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Written representation of spoken interaction in the official parliamentary transcripts of the Finnish Parliament

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In this article, I will analyze the written representation of spoken interaction in the official plenary session transcripts of the Finnish Parliament. The official parliamentary transcripts are not—and cannot be—identical copies of the original speech event. Instead, they are linguistically and textually edited in many ways. I will examine the different types of editorial changes that are made in the official Finnish parliamentary transcripts. These include phonological, morphological, and syntactic alterations, editing out of self-repairs, planning expressions, stuttering and slips-of-tongue, and finding written ways of expression for phenomena such as pauses, prosody, gestures, and non-verbal events. I will also discuss how the editorial changes affect the written representation of plenary session interaction.

KEYWORDS

parliamentary transcript, official transcript, parliamentary report, official report, verbatim report, entextualization, chronotope, conversation analysis

1. Introduction

The parliamentary plenary session is the highest decision-making organ in Finland where the Members of Parliament (MPs) oversee the acts of the government and discuss and decide on legislation, the national budget, and international agreements, among other topics (Finnish Parliament, 2023).¹ Speech has a central role in parliamentary democracy. Even the word *parliament* derives from the Latin communicative verb *parabolare* “to speak” (Etymonline, 2023, s.v. *parliament*). In Finland, the freedom of parliamentary speech is guaranteed in the constitution (§ 31). Since the very first sessions in the late nineteenth century, the discussion in the plenary session has been reported “verbatim” in the official plenary record.

In this article, I will analyze the written representation of spoken discourse in the official transcripts of the Finnish parliamentary plenary session. As is well known, the official parliamentary transcripts are not—and cannot be—identical copies of the original speech event. Instead, they are linguistically and textually edited in many ways. I will examine the central editorial changes which are made in the official Finnish parliamentary transcripts. I will focus on the changes that are foregrounded explicitly in the written guidelines of the

1 The plenary session is the decision-making meeting of the parliament where the MPs debate publicly on political issues and decide on parliamentary matters in the plenary hall. The other major meetings include committee meetings, which prepare the matters for the plenary session, and meetings of parliamentary groups, where the political activities of the groups are planned. The meetings of committees and parliamentary groups are usually not open to the public (Finnish Parliament, 2023).

Records Office of the Finnish Parliament (Kirjo, 2021). I will also discuss how the editorial changes affect the written representation of plenary session interaction.²

This article proceeds as follows. In section 2, I present the data and methods of the study. In section 3, I introduce some key theoretical and practical perspectives in the making of the official parliamentary transcript. I focus on the genre of the parliamentary transcript, as well as the three central tensions which I consider prominent in the making and editing of the transcript. In section 4, I describe the process of producing the official Finnish parliamentary transcript. In section 5, I analyze the central linguistic and editorial practices in the making of the transcript. Finally, section 6 provides an overview and some discussion of the results of the study.

2. Data and methods

The data collected consist of digital video recordings of plenary sessions from 2008 to the present day and the official written records of the same period. During this time, the Finnish Parliament openly published all the plenary sessions online. To navigate the majority of the large dataset, I have used the annotated parliamentary corpus provided by the [Language Bank of Finland \(2019\)](#). The corpus includes the transcriptions of the plenary sessions from 10 September 2008 to 1 July 2016, aligned with the corresponding video recordings of the sessions with Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology. From the newest material of the corpus to the present day, I have used public video recordings and the official transcripts published on the public website of the Finnish Parliament. To identify the most central, systematic practices, I have consulted the professional transcription manuals used in the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament (Kirjo, 2021), and my field notes which I have made since I began working in the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament at the beginning of 2010 (see below).

As my main method, I use conversation analysis (CA) which has been developed for analyzing the organization of social interaction in naturally occurring recorded data (Sacks et al., 1974; Heritage, 1984; see Sidnell, 2010; Sidnell and Stivers, 2013). More specifically, this study is contextualized with conversation analytical research on institutional interaction (Drew and Heritage, 1992; Heritage and Clayman, 2010). In my analysis of written transcripts, I also draw from genre analysis (Martin and Rose, 2008) and participant observation (Blevins, 2017). I have been a public servant in the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament since 2010, editing the official transcript according to the standing editorial principles and practices and deciding on those practices together with my colleagues.³ My first-hand experience as a parliamentary editor

has also helped me choose representative examples from the large corpora of written records and video recordings.

3. Making an official parliamentary transcript: Theoretical and practical perspectives

An official record, to which the official transcript belongs, is a formal account of what has taken place in an official chain of events, such as a meeting. In principle, a record resembles a memo in the sense that they both save and share information that is deemed important for an institution (see Guillory, 2004). Similarly to a memo, the record forms an essential part of the “official memory” of the organization (cf. Yates, 1989). The record serves the organization by choosing what to include and how to discursively formulate it. Practically, different records vary considerably, in terms of, for example, function (social aims), content (what is included in the record), structure (how the content is textually organized), and style (how the content is formulated and what kind of linguistic choices are made).

The plenary session record of the Finnish Parliament consists, roughly, of (1) technical sections which include presenting and declaring the conclusion of each matter on the agenda, and (2) a discussion under each topic. In this article, I focus on the transcript of the discussion excluding the technical sections. Quantitatively, records comprise ~4,000–10,000 pages of technical sections and transcripts per year both online and in 4 to 10 large, printed volumes. The length of the transcripts depends on the discussion, which varies considerably between election periods, sessions, topics, and other factors.

The principles of transcription depend largely on how the genre of the transcript, and the record, is understood by its authors. *Genre* is usually seen as a schematic interactional category that directs both the production and interpretation of single texts. Genres are constantly evolving, as new texts are created (see Martin and Rose, 2008). Approaches to genre vary in whether they emphasize, for example, the macro-structure and linguistic features (Eggins and Martin, 1997) or social actions which are implemented in the texts (Devitt, 2004). In this section, I will focus on the social aims, target audiences, and key editorial principles of the transcript. In the next sections, I will concentrate on the transcription process (section 4) and the linguistic differences between the transcript and the plenary session (section 5).

The official parliamentary transcript in Finland serves at least three central **social aims**: (1) open mediation of public information (what the MPs say and how), (2) legitimization of parliamentary decision-making (how the proposals are debated), and (3) preservation of nationally vital information for current and future generations. Plenary session transcripts may also be analyzed as official documents where public servants report parliamentary activities with official responsibility. The **target audiences** of the official parliamentary transcript may include, for example, citizens as a generalized group with supposed characteristics and requests, MPs, public servants who write and apply legal texts, researchers, and the media. The principles and practices of transcription are considerably affected by what target audiences are seen as primary.

² This article is partly based on my previous work in articles Tiittula and Voutilainen (2016) and Voutilainen (2016) in Finnish. However, the contents are thoroughly updated, with unpublished examples and analysis.

³ It should be noted that I, as a member of the linguistic team in the Records Office, have also been involved in writing the editorial manual which I frequently cite in this article (Kirjo, 2021). However, the norms in the manual have been agreed on collectively, and they have general approval in the office.

