

Original Paper

## A Study of Transfer from Japanese into English —Features Seen in a Manga the “Kindaichi Files”—

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### Abstract

Recently a variety of books of many genres have been published in Manga (cartoon) form. A new trend in Manga books is their publication in English versions. These are very helpful for people wishing to learn colloquial English and the differences in expression between English and Japanese, because they are written in colloquial style in natural settings which resemble actual communication among native speakers of English. In this study expressions used in the Japanese original and in the English version are contrasted so as to focus on their transfer from one language to the other. The purpose of this study is to highlight features seen in the Manga “Kindaichi Files” and to consider how these might help students in their studies. To this end, features classified into 16 categories are clarified and discussed in detail. Furthermore, some pedagogical suggestions will be made based on the results of this study.

### Introduction

In the past 10 years, a variety of books of many genres such as textbooks, novels, and manuals have been published in Manga (cartoon) form. “Manga” in Japan include not only comics but also serious contents depicted with illustrations. Books on history for students preparing for university entrance examinations were the forerunner of this boom. They are effective in catching the readers’ minds with their visual appeal and giving them an understanding of the flow of history. Recently, in addition to this tendency, a new trend has appeared in Manga books. This trend is the publication of English versions of Manga books such as Sazae-san, Granny Mischief, and the Kindaichi Files. The twin purposes of publishing these English versions are to promote overseas sales and also to attract the attention of Japanese learners of English. We can suppose that the popularity of these English versions of the above-mentioned Manga is due to the fact that they are written mainly in the kind of colloquial English that young people want to learn. Besides, as the dialogue must be confined within the limited spaces called “balloons,” its expressions are very concise and clear. This makes it seem very near to actual communication among native speakers of English.

Some English learners in Japan used to read the series “Peanuts”, which is the story of “Snoopy”, to study English. However, it was sometimes difficult for them to understand the real meaning of the story. The jokes were difficult for them and they failed to enjoy them not only because of problems of language but also because of the different style of joke. Learners would often give up reading before the end. But Manga translated into English solve these problems. It is relatively easy for Japanese learners of English

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to understand the humorous content of comics that were originally written in Japanese. Therefore they can enjoy them and finish reading to the end. Needless to say, there are problems in conveying the real pleasure of jokes from Japanese into English. An English version of a Manga book can also help English learners of Japanese become aware of the differences in expression between the two languages. As the English versions carry the Japanese lines in small letters near the balloons containing the English lines, readers can compare the words and expressions while they read.

In this study I focus on how the Japanese lines in Manga books are translated or transferred into English and at the same time I consider how we can utilize the results of this study for students who want to learn colloquial English. For this study, from among the many English version Manga books, I chose the “Kindaichi Files” (a detective story) for four reasons: First, this series in Japanese is read by many Japanese junior and senior high school students because the story attracts them and draws them into it. Secondly there are fewer specific punch lines like those seen in *Sazae-san* and *Granny Mischief*. Thirdly, the settings or situations of the story are natural, which helps readers to understand the real meaning of the conversation. And finally we can contrast the words and expressions in the book because the Japanese lines are printed beside the balloons with English lines.

### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to clarify the characteristics and/or tendencies involved in the transfer of Japanese conversational expressions into English and to consider how the results found in this study can help students in their study of English. I believe that to know different expressions conveying the same meaning or facts in two different languages is very significant for language learners. In this study, I do not intend to contrast the sentences word by word, but to contrast English expressions that match each situation finding the most natural ways of expression. That is, although sentences may be grammatically correct, they may not always be just right in a particular situation. For example, just after you have noticed that your wallet is not in your pocket, you might say “My wallet’s gone!” not “I had my wallet stolen.” Both sentences are grammatically correct, but in this situation the expression “I had my wallet stolen” is not suitable. This expression might be used when you report the fact to the police after you have calmed down (Mizutani 16-18).

