

Translanguaging in Translation: Evidence from Japanese Mimetics

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Abstract

To explore the possibility of translanguaging in translation, a corpus of seven English translations of a Japanese novel, *GingaTetsudō no Yoru*, was quantitatively and qualitatively studied with a focus on mimetics. Among the 1,806 possible spaces for renderings of Japanese mimetics across the seven English translations, only 15.61% were mimetics rendered by mimetics, and most of which were rendered by lexicalized mimetics in English. Only 1.44% were non-lexicalized mimetics rendered by non-lexicalized mimetics, but some of them have revealed the artifacts of translanguaging. They also have revealed that translanguaging in translation can have a significant rhetorical effect that can expand the pragmatic dimension of the text while the risks of translanguaging for translators can be reduced by creative ways of scaffolding. However, like translation, translanguaging is constrained by societally constructed norms of language use although it can also shape our languages and language use.

Keywords: translanguaging, multilingualism, translation, mimetics, pragmatics, Japanese

1. Introduction

Translanguaging is a rapidly growing concept on language use. Translanguaging basically refers to a deployment of an individual's linguistic repertoire disregarding the boundary between socially named languages (Baker, 2003; Makoni and Pennycook, 2007; García, 2007, 2009; Blackledge and Creese, 2010; Creese and Blackledge, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011; Li, 2011; Lewis et al., 2012; García and Li, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015 among others). Most translanguaging research has focused on spontaneous interactive communicative practices observable in classrooms, households and institutions in current multilingual societies (Li, 2011; Li and Zhu, 2013; Mori and Shima, 2014; He, 2016, Zhu and Li, 2016, etc.). Although García and Li (2014) extensively discuss the implications of translanguaging on education, their conceptualization of translanguaging is extremely inclusive. They assume that translanguaging applies to "all meaning-making modes" (p. 29) including literacy and literary practices and even the use of images for communication. They also assume that translanguaging is not limited to the current globalized era, claiming that translanguaging in writing has been common "from ancient times to today" (p. 26). Following their broad concept of translanguaging, this paper assumes that translanguaging applies to all modes of language use for communication, across time, space, and discipline, and attempts to apply it to the study of translated texts.

Although there is a close connection between translation and translanguaging, translated texts are rarely studied for the research of translanguaging. This may be because translated texts are typically the products of deliberate acts that maintain a clear boundary between two named languages. Additionally, crossing the boundary between them is subject to professional risks to translators.² Nonetheless, translation is a bilingual's interpretive and expressive process and thus, it is a part of communication as argued by Gutt (1991).

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² See Pym (2015) for his in-depth analysis of risks for translators. Also see Venuti (1995, 1998) for the negative attitude toward foreignness in translation prevalent in Anglo-America.

This applies to all translations regardless of whether they are orally done, informally written, or carefully completed and published, and they are subject to the theories of communication, for example, Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986) and Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). It follows that translated texts can be viewed as context-sensitive communicative products (House, 1977, 1997), ideology-driven cultural products (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990) or socio-politically filtered products (Venuti, 1995, 1998), and they can transform the norms of language use (Wakabayashi, 2009). Accordingly, we expect translanguaging to potentially occur strategically even with resistance during a translation process. For example, recent translators of post-colonial literature interject linguistic elements of the source text (ST) in the target text (TT) to emphasize social identity taking a risk of unintelligibility (Niranjana, 1992). Similarly, translation of Chinese and Western texts in Japan has crossed the boundaries of multiple named languages through their unique literacy practice (Taylor and Taylor, 2014). Thus, translated texts may reveal the artifacts of translanguaging, where translators introduce new concepts, voice ideologies and create or re-create rhetorical effects. Some such cases create norms of language use, transforming syntactic structures (Wakabayashi 2009) and creating new words and concepts. The important notions of translanguaging conceptualized in García and Li (2014) as well as in Li (2011), namely, creativity, criticality and transformative power, can shed light on the field of translation studies, providing uniform accounts of a variety of translation behaviors. In the same way, the empirical evidence for translanguaging found in translated texts can further support the foundational concept of translanguaging with explanatory accounts of it.

To examine the nature of translanguaging in translated texts, this paper studies a corpus of seven English translations of the same Japanese novel, with a focus on the fate of mimetics in the Japanese ST. Mimetics are known as the only exceptions for Saussurean sound-meaning arbitrariness. If this view is correct, mimetics in the ST should be relatively easily permeated into their TTs. Thus, we can hypothesize that mimetics are the ideal sites for translanguaging in translation. Mimetics have a significant rhetorical expressiveness. They can directly appeal to our sensory systems to evoke visual, auditory, and emotional images (Kita, 1997; Sasamoto and Jackson, 2016). On the other hand, the status of mimetics differs from culture to culture depending on the norms of language use. Mimetics are standardly used in Japanese, but they are marginal in English except lexicalized mimetics that can be properly incorporated in a sentence as a verb or as an adjective. Accordingly, whether mimetics can serve as ideal sites for translanguaging is also questionable. The text to be studied here is a Japanese novel, *Ginga Tetsudō no Yoru*, written by Miyazawa Kenji (1896-1933), which is known to include numerous mimetics and has at least seven English translations published within the past 30 years. The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 reviews relevant literature on mimetics, translation studies, and translanguaging. Section 3 describes the methods and materials of the study. Section 4 provides statistical results, which are evaluated and analyzed in section 5. Section 6 is a brief conclusion.

2. Preceding Studies

2.1. Mimetics

Tsujimura (2014:104) refers to sound-symbolic expressions as “mimetics.”³ She classifies mimetics into onomatopoeias and ideophones; onomatopoeias are iconic expressions of actual sounds and the rest are ideophones.⁴ Mimetics may be marginal expressions in some languages such as English unless lexicalized. On the other hand, they may be fully-fledged standard vocabulary in other languages such as Japanese. Japanese Onomatopoeia Dictionary (*Nihongo Onomatopoei Jiten*)⁵ lists 4,500 mimetics (Ono, 2007). Japanese mimetics have been extensively discussed by linguists in light of structure, acquisition, and communication (Hirose, 1981; Kita, 1997; Hamano, 1998; Tamori and Schourup, 1999; Shinohara and Uno, 2013; Dingemanse and Akita, 2016; Sasamoto and Jackson, 2016 among others).