For example, the treatment of the MPs as the primary audience might lead to editing transcripts heavily so that they meet the supposed or actual requests and intentions of the MPs. This could weaken the indexical connection between the transcript and the plenary session, or in other words, the authenticity and accuracy of the transcript. On the other hand, treating the citizens and the media as the primary target audience may lead to, for example, editing transcripts more lightly so that they convey both the content and the style of the speeches reliably and transparently to the reader because these matters are frequently focused on in public discussion.

According to the transcription manual of the Finnish Parliament, the transcription and editing practices have been consciously designed so that they mediate the plenary session to the reader as openly as possible and consider the many different purposes and target audiences of transcripts (Kirjo, 2021, p. 7). The official transcript has been regulated quite lightly from outside of the Records Office. The Parliament's rules and procedures state only as follows: "A record will be made of the plenary session, into which the proceedings of matters and discussions in the plenary session will be recorded. The speech transcribed in the record will be given to the speaker for verification. There can be no changes in the content of the speech." (§ 69). These guidelines are quite short and abstract, which means that the making of the transcript is largely based on self-regulation within the Records Office. This self-regulation is closely related to and affected by, among other things, the genre of parliamentary record with its social aims and conventions; the expected needs of the target audiences; the values, goals, guidelines, training, and culture of the transcribing community; and the personal preferences, ideals, and linguistic ideologies of the transcribers and editors of the transcript (Voutilainen, 2017).

The conversation in the plenary session is heavily regulated institutional interaction where the participants orient to the key features of the institution. These include (see Drew and Heritage, 1992; also Heritage and Clayman, 2010) as follows:

- 1) Institutional goals (e.g., deciding on the legislation, budget, and contracts of the country) and identities (e.g., the roles of MPs, ministers, chairpersons of committees, and government and opposition groups).
- 2) Social constraints (e.g., the chairperson of the parliament as the regulator of turn-taking, turn-types, and overall structure of the interaction).
- 3) Inferential frameworks and procedures (e.g., the institutional consequences of making proposals and seconding them in the conversation).

These institutional features of the plenary session are considerably reflected in the official transcript. The nature of the transcription is also naturally affected by the fact that the discourse in the plenary session is very heterogeneous. There are many genres of conversation (e.g., discussion about a law proposal, budget discussion, and question time) and several institutionally regulated turn-types (e.g., representation speech, group speech, "regular speech," comment, and interruption) with their own norms and expectations. Moreover, the topics, purposes, and target audiences

of the speeches are manifold (see Bayley, 2004; Ilie, 2015, 2016, 2018). As a consequence, the transcribed discourse material is linguistically very diverse.

Transforming speech into written text is a highly complex linguistic activity. Spoken and written interaction are in many ways different as semiotic channels, concerning production, the product, and the reception. From a linguistic perspective, reproducing and mediating linguistic material from speech to writing may be analyzed from various angles, such as diamesic translation (Gottlieb, 2018) and entextualization (Park and Bucholtz, 2009), which are discussed later, and also recontextualization (Linell, 1998), reported speech (Holt and Clift, 2010), representation (Goodwin, 1994), repetition (Johnstone, 1994), replay (Merritt, 1994), recurrence (Gault, 1994), reformulation (Merritt, 1994), reanimation (Fairclough, 1992), paraphrase (Steiner, 1975), transformation (Eades, 1996), versioning (Potter and Wetherell, 1987), accounting (Rapley, 2001), and quoting (Haapanen, 2017) (on related concepts, see Rock, 2007).

Aside from mediation, the principles followed in the transcription and editing process may be approached analytically, for example, as genre-conscious language regulation (Tiililä, 2012). In genre-conscious language regulation, the transcribed plenary speeches are edited so that their original nature is preserved when presented in the official written record. The norms, expectations, and interpretational frames of the genre are treated as essential when editing the text, even though it might mean deviating from, for example, the norms of the written standard language. The parliamentary speeches include a considerable amount of regional, social, and situational linguistic variation which activates certain rhetorical and stylistic meanings. If all this variation were to be removed from the transcript, it would change the nature of speeches, and thus heavily loosen the indexical connection between the speech and the transcript. According to the transcription and editing guidelines of the Finnish Records Office, this would be seen as contradictory to the ideals of openness and transparency which are expected from the transcript (Kirjo, 2021, p. 8).

In practice, the genre-conscious language regulation of plenary session transcripts requires consideration of the normative expectations of two genres: the plenary session and the plenary record. These results in at least three central tensions in the transcription and editing process: (1) speech vs. writing, (2) authenticity vs. readability, and (3) linguistic variation vs. written standard. The first tension lies between speech and writing which are two different semiotic channels or modes: speech is acoustic sound waves in the air, whereas writing is a visual artifact. These semiotic channels have numerous considerable differences concerning, for example, communicative resources, production, reception, social status, and expectations (Ong, 1982; Biber, 1988; Halliday, 1989). Theoretically, in this article, I approach transcending this barrier as an *entextualization* process (see Bauman and Briggs, 1990; Park and Bucholtz, 2009): the individual turns-at-talk are decontextualized from their original context—face-to-face interaction in the plenary session—and recontextualized into the official plenary record, a written text artifact with its own institutional goals. This has some unavoidable consequences for the nature of the transcript: the speech is necessarily changed when transformed into written form. This

creates tension in the connection between the parliamentary session and the parliamentary transcript. For example, since speech is received differently in written form, it may activate different interpretations, values, and attitudes in the reader. Essentially, transcription as a profession can be approached as a form of intersemiotic or diamesic translation (see Jakobson, 1959; Gottlieb, 2018) between two modalities within a single language.

The second tension in the transcription process is caused by the fact that the official parliamentary transcript aims to be both authentic—or reliable or accurate—as a report of a spoken interactional event and readable as a written text. Even though editorial changes in speech risk harming authenticity, some editing is usually treated as necessary so that the texts are easily readable and understandable for the readers, many of whom are most likely not trained in reading accurate scientific transcripts (such as conversation analytic transcripts which are used in this article). Some changes are also, paradoxically, necessary to avoid speeches and their reception from changing in the transcription process and to keep the experience as authentic as possible. This is demonstrated in section 5 of this article (e.g., changes in word order to compensate for the loss of prosody and tone in the transcription process). Authenticity means, in the Finnish Records Office, that the position of the reader is as similar as possible to the position of the member of the audience who is listening to the discussion in the plenary hall—the transcript should not be less understandable or less fluent than the speech event but also not more so (Kirjo, 2021, p. 7–8). Because of this, the removal of the multimodal situation, intonation, tone, pauses, and other non-verbal features frequently requires some intervention for the transcript to be readable. On the other hand, the complexity and ambiguity of the speech are usually left largely unchanged so that the overall experience of the speech is not harmed (see section 5 below).

The third tension between the session and the transcript lies between the naturally occurring linguistic variation in the speech and the norms of the written standard language. Because the plenary session transcript aims to represent the spoken interaction authentically, editing speech must consciously detach itself from the commonly written language bias—the view where written language is treated automatically as primary to spoken language and where linguistic features typical of spontaneous speech are often seen as secondary when they differ from their equivalents in written language (see Linell, 2005). Consciously breaking away from the written language bias means that the properties of spontaneous speech, such as regional, social, and situational variation, are not treated as mistakes from the perspective of written codified texts. It must be noted, however, that spoken face-to-face interaction and official written texts are generally met with different attitudes and expectations in the language community (Tiittula and Nuolijärvi, 2013). Because of this, the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament has decided to follow some conventions of the written standard. For example, self-corrections, stuttering, and planning expressions, which are typical of spontaneous speech, would probably draw more attention among the readers of the transcript than they would among the audience of the plenary session (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10). By standing out in the transcript, they might also activate different interpretations about the speech and the speaker, such as insecurity or incompetence, by readers who

are not accustomed to reading transcripts of spontaneous speech (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10.).

