



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

WHY ENGLISH? FINNISH STREAMERS' VIEWS ON THEIR LANGUAGE CHOICE

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<p>Videopelien reaaliaikainen jakaminen on yleistynyt viime vuosina valtavasti ja suoratoistopalvelu Twitch on kerännyt miljoonia pelisessioitaan jakajia kaikkialta maailmassa ja streamaamisesta onkin kehittynyt miljoonabisnes. Tutkielmani perehtyy suomalaisten streamaajan kielivalintoihin, kun he ovat päättäneet käyttää streamiensa kielenä englantia suomen sijasta.</p> <p>Tutkielmani tarkoitus oli selvittää mikä motivoi suomalaiset pelaajat streamaamaan juuri englanniksi ja millaisia näkemyksiä heillä on omaa kielivalintaansa kohtaan ja mikä heidän suhteensa englannin kieleen on. Tutkimukseni koostui kolmen suomalaisen streamaajan haastatteluista. Haastatteluissa pyrin ymmärtämään osallistujien kielivalintaan liittyviä syitä, arvoja ja näkemyksiä.</p> <p>Tutkimukseni teoreettinen tausta perustui Androutsopouloksen (2007) ja Eletan (2014) tutkimuksiin kielivalinnoista, sekä Leppänen et alin (2009) tutkimukseen suomalaisten suhteesta englantiin. Tutkimukseni tulokset olivat osin linjassa edeltävien tutkimuksien tuloksien kanssa, mutta paikoitellen löydökset olivat yllättäviä, eivätkä täysin vastanneet ennakko-oletuksiani. Osallistujat osoittivat tietoisuutensa kielivalintojensa vaikutuksesta yleisönsä ja ilmaisivat kielenkäytöllään ja käytöksellään yhteenkuuluvuutta tai eroavaisuutta eri yhteisöiden kanssa. He olivat kuitenkin oletettua vähemmän kriittisiä ja analyttisiä omaa kielenkäyttöään kohtaan. Reaaliaikaista streamaaminen ja siihen liittyvä kielenkäyttö ovat aiheita, joihin tulevilla tutkimuksilla on potentiaalia paneutua tarkemmin.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Code switching and language mixing in gaming contexts have been a topic of interest for many a year. However, a more fixed language choice in the context of gaming has not yet been extensively studied. The growth of multimodal online communities and websites based on user content creation and interaction has made it possible for anyone and everyone to be creators and publishers of their own online content. Ever since videogames were conceived, they have been a popular pastime, but with the birth and development of the internet, the nature of gaming has changed; there was a shift from singleplayer and local multiplayer to online multiplayer gaming. Gaming as a hobby became more social than ever, and multiple online communities were formed around it. Gaming was done and discussed both locally and internationally, and the translocal nature of gaming became clear.

The effects of gaming on language learning have been a hot topic for years, and rightfully so. The multimodal nature of gaming has offered multiple areas of interest for researchers, and especially in the past six years, there has been a new phenomenon that has entered the scene: live streaming of gaming activity. Whereas before gaming has been solely a solitary activity or something done with others, gaming has now become a performance as well. Gaming is actively narrated, edited and performed for the entertainment of viewers, either as one's hobby, or for monetary gain. Gaming as an occupation has become more and more common, both in the field of eSports and in the world of gaming content creation in stream or videoclip form, on platforms such as *Twitch* and *YouTube*. This performance-like quality of gaming is an interesting phenomenon, and the linguistic repertoires of those who partake in it are worth studying.

It is clear that Finnish gamers have taken the new fields of gaming entertainment in stride, and have strongly established themselves online. Streamers and YouTubers, such as LaeppaVika, have a strong fanbase and a large viewership Twitch, a popular live streaming video platform, and they regularly post videos and livestream their gameplay to an enthusiastic crowd of

Finnish gamers. Gaming content creators like LaeppaVika have been studied before, due to their multilingual language repertoires. Especially code-switching and language mixing in this kinds of gaming content has been studied, and interesting phenomena have been unearthed (see e.g. Myllärinen, 2014). However, among all the Finnish gaming content creators, both streamers and YouTubers, there are also those who have chosen to create their content in English, instead of Finnish. These are the people the present study focuses on – why have they chosen to speak English instead of their native language, despite the fact that channels like LaeppaVika clearly showcase that there is a place and viewership for gaming channels in Finnish?

The present study is a qualitative language attitude study that aims to find out what has motivated Finnish gaming content creators, and more specifically, streamers on the live streaming platform Twitch, to choose English as the main language of their channel and content. To understand this, I will examine previous studies carried out about language choice, and the status, uses of and attitudes towards English in Finland. I seek to understand factors that can influence which language(s) individuals choose to use and how the use of English is generally perceived in Finland.

As the targets of examination of the study are all Finns, it is important to understand the values and opinions on English that exist in the society they live in, as well as the ways Finns utilize English in their everyday lives. I will also discuss theories and studies on language mixing and code switching, and how these phenomena have been studied in the context of gaming and to what end. Based on the background provided by these studies and theories, I interviewed three Finnish streamers about their language choices. In the present paper, I contrast the findings from the interviews with what has already been studied and found. Finally, In the light of my findings, I discuss the implications and applications of my findings, and suggest further studies in this area.

2 BACKGROUND

In this section, I will introduce the theoretical framework of the present study. For the purposes of the present study, examining studies on language choice and code-switching is important. In many studies, language choice and code switching have received very similar definitions, if they have been defined at all. Language choice and code switching are often treated as either synonymous, or a two forms of the same phenomenon. Thus the motivations for code-switching can be similar to those that influence language choice, which is why some studies on it will be briefly examined alongside studies on language choice. Because the aim of the study is to understand Finnish streamers' language choices, it is also important to understand views and attitudes attached to English, so I will also discuss studies on the views and attitudes Finns have towards English and how they use it in their everyday lives.

2.1 Language choice and code-switching

In the present study, I aim to understand the reasons behind Finnish' streamers choice to use English in their streams. In order to understand these choices, it is important to examine factors that have been found to influence individuals' language choices. In this section, I introduce some key studies and their findings to understand the motivation and influences behind language choice, where it deviates from the speakers' native language(s).

For the purposes of the present study, studies on bilinguals and multilinguals language choices are relevant, since, as shown by previous work, Finns under 60 years of age can be considered multilingual in that besides their first language, some English is always included in their repertoire (cf. Leppänen et al, 2011). I examine both Finnish and international studies, where the focus has been on language choice between a native language and a dominant language. In the present study, dominant language is understood by Androutsopoulos' (2007) definition of it: dominant language is the main language of the

environment or platform where discourse takes place. This can mean, for example, the language used in the directories or menus of websites, the language used by most users of a website, or, in physical real-life settings, the official languages of an individual's country of residence.

2.1.1 Language Choice and Code Switching in German-Based Diasporic Web Forums.

In 2007, Androutsopoulos studied language choice and code-switching in German-based diasporic web forums. He examined language choice and code-switching in German discussion forums that are dedicated to migrants and members of different ethnic groups. In his study, Androutsopoulos aimed to establish the dominant language(s) of these forums, and to understand how and when language used by participants departs from the dominant language of the forum. Androutsopoulos explained that the appeal of these forums lies in the community and "meeting of people from the same group and negotiation of their we-ness", and that the participation in these online forums is framed by self-claimed membership of a certain (ethnic) group. (p.344).

Androutsopoulos pointed out that studies on bilingualism have established *topic* as one of the most important factors affecting language choice in bilingual settings and communities. Two other main factors influencing language choice are *participants* and *setting* (e.g. Auer 1998, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007:349). When observing German-based diasporic forums, Androutsopoulos noted that German was the most used language across all forums, though home languages or native languages (ie. languages used by members of ethnic/migrant groups using the forums, for example Polish, Russian, Arabic etc.) were present in the forums as well. He (2007:347) pointed out that German was used to respond to ethnolinguistic diversity of the audience. For example, in an Indian forum, German was especially prevalent due to the linguistic diversity of the forum that consisted of speakers of, for example, Hindi, Punjabi and Bengali. Androutsopoulos argued that the use of German, by using a shared, understood language, helps sustain a shared national identity and a unified community, which could collapse if the members were to be divided into

multiple home language subgroups (Goel, 2004, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007:348).

Additionally, the forums themselves, as platforms, are mostly in German. According to Auer (2000, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007), the dominant language of a platform establishes the expected language used in certain discussions or on the platform as a whole. However, it does not completely constrain users' language choices. Auer (1995, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007:348) also highlights that language choice is preference and discourse related. Auer explains that speakers can choose a language based on their feeling of competence in it and avoid using languages which they feel insecure using (Auer, 1995:125, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007:438).

For the present study, Androutsopoulos' study is important, as his results highlight the effects that community and participants, platform and topic have on language choices. A good example of the participants' effect on language choice, is the case of an Indian forum; users of the forum chose to use German over their own languages in order to create and maintain a sense of community, nationality and unity between participants with no single shared native language. German was used to "breach the gap" between users and language groups, and to create a communicative space for shared interests and ethnicities (p.347-348).

2.1.2 Multilingual use of twitter: Language choice and language bridges in a social network

In her dissertation, Eleta (2014) discusses the connectivity and language choices made by Twitter users. Eleta explains how multilingual users of Twitter are connecting different language groups in their social network, how their social network influence their language choices and what textual features can imply about language choices and mediation between language groups. Eleta (p.29) hypothesizes that the language choices the users of social media platforms make every time they write a post, or contribute to the content of the website in other ways, are influenced by the language composition of their social network and, will also have an impact on it.

In addition to the effect participant, setting and topic have on language choice, studies on bilinguals' social media use suggest that intended audience has an effect on language choice. For example, a study of the language use of Welsh-English bilingual students showed that on *Facebook*, these students wrote their status updates mostly in English to ensure that their non-Welsh-speaking friends understand and feel included. For one-to-one messages with other Welsh-speakers they mostly used Welsh. (Cunclyffe et al. 2013, as cited in Eleta 2014:44)

2.1.3 An Analysis of the Language Repertoires of Students in Higher Education and their Language Choices on the Internet

In her study of higher education students' language practices and choices on the internet, Kelly-Holmes (2004) found that the international communication potential of a certain language(s) can have an effect on language choice. Similarly, either real or perceived availability of online resources in a language can influence language choice (Kelly-Holmes, 2004). This was highlighted in her findings that participants whose native holds a "high prestige level", such as French, Arabic or Italian, were less likely to use English less on the internet, whereas speakers of smaller, less prestigious languages used English much more on the internet. Kelly-Holmes explains that this is caused by the lack of online resources in these smaller languages; because information cannot be found in the participants' native language, they are more likely to use English. Finding resources in the "larger" languages is not a problem and thus does not force the speakers to use English instead of their own native language to get ahold of information or other online resources. To quote Kelly-Holmes:

Those bilinguals whose repertoire includes English and a prestigious national language with large numbers of speakers and an economy that can support and promote this language on the Internet do not seem to be shifting into English in this medium. (ibid.74)

However, it must be noted that as Kelly-Holmes' study was carried out in the early 2000s, the availability of online resources in smaller languages has since improved. This means that the influence of availability of online resources on language choices may not be as significant anymore. That being said, Kelly-

Holmes' (2004) findings of language prestige and international communication potential of languages and their influence are still valid today, particularly in the case of English due to its status as lingua franca.

2.1.4 Young people's translocal new media uses: A multiperspective analysis of language choice and heteroglossia

Furthermore, in addition to the effect of platform, topic and intended audience, membership, identity and belonging also influence language choice. Similarly to Androutsopoulos' (2007) findings, where membership and "we-ness" of an ethnic minority was expressed and maintained through use of a home language or a native language instead of the local, dominant language, in the context of (online) gaming, English can be used to identify as a member of a global collective of gamers (Leppänen et al, 2009:1081). In their article, Leppänen et al examine the translocal new media uses and language choices of young people, and they argue that activities with new media often involve uses of multiple languages, registers and styles, as well as negotiating social action, identities and belonging (Leppänen, 2007b as cited in Leppänen et al 2009). They point out that language choice and linguistic heteroglossia are semiotic resources available for self-expression, communication, meaning making and identification (Leppänen et al, 2009:1081). Leppänen et al also echo the influence of intended audience on language choice; their interviewee, a Finnish online writer/fanfiction author pointed out that writing her fanfiction in English is sometimes motivated by a wish to reach a bigger audience than just a Finnish audience (ibid:1090).

Furthermore, as explained by Androutsopoulos (2007, as cited in Eleta, 2014:36), one factor influencing language choice is the topic of the discourse. This same phenomenon is highlighted by Leppänen et al, who studied language use on a Christian extreme sports web forum, and found that as many extreme sports and the registers associated with them originated in North America, North America has influenced the way these sports are described and talked about (p.1097). Similarly to this (especially to a western audiences) the majority of video games are produced and marketed in English, and many best selling

games are heavily influenced by North American culture or language, and as English as such a strong presence in gaming and games themselves, it can affect talk around games and gaming. Furthermore, Leppänen et al found that in a gaming context, the gamers' language choice and language use is influenced by the contextual and semiotic resources of the game (p.1101).

2.1.5 Linguistic and generic hybridity in web writing: the case of fan fiction

Leppänen defines code-switching as a means to recontextualize talk. A switch in language, or a register in a language, serves a purpose in discourse. As such, a code-switch serves as a contextualization cue (Gumperz 1982, 1992, as cited in Leppänen, 2011). Code-switching can, for example, mark a change in narrative style, and it can be used to cue a change in both written and spoken discourse. Role-playing and quotations, for example, can be contexts for code-switching in spoken language environments. In a bilingual or multilingual settings, code-switching can also express intended audience. This again echoes the importance of (intended) audience and the influence it has on individuals' language choices and language use, as discussed by Androutsopoulos (2007, as cited in Eleta 2014), and Cuncllyffe et al (2013, as cited in Eleta 2014).