³ Hasegawa (2015:71) and Dingemanse and Akita (2016) use the cover term “ideophone” instead of mimetics.

⁴ Some scholars classify mimetics into three groups: phonomimes that iconically imitate actual sounds; phenomimes that symbolically describe states; and psychomimes that sound-symbolically describe mental states or sensations (Martin, 1975; Hirose, 1981; Shibatani, 1990; Yamaguchi, 2007 among others). However, the current study is interested in the difference between mimetics that imitate actual sounds and mimetics that do not because the main question is whether the former can be more easily accessible to the speakers of different named languages than the latter due to its sound-imitative nature. Accordingly, the two-way division of mimetics is adopted rather than the three-way division of mimetics. The current study also divides mimetics into lexicalized mimetics and non-lexicalized mimetics in Section 3.

⁵ The term “onomatopoeia” is often used as an umbrella term for onomatopoeias and ideophones. In Japan, the term “onomatope” is commonly used for this purpose.

Hirose (1981:33) argues that English verbs tend to be “synthetic” and express the action and the associated manners simultaneously, while Japanese equivalents are “analytic,” comprising of a generic verb and a mimetic word. For example, different types of walking are expressed by different verbs in English, but by the same generic verb (*aruku*, to walk) paired with different mimetic words in Japanese, as in: *choko-chokoaruku* (to waddle), *teku-tekuaruku* (to trudge), *toko-tokoaruku* (to trot), *doshi-doshiaruku* (to lumber), *tobo-toboaruku* (to plod), *buraburaaruku* (to stroll), *yota-yotaaruku* (to stagger), and *yochi-yochiaruku* (to toddle).⁶ Japanese mimetic words are easily recognized by their shape. They typically have a base that consists of two light syllables or one heavy syllable and the base is frequently reduplicated, as in *koro-koro* and *kiN-kiN*.⁷ However, reduplicated forms may have a slightly altered syllable as in *dogi-magi* (frustratedly). Some bases can be extended, being followed by the moraic nasal (N), the glottal stop (Q),⁸ or the syllable /ri/, or through vowel lengthening, as in *koroN*, *koroQ*, *korori* and *kiN*. They can be followed by a particle such as the quotation particle *to*, the adverb formative particle *ni*, and the genitive particle *no*, and a verb such as *suru*(to do) and *iu*(to say), depending on the position in a sentence. Native speakers of Japanese share common intuitions about the semantics of mimetics. Hamano (1998) provides a comprehensive study of mimetic words and relates their phonological features and their semantic features. Nonetheless, the meaning of mimetic words is context-sensitive. For example, *koro-koro* may denote the chirping sound of cricket, but may also denote the rolling movement of a small object or even a frequently changing someone’s decisions. Similarly, the lexical status of mimetic words is quite blurry. Instead of basing on the absolute phonetic similarity between a mimetic word and its signified, Tamori and Schourup (1999: 200-201) present multiple linguistic criteria⁹ that evaluate mimeticity and propose that the mimeticity is judged to be higher if a greater number of such criteria are satisfied. Mimeticity is the degree to which a word can be perceived as directly mimicking sounds, manners or states and the lexicality is the degree to which a mimetic word is functioning as a lexical word according to Tamori and Schourup (1999: 189). They show that the degree of mimeticity and the degree of lexicality are gradual rather than binary, and they are inversely proportional: a mimetic word that shows more signs of lexicality has less mimeticity and a mimetic word that shows less signs of lexicality has more mimeticity (p. 189).

A non-native speaker’s accessibility to mimetics is an interesting question and is quite relevant to the current study. Ihara and Iwahara (1938) show that sound-meaning relationships are not transparent cross-linguistically when comparing Chinese and Japanese speakers. Frei (1970), cited in Hirose (1981:28), found that French speakers’ accessibility to Japanese onomatopoeias improves slightly once contexts are given. Iwasaki et al. (2007) show that English speakers’ accessibility to Japanese mimetics describing laughter is better than those describing walking, indicating that onomatopoeias are more easily accessible than ideophones for non-native speakers. Japanese mimetics have a significant rhetorical value and are effective tools for expressing contextual information, vividly evoking auditory and imaginary sensations. Kita (1997:380) argues that the semantic representation of Japanese mimetics belongs to the “affecto-imagistic dimension of meaning,” where languages have “direct contact with sensory, motor, and affective information.” Sasamoto and Jackson (2016:17) argue that mimetics can express “extremely vague impressions” which are difficult to convey in “purely propositional terms.” However, mimetics in Japanese are unlikely to be rendered as mimetics in English translations. Kubo (1997) shows that only 21.26% of mimetics in ten of Miyazawa Kenji’s short stories are rendered as mimetics in English translations by John Bester. Inose (2007) shows that 57.14% of onomatopoeias in Murakami Haruki’s *Sputnik no Koibito* were rendered as onomatopoeias in its English translation by Philip Gabriel.¹⁰ These results are based on the translation by a single translator for a given ST. Accordingly, multiple translations of the same ST need to be examined to obtain more accurate insight on Japanese mimetics in STs and their fate in the TTs.

⁶ The examples are from Tsujimura (2014: 373).

⁷ A moraic nasal is represented by /N/ only if it appears in a mimetic word.

⁸ The first part of double consonants is represented by /Q/ only if it appears in a mimetic word.

⁹ The criteria are: (a) Represents sounds; (b) Necessitates the use of a quotation particle *to*; (c) May be used as quotation; (d) May be used independently without being included in a sentence; (e) May be used in the Japanese structure X *to iu* Y (Y that is called X); (f) Has a descriptive power; (g) May be used as a label in comic books; (h) May be able used with the particle *te* instead of the (quotative) particle *to* (Tamori and Schourup (1999: 200-201).