Because the speeches are unavoidably changed in the transcript, they also evoke ethical and political considerations. All speeches discursively construct the social and political identity of the MPs. They are public performances that affect the way the MPs, as well as the views and groups that they represent, are interpreted by the recipients. If the transcribers or editors change the social reception and interpretation of the speeches, they change the relationship between the MP and the audience, which has possible political consequences for the MP. Because of this, the Finnish Records Office has made systematic and detailed guidelines for parliamentary transcription and editing, in order to treat all speeches systematically and equally regardless of who is speaking and who is transcribing the speech (Kirjo, 2021).

4. The transcription process

In the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament, there are 21 public servants who make the plenary session record.⁴ The roles and activities of these people are as follows:

1. The document secretaries act as **transcribers** who produce initial drafts of the transcripts, listening to the audio record and using a regular keyboard and automatic speech recognition (ASR) software.⁵
2. The senior specialists act as **editors** who edit the initial transcripts based on the linguistic and editorial principles of transcription while listening to the record. The senior specialists also prepare the technical sections of the written record, such as the openings and closings of agenda items by the chairperson, vote results, and the decisions by the parliament.
3. The head of office or the leading specialist acts as the **responsible official** who revises the technical sections and publishes the finished transcripts online.
4. After the sessions, the senior specialists act as **post-editors** who revise whole transcripts, correct mistakes, and make systematic decisions in, for example, cases where the individual editors have made different orthographic choices concerning the same expression. After post-editing, the revised versions of the transcripts are published online.
5. Two of the document secretaries act as **desktop publishers** who prepare the layout and deliver the finished copies to the printing house.

Moreover, during the session, a senior specialist works in the plenary hall as a plenary session secretary. In this role, they make the necessary corrections to the automatically reported metadata of the session (e.g., names, turn types, and starting times of the

⁴ In addition to this, two public servants in the Swedish Office make the transcripts of the Swedish plenary session speeches.

⁵ The basic transcription work is done by listening to the audio which is transmitted through the microphones in the plenary hall. When needed, the editors also use the public video recording to access non-verbal activities in the plenary hall.

speakers) and report all the important activities in the session which are not automatically recorded by the microphones. These include interruptions and essential non-verbal communication by the MPs (see section 5).

The continuously updated metadata of the session form a roster for the transcribers and editors in the office with each speaking turn listed chronologically on individual lines. Transcribers (document secretaries) use this roster to reserve up to 10-min long shifts of whole speeches for transcription. They make an initial transcript where they apply some conventional orthographic and language-regulatory practices, following office guidelines. When the initial draft transcript is finished, the editor (senior specialist) edits it for publication by using the office's linguistic and editorial standards while listening to the audio record. The responsible official (the head of office or the leading specialist) publishes the transcript when single speeches and matters on the agenda have been edited. After the initial publication, the MPs have the right to suggest small alterations in their speech. The basic principle is that the alterations should be corrections to observable mistakes in the transcript, and they should not affect the content or overall style of the speech (Peltola, 2015).

The transcripts are edited delicately at the different stages. The initial transcript by the document secretary mediates the speech from the spoken to written mode of communication. Here, intonation, tone, pauses, inhalations and exhalations, slowly and quickly uttered words, quiet and creaky voices, and other paraverbal elements are removed, and orthographic features, such as punctuation and capital letters, are added. The mistakes made by the ASR program are corrected. Some features caused by the time-boundedness of the production of spontaneous spoken language are not transcribed, such as clear cases of planning expressions and self-corrections.⁶ In addition, some elements of everyday speech, such as phonological features of dialect or everyday talk, are standardized in this phase (about all the changes mentioned here, see section 5). However, most of the changes are carried out in the editing phase.

Earlier in history, before audio recordings, the plenary session speeches were reported with pen shorthand (Kallioniemi, 1946). At that time, the speeches were changed considerably more both in the transcription and editing stages. The changes in transcription and editorial principles have probably been caused by at least the following key factors: First, the audio recordings and then the direct video broadcasts online have made it easy to compare the original session with the written transcript. Second, the parliamentary speech culture and language attitudes in parliament and the speech community have changed during recent decades in such a way that now documented spoken discourse by MPs does not have to be, or should not be, mechanically turned into standard written language. Following the same line of thinking, the speeches should not be

⁶ By time-boundedness, I mean that the final product of spontaneous speech and the temporal production process of speaking are inseparably intertwined. This means that, for example, traces of real-time planning and self-corrections are observable in the speech (see Hakulinen et al., 2004, p. 24–25). In this respect, spontaneous speech differs essentially from much of the written communication where such features are not visible in the final text.

stylized to be more of “higher style” or “better language” because it could remove socially or rhetorically relevant phenomena and thus harm the openness, accuracy, and authenticity of the transcript. Third, due to improvements in linguistic research, the editors of the transcript have more information about linguistic variation and its meanings in social interaction. The strong interest that the media and citizens have frequently shown toward parliamentary speeches in public discourse has reinforced the idea that the language of the transcripts should not be altered too much in the editing process. I will discuss these principles and practices in more detail in the following section.

5. Linguistic and editorial practices in the Finnish parliamentary transcripts

In this section, I will examine the linguistic and editorial practices in the Finnish Records Office by comparing the video recordings of the plenary sessions and the official written transcripts of the speeches (for the analysis of other parliamentary transcripts, see Cortelazzo, 1985; Slembrouck, 1992; Hughes, 1996; Mollin, 2007; Gardey, 2010, 2013; Treimane, 2011; Cucchi, 2013). I will focus particularly on the features which have been discussed in the guidelines of the Record Office (Kirjo, 2021) and the public presentations of the office (Voutilainen et al., 2013). In addition, I will analyze some other linguistic and interactional features which I see as central to the transcripts based on my comparative analysis.

The linguistic practices of the Finnish Parliament can be roughly divided into phonological, morphological, and syntactic transcription and editing strategies. In addition to this, there are explicit guidelines about transcribing and editing many elements of spoken language, such as self-corrections, planning expressions, slips-of-the-tongue, multimodal elements, interruptions, and administrative metadiscourse by the chairperson between official speeches.

Concerning **phonology**, the main practice followed in Finnish parliamentary transcripts is that non-standard regional, social, and situational variations are standardized (e.g., *sie* → *sinä* “you”; *kun* → *kuin* “than”). According to the editorial manual, this decision is based on the observation that this type of non-standard variation in Finnish is usually much more noticeable and is likely to draw more attention in writing (Kirjo, 2021, p. 9). Non-standard phonetic features might also make the transcript harder to read for people who are not accustomed to reading unedited transcripts (Tiittula and Nuolijärvi, 2013). An important exception to this rule is the retention of non-standard features which carry apparent rhetorical or stylistic meaning in the context. This can occur, for example, when an MP clearly uses single dialectal features as a rhetorical resource, such as the dialectal *Pyrsseli* instead of the standard Finnish *Bryssel* for “Brussels,” to highlight the foreignness of the European Parliament to “ordinary” citizens in the provinces. A similar phenomenon occurs when an MP changes their style from formal to everyday style within the same speech when addressing a new audience.

