

A “Personal Attitude Construct” Analysis from the Experiences of Japanese Translators

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日本の翻訳者の経験—PAC分析を用いた調査

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要 約

本稿は、先に行われた著者による6人の翻訳者へのインタビュー調査(田辺 2009)に、さらに3人のインタビューを加え、分析したものである。このインタビュー調査は、これまで本格的な調査の対象になっていなかった、現代の翻訳者のなまの声を記録することを最大の目的とした。したがって、調査においては平均像より多様性を、集団より個人を検証する、仮説生成型の質的調査であるPAC分析(Personal Attitude Construct analysis)と呼ばれる調査法を採用した。調査では理論的説明より観察を重視し、調査結果が今後の研究の土台となることを目指した。また調査結果から考えられるパターンを抽出するにあたり、翻訳ノーム、翻訳者ハビトゥス、アイデンティティ理論の枠組みを用いた。

キーワード: 翻訳者の経験、PAC分析、翻訳ノーム、翻訳者ハビトゥス、自己とアイデンティティ

Key words: translators' experience, Personal Attitude Construct analysis, translational norms, translatorial habituses, self and identity

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1. Introduction

This paper will analyze the results of the author's previous interviews with six professional translators (Tanabe, 2009) and three additional ones. The research was primarily designed to record the actual voices of contemporary Japanese translators, who had not as yet been the object of systematic studies. The research therefore used a hypothesis-generating qualitative research that looks at variety rather than average, and tries to understand individuals rather than groups. The research focused on observation rather than theoretical explanation and the resulting observations were expected to serve as grounds for future investigation. While identifying possible patterns in the results of the research, the author used three theoretical frameworks: translational norms, translatorial habituses and self and identity theory.

The concept of translational norms has been posited by Gideon Toury (1995), which, in contrast to the linguistic approaches that analyze translation from the perspective of equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT), puts the translation activity in the context of the socio-cultural systems in which it takes place. According to Toury, translation is primarily governed by "initial norms" that gravitate around two poles: "adequate translation" that subscribes itself to the norms of the source culture, and "acceptable translation" that subscribes itself to those of the target culture. His theory's objective is to shed light on the function of norms that determines the suitability of a particular kind of translational behavior, and to know how these norms constitute prerequisites for becoming a full-fledged, successful translator within a particular cultural environment.

Toury's theory was influential in turning the attention of translation theorists from the linguistic features of translation practice to its social features. In the case of Japanese translation studies, translational norms of the modernization era have been well documented in previous studies (Mizuno, 2007; Sato, 2007), which have revealed the conflicting norms of "literal" (adequate) and "free" (acceptable) translations, as well as their implications for the entire Japanese literary system. The more recent history of Japanese translation has been less explored, but Furuno (2002) argues, again using the framework of norms, that translational norms in Japan saw a turning point in the 1970s toward a more emphasis on acceptability. According to her, this trend coincides with the emergence of full-time professional translators and translator training institutions, where some of the participants who are subjects of this research were trained. Thus, the overall picture of modern Japanese translation history can be outlined as follows:

- 1870s–1970s Dominance of word-for-word (adequate) translation
- 1970s–present Shift toward sense-for-sense (acceptable) translation

In addition to the training institutions stated above, the present research will also take into account the role of editors, publishers and peer translators as “power players” and norm mediators in Japanese translational system.

Meanwhile, in Western translation studies, Toury’s concept of norms has recently been criticized and complemented by more sociological approaches. The concept of “habitus” posited by Bourdieu (1977), for example, focuses more on social actions as norm-generating and norm-maintaining activities. In the context of translation studies, this brings the translator as a social agent into the spotlight. According to Bourdieu, social actors act according to a particular habitus, or set of durable dispositions, which are acquired through practice, and to which the sociological and biological history of the actor is particularly important. One example of habitus-based studies in translation studies is provided by Simeoni (1998), who, through an analysis of Western translation tradition, asserts “voluntary subservience” as the prevailing translatorial habitus, which the present study will adopt as one of the frameworks for analyzing the research results.

