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## THE PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF DIALECTICISMS USED IN JAPANESE LITERARY TEXTS

**Summary.** This article deals with the problem of dialectal speech in Japanese literary texts and how it is reproduced in English translations. The usage of dialecticisms as indicators of a particular region to which characters belong is an important component of the writer's style. Dialect can be used to represent a culture, which is different from the dominant one. The examples of translation strategies show the way of creating an illusion of dialect. The choice of dialect reproduction depends on the translator's linguistic sensibility. It has been found out that a combination of standard English with explanation is often used in translation of dialect speech. The usage of transcribed forms of dialect and non-standard English is also observed. Besides the poetry, the most typical elements of the dialect were represented in the characters' dialogues. Edward Seidensticker demonstrated the distinction between various kinds of speech in Tanizaki Jun'ichiro's novels with formal and contracted English in translation and additional explanations. It is known that this author asked assistants to translate his works into the Kansai dialect, because he was born and raised in different region. Tanizaki in his novel also pointed out that main heroine from Osaka (Kansai Region) feel uneasy talking in standard Tokyo speech, either by herself or when talking with someone with whom she used to speak in dialect. In the translation of Yamanokuchi Baku's poem by Rie Takagi, there is a romanization of the dialect word and its definition in a footnote. He and Medoruma Shun were both born in Okinawa Prefecture. Medoruma used hieroglyphs in the text to convey the meaning of the dialect and wrote its reading in furigana. Michael Molasky translated the passages that contained dialect into an English dialect.

**Key words:** Japanese language, Japanese dialect, translation strategy, English translation.

**The purpose of given research** is to find out examples of translation strategies used in the English translation of Japanese literary texts.

**Presentation of the main material.** The ways of dialect usage in literary works are

- the most typical elements of dialect are represented in the character's dialogues;
- dialect readings can be added to certain words in dialogues;
- the use of dialect can be not only limited to dialogs.

The aim of dialect usage in literary texts is

- to represent a culture, which is different from the dominant one;
- to show the stereotypes that are linked to specific dialects;
- to point out the identity and origin of the character(s) and occasionally to describe pride of dialect usage;
- to create comic effect.

Judy Wakabayashi, professor of Japanese at Kent State University, wrote in her book "Japanese-English Translation: An Advanced Guide" about the ways of creating the illusion of a dialect. It can be translated:

1) by replacing a regional Japanese dialect with an 'equivalent' English dialect;

2) by replacing non-standard orthography, expressions and grammar with standard ones, giving priority to clarity;

3) by inclusion a few non-standard forms in the translation, despite the extensive dialect used in the Japanese text;

4) by selecting a language variety that is generally regional instead of one linked to a specific location (a descriptive phrase like '*in his country way*' could be beneficial here);

5) by creating a fake yet plausible English dialect that evokes non-standard language characteristics;

6) by combining various registers to convey a non-standard impact (English dialect through slang, profanities, colloquial register);

7) by substitution a local dialect with a sociolect – for instance, a working-class version of English;

8) by replacing a regional dialect with an idiolect;

9) by transcribing the Japanese dialect;

10) by transcribing non-dialect Japanese words to create an effect of non-standard language;

11) by modifying the mode (such as changing direct speech to indirect speech);

12) by using compensation or archaisms, neologisms, italics, tone.

13) by usage of standard English and explanation, that serves as an indication of dialect;

14) by adding explanatory footnote or incorporating information about the dialect in the preface;

15) by italicizing dialect expression in a sentence and providing an explanation afterwards [1, p. 162–166].

In this research, we will consider English translations of the works of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Yamanokuchi Baku, and Medoruma Shun.

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886 – 1965) was born in Tokyo. After the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923, he relocated to Okamoto near Osaka. He redirected his youthful love for the imagined West and modernity into a renewed interest in Japanese aesthetics and culture, particularly the culture of the Kansai region. The Kansai dialect is a matter of pride for the inhabitants of this region, and sometimes they do not attach much importance to their language conforming to the literary one, even when they move to other areas of Japan. It is known that at first the author invited assistants

to translate his works into the Kansai dialect. Since Tanizaki was not from Kansai, he could make some authorial changes in dialect in his works. Takagi Harue in his book “Memories of the House of Tanizaki” 『谷崎家の思い出』 (1977) noted that, for example, “Swastika” was translated into Osaka dialect by Takechi Yukiko, a graduate of Osaka Women’s College. After her marriage, Takagi Harue continued this work and had been living in the Tanizaki household from March to August 1929 [2, p. 35].