Lexical choices are not usually changed in the transcript, even though the MPs might use rare, low-register, or slang words. The reason for this principle is that these words are neither particularly hard to read nor do they, arguably, activate different interpretations

in the transcript. This principle is not followed in the transcripts of all parliaments. In the House of Commons in the UK, for example, it has been a conventional practice to change certain everyday compound verbs to their high-prestige, single-word equivalents (e.g., *look at* → *consider*; *make sure* → *ensure*; *have to* → *must*; see Mollin, 2007). In a similar fashion, some hedges concerning the certainty of a statement have been removed in the transcripts of the European Parliament (e.g., *I think, of course*; Cucchi, 2013).

Morphological elements are met with situational consideration. Some morphological features typical of spoken language are systematically changed into written standard language, such as governance in nouns and verb forms (e.g., *merkitys johonkin* “meaning to something or someone” → *merkitys jollekin* “meaning for something or someone”; *vaikuttaa jollekin* “make an impact in something” → *vaikuttaa johonkin* “make an impact on something”). Many others are transcribed as they are, such as morphological passive in the second person plural which is a non-standard feature in spoken Finnish [e.g., *me mennään* (cf. *me menemme*) “we go”]. Changes are made in cases where the non-standard variant would, according to the editor, activate interpretations and attitudes in the transcript that would not arise in spoken communication (Kirjo, 2021, p. 9). Otherwise, non-standard variants are left to indicate different rhetorical and stylistic choices in the official record.

In **syntactic structures**, the editors favor relatively light editing. For example, cases of atypical word order or complex clauses which would draw attention in standard prose are often left unedited. Generally, they are edited if they are seen as considerably harmful to readability or they give rise to a stylistically different interpretation in writing (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10). A clear exception is formed by different processive structures which are most likely caused by the time-boundedness of spontaneous speech (Hakulinen et al., 2004, p. 25–25; see footnote 5 mentioned earlier). These types of syntactic structures are usually edited in the transcript as follows (1)⁷:

(1) 19th December 2019; 5:44 pm

Original speech⁸

ja tämä on se linja =ja tänä vuonna tulee
and this is the line =and this year will
tuo .hh todennäköisesti olemaan
that .hh probably be
aika paljon alhaisempi tuo käyttö .hh aste
pretty much lower that usage .hh rate
kun kun (.) viime vuonna oli.
than than (.) was last year.
eli (0.4) kyllä me kestäviä (0.4) olemme.
so (0.4) indeed we are (0.4) sustainable.

Official transcript

Tämä on se linja, ja tänä vuonna tuo käyttöaste tulee
This is the line, and this year that usage rate will
todennäköisesti olemaan aika paljon alhaisempi
probably be pretty much lower

⁷ The Conversation Analysis transcription conventions used here are based on Jefferson (2004); see also Hepburn and Bolden (2013).

⁸ The English translations of the Finnish speech examples are intentionally literal, so that the reader gets an accurate view of the data.

kuin viime vuonna oli. Eli kyllä me kestäviä olemme.
than it was last year. So indeed we are sustainable.

In example 1, the syntactic cleft structure *tänä vuonna tulee tuo todennäköisesti olemaan aika paljon alhaisempi tuo käyttöaste* “that will probably be pretty much lower that usage rate” has been edited so that the initial pronominal noun phrase (NP) is removed, and the latter, lexical NP is moved in its place as the subject of the clause: *tänä vuonna tuo käyttöaste tulee todennäköisesti olemaan aika paljon alhaisempi* “this year that usage rate will probably be pretty much lower.” This way, the utterance no longer has a subject which is split and placed at the beginning and end of the clause. The first part of the finite verb form (*tulee olemaan* “will be”) has also been moved after the subject, which is seen as the neutral, non-emphatic word order in written standard Finnish (see Hakulinen et al., 2004, § 1366). Without this editorial choice, this part of written speech might appear more scattered and sporadic than it does in spoken language where it is quite common, unlike most written genres (Hakulinen et al., 2004, § 1064). However, the edited version might seem more polished and straightforward to some readers. Here, the editorial choice can be seen as favoring readability and the usual conventions of written standard prose.

In transcripts, **self-corrections and planning expressions** are usually edited out, unless they are commented on in the session by the speaker or by another participant (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10). In self-corrections (see Schegloff et al., 1977), the corrected expression is removed, and the final linguistic choice by the speaker is left in the transcript. The reason for this is that, while in speech, the corrected elements cannot be removed afterward and corrections are frequent, in text, they would attract more attention and possibly activate social interpretations about the speaker that would not be made while listening to the speech, such as unfocused, uncertain, or unskilled in the matter at hand. This is illustrated in example 2, where the word form *työllistämiskorvauksiin* “employing benefits” and the following repair initiator *tai* “or” are edited out and the following word form *työttömyyskorvauksiin* “unemployment benefits” is left in the transcript. The word searches (see Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 363) before the self-correction (*työttömyys- työ-“unemployment- unemp-”*) are also excluded from the transcript as follows:

(2) 7th February 2018; 2:13 pm

Original speech

ja tässäkin kuten ministeri Lindström
and here too as minister Lindström
omassa puheenvuorossa lopetti tämän
in his own speech ended this
esityksen tähän että (0.4) kahdeksantoista
presentation in this that (0.4) eighteen
tuntia siellä on se raja (0.4) ja
hours is the limit there (0.4) and
siitä rupeaa kertymään sitten se (.)
kaikki
from there will then start building up (.) all the
la- vaa- vaadittavat työttömyys- (.)
le- re- required unemployment- (.)
yhh. työ- tähän (0.6) öö
yhh. unemp- into this (0.6) uhm
työllistämiskorvauksiin tai

employing benefits or
 (0.2) työttömyyskorvauksiin
 (0.2) unemployment benefits
 (.) öö tulevat öö nämä (0.2) rahamäärät
 (.) uhm incoming uhm these (0.2) sums of money
 alkavat sieltä kertyä.
 will start to build up from there.

Official transcript

Kuten ministeri Lindström omassa puheenvuorossaan lopetti
 As minister Lindström, in his speech, ended
tämän esityksen, niin 18 tuntia siellä on se raja, ja siitä
 this presentation, 18 hours is the limit there, and from there
rupeaa kertymään sitten se kaikki vaadittava, nämä
 will then start building up all that is required, these
työttömyyskorvauksiin tulevat rahamäärät alkavat
 sums of money that come to the unemployment benefits start to
sieltä kertyä.
 build up from there.

At the beginning of the example above, the expression *ja tässäkin* “in here too” is also excluded from the transcript, possibly as a so-called “false start” where the speaker is interpreted as discontinuing the initial formulation and replacing it with another (here, *kuten ministeri Lindström...* “like minister Lindström...”). In the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament, these instances are often also treated as self-corrections, and the latter formulation is included in the official transcript.