Another key issue of the translational habitus is the sociological and biological trajectories of translators. In the case of Japanese translational tradition, the genealogy of modern translators has two different sources: scholar-translators at the center of the “word-for-word” camp with more than 100 years of history; and full-time professional translators who belong to the “sense-for-sense” camp with less than 40 years of history, and the group to which all the participants of the present research belong. In the present research, the participating translators’ career path will be investigated with this demographic shift in mind.

The third tentative framework of this study is self and identity theory. Contemporary identity theory typically categorizes the concept of identity into two subcategories: social and personal identities (Tajfel, 1972). Although their relation is not agreed upon by scholars, Sueda (2003) argues that social identity is more salient in cross-cultural communication, while the personal identity is more prominent in personal communication. Although translation is generally considered as a cross-cultural communication, the participants’ inner structure tended to testify to the personal side of their identity as will be shown later.

2. Interviews

As stated earlier, this research adopted qualitative approach and the particular method used was called PAC (Personal Attitude Construct) analysis, a semi-structured

interview method developed by a Japanese psychologist (Naito 1997). It is designed to reveal inner constructs of individuals through free association, while controlling the scope of research through the selection of stimulus words tailored to a particular purpose. In the present research, the stimulus words were designed to be not too specific, as the research was expected to be hypothesis-generating:

“What is a good translator to you? Write down images or phrases as they come to you.”

Interviews with nine professional translators were conducted in March-August 2009 according to the following procedure:

1. The participants were given a free association test with a stimulus cue (“What is a good translator to you? Write down images or phrases as they come to you.”), which had been designed to allow access to their internalized constructs. They were asked to state their associations in the form of 10–20 short, concise words or phrases. These items are said to represent inner constructs retrieved from the long-term memory that determine one’s identity image (Naito, *ibid*).
2. The participants were asked to rate these 10–20 items according to their felt importance. This rating and the order in which each association came to mind can be different. The subsequent interviews were made based on the former (importance rating), but the latter were also considered as a helpful reference point wherever there was a big gap between the two.
3. The participants were asked to rate the similarity between every pair of these items in a subjective, intuitive manner.
4. After rating every pair, the researcher used statistical software called HALWIN, on

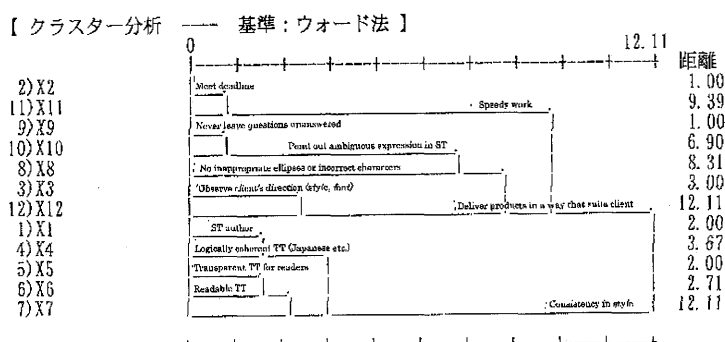


Fig1. Cluster tree

which cluster analysis was performed and the participant's personal constructs were represented in cluster trees (fig. 1). The entire process ensured the retrieval of personal constructs using the participant's scheme rather than that of the researcher.

5. The researcher identified possible nodes of the cluster tree and grouped the items based on these nodes. The participants were then presented with the researcher's idea of grouping and were asked whether the grouping felt correct.
6. When the grouping was finalized, the participants were interviewed as to what they felt about each cluster group. For example, they were asked to name the clusters, to identify the relations between them, or to explain what each item specifically meant. The interviews took around one hour on average.
7. During the interviews, the researcher avoided any guidance or interpretation. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. The researcher then went through the whole process starting from the cluster generation to the final interview, after which detailed observation was made in an holistic and empathic way,
8. The researcher's observation and the transcript were presented to each participant to be reviewed and corrected, and additional questions were asked where necessary.

Participants' backgrounds

The participants were all professional translators who are either my acquaintances or someone introduced by my acquaintances. Their backgrounds are outlined briefly below and their clusters and items are shown in Table 1.

Participant A: A freelance technical translator specializing in finance with five years of experience, he had two clusters: "Formality requirements" and "Quality requirements," of which he places priority on the former over the latter.

Participant B: A freelance technical translator specializing in medicine with seven years of experience. She is also a licensed nurse. She had three clusters: "Sincerity," "Well-accumulated knowledge," and "readability." These three are interlocking and among the three, "sincerity" is the most important.

