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A Snapshot Study of Current Practices among Sellers of Translation Services between Japanese and English

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ABSTRACT

A two-part study was launched in light of the Japan Translation Federation's 2012 statement in its guide, 翻訳で失敗しないために翻訳発注の手引き [lit. For not getting it wrong with translation: a guide to ordering translation], that “外国語の文書を母国語に翻訳するのがプロの原則です” [lit. It is a fundamental principle that professional translators work into their native languages] (Japan Translation Federation, 2012, p. 15). The key goal is to gauge the extent to which this 2012 statement is reflected in current practices among the sellers and buyers of translation services between Japanese and English. In this paper, which describes the first part of the study, the focus is on the practices of sellers of translation services between Japanese and English: specifically, professional freelance translators. Twenty-four professional freelance translators completed an online questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire, first, suggest that current practices among sellers of translation services between Japanese and English are consistent with the Japan Translation Federation's 2012 statement and, second, broadly support secondary literature on L1 translation (translation into the first language) and L2 translation (translation into the second language). Whilst this is only a snapshot of current practices among sellers of translation services between Japanese and English, the overall results are informative. In the second, follow-up part of the study the focus will be on the current practices of buyers of translation services between Japanese and English.

Keywords: L1 translation, L2 translation, Japan Translation Federation, Translation between Japanese and English, Professional freelance translators

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1. Introduction

In 1997, the then-president of the Japan Association of Translators (JAT)ⁱ, William Lise, asserted that “almost all of Japan’s J-E translation is done by Japanese writing English as a foreign language” (Lise, 1997, p. 27).

In light of anecdotal evidence that the authors had seen during their careers as professional Japanese-to-English translators, they were inclined to accept Lise’s above assertion that L2 translation (translation into the second language) is almost the norm in the Japanese-to-English translation market. However, in early 2013, they became aware that the Japan Translation Federation (JTF)ⁱⁱ was championing L1 translation (translation into the first language); specifically they discovered that the JTF had published a guide entitled 翻訳で失敗しないために翻訳発注の手引き [lit. For not getting it wrong with translation: a guide to ordering translation] which states that “外国語の文書を母国語に翻訳するのがプロの原則です” [lit. It is a fundamental principle that professional translators work into their native languages] (Japan Translation Federation, 2012, p. 15).

This statement prompted the authors to launch a two-part study with the aim of gauging the extent to which it reflects current practices among the sellers and buyers of translation services between Japanese and English. The focus of this paper, which describes the first part of the study, is on gauging the extent to which the sellers of translation services between Japanese and English, specifically professional freelance translators, perform L1 translation and L2 translation. The paper also highlights other aspects of current practice among professional freelance translators between Japanese and English.

The following literature review, first, outlines the positions that professional translators’ associations take on L1 translation and L2 translation, second, summarizes secondary literature regarding the pros and cons of L1 translation and L2 translation, and, third, gives an overview of JTF survey findings on translation between Japanese and English.

2. Literature Review

Professional translators’ associations in the United Kingdom, United States, and Japan advocate L1 translation, i.e., translation into the first language. The UK-based Institution of Translation and Interpreting requires each member to “translate only into a language which is either (i) their mother tongue or language of habitual use, or (ii) one in which they have satisfied the Institute that they have equal competence.” (Institution of Translation and Interpreting, n.d., p.1). The American Translators Association (ATA) states in its guide for translation clients that “professional translators work into their native language” and warns that “a translator who flouts this basic rule is likely to be ignorant of other important quality issues as well.” (American Translators Association, 2011, p. 16). The JTF concurs with the ATA in its guide, 翻訳で失敗しないために翻訳発注の手引き [lit. For not getting it wrong with translation: a guide to ordering translation] (2012), in which it states:

外国語の文書を母国語に翻訳するのがプロの原則です。例えば、日本語文書を英語に訳す場合、英語ネイティブスピーカーの翻訳者を使います。日本語ネイティブスピーカーの翻訳者には、外国語文書の和訳を依頼するのが基本です。翻訳を発注する側にはあまり知られていませんが、これは翻訳の世界共通基本原則。日本語でも同じです。(p. 15)

[lit. It is a fundamental principle that professional translators work into their native



languages. To translate a Japanese document into English, for instance, [one] uses a native English speaker. It is fundamental that [one] asks native-Japanese-speaking translators to translate foreign-language documents into Japanese. It is not well known among translation buyers, but these are basic principles of translation around the world. The same [apply to] Japanese.]