¹⁰ Although Inose (2007) does not provide the data for ideophones, the rate of mimetic rendering of overall mimetics is expected to be much lower once she includes the data for ideophones.

2.2. Translation Studies

Translation studies began to exist as an academic discipline in the second half of the 20th century.¹¹ The initial major objective of translation studies was to take a structure-oriented linguistic approach to construct a model of transformation from the ST to the TT as attempted by Nida (1964, 1969) and Catford (1965). However, their models were incapable of handling anything above the sentence level.¹²

From the late 1970s to the 1990s, the linguistic approach shifted its focus from sentences to texts, constructing theories of translation based on the theories of language use, discourse and pragmatics, closely comparing STs and TTs and their respective cultures. For example, House (1977, 1997) employs Hallidayan systemic linguistics in her framework for translation assessment. Baker (1992) relativizes the concept of equivalence at different levels (word, above-word, grammar, thematic structure, cohesion and pragmatic levels), reflecting Hallidayan systemic linguistics. Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997) incorporate Hallidayan analysis for revealing ideologies hidden in translations. Gutt's (1991) model of translation is based on Relevance Theory proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986).

Such a context-oriented linguistic approach complements what the structure-oriented linguistic approach is incapable of explaining. Although it was challenged by the scholars who advocate for the "cultural turn" in the 1990s for its lack of emphasis on sociocultural and socio-political ideologies (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990), the context-oriented linguistic approach can also integrate larger issues such as ideologies and ethics (Venuti, 1995, 1998) through a descriptive study of linguistic elements in translation (House, 1997; Baker, 2005; Malmkjaer, 2005). Descriptive studies of translated texts have been essential for identifying societally constructed norms of translation. Toury (1995) proposes Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), a research methodology where specific units of ST-TT pairs called "coupled pairs" are descriptively analyzed to draw generalizations about translation patterns and to reconstruct the "norms" of translation. Chesterman (1997) proposes a descriptive methodology that draws "S-Universal" and "T-Universal" to characterize translation behaviors and translated texts: S-Universal is found by comparing STs and TTs; T-Universal is found by comparing TTs and non-translated target language texts. Such descriptive studies can certainly shed light not only on the linguistic features of translated texts, norms of translations, risks for translators, and ethics of translation, but also on the concept of translanguaging.

2.3. Translanguaging

The term translanguaging is the translation of a Welsh term *trawysieithu*, which was coined by Cen Williams to refer to the pedagogical practice of deliberately using two languages for teaching and learning in classrooms (Williams, 1994, cited in Baker, 2003:81). This term has been widely used by linguists and educators to refer to complex and fluid language practices by individuals, in multilingual communities and in classrooms (Baker 2003; Makoni and Pennycook, 2007; García, 2007, 2009; Blackledge and Creese, 2010; Creese and Blackledge, 2010; Canagarajah, 2011; Li, 2011; Lewiset al., 2012; García and Li, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2015 among others). Ofelia García and Li Wei (2014) provide an inclusive theorization of translanguaging:

Translanguaging is an approach to the use of language, bilingualism and the education of bilinguals that considers the language practices of bilinguals not as two autonomous language systems as has been traditionally the case, but as one linguistic repertoire with features that have been societally constructed (García and Li, 2014: 1).

Translanguaging changes the view of languages, bilinguals (multilinguals), and bilingualism (multilingualism) not only for educators and policymakers, but also for linguists. The basic assumption behind translanguaging is that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person (Grosjean, 1982, 1989), but they have "one linguistic system" that embodies and integrates features of societally conspired different languages, whose usage may conform to the societally constructed norms, but it may not (García and Li, 2014:15). Most importantly, translanguaging presupposes a language not as a static system of codes and structures, but as "linguaging," a dynamic and self-evolving continuous action that shapes the way we use languages (Becker, 1995; García and Li, 2014:8).

¹¹ The name of the discipline "translation studies" was created based on the paper "The name and nature of translation studies" delivered by James S. Holmes (1924–1986) in 1972 (Munday, 2012:10).

¹² Catford (1965) intends his shifts to apply at the text level, but his empirical illustrations are limited to sentence-internal elements (Munday, 2012:94).

Translanguaging embraces “creative and critical” meaning-making, has a transformative power (Li, 2011; García and Li, 2014) and is driven by communicative and rhetorical effectiveness (Caranarajah, 2011).¹³ It is understood to be found in daily communications in multilingual families, classrooms and community institutions (Li, 2011; Li and Zhu, 2013; Mori and Shima, 2014; He, 2016, etc.).

However, García and Li (2014) presents the most inclusive concept of translanguaging. They assume that translanguaging applies to “all meaning-making modes” (p. 29) including literacy and literary practices and even the use of images for communication. They also assume that translanguaging is not limited to the current globalized era, claiming that translanguaging in writing has been common “from ancient times to today” (p. 26).

Translanguaging and translation appear to be mutually exclusive practices because the literal meaning of “translation” affirms a linguistic boundary between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL), which translanguaging negates at the moment of language use. However, translation can be an ideal space for translanguaging where a bilingual’s linguistic features are rigorously challenged by a purposeful creative force for communication, and translated texts can be the spaces that hold all of the artefacts of translanguaging. Wakabayashi (2009) argues for the third language, “translational language,” in the Japanese context, which can be the reflection of translanguaging. Translanguaging and translation may be mutually exclusive by definition, but they may have the same driving force and the same constraints. Close descriptive analysis of translated texts is needed to clarify this point.

3. Methods and Materials

The current research studies translations as products and employs the methodology of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) proposed by Toury (1995), examining mimetics in the STs and their renderings in the TTs. The corpus is the Japanese novel, *Ginga Tetsudō no Yoru*, written by Miyazawa Kenji (1896-1933) around 1927¹⁴ and its seven published English translations. The English translations examined here were:

- A. Night Train to the Stars by John Bester (1987)
- B. Night of the Milky Way Railway by Sarah Strong (1991)
- C. Night on The Milky Way Train by Roger Pulvers (1996)
- D. Milky Way Railroad by Joseph Sigrist and D. M. Stroud (1996)
- E. Night on the Milky Way by Paul Quirk (2013)
- F. Night on the Galactic Railroad by Julianne Neville (2014)
- G. Night on the Milky Way Railroad by Shelley Marshall (2014)

This novel was chosen for the following three reasons. First, it was written in the 20th century and contains almost no opaque archaic expression that could unnecessarily complicate our linguistic analysis. Second, author Miyazawa Kenji is known for his abundant use of mimetics (Kubo, 1995, 1997; Flyxe, 2002; Pulvers, 2013; Nicolae, 2014). Third, this novel has a much larger number of published English translations than other Japanese novels written in the 20th century or after. The researcher has identified seven complete translations of this novel excluding the newer editions of any one of them, if any.

