

# **Quality assessment of community translation in Japanese context: Functionalist approaches**

**Kazuharu Yamamoto\***

kazuharu120@hotmail.com

## **Abstract**

This paper attempts to assess community translation texts in the Japanese context using functionalist approaches. The texts, which contain information on emergencies and an individual's rights, were translated from Japanese into Thai and English in terms of Vermeer's skopos theory. The assessment framework consists of adequacy for the translation's skopos (purpose), internal coherence within the target language, and fidelity to the source language. Results of the analysis indicate that there were differences in quantity and quality of translated information between the two target languages. Some translated texts, in which focus was placed on the form of the text in the interlinear sense, maintained a style of consecutive translation, which, as a result, led to a failure in coherence within the target text. However, those texts managed to achieve adequacy regarding the translation's skopos. These results indicate that it is also necessary to consider non-text factors, such as the consistency of information in the target language and timeliness of the translation, in order to adapt the assessment framework for community translation.

**Keywords:** community translation, functionalist approach, Thai

---

\*Graduate student of Doctoral program in Human Sciences of Osaka University, Japan

## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์คำแปลภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษที่แปลจากต้นฉบับภาษาญี่ปุ่นที่เขียนในบริบทญี่ปุ่นจากมุมมองทฤษฎีการแปลที่มุ่งเน้นหน้าที่ของคำ โดยเก็บตัวอย่างจากงานแปลข้อมูลในสถานการณ์ฉุกเฉินและข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับสิทธิส่วนบุคคล ครอบครัวการวิเคราะห์ประกอบด้วย ความหมายสมของภาษาเป้าหมายกับวัตถุประสงค์การแปล การเรียนรู้ภาษาเป้าหมาย และความซื่อสัตย์ต่อภาษาต้นฉบับ ผลการวิจัยพบว่า การแปลระหว่างภาษาเป้าหมาย 2 ภาษา มีความแตกต่างกันทั้งในเชิงปริมาณและคุณภาพ เช่น เมื่อว่าการแปลด้วยวิธีแทรกระหว่างบรรทัดจะมีจุดอ่อนในการเรียนรู้ความต่อเนื่องของแต่ละข้อความแต่การแปลนี้มีความหมายสมกับวัตถุประสงค์การแปล ผลการวิจัยนี้บ่งชี้ให้เห็นถึงความจำเป็นในการพิจารณาองค์ประกอบอื่นที่ไม่เกี่ยวข้องกับโครงสร้างภาษา เช่น ความต่อเนื่องของข้อมูลในภาษาเป้าหมายและข้อจำกัดทางด้านเวลาในการแปลเพื่อที่จะสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในการแปลเพื่อชุมชนให้เหมาะสมมากยิ่งขึ้น

**คำสำคัญ:** การแปลเพื่อชุมชน, ทฤษฎีการแปลที่มุ่งเน้นหน้าที่ของคำ, ภาษาไทย

## 1. Introduction

“Foreign residents” in this research are defined as those who live in Japan without Japanese nationality and whose first language is not Japanese. There is an upward tendency of the number of foreign residents, which serves to promote the multilingual information. In particular, fields related to the living of welfare and education has taken the lead in the multilingual information from the viewpoint of multicultural symbiosis.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications considered synthetic and systematic promotion of multicultural symbiosis in Japanese local governments, which led to its decision on “the proposal of the ‘multicultural symbiosis’ promotion program” in 2006. This decision clarified the Ministry’s position on promotion of multilingual information dissemination. As a result, local governments and the organs concerned are advancing multilingual information sequentially from languages in high demand, such as English and Chinese.

The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) has published a “Multilingual Information Manual for Publishing<sup>1</sup>”, which describes an editorial policy and contains notes on translation, in order to support the promotion of the multilingualization of information for local governments. “Community translation” in this research is defined as a translation into multiple languages for foreign residents, with a focus on information that originated in the community. It serves to increase access to public services. Support on the informer side of translation has been stimulating the multilingual information. For instance, city public relations texts and information on how to take out garbage were translated from Japanese into multiple languages. However, analysis or assessment of the translations from the perspective of the recipient has not yet been performed. Thus, it is necessary to discuss the function and role of community translation suitable for multicultural symbiosis.

Localization, in which the multilingual information positions English as an interlingua for translation into multiple languages, may be applied in order to ease the burden on edits, for example, by reducing cost and unifying a translation (Munday, 2008: 191). This localization has the feature that management of a translation can be easily performed by eliminating the peculiar socio-cultural

elements of language as much as possible. If localization is applied to a community translation, the process will involve translating from Japanese to English and then from English to multiple other languages. If it is not applied, there will be differences in translation strategies and socio-cultural aspects, including the information content, between a source language and target languages or intra-target languages.

Functional theories of translation<sup>2</sup> exceed the theory that carried out the core of the concept of equivalence, whether in literal or free translation, and are regarded as a new paradigm of translation studies that view translation phenomena according to the function and role of the text (Munday, 2008: 87; see also Pym, 2010: 43). The purpose of this study is to specify the skopos in which each translation example has a multiple language translation text for foreign residents based on the skopos theory, which is a functional theory, and to attempt assay from a recipient's position.