Sometimes interpreting an expression as a “false start” might be open for debate. For example, the aforementioned expression *ja tässäkin* “in here too” might be interpreted in some contexts as connecting the utterance to something prior in the speech. Nonetheless, in example 2, the editor has interpreted it as self-correction. On the other hand, the difference between “false starts” and other expressions that are left incomplete is sometimes difficult to make. As a rule of thumb, short expressions that the speaker leaves incomplete and which do not carry much meaning according to the editor are interpreted as “false starts” and thus self-corrections. If the discontinued expression is longer and is interpreted as relevant to the speech, it is included in the transcript. If the unfinished utterance cannot be completed or connected to a neighboring utterance with very light and neutral editing (e.g., by changing the word order, adjusting inflection, or adding a grammatical word without changing the meaning of the utterance), its ending is marked with an ellipsis (...) (Kirjo, 2021, p. 135–136).

In planning expressions, the evident cases are removed based on the same practice. In plenary speeches, these include, for example, particles *niinku* “like” and *tota* “kind of” and hesitation markers such as *mm*, *öö*, and *ee*. In example 3, the planning particle *tota* “like” is left out from the transcript.

(3) 12th February 2020; 2:38 pm
 Original speech

myös vasemmistoliitto .hh öö(0.2)
 tervehtii
 also the Left Alliance .hh uhm (0.2) greets
 ilolla tätä hallituksen (.)
 with joy this government's (.)

esitystä =ja (.) ja antaa kaiken tukensa
 proposal =and (.) and gives all its support
 ministeri Kiurulle ja hallitukselle
 to minister Kiuru and the government
 siihen että tämä työ saadaan .hh hyvin
 for that this work is get .hh well
 tehtyä loppuun ja .hh ja tota
 finished up and .hh and like
 henkilöstömitotus nolla pilkku seitsemän
 the personnel requirement zero point seven
 sitovaksi lakiin
 as binding in the law

Official transcript

Myös vasemmistoliitto tervehtii ilolla tätä hallituksen esitystä ja
 Also Left Alliance greets with joy this government's proposal and
antaa kaiken tukensa ministeri Kiurulle ja
 gives all its support to minister Kiuru and
hallitukselle siihen, että tämä työ saadaan hyvin tehtyä loppuun
 for that this work is get well finished up
ja henkilöstömitoitus 0,7 sitovaksi lakiin.
 and the personnel requirement 0,7 as binding in the law.

In addition to the planning particle *tota* “like,” there are also a hesitation marker (*öö* “ehm”) and two instances of non-emphatic repetition (*ja ja* “and and”) in the example. Both have been edited out of the transcript so that these frequent processing expressions of spontaneous speech do not attract special attention or activate different interpretations in written form.

The practices that self-corrections and planning expressions by the MPs are not included in the transcript may have a few effects on the official record. First, it can be said that these features which are probably caused by the time-boundedness of speech (see footnote 5 above) would be likely to evoke a different, possibly less formal impression of the speech and the speaker. Second, the exclusion of self-corrections and planning expressions may make the transcribed speeches more prepared and literal in style (Slembrouck, 1992). Third, both self-corrections and planning expressions make visible how the speaker constructs a turn-at-talk. By removing them, the editors of the transcript exclude features of real-time turn-design and linguistic processing of the speaker. Moreover, self-corrections, in particular, reveal the norms of the institution by correcting non-normative linguistic actions and formulations (see Drew, 2013). When editors exclude self-corrections, they remove traces of possible non-normative actions and formulations which the speaker corrected in the session. However, they are not erased in the transcript when someone reacts to corrections or corrected parts of speech (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10). Removing self-corrections and the corrected elements would make the reactions of another speaker impossible to understand for the reader. On the other hand, if the reactions were removed, it would considerably harm the reliability of the transcript.

A similar convention has been extended to so-called innocent **blunders**, or **slips-of-the-tongue**, which are usually corrected in the transcripts. This is presented in example 4 where the apparent blunder *ilmastointimuutos* “air-conditioning change” has been corrected to *ilmastonmuutos* “climate change.”

(4) 11th October 2012; 4:56 pm
 Original speech

arvoisa puheenjohtaja (.) on muistettava
 honorable chairperson (.) it must be remembered
 että rannikko .hh kunnissamme ei tulvi
 that in our archipelago .hh municipalities it doesn't flood
 mitään s- tsunamia(0.8) .hh vaan
 tavallinen
 any s- tsunami(0.8) .hh but ordinary
 vesi (.) josta (0.2) .hh joista ja
 water (.) where (0.2) .hh from rivers and
 jokien valuma-alueilta (.) yläjuoksulta.
 the catchment areas of rivers (.) from upper reaches.
 (0.6) .hh ilmastointimuutos ei ole (.)
 (0.6) .hh air-conditioning change is not (.)
 myöskään mikään rannikkoväestön syytä .hh
 the blame of archipelago people either .hh
 tulisiko hallitus näin ollen pyrkiä
 should the government therefore strive
 kustannusten jakamiseen .hh
 to the division of costs .hh
 niiden osapuolten välillä jotka johtavat
 between those parties who lead
 valuum- valumavesi- vesien vesistöihin
 draining- drainagewater- waters' water systems

Official transcript

Arvoisa puheenjohtaja! On muistettava, että
 Honorable chairperson! It must be remembered that
rannikkokunnissamme ei tulvi mitään tsunamia
 in our archipelago municipalities it won't flood any tsunami
vaan tavallinen vesi joista ja jokien valuma-alueilta
 but ordinary water from rivers and catchment areas of rivers
yläjuoksulta. Ilmastomuutos ei ole
 from upper reaches. Climate change is not
myöskään mikään rannikkoväestön syy.
 the blame of archipelago people either.
Tulisiko hallituksen näin ollen pyrkiä
 Should the government therefore strive
kustannusten jakamiseen niiden osapuolten välillä,
 to the division of costs between those parties
jotka johtavat valumavesiä vesistöihin?
 who lead drainage waters to water systems?

In Finnish, the difference in the formulation is small, and the forms can be easily mixed. The difference in meaning, however, is considerable and may be a cause of unintended humor. Moreover, the MP in the example frequently uses both Finnish and Swedish in speeches, and it is apparent that Finnish is not his mother tongue. Slip-of-tongue is a good example of a phenomenon that is emphasized in the written text but might even pass unnoticed by the participants of the speech event. The same can be said to apply to **stuttering** and **word searches** which are also by rule edited out of the official Finnish parliamentary transcript. In example 4, there are a few cases of these phenomena (*s- tsunamia* “s- tsunami,” *valuam- valumavesi- vesien* “drain- drainage water- waters”).

In Finnish parliamentary transcription, the same principle that applies to self-corrections and planning expressions is applied to stuttering and slips-of-the-tongue: they are corrected only if the

participants do not explicitly react to them in the session (see Kirjo, 2021, p. 10). However, it should be noted that the difference between slips-of-the-tongue and incorrect knowledge might be hard to distinguish. This is apparent with, for example, wrong figures, names, and citations which might be the cause of either a slip-of-the-tongue or wrong information. The editorial guidelines (Kirjo, 2021, p. 10) state that if the mistake is clearly caused by wrong or incomplete information, there will be no correction in the transcript because the mistake is the MP's responsibility. Correcting MPs' wrong information could be easily seen as contradictory with an openness which is mentioned as a key value in the strategy of the Finnish Parliamentary Office (Parliamentary Office, 2019).