The story of this novel is about a schoolboy (Giovanni) from a poor family and his surreal train trip through the stars on a summer night with his best friend (Campanella), but he doesn’t realize that the train was actually transporting the dead to different destinations in the universe until the very end. The geographic setting is not made explicit. No Japanese proper names appear in the story. Many words related to the universe, nature, geology, agriculture, classical music, religions, and myths are scattered throughout the novel. The targeted audience of this novel is school age children and adults judging from the length and the vocabulary level.

¹³ See Lin (2014) for translanguaging in hip-hop lyrics.

¹⁴ The novel was discovered and published in 1934, one year after the author’s death. Some of its published editions do not include small portions of parts referred to as “cello voice.” The current study was conducted based on the Kodansha International’s bilingual edition published in 1996, and focused on the parts covered by all seven translations in order to maintain data consistency in the statistical analyses of all TTs.

The research question in the current study is whether mimetics can be easily deployed crossing the boundary between two named languages due to their alleged sound-meaning connection. Accordingly, the initial step for this research is to identify the mimetics that can be recognized by translators in the ST and the TT. To increase objectivity, the mimetics in the ST were first identified based on Ono's (2007) dictionary¹⁵ and the mimetic renderings of the Japanese mimetics in the seven TTs were identified based on the Onomatopoeia List.¹⁶

However, they include mimetics that cannot be easily perceived as mimetics. For example, *shikkari* (tightly) is listed in Ono's Onomatopoeia Dictionary, but is perceived only as a lexical adverb rather than a mimetic word. This word originated as a mimetic word, but has been lexicalized and used as a lexical word now. Let us call such mimetics "lexicalized mimetics (L-mimetics)"¹⁷ and the rest of the mimetics as "non-lexicalized mimetics (NL-mimetics)." To objectively classify L-mimetics and NL-mimetics, the following criteria is proposed:¹⁸

If a mimetic word cannot be used as a label for a sound, a manner or a state in a cartoon without being perceived as a one-word sentence or a sentence fragment, it is a lexicalized mimetic word (L-mimetic word). Otherwise, it is a non-lexicalized mimetic word (NL-mimetic word).

This predicts that mimetics such as *haQha* (laughing), *koro-koro* (rolling movement), *korori* (rolling movement) and *kusuQ* (snickering sound) are NL-mimetics while mimetics such as *shiQkari* (firmly) and *yukkuri* (slowly) are L-mimetics because the latter cannot stand by themselves as labels in a cartoon although they can be perceived as a one-word sentence or a sentence fragment. Similarly, it predicts English mimetics such as *tick-tock*, *kaboom* and *bzzzz* are NL-mimetics, but mimetics such as *rustle* and *whisper* are L-mimetics because the latter cannot stand by themselves as labels in a cartoon although they can be perceived as a one-word sentence or a sentence fragment.

A quantitative analysis was conducted to examine the extent of the renderings of Japanese NL-mimetics by English NL-mimetics (NL-to-NL mimetic renderings).¹⁹ Then, a qualitative analysis was conducted on them in light of text pragmatics and translanguaging. The concept of translanguaging adopted in this paper is based on the inclusive concept of translanguaging found in García and Li (2014), and is defined as below:

Translanguaging is a deployment of linguistic repertoire for critical and creative meaning-making disregarding the boundary between named languages, and it applies to any modes of communication across time, space and discipline.

4. Results

In the ST (*Ginga Tetsudō no Yoru*), 258 instances (107 unique items) of mimetics were identified. All instances of their English renderings in the seven English TTs were examined (n=258 for each of the seven translations, giving 1,806 total renderings). Among the seven translations (A-G), 282 renderings (105 unique renderings) were identified as mimetic expressions in English. The average rate of the mimetic rendering of Japanese mimetics was 15.61% as shown in Table 1.

¹⁵ The mimetic words obviously created by the author of the novel were counted as mimetics even though they are not listed in Ono's (2007) dictionary.

¹⁶ The Onomatopoeia List (onomatopoeialist.com) lists 997 mimetics in English. When one mimetic word in Japanese is rendered by more than one mimetic word in English, it was counted as one mimetic rendering in this study.

¹⁷ The term "lexicalized mimetics (L-mimetics)" are not meant to mean established mimetics in the current study. For example, a mimetic word with a typical template such as *koro-koro* (rolling) is quite established as a mimetic word, but it is not an L-mimetic word.

¹⁸ This definition is based on one of the eight criteria for mimeticity proposed by Tamori and Schourup (1999: 200-201), namely, "the ability to be used as a label in comic books." However, it was made more specific. The basic assumption is that L-mimetics have established morpho-syntactic properties that help them connect to other words to form a sentence and thus cannot independently occur as a label in a cartoon unless it is perceived as a one-word sentence or a sentence fragment.

¹⁹ When an English rendering by multiple mimetics includes both L- and NL- mimetics, it was counted as a NL-mimetic rendering in this study because our focus is to see the extent of the usage of NL-mimetics.

Table 1: Mimetic renderings of mimetics

Translation	Mimetics in the ST	Mimetic renderings in the TTs	Proportion of mimetics rendered
A	258	40	15.50%
B	258	42	16.28%
C	258	55	21.32%
D	258	40	15.50%
E	258	44	17.05%
F	258	24	9.30%
G	258	37	14.34%
Total	1,806	282	15.61%

Among all instances of mimetics in the ST, 29.84% (77 instances, 11 unique items) were L-mimetics and 70.16% (181 instances, 96 unique items) were NL-mimetics. Table 2 and Table 3 show the number of mimetic renderings of L-mimetics and NL-mimetics, respectively.