In the opening scene of the novel 『細雪』 (“The Makioka Sisters”), translated by Edward G. Seidensticker in 1957, we witness a dialogue between the Makioka sisters Sachiko and Taeko that has a dialect trace. The Makiokas were an upper-middle-class family from Osaka. In the translation, we find additional explanations, which are absent in the original quote. We used bold text to highlight these and other peculiarities of English translation connected to dialect usage:

「こいさん、頼むわ。――」

……「雪子ちゃん下で何してる」と、幸子(さちこ); 幸子はきいた。

「悦ちゃんのピアノ見たげてるらしい」 [3].

“Would you do this please, Koi-san?”

... “And where is Yukiko?”

“She is watching Etsuko practice,” said Taeko. **Both sisters spoke in the quiet, unhurried Osaka dialect. Taeko was the youngest in the family, and in Osaka the youngest girl is always “Koi-san,” “small daughter”** [4, p. 14].

The Tanizaki’s attitude to the Osaka dialect and Tokyo standard language we can witness in the following quotes. It is clear that some heroines from Osaka (in the Kansai Region) have difficulty communicating in standard Japanese:

そうでなくても人中(ひとなか); 人中へ出ると一層物が云えなくなる雪子は、こう云う席では「でございます」の東京弁で話すのがゴゴチなくて、自然言葉の終りの方が曖昧(あいまい); 曖昧になるのであるが、そこへ行くと幸子の方は、矢張りくらか云いにくそうに言葉尻(じり); 尻を胡麻化(ごまか); 胡麻化しはするものの、それでも大阪流のアクセントが余り耳に付かないような技巧を使って、どんなことでも割合に不自然でなく器用にしゃべった [3].

Yukiko was never very talkative when she was out of the house, and she was especially helpless when the occasion demanded not the Osaka dialect, but standard Japanese. Her sentences had a way of never quite ending unless Sachiko rescued her. Sachiko herself had a little trouble bringing out exactly the right words, but she was able to disguise the more obvious features of her Osaka accent and talk with a certain fluency on almost any subject [4, p. 67].

The next quote describes how Miss Niu came to visit the ill Sachiko with her friends from Tokyo. The main hero’s unease is evident when she realizes that Miss Niu’s speech has changed to the standard Tokyo accent and how it negatively affects her behavior and appearance:

彼女は相良夫人のような型の、気風から、態度から、物云いから、体のこなしから、何から何までパリパリの東京流の奥さんが、どうにも苦手なのであった。彼女も阪神間の奥さん達の間では、いっばし東京弁が使える組なのであるが、こう云う夫人の前へ出ると、何となく気が引けて、――と云うよりは、何か東京弁と云うものが浅ましいように感じられて来て、故意に使うのを差控えなくなり、却(かえ); 却って土地の言葉を出すようにした。それに又、そう云えば丹生夫人までが、いつも幸子とは大阪弁

で話す癖に、今日はお附合いのつもりか完全な東京弁を使うので、まるで別の人のようで、打ち解ける気になれないのであった。成る程丹生夫人は、大阪っ児ではあるけれども、女学校が東京であった関係上、東京人との交際が多いので、東京弁が上手なことに不思議はないものの、それでもこんなにまで堂に入っているとは、長い附合いの幸子にしても今日まで知らなかったことで、今日の夫人はいつものおっとりとしたところがまるでなく、眼の使いよう、唇(くちびる); 唇の曲げよう、煙草を吸う時の人差指と中指の持って行きよう、――東京弁は先(ま); 先ず表情やしぐさからあしななければ板に着かないのかも知れないが、何だか人柄が俄(にわか); 俄に悪くなったように思えた [3].

