


Drawing Justice: Comics as Tools for Legal Literacy

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About me

- PhD, Translation Studies
 - Dissertation: *How do images affect the translator's solutions?*
- Post-doc: Sarjis research group
 - *Word to Image* (2020-2023) & *Graphic Justice* (2020-2024)
 - **Turning documents into comics**
- Currently: Principal Investigator
 - *Contract language: From unsustainable jargon to clear sustainability communication* (2024-2026)
 - **More subtle forms of visualization**
 - *The Audiodescription Handbook* (2024-2025)
- Kaatra, Kaisa & Anne Ketola (2023). *Selkokuvaopas* [Picture communication guide]. The Finnish Center for Easy Language.



**Finding ways to
improve access
to information**

Using images with low-literate target users: Challenges and potential

- What is lost, and what is gained when we translate words into images?

TYPICAL CHALLENGES

- What can we represent as an image (concrete vs. abstract content)?
- How do we represent people (the target user) in the image?
- How much content can we include?

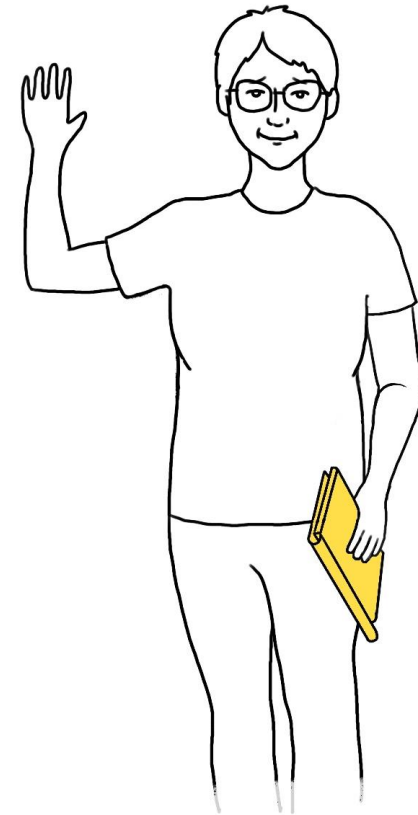
Images take up a lot of space ->

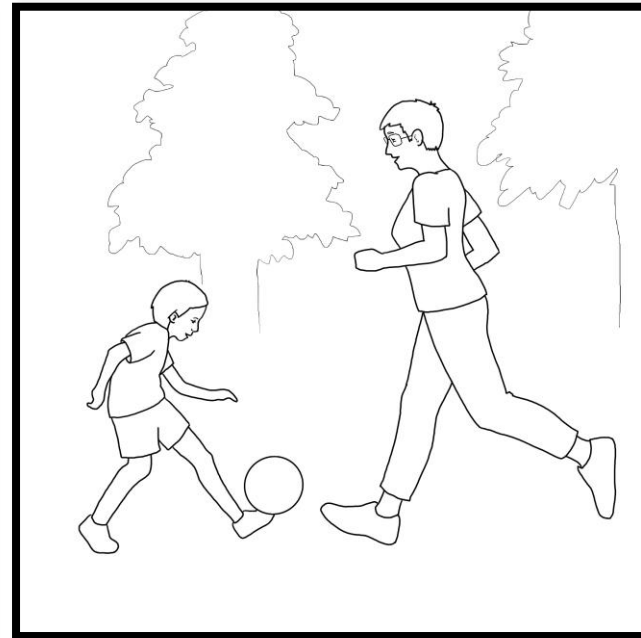
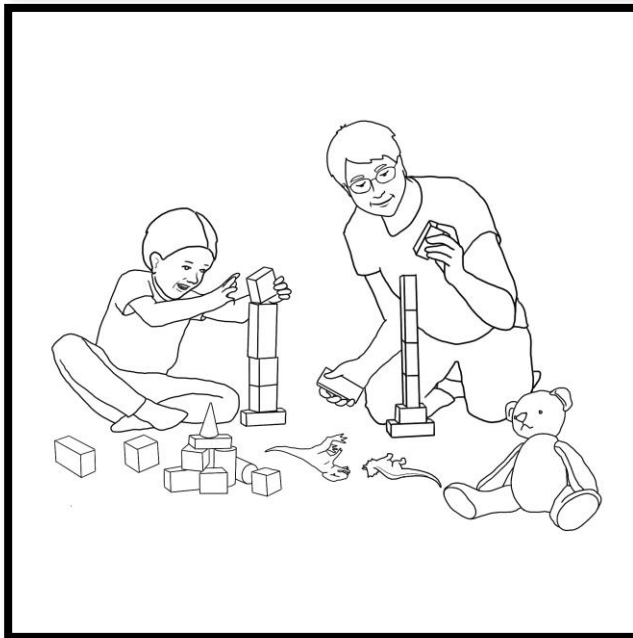
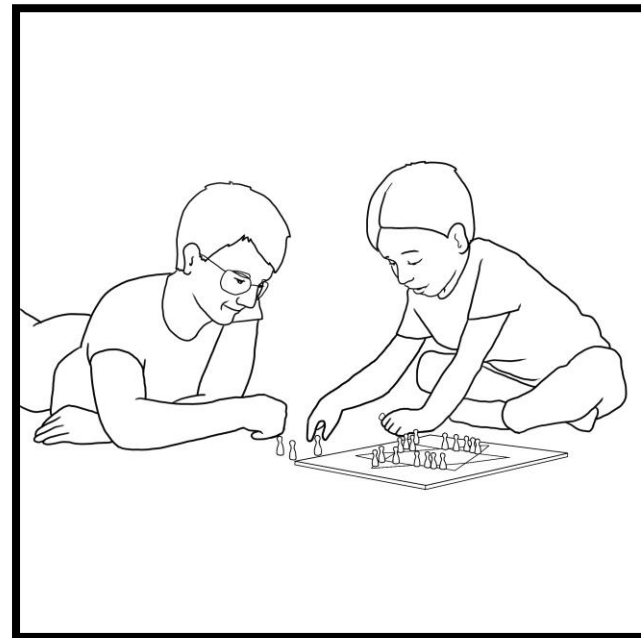
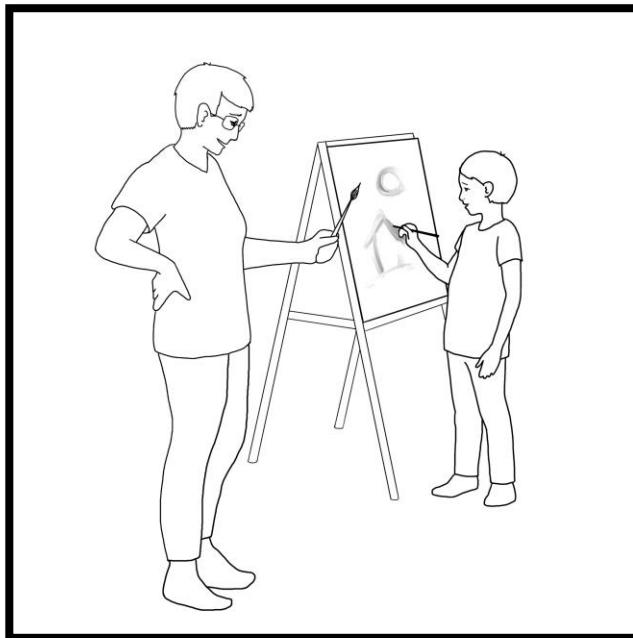
Comic-style documents are long ->