The Japan Association of Translators (2012) takes a more nuanced position on directionality but appears, on balance, to also favour L1 translation:

It is very rare for a translator to be able to translate equally well in both directions, even if both languages are spoken fluently. [...] In general, a translator working into his or her native language is less likely to make grammatical errors, and is more likely to be able to produce text in the desired style of the target language and/or market. Conversely, a translator working from his or her native language is less likely to make mistakes in comprehension of the source text, but is more likely to make grammatical errors and to be limited in his or her command of syntax and style in producing the translation. (para. 5)

The aforementioned organizations' advocacy of L1 translation is widely echoed in the secondary literature. Campbell points out that "expert (and no doubt public) opinion favours translation into the first language" (1998, p. 57). Pokorn similarly argues that "Most translation theoreticians [...] covertly express their conviction that only translation into one's mother tongue guarantees a good translation." (2005, p. 30). Scholars highlight a variety of reasons to prefer L1 translation over L2 translation. For instance, Campbell highlights problems at the sentence and word levels, noting that "first language writers are [...] less likely to make grammatical errors and unfortunate vocabulary choices than second language writers" (1998, p. 57). Newmark notes that L2 writers produce texts that are full of "unacceptable or improbable

collocations" (1981, p. 189). Seidensticker suggests that L2 translators are ill equipped to handle connotation, noting that if "controlled use of connotation" is a mark of literary style, "the translator out of his own language is likely to find himself losing his bearings at precisely the point where the literary value of the original begins" (1984, p. 240). Gouadec makes clear that "only someone translating into his mother tongue can really produce the clear, effective and, above all, natural flowing language that a native speaker can produce" (2007, p. 92).

Some scholars challenge the axiom of the superiority of L1 translation and go so far as to champion L2 translation, i.e., translation into the second language. Stewart argues for "the higher comprehension proficiency of translators into the foreign language" (2000, p. 219) and concludes that "translators into L1 [...] are much more likely than L2 translators to misunderstand the source text" (2000, p. 218). Malmkjær states more fully that an L2 translator is, relative to an L1 translator, "more likely to share the author's interpretations of source text linguistic choices than a TL native language translator" and that "s/he will be more sensitive to their significance, and will therefore [...] be more likely to reproduce them in the target text" (1993, p. 227).

Posey agrees and makes two further pro-L2 translation observations: (1) that L2 translators have "higher cultural competency" (Posey, 2009, p. 92); and (2) that L2 translators are "more conscientious with the TT" and will, because of the target language's foreignness, "scrutinize their work more carefully than L1 translators" (Posey, 2009, p. 96). Some pro-L2 translation scholars highlight the usability of L2 translation target texts within what Stewart calls the "parameters of acceptability" (2000, p. 218). For instance, Stewart highlights

potentially different degrees of L2 translation acceptability with different text types, noting that “While most expressive texts and some vocative texts [...] may well be beyond the reach of the non-native speaker, informative texts are assuredly more approachable.” (1999, p. 50).

Crystal reports that some translators have argued in favour of L2 translation “for certain types of text (e.g. scientific material) where translation accuracy is more crucial than naturalness” (1987, p. 344). Crystal’s observation is lent credence by caveats in the ATA’s guide (2011) for translation clients:

Sometimes a linguist with special subject-matter expertise may agree to work into a foreign language. In this case, the translation must be carefully edited—and not just glanced through—by a language-sensitive native speaker before it goes to press. (p. 16)

The JTF’s guide, *翻訳で失敗しないために翻訳発注の手引き* (2012), applies the same caveats specifically to translation by native Japanese speakers:

なお、特殊分野の難解な文書の場合、専門知識が豊富な日本人翻訳者に、例外的に外国語訳を依頼することもあります。この場合は、言語能力が高いネイティブスピーカーに訳文を入念にチェックしてもらうことが必須です。(p. 15)

[lit. In exceptional cases, [clients] ask [native] Japanese translators with great specialist knowledge to [translate] difficult documents in specialized fields [into foreign languages]. In such a case, it is essential to have the translation carefully checked by a highly linguistically competent native speaker [of the target language].