The notion of translation in this investigation refers to interlingual translation as defined by Jakobson (1959/2004: 139), which is a means of intercultural communication that includes the interpreting in a subordinate notion. A translation and its interpreting are distinguished by “whether a target text can polish and correct” (Fujinami, 2007: 27), according to the definition of a functionalist of Vermeer. Moreover, the notion of community interpreting<sup>3</sup> is one that is included in community translation, which is realized as research that specializes in interpreting action or the interpreting phenomenon.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Theoretical framework of skopos

The functional theories employed in this investigation are those that consider not only linguistic factors but also the purpose and function of the translation corresponding to each situation (Munday, 2008: 72). The target text premises considering and dealing with translation patterns according to the purpose and function of translation from the same source text.

Vermeer applied the concept of skopos and advocated the skopos theory, which aims at translation in which the purpose of the translation is most important. The skopos theory developed by Vermeer and Reiss established the General Theory

of Translation (Schaffner, 2009: 118). Vermeer claimed that translation is an intentional mutual act between human beings with different sociocultural backgrounds, which became an opportunity which recognizes the existence and role of the translator as a mediator of intercultural communication (Nord, 1997: 44-52). This General Theory of Translation has three rules: skopos rule, coherence rule, and fidelity rule. The skopos theory may have to express the language form of a source text sequentially while remaining faithful to a legal document, depending on the purpose, although there is serious concern about what kind of purpose a target text is translated. On this point, Fujinami (2007: 30) indicated, "It is not the alternative view whether they are a fidelity to a source text, or the readability of a target text." That is, since the target texts called for according to its skopos differ, the skopos theory has not denied the fidelity.

Fujinami (2004) proposed the assessment model for translation based on the rules of the General Theory of Translation. The original standard was first set up and evaluated with the following order of importance: 1. the skopos rule, 2. the coherence rule, and 3. the fidelity rule. This order was verified through her model of what transfer of culture would occur in the case of literature translated from German into Japanese. Although in this assessment model, "overall assessment of target texts is not clarified and suitable for each analysis description" (Fujinami, 2007: 158), the point that application tends to attempt to identify the specific skopos suitable for each case is also one of the features of this methodology.

Apart from this, the purpose of community translation is to provide multilingual information to foreign residents as "communication support" in order for the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to show its "Multicultural Community Promotion Plan at the local level<sup>4</sup>". For example, for translating information into multiple languages, Yokohama City or Kawasaki City specifies the translation indicator and the implementation guidelines for translation to the translator. In order to provide multilingual information taking into consideration the sociocultural backgrounds of foreign residents, it is necessary to create functional correspondences according to each situation and role for which translation is asked. In the skopos theory, if the skopos of translation is not clear, translation action is impossible, and even if a source text is analyzed, a target text will not be produced.

In order to create an adequate translation, it is necessary to specify the skopos in the first place.

In the framework that considers the skopos, the notion of skopos can be applied in three ways: the translation process, the translation result, and the translation mode (Vermeer, 2004: 230). However, Nord (1997) offered the criticism that caution had not been sufficiently paid to the reappearance of the feature at the micro-level of the target text in Vermeer's method of considering the skopos of the source text. She pointed out the significance of a translation commission based on a functionalist approach. Regarding this point, Vermeer also accepts the necessity of a translation commission (Vermeer, 2004: 235). A translation commission describes skopos explicitly or suggestively, and some conditions on which the skopos and skopos of translation must be attained are shown. Further, the character of a target text is that "the nature of the TT is primarily determined by its skopos or commission, and adequacy (Adaquatheit) comes to override equivalence as the measure of the translatorial action" (Munday, 2008: 81). That is, if a target text fulfills the skopos outlined by the request content, also functionally, it can be considered as adequate from the viewpoint of communication.

From the above, the adequacy of translation could be inferred by whether the skopos, tested by comparison and specified as the translation commission, is functionally fulfilled in the target text. When a translation commission is not clear, the skopos will be considered and specified through the translation process that Vermeer presented, a target text, and the method and the intention of translation.

This investigation specifies the skopos of each translation case in consideration of the translation commission, which was not examined by Fujinami (2007), and evaluates the adequacy of translation. This is because a translator receives restrictions in a translation commission most often by a translation client (initiator) or those who receive the request and direct it to a translator (commissioner).

## **2.2 Community translation in Japanese context**

Local governments whose districts have many foreign residents organized the Council for Cities of Non-Japanese Residents in Hamamatsu City in 2001 and issued the Declaration for Cities of Non-Japanese Residents. The council meets once a year

to focus on problems involving foreign residents. Support for foreign residents was materialized by the declaration, and community translation began to be carried out in different areas, such as foreigner legal aid services and medical interpreting. However, there are qualitative and quantitative assignment<sup>5</sup> in that the translator, who is playing an active part in the community translation, is a volunteer (Mizuno, 2008), and there is also deviation within the language that is regarded as acceptable.

