

# **A Conversation across Disciplines and Communities:**

*Public Sociology, Public Translation  
Studies and Revitalizing an  
Endangered Language via Translation*

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## Challenges of communication across communities in TS:

- ▶ translation studies vs. other disciplines
- ▶ theory vs. practice



Michael Burawoy &  
the four fields of sociology



# Division of disciplinary knowledge:

	Academic audience	Extra-academic audience
Instrumental knowledge	PROFESSIONAL	POLICY
Reflexive knowledge	CRITICAL	PUBLIC

# Four types of TS (adapted from Burawoy 2004):

	<b>Academic audience</b>	<b>Extra-academic audience</b>
<p><b>Instrumental</b>            Knowledge            Legitimacy            Responsibility            Politics</p> <p><i>Pathology</i></p>	<p><b>Scientific TS</b>            theoretical/empirical            scientific norms            peers            professional self-interest</p> <p><i>self-referentiality</i></p>	<p><b>Pragmatic TS</b>            concrete            effectiveness            clients/patrons            interventions</p> <p><i>servility</i></p>
<p><b>Reflexive</b>            Knowledge            Legitimacy            Responsibility            Politics</p> <p><i>Pathology</i></p>	<p><b>Critical TS</b>            foundational            ethical values            critical intellectuals            internal debate</p> <p><i>dogmatism</i></p>	<p><b>Public TS</b>            communicative            relevance            designated publics            public dialogue</p> <p><i>faddishness</i></p>



# The tasks of TS scholars:

- **Scientific TS:** scientific progress, increased knowledge-base.
  - **Critical TS:** critical discussion of the role and development of TS, critical interventions on other fields from the perspective of TS.
  - **Pragmatic TS:** professionalization/institutionalisation, policy work, improvement of work processes etc. Expert role.
  - **Public TS:** dialogue with different publics; organic research projects; public presentations; also translator training.
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“ [Public sociology is]  
commitment to dialogue  
around issues raised in and by  
sociology ”

"a systematic back-translation, taking knowledge back to those who it came from"

"responding to the growing gap between the sociological ethos and the world we study"

"moving from interpretation to engagement, from theory to practice"

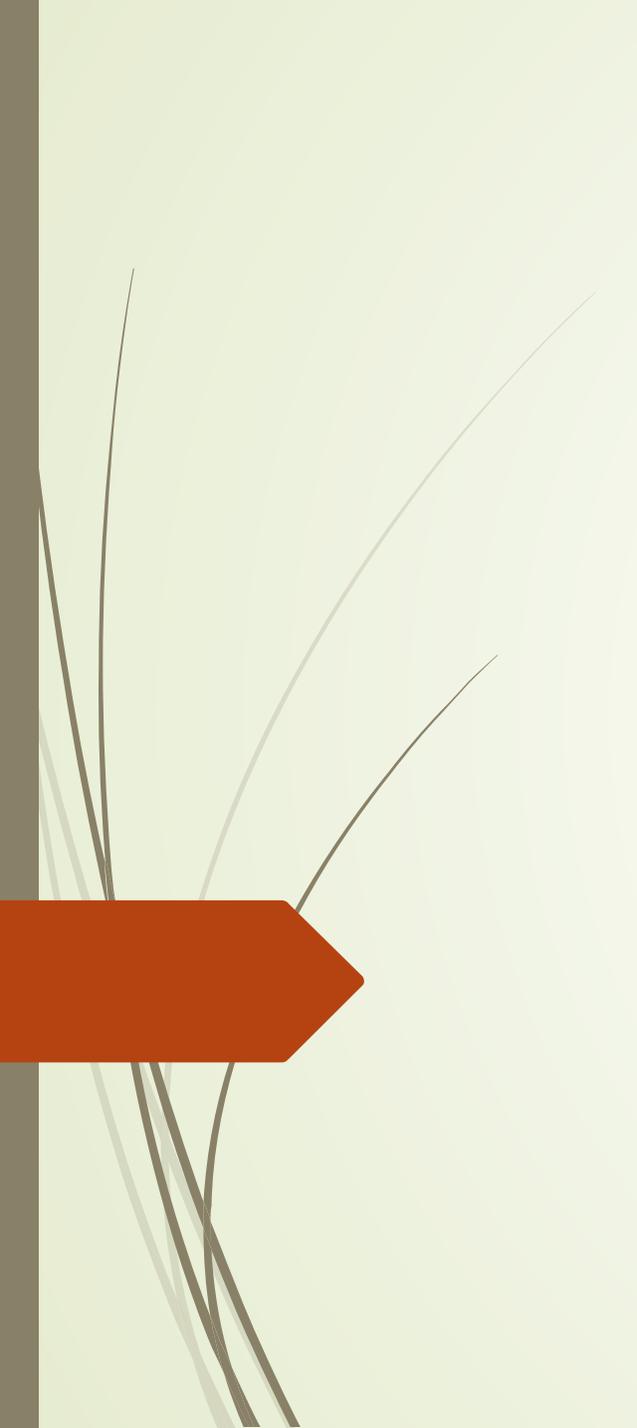
# The role of public translation studies