### Procedure

I extracted from the Kindaichi Files only the lines of English and Japanese conversation and have contrasted them so as to observe the differences between the Japanese and the English version. In all, I picked out 508 sentences, that is, all the lines in balloons from the beginning of the book, but not including narration or sound effects like “Rock, sway,” “hoot,” and “Chuckle” or one word lines such as “Why?” “Hi!” and “S-Sir!” Then I put all 508 sentences into 16 categories as a basis for observing their characteristic features when contrasting the Japanese and English lines. Some sentences have plural features; therefore a total of 582 sentences were assigned to categories.

### Results and Discussion

As a result, the features are classified into 16 categories as follows: (The words in parentheses are my abbreviations for each category.)

- (1). Changing the meaning step by step (Step)
- (2). Adding subjects in English (Add)
- (3). Omission of subjects in English (Omit)
- (4). Simplification of the meaning in English (Simplify)
- (5). Idiomatic expressions (Idiomatic)
- (6). Different usage of names (Names)
- (7). Pronouns in English instead of names in Japanese (Pronouns)
- (8). Presumption of the meaning in Japanese (Presumption)
- (9). Change of subject (Subjects)
- (10). Slang words or expressions (Slang)
- (11). Change of the words themselves (Word-change)
- (12). Different usage of demonstrative pronouns (Demonstratives)
- (13). Affirmative expressions in English for negative expressions in Japanese (Affirmative)
- (14). Division into two sentences in English from one sentence in Japanese (Division)
- (15). More specific expressions in English (Specific)
- (16). Use of inanimate subjects instead of animate subjects (Inanimate).

The following table shows the number of sentences and their percentages in each category:

Table 1 The number of sentences and percentage of features found in each category (rounded off to one decimal place)

Step	Add	Omission	Simplify	Idiomatic	Names	Pronouns	Presumption
97/582	88/582	68/582	63/582	59/582	41/582	40/582	28/582
16.7%	15.1%	11.7%	10.8%	10.1%	7%	6.9%	4.8%

Subjects	Slang	Word	Demonstratives	Affirmative	Division	Specific	Inanimate
27/582	22/582	21/582	8/582	7/582	7/582	4/582	2/582
4.6%	3.8%	3.6%	1.4%	1.2%	1.2%	0.7%	0.3%

As shown in the results in Table 1, the “Step” category is the most frequently used among all of the categories, showing that many Japanese expressions must be transferred step by step to bring them near to natural expressions in English. The second most frequent feature is “Add,” which means subjects must be added in the English version because, in Japanese colloquial style, subjects are mostly omitted. In contrast to “Add,” the third most frequent feature shown in this study is “Omit” which means that subjects which are needed in written style in English are omitted in colloquial English just as they are omitted in the Japanese lines.

Thus two categories out of the three most frequent features found in this study concern the problem of subjects. Thus, subjects are the biggest problem in changing from Japanese into English. In addition to the above two categories, the ninth most frequent category, “Change of subjects”, is also a problem of subject. In this category subjects are changed according to the English preference for personal pronouns as subjects instead of the Japanese preference for impersonal ones.

When we come to the categories “Names” “Pronouns” “Demonstratives” and “Affirmative”, we get to know the different conventions underlying each language. Especially, in the colloquial expressions used in the ordinary conversational settings that are treated in this study, the categories “Names” and “Pronouns”

stand out as a way to show the differences between the two languages.

Now let's look into the categories one by one more carefully.