Roberts (1997) classified the range of phenomena that interpreters treat in community translation into three categories—public, medical, or legal service—and attempted to specify the concept of community interpreting<sup>6</sup>. It can be argued that community translation is especially prospering in the fields of medical and legal services<sup>7</sup> when the present situation in Japan is surveyed according to Robert's classification.

In the legal field, Watanabe et al. (2004) explained how a translator should act in a legal setting. For a court setting, Yoshida (2007) pointed out the limit of the normative role of an interpreter's invisible existence from the viewpoint of intercultural communication and gave reasons to reconsider the interpreter's role and responsibilities. Tsuda (2007) investigated the court interpreter's qualification system overseas, and Nishimatsu (2007) discussed the state of the qualification authorization system. On the other hand, in the medical field, Nadamitsu (2008) conducted an interview investigation with medical interpreters about the features and present situation of medical interpreting and pointed out the peculiarity of medical interpreting.

However, verification has not been fully attained for the discussion based on the characteristics of community translation because previous research on community translation has focused on the interpreter phenomena. The reasons that the translator's role and institutional argument become an issue in community interpreting research are the need to protect the privacy of the patient in the medical setting (Nadamitsu, 2008: 74) and the difficulty of collecting language data in court when recording is not permitted. Although there has been much discussion on what kind of role a translator or interpreter should play—and with what kind of norms and under what kind of system—arguments on translation action or translation texts are lacking. This study analyzes the text produced by the translator not from the

perspective of the informer of the translation but of the recipient. Moreover, since comparatively many studies have been conducted in the fields of medical and legal services, this study targets the case of multilingual information provided in the field of public service.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 The candidate for analysis**

The local governments affiliated with the Council for Cities of Non-Japanese Residents are called Cities of Non-Japanese Residents. According to Miyasato (2009), who investigated administrative services and multilingual measures in cities where foreigners live together in a concentrated community, the living guide and public relations magazine had been translated multilingually in all 23 cities that were affiliated with the council at the time of investigation. Moreover, multilingual information is provided with a focus on information that can be applied at home.

For example, Kanagawa Prefecture has translated and provided multilingual information according to each field with priority in the order of information: first priority is given to information about corresponding in an emergency, second to the concerns of daily life, and third to rights and duties<sup>8</sup>. Although the standard for providing multilingual information probably varies among local governments, as Miyasato's investigation indicates, with regard to distributing the information as a form of crisis management, such as in case of a disaster or emergency, multilingualization of the required information is carried out with priority.

Then, this study analyzes sentences from the notice<sup>9</sup> "Information on the Novel Influenza A," which Kanagawa Prefecture created, and part of an explanatory note on the application for child allowance,<sup>10</sup> created by the CLAIR, which supports autonomous internationalization. In addition, in the language combinations for analysis, the source language is Japanese and the target languages, Thai and English. These languages are chosen because English translation is widely given to foreign residents who do not specify their regionality and do not speak Japanese as their first language. On the other hand, Thai reflects regionality because only one country (Thailand) specifies it as an official language. Thus, it seems appropriate to compare and contrast community translation using these three languages.

### 3.2 Assessment method

Description analysis is conducted from the viewpoint of the skopos theory, based on the assessment model of Fujinami (2007), which proposed the functional translation assessment method, and this study evaluates translation texts. However, Fujinami's case of analysis that was suggestively specified from the translation method was literature, and it adopted the skopos of translation for producing a target text. In this research, the skopos is explicitly specified from a translation indicator or implementation guidelines for translation as what deserves a translation commission.

Specifically, analysis is conducted according to the following procedure. First, Japanese as a source language and Thai or English as a target language are contrastively analyzed from the collected translation cases. The kind of skopos that created each case is examined on the basis of the individual translation policy and implementation guidelines. Second, according to the classification (details see Appendix 1: Table 6) of the translation method that Fujinami proposes, each case is analyzed from three viewpoints—semantic content, expressive form, and operativeness—in terms of whether coherence is maintained within the target language (coherence rule) and translation products are loyal to the source language (fidelity rule). Then, it is judged whether the translation method is in agreement with the skopos of the individual translation cases. In addition, the analysis focuses on differences in translation methods, based on intratarget languages, and reexamines the skopos that an individual translation case has in translation methods that display differences. Finally, it considers the theoretical framework of the translation assessment based on the characteristics of community translation taken from the assessment results.

*Table 1* Assessment method list based on skopos theory

Translation method	Skopos A	Coherence B	Fidelity C			Whole assessment
			Content	Format	Effect	
Refer to Table 1.	A /—	B /—	±	±	±	Total

Source: Assessment method list based on skopos theory (Fujinami, 2007: 140) Table 6.

The above analytic procedure was adjusted for the assessment method (Table 1). The target text corresponding to the skopos is judged to be [A]. It is judged to be [B] if coherence is found. A [+] is assigned if fidelity corresponds to each of the three items. If it does not correspond, a [−] is assigned. The number of [+] is counted and evaluated, and the evaluation is represented as ABC3 when it is perfect. However, from the rule of the skopos theory, a translation is judged as adequate if an assessment of ABC1 is obtained. The comparison and examination of translation is for “considering the reception context of the assumed translation” (Fujinami, 2007: 143). The basic assumption of her discussion remains, and this study shares this assumption.

