

## **De-Feminising Translation: making women visible in Japanese translation**

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### ABSTRACT

When feminist translation is discussed, it tends to be proposing a feminising translation strategy to give women their own voice. My thesis, however, presents a de-feminising translation. This results from the over-feminising convention in Japanese literature, both original and translated. Female characters' speech has been over-feminised despite the dissonance with real Japanese women's language use, and the convention has reinforced and maintained gender ideology in Japanese society.

My study offers theoretical description and a prescriptive approach. In the theoretical description, I offer empirical and statistical analyses to describe the over-feminising convention, which is a new contribution in this research area. I also investigate the history of the convention and its function in society from an ideological perspective, and then explore translation problems of the convention. The systematic explanation of the translation problems in relation to the over-feminising convention is also a new area of research in translation studies. The prescriptive approach is an attempt to integrate theories into practical translation by presenting an empirical de-feminising translation.

Through my project, I have become aware that when western feminist theory is used in the Japanese context, we should adjust the idea to the recipient culture. Feminism, in the western sense, has not been widely accepted in Japanese culture and there is a danger in presenting a radical feminist translation. Having worked as a book editor in Tokyo, Japan, I am aware that most of the publishers cannot ignore the commercial side of the book business. Thus, if I translated a text with a radical feminist approach, it might not be accepted by the intended readership and this is not my aim. Therefore, the proposed strategy searches for the best balance between an academic approach and commercial acceptance.

### KEYWORDS

*Bridget Jones's Diary*, de-feminising translation, *The Edible Woman*, *Emma*, feminist translation, *genbun-ichi*, gender, ideology, Japanese translation, linguistics, Margaret Atwood,

*New Voices in Translation Studies* 7 (2011)

Meiji period, *Mrs Dalloway*, norms, over-feminising, polysystem theory, *Pride and Prejudice*, reader-response theory, relevance theory, stereotypes, women's language.

Completion of Thesis

Place: University of East Anglia, U.K.

Year: 2011

Supervisors: Professor Jean Boase-Beier and Dr Gabriela Pounds