She (Sachiko) always felt uncomfortable with bright, stylish Tokyo matrons like Mrs. Sagara. One of the more expert of Osaka ladies at standard Tokyo speech, Sachiko still found that Mrs. Sagara put her on her guard – or rather, made Tokyo speech seem repulsive. Sachiko avoided it purposely. And then Mrs. Niu, who always used the Osaka dialect with Sachiko, was today keeping Mrs. Sagara company. Tokyo speech had made her an entirely different person, Sachiko thought, a person with whom she could not possibly feel at home. Although there was nothing strange in the fact that Mrs. Niu, who, though born in Osaka, had gone to school in Tokyo and had long associated with Tokyo people, should have a good Tokyo accent, Sachiko had never before realized how far into the Tokyo recesses her friend had penetrated. There was nothing here of the usual sedate Mrs. Niu. The way she rolled her eyes, the way she curled her lips, the way she held her forefinger as she lifted a cigarette to her lips – perhaps Tokyo speech was not authentic unless it brought its own gestures and facial expressions. The woman was suddenly cheapened in Sachiko’s eyes [4, p. 136].

Edward G. Seidensticker explained how he translated dialect in “The Makioka Sisters”: “I did try to differentiate between Tokyo speech and Osaka speech. I think it was not a good solution. I rendered Osaka speech in a formal kind of English, without contractions, without any “don’ts” and “wasn’ts,” and to emphasize the contrast I introduced more contractions than necessary in Tokyo speech. Someone from Osaka – it was quite a while after the translation came out – told me I should have done just the opposite. He said that Osaka speech is a speech of abbreviation and Tokyo speech is not. That had not occurred to me, but it is true. In standard Tokyo speech, all of the markers, the *te-ni-o-ha*, the postpositions, are there. They may be only vestigially there but they are all there in a Tokyo sentence. A lot of them are left out in an Osaka sentence. Therefore, I should have had the exaggerated contractions in the Osaka part. But the experiment was a complete and utter failure for the simple reason that nobody even noticed what I have done” [5, p. 76–77].

In this quote from the dialogue of Sachiko, her husband Teinoske and Segoshi, during the *miai* (a formal meeting with a view to marriage), arranged for Yukiko, we can also observe usage of dialect. In translation, Seidensticker showed the distinction between different types of speech with formal and contracted kinds of English:

「その奥さんは日本語が話せるんですか」と、瀬越がともに雪子の顔を見ながら云った。

「はあ、初めは話せなかったのでございますけれど、だんだん話せるようになりまして、この頃ではもうえらい上手に……」

「それが却って為めにならないのでございます」と、幸子が又あとを引き取って、

「――稽古の間は決して日本語を使わないと云う約束したのでございますけれど、矢張そう行かなくて、つい日本語が出てしまっていて、……」

「僕は稽古を隣の部屋で聞いていることがあるんですが、三人共殆(ほとん);殆ど日本語でばかりしゃべってるんですよ」

「あら、そんなことあれへんわ」と、幸子は思わず大阪弁を出して夫の方へ向き直った。

「仏蘭西語かて使うてますねんけど、あんさんとこまで聞えしませんねん」

「そうらしいですよ。たまには仏蘭西語も使うてるらしいんですが、その時はいつも虫の息みたいな小さな声でさまり悪そうに云うもんですから、隣の部屋まで聞えて来る筈(はず);筈がないんです。あれではいくらやったって上達しない訳ですが、どうせ奥さんやお嬢さんの語学の稽古なんて、何処でもあんなものなんでしょうな」[3].

“And can the lady speak Japanese?”

“She **couldn't** at first, but lately she has been learning, and now ...”

“... and now,” said Sachiko, “she is really too good. **We're** forbidden to use Japanese when **we're** having French lessons, but somehow we slip into it.”

“I've listened to them from the next room and heard hardly a word of French,” said Teinosuke. “**That is** not true.” Sachiko slipped into the Osaka dialect in spite of herself. “We speak a great deal of French, and you cannot hear it.”

“**That's** so. Now and then you would say something in the tiniest whisper, and I suppose it was French. I doubt if **you'll** improve at that rate. But I suppose that is always the way when ladies take up languages” [4, p. 67-68].

The same thing we can find in quote from dialogue of Shimozuma and Sachiko:

「御気分がお悪いんじゃない? 」と、下妻夫人が聞いた。

「ええ。――でも今日は大分ええ方なんですの」[3].