Participant C: A non-fiction book translator (English-to-Japanese) with 25 years of experience, she was an editor in a publishing company, before going freelance. Her clusters were "Readability" and "Rhythm," both of which had to do with an "accurate transfer of the author intention." She can read English as easily as Japanese having spent considerable time in English-speaking countries as a teenager.

Participant D: A freelance book translator (E-to-J fiction/non-fiction) with six years of experience, she studied translation at several training institutions. Her clusters were "Accurate interpretation of author intention," "Loyalty as the basic imperative,"

	yrs	Field	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
A	5	finance	Formality requirements (speed, format, punctuation, spelling)	Quality requirements (readability and correct interpretation).			
B	7	medical	Sincerity (sincerity, deadline observance, cost-effective)	Well-accumulated knowledge (technical terms, observance of house style, well-informed)	Readability (accuracy, reader-friendliness, readability)		
C	25	book (nf)	Readability (readability, equivalence in readability and atmosphere, less loan words, no over explanation, domestication, free from dictionary definition)	Rhythm (Rhythmical and not monotonous translation, skillful use of adverbs and onomatopoeia, variety in style)			
D	6	book (nf)	In-depth interpretation of the author's intention (accurate interpretation of the author's intention, taste and smell of the original, between-the-lines meanings)	Loyalty as the basic imperative (few mistranslations, no over-translation)	Required quality as a translator (readability, natural Japanese, invisibility)	Procedural requirements (observance of deadline, cooperation with editors, accommodation to the specific readership, up-to-date, market-oriented translation)	
E	18	technical + book (nf)	Openness (curiosity, progressiveness, respect, emotional involvement)	Marathon-runner-like perseverance (loyalty, endurance, self-control)			
F	10	book (f)	Language-ability requirements (language sensitivity in both ST and TT, understanding of two cultures, sincerity, color, sound, smell of ST)	Required quality for literary translator (flexible mind, empathy toward the author, playful spirit)			
G	20	book (f+nf)	Reading ability (extensive reading, good memory, imagination, language competence, communicative skills, empathy, curiosity)	Perseverance (contribution to the next generation, never-give-up spirit, endurance, hearth, meaningfulness, motivation control)	Technical skills (information technology, literacy, organized thinking, research skills, logical accuracy)		
H	30	book (nf)	Independence (undaunted by isolation, do not flatter clients and readers)	Culture (cultural knowledge, love of the Japanese culture and society)	Learning (healthy doubt of one's language ability, learning capacity, flexibility)		
I	25	book (f+nf)	Reading ability (Reading and reasoning abilities)	Basic knowledge (knowledge and research skills)	Accurate understanding (accuracy, research, faithfulness)	Attitude toward the original (Going extra mile, honest, sincere, humble)	Stylistic competence (Adequate wording and readability)

Table1. Clusters of Participants

“Required quality as a translator” and “Procedural requirements.” She said she was deeply troubled regarding where to position herself among these imperatives. She also mentioned many clichés that she had learned from her trainers.

Participant E: An in-house translator working for a translation agency with 18 years of experience. His basic work ethic is to be loyal to the author. He does both technical and book translation, with more passion toward the latter. His clusters were “Openness” and “Marathon-runner-like perseverance.”

Participant F: A freelance translator specializing in children’s books and video subtitles with 10 years of experience. Her clusters were “English-ability requirements” and “Required qualities for literary translation.”

Participant G: A freelance book translator with 20 years of experience, she translates both fiction and nonfiction and teaches at translator training institutions. She is also a professional writer and writes her own weblog. Her clusters were “reading ability,” “perseverance” and “technical skills.” These three formed a triangle and “reading ability” came on top of the other two.

Participant H: A veteran translator with 30 years of experience. His main field is social science, especially economics, management and finance. He has his own online journal covering various translation-related topics. His clusters were “Independence,” “Culture” and “Learning.”

Participant I: A book translator with 25 years of experience, covering both fiction and non-fiction. Her language pairs are English-to-Japanese (60%) and French-to-Japanese (40%). Her clusters were “Reading ability”, “Basic knowledge,” “Accurate comprehension,” “Attitude toward the original” and “Stylistic competence”.