One essential category of editorial changes in the transcript is formed by different non-verbal features of parliamentary speech. The removal of **prosody**, for example, which unavoidably happens in the written transcript, might lead to a change of meaning in the range of certain particles and adverbs if the word order remains unchanged. This is illustrated in example 5 as follows:

(5) 7th September 2021; 6:38 pm

Original speech

rajoitusten purkaminen on mielestäni
 Dismantling restrictions is in my view
 myös perusteltua (0.4)
 also justified (0.4)
 rokotuskattavuuden kannalta.
 considering vaccination coverage.

Official transcript

Rajoitusten purkaminen on mielestäni perusteltua
 Dismantling restrictions is in my view justified
myös rokotuskattavuuden kannalta.
 considering also vaccination coverage.

In example 5, the particle *myös* “also” refers, by virtue of the emphasis and the pause, to the phrase *rokotuskattavuuden kannalta* “considering vaccination coverage” and not to the word *perusteltua* “justified” which immediately follows. This emphasis is removed when the speech is transcribed, which directs the reference incorrectly to the word *perusteltua* “justified.” To preserve the original reference, the editor has changed the word order in the sentence; the particle has been moved right before the phrase to which it refers.

Pauses are usually not explicitly marked in the transcript. However, where they have been identified as having rhetorical significance pauses in the speech have been indicated, for example, with a dash or a full stop and a change of sentence in the transcript. The use of typography with dash is presented in example 6 as follows:

(6) 31st March 2022; 4:53 pm

Original speech

olisi hienoa (0.4) että ottaisimme sen
 it would be great (0.4) that we would take the
 kannan (0.2) että ihan <oi>keasti> (0.6)
 stance (0.2) that quite <really> (0.6)
 arvostamalla hoitajaa ja antamalla hänelle
 by appreciating the nurse and by giving them
 kunnan ((puhemies koputtaa nuijalla))

a decent ((the chairman knocks with the gavel))
palkan (.) me saamme heitä lisää
salary (.) we get more of them

Official transcript

Olisi hienoa, että ottaisimme sen kannan, että
It would be great that we would take the stance that
—*ihan oikeasti*—*arvostamalla hoitajaa ja antamalla hänelle*
— quite really — by appreciating the nurse and by giving them
kunnon palkan [Puhemies koputtaa] me saamme heitä lisää.
a decent salary [The chairman knocks] we get more of them.

In the above mentioned example, the dash is used to indicate two rhetorically relevant pauses which, together with pronouncing the keyword noticeably slower than surrounding speech, form an emphatic parenthetical structure inside the ongoing subordinate clause. Following this structural interpretation, the particle *että* “that” is moved to precede the parenthesis, even though the MP utters it after the first pause. This editorial decision highlights the rhetorical choice by typographical means.

Similarly to prosody, **multimodal elements** of the interaction, such as gestures, gazes, and movements, as well as non-verbal actions and events, are unavoidably erased when the speech in face-to-face interaction is represented in writing. Because of this, the editor includes the multimodal elements in the transcript that the plenary session secretary has made a note of during the session. The editor, in the next work phase, removes the ones that they do not consider necessary for comprehending the speech in the same way as the participants do in the plenary hall. These elements are included in square brackets within the transcript in the place where they occur (Kirjo, 2021, p. 53–54). This is demonstrated in example 7 as follows:

(7) 2nd June 2015; 2.51 pm

Official transcript

Arvostamani pääministeri Sipilä, te olette tässä kuvassa
prime minister Sipilä who I appreciate, you are in this picture
opiskelijan kanssa, tekstinä “Koulutuksesta ei leikata”,
with a student, with text “No cuts from education”,
vieressä ministeri Stubb. [Puhuja näytti kuvaa]⁹
next to minister Stubb. [The speaker showed a picture]

In the example, the MP refers to an artifact with an NP *tässä kuvassa* “in this picture.” The pronoun *tässä* “in this,” in this case, refers to the material context of the session. The editor has interpreted this deictic reference as an expression that requires an explanation for the reader of the transcript. To address this issue, the editor has added a description in brackets.

In addition to the features that have been described earlier, there have traditionally been a few other editorial decisions that have had a noticeable effect on how the interaction is presented in the official transcript. The **interruptions**, or **interjections**, made by the MPs are transcribed in square brackets in the transcript in a similar way to the multimodal elements that were described earlier. The interruptions are not an official part of the plenary session discussion, but they are passively tolerated in the session and

routinely included in the transcript when someone reacts to them or when they are otherwise seen by the editors as essential to the session (Kirjo, 2021, p. 34–35). Example 8 shows an interruption that has been included in the official transcript as follows:

(8) 19th September 2017; 2:31 pm

Original speech

MP: joo =arvoisa (0.4) puheenjohtaja (1.0)
yeah =honorable (0.4) chairperson (1.0)
täällä on käyny esille
it has turned out here
[se että nuorten (1.4)
[that young peoples’ (1.4)
I¹⁰: [puhemies
[chairman
MP: puhemies (.) nii vielä toistaseks
chairman (.) yes still for the time being
=kiitos (0.8) elikkä tota (0.4)
=thank you (0.8) so, like, (0.4)
täällä on käyny ilmi se
it has turned out here
että nuorten alkoholinkäyttö
that alcohol consumption by young people
on vähentyny (.) tuo- näinä vuosina
has decreased (.) tu- during these years

Official transcript

Arvoisa puheenjohtaja! [Eduskunnasta: Puhemies!]
Honorable chairperson! [From the parliament: Chairman!]
—*Niin, puhemies vielä toistaiseksi, kiitos!*—
—Yes, chairman still for the time being, thank you!—
Täällä on käynyt ilmi se,
It has turned out here
että nuorten alkoholinkäyttö
that the alcohol consumption by young people
on vähentynyt näinä vuosina.
has decreased during these years.

In the example, the MP starts his speech with the form of address *arvoisa puheenjohtaja* “honorable chairperson,” which is common as an official form of address in other meetings in Finland, but in parliament, the official formulation is *arvoisa puhemies* “honorable chairman.” After the form of address, the MP manages to utter a few words before there is an interruption in the overlapping speech by another MP from the plenary hall, correcting him with the official formulation. The MP who has the floor interrupts his speech and reacts by repeating the official formulation, confirming that it is the correct formulation at the moment (*nii vielä toistaseks* “yeah still for the time being”) and thanking the other MPs (*kiitos* “thank you”). He then, after a pause, continues with the speech by repeating the utterance which was interrupted. In the official transcript, the interruption has been included in the transcript in square brackets. The plenary session secretary has not confirmed the identity of the MP who made the interruption, so it has been marked with the source expression

⁹ In the earlier data, the explanations in the brackets are in past tense, whereas in the current data they are in present tense.

¹⁰ I, in this transcript, stands for an interruption from another MP in the plenary hall.