#### (1) Changing the meaning step by step (Step)

Changing the meaning step by step (Step) means that the expressions in Japanese must be changed or paraphrased step by step to convey the meaning in English. They cannot be transferred into English directly word by word by just considering the situation and the gist of the conversation. For example, “*betsuni kikkake-ga nai-dake yo* (別に きっかけがないだけよ)” cannot be translated directly. If it is translated directly, it will be “Nothing especially, only no chances.” It is the reply to the lines “It's not normal for a pretty girl like you not to have a boyfriend.” In the English version, the girl answers, “Oh, I just haven't met the right guy yet.” Although the word “*kikkake*” in Japanese can be translated as “a chance” in English directly, in this context “a chance” is too vague and lacks concreteness. Although Japanese readers can understand or read between the lines in Japanese, they could not understand a literal English translation of the Japanese words which lack the concreteness needed in English. This is a big difference between Japanese and English. English requires concreteness and specific expressions, whereas Japanese does not require them; far from it, it prefers vagueness in expression to stimulate the readers' imagination in Japanese.

Here is another example. To someone who was found by his friend asleep on the roof very near the edge, the anxious friend says in the English version of the comic, “Once false move and you're dead.” The original Japanese comic just said, “*Ochitara shinjau janai*” which can be translated directly as, “If you fall, you will die.” That might be true, but the threatening tone of the indirect English translation is more vivid.

In this way, many Japanese expressions can be successfully transferred or have their meaning conveyed into English, if they are first paraphrased to bring them nearer to the English way of expression in that situation.

#### (2) Adding subjects in English (Add)

In Japanese it is not necessary to express the subject of a sentence. The subject is often presupposed or implied by the verb (Umegaki 70-74). For instance, the subject of the sentence “*Hoshikereba yarô*” must be “I” (the speaker) because the verb “*yarô*” is only used when the subject of the verb in the main clause is the first person “I”. So usually no word for “I” is expressed. “*Hoshikereba yarô*” can be translated like this: “If you want (it), I will give it (to you).” The object “it” also is only implied, not expressed. In the same way, the subject of the sentence “*Hoshikereba kureru-ka?*” is presupposed. The verb “*kureru*” makes it clear that “you” (the person addressed) may or may not give something to “me,” the speaker (Umegaki 164-166). In English this could be expressed as “If I want it, will you give it to me?” though in Japanese no pronouns are expressed. Colloquial English expressions generally include a subject while the corresponding Japanese sentences might not. Barring special circumstances in which no subject is needed in English either, Japanese English learners must consciously decide what the missing subject should be. In Japanese this question is not necessary because the verb determines the subjects.

In the Japanese edition of this Manga book, the subjects of most sentences are not expressed, as is usual in Japanese. They are added, however, in the English version because subjects are indispensable in English sentences in most cases. In this study, 88 sentences out of 582 have added subjects, making this characteristic the second most numerous among my 16 “categories.” The first and the second personal pronouns in Japanese, including imperative forms, are unexpressed in all of these 88 sentences because in the Japanese sentences, the subjects are inferred from the context. Only 88 sentences out of 582 do not

seem very many. But in none of the Japanese sentences do we find any first or second personal pronouns as subjects, while 88 sentences could not be transferred into English without adding all these pronouns.

In the case of third personal pronouns as subjects in sentences, names themselves are used in Japanese rather than pronouns. This will be discussed under the characteristic “Pronouns” later in this paper.

### (3) Omission of subjects in English (Omit)

The third most numerous feature and an interesting one among the 16 categories is the omission of subjects in English (Omit). Surprisingly, 68 sentences out of 582 in my research data omit the subjects in English too, including of course the 12 imperative forms. That is, fifty-six subjects are omitted in English sentences in which subjects might be expected. The first singular nominative pronoun “I”, the second single and plural nominative pronoun “you”, the third singular neuter pronoun “it”, the third singular masculine and feminine pronouns “he” and “she”, the first plural nominative pronoun “we”, and the third plural nominative pronoun “they” are all omitted in the English. Also they are sometimes omitted with the copula.