3. Results

As mentioned earlier at the beginning of this paper, the results of the interviews were analyzed based on three concepts: the conflicting translational norms of literal (adequate) and free (acceptable) in Japanese translational tradition; the translatorial habitus of “voluntary subservience”; and the social and personal identities of translators. As the purpose of the study being hypothesis generation, possible patterns outside these premises will also be explored.

After trial and error, findings gathered from interview transcripts are grouped into nine topics: Adequacy vs. acceptability; Clichés; Subservience; Other players; Frustrations; Social self; Inexplicability; Translator as a minority; How did I become a translator?

Adequacy vs. acceptability—translational norms

Among the nine participants, two supported adequacy (literal translation) and three

supported acceptability (free translation), with the remaining four not mentioning the dichotomy. It seems that the shift observed by Furuno is still in process. At the same time, it is interesting to note that those in the acceptable camp called themselves faithful to the author as frequently as those in the adequacy camp did. The term “free translation” may therefore not adequately explain the feeling of actual translators. Also interesting was the fact that more experienced translators were less concerned about the literal-or-free dichotomy.

- C: My style is to achieve in the TT the same readability of the ST. I prioritize equivalence in atmosphere over that of literal meaning. I often see a readable, casual text translated into a rigidly formal one. My motivation as a translator is to reproduce the readability of the original. Nida’s concept of “dynamic equivalence” explains my intention well. That is exactly what I would like to achieve in my translation.
- D: I am always troubled over whether to translate in my own style of writing, or to remain in the background and use a neutral style Translation in the pure sense refers to the literary or artistic transfer of the intention of the original author (nuances and between-the-line meanings), but real-life translation comes under constraints from market-oriented publishers and editors on the literal-or-free choice.
- E: I translate everything written in the original and not translate anything not written in the original. That’s my style.
- I: If you don’t understand the author’s true intention, you cannot translate. Even if you can, your translation is irrelevant. For example, the author may appear to be praising something but in fact is really criticizing If you translate faithfully, you are certainly constrained by the original, but grasping the style and intention of the author is also important Being loyal to the original is not betraying the author.

Clichés

Interestingly, some participants used the same phrases to explain their views on translation. One participant suggested that these clichés had come from translation trainers, while others did not mention their sources. These translational clichés may be transmitting translational norms from one generation to another, although more experienced translators mentioned them as little as they mentioned the literal-free dichotomy. Younger translators seem to be more prone to such clichés and norms. Also of interest is the fact that one participant quoted novelist Haruki Murakami, which shows the possible influence of the authentic literary system on the translation community.

- D: Translation is like pouring water from one glass to another.

- D: Translators are *kuroko* (stage assistants dressed in black of Japanese traditional theater).
- D: You cannot translate literary works well, if you are not skilled enough to win the Akutagawa Prize (one of the most prestigious awards for fiction in Japan).
- H: Those who can translate novels are those who can write a novel.
- D: Add nothing, subtract nothing (from a 1989 CM phrase).
- E: Add nothing, subtract nothing.
- E: Translation is like having a coin in your left hand, slapping your right hand down on your left, and sliding away your left hand, with the coin remaining on your right palm (from Haruki Murakami, *Pinball*, 1973).
- D: Translation reproduces the taste, smell and atmosphere of the original.
- F: Translation reproduces the color, sound and smell of the original.
- F: “Vertical to horizontal” transfer [is bad translation.] (Japanese writing is vertical, while Western one is horizontal).

Subservience

Simeoni’s translatorial “subservience” mentioned earlier was identified in many participants’ responses, one of which was the intriguing metaphor of a hard-working marathon runner used by one participant. Also worth noting is that several participants mentioned openness and curiosity as necessary qualities for a translator to possess. This might come from the fact that translators usually have no power to decide what to translate and what not to, and accidental career choice four of the nine participants mentioned can also be a factor that encourages passive and subservient attitudes.