2.1.6 Bilingual Language Mixing: Why Do Bilinguals Code-Switch?

Heredia and Altarriba (2001) studied why bilinguals code-switch. They discuss that a switch in codes may occur due to a problem in retrieving the right words in one of the languages, which can occur when a person is using a word that is not recurrent in their vocabulary. They explain that language accessibility seems to be a key factor in code-switching. This is similar to Auer's (1995, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007) theory that language choice can be motivated by (perceived or real) lack of competence – or perhaps better knowledge of vocabulary - in a language or, in contrast, higher confidence with the use of another language. However, Heredia and Altarriba discuss a view that code-switching emerges from a lack of proficiency in one or both languages used, but argue that this view overlooks the possibility that code-switching is used to be

better understood, when an idea or concept can not be easily explained in one language.

2.1.7 “Mä koitan olla kutsumatta niitä infectedeiks koska anglismi”: Code-switching in Finnish online gaming videos

Myllärinen (2014) studied the ways a Finnish YouTuber uses language mixing and code-switching in his gameplay videos. In her thesis, Myllärinen explains that as the gamer's gaming experience, his/her choices and interpretations are guided by in-game messages, instructions and dialogues, English elements are made a vital resource of interaction in the gaming activity (Piirainen-Marsh, 2008, as cited in Myllärinen, 2014). Myllärinen explains that the setting of a YouTube gaming video differs from a more widely studied gaming situation, as previous studies have largely focused on multiple people interacting in a physical, private setting whilst gaming. YouTube gaming videos often consist of a gamer playing alone in their home, recording their gameplay and monologue to be posted to an online audience. Myllärinen highlights that this kind of interaction happens in a seemingly one-way direction, much like a performance (p.4). As discussed previously, Androutsopoulos (2007, as cited in Eleta 2014) and Cunclyffe et al (2013, as cited in Eleta 2014) identified audience as a factor that influences language choice. Similarly, Myllärinen found that audience influenced her participant's language use. He, for example, felt that he was obligated to speak more than he would if he was playing without recording his sessions, and to entertain his audience through his language use. Moreover, her participant often used English for profanities, which he explained was because using profanities in English instead of Finnish was a way of “softening the message” and avoiding upsetting his audience, as he felt that profanities in Finnish carry a heavier meaning than those in English (p.63).

By observing her participant's video material, Myllärinen was able to detect patterns in his language use and analyse *how* he uses language, but only by interviewing him about the phenomena she encountered, did she come to understand *why* the phenomena occurred. For example, by observing her participant's video data, Myllärinen would have noted that he uses English often

when using profanities but However, only through interviewing him did Myllärinen find out that it was done for a specific purpose, ie. softening the message of the profanity. Myllärinen's findings not only emphasize the importance of taking subjective experience of language use into account, but also highlights the significance of audience, when it comes to gaming content; her participant expressed his awareness of his audience and his efforts of taking them into account in his content by consciously moderating his discourse.

2.1.8 Summary

In this section, I have introduced key factors influencing language choices individuals make and reasons and motivations for code-switching. Main factors influencing language choice identified in this section are topic, participants, setting, platform, intended audience, international communication potential of a language, membership and identity. For the purposes of the present study it is important to understand how these factors might influence language choice especially in gaming and streaming contexts.

It is important to understand the influence of intended (and perceived) audience when examining performances such as streaming. As the streamers make their live feed openly accessible online, audience presence is expected. Cuncllyffe et al (2013, as cited in Eleta) showed that intended audience can mean specific people, as in the case of Welsh speakers who wished to take their English speaking friends into account when writing on Facebook, but additionally, Leppänen's (2007) findings on a Finnish fanfiction writers language choices show that, especially in online contexts, 'audience' can also mean an unspecified, larger (international) audience with an understanding of English. Myllärinen's (2014) study showed that on YouTube, language use was modified to accommodate audience and its preferences. Furthermore, as Kelly-Holmes (2004) pointed out, the international communication potential of a language can influence language choice. In the case of streaming,

Cunclyffe et al (2013, as cited in Eleta, 2014:44) found that on Facebook, users mostly wrote their posts in English instead of their native language to ensure that their English-speaking Facebook friends understood their messages and did not feel excluded from conversations. Similarly, Androutsopoulos' (2007) study of diasporic forums, dominant language of the forum was used instead in order to "breach the gap" between users and language groups, and to create a communicative space for shared interests and ethnicities (p.347-348). Furthermore, not only can dominant languages such as English be used to create a communicative space for communities, but Leppänen et al (2009) pointed out that English is also often used to identify and show membership of a global community of gamers.

Cunclyffe's et al, Leppänen's et al and Androutsopoulos' findings are important for the purposes of this study: in the case of online videogaming communities whose user bases are often international and multilingual, in order to create and maintain a unified communicative community the language used by users must be one that everyone understands. Additionally, the language of the platform influences language choice, as could be seen in the strong presence of German across all the forums, in the case of the present study English is both the language of the platform used by the participants (Twitch), as well as the games played by them, so their language choice could be primed by this.

Furthermore, in addition to platform, Androutsopoulos identified topic as a key factor influencing language choice. Interestingly, previous studies suggest that topics such as politics and technology tend to correlate with the use of the main language of the forum or platform, instead of a home language (e.g. Paolillo, 1996; Sperlich, 2005, as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007). Perhaps it is due to ever-changing and developing nature of these phenomena, that they can be easier to describe and discuss in their language of origin – or a larger, dominant world language - as other, smaller languages can lack behind in vocabulary needed to describe said phenomena. This could also be the case with gaming, which growing and changing constantly as a phenomenon, and the language of which English generally is. Furthermore, Heredia and Altarriba (2004) pointed out that problems in vocabulary retrieval can motivate code-switching. This is

important, because as video games and the technology surrounding them are such new phenomena, vocabulary and terminology for them might be lacking in the participants' native languages. This being the case, discussing games, gaming and the technology and phenomena around in English might be explained through language accessibility; choosing to create their gaming content in English, where the vocabulary already exists and is easily available and accessible to the speakers, may be a way of saving time and effort on the content creators' part.

Moreover, Auer (as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2007) argued that language choice can be motivated by feelings of efficacy and lack thereof. This is important for the purposes of the present study: the participants' feelings of confidence in their English skills may have influenced their language choice and may affect how they perceive and moderate their language use.

2.2 Finns' attitudes towards English and their uses of it

In this section I will discuss the role, status and presence of English in Finnish society, and the views and attitudes linked with it. As the present study focuses on Finnish participants' choices, it is important to understand the kinds of meanings, values and views attached to English more generally in Finland, as well as Finns' feelings of fluency, self-efficacy and competency in English. These are all factors that can influence an individual's language choice and their overall readiness to use English, as well as contexts and situations where they feel comfortable using English. As language prestige is an important factor influencing language choice, it is important to examine the values and opinions Finns have towards English and its variants as global languages. The findings of previous studies presented in this section may also help to predict what kind of factors the participants of the present study feel have influenced their own language choices and how they evaluate, critique and moderate their own language use, and also help to understand their alignment with or deviance from the Finnish norms.

With the rise of Web 2.0 and the rapid development of social media, in the recent decades the role of English as a lingua franca has become more significant than ever. With the widespread use of English, there has been a shift in its ownership; in fact, today, English is spoken more among non-native speakers than native speakers (Coskun, 2011). In fact, Kelly-Holmes (2000:76) argues that English as a language can be seen as an entity completely independent of the countries in which it is an official language – English is an a-national symbol of identity, globalism, youth, development and modernism. Vocabulary, jargon and certain linguistic repertoires can be used to express and build one's and identity and membership of an inside group or as an expert on a subject. Due to globalisation, modernisation, advancements in technology and overall internationalization, and the new means and needs for communication and interaction they provide, English has become an important part of the everyday life of many Finnish people too, both in business and personal life (Leppänen et al, 2008:16). In this section, I will introduce previous studies on Finns' attitudes towards English and their uses of it. First, I will begin with introducing findings from Leppänen's et al (2011) study concerning the uses of English in Finland as well as the views and attitudes towards it. Secondly, Kytölä's (2009) study on the use of English on Finnish football forums will be discussed. Thirdly, I will discuss Valppu's (2013) findings on Finnish students' uses of and attitudes towards English on Facebook. Finally, I will discuss the big picture of English in Finland these studies painted by these studies.

2.2.1 National Survey on the English Language in Finland: Uses, meanings and attitudes

According to a study carried out in Finland in 2007 by Leppänen et al (2011), English has a firm place in the Finnish society today, and especially young people consider English an at least somewhat important part of their lives (p.49). Leppänen et al studied the status and use of English in Finland, and the attitudes and relationships people have with English via a questionnaire study. They had 1495 participants from all around Finland. The ages of the participants ranged from 15 to 79 and they were divided into four age groups for the analysis. For the purposes of the present study, the two youngest

participant groups, 15-24-year-olds and 25-44-year-olds, are relevant and will be examined. It is important to note that because the participants of the present study were all in the first age bracket at the time Leppänen's et al study was carried out, their attitudes may reflect the ones expressed by Leppänen's et al youngest participants rather than those expressed by the second youngest age group, within which their current ages fit.

Leppänen's et al study examined different ways English is present in Finnish people's lives, including studies, business, travel and hobbies and freetime, as well as their attitudes towards their own English and English spoken by other Finns. The presence of English in Finnish lives is indeed clearly visible in the statistics of the study: 80% of the participants experienced hearing and seeing English in their environments (Leppänen et al, 2011:61) and 75% more specifically in their homes (p.52), which highlights the global status of English and its presence in Finnish everyday lives and homes and the Finnish society. In fact, English holds the strongest position of all foreign language in Finland, and especially young people reported encountering English in their everyday lives (Leppänen et al, 2011:64). Leppänen et al (2008 as cited in Leppänen et al, 2011:64) point out that this is due to young people having more contact with English through higher exposure and use of media, entertainment and information technology. Furthermore, English is not only present in Finnish everyday lives, but Finns also consider English personally important to them: almost 60% of Leppänen's et al participants reported that English is at least moderately important to them, and especially participants with higher education found English to be very important to them personally (p.65). Interestingly, despite the fact that many Finns considered English important to them personally, only 9% of the participants considered themselves bilingual and 7% multilingual.

When asked to report where and when the participants use English in their lives, roughly half of the participants expressed that they use English the most on their free time (p.106). The participants of the study most frequently reported to use English to searching for information, for the fun of it, and to communicate with people (p.121). In the context of oral communication, the youngest

participants were the most active in speaking English with Finnish speaking friends (p.114). The second youngest participant group were more active in speaking English with friends whom they have no shared native language and with tourists (p.113). Those participants with the lowest education expressed to speak English the least in their free time.

The youngest participant groups of Leppänen's et al study were also the most active in writing in English online, which they did in the form of internet blogs and forum posts (p.111). The youngest participant group were also the most active in using English in playing games and chatting online, with the second youngest participant group participating in these activities only half as much (ibid). Out of education groups, people with basic education the most active in using English for online gaming – this group largely comprising of young participants who were still in school. Out of occupation groups, manual workers were the most frequent users of English in gaming contexts (p.117).

Interestingly, only 19% of the participants reported that they use English in leisure activities or with friends, despite especially the youths' active use of English in gaming and online chatting. Perhaps it could be argued that there is some overlap in using English for communication with people, using English in leisure activities, and using English for the fun of it. In the context of video games and online gaming, these three choices could all be combined – video gaming is more often than not done for pleasure and as a hobby, but due to the translocal nature of the internet and video games, communicating with people and international friends can also be an important aspect of online gaming, of which English is often the language.

Leppänen's et al study also illustrates the attitudes and views Finns have on their own language skills and those of other Finns. Their findings show that Finns are critical of their language skills and hold native-likeness in high regard. Leppänen et al found that Finns' preferred variants of English were British and American English and their least preferred variants Finnish and Indian English. Especially the youngest participants of their study reported to strongly dislike Finnish English (p.72-73). Their preferred variant of English was American

English, which Leppänen et al argued could be due to their exposure to America-centric entertainment and popular culture (p.71). The strong preference of native variants of English was visible in all participant groups. Leppänen et al (2011:73) argue that these views can be illustrative of the language norms that Finns compare themselves and others to, and use to and evaluate their language use.

This preference for native-likeness is also visible in the participants' attitudes towards other Finns speaking English on TV or radio. When hearing a famous or known Finn speaking English with difficulty in public, the most expressed feeling was sympathy. However, a fifth of all participants reported feeling amusement in this situation. However, in the youngest participant group, it was also common to feel embarrassment on behalf of Finns and less sympathy than others when hearing a public figure struggle with English (p.77). Leppänen et al point out that this implies that younger people feel that people speaking English in public should already be quite fluent in it. When hearing a known Finn speaking English fluently but with a Finnish accent, this youngest group reported to feeling pride in Finns, amusement or nothing at all (p.78). However, in the case of famous Finns speaking English fluently and with a native-like accent, over half of all participants reported feeling admiration towards the speaker, again highlighting the importance of native-likeness in Finns' opinions. Unlike in many other non-native English speaking countries, Finns still seem to connect fluency to native-like accent to some degree, which indicates that Finns have not yet "taken possession" of English as their own, but rather still see it as a foreign language to speak which one assumes a "foreign" identity (p.89).

In general, in Leppänen's et al study, young people had a more positive attitude towards English in general than other age groups (p.81). They frequently expressed that all Finns should know English, and that Finnish social services must be offered in English as well as Finnish. However, youths were not the only ones that felt that young people's language skills are a given. Highlighting the view of English skills being both important and also a given for especially younger people, almost every participant reported to feel that young people must know English, and almost all agreed that also people of working age must

know English. Especially the younger participant groups, participants with the highest education and participants in managerial or expert positions felt that English skills add to mutual understanding on a global level (ibid:87-88). Additionally, most of the participants felt that Finns need to know English when travelling abroad (p.90). Generally, Finns viewed English in a positive light as a language of international communication (p.85). According to Leppänen et al, these results show that Finns highly appreciate English and want to learn it (p.90).