Eduskunnasta “from the parliament.” The reaction by the MP who has the floor is separated from the surrounding speech with dashes. The interruption has been moved to directly follow the form of address that it comments upon, and the interrupted talk is removed probably because the MP repeats it after his reaction to the interruption. In other cases, interrupted talk is usually marked in the transcript with an ellipsis (...).

In the Finnish official transcript, interruptions that are not heard properly by the plenary session secretary, are not audible on the digital record, and are not reacted to by any MP, are often excluded from the transcript, unless it is seen as important to convey that the speech caused a commotion in the session (Kirjo, 2021, p. 34–35). Moreover, especially when there is a considerable number of interruptions, an interruption is often left out when an editor has interpreted it as of little importance to the session (e.g., supporting chants like *hyvä* “good” or *juuri näin* “just like that” from the same parliamentary group). In these cases, the editor decides that not including all the interruptions and the harm that it does to the authenticity, or accuracy, of the transcript is “a lesser evil” than the harm that would otherwise occur to the readability of the transcript. Moreover, since these types of interruptions are quite frequent in the session and only some of them are caught by the plenary session secretary, the ones that are caught could be seen as getting a disproportionate weight when transcribed in the report (Kirjo, 2021, p. 34–35). Similarly, the **parallel discussions** which take place in the plenary hall between MPs at the time of the session are left out of the transcript as a matter of routine.

For the sake of readability and to retain the authentic impression when mediating speech into writing, some of the **utterance-initial particles** have been removed when they have been considered as not having a special function, rhetorical weight, or stylistic significance (e.g., *ja* “and,” *mutta* “but,” *no* “well,” and *eli* “so”) (Kirjo, 2021, p. 147). These discourse markers often connect utterances in spontaneous speech. If all of them were included in the transcript, they would create considerably long compound clauses which would most likely negatively affect readability and create a very different impression for the reader than they do in speech. However, research on particles (Sorjonen, 2001; Heritage, 2015) shows that they can have a large array of significant interactional functions. When editors identify an utterance-initial particle as having functional relevance in the transcript, they do not remove them. A case where utterance-initial particles have been included in the transcript can be seen in example 9 as follows:

(9) 14th September 2016; 4:07 pm

Original speech

arvoisa puhemies (1.2) vastaan (0.8) hh.
 honorable chairman (1.2) I answer (0.8) hh.
 yhteen kysymykseen joka tuli usealta
 one question which came from multiple
 (0.4) taholta tässä =elikkä (0.6) ja
 yritän
 (0.4) sources here =so (0.6) and I try
 olla lyhytsanainen (2.2) kysyttiin
 to be brief (2.2) it was asked
 sitä että miten lainvalmistelussa
 how in legislation could one
 paremmin voitaisiin perustuslaki- (0.4) ja

better the matters concerning the constitution (0.4) and
 sääätämisyjärjestysnäkökohdat ottaa huomioon
 the legislative proceedings take into account
 (1.6) no (0.4) ensinnäkin näen niin
 (1.6) well (0.4) first I see so
 että (0.6) ministeriön (1.2) omat
 that (0.6) ministry's (1.2) own
 lainvalmistelijat (.) omat virkamiehet
 legislators (.) own officials
 on avainasemassa tässä (.) että
 are in key position here (.) so that
 ministeriöissä on riittävä (0.6)
 the ministries have sufficient (0.6)
 perustuslain tuntemus
 knowledge of the constitution

Official transcript

*Arvoisa puhemies! Vastaan yhteen kysymykseen, joka tuli
 Honorable chairman! I answer one question which came
 usealta taholta tässä—ja yritän olla lyhytsanainen.
 from multiple sources here—and I try to be brief.
 Elikkä kysyttiin sitä, miten lainvalmistelussa
 So it was asked how in legislation
 paremmin voitaisiin
 could one better
 perustuslaki- ja sääätämisyjärjestysnäkökohdat
 constitution and legislative proceedings matters
 ottaa huomioon. No, ensinnäkin näen niin, että
 taken into account. Well, first I see that
 ministeriön omat lainvalmistelijat, omat virkamiehet,
 ministry's own legislators, own officials,
 ovat avainasemassa tässä, että ministeriöissä
 are in key position here, so that the ministries
 on riittävä perustuslain tuntemus. [...]
 have sufficient knowledge of the constitution. [...]*

In this example, utterance-initial particles *elikkä* “so” and *no* “well” have been included in the transcript. This means that the editor has interpreted them both as having relevant functions in the speech, besides connecting utterances. First, after saying that he will answer one question that was posed by many people, the speaker proceeds with *elikkä* to report the question. Here, the particle marks the following utterance as a conclusion from the previous utterance and also provides a shift to the next action (see Hakulinen et al., 2004, § 1031). In the example, the editor has not only included the particle but also moved it to directly precede the question, interpreting the first-person performative after it (*ja yritän olla lyhytsanainen* “and I try to be brief”) as a metapragmatic increment that is actually supposed to target the previous utterance and thus be located before the particle. After reporting the question, the speaker then begins the answer with a pause and a particle *no* “well.” With the particle, the speaker indicates that he acknowledges the project behind the reported question and starts to process it in the utterance that follows. Simultaneously, the particle might also stress that the question presents a problem that requires a solution (Vepsäläinen, 2019). This interpretation is in line with the relatively lengthy answer that follows the particle. In both cases, the utterance-initial particle serves a distinct function in

the speech, and the editor has included them in the utterance as rhetorically significant.

Similarly to some utterance-initial particles, some of the **metadiscursive expressions** (such as *sitten* “then,” *ja se että* “and the fact that”), which would draw more attention or activate more literal interpretations in writing, are not included in the transcript. The same goes for **mannerisms** that some of the MPs use frequently (e.g., *todella* “really,” *myöskin* “also” several times in a sentence). In these instances, only some, or none, of the cases are left in the transcript as stylistic markers, on the grounds that an expression, which is repeated extensively without rhetorical weight, is emphasized more in the transcript than in speech (Kirjo, 2021, p. 11).

6. Discussion

In Finland, the making of the official parliamentary transcript involves many types of editorial changes. These include certain phonological, morphological, and syntactic features, self-corrections and planning expressions, stuttering, and slips-of-the-tongue, as well as several prosodic and non-verbal features of interaction. The linguistic and editorial practices have been documented in the internal guidelines of the Records Office of the Finnish Parliament. Editing the parliamentary transcript is a form of genre-conscious language regulation where the editor operates among several interconnecting tensions. These include tensions between speech and writing as semiotic channels, authenticity and readability as competing ideals of the transcript, and naturally occurring spoken language variation and the norms of the written standard language.

Making an official transcript can be observed as a process of extexualization (Bauman and Briggs, 1990; Park and Bucholtz, 2009; see section 3 above), which decontextualizes individual turns-at-talk from the original speech event and recontextualizes them into another semiotic mode with partially different communicative resources (written text) and into another genre with its own goals and expectations (e.g., an official parliamentary plenary session record). As Komter (2022) highlights regarding this issue, this might have a profound effect on the transcribed speech event, depending on, for example, what the purpose and status of the transcript are, how the transcript is used, what is selected to be included as relevant in the transcript, and how the participants are presented. Moreover, the goals of the original speeches are unavoidably intertwined with the goals of the parliamentary record where the transcripts are included. This new context inevitably affects how the transcribed speeches are received and interpreted (see also Holder et al., 2022). Finally, all the different editorial decisions that are made in the transcription process always have an impact on how speeches are presented in the transcript. Whether these decisions are successful or not depends on the context and purpose of the transcript. As Fraser (2022) showed, no transcript is valid for all purposes: transcription choices that work well in one context might be unacceptable in another.