- ▶ Burawoy: This time of the marketization of everything is the age of public sociology → Koskinen: it also the age of public TS
- ▶ Students are our first, and captive, audience. Teaching public TS is a way of doing public TS.
- ▶ Public TS might include:
  - ▶ Workplace studies in the new market economy
  - ▶ Action research with grassroots movements
  - ▶ Moving away from professional spheres
  - ▶ Focussing on pressing issues in contemporary society
  - ▶ Direct engagement with the field, dialogue and co-construction of meaning



# Fundamental questions to answer:

- Knowledge for what?
  - Knowledge for whom?
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The case: KIÄNNÄ!

# Karelian language

- Closely related to Finnish
- Spoken in the Russian Republic of Karelia and in Finland
- estimated 55,000 speakers (Ethnologue)
- Status: critically endangered
- Absolute minority language
- Predominantly used in private domains
- 3 main variants; no shared written standard



# Karelian as a transnational language

## ... in Finland:

- Earlier a historical territorial minority language
- After WWII, speakers were resettled in different parts of Finland
- 11,000-30 000 speakers, all bilingual
- Majority of Finns are not aware that Karelian exists as a language in its own right
- **no professional translator market**

## ... in Russia:

- Spoken in the Russian Republic of Karelia and in the Tver oblast
- 25,605 speakers (2010 census), all bilingual
  - Down from 52,880 in 2002!
- Rapid language shift to monolingualism in Russian
- Karelian Proper and Olonets Karelian acquired written standards in 1989
- **limited opportunities for professional translation**



# Kiännä!: Translation, revitalization and the endangered Karelian language

2015-2018, University of Eastern Finland/KONE Foundation

## Core Team:

Project leader: Dr. Helka Riionheimo

Course coordinator and trainer: Dr. Päivi Kuusi

Expert in Karelian: Natalia Gilova

## My role:

- ▶ member of the steering group
- ▶ fieldwork during year 1 → research initiatives

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# Kiännä!...

## **Aims:**

- ▶ To empower and encourage speakers of Karelian to translate
- ▶ To contribute to the emergence of a new generation of translators of the Karelian language
- ▶ To connect translators of Karelian from Russia and Finland with each other
- ▶ To increase the number of language products available in Karelian

**Means:** Translator training for Karelian speakers

# EXAMPLE: Translation Seminar I, 2015–2016

## Course outline:

- ▶ 48 hours of contact teaching (lectures and exercises), 87 hours of independent work (5 ECTS)
- ▶ Learning outcomes: a general overview of relevant translation theory and some practical experience of translation

## Challenges:

- ▶ To combine the learning outcomes with the limited time resources
- ▶ To combine professional standards with the mission of empowering the participants to translate
- ▶ The heterogeneity of the group: varying degrees of language skills, 3 different varieties of Karelian, two national realities