Whatever the arguments for and against L2 translation may be, market realities (notably the limited availability of L1 translators) have reportedly made the practice

common. Campbell reveals that “the supply of translators into particular languages may not match the demand, so that translation sometimes (or perhaps even often) has to be undertaken into the second language” (1998, p. 57). Campbell also notes that L2 translation is “a regular and accepted practice” (1998, p. 12) in many parts of the world and claims to have “met translators working into non-native English from a number of countries [...] where it is impractical to expect to find sufficient native English speakers able to the job” (1998, p. 27). St. John suggests that the need for L2 translation is particularly great “with languages that have traditionally been less widely taught e.g. Chinese and Japanese” (2003, p. 1). The Japan Association of Translators acknowledges that “in certain specialized fields it is simply not possible to find a good translator who is a native speaker of the target language and has the requisite field-specific knowledge to understand the topic” (2012, para. 5).

Although this literature review is not limited to views on translation between Japanese and English, the study described hereafter focuses exclusively on the practices of freelance translators working in this language pair. The significance of the Japanese-and-English language pair is underscored by JTF survey findings. The JTF conducts surveys on translation companies in Japan and publishes the findings in online reports that show, inter alia, the proportion of the respondent companies’ combined sales represented by each of a range of language pairs (e.g., Japanese and English). The JTF’s most recent publicly accessible online report, *明るさがみえてきた翻訳市場* [lit. A translation market showing signs of brightness], from 2006 summarizes the findings of a survey conducted by the JTF in late 2005. This report states that translation between Japanese and English accounts for



the overwhelming share of the market (with 74% of combined market sales). The next-most-significant language pair is Japanese and Chinese (with just 6.6% of combined market sales)ⁱⁱⁱ. The extent to which the Japanese-and-English language pair dominates the market underscores the relevance of this study's focus on translation services between Japanese and English.

3. Methodology

An online survey was conducted to explore current practices among the sellers of translation services between Japanese and English with particular reference to whether or not these practices reflect the JTF's statement that “外国語の文書を母国語に翻訳するのがプロの原則です” [lit. It is a fundamental principle that professional translators work into their native languages] (2012, p. 15).

The members-only online mailing list of the Japan Association of Translators was used to invite individual freelance translators to take part in the study. JAT members were targeted because JAT states that it has “only one class of members: individuals” (Japan Association of Translators, 2014, para. 2) and that most of its members “are Japanese-to-English or English-to-Japanese translators” (Japan Association of Translators, 2014, para. 3). On November 30, 2013, an appeal was posted on the JAT mailing list for participants to complete an online questionnaire. This was posted in both English and Japanese in order to attract both native English speakers and native Japanese speakers. The appeal is shown in Appendix 1.

The appeal contained a link to an online questionnaire that the authors had created in a Google Docs form linked to a Google Docs spreadsheet. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix 2. (The questionnaire was posted in both Japanese and English. Only the English version of the questionnaire is shown

in Appendix 2 for the sake of brevity.) In designing the questionnaire, a balance was sought between minimizing the time burden on each study participant and maximizing the data that could be obtained. Eight questions were set, each of which had a multiple-choice part and a free-response part. The multiple-choice part, which required only a mouse click, was mandatory. The free-response part, which required more time to complete, was optional and could be completed in either English or Japanese. The focus of the questions was on the genres of texts that freelance translators translate, i.e., scientific/technical or non-scientific/technical, and on issues related to the directions in which freelance translators translate, i.e., into the mother tongue only, into a foreign language(s) only, or in both directions.