“(I) Wonder where he went,” “(It) Looks like you’re having fun,” “(You are in) Detention, you troublemaker,” “(He) Fails most of his exams and is weak at sports,” “(She is) Not a contender for Miss Congeniality,” “(We) Can only see her playing a bitchy mother-in-law type,” and “(They are) Chalk and cheese, cake and crap” are some examples out of 56 sentences. This tendency suggests that subjects may be omitted in colloquial English expressions or even in relatively short sentences when their reference is obvious from the context. Especially in colloquial style, omitting subjects tends to give the effect of a vigorous and animated exchange of conversation. These represent some special circumstances in which no subject is needed in English, as mentioning in the previous section.

### (4) Simplification of the meaning in English (Simplify)

The fourth most numerous feature among our 16 categories is the simplification in English of the expressions in Japanese. Sixty-three sentences out of 582 (10.8%) fall into this category. In the English version, superfluous expressions are avoided and sentences tend to be concise, especially those in colloquial style. Therefore some Japanese words in this study are omitted from the lines or simplified to meet the English conventions. Some examples are as follows:

うるさくって 台本に集中できないじゃない! → I can’t concentrate on the script.  
わざわざ 別荘に 立派な 劇場を作ったんですよ → So he built this theater in his summer house.  
 ありがとう。 お願いね → Thank you.

The underlined Japanese words are omitted in the English version. If they were translated and added to the English text, the expressions might be redundant in the context, e.g.: “I can’t concentrate on the script because you are too noisy,” following to the lines “Be quiet!” The reason for the clause “because you are too noisy” is obvious from the context and from the words “Be quiet!” So it is natural to omit it in the English version. The second example “So he built this theater in his summer house” is a response to the lines “The industrialist was a great theater buff.” The word “fine” and the adverbial phrase “on purpose” are superfluous in this situation, because ‘a great theater buff’ would probably build a fine theater “on purpose.” And “Thank you,” replying to the lines “I’ll go and look for her” is enough in English. “*Onegai-ne*”, translated by the word “Please” in English, is also superfluous in English.

In Japanese these words do not interfere with the context and are not tedious; if anything, they help to depict the scene precisely. However, some of them sound tedious and redundant in English. The expressions

omitted in English are not needed for understanding and do not add anything essential to the meaning.

(5) Idiomatic expressions (Idiomatic)

Many idiomatic expressions are also found in the English version of this Manga book. According to Longman Contemporary English Dictionary, idiomatic expressions are expressions typical of the natural way in which persons using their own language speak or write.

Fifty-nine sentences like “Give me a hand” “I was in a real fix” “Hold it” and so on out of 582 turned up as idiomatic expressions in this study. Seeing that people often use idiomatic expressions in a conversational situation, this finding shows how important the acquiring of idiomatic expressions is to English learners. That is, English learners should try to remember such expressions when they encounter them in various situations and get used to using them.

(6) Different usage of names (Names)

We can find a difference in the usage of names in this Manga book when we contrast the Japanese and English versions. In Japanese, readers can judge the relationship between two speakers from the way they address each other, because the Japanese language puts indicators of position, rank, and sex after names. However, in English all these indicators are left out because they are not customary in English-speaking society. If they were translated into English expressions, it would sound strange to native English speakers.

I will give some examples. 「Fuse *Senpai* (布施先輩) !」 is changed into “*Mitsuhiko!*” *Senpai* means senior and is omitted in the English version, and the family name “Fuse” is changed into the first name “*Mitsuhiko.*” In Japan the family name is used in addressing a senior person and hardly ever the first name. Here is another example: The words 「*Ogata Sensei* (緒方先生)」 are changed to “Ms. *Ogata.*” The indicator of position “*Sensei*” (teacher) is changed to Ms. The relationship between the two people in English would be found from the story and the family name would be used. In the English version there are two ways in which the name by which the person is called in Japanese is changed; “*senpai*” (senior) is omitted in the English version and changed into the first name, but “*sensei*” (teacher) in Japanese is changed into the family name, as in “Ms. *Ogata.*”

Occasions for calling persons by their name often occur in conversational situations. So it is very important for English learners to know what to call people. In this study 41 out of 582 sentences have scenes in which people are called by name. The family name is seldom used in the English version except to persons who are in superior positions or on meeting a person for the first time.