In addition to the youngest participants finding English very important, they also generally had positive views on their own English skills. They evaluated their English skills in all categories, both receptive and productive, higher than older participants (p.97). However, they were not alone in evaluating their skills quite high. Altogether 61% of all the participants felt that their oral English skills were moderate or above. Moreover, almost half of the participants of the study expressed that they feel like they know English well enough, and 38% expressed that they are proud of their English skills. Finns' eagerness to learn more English discussed previously is again visible, as 82% of all the participants expressed that they want to learn more English (p.98). That being said, Finns are not ashamed of their English skills. Especially the younger participants expressed to have pride in their English skills, even though they were also the most keen to learn more English (ibid). From the education groups, the highest educated were the most frequent to express that they feel like their English skills are good, and the least frequent to express that they feel ashamed of it. They were also the most eager to learn more English. Managers and experts were the most at ease with their English skills out of the occupation groups in the study. Furthermore, Leppänen et al argue that these findings could suggest that especially younger people, due to their eagerness to learn more English despite their already high ranking of their English skills, can be seen as striving for fluent bilingualism (p.104).

Despite the fact that Finns are not ashamed of their English skills, half of participants still felt like their skills inadequate for discussing with native English speakers, and 30% thought their English skills were not good enough to discuss

with other non-native speakers of English (p.100). Interestingly, despite the fact that the younger participants of Leppänen's et al study had shown to generally have more positive views on English and their English skills, the youngest participants were also more likely to report that they felt inadequate to speak with native English speakers than older participants (p.101). This, again, could be related to the high regard Finns, and especially young Finns, have for native speakers language variants and skills, and how they are seen as the standard to which Finns need to compare themselves and their skills.

Finn's tendency to be quite critical of their own language skills and the skills of other Finns was also visible in Leppänen's et al findings on Finns' feelings of fluency when speaking English. Only 25% of their participants found using English as natural as using their native language. Roughly half of the participants also expressed that it was important to them to sound fluent when speaking English. Seeming fluent when using English was especially important to the youngest participant group, and the highest educated participants, as well as managers and experts. These participant groups were also the ones that most frequently felt that their English is as natural as their Finnish, and that they want to use English whenever possible (p.119-120). These same groups were also among the groups that evaluated their own English skills as at least moderate so it comes as no surprise that they also wish to convey these skills when using English.

Although a quarter of the participants felt like they feel as natural speaking English as they do speaking their native language, only 12% of the participants expressed that they behaved the same way as they do when speaking their native language (p.123) when it comes to for example, non-verbal communication, decrease or increase of speech and speech speed and feeling of intellect etc. Majority of the participants of the study expressed that when they speak English, they need to search for proper words, and almost half of the participants said that they speak slower when speaking English (p.123). Almost 40% of the participants said they felt less capable when speaking English and 32% said that they use less humour when speaking English (p.123). The use of non-word or non-verbal communication, such as using hand gestures or

utterances such as "mm" or "uhuh", was also fairly common (ibid). However, what might be noteworthy is that even though these findings could easily be interpreted as problems in fluency or lack of skills in English, it needs to be taken into account that 25% of all the participants, and about half of the highest educated and those in higher occupation positions felt that their oral English skills were (at least) moderate. However, almost a quarter of the participants did express feeling more stupid than when they speak their native language (p.123).

Overall, in their study Leppänen et al found that generally speaking Finns have a positive relationship with English, and they are exposed to English frequently both in their free time and at work or studies. The findings of the study showcase that Finns also frequently use English themselves. Especially young people, educated people and people in high positions in their jobs are active producers of both spoken and written English. These groups also have a positive view on their own language skills and fluency, even though they tend to hold native-likeness as a standard to which they compare themselves and others. Leppänen et al (2011:127) argue that "in principal, Finns are willing to use English, but when they use it, they are not content with their skills." They argue that this could explain why Finns are so eager to learn more English (ibid).

Leppänen's et al findings are an important overview of the views and attitudes Finns have towards English and how they use it in their lives. It shows that despite the fact that English has a strong foothold in Finland, Finns are still somewhat timid in using it, especially with native speakers, and have feelings of inadequacy when it comes to their English skills. Finns put a lot of pressure on themselves and on others to sound native-like when speaking English, which can make speaking English in public difficult. The values and attitudes unearthed in Leppänen's et al study may influence the way the participants of the present study view their own language use and evaluate it.

2.2.2 Englanti huumorin ja syrjinnän välineenä suomalaisen Futisforumin keskusteluissa

In a study carried out by Kytölä (2008) the uses of English as a tool of creating and maintaining social structures, membership hierarchies and exclusion were examined on a Finnish football forum. Kytölä examined the way English was used by Finnish users of the forum when a user indentifying himself as Turkish started posting in seemingly poor English on the forum. Kytölä (2008) found that Finnish users of the forum immediately latched onto the thread started by the Turkish user and started making fun of his English by posting in "mock English" - a purposefully poor and grammatically incorrect English. Based on his observations, Kytölä describes this use of English as a crude, at times even cruel, power use and discrimination. Kytölä argues (2008:268) that in Finland there is a generation that has grown up whose collective English skills are good enough to create multifaceted, collective humour. He explains that to be able to use this "mock English" one needs to, in reality, be quite fluent in English and to have enough confidence in their ability to use nuanced language and to understand it. By finding a user's English amusing due to its perceived lack of fluency and poking fun of it, these mockers raise themselves to the status of "expert" regarding English (ibid:268). By making fun of the ones less proficient in English, users are creating inside humour and excluding the ones deemed humorous. Additionally, on the forum, the Turkish user was not the only one being made fun of for his English – Kytölä (2008) points out that English used by other Finnish speakers is also heavily moderated by "more proficient" English speakers, who, when encountering perceived shortcomings or errors, will eagerly comment and correct the language (ibid: 267).

2.2.3 Finnish students' uses of and attitudes towards English on Facebook

In her Master's thesis, Valppu (2013) studied Finnish English language students' and nursing students' attitudes towards English on Facebook, and how they use English on Facebook. She found that what her participants used English to write about on Facebook were everyday topics, such as "catching up" (p.45). The majority of her participants expressed that they wrote in English when they felt that what they had to say was meaningful or important to their

non-Finnish speaking Facebook friends, or when they replied on someone else's Facebook post that was written in English. Cunclyffe et al (2013) named intended audience as a factor that influences language choice, which is visible in Valppu's findings.

However, English students, who had had a higher evaluation of their English skills than nursing students, said that they also used English when they felt that expressing something was easier, funnier or more natural in English. Valppu argues that this indicates English students' confidence in their language skills. Some of Valppu's respondents expressed that they did not write Facebook posts in English because they did not have many foreign friends and thus have no need for using English. Valppu found that some students mixed English words and phrases into their otherwise Finnish Facebook posts, even though they rarely used English on Facebook.

The majority of Valppu's respondents did not view Facebook as the platform for practicing their English skills, nor for showing that they already know English. She argues that using English on Facebook is not seen as something to admire and the knowledge of English was not regarded as impressive (p.53). This view could be explained by the fact that roughly half of all her participants felt, to some degree, that they were used to using English online, and perhaps thus felt that knowing English was a given and not something to brag about. Furthermore, one of Valppu's respondents expressed that they did not wish to use English on Facebook because using English when they did not have non-Finnish-speaking Facebook friends would have come across as "bragging and boasting". Valppu explains that this was a fairly typical response from a nursing student (p.55), but that also some English students felt that unnecessary use of English or mixing of languages can give the impression that one is trying to show off their language skills (p.56), especially if the writer has either no or only a few non-Finnish-speaking friends.

Moreover, some of Valppu's respondents expressed that they did not wish to use English on Facebook because they were unsure of their skills and were afraid making mistakes and being laughed at. Criticism towards either their own

or others' English skills, and especially towards mistakes, was Visible in some of the answers from Valppu's respondents. Some of her respondents felt that if a person cannot produce grammatically good (or perfect) English, they should write in Finnish instead, as reading texts containing grammar mistakes is "annoying" (p.62). Valppu argues that those respondents who expressed that they were afraid of making mistakes when writing English, are very aware of this kind of negative view and that there seems to be a lot of pressure to write well in English (p.63). However, despite these negative views, Valppu's respondents expressed that they understand Finnish-speakers' use of English on Facebook, and they often regarded users of English as international people (p.57-58).

2.2.4 Summary

In this section, I have introduced and discussed studies on Finnish people's uses of English and their attitudes and views on it. I have mainly focused on young people's uses of and attitudes towards English and the use of English in online contexts, as they are most central to the present study. All of the studies introduced illustrate the complex relationship Finnish people have with English.

On the one hand, Finns find English to be an important factor in international, modern communication, which all Finns should know, and they consider English to be personally important to them. Especially young Finns tend to have a close relationship with English, and they are active in using it in multiple different context, both online and in real life. Some Finns even find that some things are easier to express in English and that some humour works better in English (see Valppu, 2013). Finnish people are also eager to learn more English, and especially younger Finns expressed their willingness to learn more English. On the other hand, Finns have quite a rigid view of what fluency in English is.

On the other hand, however, as shown in Leppänen's et al study, native-like accents and pronunciation are still seen as the standard of fluency, and a Finnish accent is seen as embarrassing or displeasing, especially to the youngest participants of their study. Finns criticise both themselves and other

Finns on their English pronunciation as well as on their grammatical correctness. This is reinforced by the findings of Valppu's study. She found that Finnish students can be afraid of using English because they fear they would be ridiculed for possible mistakes. Finns also find other Finns' grammatically incorrect use of English unpleasant, and feel that in order to use English, one needs to know proper English first.

These views were also highlighted in the findings of Kytölä's study. Kytölä's findings highlight that not only do Finns feel critical of others' language use, but they are also not afraid to vocalize that, at least online. This combined with the reported feelings of insecurity and self-criticism when using English reported by Leppänen et al (2011) and Valppu (2013), creates a complicated situation for Finns who wish to use English online for their own purposes, but might not perceive their own skills high enough to do so and avoid mockery and exclusion. If they do speak English online, they make themselves vulnerable to harsh and even cruel criticism, and exclusion from inside jokes and communities. Moreover, Valppu's findings also show, that Finns can find the use of English on Facebook unnecessary and unpleasant if the person does not have an international audience. "Unnecessary" use of English is often seen as boastful, as if the person using English is trying to brag about their language skills.

These mixed views and attitudes present in Finnish society might have had an effect on the language choices made by the participants of the present study. They may feel that there is pressure to sound native-like in their pronunciation, or like they need to monitor their own language use extensively in order to avoid making grammar mistakes.

3 SETUP

My study was inspired by Androutsopoulos' (2008) approach to discourse-centred online ethnography. Androutsopoulos (2008) argues that in the field of online ethnography, the focus is still on exclusive study of log data (ibid:2). Indeed, research of online language use is oftentimes done through observation. By observing online language use, whether it be videos, pictures or written material and discourse, one can detect patterns, trends and structures in the way individuals and communities use language. However, outsider observation only provides a view on *how* language is used, but not *why*. Androutsopoulos points out that observable patterns are not necessarily related to the participants' language practices and perspectives, but one must also take into account an individuals motivations for using certain linguistic resources, as well as the meanings that they attach to those resources. (ibid p.2) As a result, in addition to observation, interviews with the research subjects are important to this type of ethnographic study.

Androutsopoulos highlights that in the past the trend in ethnographic research online has been to mainly observe the participants' linguistic practices and include little or no actual contact with the participants (Döring, 2004, as cited in Androutsopoulos 2008). The trend of observatory online ethnography has not focused the subjective side of language use, the motivations and perceptions discussed above, even though, as can be seen in the studies carried out by, for example, Eleta (2014), Myllärinen (2014), Leppänen (2011), Heredia and Altarriba (2001), subjective perspectives, motivations and intentions have a strong effect on the ways individuals choose to use languages and linguistic resources available to them. This is why in the present study, I will interview my participants about their views on their language use and the motivations behind them.

In this section I will introduce the setup of the present study. I will explain and argue the research questions formulated for the study. I will also cover the research ethics based on which the study was conducted. I will also introduce

Twitch as a platform, studying its language composition, broadcaster page and its monetization policies in order to understand how Twitch as a platform primes language choices. and enables and encourages viewer-streamer interaction. I then introduce the interview formulated based on the findings of previous studies presented in the background section of the study. Lastly, I will introduce the data chosen for analysis as well as the methodology used to analyse it.

3.1 Aims and research questions

Finnish YouTube channels such as LaeppaVika show that Finnish gaming content has an active audience online. Furthermore, the international gaming content platform, Twitch, has an official Finnish translation. These factors showcase that Finnish has a presence in the online gaming scene. Despite this, some Finnish streamers choose to stream their gaming in English instead of Finnish. The aim of the present study is to research the motivations, perceptions and attitudes these Finnish gaming content creators have towards their own language choice. I aim to find out what motivated them to start producing their content in English and what views and attitudes they have towards their language choice and language use.

The research questions for my study are as follows:

1. Why have the streamers chosen to stream in English instead of Finnish and what kind of factors have affected their language choice?
2. What kind of views and attitudes do they have on their own language use and how do they perceive themselves as users of English?