Table 2: Mimetic renderings of L-mimetics

Translation	L-mimetics in the ST	Renderings by L-mimetics	Proportion of the renderings by L-mimetics	Renderings by NL-mimetics	Proportion of the renderings by NL-mimetics
A	77	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
B	77	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
C	77	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
D	77	1	1.30%	0	0.00%
E	77	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
F	77	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
G	77	1	1.30%	0	0.00%
Total	539	2	0.37%	0	0.00%

Table 3: Mimetic renderings of NL-mimetics

Translation	NL-mimetics in the ST	Renderings by L-mimetics	Proportion of the renderings by L-mimetics	Renderings by NL-mimetics	Proportion of the renderings by NL-mimetics
A	181	37	20.44%	3	1.66%
B	181	38	20.99%	4	2.21%
C	181	53	29.28%	2	1.10%
D	181	36	19.89%	3	1.66%
E	181	35	19.34%	9	4.97%
F	181	21	11.60%	3	1.66%
G	181	34	18.78%	2	1.10%
Total	1,267	254	20.05%	26	2.05%

There were only 26 cases of non-lexicalized-to-non-lexicalized (NL-to-NL) mimetic renderings, which were the only cases of renderings by NL-mimetics. These 26 cases constitute only 1.44% of all renderings of the mimetics in the ST across seven translations (n=258 for each of the seven translations, giving 1,806 total renderings). They resulted from the following six mimetics in the ST: *gīgīfūgīgīfū* (sound of a comet's approaching); *goto-goto* (*goto-goto*) (sound of a train's movement) *4 instances; *gyā-gyā* (squawking); *haQha* (laughing); *kachiQkachiQ* (clock's ticking); *pataripatari* (the sound of a machine's rotation)

5. Analysis and Discussion

5.1. Nature of mimeticity

The identification of mimetic words in this study was challenging. The word *doN-doN* (progressively) and *daN-daN* (gradually) appear repeatedly in this novel.

These two words are extremely similar. Both are frequently used adverbs, indicate a progression, and have repetition of a heavy syllable whose onset and coda consonants are /d/ and /N/, respectively. However, only doN-doN is listed in Ono's (2007) Japanese Onomatopoeia Dictionary.²⁰ Although an etymological difference may be the reason, native-speakers usually perceive mimeticity from both words.

Nonetheless, native-speakers' perceptions of mimeticity are subject to change over time. Some mimetics are lexicalized with a perceivable mimeticity while others are lexicalized without it. For example, biQkuri and odoroku were derived from mimetics that express a surprise; however, biQkuri is a lexicalized mimetic with a mimeticity whereas odoroku is a lexical word without a perceivable mimeticity according to Kakehi (1986), cited by Kubo (1997). By contrast, some mimetics can be derived from lexical words. For example, the mimetic word ozu-ozu (fearful) was derived from ozu, the old conjugated form of the verb ojiru (to fear) according to Ono (2007:17). Similarly, the mimetic word chuckle in English was derived from the name of a type of laughing (Tamori and Schourup, 1999:200).

These are cases of inverse lexicalization, where a non-mimetic lexical word became a mimetic word. These cases predict that phonological features of full lexical words trigger a birth of new mimetics as a case of congeneric assimilation (Bloomfield, 1895:410). Such a bidirectional metamorphoses from lexical words to mimetics, and vice versa, discussed above, can repeat cyclically in any direction, making the native speaker's perception of mimeticity unstable, in the same way word meanings are unstable as viewed by deconstructionists (Derrida, 1985). The bidirectional metamorphoses discussed above also cause an illusion of the association between sounds and meanings in mimetics, especially in ideophones, whose sound-symbolism is more abstract than that of onomatopoeias. However, the illusion of mimeticity is not limited to ideophones, either. Onomatopoeias are in fact societally constructed. This is the very reason why the same breed of dogs bark differently depending on the societally constructed notion of "languages": ruff ruff in English, wanwan in Japanese, mungmung in Korean, and gavgav in Russian, etc. Therefore, mimetics are the products of a societally constructed melting pot of language features. Ono (2007:512) presents over 200 Japanese mimetics that were creatively derived from Sino-Japanese words, using the phonological or semantic features of Chinese characters. Such Sino-Japanese-based mimetics can be written in Chinese characters, but more and more of them are commonly written in kana (Japanese phonetic symbols), making it difficult even for native speakers of Japanese to perceive their Sino-Japanese roots as discussed in Ono (2007:512). Three of the Sino-Japanese mimetics listed in Ono (2007) appear in the currently analyzed novel and they are all written in kana: shiN-shiN (しんしん>岑岑, smarting pain); saN-saN (さんさん>燦燦, brilliantly shine); sei-sei (せいせい>清清, refreshed). In addition, some mimetic words were derived from English. For example, chiku-taku (a clock's ticking) was derived from tick-tock and jigu-zagu (frequent sharp turns from side to side) was derived from zigzag according to Ono (2007).

5.2. Statistical results

The average rate of mimetic rendering of mimetics in the seven English translations of the Japanese novel *GingaTetsudō no Yoruwas* 15.61% (Table 1). This rate is slightly lower than what was reported by Kubo (1997) (21.26%) who studied the English translations of mimetics in Miyazawa's 10 short stories by a single translator (John Bester). The range of variation among seven translators in the current study was 9.30% to 21.32% and the median was 15.50% (Table 1). The majority (70.16%) of mimetics in the ST were NL-mimetics whereas 29.84% were L-mimetics.

L-mimetics were almost never mimetically rendered. On average, only 0.37% of the L-mimetics in the ST were mimetically rendered (Table 2). The mimeticity of L-mimetics in Japanese may not have been perceived by the translators because they appear as lexical words.