### **3.3 Limit of the methodology**

The assessment method that this research applies analyzes the features of the texts produced as translation products for specifying the translation method and evaluates the fidelity over a source language and the coherence in target languages. Moreover, the skopos of translation is specified from the translation indicator, and translation implementation points that the translation commission regarded as important in the translation process are made applicable to analysis. The text is investigated synthetically, including the consideration of whether the skopos was attained within the target language.

However, it is supposed that the judgment of whether skopos was attained within the target language also takes into consideration assessments by the foreign residents themselves, who are recipients of the information. In this case, it will be necessary to also take into consideration the extent of a recipient's background knowledge or amount of information given to a recipient as well as his or her Japanese-language competence. Although investigations using interviews and written questionnaires can be considered as assessment models for foreign residents, I would like to address the issue of such investigations in a separate article due to the limitations of space.

Thus, this study eliminates the writer's subjectivity as much as possible and attempts to evaluate the skopos explicitly shown by the text and expressed objectively, or the translation policy.

## 4. Analysis and assessment

### 4.1 Information concerning correspondence in an emergency

Translation Case 1(details see Appendix 2) is part of the beginning of the notice “Information on the Novel Influenza A,” which Kanagawa Prefecture created, and contains general information concerning correspondence in an emergency. The source language is Japanese [ST\_1], and it is translated into the target languages Thai [TT\_Thai\_1] and English [TT\_Eng\_1]. In addition, the notice was translated into a total of ten languages.

Kanagawa Prefecture, an initiator, is one of the local governments that have so far promoted the multilingualization of information and which has defined Implementation Guidelines for the Information Service to the Foreign Citizenship People of the Prefecture<sup>11</sup>. It is concerned with detailed translation methods and the Basic Policy on Information Service to the Foreign Citizenship People of the Prefecture<sup>12</sup>. This case attempts to specify the skopos from this basic policy and the implementation guidelines.

Translation requirements are based on the assumption that the recipient does not understand Japanese culture or customs because the Basic Policy is for “those for whom understanding Japanese is difficult and who need the information in foreign languages because Japanese is not their native language.” With regard to producing multilingual translations, Article 4 of the implementation guidelines clearly refers to “Multilingual Guidelines Manual 43 Points for Multilingual Information<sup>13</sup>”. Moreover, it is clearly mentioned in the first point of the multilingual guidelines manual that it is important to clarify the recipients of the information service and identify their needs. Since required information is different for individual languages, it is inferred that applying the procedure of localization to community translation is difficult.

The skopos of the community translation, which this case shows from an initiator’s viewpoint, adapts the content of original information to align with individual language needs in consideration of cultural differences that have been identified; thus, it is aimed at translation from the viewpoint of foreign residents. Namely, translation in consideration of both communication and information functions is required as the skopos. Then, after target texts from Translation Case 1

are divided and analyzed for coherence and fidelity according to the classification of the translation method, the translation method is judged according to whether it is in agreement with the skopos.

Translation Case 1: Analytic sentence <1>

Source Text: Japanese [ST\_1]

県民のみなさんへ—新型インフルエンザに関するお知らせ—

Target Text: Thai [TT\_Thai\_a]

แจ้งข่าวสารเรื่องไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่ 2009 ถึงประชาชนของจังหวัด  
คานางawa

Target Text: English [TT\_Eng\_1b]

To the Prefectural Citizens — Information on the Novel Influenza A  
(H1N1) —

[TT\_Thai\_1a] uses the expression “the new type of influenza 2009” in order to adapt a “new type of influenza” to the target culture. The simple expression “new type of influenza” in Thai could lead to the misunderstanding that the term refers to SARS, which was an epidemic mainly in Hong Kong in 2007. Incidentally, SARS is expressed as “the new type of influenza 2007” in Thai. Moreover, the phrase “you, people of the prefecture” in Japanese, is retouched in Thai as “people of Kanagawa Prefecture,” to specify the meaning more clearly, thereby fulfilling the skopos. The Thai verb “แจ้ง” has the meaning of notifying or releasing information publicly, which indicates that the operativeness of communicating that the text is a public notice sentence is achieved.

On the other hand, because [TT\_Eng\_1b] translates the vocabulary sequentially, the meaning of the expression “the Prefectural Citizens” cannot fully be understood, and, thus, coherence is not fully maintained. As word order also has a similar relation according to the syntax of the source language, the format is securable. The expression “a new type of influenza” retouches “H1N1,” which is also a synonym of a new type of influenza, and it takes skopos into consideration. Given this, it is difficult to say that it was transmitted to the operativeness as the title of the notice statement because of fulfilling the translation fidelity, especially the Japanese Format to as stated above.