(7) Pronouns in English instead of names in Japanese (Pronouns)

Originally, it is said that the Japanese language did not have personal pronouns, but rather used names or nouns such as “*o-toosan* (Father)”, “*o-neesan* (Sister)” and “*sensei* (teacher)” to accomplish the same linguistic purpose (Umegaki 109). According to Umegaki and Kanaya, in the beginning of the Meiji Era, when Japanese grammar was systematized based on English grammar, these names and nouns were called personal pronouns even though this classification was not an exact fit (Umegaki 69 & 109; Kanaya 34). Therefore, the original tendency for using personal names or nouns instead of personal pronouns can be seen clearly in this study.

Miyuki-chan nande anna otoko tsurete kita-no? ( 美雪ちゃん なんであんな男連れてきたの? )

Why did you bring such a lout?

Ma-a Kiryuusan-wa majime dakara... ( まあ桐生さんはマジメだから )

Well, she is very serious.

Saotome-san te-hito-wa itsumo kounandayona. ( 早乙女さんって人は いつも こうなんだよな )

She's always like this.

Ja-a Kindaichi-kun-mo shourai tantei-ni nacchau-no? ( じゃあ 金田一君も将来 探偵になっちゃうの )

Are you going to be a detective too?

In all the Japanese lines the persons' names are used, but in English all are changed into pronouns. As I said in the “Add” section above, originally Japanese probably did not have personal pronouns. First and second personal pronouns can be presumed from the verbs, even though these pronouns do not exist in the Japanese sentence. And the third person is expressed by using names with indicators showing position, rank and sex in Japanese. However, in English personal pronouns are usually used instead of names in order to avoid repetition.

#### (8) Presumption of the meaning in Japanese (Presumption)

The Japanese lines in this Manga sometimes end with incomplete sentences, such as are often found in real communication. In the Japanese version, Japanese readers can guess how the sentence will end or what the intention of the speaker is from the context. However, this covert meaning in Japanese is transferred into overt expression in English, because in English it is necessary to make the meaning clear (Nakau, Makishita, and Seto 59).

Hajime-chan tara... ( はじめちゃんたら . . . )

Where on earth is Hajime?

Tsukishima Fuyuko-san no koto... ( 月島冬子さんのこと . . . )

You're talking about Fuyuko Tsukishima?

O oi are... ( お おい あれ . . . )

Look! Up there!

The words underlined in English are omitted in Japanese. The first example “*Hajime-chan tara ...*” precedes the lines “Class began ages ago. Wonder where he went.” “Where on earth is Hajime?” is more suitable than “Oh, Hajime!” if the words were to be translated directly from Japanese into English. As for the second example, the previous lines are “I told you never to mention that. We might be keeping up a cheerful front but we are really still in a state of shock.” Therefore, “You're talking about ~” needs to be added in English to “*Fuyuko Tsukishima*” to clarify the meaning. In the last example, what the demonstrative pronoun “*are*” indicates can be presumed in Japanese from the context. However, in English it must be supplemented to clarify the meaning.

Thus in Japanese incomplete sentences stimulate the readers' imagination. In English, however, the words presumed in Japanese are needed to convey the meaning accurately in English.

#### (9) Change of subjects (Subjects)

Contrasting the Japanese and English versions, I found that sometimes the subjects change in the

following ways:

Hora sakki kimi-ga hiita câdo-wa kore-daro? ( ほら さっき君が引いた カードは コレだろ? )  
You drew this card, right?

Nedan-no shîru wo hagashita ato-ga ma-atarashii daro? ( 値段のシールを はがした跡が 真新しいだろ? )  
 Clearly you've just peeled off the price tag.