- A: Clients are “gods” and I must be compliant with their requirements. Coordinators are in a difficult situation mediating between them and translators. So, I try to be punctual in order to reduce their stress and establish mutual trust.
- B: The most important thing is “loyalty.” You must be loyal to everyone from your translation agent to the client. One example of this is to make your translation as short as possible in order to keep the translation cost reasonable.
- E: You must not wander away from the original. When you run a marathon, you don’t want a short-cut. You must not run out of the track. You don’t go ahead of the original (the pace maker).
- E: I am not proud of my position as a translator because I became a translator by chance. My job is not creative and I think myself a code-switcher who works in the information service industry.
- E: [After graduating university] I started working at a translation agency and translated

- texts in areas totally different from my university major I don't, and cannot afford to, mind covering many areas of translation. It's become my style.
- F: I would like to be sincere to everyone—the author, editor and the reader—and balance their conflicting requirements.
- G: Translators cannot always work in the areas they are interested in. So, they must have a wide range of curiosity.
- H: Translators should be very alert. When translating, they must read ten times deeper than they do when simply reading. We cannot understand [foreign texts] unless we try very hard. *If one doesn't look up every word or look for every piece of necessary information, they cannot translate appropriately.* Translators have no future if they become too confident of their language ability.
- H: [Unlike authentic writing,] the difficulty of translation lies in the fact that you must translate everything, even things you are not interested in and that come from a totally different cultural background.
- I: What is important for translators is to listen to what others say about their translation. If you don't listen, you don't make progress. In that sense, being humble is important.
- I: Translators are usually self-effacing and have love and respect for the ST. They are sincere and humble Translation tasks taught me to be perseverant.

Other players

Theories on the power network of the publishing industry (Fawcett, 1995) and studies focusing on book reviews using Reception Theory (Jauss, 1982) have revealed the influence exercised by various players involved in translation (readers, critics, editors, publishers). During the interviews, in addition to these power players, trainers and editor-cum-mentors were often mentioned as the source of norms (adequacy norm for example) and peer translators as a reference point against which translators can confirm their positions (doubts about over-translation, for example).

- C: My translation skills were improved under the mentorship of a senior editor at the publishing company where I was working. Her emphasis on “readability” influenced me greatly.
- D: I didn't realize that I quoted so many words of my trainers during the interview. I learned translation with many trainers, so it is likely their ideas have become part of my own.
- E: I sometimes have doubts about [other translators'] over-translation.
- E: Two editors pointed out mistakes in my translation and taught me what translation is about. One of them told me to “translate without changing the rhythm of the original.”

I still follow their advice and have respect for the author and loyalty toward the ST.

H: I used to work with an editor and a proofreader, both skilled trainers of novice translators. They would never provide an answer to the problems young translators faced. This was the kind of tension necessary in translation process. Ordinary editors think solely about how to accommodate the reader.

I: My editor is the first reader of my translation, so our relationship is cooperative. For example, I totally changed my translation policy when my editor told me, "No reader can follow your translation."

I: Most translators have a mentor as well as a mentee. I am exceptional in that I have neither mentor nor mentee.

Frustrations

"How can translators prevent the permanent oscillations of empathy and sympathy, the never-ending switching and adjusting to other parties from fragmenting, eroding or dislocating their sense of self . . . ?" asks Delabastita in his analysis of the portrayal of translators in fiction writings (2009). The same question can be asked in the present research where much subservience was identified, and here are some of the answers. In addition to the pressure of "switching and adjusting to other parties," that of low income was often felt and mentioned and some were so frustrated as to seek another line of work (an academic career for example).

A: As [in the technical translation] there is a serious conflict between time constraint and readability or in-depth interpretation of the author's intention, I work from the start with priority on the former over the latter.

B: Although I never think quality is not the issue, translation is almost a volunteer work for me [because of low fees involved]. The identity as a technical translator is very weak in me.

B: The translation industry not only pays poorly, but treats workers as disposable, and its catch-phrase is "speedy, cheap and high-quality," which is simply impossible. I am scandalized by this dishonesty. Before the huge success of translation/interpreting training institutions, many translators became professional by chance. I myself was lured by such institutions into dreaming of becoming a conference interpreter. Now, I know I was manipulated by exaggerated advertisements. Some interpreters become summit-level conference interpreters by sheer luck, while others are working in a totally different environment. Pull and network count. Translator/interpreter training is a business and schools are not meant to give serious training. Translation and interpreting themselves are not well-paid, while so many people make their living on

the fringe of translation/interpreting industry. This is infuriating.