With regard to the aforementioned scientific/technical vs. non-scientific/technical dichotomy, a scientific/technical text was defined in line with definitions given by the UK-based Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (2012) and the US-based Society for Technical Communication (2014). Specifically, a scientific/technical text was treated as any text containing field-specific terminology. By this definition, scientific/technical texts are not limited to subject matter related to engineering, science, and industry but also encompass subject matter related to businesses, products, and services. It should nevertheless be acknowledged that some scientific/technical translation scholars prefer narrower definitions. For instance, Byrne asserts that “technical translation deals with texts on subjects based on applied knowledge from the natural sciences” (2006, p. 3). The survey findings may have differed if the authors had adopted such a narrower definition.

The study participants were asked to each provide an e-mail address in the questionnaire so that, if necessary, clarification on comments made in the free-response questions could be sought. However, this did not prove necessary. In addition, all the comments that respondents wrote in response to the free-response questions were anonymized.

Questionnaire responses were received from 28 individuals. One individual whose answers showed that s/he works in-house rather than as a freelancer was excluded. Three other individuals were excluded as none of them had provided an e-mail address, making clarification of any unclear comments impossible. The study sample thus consisted of 24 professional freelance translators working between Japanese and English^{iv}.

Of these 24 respondents, 20 responded that they are native English speakers, three that they are native Japanese speakers, and one that s/he is bilingual. This breakdown of respondents could suggest either that native-English-speaking JAT members are more inclined to participate in online studies than native-Japanese-speaking JAT members and/or that native-Japanese-speaking JAT members feel uncomfortable revealing that their work includes L2 translation into English.

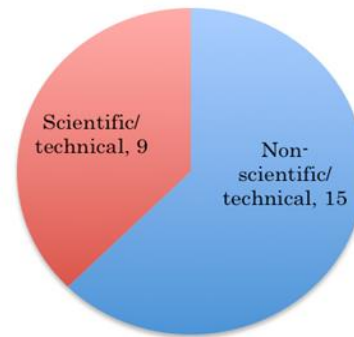
4. Analysis and Discussion

In this section, the survey questions and results are presented and discussed.

Question: *What genre of texts do you usually translate? Please give more details if possible.*

The 24 study participants each selected “Scientific/technical” or “Non-scientific/technical”. The number who chose each category is shown in Figure 1.

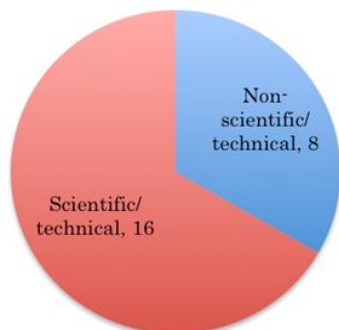
Figure 1: Non-scientific/technical translation and scientific/technical translation (as defined by the study participants)



Non-scientific/technical: 15 (62.5% of total)
Scientific/technical: 9 (37.5% of total)

The study participants were asked to expand their answers as much as possible in a text box. Their comments reflect, inter alia, their differing interpretations of the scope of texts covered by the categories “non-scientific/technical” and “scientific/technical”. For instance, one study participant who selected “non-scientific/technical” responded that s/he translates advertising and marketing texts. Another study participant who selected “non-scientific/technical” responded that s/he usually translates legal, finance, and business texts. As stated in the methodology, the definition of a scientific/technical text for the purposes of this study is any text that contains field-specific terminology. Thus, inter alia, advertising, marketing, legal, finance, and business texts are considered to be scientific/technical. If the study participants’ comments are categorized in accordance with this definition of a scientific/technical text, the number falling in each category (“non-scientific/technical” and “scientific/technical”) is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Non-scientific/technical translation and scientific/technical translation (categorised according to our definition of a scientific/technical text)



Non-scientific/technical: 8 (33.3% of total)

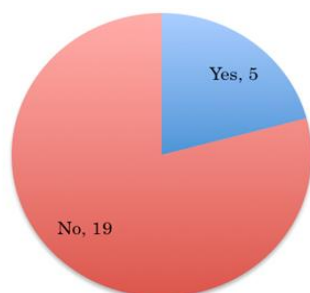
Scientific/technical: 16 (66.7% of total)

The numbers in Figure 2 clearly differ from those in Figure 1. Given that a scientific/technical text was defined in line with definitions given by the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators and the Society for Technical Communication, each of which is a leading professional body in the field of scientific and technical communication, the numbers in Figure 2 would seem to be more representative in nature. No current figures are available about the percentage of scientific/technical translation in Japan or even globally. However, both Kingscott (2002) and Byrne (2006) suggest that scientific/technical translation is indeed dominant.