In addition to the explicit principles and practices of Finnish parliamentary reporting, the most central of which have been analyzed in this article, there are undoubtedly other differences between the parliamentary session and the written transcript which

are based on the individual decisions of the editors in different contexts. The detailed analysis of these phenomena is outside the scope of this study and is left for future research on Finnish parliamentary transcripts.

The editorial changes in official transcripts affect the mediation of Finnish parliamentary interaction in a number of ways. First, the standardization of linguistic variation affects the tone of transcribed speeches. Removing mostly phonological but also some morphological and syntactic variations can be seen as preserving readability and preventing over-emphasis on some spoken language features. Having said that, removing this variation might turn the register of the speeches toward a more formal direction. Second, editing some gradually emerging structures into more coherent ones, as well as removing elements, such as self-corrections, planning expressions, stuttering, and slips-of-the-tongue, affects how speakers' ways of processing their thoughts are conveyed to the readers. It might, for example, make the transcripts appear more controlled or deliberate than the original speech. Applying the linguistic metafunctions introduced by Halliday (2003), the ideational meanings that deal with describing reality are emphasized, but the interpersonal and textual meanings are often affected by editing (see also Slembrouck, 1992).

The principles of creating and editing parliamentary transcripts have changed considerably during the past few decades. This can be observed when comparing the current practices with how Kallioniemi (1946, p. 147) describes parliamentary transcription in the late 19th century. According to him, the stenographer should edit “lousy” speeches so that they became “exemplary in terms of content and language” and confusing statements became clear. In fact, according to the experienced officials in the Records Office, this type of orientation to transcription prevailed well into the 1980s, when the editors began to develop more authentic linguistic and editorial principles. The old ideals and practices were occasionally criticized for changing the transcribed speeches so much that it gave the impression that they were spoken by the same person (Kallioniemi, 1946). This means that the old transcripts might differ considerably from the original sessions (cf. Harvard, 2011, on the old transcripts of the Swedish Parliament). Some old editorial principles that are no longer followed are the correction of false statements (e.g., figures, names, and other information), the correction of false citations (e.g., unclear formulations and missing words), and changing inappropriate behavior (e.g., informal forms of address and improper words).

It is left for later research to give a more comprehensive picture of the development of transcription and editing principles in the Finnish Parliament. However, I will illustrate a recent significant change in the editorial principles here. Between the late nineteenth century and early 2021, most short routine turns by the chairperson were excluded from the transcript. Most of these were turns where the chairperson gave the floor to the next speaker (e.g., *Seuraavaksi edustaja Meri* “Next MP Meri”). The reason given for the exclusion of these administrative turns in the Records Office was that they were seen as unnecessary for the reader between MPs' speeches. The same argument was made for the exclusion of different metadiscursive and technical remarks which refer to the organization of the session, such as comments on the microphone (*anteeksi onko mikrofoni päällä* “excuse me is the microphone on”). Another reason for the exclusion of routine

turns by the chairperson and different metadiscursive remarks was that they were not seen as substantial parts of the session but rather as its technical administration (Voutilainen, 2016). However, since the beginning of 2021, all these have been included in the transcript—except for some of the simple cancellations of taking the floor when they are not commented on in the session. The reason for including all the chairpersons' routine turns, as well as administrative and technical remarks, is to convey the nature of the parliamentary plenary session as institutional interaction. A further reason for their inclusion is to reduce the monologization of the session in the transcript, which was seen to happen during the earlier practice when the administrative turns had been edited out (Records Office, 2021; Voutilainen, 2021).¹¹

The inclusion of chairpersons' turns has had a considerable impact on how the plenary session interaction is conveyed in the official transcript. The chairperson has a significant administrative role in every official speech by giving the floor to the MPs and managing the technical details of the session. When these administrative and technical turns were largely edited out, the focus of the official transcript was almost exclusively on the individual speeches, whereas the nature of the plenary session as institutional interaction was faded out. The inclusion of chairpersons' turns and other technical talk has increased, mediating the nature of plenary session conversation as a whole. In other words, it has significantly affected the chronotope of the transcript, i.e., how the sense of time and space in the institution is communicated to the reader (see Bakhtin, 1981; see also De Fina and Perrino, 2020).

The relationship between parliamentary sessions and parliamentary transcripts is especially important to consider when using parliamentary transcripts as data for scientific research. There might not be serious validity problems for analyzing the content of the speeches, but when studying the interactional details, discourse processing, or linguistic variation, for example, the researcher should consult the original audio and video recordings of the sessions. Even when analyzing the content of the speeches, it is important to note that the form and content of the speeches might be difficult to keep separate in practice (see Semino, 2011). For example, the regional phonological features that are removed in the transcript might carry important weight in practically profiling the MP as a politician with regional issues at heart. In addition to this, there is always the possibility that some parts of speech have been misheard or misinterpreted by the transcriber and the editor. For a parliamentary researcher, it is nonetheless important to familiarize oneself with the transcription practices and editorial principles of the parliament in question. Preliminary studies suggest that there are vast differences between these practices and principles in different parliaments (Voutilainen, 2019a,b). To shed more light on this, it is important to provide systematic comparisons between transcription cultures, working methods, and linguistic ideologies of different parliamentary reporting offices in the future.

¹¹ Regarding the same phenomenon in the Hansard of the House of Commons, UK, see Slembrouck (1992). Regarding monologisation in quoting, see Haapanen (2017).

Data availability statement

Publicly available datasets were analyzed in this study. This data can be found here: <https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/search/Sivut/Vaskiresults.aspx#Default=%7B%22k%22%3A%22%22%2C%22o%22%3A%5B%7B%22d%22%3A1%2C%22p%22%3A%22Laadintapvm%22%7D%5D%2C%22r%22%3A%5B%7B%22n%22%3A%22Asiakirjatyypinimi%22%2C%22t%22%3A%5B%22%5C%22%2C%7%82%2C%7%8250c3b67974c3a46b69726a61%5C%22%22%5D%2C%22o%22%3A%22AND%22%2C%22k%22%3Afalse%2C%22m%22%3A%7B%22%5C%22%2C%7%82%2C%7%8250c3b67974c3a46b69726a61%5C%22%22%3A%22P%22%3B6yt%22%3A4kirja%22%7D%7D%2C%7B%22n%22%3A%22Toimija%22%2C%22t%22%3A%5B%22%5C%22%2C%7%82%2C%7%8254c3a47973697374756e746f%5C%22%22%5D%2C%22o%22%3A%22AND%22%2C%22k%22%3Afalse%2C%22m%22%3A%7B%22%5C%22%2C%7%82%2C%7%8254c3a47973697374756e746f%5C%22%22%3A%22T%22%3A%4ysistunto%22%7D%7D%5D%7D>.

Ethics statement

Written informed consent was not obtained from the individual(s) for the publication of any potentially identifiable images or data included in this article.

Author contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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