NL-mimetics were mostly rendered by L-mimetics. On average, 22.10% of the NL-mimetics in the ST were mimetically rendered, 9.21% of which were by NL-mimetics and 90.71% of which were by L-mimetics. There were 26 NL-to-NL mimetic renderings in total across seven translations. They constitute only 1.44% of all renderings of the mimetics in the ST across seven translations. The low rate of NL-to-NL mimetic renderings could be the result of the marginal status of NL-mimetics in English-speaking societies. When the translators face a large number of NL-mimetics in the Japanese ST, their low-risk choices are to paraphrase them, to render them using L-mimetics or any lexical words in English, or even to delete them.

²⁰ *DaN-daN* is listed in Ono's (2007) dictionary only to represent roundness or banging sound, but not to mean *gradually*. Scholars do not always agree on the status of *daN-daN*. Mikami (2007) includes *daN-daN* (gradually) in the discussion of mimetics.

However, there were a limited number of risk-taking NL-to-NL mimetic renderings, which are renderings of six Japanese NL-mimetics: *gīgīfūgīgīfū* (sound of a comet approaching), *goto-goto* (goto-goto) (sound of a train's movement), *gyā-gyā* (squawking), *haQha* (laughing), *kachiQkachiQ* (clicking sound), and *pataripatari* (the sound of a machine's rotation). Interestingly, all six of these mimetics are onomatopoeias, and not ideophones. This is fascinating because onomatopoeias constitute only 12.40% of the mimetics in the ST whereas ideophones constitute 87.60%. Furthermore, all six of these items involve some degree of repetition, suggesting that the mimeticity conveyed by onomatopoeias with repetition is less negligible and/or more reproducible by NL-mimetics for translators than the mimeticity conveyed by ideophones.

5.3. Case study

One question is how and why the limited number of NL-to-NL mimetic renderings were realized in the TTs. Another question is whether some of them show any signs of translanguaging in the broader sense. If translanguaging of mimetics occurs in translation at all, NL-to-NL mimetic renderings are the most likely hosts for it because NL-mimetics have no inherent morpho-syntactic lexical properties, but have feeling-evoking expressiveness that lexicalized mimetics do not have. The following subsections analyze six Japanese NL-mimetics that yielded NL-to-NL mimetic renderings.

5.3.1. *Gī-gī-fūgī-gī-fū*

The protagonist hears a conversation between a little boy and his sister about comets in the train. The following is the quotation of the little boy's speech, which includes a NL-mimetic word created by Miyazawa, *gī-gī-fū*:

"Sorekara hōkiboshiga *gī-gī-fūgī-gī-fū*Qte ittekita ne."

then, comet-NOM *gī-gī-fūgī-gī-fū*-QUO say-and came CONF

The following are its renderings in the seven translations:

- A. "Then a shooting star came along blowing and wheezing."
- B. "And then a comet came by huffing and puffing."
- C. "And the comet came whooshing by. Whoosh! Whoosh!"
- D. "And along came a shooting star -- woosh! woosh!"
- E. "And the broom star went swoosh-swoosh, swoosh-swoosh."
- F. "... and then a comet came buzzing past them! Whoosh!"
- G. "And then a comet zooms by."

None of them present any sign of translanguaging, but this is a rare case where seven out of seven (100%) English renderings are done by mimetics, four of which (57.14%) were done by NL-mimetics (whoosh, wooshor swoosh). Why is there such a high rate of mimetic rendering and NL-to-NL mimetic rendering in this particular sentence in this novel? Interestingly, this is the only case that includes a NL-mimetic word as part of a quoted child's speech. Because it occurs in a child's quote, the occurrence of a NL-mimetic word is stylistically unmarked in English and thus, presents little risk for translators. This case indirectly affirms that the use of mimetics as well as the act of translation are context sensitive and constrained by societally constructed norms of language use.

5.3.2. *Goto-gotogoto-goto*

GingaTetsudō no Yoru is about the journey through the stars and many new encounters arise as the train (steam engine) continues to proceed. The perpetual motion of the train is expressed by a NL-mimetic word with a reduplicated base *goto*: *goto-goto*, which occurs once in the novel, and *goto-gotogoto-goto*, which occurs three separate times in it. For example, the following excerpt includes, *goto-gotogoto-goto*:

Goto-gotogoto-goto, sono *chīsana kireinakisha-wa*,
goto-gotogoto-goto, that small pretty train-TOP
sora-no susuki-no kaze-ni hirugaeru naka-o,
 sky-GEN pampas grass-GEN wind-by flutter inside-ACC
ten-no kawa-no mizu-ya,
 celestial-GEN river-GEN water-and,
sankakuten-no ao-jiroi bikō-no naka-o,

triangle-marker-GEN blue-white faint light-GEN inside-ACC
 doko-made-modoko-made-mo, hashitte iku-no-deshita.
 where-up-to-evenwhere-up-to-even, run-and go it-was

The following are the seven English translations of this sentence.

- A. Clatter-clatter, clatter-clatter, went the pretty little train, through the fluttering of the sky-pampas grass in the breeze, through the pale glimmerings of the markers and the waters of the Milky Way, on and on forever...
- B. With a clickety-clack the pretty little train sped on and on through the celestial pampas grass waving in the wind, through the bluish glimmer from the water and the triangular lights.
- C. The beautiful little train, chugging and clanking its way through the pampas grass that waved in the sky and through the waters of the Milky Way and the glimmering milky-white lights of triangle and deltas, was running on its endless journey.
- D. With a steady chug-chug, the little train went on through the fields of heavenly marsh grass waving in the breeze, on through the faint blue light of the triangular signals, on by the water of the great river, on and on it went.
- E. The tiny majestic train traveled on endlessly, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, through the silver grass in the sky that rippled beneath the wind; passed the water of the Celestial River and the pale-blue whispers of light from the signal markers.
- F. The train traveled on and on beside the swaying silver pampas, the clear river water, and the faint lights of the signposts.
- G. The splendid little train chugged along to a destination somewhere in the fluttering winds of the silver pampas grass in the sky and in the waters of the Milky Way or in the faint bluish-white lights at the three vertices of some triangle.