- C: Trying to reproduce the same effect as the original, I sometimes find myself in disagreement with editors or peer translators and feel stress. When I was working for a publisher, I edited others' translations to make them more readable, but some translators, particularly specialists of the field who are not professional translators, complained about my editing. Now that I am a freelance translator, the priority I place on readability clashes sometimes with those of editors or co-translators who tend to place more importance on accuracy.
- D: The translation market favors translators who are unfaithful to the original and allow them to run their own way unchecked toward their own interpretation.
- G: Translation is hardly a cost-effective job.
- H: I am surprised by the fact that many people dream of becoming translators. Translation is not a job you dream of. They must know it's rather one you get snubbed for.
- I: The income is low and unsteady.

Although no one said they "enjoy" being a translator, some reported positive feelings, mainly about the learning side of translation.

- H: The biggest appeal of translation is that one can earn money by learning things. It's really a rare job.
- I: Translation is a suitable job for me. It allows me to know many different worlds and I can say I am very lucky.

Social identity

The definitions of social and personal identities are not clear, but the observations described so far can be said to represent some aspects of personal identity rather than social identity, as these feelings do not happen cross-culturally but largely inside the translators' inner selves or the translation community. The following are some of the participants' statements that can be viewed as more cross-cultural, social actions. Unsurprisingly, these participants are those who raise their voices through the internet and other media. It is possible that those translators are challenging the limit of their roles and taking over the roles of editors and publishers, who are thought to be the central decision-makers of translation practice.

- E: Translation bridges different cultures.
- G: Translation brings about different values and perspectives [to the target culture].

- G: It is important to have a particular area at which you excel over others.
- G: I take much care to the esthetic side of the book I translate: the format, paper, fonts, layout, use of Japanese characters and even annotation format.
- G: I am ambivalent about the notion of translation as a commodity. Since the mid-20th century, the commercialization of translation has rapidly proceeded in Japan. I myself have benefited from this move early in my career, but now, I am concerned about the future of the cross-cultural reception in Japan, where only marketable books are translated.
- H: Translation is not a language-related job, but a job that mediates foreign cultures into Japan.
- H: Translation serves society as a medium of learning, and translation practice itself is a sort of learning. Translators learn on ahead of readers, so they are like teachers.
- H: Translators today, especially young ones, don't think seriously about their independence or their role as cultural mediators. They might want to know that if they mistranslate, everyone misunderstands.

Inexplicability of the practice

The words that appeared most frequently in the associated words and cluster names were “loyalty (faithfulness),” “sincerity” and “knowledge” (see table 1), which roughly correspond to the topics listed above and are in line with the theoretical frameworks adopted in this research. Another frequently mentioned term was “inexplicability,” which was used to describe the interpretation process of the author’s intention or the word choice in the target text. Emphasis on translators’ natural quality can also be seen as indicating the perception that translation competence cannot be explained.

- F: I cannot explain why I use this word in this particular translation. Even if the interpretation of the author’s intention is the same, each translator translates differently. That is where one’s taste or style comes into play.
- G: Reading ability is indispensable for translators and this includes the ability to think logically, which is a required quality in any areas of society and mainly inborn and determined by family environment. Endurance and technology-related skills are the second essential qualification for translators.
- H: Unlike interpreting, there is no know-how for translation and no translator has such know-how.
- H: As an old saying “the style is the man,” the translation is 100 percent the man. Translation is not automatic, and therefore reveals the character of the translator. In that regard, translation is a tricky job.

I: Translation requires 95 percent of basic skills (knowledge, research skills and accurate understanding) and 5 percent of intuition (interpretation and writing style), with the latter controls the former. Intuition is something difficult to explain and I myself am not sure what it is, but . . . in some rare moments, translation flows out of my brain just naturally.

I: Students' innate ability is important in becoming a translator.

Translator as a minority

Another perception suggested frequently was that of translators as isolated individuals. Some thought isolation as a means to be independent, while others seemed to like the community to remain that of a select few. This has something to do with the popularity of translation and the huge number of translation learners in Japan, but more in-depth investigation might be needed to identify the real motivation.

I: Translators tend not to band together.

I: Translators are self-centered and believe in their interpretive ability, and, except with editors, they rarely discuss about the appropriateness of their interpretation with those with different interpretation.

