

## **4.2 COGNITIVE APPROACH TO TRANSLATING JAPANESE-ENGLISH ONOMATOPOEIC WORDS: FINDING PARALLELS**

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**Abstract.** The research offers insight into understanding how frames and cognitive approach can be used to convey the meaning of Japanese onomatopoeia in the Japanese - English translation process. Based on the present scientific and practical researches of the novel by Haruki Murakami “Wind-up Bird Chronicles” and its translations J. Rubin, there have been counted the frequency of use along with clarification of the semantic and stylistic peculiarities of onomatopoeia. Further understanding of verbal mimetic conflation patterns between source and target texts and its central frame models gives the possibility to define the reasons for the occurrence of the broken frame in the target texts. Based on the theory of frames and theoretic and methodological research of cognitivists, who have introduced frame analysis to language and speech units, a frame is defined as a unique structure that represents a person’s cognitive knowledge and combines both cognitive and linguistic spheres in the process of speech. Therefore, unlike other types of cognitive units (e.g. concept, image), frames are patterns that represent definite utterance, relevant to the aim of translation. Thus, any cognitive unit, as a result of mental activity, having undergone the process of verbalization at the pre-linguistic stage, appears as a frame. The theoretical studies, analyzed in the research, enable the use of frame approach in the Japanese onomatopoeia translation process since it remains beyond the attention of leading researchers in this sphere.

### **1. Introduction**

Japanese mimetics are usually rendered with the help of such techniques as replacement, compensation, omission, and addition. Compensation is used to preserve lexical and emotive components, which are relevant to the reproduction of onomatopoeia functions when those components cannot be transcoded by the usage of other translation transformations. Previous works on translation of Japanese mimetics in literature include Flyxe (2002), Minashima (2004), and Inose (2008). These authors describe at what rate a particular form (e.g. noun, verb) is employed to translate a mimetic. For instance, Minashima (2004), who examines the English translation equivalents of 332 mimetics, reports that the concepts conveyed by them appear as verbs (27.1%), adverbs (18.1%), adjectives (15.4%), nouns (10.2%), onomatopoeias (7.2%), and others (5.7%), with the remaining 16.3% being left untranslated. These studies imply that translation of mimetics often involves ‘class-shifts’, which “occur when the translation equivalent of a source language item is a member of a different class from the original item” and the term ‘class’ signifies a word-class in this case [2, p.102]. Onomatopoeia may be omitted when all the major

components of the meaning are expressed through other linguistic units, when rendering of all the components of mimetics may lead to the unreasonably long translation version, or when the use of a corresponding equivalent may disrupt stylistics of the text. The study sheds the light on the peculiarities of frame approach in rendering the onomatopoeia of Murakami's novel in translation and shows the results of comparative translation analysis applied to the English translation of the novel. Frame analysis, which is used to convey the meaning of Japanese onomatopoeia in the context of English translation, enables to identify the main characteristics of Japanese syntax, especially the use of particles. Since there is no grammar case in Japanese, onomatopoeic verbs are determined by particles, and predicate plays the main role in the sentence structure. In this case, particles may form additional grammar cases.

## **2. Survey methodology**

To conduct the following research, we examined 6 of the 72 chapters of the novel:

- *Book One*: Chapter 1 "Tuesday's Wind-up Bird. Six fingers and four breasts";  
Chapter 5 "Hooked on Lemon Drops. Flightless Bird and Waterless Well";
- *Book Two*: Chapter 2 "No Good News in This Chapter"

Chapter 6 "Inheriting Property. Inquiry of Jellyfish. Something Like a Sense of Detachment"

Chapter 7 "Recollections and Dialogue about Pregnancy. Empirical Inquiry on Pain";

- *Book Three*: Chapter 36 "The Story of the Duck People. Shadow and Tears (May Kasahara's Point of View: 6)"

Chapter 39 "Goodbye"

One is noteworthy about the translation analysis of *Book Three*, is that it comprises the largest part of the novel, which is 41 chapters, though we picked up only 2 chapters, because there Murakami uses minimal number of onomatopoeic words in comparison with *Book One and Book Two*.

The results of this study were displayed in 7 histogram graphs, illustrating our translation analysis of Japanese onomatopoeias in the translation of "The Wind-up Bird Chronicle" by Jay Rubin [10]. The following graphs, are based on the following criteria:

- 1) the presence of loneliness topic in the title of each chapter;
- 2) the presence of sufficient number of onomatopoeias to convey the frame LONELINESS in the source language text and its target language text;
- 3) translation methods of conveying onomatopoeias in the target language text;
- 4) reasons for mimetics' omission and addition during the translation process in English version of the novel.

Having examined the of onomatopoeic words used by H. Murakami in *Book One*, we found that in *Chapter 1* on 42 pages he used 62 words, which is

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about 1.5 words per page, and in *Chapter 5* on 24 pages – 56 words, which is 2, 5 words per page accordingly. In those two chapters Murakami dragged the attention to so called "musicalisation of the text flow". One more peculiarity is a significant amount of onomatopoeic words used for connotative coloring of the text. Murakami also relies on a large number of sound symbols to describe in detail the inner world and excitement of protagonist:

「あなたに関係のないことでしょう。何時に何を何を食べようが僕の勝手だ」、僕はちよつと ムツとして 言った。

「それはそうね」、女の表情のない乾いた声で言った、ちよつとした感情の変化で声のトーンが がらりと 変わるのだ。「まあいいわ、あとでかけなおすから」 [7, p. 20].