3.2 Twitch as a platform

Twitch.tv is a gaming streaming website established by two American internet entrepreneurs in 2011 as a spin-off of a general-streaming platform Justin.tv (Popper, 2014). On Twitch, users can watch other users' live streams or saved streams or stream their own gaming sessions themselves. Over the past 7 days

(sullygnome.com/viewers, viewed on April 22.2017), all Twitch streams combined have had an average of 692 714 viewers, with viewer numbers peaking at 1 284 338. Twitch as a platform is American, but it has been translated into, for example, Finnish, and for viewers in Finland the Finnish version of the site is visible. However, English is still the most prevalent language on Twitch, and can be considered the dominant language of the platform. The three most streamed games on Twitch are *League of Legends*, *Destiny* and *Overwatch*, and three most watched games are *League of Legends*, *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive* and *Hearthstone*. All of these games are developed by American game developers, and their default language is English. Furthermore, according to Twitchstats.net (visited 22.4.17), English is the most used language on the website, with 56,13% of the channels streaming in English. The second and third most used languages on Twitch streams are German with 7,95% and Russian with 7,25%. Streamers with the most followers on Twitch are syndicate, riotgames and summit1g, all of whom have English as their stream language (ibid).

Twitch, as a platform, is extremely multimodal - the broadcasting setting consists of audio and video material from the game being played, livefeed of the streamer's face and their commentary on the gameplay, and written text in the chat window, where viewers of the chat can converse with each other and the streamer. The broadcast page on Twitch consists of a video stream that showcases the gameplay and a web cam feed of the player; the username of the streamer and a title for the stream; a navigation bar of the site, and a chat window for real time communication between viewers and the streamer. Additionally, at the bottom of the video stream window, there are buttons for "following", "subscribing" and "sharing". Twitch users can follow other users by clicking the follow button on their broadcast pages. By following a streamer, the follower receives an email notification whenever the streamer goes online. This enables the followers to effectively follow live streams they enjoy, and helps them stay informed about new stream content. Pictured below in figure 1 is Recktenwald's (2017) representation of the broadcaster page.



Figure 1. Recktenwald's representation of the Twitch's broadcaster page

Additionally, there are *information panels* under the stream window, in which streamers can add, for example, general information about themselves, their gaming repertoire, their streaming schedule, rules of their chat, information about their PC setup, a link to PayPal for donations, and social media links to their Facebook pages, Twitter, etc.

Usually streamers have their streaming gear set up so that they have a minimum of two computer monitors, in one of which a the game they're streaming is running, and in another – the secondary monitor – their own stream window is open, so they can monitor their stream quality and read their chat to respond to viewer comments. The Twitch setup encourages interaction between viewer and streamer.

On Twitch, streamers have multiple ways to make money on their streams, and Twitch encourages aspiration to high viewer counts with their monetization policies. Simply put, streamers can earn money by maximizing their viewercount and participating in active viewer-streamer interaction. For smaller Twitch channels, donations are the main source of revenue; a streamer can add a "donate"-button onto their broadcast page, and viewers can make donations to their Paypal account by pressing the button. There are no limitations as to who can have donations enabled on their Twitch-channel. However, in order to make larger revenue through Twitch, one must apply for a partnership with

Twitch (Kemps, 2015). Twitch's partnership program provides streamers with better possibilities to monetize their streams. Once accepted to the Twitch partnership program, streamers can gain revenue from monthly paid *subscriptions*, advertisements run on their streams, and from fan merchandise sold in the Twitch store (partner program overview, 2016). According to Twitch's director of partnerships (Kemps, 2015), when deciding whether or not a partnership application is accepted, viewership of a stream counts but is not a deciding factor. However, interaction with audience is important when wishing to become a member, and it is important that a streamer has consecutive viewers (ibid).

Both Twitch's monetization policies and its broadcast page setup designed for streamer-viewer interaction encourage streamers to strive for high viewer counts. As Twitch's language composition shows, English is the most widely used language on Twitch. This means that by using English, streamers can maximize their possibility to reach a wide audience as possible and thus also maximize their possibility for monetary gain. This could also motivate Finnish streamers to choose English instead of Finnish as the language of their streams.

3.3 Data

For the present paper, I chose to analyse interview data. Three participants were interviewed. As the present study is a qualitative one, a small number of participants is required. The participants were chosen by the following criteria:

1. They are native speakers of Finnish
2. The main language of their Twitch channel is English
3. They stream regularly

Due to difficulties finding suitable participants through conventional search engines or databases, the participants were acquired through snowball sampling. Atkinson and Flint (2001) define snowball sampling as consisting of "identifying respondents who are then used to refer researchers on to other

respondents".The participants are all members of an online community for Finnish Twitch streamers, and were all found and contacted on *Discord* in March 2017. Discord is a free text and voice chat program used for group chatting, on which said Finnish streamer community has a public channel. I received permission to recruit participants to my study from the channel moderators and proceeded to inform the people chat room about the purpose and setting of my study and what I needed from possible participants. One of the participants of the present study was in the chat room at the time and volunteered to participate immediately. The two others heard of my study from other members of the community and personally contacted me via private chat message to volunteer later that day.The participants are all native Finnish speakers who have chosen to stream their gaming sessions on Twitch fully in English. All of them stream regularly and have viewer bases of between 150 and 3500 followers. All the participants will be introduced in further detail in the results section of the present paper. In order to provide more data and thus a larger understanding, five participants would have been better in terms of the setting of the present study. However, due to the closed and hidden nature of these communities, only three volunteering participants were found in the timeframe of the study.

3.3.1 Research ethics

The participant recruitment and data gathering for the present study were conducted according to research ethical guidelines provided by Marham and Buchanan (2012), who identified, for example, participant vulnerability, informed consent and presentation of findings as ethical questions related with internet research. As the topic and issues discussed in the present study are not of particularly personal, intimate or delicate nature, ensuring the participants' complete and utter anonymity was not essential. Participating in the present study would not put the participants in a vulnerable place. This is why snowball sampling could be used as the method of recruiting participants; had the topics discussed in the study been more delicate and personal in nature, contacting the participants only one-on-one would have been necessary. This would have ensured that no outsiders would have been aware

of the participants' involvement in the study and they could not have been associated with any of the opinions or thoughts expressed herein. However, as mentioned, this was not necessary for the purposes of the present study, so the participants were initially contacted in an open chat room.

When contact was established with the participants, they were informed about the topics, procedures and public nature of the present study. They were informed that they were they to participate, they would be interviewed and the interviews would be recorded. They were informed that these recordings would not, however, be published in audio form anywhere, and their data would be presented under a pseudonym in order to ensure anonymity. The participants expressed their content in one-on-one chat with me. In the beginning of the interviews, I repeated the aims and procedures of the present study and provided an opportunity to ask for clarifications or to withdraw consent. All the participants orally re-stated their consent, and the interviews were carried out.

The participants' anonymity through the data analysis was ensured by using pseudonyms and omitting any personal information. Information about their streams visible on their broadcast pages on Twitch, however, were included. This information included follower number, possible main game and streaming schedule, as well as their membership of a streaming community which was visible on their Twitch page, the name of which will not be revealed in the present study.

As the aim of the present study is to gain an understanding of the reasons behind Finnish streamers language choices and to understand their personal relationship with English, it was important that the participants of the study had experience in both streaming, and streaming in English. The participants were deemed valid for the present study because of their inside membership of a community of streamers and their experience in streaming. Before they were chosen as participants, I examined their Twitch channels to verify the language of their channel, their streaming activity and their follower count. These were deemed as important factors affecting validity, as they show that the streamers have personal experience with using English as their streaming language and

that they had an audience to whom they stream, which would enable gathering information relevant to the research questions of the present paper.

The participants interview answers will be presented as close to their original despite the fact that they have been translated. Care is taken in preserving the original meanings in the process of translating. The interview answers given by the participants are studied and interpreted based on background information from previous literature in the area, and subjective interpretations and speculations not backed up by evidence or existing theories are avoided.

3.3.2 Interview

The interviews were carried out over Discord app, via a private audio call, in May 2017. The interviews were conducted in Finnish in order to ensure understanding and to yield answers unhindered by problems in understanding or language skills insufficient to communicate complex issues and opinions. The interview questions translated into English were as follows:

1. Your age?
2. Your occupation?
3. How long have you streamed, and what made you start streaming?
4. What language did you use when you started streaming and why?
If you started in any other language than English, how long did you stream before you switched to English? What motivated you to switch to English?
5. Have you considered streaming in Finnish? Why? Why not?
6. Do you have a certain target audience you would like to reach?
7. How do you take your target audience into account (linguistically) when you stream?
8. Do you know from which countries you have followers?
9. Do you feel like your language choice has affected your audience?
10. Do you communicate with your audience? How? In which language?
11. The speakers of which languages do you follow on Twitch?
12. What factors affect who you follow on Twitch?
13. Do you use English on your free time, at work or in your studies?
14. Did you use a lot of English before you started streaming in English?

15. Has your relationship with English changed since you started streaming?
16. Do you pay a lot of attention to your language use when streaming?
17. Do you make compilation videos from your streams, or edit your video material in any other way? If so, do you pay attention to your language use then?
18. Do you think there is something else interesting or noteworthy in your language use when you stream? Feel free to share!

The interviews were semi-structured. This was done so that the participants would not be restricted to a strict set of questions, but could also contribute further information if they so wished. Gillham (2000) emphasizes that a semi-structured interview is loosely structured and open in style, but the questions provide a systematic structure to the interview. The participants of the present study were encouraged to ask questions, make clarifications and provide additional information when they thought of something they themselves found relevant. The open nature of a semi-structured interview also allowed me to ask further questions when I found something said by the participants warranted extra attention.

The overall aim of the interview is to paint an overall picture of the participants relationship with their language use and the reasons why they feel English is more suited for their streams than their native language. To do this, the interview questions were formulated based on two different themes: language choice and its motivations, and the streamers relationship with their own English use.

The first half of the interview (questions 1-10) is focused on the language choice made by the participants. The aim is to specify the explicit motivations that guided the language choice(s), and to map out their opinions on streaming in their first language. With the questions in the first half of the interview, I study the participants' views on and understanding of audience – both their own (perceived and/or target) audience and how they take that into account, and what guides whose streams they themselves choose to view follow. As discussed in the background section of the present study, studies have

identified *platform/setting*, *participants*, *intended audience* and *topic* as important factors that influence language choice, and the questions in this section are designed with these factors in mind, to see whether the participants themselves deem these factors influential to their own language choice(s).

In the second section (questions 11-18) of the interview the aim is to understand the participants' personal relationship with English, how important it is to them on a personal level, the possible prestige they place on it, and their awareness of their own language use and linguistic repertoires, and to see whether they voice criticism towards their own English skills or language use. This is done with questions about their use of English in their lives in general, whether it has changed through its use in streaming, if they pay attention to something in their language use while streaming and whether they are exposed to their own English use through editing of their stream material. At the end of the interview, I will give the participants a chance to freely comment on their language use and what they find interesting, important, problematic or in any way noteworthy. As Auer argued (see section 2.2.1), language choice can be guided by feelings of confidence or lack of proficiency in a language, it is important to examine the kind of commentary streamers make on their own language use and whether they express feelings of inadequacy or confidence.

3.4 Methods of analysis

The data for the present study is analysed with qualitative methods. As the aim of the study is to gain an understanding of the inner workings of language choice in a gaming video context, a qualitative approach generates more relevant information. A large scale quantitative questionnaire study would provide more answers and thus perhaps a broader look at the focus group's opinions, views and perspectives on their language choices, but, on the other hand, it would also mean that the chance to ask more emergent additional questions would be ruled out. A smaller scale qualitative study will provide less data and the data will thus be less generalizable. However, focusing on fewer participants leaves more time to be spent on each participant and provides a

chance to ask more specific questions if and when something interesting emerges during an interview. According to Androutsopoulos (2008), when conducting an ethnographic study focused on online discourse, to get a more multifaceted understanding of language use and its characteristics, it is important to take into account the views and motivations of the people participating in the discourse or other online language use under observation. This is why conducting a qualitative study over a quantitative one makes more sense in the context of the present study. The data of the present study is analysed through qualitative content analysis.

3.4.1 Content analysis

The way in which the interview data in the present study is analysed is based on qualitative content analysis methodology introduced and explained by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) and Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003). According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), content analysis is used to interpret meaning from the content of text data. For the purposes of the interview data, it is important to examine the meanings in the participants' answers. For direct content analysis, when analysing interview data, it is typical to conduct the interviews with open-ended questions (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005:1279), and the present study follows that convention. Taylor-Powell and Renner show two ways to categorize interview data for analysis: using preset categories or emergent categories. The data for the present study was arranged and analyzed using preset categories. According to Taylor-Powell and Renner's instructions (p.3), these categories were formulated based theories and findings from previous studies introduced in the background section of the present study. Initially, the data was divided into two simple, broad categories. These categories were created to provide relevant information according to the research questions of the present paper. These categories were:

1. Reasons for using English in streaming
2. Participants' relationship with English prior and after starting streaming

These categories were used to separate data relevant to the interview questions from those irrelevant to it.

Later, more specific categories were used. These categories were *expressions of membership or disassociation, audience influence, and attention to and evaluation of English use.*

It is important to note, that as there is some category overlap in the answers to the interview questions, some categories have been treated in combined subsections, as dividing the answers into rigid categories would have meant that the answers themselves would have needed to be broken down into multiple parts. This is not meaningful for the purposes of the present study, so in order to deal with overlap, categories have been combined into larger sub-categories. These combined categories will be discussed as they occur.

In the following section of the present study, the interview data will be presented and examined one participant at a time. For each participant, background information about their age, occupation and streaming history will be given. Their interview data has been organized under the two main categories introduced above. Sub-categories (as introduced above) relevant to each participants' data have been organized under these main categories. Data relevant to these categories will be introduced and discussed within these sections. After each participant's data has been examined by category, the key findings for each participant will be summarized. In the discussion section of the present study, findings from all the participants will be drawn together and discussed in light of the theoretical background presented in the background section of the study.

4 RESULTS

In this section of my paper, I will introduce the findings of the interviews conducted for my study. I will first show my findings from the interview data of each participant individually, after which I will compare the findings from the participants to each other. The interviews were originally conducted in Finnish to ensure mutual understanding, but I have translated the interview extracts introduced in this section into English. The original Finnish extracts are not included here because I am analyzing them only contentwise and not from a language perspective.