The assessment result of analytic sentence <1> is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Assessment of analytic sentence <1>

Analytic sentence	Translation method	Skopos A	Coherence B	Fidelity C			Whole assessment
				Content	Format	Effect	
TT_Thai_1a	No.7 & 8	A	B	+	-	+	ABC2
TT_Eng_1b	No.4 & 8	A	-	+	+	-	AC2

Translation Case 1: Analytic sentence <2>

Source Text: Japanese [ST\_1]

県では、ホームページ等でインフルエンザに関する情報をお知らせしています。

多言語による電話相談も受け付けています。

Target Text: Thai [TT\_Thai\_c]

ອນນິ້ງ ໄດ້ຂໍດເສນອບໜ້າວສາຮ່ວມມືດ ເຮືອງໄຟ້ຂ່າວດ ໄກສູ່ສາຍພັນຫຼື້ມີໃນໄອມເພຈ

Target Text: English [TT\_Eng\_1d]

The Prefectural Government is offering information on the H1N1 influenza on its websites. Also, MIC Kanagawa (Multi-language Information Center), one of the cooperative NPOs of the Prefectural, is providing a telephone consultation service [...] 08:30 to 17:00 on weekdays.

[TT\_Thai\_1c] has transliterated with “ໄອມເພຈ,” the sound of Japanese “homepage,” as it is. Thai speakers can understand the sounds in “homepage,” and the information content on the homepage is also understandable. However, the text omits that the telephone consultation service is offered in many languages without translation. Probably, the skopos is insufficiently achieved in terms of whether this information, adapted for the content, is useful and free of omissions, and whether it meets the needs of Thai speakers.

On the other hand, [TT\_Eng\_1d] has transliterated homepage as “website,” which expresses the idea in another way using a much broader concept. Moreover, the translation method from the viewpoint of foreign residents, including retouching the information of the NPO that supports foreign residents, is observed. Contrasted with the sentence structure in the source language, which is simple and intelligible, the statement in [TT\_Eng\_1d] is a long sentence, and, thus, the style of operativeness is not maintained, although coherence of the text is not denied.

The assessment result of analytic sentence <2> is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 Assessment of analytic sentence <2>

Analytic sentence	Translation method	Skopos A	Coherence B	Fidelity C			Whole assessment
				Content	Format	Effect	
TT_Thai_1c	No.2 & 7	—	B	+	—	+	BC2
TT_Eng_1d	No.5 & 8	A	B	+	—	—	ABC1

Translation Case 1: Analytic sentence <3>

Source Text: Japanese [ST\_1]

電話相談窓口のご案内（日本語）

[http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic\\_buta\\_jp.pdf](http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic_buta_jp.pdf)

Target Text: Thai [TT\_Thai\_1e]

มีข้อมูลช่วยสารเกี่ยวกับการป้องกันและรักษา โรคไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่ (ภาษาไทย) ด้วย

Target Text: English [TT\_Eng\_1f]

For the telephone consultation service on the influenza, visit

[http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic\\_buta\\_eng.pdf](http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic_buta_eng.pdf)

Information on the Preventive Measures and Treatment of the Influenza.

Although the consultation guidance, as shown in [ST\_1] is also translated into Thai with an idiom, in [TT\_Thai\_1e], it is translated as an inquiry “related to influenza prevention and medical treatment.” It can be said that semantic content is more concretely shown in the source language as an abstract expression. It corrects the content that there is a consultation in Thai and the translation is adapted to Thai native speakers’ needs. However, the impression received when the address of the PDF file that shows the consultation window point is omitted, compared to that of the source language or [TT\_Eng\_1f], is unlikely to be the same. Tentatively, the contact for consultation in Thai should have been indicated if the file existed or, it should have been retouched if a PDF file for Thai did not already exist.

On the other hand, [TT\_Eng\_1f] accorded with the format of the source language and changed to the address of the PDF file produced in English. Besides, the coherence of the texts is improved by retouching “being related with influenza prevention and medical treatment” as well as [TT\_Thai\_1e], and translation is

adapted so that recipients can understand easily from the perspectives of their target cultures. With a focus on this expression, it was the same as with [TT\_Thai\_1e].

The assessment result of analytic sentence <3> is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 Assessment of analytic sentence <3>

Analytic sentence	Translation method	Skopos A	Coherence B	Fidelity C			Whole assessment
				Content	Format	Effect	
TT_Thai_1e	No.6 & 7	A	B	+	-	-	ABC1
TT_Eng_1f	No.6 & 8	A	B	+	+	+	ABC3

#### 4.2 Information concerning rights and duties

Next, this paper assays Translation Case 2: Analytic sentence <4> (details see Appendix 2). Translation Case 2 extracts text from an explanation of the “application for child allowance” published by CLAIR. Although there were examples of translation into 12 languages, including Chinese and Spanish, the translation cases of Thai and English are adopted in this analysis, for the reasons discussed.

The translation form is an interlinear version of the format that inserts a translation in the spacing of a source language. This translation form has the feature “of auxiliary translation for reading a source language, and text intentionality becomes remarkably high” (Fujinami, 2007: 23). Namely, restrictions are yielded to the format of the source language, such as the length or the syntactic structure of a sentence, and there is the possibility that maintaining the coherence of the target texts will become too difficult. It is supposed that this translation form is adopted for each local government to easily perform edits such as adding information.