“**You're** still not feeling well?” asked Mrs. Shimozuma.

“Today **I am** much better” [4, p. 95].

The other Tanizaki's text, where we can find dialect traces, is 『蓼喰う虫』(“Some Prefer Nettles”), translated by Edward G. Seidensticker in 1955. He used additional explanation ‘Hiroshi brought a trace of the Osaka dialect into his speech’ to render dialect usage while translating the dialogue between characters Kaname Shiba, his 10-year-old son Hiroshi, and Takanatsu Hideo, a cousin from Shanghai. Kaname and his wife Misako Shiba were from Tokyo and they moved to Osaka a few years ago.

「へえ、そりゃハイカラだなあ、日本にもそんな電車があるのか」

「日本だって馬鹿に出来ないでしょう、どうだす、小父さん? 」  
「そうだったか」

「おかしいや、小父さんの大阪弁は。それじゃアクセントが違ってらあ」

「弘の奴は大阪弁がうまくなっちゃって困るんだよ、学校と家とで使い分けをやるんだから、――」

「そらなあ、僕かって標準語使え云うたら使わんことないけど、学校やったら誰かってみんな大阪弁ばかりやさかい……」

「弘」と、要は図に乗ってしゃべりつづけようとする子供を制した [6].

“We have electric cars like that now? Japan is catching up with the world.”

«Oh, we have everything.» **Hiroshi brought a trace of the Osaka dialect into his speech.**

“We have, have we.” Takanatsu tried to imitate him.

“Terrible. Not a bit like Osaka.”

“The boy's really become too good. He speaks a different language with Misako and me from the one he uses at school.”

“I can talk with a Tokyo accent when I want to, but everyone at school is from Osaka.” Hiroshi was still displaying his **Osaka dialect** proudly [7, p. 41].

In the novel, the features of Kyoto dialect are mentioned in the speech of O-hisa, Misako's father's mistress. An extra explanations, ‘soft Kyoto accent’ and ‘Kyoto lilt’, were also used by Seidensticker. O-hisa lives in Kyoto and represents the essence of old Japan. The author compares her to a Bunraku puppet. In this quote, Kaname and Misako came to the theater, and when O-hisa saw them, she said: .....渡りを渡って降りて来る二人にお久はそれと心づくくと、「お越しやす」と小声で云いながら居ずまいを直して、場を塞(ふさ);塞いでいる蒔絵(まさえ);蒔絵の提げ重を、一つ一つ丁寧に積み重ねて自分の膝の前に寄せた。

「お越しやすたえ」.....[6]

O-hisa saw them as they came down the passage. «Oh, you're here,» she said in her **soft Kyoto accent**. She carefully piled the lunch boxes at her knee, elaborate gold-flecked tiers of them, and moved back to make room for Misako beside the old man. “They've come,» she said. He greeted them shortly and turned to concentrate again on the stage [7, p. 20].

The other traces of Kyoto dialect can be found in this quote:

老人が何かくどくど云うのに対して、お久の方は言葉少なに「へえへえ」と聞いているらしく、ときどき「何々どす」と答えるそのどすと云う語尾だけがぼんやり聞き取れる [6].

Still the old man talked. O-hisa answered chiefly in monosyllables, interjecting only now and then a sentence at the end of which Kaname could catch a **Kyoto lilt** [7, p. 94].

In the introduction to the anthology “Sothern Exposure: Modern Japanese literature from Okinawa”, Michael Molasky and Steve Rabson also noted different ways of handling dialect in Okinawan texts with the link to the literary works:

“1. render the dialect into standard English with little or no textual indication that dialect is used;

2. romanize rather than translate the words or phrases that appear in dialect and then define them using footnotes (“Shell-shocked Island,” “Dream Revelations”);

3. do the same without defining or translating the words (an approach used for select proper nouns in “Droplets” and “Fortunes by the Sea” [1998]);

4. italicize the word in dialect and offer an explanation in the text as unobtrusively as possible (many of our translators have selectively adopted this approach);

5. translate those passages appearing in dialect into an English-language dialect (“Droplets”)” [8, p. 9].