The full interview structure with its questions is visible in section 3.3.1. To make referring to certain questions and answers, in the following sections the questions will be referred to according to the numbering seen in section 3.3.1.

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Pertti

In this section, I will introduce the findings from the interview data of my first participant, henceforth known as "Pertti". Pertti is a 28-year-old factory worker who has been streaming for about two and a half years. Pertti has 1058 followers on Twitch ([twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv), visited 14.6.2017). He streams five times a week for four hours at a time. He streams a large variety of different games, and does not have a "main game" on which he mainly focuses. When asked about his reasons for starting streaming (question 3), Pertti explained that through streaming, he wanted to "recreate the old times when one kid had a *Nintendo* and everyone from the village gathered around to see them play."

In his interview, the influence of Pertti's audience to his behaviour and language use emerged often, as well as Pertti's expressions of disassociation from certain communities and groups. Audience and its influence and membership and disassociation could all be separate categories in their own right, but as

they were often expressed within the same interview answers, and they all deal with the kinds of connections or distances Pertti creates/maintains, they are all introduced under one category header.

1. Reasons for using English in streaming

In this category, explicit and implicit reasons for choosing English over Finnish that arose from Pertti's interviews are discussed. For Pertti, reasons for language choice were often connected with his audience and his connection or disassociation from certain groups.

Audience, membership and disassociation

When asked about the initial language of his stream (question four), Pertti told me he had started his stream in English. As the reason for this choice, Pertti answered the following:

Better chance to get viewers. If you stream in Finnish, your viewership is a lot smaller. - Pertti, question 4

Here Pertti displayed awareness of his audience, as well as his understanding of viewership dynamics on Twitch and Twitch's language composition. It is also perhaps possible to see Pertti's ambitions and motivations for his stream in this statement. As Pertti has chosen to use English instead of Finnish for its larger viewership potential, his practices are aligned with Twitch's monetization policies. As Twitch's monetization policy is largely based on viewership counts and active interaction between viewer and streamer (Kemps, 2015, see 2.6.3), by widening his audience, Pertti could also procure monetary gain from his streaming in addition to his personal reasons for streaming. However, any monetary motivations were not expressed or enquired about.

Pertti's awareness of his audience and his viewership was emphasized in his answer to question five as well. He explained that because of his audience - both his existing audience and the audience he wishes to reach - he had not thought about switching his stream language to Finnish, but more interestingly,

he also created distance between himself and what he considers typical Finnish media:

I haven't thought about switching to Finnish because of the viewer count, and having seen this Finnish level of humour on YouTube and Twitch and on TV in general, the Finnish sense of humour is something that doesn't really appeal to me and I can't offer that myself. - Pertti, question 5

This is an interesting disassociation from Finnish media, and what Pertti considers "Finnish humour" and how that is represented online and in more traditional media. By creating this distance between himself and Finnish humour, Pertti was also expressing his knowledge of, understanding of and membership in a more international gamer, or entertainer, culture and community.

Pertti's disassociation from certain types of humour and behaviour is also apparent in his answer to question 6, where I asked him about his target audience. To this Pertti asked for a clarification, as he was unclear whether I meant a certain age group, certain nationalities or anything else. I explained to him that it could be anything – anyone he wished to reach in any kinds of walks of life. To this he answered the following:

--no specific nationalities or ages, more like calm and proper people. [Twitch] channels where people brainlessly spam whatever comes to mind and other people jump on board - I won't deal with that really. People who can verbalize their thoughts without memes. - Pertti, question 6

Here Pertti draws attention to Twitch channels where the communication consists of "brainless spam" and explained that he does not want that on his own channel and would rather have an audience that consists of "calm and proper people". He also points out the importance of being able to verbalize their thoughts, indicating that concise communication is important to him. By referring to memes in the same groups as brainless spamming, he was also creating a distance between himself and what could be considered as spastic internet communication and culture. It is interesting to note, that although Pertti

has chosen English as his language due to its international viewership potential, he is also not willing to cater to what he perhaps considers a "typical Twitch audience" by discouraging behaviour and communication culture that does not appeal to him, even though that might increase his viewercount.

When I asked Pertti how he takes this kind of target audience into account (question seven), either through his language use or otherwise, he answered that he himself tries to behave as appropriately and "adult-like" as possible. Through his own behaviour, Pertti tries to encourage the kind of behaviour and communication that he appreciates, and to gather an audience of like-minded people. Here, again, Pertti's emphasis is on the content of his streams and the behaviour he portrays, rather than the languages he uses.

In question eight, I asked Pertti about where he has viewers from, to which he answered that most of his viewers come from the United States, but a large part is also from Great Britain. Pertti also believed that his language choice has affected his viewership and especially its size (question 9).

Yes, I do think that if I had started in this style in Finnish, and with the same principles, there might not necessarily be that many viewers. - Pertti, question 9

In this answer, Pertti once again displayed awareness of audience by stating that he thinks that if he had started streaming in Finnish with the principles he has, he might not have as many viewers. Furthermore, by emphasising his own streaming style's perceived unpopularity with the Finnish streaming scene, he further relates himself more with international streaming and streamers than the Finnish streaming scene and its conventions.

When asked whether Pertti communicates with his audience (question ten) and in what language, Pertti reported that he uses the Twitch chat, Discord, Twitter and email to communicate with his viewers, and that English is the main language that he uses to communicate with his audience. He explained that he does speak Finnish with some of his viewers, but that that happens only outside the streams. This shows that Pertti's streams are not only one-sided performances where he talks and his audience listens, but rather two-way

interaction between him and his viewers. Pertti's answer also shows how his language choice is influenced by the participants of the discourse and its context. Pertti uses Finnish only outside his streams, perhaps because Pertti's stream audience mainly consists of non-Finnish-speaking people, and using Finnish during his streams would exclude non-Finnish-speaking members of his audience from discussions during his stream. In discussions outside of the streams, however, Pertti speaks Finnish with Finns, so his reasons for speaking English can be seen as related to the stream and its audience, and not so much reasons such as practice, for the fun of it, etc.

Questions 11 and 12 aimed to understand whom Pertti himself follows on Twitch, what language they speak and what motivated him to follow them. Pertti's preference for coherent communication on Twitch, which is visible in (for example) his answers to question six, is also reflected in his answers to these questions; Pertti reported mostly following streamers who speak English, but he points out that he tries to make the kind of streams he himself likes to watch:

I try to be the kind of streamers that I myself would like to watch, so I watch proper, calm streamers who don't play music in the background and people can explain what they're doing, and that don't have as much clamor around them as, perhaps, the most popular streamers have. -
Pertti, question 12

Here, again, the emphasis is on the kind of behaviour portrayed in the streams that he enjoys and that he feels differ from "typical", "most popular streams and streamers".

At the end of the interview, I asked Pertti if he had something specific that he finds interesting in his own language use when he streams (question 18). Here, Pertti emphasized the importance of "gaming metalanguage".

"when I -- try to speak in my streams, I try to explain what I am doing, and I try to explain why the game is doing what it's doing, and I try to explain why the game answers the way it does to what I do, and I try to go deeper than the surface to what there is to the games. I try to be a bit more than an entertainer, more like a teacher." (Pertti, 18)

He explained that when he is streaming, he is not only talking, but also explaining in-game events, his actions and the game's reactions. Pertti also points out that to him streaming is not only about entertaining his audience, but also teaching them about the game through clear explanations and narration of the game. In this statement, Pertti shows his view on streamers' roles as entertainers, and he strives to expand on that by also acting as a teacher.

2. Relationship with English

In this category, Pertti's personal relationship with English, both prior and after starting streaming is examined, and the ways he evaluates, criticises and comments on his English use and/or language skills are discussed.

To understand the participants' relationship with English, I asked them whether they use English in their lives outside of streaming, such as at work, in their studies or their free time (question 13). Pertti told me that at work he has been appointed the task of communicating with international visitors (mainly truckers). He did not elaborate on this, but this could be due to his familiarity with speaking English compared to other workers. He also said that he uses English to communicate with his girlfriend, whose native language English is. This shows that in addition to being the language of his streams, English also has a strong foothold in his everyday life and personal relationships.

Evaluation of English use

When asked about his relationship with English before and after he started streaming (questions 14 and 15) Pertti said that before started streaming, he actively used written English as a tool of communication during *Warcraft* gameplay. However, he reported that before he started streaming, he did not use spoken English much. Pertti did not feel like his relationship with English has changed with streaming as such, but he did feel that his spoken English skills have improved.

--my speaking skills have improved a lot. I have my old streams recorded, and the accent [I had] has hopefully got

less pronounced and isn't as "rally-English" anymore. Let's say I can also seize a conversation more bravely and fluently these days, in both written and spoken form. - Pertti , question 15

As can be seen from the quote above, Pertti viewed his pronunciation when he started streaming as "Rally-English" from which he wishes he has improved. This also displays his view on a Finnish accent when speaking English as something negative to improve upon. Furthermore, this is also the first instance of Pertti voicing critique towards his, or anyone else's, language skills. Interestingly, his accent is also the only thing he specifically comments upon or criticizes; he does point out that he feels like his fluency has improved, but he does not elaborate on what he considers to contribute to fluency. He also feels that his confidence in using English in conversations has improved. Pertti does not specify why this is, but it could be related to his feelings of improved English skills and movement away from "rally-English", as this was a feature he feels was worth criticising.

Interestingly, however, despite his critical approach towards his previous language skills and pronunciation in particular, Pertti did not report to pay much attention to his current language use during his streams. When I asked Pertti whether or not he pays a lot of attention to his language use during his streams (question 16) he answered the following:

Not really, somehow the filter goes off. Maybe in the beginning I tried to think about what I was saying so that I didn't talk complete nonsense, but since I have to use [English] a lot and have talked a lot in front of a camera, it has become more natural, and when it becomes more natural it gets harder to filter what you're saying anymore. I obviously try to avoid the biggest pitfalls, and can't go smearing someone even if I wanted to. And cursing, luckily, in English is really difficult. As a Finn, when you're speaking Finnish, of course cursing is second nature that kind of accidentally slips out. When you are speaking English, you don't necessarily know how to curse as naturally so it might not need to be as cautious about what you say. - Pertti, question 16

Pertti said that his "filter goes off" when he streams, which is a development that has taken place with experience in streaming and talking in front of a camera. He does point out, however, that he does try to "avoid the biggest pitfalls" and to "not smear anyone even if he wanted to", which I took to mean that he tries to filter out unpleasant things that one might say about someone they have strong opinions about. However, he also explains that he feels that cursing in English is rather difficult and does not happen as naturally as it does in Finnish, so he does not feel he has to be cautious of profanities when streaming despite the fact he feels his "filter" is otherwise off when he streams and speaking comes naturally. As seen in Pertti's answer, he does not voice concerns about his fluency, pronunciation or other linguistic issues, but rather focuses on the contents of his discourse. As Pertti had expressed earlier, he values adult-like, proper streamers and tries to behave accordingly in his streams, and these answers reflect the same values.

Furthermore, in addition to question 16 about his language use during the stream, I also asked Pertti if he edits his streams and for example, makes compilations – videos consisting of clips from different streams and made into, for example, "highlights" videos or "fails" videos- or YouTube videos (question 17). Pertti answered that he sometimes does, but not as much as he would like because he lacks the time for it. I enquired him about if he has paid attention to his language use in his streams as he has seen them when editing. To this, Pertti answered that he pays attention to the clarity of his speech.

--sometimes I have noticed that I am speaking too fast, which can be acceptable when speaking Finnish, but in English it becomes mush. I also pay attention that sometimes I can mutter, like I forget that the microphone is there and start muttering to myself. - Pertti, question 17

As shown in Pertti's answer to question 17 above, his emphasis is not on pronunciation or correctness of language, but more on how clear his speech is, which aligns with Pertti's previous commentary on his language use, or rather the lack of excessive criticism towards accent or possible mistakes. Though clarity can be considered a feature of fluency, I did not interpret this as Pertti commenting on his fluency either, but rather on the quality of speech in regards

to speed, volume and enunciation. Furthermore, as Pertti puts it, he can forget that the microphone – and thus also the audience – is there and forget to take his audience into account in the way he speaks. This could be indicative of the way Pertti's audience influences not only his language choice, but also the way he uses language and speaks on a more general level.

Summary

Overall, Pertti's emphasis was on the audience and how he takes it into account in his streaming. He also often expressed disassociation from streaming conventions people and communities that he feels are representative of "typical streams and streamers". He also draws distance between himself and Finnish media and entertainment, associating himself more with an international streaming community and its conventions. These associations and disassociations influence whom Pertti wishes to reach with his streams and which communities he wishes to convey membership to through his language use and language choice.

Furthermore, throughout his interview Pertti emphasised the importance of communication and coherence in streams, and expressed that these are things that he he himself strives towards. This importance placed on coherence and quality of communication perhaps could have been expected to affect how he views his own language skills, and to cause a more critical approach to his own English use. However, this was not the case. Although he commented on his pronunciation from old streams and expressed that he thinks and hopes that his accent has "improved", he did not further comment on his non-nativeness or express feelings of inadequacy in language skills, but rather emphasized the meanings he conveys through his language use, and focused more on the clarity of speech in terms of speed and clear enunciation. He also expressed that through streaming, his confidence and readiness to speak English has improved.

4.1.2 Matilda

In this section, I will introduce findings from the interview data from my participant "Matilda". Matilda is a 31-year-old streamer. She works in marketing and has 3504 followers on Twitch. Matilda streams four times a week and each of her streams is scheduled to last about four hours. The game she streams almost exclusively is Final Fantasy XIV, a Japanese massively multiplayer online role-playing game. Although the game is originally in Japanese, Matilda plays an English translation of it. In addition to her regular game streams, Matilda also occasionally streams video feed of other things she does, such as cooking or tinkering with her gaming gear. These streams are also fully in English.