Translation Case 2: Analytic sentence <4>

Source Text: Japanese [ST\_2]

2010年3月31日現在、児童手当を支給されていた方で、新たに子ども手当の対象となる子どもがいない場合には、申請する必要はありませんが、6月に現況届の提出が必要になります。

Target Text: Thai [TT\_Thai\_2]

สำหรับผู้ที่ ณ วันที่ 31 เดือนมีนาคม ค.ศ. 2010 ได้รับเงินสงเคราะห์บุตร

(เดิม)อยู่ และ ไม่มีบุตรที่อยู่ในกลุ่มที่จะได้รับเงินสงเคราะห์บุตร (ใหม่) นี้ ไม่จำเป็นต้องยื่นคำร้อง แต่ต้องยื่นเอกสารแสดงสถานภาพปัจจุบันในเดือนมิถุนายน

Target Text: English [TT\_Eng\_2]

As of March 31, 2010, people who already receive a child allowance [jido teate] according to the old system and do not have another child who is eligible for the new child allowance [kodomo teate], do not need to make an application. However, they must make a report of present circumstances in June.

Translation Case 2 refers to the “multilingual guidelines manual” as does Translation Case 1. In this meaning, the skopos of Translation Case 1 does not fundamentally change. However, the recipients are assumed to be “those who need information and who do not have Japanese people in the family or those who need information for a child occasion, like entrance for school.” Viewing understanding as important as compared with Japanese-oriented information, the explanatory translation would be suitable. Besides, for those who hardly understand Japanese, it is assumed that when there is no terminological concept in the target culture, and translation is needed, extra consideration should be given.

I would like to conduct translation analysis of Translation Case 2 according to the classification of a translation method. Immediately after the relative pronoun for the date, [TT\_Thai\_2] holds the format and translates word for word. In addition, while considering it as “ผู้ที่ (those who)” in response to restrictions of the Japanese syntactic structure, it translates with the technique of raising the degree of depths and the degree of extension of a paragraph, which requires [TT\_Eng\_2] to use “people who (those who),” and it is difficult to maintain unity. Thailand also has a system of child allowance, and as the translation of “allowance for dependent children” and “child allowance,” the term “เงินสงเคราะห์บุตร” appears, and meta-information is added, such as the system of the “เดิม (old),” or “ใหม่ (new).” However, there is no explanation of the system itself, and it is difficult to say that the content is fully understood. The effect of a public text is given because, overall, the vocabulary items applied are formal.

On the other hand, by [TT\_Eng\_2], “allowance for dependent children” is translated as “a child allowance [jido teate],” and a transliteration is added in

parentheses; thus, translation that considers the communication function is accomplished. Other than this, the text corrects that an allowance for dependent children is part of “the old system,” and contrasts it with “child allowance,” urging readers’ understanding. In addition, the effect of a public text given by the source language was given because “make a report” is an expression used by formal texts, such as statutes. The assessment result of analytic sentence <4> is summarized in Table 5.

*Table 5 Assessment of analytic sentence <4>*

Analytic sentence	Translation method	Skopos A	Coherence B	Fidelity C			Whole assessment
				Content	Format	Effect	
TT_Thai_2	No.4, 6, 8	A	—	—	+	+	AC2
TT_Eng_2	No.2, 4, 8	A	—	+	+	+	AC3

#### **4.3 Summary of the assessment results and discussion**

The translation cases from Japanese to Thai and English were tested by comparison to the translation method after specifying each skopos and analysis assessment performed. In Translation Case 1, it became clear that there is a difference between target languages with regard to the amount of information to be shown, as well as the quality of the information corresponding to each language need. On the other hand, in Translation Case 2, because the translation form is an interlinear version, it is the word-for-word translation, and the reservation of coherence was not enough.

With regard to the skopos, translation that considered cultural differences was accomplished, and the skopos attained both cases synthetically through appropriate changes in information and content in accordance with the needs of each language. When the translation method was considered from the viewpoint of compatibility between target languages, it was found that compatibility was seldom maintained with regard to the content of information between target languages, and the translation method or the whole assessment differed in [TT\_Thai\_1] and [TT\_Eng\_1]. On the other hand, the syntactic structures of [TT\_Thai\_2] and [TT\_Eng\_2] were similar to each other, and the compatibility of them was also

maintained in the translation method. It can be supposed that English was used as an inter-lingua with the aim of a unified purpose.

Finally, with regard to the assessment criteria, there is still room for quantitative improvements on the alternative criterion. However, if there are many assessment criteria and the standard is complicated, to a certain degree, the practicality of achieving greater precision will be low. The skopos theory is a practice-oriented theory and is intimately connected to practical applications, such as the assessment model that Fujinami proposed. The role that a community translation plays is to secure foreign residents' rights to know and to access information, which in turn leads to the security of their language rights.