Kono gekijou-wa kareno sumika nano. ( この劇場は 彼の住処なの )  
He lives below this theater.

In the above examples, the underlined words which are the subjects in the two languages differ in content. This difference is closely related to what the theme of a sentence is expected to be in each language. English tends to have a personal pronoun as the subject of a sentence except when some other word is emphasized in special cases (Kunihiro, Nakano, and Ikegami 90-93, Ishiwata and Takada 96-101, Umegaki 244-253). Japanese sentences, however, can have impersonal subjects as their theme without any feelings that this is odd.

In this study this tendency to change impersonal subjects in Japanese into personal pronouns in English can be seen in 4.6 percent of all lines, ranking ninth in number of examples. Considering the infrequency of inanimate subjects in the English version of this Manga (only 0.3%), which moreover are translated by different English words from the English equivalents to the impersonal subjects in Japanese, we can confirm that in colloquial style English speakers prefer personal subjects in sentences.

#### (10) Slang words or expressions (Slang)

According to Cobuild English Dictionary, slang words or expressions may be defined as informal words used by people who know each other very well or who have the same interests, differing from the idiomatic expressions which are typical of the usually accepted way in which people using the same language speak or write. Twenty-two slang words (3.8%) such as “Birdbrain” “Cool!” and “You bet” appeared in this study.

Sometimes these kinds of words are neglected in classroom study. However, as they give spice to the conversation, it is desirable that Japanese English learners know these slang words to understand actual conversation between English native speakers, even though they may never use them themselves.

#### (11) Changes in the words themselves (Word)

Not all words that seem to have the same meaning are equivalent to each other in the two languages. The following are some examples:

Ne-e Hajime-chan mo ikanai? ( ねえ はじめちゃんも行かない? )  
 Hajime, you come, too.

The Japanese word “*iku*” usually means “go” in English. But in this case, it is translated “come”, because in English the speaker sees the action from the view point of the hearer, Hajime, who is asked to come with the speaker. On the contrary, in Japanese it is seen from the viewpoint of the speaker who is asking if Hajime is going to go (maybe together with the speaker, or maybe not). Thus the words “go” and “come” are reversed in translation.



Another example is “*Anata-wa sukoshi okorippoi wa.*” (あなたはすこし怒りっぽいわ). This is transferred into English like this: “You’re too hot-tempered.” “*Sukoshi*” literally means “a little.” But in the English version, it is changed into “too” which has the opposite meaning to “*sukoshi*.” In this case, “*sukoshi*” has the function of softening an expression or avoiding too blunt an expression in Japanese. Therefore, it is changed to “too” to emphasize this softening effect in the English version.

Thus, some words in Japanese are changed into other words in English, considering their real meaning in the context.

(12) Different usage of demonstrative pronouns (Demonstratives)

This feature appeared less frequently in this study, in only 8 out of 582 sentences (1.4%). However, I can say it is frequently misused by Japanese learners of English.

Soko-wa kowareteru. ( そこは 壊れてる )

It's broken.

Koko-ga onkyoushitsu. ( ここが 音響室 )

This is the sound engineering room.

Soko-wa oreno seki-da. ( そこは 俺の席だ )

That's my seat.

“*Soko*” and “*Koko*” in Japanese are demonstrative pronouns, but “here” and “there” in English are adverbs which can not be the subject of a sentence in English. According to Shibatani, Japanese has three series of demonstratives, beginning respectively with *ko-*, *so-*, and *a-*. The *ko*-series refers to a thing, person, etc. close to the speaker, the *so*-series refers to those items closer to the hearer, and the *a*-series refers to those away from both speaker and hearer. Thus, we find *kore* ‘this’, *sore* ‘that’, and *are* ‘that one over there’; *koko* ‘here’, *soko* ‘there’, and *asoko* ‘over there’; *kono hito* ‘this person’, *sono hito* ‘that person’, and *ano hito* ‘that person over there’, etc. (387). Therefore, the words “this”, “it”, and “that” are in fact not equivalent to “*kore*” “*sore*” and “*are*” in Japanese. In reality, Japanese “*sore*” is equivalent to “that” in English, not to “it.” No neuter pronoun “it” existed in Japanese originally. This is the big reason many Japanese English learners misuse these demonstratives.