As with the case of Pertti, Matilda's interview answers often yielded answers that would fit into multiple categories. She actively commented on the importance of her audience and her own online communities, and also expressed disassociation from certain groups. These categories have again been combined into one larger category focusing on the connections and distances created and maintained through streaming and language use, as they were in Pertti's case.

1. Reasons for using English in streaming

In this category, Matilda's implicit and explicit reasons for choosing English over Finnish are examined. They are often associated with her membership in communities and with audience influence.

Audience, membership and disassociation

In the beginning of the interview, I asked Matilda how long she had been streaming, and what prompted her to start streaming in the first place (question 3). Matilda said she has streamed for two years and that she initially started streaming to share her gaming with her online friends, but became more invested later as she had watched other streamers and felt that it could be

something she could do as well. In question 4, I asked her about the initial language of her stream, and why she had chosen to stream in that particular language. She answered the following:

English from the get-go, because most of my online friends are English speakers, or I mean, from all over Europe, not only from Britain, so I streamed with them and to them, so that just kind of stuck from there. - Matilda, question 4

Similarly to Pertti, Matilda was also aware of her audience from the start; her language choice was motivated by an online community with whom English was a shared language. Interestingly, Matilda also points out a communal aspect of streaming as well – she not only streams *for* her friends, but also *with* them. This is an interesting distinction, as it draws attention to streaming as a social activity, where the followers are active participants in the stream (in one way or another), rather than just passive viewers or consumers.

When I asked Matilda about whether or not she has thought about streaming in Finnish (question 5), she said that she actually had streamed in Finnish for the first time a while ago in a community event, which she enjoyed. However, she goes on to explain that she would not switch her stream language to Finnish permanently.

I wouldn't switch [to Finnish], because I have quite a large audience and it would be kind of rude to stream in Finnish, since perhaps about 70% of them don't speak Finnish. - Matilda, question 5

In her answer above, Matilda points out that the majority of her audience is non-Finnish speaking, which, displays her awareness of her audience and its language composition. She also points out the rudeness of using a language that not everyone would understand, as she has built an audience around another language. As was visible from Matilda's answer to the question 4, to Matilda, streaming has always been a social, interactive activity, so it seems understandable why excluding the majority of her viewers from discussions does not seem appealing to her. However, her participation in a community streaming event in Finnish also highlights the influence different communities

have on her language choice and how context dependent her language choice is; in her stream, she generally speaks English because her audience's shared language is English, but she has also partaken in Finnish streaming with a community whose language of communication is Finnish.

When asked about her target audience (question 6) and how she takes that into account (question 7), Matilda emphasized the quality and content of her stream, focusing on like-mindedness more than other features.

I think I create the kind of streams I myself would like to watch, as a thirty-something woman, who likes laid-back streams with very little screaming or being angry. - Matilda, question 6

--I've tried to think a bit of what kind of values I want to support or spread in my own content, so I try to kind of stick with that. - Matilda, question 7

She also points out that she wants to keep her values in mind when creating her stream, and to make sure she acts according to them. Furthermore, this shows that Matilda is aware of the publicity of her platform and the scale of her viewership, and perhaps her responsibilities as an entertainer or public figure whose content is openly available and accessible to everyone. Though not explicitly expressed here, I understood her answers to questions 6 and 7 to mean that she wishes to attract an audience that hold similar values to her and who enjoy streams that deviate from loud, agitated streams that are abundant on Twitch. Here, similarly to Pertti, Matilda is also thus creating a distance between herself, and "the typical streamer".

When asked about where her followers are from (question 8), Matilda reported that many of her regular viewers are from Finland and a large number of her viewers are from the United States. She said that many of her old online friends from all around Europe "hang out" in her stream too. She also feels that her language choice has strongly affected her viewership (question 9). She had the following to say to question 9:

I think that had I originally streamed in Finnish, the growth of my channel would have been significantly hindered -- I stream quite "small games", not really huge

mass games, so on the whole the audience for those is already a lot smaller. For example, in my main game, there are about 300-700 viewers for the game per night, and I mean generally watching the game, not just one stream, so that's quite few. So if I'd rule out everyone except those who speak Finnish, there wouldn't be much traffic [on my channel]. - Matilda, question 9

In her answer, the importance of the type or scale of the game streamed and its audience potential is highlighted. Matilda points out that had she chosen to stream in Finnish, a language with much lesser international communication potential, her follower count would not have grown as much as it has when she has streamed in English. Thus, by choosing English, she has managed to optimize her viewership potential in a game whose potential is limited overall.

In questions 10 I asked Matilda about her communication with her audience and the language, or languages, she uses for that. She explained that she communicates with her audience during her streams by reading her Twitch chat. She said she reads some of the comments aloud and answers to them. She states that English is the main language of her communication with her audience, but she also says she sometimes uses other languages "for comedic value". This, perhaps, indicates a level of confidence in her language skills that allows her to use her linguistic repertoires for a variety of purposes, such as humour.

Furthermore, Finnish is also present in her communication with her audience every now and then, but it gets translated into English by her and its continuous use is discouraged.

--sometimes when I get Finnish viewers and they say something in Finnish, I might read it in Finnish or translate it immediately to English to explain a bit to the other viewers what this person just asked or greeted or something, and then I might answer it in English, and sometimes, if I have to, I can tell them like 'hey, remember that we mainly speak English here' - Matilda, question 10

As seen in her answer above, Matilda emphasized the importance of mutual understanding and inclusion within her viewership. She maintains this culture of

inclusive communication through her own linguistic practices, such as, for example, translations into the shared language of the stream, and moderation of the chat by giving feedback on language choices. Similar values of inclusion of international audiences were seen in Matilda's answer 5, where she did not wish to use Finnish extensively so as not to "be rude" or alienate an existing international audience.

In questions 11 and 12 I enquired whom Matilda follows on Twitch and what languages they speak. She expressed that she mainly follows English speaking streamers, but that she also has an interest in Finnish streamers who stream her favourite and most streamed game, although she explained that there are very few Finnish streamers who regularly stream that particular game.. She also pointed out that she watches the streams by a French person purely because they have a great voice. She then explained that one of the main factors affecting whom she follows on Twitch, is the video and audio quality of their streams. She said that she also prefers streams with the streamer camera on, because to her it signifies that there is someone actively playing and perhaps commentating on the game and even reading the chat.

Especially if you stream smaller games, smaller streams, it might easily be a case of someone having put on the stream but they're not reading the chat, they don't have a microphone, they don't do any kind of commentating. So I use the presence of the camera a lot when I'm searching for streams. - Matilda, question 12

Matilda's comment above showcases that Matilda values streamer-viewer communication and active commentary in the streams of others' as well and not just in her own. This emphasises the view of streaming as a social, interactive activity that she has expressed multiple times in her interview.

Interestingly, Matilda was also the only participant to bring up gender in her interview. She expressed that she is particularly interested in the streams of other female streamers:

--I am personally especially interested in female streamers, just because there aren't that many of us, and because they might generally be a bit more interesting than these basic

"gamer dude bros" that there are quite a few of [on Twitch]. - Matilda, question 12

What is noteworthy from Matilda's comments on question 12, is that for her, the content of the streams motivates her to follow a streamer, even though she might not even know the language the streamer speaks (as might be the case with the French streamer). She also emphasized the importance of the game(s) streamed, and is likely to follow active streamers who play the games in which she is interested. In her comment about the "gamer dude bros", she is again creating a distance between herself and a "typical streamer" and disassociating from them and the streaming culture they portray in her opinion. She is also placing herself within a minority group of female streamers whose content she finds different from the "typical stream content" and thus more pleasing to her.

In question 16, I asked Matilda if she pays attention to her language use when she streams. Her emphasis was on what she says and what messages she conveys. What she finds important is that she comes across as considerate, proper and polite, not so much whether or not she makes mistakes in her language use:

I've set some boundaries for myself, for example I would like to swear less, because I feel like it's something I could strive for myself and improve myself in that area and being polite and considerate towards people. - Matilda, question 16

This, again, shows her awareness of audience and her conscious efforts to create and maintain a good relationship with her viewers through her language use. Here, she also again displays her awareness and understanding of her responsibility and influence as a public figure.

2. Relationship with English

In this category, Matilda's personal relationship with English, both prior and after starting streaming is examined. The ways he evaluates, criticises and comments on his English use and/or language skills are discussed.

Questions 13-17 of the interview were dedicated to Matilda's own personal relationship with English and its presence in her day-to-day life. In question 13 I asked Matilda whether she uses English in her free time or at work. To this, Matilda answered the following:

I have a boyfriend who is from Sweden, and we speak English with each other, so in that sense, but at work quite rarely, not even on a daily basis, but sometimes there too, and at work for example all programs and the like are in English, so in that sense I get exposed to it too. And then of course a large part of my online friend circles are from all around the world, so I speak English with them on a daily basis. - Matilda, question 13

From her answer, it is clear that English has a strong presence in Matilda's everyday life. She is constantly exposed to English, and she also actively uses it in her personal life to communicate with people close to her. She also explains that she used English actively even before she started streaming (question 14) in gaming situations, as she has been online games for half a decade.

Evaluation of English use

However, she says that she had not spoken English much before she started using voice chat in her gaming. When asked if her relationship with English has changed as she has streamed (question 15), she said the following:

--based on the streaming, I really like speaking English, so it's almost something I would like to do more for work as well, and I've noticed from the streaming that I can come up with things from nothing in English too these days. - Matilda, question 15

What was noteworthy in Matilda's answer, was her expression of pleasure in speaking English. By drawing attention to her enjoyment of speaking the language, Matilda differentiates her language use from the act of streaming and gaming into its own separate entity, which not only works as a tool for the streaming, but also as a means for her to have fun on its own. This kind of playful relationship with language use was also visible in her answer to question ten in the previous category, where she expressed that she sometimes uses

other languages than English in her streams "for the fun of it." This kind of enjoyment in language use and playfulness with it is something that no other participant expressed. This can be indicative of Matilda's close relationship with English and strong confidence using it.

Furthermore, as Matilda expressed that she felt that she can "come up with things from nothing in English *these days*", there was an implication of improvement, so I asked her if she felt that her English skills had improved with streaming, she answered the following:

- I'd say the biggest improvements happened before streaming, and that came along with online gaming, otherwise in real life I would never have needed to use English as much. But in a way my confidence has greatly increased with the streaming. - Matilda, question 15 part 2

Matilda expresses that even though she does not feel that her English skills have improved with streaming, but rather before that, she feels that her confidence in speaking English has increased as she has streamed, which is similar to what Pertti expressed in his interview. Although it was not discussed, perhaps Matilda's improved English skills played a part in her starting streaming in the first place. This is something that could have been further elaborated upon during the interview in order to further understanding Matilda's relationship with English and its connection with her streaming.

At the end of the interview, I asked Matilda whether there was something she finds interesting in her own language use that she would like to share (question 18). To this, she said the following:

What I think is kind of fun is that I have quite many Finnish friends, like real life friends who hang out in my stream, and we all speak English with each other. I think it's quite great, that I have some real life friends who don't necessarily speak English that well, but they try and make a big effort to communicate with the community in English, and that's always great to see. And that people aren't like "sorry for my English" after each sentence, but rather try to communicate than be quiet because they're afraid of making mistakes.

Back in the day when I started using voice chat, I stammered an awful lot, and whenever I needed to say a longer sentence, I preferred to write it because it would have taken ages to say it, but then I realized that there were people there from all around Europe and very few of them were native speakers but everyone was trying to speak English together. There were people whose English was originally quite poor, but they still tried and did their best and we hung out with people from all corners of Europe and had fun in English. - Matilda, question 18

Here, Matilda once again places emphasis on the communication with her friends and the community built around her stream, which English enables. She points out that it is unnecessary to focus on possible mistakes or to be overly apologetic about one's language use as long as one can get their message across and communicate. She explains that for her, realizing that the people with whom she was communicating were not native English speakers either but were still making an effort to speak with each other made her feel more comfortable speaking English without feeling too self-conscious. Matilda seems to understand the status of English as a lingua franca that has no native ownership, but rather is a global language of communication. Matilda's view differs drastically from Finns' general view of English, as Finns typically hold native-likeness and grammatical correctness in high value and even deem grammar mistakes, problems in fluency and non-native-likeness as something negative and hindering.

Summary

In her interview, Matilda strongly emphasized the importance of audience and community and their influence on her language choice and language use. For her, creating, maintaining and moderating an inclusive, communicative community around her streams (and in her personal life) is important and she does that through both her own language choices, and encouraging others to use the shared language of her viewership. Furthermore, she consciously moderates the contents of her discourse in order to be polite and accommodating towards her audience. Matilda also expressed awareness of the publicity of her stream and said that she tries to convey values that are important to her

through her language use. In addition to communicative practices linked with her own audience and communities, Matilda also expressed both membership to Finnish and international streaming communities, as well as a gender minority on Twitch. However, similarly to Pertti, she also disassociated herself from people and practices that she felt were common on Twitch.

In her interview, Matilda also expressed enjoyment in speaking English and a playfulness in her linguistic repertoires. Moreover, the strong position English has in her life was also visible from her answers, as she reported to use English as the language of communication with her significant other and with friends from different international gaming communities. She expressed that her confidence in speaking English has increased through streaming. Interestingly, Matilda also expressed understanding of the status of English as a lingua franca with no native ownership. She emphasized the importance of English as a tool for international communication and expressed that when she acknowledged the importance of communicativeness over correctness and native-likeness, her readiness to speak it herself grew. She also expressed that in streaming contexts, she uses English with her Finnish-speaking friends as well. As discussed in the background section of the present study, Finns tend to hold native-likeness rather than intelligibility as the standard of fluency, and unlike many people from other non-native English speaking countries, Finns have not taken ownership of English (see Leppänen et al, 2011). However, Matilda seems to have taken ownership of her own English use, as she focuses more on the communicative side of language use than its correctness.