However, can this be said only if the translation is multilingual? Even though a contact and a link appeared in the English version of the PDF file, as the assessment result indicated, this was missing in the Thai translation. Thus, with regard to the compatibility of information content between target languages, we should consider the framework of the whole assessment. In addition, although the information on correspondence in an emergency is translated as a top priority in the field of community translation, it is also part of the skopos of translation in this case to disseminate information in multiple languages as quickly as possible. When evaluating the nature of timeliness for translation, it is important to consider the number of days taken to open information to the public in a target language as compared to a source language scenario. It will be necessary to include the nature of timeliness in translation according to the urgency of information in the framework of assessment in order to make a community translation applicable to assessment.

## 5. Conclusion

This research has attempted an assay of community translation from the point of view of skopos theory based on the assessment model that Fujinami proposed. The analysis cases were texts about the procedure of child allowance, which CLAIR produced, related to rights and duties, and about the notice statement on a new type of influenza, which Kanagawa Prefecture exhibited on its homepage as highly urgent information in 2009. The result of examining a translation policy and implementation guidelines for translation as reference was to adapt the skopos of the

translations to the content in accordance with the individual needs of each language and in consideration of cultural differences with the aim of translating from the viewpoint of foreign residents.

Although both object cases fulfilled the *skopos* according to the assessment, there were some gaps in correspondence in each language regarding the quality of the amount of information or the information itself between intratarget languages. Moreover, the translation form regarded formality as important, and this resulted in word-for-word translation. Some of the cases in which reservation of coherence was not enough were also considered. Henceforth, not only aspects of the text but also elements outside of it, such as compatibility of the content of information in intratarget languages and the instant nature of translation, should be considered as part of the assessment.

In future research, the validity of assessment must be quantitatively verified based on a corpus only from a qualitative viewpoint, and the validity as an assessment model must be improved. It is expected that the significance of community translation also increases with an increase in foreign residents. While community translation permeates society, the fact that community translation itself has not been evaluated until now may be a manifestation of the lack of concern about translation action itself. In addition, given that many volunteer translators play an active part in community translation, it is necessary to carefully and critically examine translators and translation actions.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> CLAIR. (2004, March). *Multilingual Information Manual for Publishing*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.clair.or.jp/j/culture/PDF/culture01.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> It is the theory which German researchers led and advocated beginning in the 1970s. Refer to Schaffner (2009:115-121) for details.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Takahashi (2009) for details. In addition, the Japan Association for Public Service Interpreting and Translation, which treats community translation as used in the context of this research, was established in 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. (2006, March 27). *Multicultural community promotion plan at the local level*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from

[http://www.soumu.go.jp/kokusai/pdf/sonota\\_b6.pdf](http://www.soumu.go.jp/kokusai/pdf/sonota_b6.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Toyota City has employed full-time multicultural coordinators to carry out language service, and this has spread to other cities.

<sup>6</sup> Suppose that a draft is discussed anew with argument on the community translation definition about whether to include medical and court interpreting in community translation.

<sup>7</sup> In the legal field, the Japan Association for Language and Law is established, and in the medical field, the Medical Interpreters and Translators Association has been established in recent years.

<sup>8</sup> Kanagawa Prefecture. *Information Policy for Foreign Residents*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/tagengokahousin—/kionhousin.doc>

<sup>9</sup> Kanagawa Prefecture (2009, September 18). *Information on the Novel Influenza A*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from [http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kok—.usai/2seikatujouhou/buta\\_influenza.html](http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kok—.usai/2seikatujouhou/buta_influenza.html)

<sup>10</sup> CLAIR. (2010). Explanatory note on application for child allowance. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from [http://www.clair.or.jp/j/culture/child\\_allowance/ind—.ex.html](http://www.clair.or.jp/j/culture/child_allowance/ind—.ex.html)

<sup>11</sup> Kanagawa Prefecture (2009, September 18). *Information on the Novel Influenza A*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kok—.usai/tagengokahousin/kihonhousin.doc>

<sup>12</sup> Kanagawa Prefecture. *Guidelines for the Multilingual Information Service*. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/tagen—.gokahousin/jissiyoryo.doc>

<sup>13</sup> It was produced for reference meant to be used when local governments tackle multilingual administration information.

## Appendix 1

Table 6 Translation method list

No.	Translation method	Feature	Coherence	Fidelity		
				Format	Content	Effect
1	Transplant	Spelling of ST is introduced as it is.			○	
2	Transliteration	Aspects of speech of ST are introduced.			○	
3	Loan Translation	The meaning of the component of a word is translated.		○	○	
4	Literal Translation	One word at a time is made to correspond and translated.		○	○	
5	Paraphrase	The same content is phrased in another way as another expression.			○	
6	Adaptation	It adjusts and changes according to the target culture.				○
7	Omission	The element of ST is completely deleted.		○		
8	Retouch	The element that is not contained in ST is added.		○		
9	Explanation	Explain in meta-language.		○		

Source: Translation method list (Fujinami 2007: 141) Table 2. The order of a display of coherence and fidelity is replaced.