I will give another example of a common misuse of these words by some Japanese speakers of English.

Koko-wa Tokyo desu. ( ここは 東京です )

\*Here is Tokyo.

This is Tokyo.

Sore-wa nandesu-ka. ( それは 何ですか )

\*What is it?

What is that?

The sentence “What is it?” is correct grammatically, but this “it” should indicate something which has already entered the conversation. Something that enters the conversation for the first time should be referred to as “that” (Kojima 149). It is significant that these facts in particular are re-confirmed through this study.

## (13) Affirmative expressions in English from negative expressions in Japanese (Affirmative)

In this study 1.2% (7 sentences out of 582) of the sentences are changed from negative expressions in Japanese to affirmative in English. Traditionally Japanese have preferred negative expressions to show their reserved and euphemistic approach (Kunihiro, Nakano, and Ikegami 3, Kojima 208-214, 220). But in English these expressions are regarded as roundabout or indirect. Therefore affirmative expressions are generally preferred in English. The number found in this study was not high, but all the Japanese lines with negative expressions were changed into affirmative expressions in English. That means 100 % of the negative expressions in Japanese are shifted to affirmative in English.

Wakaranai demo nai. ( 分からないでもない )

I can understand ~.

Buin-igai daremo shiranai. ( 部員以外誰も知らない )

Only the drama club members know.

Ikanai? ( 行かない? )

You come too?

## (14) Division into two sentences in English from one sentence in Japanese (Division)

Some Japanese sentences in this study are divided into two sentences in English. For example,

Ore-no tsukutta kamen-de asobu-na. ( 俺の作った仮面で遊ぶな )

Don't mess around with the mask. I made it.

Saotome-senpai-wa shin-da tsukishima-san-no kawari-ni hiroin-ni nattan-da! ( 早乙女先輩は死んだ月島さんの代わりにヒロインになったんだ )

She was supposed to play the heroine. Ryoko replaced her.

As the examples show, a short sentence has more impact than a long sentence in English. Therefore, when Japanese lines are transferred into English, some are divided into two sentences in English, especially to give a strong impact to the lines. This tendency is confirmed by Ishiwata and Takada (147). They include as an example a sentence from *The Little Prince*.

a) Ningen-te yatsu-wa teppou motte-te kari wo surun-dakara ore-tachi mattaku te mo ashi mo denai-  
yo. ( 人間ってやつあ、鉄砲もってて、狩をするんだから、おれたち、まったく手も足もでないよ。 )  
(one-sentence)

b) "Men," said the fox. "They have guns, and they hunt. It is very disturbing." (3 sentences)

## (15) More specific expressions in English (Specific)

More specific expressions are used in the English than in the Japanese. For instance:

Kanojo-no akarui-koe-wa yoku toh-tta. ( 彼女の明るい声はよくとあった )

Her bright and cheery voice would ring out.

Itsumademo konnatokoro-ni iruto “kai-jin” ga deru-wayo. ( いつまでもこんな所に いると 「怪人」がでるわよ )

If you hang around here too long, the phantom will appear.

Japanese “*akarui*” is made more specific by adding the words bright and cheery in the English version to depict the scene more expressively. In the same manner, “*iru*” in Japanese is changed into “hang around” which expresses the situation more specifically and more in detail. This phenomenon is noted only in four sentences out of 582. However, it shows the English preference for expressing things clearly and obviously.