4.1.3 Konsta

In this section I will be focusing on the findings from "Konsta's" interview data. Konsta is 27 years old and has 160 followers on Twitch. He is retired. He has streamed actively before, but said that he has had a break. He has now been streaming for a year or two again. He does not have a rigid streaming schedule and he plays a variety of different games. When asked about why he initially started streaming (question 3), Konsta said that because he is retired, he has "a lot of time and nothing better to do". He explained that because of this, he

started streaming to share his large game collection with the internet and to analyse the contents of games; he explains that to him, phenomena and issues portrayed in games are interesting to him and he thought that through streaming, he could explain them to his audience and analyse how well they are depicted in the games.

In his interview, the influence of Konsta's audience to his behaviour and language use emerged often. As with Pertti and Matilda, Konsta's answers yielded data that could be arranged into multiple categories, so once again audience and its influence and membership and disassociation are all discussed under the same subcategory, due to their shared focus on connections and communities.

1. Reasons for using English in streaming

In this category, Konsta's implicit and explicit reasons for choosing English over Finnish are examined. In Konsta's case, these reasons are often connected with membership in communities.

Audience, membership and disassociation

In the interview, questions 4 and 5 focused on Konsta's language choices when he started streaming, and whether he has considered streaming in Finnish. Konsta explained that the language of his stream has been English from the start, because English has been the main language of his life for the last few years.

The last couple of years I've practically only used English, from morning to night. I read the news in English, I listen to music mainly in English, I speak English, I write English. Finnish has slowly began to feel like a secondary language in my life. And I have friends from all over the world, and since English is a world language, you reach more people with it than with Finnish. - Konsta, question 4

In his answer above, Konsta also explains that his language choice was influenced by his international group of friends, as well as the viewership potential English has that is superior to that of Finnish. Furthermore, by saying this, Konsta expresses awareness of audience and his ambitions for the growth of his channel. He also displays his understanding of the status of English as lingua franca. Konsta also explained that he does sometimes stream in Finnish, but very infrequently. Furthermore, he states that speaking Finnish feels unnatural to him:

--whenever I try to speak Finnish, it feels abnormal. Sometimes I speak Finnish, but at some point I automatically start speaking English-- and if I see there are foreigners present [in my stream] I automatically have to switch to English. - Konsta, question 5

Interestingly, Konsta points out that his language changes automatically from Finnish to English even if he tries to speak Finnish. Moreover, he points out that he "has to" switch to English if there are foreigners watching his stream, indicating that to him it is important to include them in the discussion and ensuring their understanding of the communication taking place on his channel.

As for whom Konsta follows on Twitch himself (questions 11 and 12), he expressed that he mainly follows English speaking streamers, but Finnish speaking streamers from his own team are also on his list but the majority of people he follows are English speakers. He also explained that he often sees whom the people he follows follow on Twitch, and find new streamers to follow that way.

English mainly. It varies day to day. Of course I follow members of my own team who speak Finnish, a couple of others too. I check whom the people I follow follow, and if there is a Finn there, I don't actively think to exclude them, but I mainly follow English speaking streamers. - Konsta, question 11

Konsta also said that the factors that affect whom he follows are the personality of the streamer and the games they play, though he does point out that he prioritizes members of his own team when choosing a stream to watch. He said that he "clicks on their streams more easily [than others' streams]". Perhaps

Konsta favouring his peer groups' contents on Twitch could be interpreted as Konsta expressing and maintaining his membership in these groups.

When asked whether he edits his streams or makes compilation videos out of them, Konsta answered the following:

I only upload them as full videos. I mean to start learning video editing more. - - I mean to learn in the future, because some people want to watch a full play through, but some people want to see a highlight reel. That's why I think it would be good to learn editing soon. - Konsta, question 17

Although Konsta does not currently edit his videos, he expressed that he wants to learn editing in order to provide more material for all preferences. This, again, shows Konsta's understanding of his audience as well as potential audience, and what could be done in order to maximize visibility and viewership on Twitch and perhaps online on a more general level. This, again, could echo Konsta's possible ambitions for the growth of his channel.

Konsta's aspiration for a wider audience is also visible in his answer to question 6. In question 6, I asked Konsta whether he had a specific target audience, to which Konsta answered that he does not. However, when I asked him if he felt that "everyone was welcome to his channel", he agreed that he tries to invite in as many people as possible from all areas of life. He then pointed out that the one criteria he has for his viewers is that they be open minded, progressive and tolerant. Konsta explained that this is important to him because of his own involvement and membership in subculture groups:

I have noticed that Twitch has quite many people from all walks of life, and I strive to take as many people in as possible. I work in LGBT groups, I work with bronies, I work in different subcultures, so that's why I try to be as open minded as possible, to the point that if you are not open minded, you're not welcome anymore, if you are not able to be open minded and give people space. Of course people can have differing opinions. So everyone's welcome. - Konsta, question 6

When asked about how he takes this into account during his streams, Konsta expressed that he does this through being as open minded as possible himself, but he does not feel like he needs to modify his language use during his streams.

I speak as much shit as I want to. I don't pay attention to swearing at all. It's my stream, I have already got sponsored keys and they [game developers] have watched my streams for sure, and they have noticed my language use, and a couple of them have said that, and they don't care as long as I stream their game and give my honest opinion on it. That's my niche. I am me. I don't really think about it. I don't have to think about it. - Konsta, question 7

As seen above, Konsta explained that he has had game developers request him to review their games and they had not minded his language use or swearing during his streams, but rather just wanted to hear his honest opinion about their games. From his answers, I understood that to Konsta it is important that his stream or his channel is open and inclusive to everyone and offensive or derogatory language use is forbidden, but otherwise he feels it is important that his discourse remains authentic to himself, rather than modified in order to please someone else. By taking this stance against offensive language use and closed-mindedness, Konsta associates himself with progressive, liberal values. This stance could, perhaps, be seen as indicative of Konsta's understanding of the public nature of his streams and his responsibility and as someone who is speaking in public, and also as someone who has the power to monitor and moderate discussion within his stream channel/"public area".

2. Relationship with English

In this category, Konsta's personal relationship with English, both prior and after starting streaming is examined. The ways he evaluates, criticises and comments on his English use and/or language skills are discussed.

When asked about whether he uses English on his free time or in his life outside streams in general (question 13), Konsta simply stated that English

feels like the main language of his life. In his answer to question 4, Konsta already stated that most of the things he does in his everyday life (reading newspapers, listening to music, writing, etc.) is done in English, so this answer came as no surprise.

Furthermore, in questions 14 and 15 I focused on Konsta's relationship with English both prior to streaming and after he started streaming. To Konsta, English has always been an important language, even prior to streaming, and he reports to have started learning it at a young age through video games. He also emphasized the importance of social factors to his English use:

--because I've had friends from all around the world since I was a kid, so I had to learn English. I started learning English through games when I was young, like many others. As I know people from all around the world, I've had to learn it and I use it constantly. And the older I get, the more I use it. - Konsta, question 14

He also states that his relationship with English has not changed with streaming, as English has always been an important language to him (question 15). Interestingly, although he has streamed for some time now, Konsta does not consider his streaming an influencing factor to his relationship with English, but rather sees its use increasing with other factors, such as age and other aspects of life.

Evaluation of English use

I asked Konsta if he pays attention to his language use during his streams (question 16), which he asked me to clarify. I elaborated by asking whether he pays attention to possible pronunciation mistakes, corrects himself, switches languages or does any other kind of moderation of his own language use. To this he answered that he does sometimes pay attention to grammar mistakes and tries to correct himself when he can, but he also expressed that he tries not to dwell on lost vocabulary, for example, for too long.

--if I speak Finnish, it starts slipping back in to English, not vice versa. Sometimes I get stuck if I say something wrong or if I can't remember a specific word, but that's due to other problems of my own. But I get stuck for a bit,

but after a while I just say "fuck it, you know what I mean". I do try to correct myself if a wrong word comes out, or the words are in the wrong order, even though that's not so common seeing that I speak it as a second language. - Konsta, question 16

As Konsta says in his answer, he trusts his audience to be able to fill in the gaps, if he gets stuck at a vocabulary search, and often decides not to spend too much time on completing his sentence, as he feels it is not necessary for the comprehensibility of his discourse. Interestingly, Konsta also points out that he does not feel that these vocabulary losses happen often as he considers English as his second language. He is the only participant to explicitly express a feeling of bilingualism or multilingualism. This is also quite rare in the larger context of Finland as well; as discussed in the background section of the present study, most Finns consider themselves monolingual despite their knowledge of more than one language. Furthermore, Konsta points out that in his case code-switching or language mixing happens mostly into English when he is speaking Finnish, not vice versa, which might be more expected from someone with Finnish as their native language.

Konsta also explained that he has received good feedback on his English skills and on how understandably he comes across when speaking English.

Many people say that my English is surprisingly good, and people understand, but I have to "grind" stuff sometimes until it comes through. - Konsta, question 16

However, there were perhaps some contradictory statements in Konsta's answer; though he often bypasses vocabulary losses by trusting the audience's understanding, Konsta also expresses that he feels that sometimes he "has to grind some things until they come out right". Perhaps this can be seen as sign of perfectionism when it comes to language use; as Konsta knows his intelligibility, he knows he does not need to spend time on self-corrections, but he does it anyway for himself rather than for the audience.

To conclude my interview with Konsta, I asked him if there was something that he himself finds interesting, noteworthy or unique in his language use (question

18), to which he joked about the amount of his cursing. The following is an excerpt from what Konsta said about his language use:

What could be interesting in it, except for the number of "fucks"? Fuck, fuck, fuck it. What I have noticed that differs from others, is how much I use slang, like English slang. Not a lot, but based on what I have watched, I feel like I use it a lot more than other streamers in any case -- of course the most common slang words and abbreviations and such are used by everyone, but I notice that I sometimes use expressions that I then have to clarify, but that I feel are completely normal words -- of course native speakers use it, just like we do, for example, Helsinki slang. But in Finnish streams I don't hear it practically at all -- so that's a bit of a rarity." - Konsta, 18

As seen in Konsta's comment above, he also expressed that he feels that he uses more slang than many other streamers. This is an interesting notion, as it further highlights Konsta's feelings of efficacy in English. By drawing attention to his use of vocabulary typical for specific, fringe native speaker groups he shows how knowledgeable and familiar he is with English in multiple complex ways.

Summary

In his interview, Konsta emphasized the importance of English as the primary language of his life. He expressed that to him using English rather than Finnish is the norm in both his stream and his life outside it. For him choosing English as the language of his stream was an obvious choice. However, Konsta also pointed out that audience has an influence on his language use and language choices. Finnish viewers in his stream can change his language to Finnish for a while, but he said that he automatically always returns to English. In addition to his "automatic" switch back to English, Konsta also expressed that if there are non-Finnish-speaking people in his audience, he "has to" switch to English, which highlights the influence of audience on his language choices. Konsta is also aware of the status of English as the language of international communication with a larger viewership potential than Finnish. He also explained, that to him being inclusive, open-minded and tolerant is important

and that he tries to make everyone feel welcome in his stream, which not only showcases his membership in a global community of liberal youth, but also showcases his aspiration towards wider viewership.

Konsta's relationship with English is also visible in his evaluation of his own language use. He expresses that even though he sometimes experiences vocabulary losses when speaking English, he does not dwell on them. He does not feel that they are frequent or important as he feels that English is a second language to him. However, he also explained that despite this, he sometimes has to "grind" something in English until it comes out right. This could, perhaps also show that he has high standards for his own English because of his feelings of fluency, and thus he sometimes feels the need to correct himself as he knows that he "knows better". His views are somewhat in line with literature discussed in the background section of the study: he, as many other Finns, can feel that mistakes are something to get rid of and to correct, despite the fact that they might not hinder intelligibility at all.

5 DISCUSSION

The motivation for the study arose from a lack of studies on fixed language choice in gaming or streaming contexts. Language use on Twitch, a real-time streaming platform, has not yet been widely researched, and its communicative and interactive setting provides ample area for linguistic research. Androutsopoulos (2008) argued that by observing someone's language use, researchers are able to detect patterns and how language is used, but they are not able to see the motivations, perspectives and views behind these patterns. Androutsopoulos explained, that in order to understand these subjective, personal aspects of language use the language users' own opinion must be heard. This highlighted in Myllärinen (2013). In her study, by both observing her participant's gameplay videos and personally interviewing him, she was able to gain a multifaceted understanding of his language use. By observing his language use, Myllärinen detected that he often used English instead of Finnish when swearing, but the reason for this only became clear when she explicitly asked him about it. Androutsopoulos' and Myllärinen's studies strongly inspired the present study. I had made the observation that many Finns' use English when streaming on Twitch, but I did not know why. As someone who has streamed in English, I had my own views on the topic, but what about the views and opinions of other Finns? What had motivated them to use English? Thus the idea for the present study was born.

The aim of my study was to understand the reasons behind Finnish streamers language choice when they have chosen to stream in English instead of Finnish and the relationship they have with English. The study was a qualitative study conducted through semi-structured interviews. For the study, three Finnish streamers were recruited to be interviewed. They were chosen based on their streaming language, which was English, and their extensive experience in streaming. They were all members of a Finnish streaming community, and they were recruited and connected through a Discord-channel owned by that community. In May 2017, the participants were interviewed. The interviews

were formulated to understand the explicit and implicit factors that had influenced the participants' language choice. The interview was also aimed to understand the participants' personal relationship with English, and how they evaluate, criticise and comment on their own language use. The interview data was analysed through methods of content analysis. The interview data categorized based on theories from previous studies, and two main categories were formed. These categories were directly linked with both the research questions of the present study, and the two main themes of the interviews. Under these main categories, subcategories were formulated based on previous studies' findings on factors influencing language choice, and Finns' relationships with English. However, in their interview answers, participants often expressed multiple factors in a single answer (such as audience influence and membership to communities), which is why some subcategories had to be merged into a single "umbrella" category, that focused widely on connections and distances expressed, created and maintained by the participants.