To convey ANXIETY frame in the given dialogue, H. Murakami used simple syllabic symbolisms ムツと(する) (mutto suru) - to be offended, to get into a huff, ちよつとした (chotto shita) - to change a little, slightly and がらりと (gararito) – all of sudden.

Though J. Rubin has omitted mimetic ムツと(する) (mutto) in his translation:

*That is none of your business, I said. I decide what I eat and when I eat it.* [10, p. 6].

It can be noticed that *seme of irritability* was eliminated in source language translation, suggesting that J. Rubin decided to neglect the sound symbolism in this case in favor of a set expression *That is none of your business*, which preserves the expressiveness of the protagonist's statement. Within the development of tragic events in the life of protagonist, Murakami often uses one-syllable sound symbolism to convey the frame LONELINESS, which emphasizes mental loneliness of the protagonists:

その間妻は台所のテーブルの前に座って ぼんやり といた [7, p. 49].

*Kumiko sat at the kitchen table and vegged out* [10, p. 22].

One-syllable sound symbolism ぼんやり と (bonyarito) – absence of mind, blockhead. J. Rubin in this case used a slang phrase *veg out* with a short version of the word *vegetable* to describe the inactive state of human, when he/she does nothing and becomes literary *like a vegetable*:

食事の後で僕は風呂から出てくると、クミコは電灯消した居間の暗闇の中に一人で ぼつんと 座っていた。クレイのシャツを着て暗闇の中に じつ とうぞくまっていると、彼女はまるで間違った場所に置き去りにされた荷物のように見えた [7, p. 50].

*When I finished bathing after dinner, Kumiko was sitting in the living room with the lights out. Hunched in the dark with her grey shirt on, she looked like a piece of luggage that had been left in the wrong place* [10, p. 23].

In the above abstracts it should be noticed that the onomatopoeic words ぼつんと (potunto) and じつ と (jitto) in the English translation were omitted,

which made frame LONELINESS broken, since the phrase *like a piece of luggage that was left in the wrong place* does not fully implement the information, which is contained in these one-syllable soundsymbolism, creating the effect of "silence and immersion in their own inner world." Onomatopoeias are often used to convey puns, linguistic characteristics of the characters and often replaced by proverbs and phrase. For example, 頭がぼんやりして (atama ga bonyari shite), J. Rubin conveyed by means of idiomatic expression "fog over", creating the effect of "condensated window" in a figurative meaning to describe the state of protagonist:

*I felt my brain fogging over. The last thing I wanted to do was think* [10, p. 18].

The next peculiar feature of this research concerns the ratio of the amount of onomatopoeic vocabulary with the names of sections. In the titles of all three chapters there are words that are directly related to the topic of LONELINESS and negative feelings, which we have demonstrated through in the present study in the use of certain mimetic words in the novel by H. Murakami. In the title of Chapter 2 this is *negative participle* の (no); in the title of Chapter 6 the noun *detachment* acts as a marker of loneliness, and in Chapter 7 this effect is reached through the presence of the noun *pain*:

Chapter 2 この章では良いニュースはなにひとつない

*No good news in the chapter*

Chapter 6 遺産相続、クラゲについての考察、乖離の感覚のようなもの

*Inheriting property*

*Inquiry on Jellyfish, something like a sense of detachment*

Chapter 7 妊娠についての回想と対話、苦痛についての実験的考察

*Recollections and dialogue on Pregnancy*

*Empirical Inquiry on pain*

In Chapter 2 of the 22 units of onomatopoeic vocabulary H. Murakami uses only 4 sound symbols with a reduplicated basis, which in most cases are semantically flexible sound-symbolic words that have the property of forming subframes of metonymical extension which is typical for Japanese language. It is an important tool not only for describing feelings, but also for transmitting voice / noise from a new angle, enabling its new use and practical application. This provides new opportunities to maintain adequacy in the translation of these onomatopoeias.

### 3. Findings

The systematic use of "melding text and music" in Haruki Murakami's novels makes it possible to identify a significant number of onomatopoeic units that provide connotative coloring of the text in translation. It is also relevant to the novel "Wind-up Bird Chronicles", where each of three parts is named by the author after the well-known musical masterpieces, namely, "The Thieving Magpie" (J. Rossini's opera), "The Prophet Bird" (R. Schumann's Piano Cycle), and "The Birdcatcher" (Gypsy folk song). Thus, it is logical to assert that there is a musical background in the novel,

which is adequately preserved in both English and Ukrainian translations. To visualize his inner world, Haruki Murakami uses onomatopoeia that conveys emotions and feelings of protagonists, as well as the descriptions of peculiar features and sounds of nature. It is the presence of mimetics that enables Murakami to create a complex frame net that intertwines the main storylines through the permanent repeating of some certain onomatopoeia. The study sheds the light on the connection between onomatopoeia, used in particular chapters, and titles of these chapters. Thus, there are lexical items in all the titles that are directly related to the key frames of the novel, which are conveyed by certain onomatopoeia and aura symbols in English translations of Murakami's novel. It is undeniably true that reduplicated mimetics in Murakami's novel are semantically flexible and form a subframe of sensory perception. Thus, the appliance of comparative translation analysis to these onomatopoeic verbs shows the level of adequacy/inadequacy of their transcoding in the target texts, which determines the peculiarities of sound frame/noise functions. Such a frame structure is relevant only for the Japanese language and reflects the various degrees of translation adequacy.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Thus, this research investigates the importance of cognitive approach for Japanese onomatopoeia in the translation process and presents onomatopoeia as a valuable material for the construction of frame models. The study identifies the key translation transformations to offer insights into adequate ways of rendering the sense of Japanese onomatopoeia on the case study of translated versions of Haruki Murakami novel's in the English linguistic traditions.

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