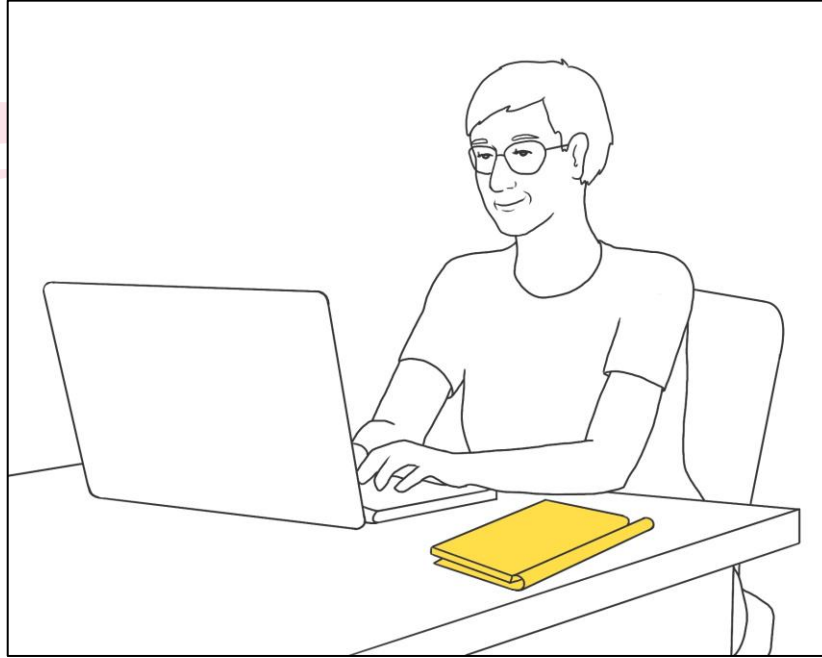
Only *strictly essential* information included, rest is *omitted*

Example: Concrete vs. abstract information

- **Riikka Era, PhD research:** Child asylum seekers: What is it like to spend your childhood in a reception center?
 - Ethnographic research: Spending time at the reception center
 - First data collection: Illiteracy was not brought up!
 - No shared language; automatic translation tools
 - Researcher's moral duty to make an effort the genuinely inform **the children but also the parents**
- **Illustrated informed consent document**
- **Illustrations to explain the research to the children**







RESEARCH =
Taking notes;
writing about those notes



Riikka Era & Anne Ketola (forthcoming): *Tutkimusviestintää vastaanotto- keskuksessa: Kuvien toimijuus monikielisissä vuorovaikutustilanteissa.*

Can the reader
identify with the visual
character?

Does the image
represent the user in
the way the user wants
to be represented?

-> *Acceptability of
images?*

Challenge:
How is the user
of the document
represented in
the images?

- Agreements for supervised exchange and supervised visitation services



- Service descriptions of two home support services (meal and safety services)



E.g. Supervised meetings comic

- How the meeting is organized
- What is allowed and what is not
- Etc.



THE SUPERVISOR SEES AND HEARS EVERYTHING THAT THE CHILD AND PARENT DO DURING THE MEETING.

E.g. Meal service comic

- How and when the meals are brought
- How meals are ordered
- Etc.



"The food is cold. It should be kept in the fridge."



"Warm up the meal in the microwave."

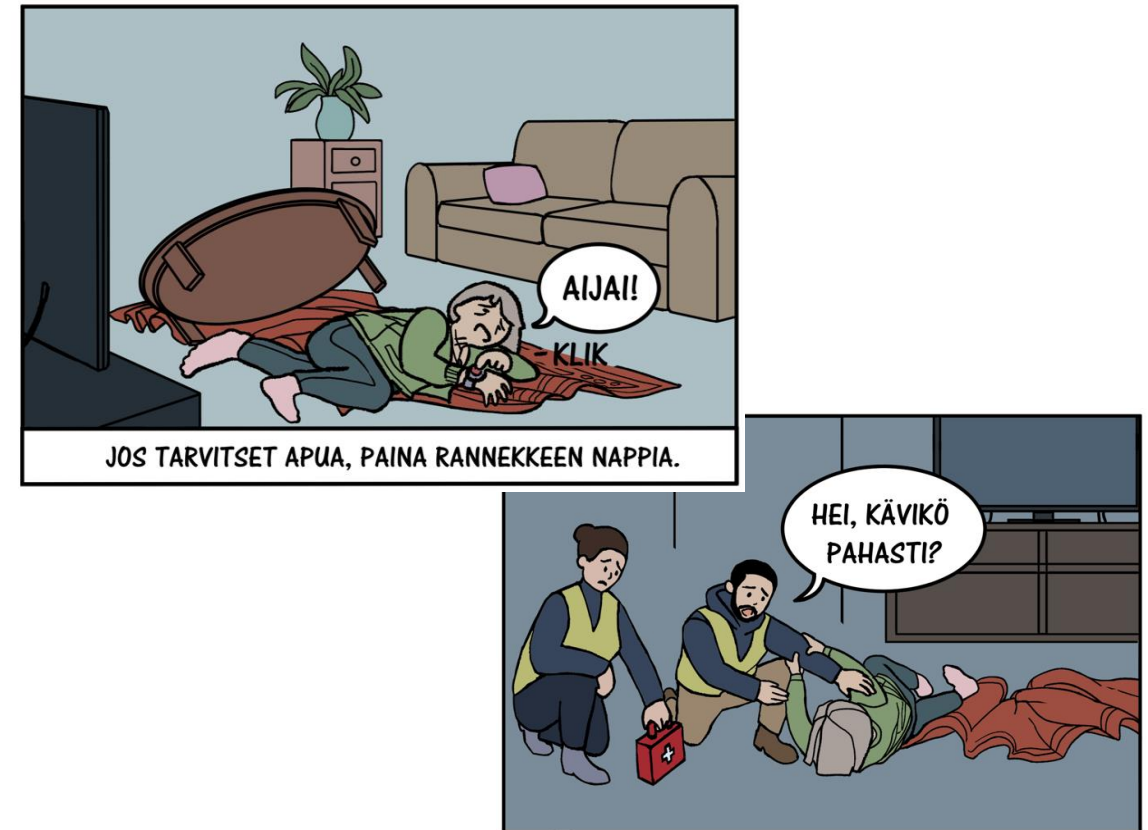
Presenting the client respectfully:

Nakedness makes client more vulnerable than necessary

Version 1



Version 2



Presenting the client respectfully:
Size reflecting a physically capable person

Version 1



Version 2



Racial representation? Gender representation?



A large, irregular pink brushstroke shape serves as a background for the text. It has a soft, painterly texture with visible brush marks and a slightly darker pink outline on the right side.

Which is better:

Understanding **some**,
or understanding **none**?

Work continues: Sarjis

ProLingJust (*Promoting Linguistic Justice with Social Welfare Comics; 2025–2026, Research Council of Finland. PI Eliisa Pitkäsalo*)

- Home service comics translated into **Sami, Romani and Russian**
- Which cultural factors may influence the acceptability of the images?



Work continues

Original



Pay wages in a regular, timely and stable manner, and fully in legal tender. Partial payment in the form of allowance “in kind” is only accepted in line with ILO specifications.

- JARGONFREE:
- Contract Language project (Kone Foundation, 2024-26)

Our version

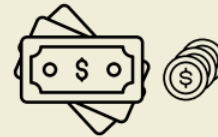


HOW DO I RECEIVE MY PAY?

PAY
is what you earn
from your work.



Usually you get
your pay in
MONEY.



Sometimes you can get a part of your pay in
BENEFITS.

Benefits means **FOOD** or a **PLACE TO SLEEP.**



YOUR BOSS HAS TO

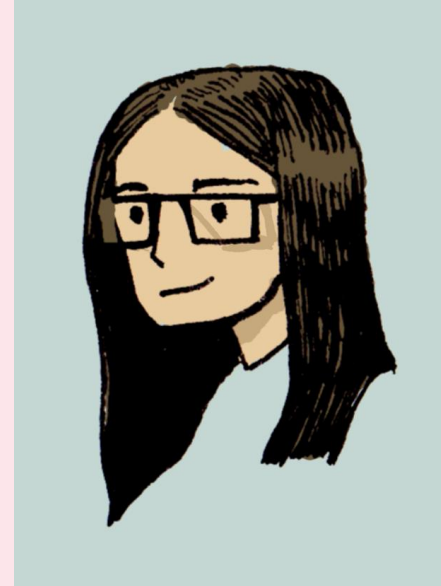
- pay you **regularly**, for example once a month,
- pay you **on time**,
- pay the **full amount** you have earned,
- pay you either in **cash** or put directly into your **bank account**,
- pay you in the **currency** that is commonly used in your country.

Thank you!

[Research.tuni.fi/sarjis](https://research.tuni.fi/sarjis)

[Jargonfree.fi](https://jargonfree.fi)

[Creative-contracts.com](https://creative-contracts.com)



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