Question: Are you aware of the Japan Translation Federation guide 「翻訳で失敗しないために：翻訳発注の手引き」? Please expand your answer if possible.

The study participants were asked to answer “Yes” or “No”. The number who gave each answer is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Are the study participants aware of the JTF guide?



Yes: 5 (20.8% of total)

No: 19 (79.2% of total)

The study participants were also asked to expand their answers as much as possible in a text box. Five study participants did so. Four of them stated that they were aware of the JTF guide and one that s/he had read it. In other words, 20.9% of the study participants stated that they were *aware* of the JTF guide and 4.2% of our study participants stated that they had *read* it. The JTF guide is a set of recommendations for buyers, not sellers, of translation services. Even so, the authors feel that it is reasonable to expect sellers of such services, such as the study participants, to have read the JTF guide.

Question: In which direction(s) do you usually translate?

If you translate into your mother tongue only, please state which language.

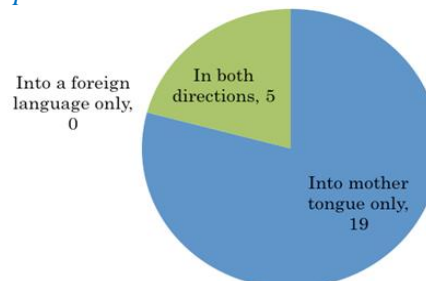
If you translate into a foreign language(s) only, please state which language(s).

If you translate in both directions, please state which languages.

If you translate in both directions, please estimate how much (in percentage terms) you translate into your mother tongue and how much into a foreign language(s).

The 24 study participants each selected “Into my mother tongue only”, “Into a foreign language(s) only”, or “In both directions”. The number who chose each category is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Directions in which the study participants translate



Into my mother tongue only: 19 (79% of total)

Into a foreign language(s) only: 0 (0% of total)

In both directions: 5 (21% of total)

The study participants also indicated their respective native languages. Among the 19 study participants who stated that they translate only into their mother tongue, 18 indicated that they are native English speakers and one indicated that s/he is a native Japanese speaker. Among the five study participants who stated that they translate in both directions, three indicated that they are native Japanese speakers, one that s/he is a native English speaker, and one that s/he is bilingual.

As shown in Figure 4, the vast majority of study participants stated they translate only into their mother tongue. Study participants who stated that they translate in both directions were asked to estimate how much they translate into their mother tongue and how much into a foreign language. Two stated that they translate 50% in each direction. One stated that s/he translates 30% into his/her mother tongue and 70% into a foreign language. And two stated that they translate 90% into their mother tongue and 10% into a foreign language. Even among bidirectional translators, then, translation into the mother tongue accounts for 62% of total work.

The preponderance of L1 translation reflected in the study participants' responses came as a surprise to the authors. One reason is that the authors had found no literature directly refuting Lise's assertion (Lise, 1997, p. 27) that L2 translation was almost the norm in the Japanese-to-English translation market. Another reason is anecdotal evidence that the authors had seen during their careers as professional Japanese-to-English translators. This anecdotal evidence supports Lise's assertion (Lise, 1997, p. 27) and is consistent with, *inter alia*, St. John's suggestion that the need for L2 translation is particularly great "with languages that have traditionally been less widely taught e.g. Chinese and Japanese" (2003, p. 1). It

includes a first-hand observation that at least 90 percent of the Japanese-to-English translation of political and economic news in the international operations of Japan's public broadcaster during the past 20 years has been produced by native Japanese speakers and rewritten by native English speakers.

The preponderance of L1 translation in the participants' responses is consistent with the JTF's statement that "外国語の文書を母国語に翻訳するのがプロの原則です" [lit. It is a fundamental principle that professional translators work into their native languages] (2012, p. 15). One possible reason for this preponderance of L1 translation is revealed by study participants' answers to the next question.

Question: *In which direction do you find it easier to translate?*

Please expand your answer if possible.

