神戸市外国語大学 学術情報リポジトリ

Estudio comparativo de las mímesis del japonés y el español.Propuesta de marco teórico ante los problemas de traducción

メタデータ	
	言語: spa
	出版者:
	公開日: 2018-03-23
	キーワード (Ja):
	キーワード (En):
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URL	https://kobe-cufs.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/2413

博士論文審査結果

Title

Estudio comparativo de las mímesis del japonés y el español. Propuesta de marco teórico ante los problemas de traducción

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Report of the dissertation committee

This dissertation has the following components:

1) A syntactic-semantic analysis of the nature of mimetic words in Japanese, both with regards to their use and behavior and to their syntactic category. As part of this analysis, two important conclusions are achieved. On the one hand, it is stated that the lexicalization process that affects this kind of words can culminate in a verb, a noun or an adverb, contrary to what was assumed in previous accounts, in which it is considered that the verb is the highest form of lexicalization possible. The second conclusion follows from this one: the author claims that the adverb is a pure syntactic category, contrary to the belief that it is a subclass of the adjective. It is proven that some mimetic words lexicalize into adverbs without deriving from an adjective. Thus, the careful analysis of Japanese mimetic words undertaken in this dissertation contributes an important theoretical point to the linguistics literature in general: the fact that lexicalization culminates in pure syntactic categories, and the adverb must be among them. In turn, admitting the existence of the adverb as a basic syntactic category implies that the number of mixed categories in Japanese can be expanded to having an adverbial verb (AV), since the mimetic adverb can join *suru* to assume a verbal behavior.
2) An analysis of the problems encountered in the translation of literary works from Japanese into Spanish. In the latter language, this category is absent altogether, which causes omissions or erroneous translations when the original text in Japanese contains mimetic words. The problems stem from a lack of understanding of the category of the mimetic word, which is thoroughly clarified in this dissertation, as stated in 1) above.
3) A dictionary and guide for translators containing 249 entries that cover the most common mimetic words in Japanese and their suggested translation into Spanish. The dictionary is based on several novels by two authors, one representative of the 20th century (Kenji Miyazawa), and one representing the 21st century (Yoko Ogawa).

Thus, this dissertation is a valuable piece of work both from a theoretical and from an applied point of view.

On February 1st, 2018 from 14:00 to 16:00, a public dissertation defense took place at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. The defense committee consisted of Prof. Atsuko Wasa, from Kansai University of Foreign Studies; Prof. Ryujin Nomura, Prof. Mizuho Narita and Prof. Montserrat Sanz, from Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. The defense committee praised the value of the work and offered suggestions about places in which it could become stronger and more convincing, as follows.

The adverbs proposed in the dissertation as examples of the ultimate lexicalization stage on page 62-63 were noted to be peculiar due to different factors (for instance, consisting of only one mora) and it was considered that they do not serve as strong arguments for the proposal. The candidate offered a few other examples of adverbs containing obligatory –*to* but consisting of more than one mora, and the discussion concluded that this particle must be considered to have lost its value as a particle and to have become completely lexicalized with the mimesis to which it accompanies. This was also applied to the –*ri* of *sukkari*, which in principle is an onomatopoeic marker, but has lost its character as such. In light of this discussion, a member of the committee suggested that the borders between level III and level IV of lexicalization should be further clarified in future work. She also offered the idea that adverbs should be classified in at least two categories, depending on whether they are or not pure categories. Thus, certain adverbs could be subtypes of adjectives, and others could be considered pure adverbs. Other examples were also questioned, such as the claims about the mimetic words *peka-peka*, *ba-nto* or *chanto* in different parts of the thesis or of the dictionary. Concerning *peka-peka*, a member of the committee provided some pieces of bibliography that had not been part of the analysis and that should be included in the research.

Two important theoretical questions came up during the defense: the reason why the category of mimetic words in pervasive in Japanese but absent from Spanish, and the question of whether the claim that adverbs are pure categories can be taken as a universal. As for the former, it was concluded that further work is required to analyze what features of Japanese grammar make this category possible, like the fluid nature of syntactic categories caused by less markedness of certain features. Regarding the latter, the claim is stated as a universal, since finding evidence of a mental category in a language, if proven right, constitutes evidence that it is a universal, even if it is not visible in other languages.

The different degree of difficulty in translation between fonomimetic and fenomimetic words into Spanish was also discussed. The candidate clarified that in one case, the difficulty stems from being able to capture the sensory perception in Spanish in a way that is similar to the perception of native speakers in Japanese, whereas in the other case, the difficulty lies in finding the appropriate adverb or adverbial expression in Spanish.

When asked about the diachronic sequence between *pika-pika-to* and *pika-pika-ni*, the candidate resorted to the type of verb with which they appear to explain the differences in the use of these two variations, but did not clarify the historical sequence of development.

During the session, it was also discussed that the fact that a word has achieved a certain level of lexicalization (as a noun or an adverb, for instance), does not preclude the simultaneous appearance of a previous level of lexicalization in the use of mimetic words. The candidate commented on the fact that all stages of lexicalization of mimetic words in Japanese are visible at the same historical moment, which constitutes an unusual case of a language variation phenomenon that can be seen in progress.

The fact that studies on onomatopoeic words are increasing lately was noted by a member of the committee. The candidate commented on the fact that these words are pervasive in Japanese conversation and that there is a growing need for foreigners to understand the shades of meaning that they contribute. It was also noted that in the case of Spanish-Japanese comparative studies, research about mimetic words is scarce. This dissertation fills that gap in part.

A member of the committee also asked whether mimetic words could be classified according to the syntactic category of their origin (for instance, *bonyari* stems from *boya*, a noun, whereas other mimetic words stem from other categories). The candidate mentioned

that, whereas there are other studies that concentrate on this kind of analysis, hers only focused on the synchronic syntactic-semantic properties, and not about the origin of each word in detail.

In conclusion, the members of the committee agreed that the work has value as a contribution to the academic world and to the field of linguistics and translation studies and that it is worthy of a PhD dissertation. For which reasons, the candidate is considered successful in obtaining the doctoral degree granted by Kobe City University of Foreign Studies.

Kobe, February 7th, 2018

Prof. Montserrat Sanz
Prof. Ryujin Nomura
Prof. Mizuho Narita
Prof. Atsuko Wasa