Scientists also consider the Okinawan dialect to be a language due to its distinctive features compared to Japanese. So next we will analyze the texts of Okinawan writers.

Yamanokuchi Baku (*real name Yamaguchi Jūsaburō*, 1903 – 1963) was born in Naha, Okinawa prefecture. In 1922 moved to

Tokyo. In the translation of his poem below by Rie Takagi, there is a romanization of the dialect word and then its definition in a footnote:

弾を浴びた島  
島の土を踏んだとたんに  
ガンジュイ<sup>(1)</sup>とあいさつしたところ  
はいおかげさまで元気ですとか言って  
島の人日本語で来たのだ.....[9]

#### Shell-shocked Island

The moment I set foot on the island soil

and greeted them *Ganjuy*<sup>(1)</sup>

Very well, thank you

the island people replied in Japanese...[8, p. 49].

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ (1) How have you been?

Medoruma Shun (1960 – ) was born in Nakijin, Okinawa prefecture. He employed the Nakijin dialect of Okinawa in his work but restricted it. The reason for this, as the author himself thought, was that most of the Okinawan youth ceased to understand it. In the text, he used hieroglyphs to convey the meaning of the statement and wrote the reading with furigana. As it was stated in the preface of the book “Sothern Exposure: Modern Japanese literature from Okinawa”, Molasky translated the passage, where dialect appeared, into an English-language dialect. Here there is an example from 「水滴」(“Droplets”):

「ええ、おじい、時間ど。起(う);起きみ候(そーり);候れ」

肩を揺ると枕から頭が落ち、空ろに開いた目と口から涙とよだれが垂れ落ちた。

「あね、早(へー);早く起(う);起きらんな」  
[10, p. 191–192].

“Grandpa, time to **git** yourself up. **C’m**on now.” When Ushi shook his shoulder, Tokusho’s head slid off the pillow and tears dripped from his eyes, wide open and glazed, while saliva drooled from his mouth.

“Hurry up! **Outta** that bed, **ya** hear?” [8, p. 255].

**Conclusion.** We have observed examples where dialect was translated by usage of standard English and explanation. There were also texts where we found additional footnotes and incorporation of the information about the dialect in the preface of the translated book. There were examples of dialect transcription and usage of non-standard English.

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**Батюк І. Особливості перекладу англійською мовою діалектизмів, вжитих у японських літературних текстах**

**Анотація.** Ця стаття присвячена проблемі діалектної мови в японських літературних текстах та її відтворенню в англійських перекладах. Використання діалектизмів як ознак певного регіону, до якого належать персонажі, є важливою складовою стилу письменника. Діалект служить для вказівки на культуру, яка відрізняється від домінуючої. Приклади перекладацьких стратегій демонструють, як досягається його ілюзія. Вибір способу відтворення залежить від мовного чуття перекладача. В дослідженні було виявлено, що в перекладі діалектної мови часто використовували поєднання літературної англійської з поясненням. Крім того, подекуди це були транскрибовані форми діалекту та нестандартна англійська мова. Окрім поезії, найхарактерніші його елементи було вжито в діалогах персонажів. Едвард Сайденстікер продемонстрував відмінність між різними видами мовлення в романах Танізаки Джюн'ічіро за допомогою формальних та скорочених елементів англійської мови, а також додавав пояснення. Відомо, що цей автор наймав помічників перекладати його твори на кансайський діалект, оскільки сам народився і виріс в іншому регіоні. Танізаки у своєму романі також вказав, що головна героїня з Осаки (регіон Кансай) відчувала себе некомфортно, розмовляючи стандартною токійською мовою, а особливо з тими, з ким вона звикла спілкуватися діалектом. У перекладі вірша Яманокучі Баку, який виконала Ріе Такагі, є транскрипція діалектного слова та його пояснення у виносі. Він, як і Медорума Шюн, народився в префектурі Окінава. Останній використовував ієрогліфи в тексті для розуміння значення діалекту, але підписував їх фуриганою, щоб передати його прочитання. Майкл Моласкі переклав уривки з літературних творів Медоруми Шюна, що містили діалект, нестандартним варіантом англійської мови.

**Ключові слова:** японська мова, японський діалект, стратегія перекладу, англійський переклад.

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