From the interview data, some clear reasons for the streamers' language choice arose: two of them expressed that English had been chosen as the language of their stream due to its large viewership potential. Matilda, however, expressed that for her English was chosen as the language of her stream because she initially started to stream to and with her existing gaming community, the language of which was English. Personal relationships and communities influenced the other two participants' language choices as well. All the participants expressed strong associations with and membership to international communities, both smaller communities consisting of friends and larger communities of gamers, the shared language of which English is. Both association with and disassociation from Finnish gaming communities and entertainment on a more general level also arose from the interviews. Pertti expressed that he cannot or does not wish to create content similar to what he considers typically Finnish, and associated himself more with international streaming conventions and communities. However, for Konsta, exclusion from Finnish streaming communities felt like a byproduct of his language choice rather than something he himself has aimed for. Matilda, however, expressed

that she still participates in events and interaction in Finnish streaming communities alongside her English-speaking international communities.

However, when asked about their target audience, the participants expressed that they wish to reach as wide of an audience as possible, but also focused on the qualities of the members of their audience and the values they wished they would share. For example, both Pertti and Matilda said that it was important that their streams attract calm, proper people, and they both emphasized the importance of active streamer-viewer communication. To Konsta, it was important that his audience was open-minded and tolerant of others, and that discussions on his channel remained inoffensive. All the participants expressed that they take this kind of audiences into consideration by behaving the way they wished their audiences to behave, even though Pertti and Matilda noted that this deviates from "typical" streams, which could alienate "typical audiences" as well. This was an interesting find, as all the participants expressed that the viewership potential of English had, at least to some extent, motivated them to choose it as the language of their streams, which led me to believe that their goal was to reach as wide of an audience as possible. However, this was proven to be a somewhat false expectation, as the participants expressed their unwillingness to modify their behaviour and streams in ways that they deemed unpleasant or inauthentic, even though they often associated this kind of behaviour with "more popular" streams. Moreover, although the participants expressed that they aspired for high viewercounts, none of them mentioned monetary gain as a motivator for their language choices. Twitch's monetization policies encourage aspiration to high viewercounts and streamer-viewer interaction (see section 3.2), but better chances of monetary gain were never explicitly expressed as a reason for using English.

All of the participants had initially began streaming because they wished to share their games or gaming moments with either their friends or an online gaming community, and all of them had chosen English as the language of their streams at least partly due to its better potential to attract a larger number of followers. Konsta also expressed that to him, English had become the main

language of his life, so using it in his streams was a given. All of the participants expressed that English had an important role in their everyday lives as well. For both Pertti and Matilda it was somewhat present in their work, in Pertti's case through interaction with international visitors and with Matilda through electronic programs in English, but also in their personal relationships, as they both expressed that English was the main language used with their significant others.

In general, English had a strong place in all the participants lives, and they all had a close personal relationship with it. As mentioned, Konsta expressed that English is the main language of his life, and Pertti and Matilda are both also in contact with English on a daily basis. Both Pertti and Matilda reported that their confidence in speaking English has increased through streaming, but Konsta expressed that he did feel not that his relationship with English has changed due to streaming.

Furthermore, all the participants had a positive relationship in English: when asked whether they pay attention to their language use during streaming none of them expressed concerns about their fluency or correctness unless prompted to consider their language use more from that point of view, as was the case with Konsta when he asked for clarification to the interview question. Konsta expressed that he sometimes experiences vocabulary losses and corrects his grammar mistakes, but he did not feel that it was a big issue for his language use. Pertti and Matilda focused more on the messages and values they wished to convey through their language use, and not how (and how correctly) they say it.

Both Pertti and Matilda said that they monitor their language use in regards to cursing, and Matilda expressed that she tried to be polite and considerate towards people. Konsta, however, expressed that he tries to correct himself if he makes grammar mistakes and that he sometimes experiences vocabulary losses, but he trusts in his intelligibility and communicativeness enough to not dwell on these issues for too long. Moreover, Matilda explicitly commented on the importance of communication over correctness; she expressed that she

found it interesting and fun that in her stream chat people from all over the world communicate in English no matter what their competence level is. She points out that she likes that people are not apologetic about their language skills and that people focus on communicating with the community to the best of their abilities.

The interview data yielded fruitful information in relation to the research questions of the study. The research questions for the present study were *why have the streamers chosen to stream in English instead of Finnish and what kind of factors have affected their language choice and what kind of views and attitudes do they have on their own language use and how do they perceive themselves as users of English*. From the interviews, answers to both these questions were found. The main reasons for using English as the language of their streams were the larger viewership potential of English, and, for example, the participants' membership in (international) communities, and disassociating from other communities influenced which language they chose to use in their streams. The participants had positive attitudes towards their own English use and English skills, and English had strong personal importance in their lives. They were not critical towards their own language use, but rather focused on what they communicate using English. They did not comment on their non-nativeness, but rather seemed to express ownership of their own linguistic repertoires, of which English was an integral part.

The findings of the present study are in line with previous studies and theories presented in the background section of the present study; especially the influence of audience – actual, perceived or potential – on language choice (Cunclyffe et al 2013, as cited in Eleta 2014:44) was repeatedly voiced by all the participants of the study. As discussed in the background section of the present study, intended audience can either mean specific people as in Cunclyffe's et al (2013, as cited in Eleta 2014)study, or an unspecified wide audience as pointed out by Leppänen (2007). The influence of both these kinds of audiences was visible from the interviews: participants expressed that their own English-speaking friend circles motivated them to stream in English, and that through English they could also reach a wider audience in general.

Indeed, as discussed in the background section of the present study, Androutsopoulos (2007) argued that a dominant language of a platform can be used to "breach a gap" between different language groups. In the findings of the present study, English, the dominant language on Twitch, was also found to be used by the participants to create and maintain a communicative space for people with shared interests from different linguistic backgrounds. Especially Matilda often expressed that she actively translates chat messages into English on her Twitch channel and also explicitly encourages the use of English if her viewers deviate from it. She does this to ensure mutual understanding and to maintain an inclusive communicative space. Furthermore, Myllärinen (2014) found out that a YouTuber actively modifies his language use in order to take his audience's preferences and sensitivities into account. The participants of the present study also expressed to moderate their language and behaviour use in order to both invite in viewers and followers, and to maintain a good relationship with their existing audience. They did this through avoiding cursing and behaving calmly and appropriately.

However, despite platform and topic being named as factors influencing language choice, the participants of the present study made no mention of the effect of platform or topic on their language choice. Twitch as a platform and gaming as a topic are both strongly dominated by English, as seen from Twitch's language composition (see section 3.2) and as argued by Leppänen et al (2009). Despite this, the participants did not express that they were, at least consciously, influenced by the language of the games they played or the language composition of the platform they used. However, as all of them expressed that they had chosen to use English at least partly due to its larger viewership potential, it could perhaps be argued that they were aware of the dominant status of English on Twitch. At the least, they were aware of the status of English as a lingua franca, as at least Konsta explicitly stated that his language choice was based on the status of English as a global language of communication.

It is also worth noting that the participants of the present study were surprisingly positive about their English skills and language use. In light of Leppänen's et al

(2011), Kytölä's (2008) and Valppu's (2013) findings on Finn's views towards their own English use, English skills and the presence of English in everyday society, the expectation was that the participants would be far more critical and analytic towards their own language use. However, only one of them reported to actively monitor and correct mistakes in his language use, and all of the participants emphasized the importance of active communication with one's audience, and meanings, messages and values conveyed through English, rather than how well English is used.

Leppänen's et al (2011) found that especially young people have quite a positive relationship with English. The participants of the present study are 27-31-years of age, so their current ages fit into the second youngest age group in Leppänen's et al study, but in 2007 when the study was conducted, they were of age with the youngest participant group of the study. This means that opinions expressed by both age groups of Leppänen's et al study can be considered applicable. Both groups expressed to be somewhat confident in their English skills, and also expressed their eagerness to learn more. They were also active in using English to communicate with both Finnish-speaking friends and non-Finnish-speaking friends, which was visible in the findings of the present study as well. Matilda expressed that she uses English with both Finnish-speaking friends and friends with whom she has no shared language. Pertti said to use English with his non-Finnish-speaking girlfriend and Konsta expressed that English is the language he uses with his international group of friends. However, using English not seen as anything abnormal even when there are other Finns present, as was the case in Valppu's (2013) findings. Valppu found that using English online when not many non-Finnish-speakers were present was seen as pretentious and boastful. However, as mentioned, Matilda expressed that she uses English even when there are Finnish-speakers in her chat and that it is a normal thing for her.

Leppänen et al (2011) also found that especially younger Finns value native accents of English and dislike Finnish accents. Leppänen et al argue that Finns often consider native-likeness as a standard of fluency and competence. With this in mind, it was surprising that any kind of commentary on accents or native-

likeness occurred only once in the interviews for the present study. In his interview, Pertti commented on the "rally-English" accent he had in his early streams and expressed that he hopes his English has improved from that. This shows that he holds the Finnish, so called "rally-English", variant of English at a lower value than a more native-like accent. However, neither of the other participants commented on their pronunciation or accent at all.

Furthermore, Leppänen et al also found out that especially young Finns are often rather critical of other Finns' English skills, and feel that especially Finns who speak English in public should be fluent in it. The importance of fluency in Finns' minds was echoed by Valppu (2013), who found that nursing students often were afraid of using English on Facebook in fear of making mistakes and being made fun of, and Kytölä (2008), whose study showed that Finnish members of a Football forum used English to mock and exclude people whose English skills they deemed poorer than their own. However, this kind of criticality was not found in the interview data of the present study. None of the participants expressed that they were afraid of receiving criticism on their language skills or that they would be ridiculed because of it. Matilda even explicitly expressed that she had consciously let go of that fear when she had realized that in her communities English was used in multiple different ways by people from all kinds of non-native backgrounds. Furthermore, all the participants expressed that they used English as a way to include people in the viewer communities around their streams; they said that they actively avoid using Finnish in order to not exclude non-Finnish-speaking viewers from their stream. This shows that the participants are aware of the ways language can be used to exclude or include people, but instead of using it for purposes of exclusion, they opt to use English in order to keep as many people as possible included in the discourse.

The effects of occupation and education were not clearly visible in the interview findings. Pertti and Matilda are employed, and Konsta is retired due to unspecified reasons. Pertti's field of work was not specified beyond factory work, nor was Matilda's work in marketing, but they both displayed confidence

and familiarity with English that Leppänen et al found to be most typical for workers in expert and managerial positions.

As the topic for the study arose from personal experience, thoughts and views on English use in streaming, the findings from the interviews were in part expected, but in some part also very surprising. The motivations for using English were as expected; the participants had chosen English as the language of their streams due to its superior international viewership potential and because of their personal relationships with English and English speaking communities. These findings came as no surprise, as they coincide with previous studies rather well, and were also aligned with my own reasons for using English in streaming. However, the participants relationship was surprisingly positive. They placed very little emphasis on their native-likeness and correctness, and did not express any feelings of inadequacy or incompetence in using the language. Their relationships with English were intimate, positive and even playful at times, as was the case with Matilda. The participants were focused on what they said through English and the communities they displayed membership as well as how they interacted with their audience. This was somewhat unexpected to me, both because it does not completely align with previous studies, but also because of personal expectations. Perhaps because of my own history as an English students, I am more likely to pay attention to the correctness of my language use and also actively strive towards native-likeness.

Furthermore, the participants were not only comfortable in their English skills, but Konsta also expressed that he views English as his second language. This kind of feelings of bilingualism or multilingualism are not typical for Finns, as seen in Leppänen et al (2011). Finns do not often express – or experience – this kind of bilingual ownership of English, but rather feel that they are monolingual non-nativeness who "borrow" the language for their purposes. As this has been my personal experience as well, the overall positive way the participants viewed their own English use and skills was surprising.

The interview data was fruitful for the study and provided interesting insight into the factors influencing Finnish streamers' language choices and the relationships they have with English. However, some of the interview questions could have been more explicitly targeted towards clear reasons for language choice, feelings of efficacy and fluency in English. As the interview was originally formed around the assumption that another data set focusing on stream observation would be included in the study, the questions were formulated to yield data comparable to stream observations. However, this did not end up being the final setting of the study, and when the second set of data was dropped out of the present study, the interviews had already been conducted and there was not enough time to formulate new questions more focused on purely language choice and its explicit motivations.

However, the present study provides a chance to continue research on Finnish streamers' language choice and use of English. Studying how Finnish streamers actually use English during their streams and how they interact with their audiences would generate a wider understanding on the complex ways streamers use languages to cope with in-game activities as well as real-time communication with their audiences.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to gain an understanding of the motivations, perceptions and attitudes Finnish streamers have towards their language choice, as they have chosen to stream in English rather than in Finnish. In this study, I interviewed three Finnish streamers about their reasons for streaming in English and how they perceive their relationship with English and streaming.

The data yielded somewhat surprising results; the participants' motivations for their language choices coincided with previous studies and theories, and the participants expressed membership, disassociation and community through linguistic practices. However, their attitudes towards English were more positive than what previous studies would have suggested. The participants expressed feelings of confidence and fluency in using English and emphasized the importance of messages and meanings conveyed through language use, and the communities that are maintained through the use of English.

Language use in streaming has not yet been widely studied, nor have the aspects of fixed language choices. The setting of Twitch encourages interaction between viewers and streamers and their combination of real-time gaming and communication with an audience provides possibilities further studies on streamers' linguistic practices. Especially in bi- or multilingual settings, streamers use languages in complex ways with in-game activities at hand, and to create and maintain communication with their audience. As streaming is a growing, developing phenomenon which more and more people from all linguistic backgrounds take part in in their everyday lives, the linguistic practices associated with streaming are interesting areas for future studies.

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