In this excerpt not only *goto-goto*, but also *doko-made-mo* (infinitely further) are repeated, and there are two locative phrases that end in *naka-o* (inside of ...), all in one sentence. Such an extensive repetition of multiple items, mimetic or non-mimetic, within a sentence makes this narrative sound stylistically marked because it is not within a quote. However, this stylistic markedness has a rhetorical effect of making this narrative sound like a fast-paced non-lexicalized reporting from a moving train. In particular, the metronome-like extensive repetition of the NL-mimetic word is essential for expanding the pragmatic dimension of the text, making the readers feel as though they are in the moving train.²¹

None of the translations directly use the Japanese NL-mimetic word, but translations A and E employ the marked metronome-like extensive repetition, as in *clatter-clatter, clatter-clatter* and *chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga*. The marked repetition in the ST and the TT vividly evokes continued auditory and imaginary sensations as predicted by Kita (1997) and Sakamoto and Jackson (2016). The rhetorical effect of repetition is significant. Repetition results in a rhythmic pattern and sweeps the readers along (Tanner 1984). Although phonemes in this mimetic word have not been maintained, its prosodic feature, namely marked repetition, permeates through the boundary of named languages either naturally without resistance or strategically taking the risk of sounding marginal through translation. However, it is unclear whether this is an instance of translanguaging without knowing the language-specific nature of repetition. In addition, this marked repetition in the TTs may well be the adaptation of a prosodic feature of Miyazawa's rhetoric rather than the socially recognized typical feature of the Japanese language.

5.3.3. Gyā-gyā

The protagonist sees thousands of herons²² suddenly coming down from the sky like snowflakes and the bird catcher swiftly grabs some of them by their legs and puts them in a cloth sack. Then their eyes close after glowing for a few seconds in the cloth sack. The rest of the herons descend on the sands near the river, melt down and then evaporate. A part of this scene is described as below:

sagi-ga marude yuki-no furu-yōni, gyā-gyāsakebi-nagara, ippaini orite kimashita
 herons-NOM as-if snow-GEN fall-as-if, gyā-gyā crying-while, numerously fell-and came

The following are the seven translations of this line:

- A. [a] flock of herons ... came fluttering down like snowflakes, calling as they came.

²¹ See Abdulla (2001) and Dahlgren (2005) for the significance of keeping reiterative device in translation.

²² Herons are medium to large sized birds with long legs and necks. They are widespread freshwater and coastal partially migratory birds.

- B. They cried as they came.
 C. ... a veritable snowfall of herons, squawking and calling, come fluttering down ...
 D. They came dancing down in a great cloud like falling snow, calling as they came.
 E. Just then, a massive flock of herons like ...,descended all at once, squawking like thunder: gyaah-gyaah gyaah-gyaah.
 F. Herons ...an ..falling downward like snowflakes. many heron, squawking “gyagya” gently landed, falling like snow.

The NL-mimetic word for the cry of the herons, *gyā-gyā*, in the ST is directly transferred in translations E and G, as *gyaah-gyaahgyaah-gyaah* and *gyagya*, respectively. Although this mimetic word is an onomatopoeia rather than an ideophone, it is still iconic and not fully transparent for English speakers, presenting a risk of unintelligibility. To reduce this risk, these NL-mimetic words are scaffolded by an L-mimetic word, *squawking*, in both translations. However, it still presents a risk of sounding unnatural because it is not occurring within a quote of a child. A question is why these two translators have taken this risk. If there is no equivalent established NL-mimetic word in English, they could have just used the L-mimetic word, *squawking*.

The use of a NL-mimetic word in this context actually has a significant rhetorical benefit. A major theme of the novel is death as a natural, universal and peaceful transition from life. In this scene, many herons make the sound “*gyā-gyā*” and then some of them die in the cloth sack while the rest die on the sand by the river. The sound these birds make in this scene is the very last sound they make in their lifetime. Only NL-mimetics, rather than L-mimetics, can directly appeal to the reader’s sensory systems and provoke feelings toward the last moment of the herons’ lives, and provide a much needed sound that most vividly and realistically symbolizes their lives, instantly expanding the pragmatic dimension of the text. Although *gyā-gyā* appears to have been deployed with resistance rather than spontaneity, the broader conceptualization of translanguaging adopted in this paper regards it as an instance of translanguaging where a NL-mimetic word in the ST is directly used in translation with scaffolding, with the risk of sounding unnatural for rhetorical effectiveness.

5.3.4. HaQha

The bird catcher reports his earlier humorous response to the complaints about the outrageous number of birds, and then laughs. The end of his response and his laugh, *haQha*, are presented in a quote in the ST, as below:

“..., *kōittayarimashitaga ne, haQha.*”
 this way said-gave-but-CONF, *haQha*

The following are the seven translations of this line:

- A: “... That’s what I told them!” He laughed.
 B: “... I told the people, Ha, ha!”
 C: “...I gave it to ‘em, I did! Ha!”
 D: “.... And that’s what I told them!”
 E: “Go tell that Ha haha, O! Scarecrow!”
 F: “... That’s what I told them, all right. Ha ha!”
 G: “... I ... became Ha, ha, ha!”

The NL-mimetic of his laugh is omitted in translations A and D, but rendered by similar NL-mimetics in the rest. The high rate of NL-to-NL mimetic rendering is probably due to the fact that it is a vocative and occurs in a quote. Vocatives are part of sound symbolism and Ono (2007) lists *haQhaQ* as an onomatopoeia for laughter. *HaQha* here is just the shortened version of *haQhaQ*. The sound depicted by vocatives is created by a human’s vocal tract and may have a communicative function (Hinton et al., 1994). Accordingly, its abstractness and arbitrariness are significantly lower than the rest of the mimetic words examined here. Therefore, the risk for translators is also very low. This explains the high rate of NL-to-NL mimetic rendering without scaffolding and thus, is not a case of translanguaging because the NL-mimetics in the TTs are already established in English as vocatives.