## Appendix 2

### Translation Case 1

#### Source Text: Japanese [ST\_1]

県民のみなさんへ 一新型インフルエンザに関するお知らせ一

県内では、インフルエンザが大変流行っています。1つの病院に来る患者の数が30人以上となっている地域もあります。県では、ホームページ等でインフルエンザに関する情報をお知らせしています。多言語による電話相談も受け付けています。

電話相談窓口のご案内（日本語）

[http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic\\_butajp.pdf](http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic_butajp.pdf)

#### Target Text: Thai [TT\_Thai\_1]

～แจ้งข่าวสารเรื่องไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่ 2009～

ดึงประชาชนของจังหวัดคานางาวะ

ปัจจุบันในจังหวัดคานางาวะมีโรคไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่กำลังระบาดลุกคามมาก ในบาง

ท้องที่ ณ โรงพยาบาลเพียงแห่งเดียว มีผู้ป่วยไข้หวัดคนยอดรวมมากกว่า 30 คน

อนึ่ง ได้จัดเสนอข่าวสารข้อมูล เรื่องไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่ในโรมเพจ

◦ มีข้อมูลข่าวสารเกี่ยวกับการป้องกันและรักษาโรคไข้หวัดใหญ่สายพันธุ์ใหม่ (ภาษาไทย)ด้วย

#### Target Text: English [TT\_Eng\_1]

#### To the Prefectural Citizens

— Information on Novel Influenza A (H1N1) —

We have already entered the influenza season, and it is reported that some hospitals and clinics have been seeing over 30 influenza cases per day. The Prefectural Government is offering information on the H1N1 influenza on its websites. Also, MIC Kanagawa (Multi-language Information Center), one of the cooperative NPOs of the Prefectural Government, is providing a telephone consultation service in English to answer various questions on the H1N1 influenza. The service is available at 045-314-9917 from 08:30 to 17:00 on weekdays. For the telephone consultation service on the influenza, visit

[http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic\\_butajp.pdf](http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/2seikatujouhou/mic_butajp.pdf).

Information on the Preventive Measures and Treatment of the Influenza

Source: Kanagawa Prefecture (2009, September 18). Information on the Novel Influenza A. Retrieved March 19, 2011, from <http://www.pref.kanagawa.jp/osirase/kokusai/tagengokahousin/kihonhousin.doc>

## References

Fujinami, F. (2004). Intercultural communication in literature: Method for Evaluation. *Japan Germanic Literature*, No.115, 30-42. [In Japanese]

Fujinami, F. (2007). *Translation action and intercultural communication: Aspects of functionalist approaches*. Kyoto: Shoraisha. [In Japanese]

Jakobson, R. (1959/2004). On linguistic aspects of translation. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The translation studies reader* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.), (pp. 138-143). London and New York: Routledge.

Miyazaki, S. (2009). Language Policy from Census: Administrational Issues on Foreign Residents. In S. Tanaka. (Et al.), *Language education in immigrant days: Frontier of language*, (pp. 184-211), Tokyo: Coco Publishing. [In Japanese]

Mizuno, M. (2008). *Introducing community interpreting*. Osaka: Osaka Kyoiku. [In Japanese]

Munday, J. (2008). *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and application* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Nadamitsu, Y. (2008). The status, roles, and motivations of medical interpreters. *Interpreting and Translation Studies*, 8, 73-95. [In Japanese]

Nishimatsu, S. (2007). The Court Interpreters in Japan and in the United States of America. *Interpreting and Translation Studies*, 7, 189-204. [In Japanese]

Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a purposeful activity: Functional approaches explained*. Manchester, U.K.: St. Jerome.

Pym, A. (2010). *Exploring translation theories*. London and New York: Routledge.

Reiss, K. (2000). *Translation criticism, the potentials and limitations: Categories and criteria for translation quality assessment*. Tran. Rhodes, E. F. Manchester, U.K.: St. Jerome.

Roberts, R. P. (1997). Community interpreting today and tomorrow. In Carr, S. E. (Eds.), *The critical link: Interpreters and in the community*, (pp. 7-26), Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Schaffner, C. (2009). Functionalist Approaches. In B. Mona & G. Saldanha (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of translation studies* (2<sup>rd</sup>ed.), (pp. 115-121), London and New York: Routledge.

Takahashi, M. (2009). Role of Interpreters: From the view point of community interpreting. *Multilingual and multicultural partnership on practical research*, 2, 50-62. [In Japanese]

Tsuda, M. (2007). A study of the public certification system for interpreters and translators in Sweden. *Interpreting and Translation Studies*, 7, 167-187. [In Japanese]

Vermeer, H. J. (2004). Skopos and commission in translation action. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation studies reader* (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.), (pp. 227-238), London and New York: Routledge.

Watanabe, O. (Et al). (2004). *Court interpreting*. Tokyo: Shohakusha Publishing. [In Japanese]

Yoshida, R. (2007). Interpreting court interaction: Redefining the role of court Interpreters. *Interpreting and Translation Studies*, 7, 19-38. [In Japanese]