G: I think ten literary translators in Japan are more than enough.

H: Translators should be primarily excellent readers. So, any society needs only a small number of translators.

H: I am a type of person who contemplates what is needed in Japan and decides accordingly what I should translate. My goal is to become an uncompromising minority, so I don't pick up easy materials. Surprisingly enough, the result is a lot of long-sellers that constitute a good part of my income.

H: Translators should remain a minority, but many of them do the opposite. They try to make their translation readable and easy to understand for a majority of readers. It is absurd. I don't understand why readers welcome things they already know well. Editors try to gain readers' favor, but translators have no reason to do the same.

H: Book translators should remain a minority group with unconventional thinking. Once imitated by the target culture, translation loses its meaning. Translators are better positioned when they are a minority.

How did I become a translator?

During the interview, all the participants were asked about how they had become a professional translator. As stated earlier, the sociological and biological trajectories of social actors are important in establishing social habituses. In the case of the present

research, all the participants belong to the generation of full-time professionals who emerged in the 1970s and have not been well documented in literature. As a possible noteworthy feature of this generation, one of the participants divided the generation into two smaller ones and suggested that, before the expansion of translator/interpreter training business, translators/interpreters tended to become professional accidentally, while younger translators were lured into dreaming of becoming a professional translator/interpreter by advertisements placed by training institutions. In fact, while two of the nine participants who learned translation/interpreting in such institutions were relatively newcomers, another four participants, all with 18 years or more of experience, became professional by chance, or without the specific intention of doing so. Considering the fact that the researcher herself also started her career by chance approximately 20 years ago, the suggestion of the above participant concerning the change of translatorial trajectory seems quite plausible.

Also worth noting was that some of the participants acknowledged that they started their careers with mentors who were accomplished professional translators. Yet another participant spoke of the traditional apprenticeship system that has now gone out of fashion but still persists in one of these training institutions.

- A: My preferred type of job is interpreting and tour guiding, and I started translation to expand the range of the sources of my income.
- C: I wanted to be an English teacher at first, but being educated in a Canadian university, getting a teaching license in Japan proved to be difficult. As I wanted to take advantage of my English competence, I decided to become a translator. After graduating from the university, I landed a job in a publishing company, first as a secretary, then as an editor. While working there, I started translation on the side. After leaving that company, I went freelance. Much of the work I did in the early years was for that publisher.
- D: English and Japanese were my favorite subjects at junior high school and I liked reading. Quite naturally, I dreamed of becoming a translator and translating foreign stories. I majored English and studied translation at college, but as I couldn't afford postgraduate study to further study translation, I got a job in a company and, 10 years later, I started learning translation again at several training institutions. I studied at these institutions for seven to eight years.
- G: When I was a child, I used to read many literary works from different countries and experienced the joy of knowing various cultures. So, as a translator, I want to bring these different cultures to the next generation. But as for the reason why I became a translator, I started my career by chance and there was no other option. I just

happened to get acquainted with a famous translator and was asked to help him. I first did magazine articles, and then my editor introduced me to some translation jobs and I became independent.

H: All of my classmates believe they can translate without problem. I myself also believe the level of the education I received would allow anyone to translate (Therefore, I never learned translation.). My classmates are suspicious why I translate rather than write something. In fact, it is difficult to make a living working as a writer. I had no choice but to go for a translation job and it was accidental except that I wanted to improve the quality of translation of the time (1970s).

I: I first translated articles in sports magazines. As I was working in a copyright agency, I had some contacts at publishers' offices. After quitting the job, I started getting commissions and went freelance.

4. Conclusion

As the present research aims at listening to the voices of actual translators, the resulting observations are not fully organized as a full-fledged theoretical analysis. The patterns identified in this paper are certainly too diversified to be linked and integrated into a plausible model, but the research provides valuable information that can serve not only as the basis for further investigation in Japanese translation studies, but also as a useful tool in related fields such as translation/interpreting education and professional training.

Finally, this research could not have been possible without the cooperation of nine translators, who provided their valuable stories and precious time. It is easy to imagine the difficulty of sharing one's personal story. In fact, there were translators who declined outright to be interviewed. I sincerely thank the participants and hope this research proves beneficial to them and to others as well.

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