#### (16) Using of inanimate subjects instead of animate subjects (Inanimate)

As I said above in section (9) “Subjects,” English mostly prefers a sentence to have a personal subject except in cases of special emphasis. These are examples of special occasions in which an impersonal subject is used:

Heta-ni kamau-to tsukeagaru dake-da-yo. ( ヘタにかまうとつけあがるだけだよ )

Attention only encourages her.

Kare-niwa hokano seito-niwa nai “nanika”-wo motte-iru sonna-ki-ga surun-desu. ( 彼には他の生徒にない「何か」を持っているそんな気がするんです )

Something tells me he has something special.

In this study of colloquial English expressions, impersonal or inanimate subjects have been extremely rare. However, such subjects are used quite often to express things in objective style. Although such examples are relatively rare in the comic books, they may be recommended to learners as displaying a typical English communication strategy that is not as common in Japanese.

#### Conclusion and Implications for Teaching

In this study I have discussed the features of colloquial style as seen in a Manga book, contrasting the Japanese original and English version. Some of these features may be found also in non-colloquial style; but some are especially characteristic of colloquial English. For example, the “omission” of subjects in English ranks third in order of frequency in this study. It can be said to be a characteristic feature of colloquial style, because subjects are not usually omitted in English written style except in special cases such as Christmas cards and letters addressed to close friends. Probably many Japanese students do not think it is possible to omit subjects in English, even in colloquial style. But this study shows it is possible to omit subjects in colloquial style when they are obvious from the context. At the same time, we noticed that subjects must often be added in English although in Japanese these subjects would be omitted.

We also recognized that Japanese expressions can not be transferred into English directly. They need to be changed step by step or paraphrased to convey the meanings in English. Moreover, some misusages in English, discussed under the categories of demonstratives and pronouns, are explained through this study. The results show that idiomatic and slang words in daily conversation are needed to give a lively description. Some preferences in English such as using pronouns instead of names, using affirmative rather than negative expressions, and using more animate than inanimate words as subjects are also noted in this study. Changes in wording, simplification of sentences and supplementing hidden meanings are used to

convey the meaning properly to fit the situation.

Thus by contrasting the expressions in the two languages many features which give some hints for teaching and/or learning English have been found. For example, from feature (1) Step, we see that it is advisable for students to paraphrase the Japanese first step by step to convey the main meaning effectively in English, especially for beginners. It is not necessary to convey every word of Japanese into English. As their English ability progresses, this procedure will come to be acted out unconsciously in their minds. For example,

- ①もうとっくに授業始まっているのに！(mo tokkuni jyugyou hajimatteru-noni!)  
 → 授業はずっと前に始まっている。(jyugyou-wa zutto-mae-ni hajimatte-iru) (Step)  
 → Class began ages ago.

And it may also be useful for students to learn when to supply missing Japanese and English words or clarify words omitted in English, as explained in the features of (2) Add, (4) Simple and (8) Presumption.

- ①いくら (あの人たちが → 彼らが) おさなじみでも (Add)  
 Ikura (anohito-tachi-ga → karera-ga) osana-najimi-demo  
 Even if they have known each other since they were kids
- ②では この中から好きなカード を引いて俺にみせて！(Simple)  
 (dewa kono naka-kara sukina kādo-wo hii-te mise-te)  
 → カードを引いて俺に見せて (kādo-wo hii-te mise-te)  
 Pick a card and show it to me.
- ③はじめちゃんたら・・・(いったいどこにいるのかしら？)(Presumption)  
 Hajime-chan tara (ittai doko-ni iruno-kashira)  
 Where on earth is Hajime?

Finding other affirmative expressions in English, such as those on sign boards and business letters, which are usually expressed negatively in Japanese, might also be an interesting activity for students. It would cause them to pay attention to their own language. To make dialogues using idiomatic expressions positively in the classroom would also be a way of learning.

The above examples are only a few of many possible activities. Teachers can find many possible ways to create activities or exercises to focus on the differences in expression between Japanese and English by using Manga, referring to the results of this study.

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