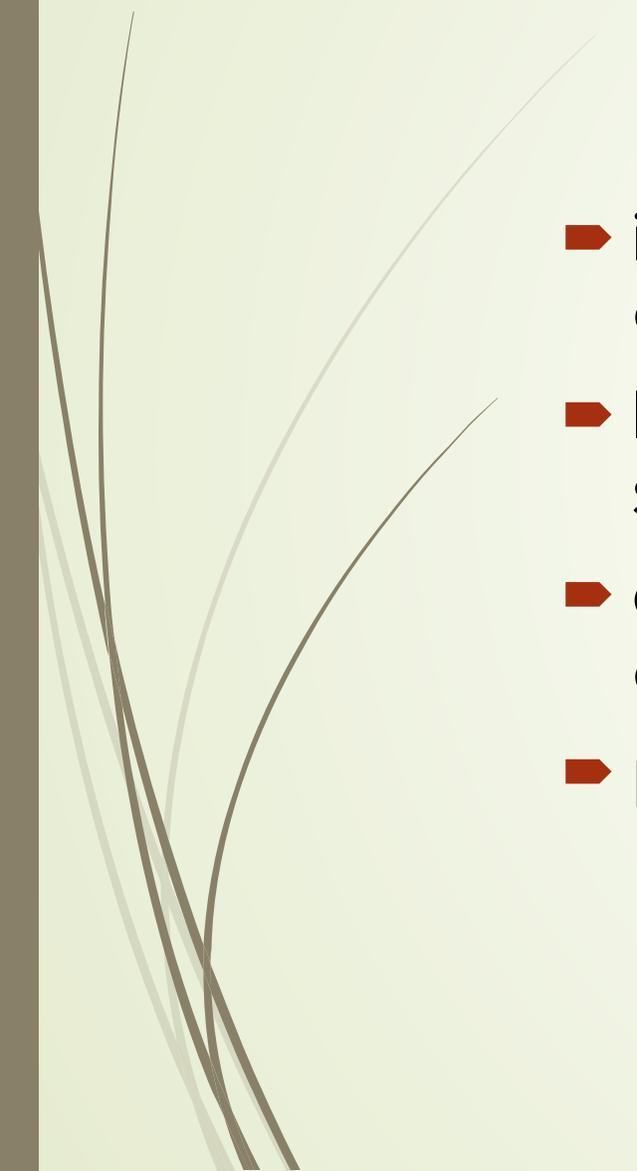
# Results of the 1st year

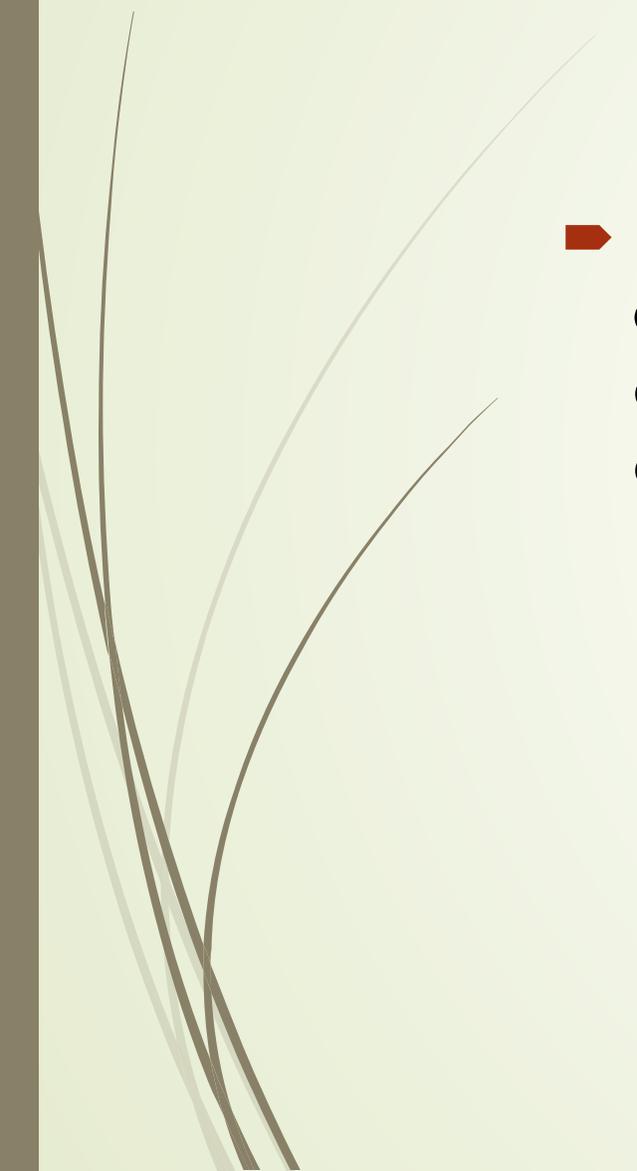
- ▶ amplifying the voice of Karelian:
  - ▶ Weekly radio news in Karelian
  - ▶ language activism
  - ▶ blog & Facebook
  - ▶ Wikipedia (Olonets Karelian) from incubator to public
- ▶ empowerment & community building
- ▶ plans for new technical tools





# Kiännä! as public translation studies

- in defense of **civil society**: support for linguistic democracy
  - legitimacy through **relevance**: immediate results, societal change
  - **designated publics**: target 1 participants, target 2 their audiences
  - public **dialogue**: social media, wikipedia, publications
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- ▶ Kiännä! is a process of **mutual education** and **communicative, co-constructed knowledge**: among students, between trainers and trainees, among trainers.



# Forms of dialogue within Kiännä!

- ▶ **across disciplines:**

- ▶ linguists, translation scholars and language revitalization experts

- ▶ **across communities:**

- ▶ academics
- ▶ heritage speakers
  - ▶ with/without translation experience
- ▶ new speakers and language learners
  - ▶ with/without academic background and skills
- ▶ speaker communities across the border

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- Public translation studies for what?
  - Public translation studies for whom?



Thank you for your attention!

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<http://kianna-hanke.blogspot.fi/p/in-english.html>



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# Read more:

**On and by Michael Burawoy:** <http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/>

## **On public translation studies:**

Koskinen 2012, 'Public Translation Studies in the Classroom.' *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 6(1), 2012, 1–20.

Koskinen 2010, 'What Matters to Translation Studies? On the Role of Public Translation Studies.' In *Why Translation Studies Matters*, eds. Daniel Gile, Gyde Hansen and Nike Pokorn. John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 2010, 15–26.