5.3.5. Tic, tic, tic

The protagonist sees a bluish-white clock in front of him when the train stopped at some station. He hears the clock's pendulum ticking. Then, he gradually starts hearing the faint melody of the New World Symphony. The following is the excerpt that describes the clock's ticking:

Sono furiko-wa kachiQ-kachiQ-to tadashiku toki-o kizande iku no deshita.
that pendulum-TOP kachiQ-kachiQ-QUO precisely time-ACC marked-off-go it-was

The seven translations of this line are as follows:

- A. ... and the pendulum marked off the time with a precise tick-tock, tick-tock.
- B. ... the pendulum went on swinging, tick-tock, tick-tock, precisely counting the time.
- C. ... and a pendulum ticktocked the time ...
- D. ... as the tick-tock of the pendulum drifted out ..., sure and steady, marking out the time.
- E. ... the clock pendulum carefully etched away time - tick, tick, tick.
- F. ... and the ticktock of its pendulum swept across the silent fields.
- G. ... the clock pendulum carefully etched away time - tick, tick, tick

In Japanese, there is an established NL-mimetic word exclusively used for a clock's ticking, *chiku-taku*. Ono (2007) claims that *chiku-taku* was derived from tick-tock in English.²³ However, instead of this common mimetic word for a clock's ticking, *kachiQkachiQ*, a mimetic word for a variety of clicking sounds, is used in this context in the ST.

Translations A, B, C and D use a common mimetic word for a clock's ticking in English, tick-tock or its verb version, ticktocked. By contrast, translations E and G use tick, tick, tick, which is less typical for a clock's ticking than tick-tock.

What is the benefit of using a less typical mimetic for a clock's ticking for a clock's ticking in the TT, just as in the ST? In fact, there is a rhetorical benefit for this. The use of a mimetic expression that can apply to a wide range of clicking sounds allows the overlap between the clock's ticking and the metronome-like introduction of the New World Symphony that immediately follows in this context, providing an auditory anticipatory clue to the readers and enabling a smooth transition from one scene to the other. Overriding the "typicality" to adapt the pragmatically needed phonological feature of mimetics was found in both ST and TT. However, its relevance to translanguaging is unclear.

5.3.6. Pataripatari

In the print shop where the protagonist works part-time after school, many rotary presses are turning and making noise. It is described in the ST as below, with a NL-mimetic word *pataripatari*:

... takusan-no rintenki-ga pataripatari-to mawari
numerous-GEN rotary-press-NOM pataripatari-QUO turn

The following are its seven translations:

- A: ... a large number of rotary presses were thudding round and round, ...
- B: ... several rotary printing presses were in noisy operation.
- C: ... rotary presses were clacking and clanging away ...
- D: ... a great number of rotary presses were churning and changing away.
- E: ... there were a dozen or more printing presses going clunk - clunk, as they spun noisily around; ...
- F: ... the many rotary presses were shaking noisily.
- G: ... the churning of many rotary printing presses and cutters, ...

Clunk-clunk in translation E is the only NL-to-NL mimetic rendering in this context. It is a low-risk choice because clunk-clunk is commonly used in English. Accordingly, no sign of translanguaging is detected in this context.

6. Conclusions

Following García and Li (2014), this paper inclusively conceptualized translanguaging as defined below and applied it to rarely studied data, namely, translated texts: Translanguaging is a deployment of linguistic repertoire for critical and creative meaning-making disregarding the boundary between named languages, which applies to any mode of communication across time, space and discipline.

²³Ono (2007: 249-248) lists *chiku-taku* and its variation *chiQku-taQku* and provides attested usage examples from the early 20th century.

A corpus of seven English translations of *GingaTetsudō no Yoru* was quantitatively and qualitatively studied with a focus on mimetics. Mimetics were divided into lexicalized mimetics (L-mimetics) and non-lexicalized mimetics (NL-mimetics). Among the 1,806 possible spaces for renderings of Japanese mimetics across the seven English translations, only 15.61% were mimetics rendered by mimetics. Almost no L-mimetics in the ST were mimetically rendered. Only 22.10% of the NL-mimetics in the ST were mimetically rendered, 90.71% of which were rendered by L-mimetics. Only 1.44% of NL-mimetics in the ST were rendered by NL-mimetics, and all of them were onomatopoeias rather than ideophones. This indicates the marginal status of mimetics, especially NL-mimetics, in English, unlike in Japanese.

A qualitative study of the NL-to-NL mimetic renderings has revealed that translanguaging conceptualized here can occasionally be found. It is particularly interesting because any signs of foreignness tend to be resisted in translation practices in Anglo-America (Venuti 1995, 1998). However, the case of translanguaging of mimetics identified in this study seems to expand the pragmatic dimension of the text by providing auditory sensations and provoking feelings. The risks of translanguaging in translation such as unintelligibility and unnaturalness can be reduced by creative ways of scaffolding, and any remaining risks due to translanguaging can be overridden by the benefits of translanguaging as predicted by a general decision-making theory “Minimax” prevalent in translation studies (Levy, 1967/2000).

Translanguaging can occur freely or be quite resisted depending on the norms of language use in a given society at a given time in the history, but translanguaging can also transform the norms of language use just as translation has (Wakabayashi, 2009). It is possible to consider initial stages of borrowings through language contact and direct renderings of linguistic items in the ST as the manifestation of translanguaging. Future research of translanguaging can include the investigation of the historical development of literacy and literary practices in conjunction with the study of translated texts, the analysis of different linguistic entities such as metaphors, proper names, addressing terms, puns and scripts, which are pivotal for translation, and the analysis of translation processes via annotated translation and post-translation interview.

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Appendix A: List of Abbreviations

ACC: accusative
 CONF: confirmation
 GEN: genitive case marker
 NOM: nominative case marker
 PRT: grammatical particle
 QUO: quotation
 TOP: topic marker

Appendix B: Special symbols used for transliteration of Japanese

Long vowels are represented by a macron over letters as in, ā, ī, ū, ē and ō. The glottal stop, which is a part of geminate consonants (ss, zz, pp, tt, kk, bb, dd and gg), is represented by Q when it is a part of a mimetic word. The moraic nasal is represented by N when it is a part of a mimetic word.