The 24 respondents each selected "Into mother tongue", "Into a foreign language" or "No preference". The responses are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Directions in which the study participants find it easier to translate



Into mother tongue: 23 (96% of total)

No preference: 1 (4% of total)

The study participants were asked to expand their answers as much as possible in a text box. Thirteen did so. Their comments include: "You should only ever translate into your mother tongue.", "Expression is always easier in my mother tongue", "I write well in my mother tongue. I do not have the same

fluency in my acquired-after-maturity language.” and “It is easier to choose the right word or phrase to match the timbre because I have a much larger vocabulary and a better understanding of the subtle variations between words and phrases in my mother tongue.” Such comments are broadly consistent with the literature: most notably Newmark (1981), Seidensticker (1984), and Campbell (1998).

Question: *If you translate into a foreign language, what (if any) are your main difficulties?*

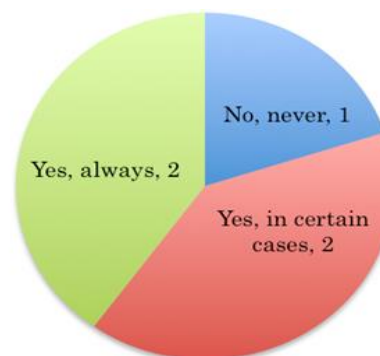
Each of the five study participants who stated that they translate in both directions answered this question. One stated that s/he had no particular difficulties. The other four made comments that are broadly consistent with study participants’ answers to the previous question (“In which direction do you find it easier to translate?”) in that they pertain to target-language lexical and syntactic choices. For example, one of the study participants stated that s/he has difficulty “Capturing grammatical nuances and finding natural, idiomatic phrasing (with a more limited set of vocabulary to work with than a native speaker has).” The answers to the last two questions appear to reflect a perception that translating into the mother tongue is easier because, inter alia, it enables the translator to make target-language syntactic and lexical choices more easily and confidently. This finding is also consistent with the literature: most notably Newmark (1981), Seidensticker (1984), and Campbell (1998).

Question: *If you translate into a foreign language, is your work checked by a native speaker of the target language as recommended in the Japan Translation Federation guide?*

Each of the five study participants who stated that they translate in both directions answered this question. They each chose “Yes, always”, “No, never” or “Yes, in

certain cases”. The number who chose each category is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Is L2 translators’ work checked by a target-language native speaker?



No, never: 1 (20% of total)

Yes, in certain cases: 2 (40% of total)

Yes, always: 2 (40% of total)

The preponderance of “yes” responses appears to be further evidence that practices among freelance translators who work between Japanese and English are in line with this statement in the JTF guide (2012):

なお、特殊分野の難解な文書の場合、専門知識が豊富な日本人翻訳者に、例外的に外国語訳を依頼することもあります。この場合は、言語能力が高いネイティブスピーカーに訳文を入念にチェックしてもらうことが必須です。(p. 15)

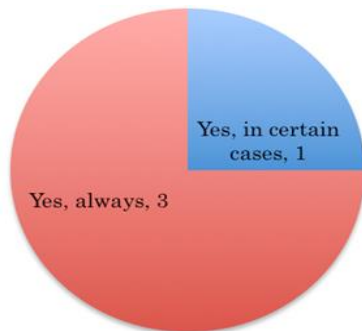
[lit. In exceptional cases, [clients] ask [native] Japanese translators with great specialist knowledge to [translate] difficult documents in specialized fields [into foreign languages]. In such a case, it is essential to have the translation carefully checked by a highly linguistically competent native speaker [of the target language].

Question: *If you translate into a foreign language, do you believe it is necessary for your work to be checked by a native speaker of the target language?*

Four of the five study participants who stated that they translate in both directions answered this question. They each chose “no, never”, “yes, in certain cases”, or “yes,

always”. The number who chose each category is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Do L2 translators believe their work should be checked by a target-language native speaker?



Yes, in certain cases: 1 (25% of total)

Yes, always: 3 (75% of total)

The preponderance of “yes” responses appears to be evidence that attitudes among professional freelance translators who work between Japanese and English are also broadly in line with the aforementioned statement in the JTF guide.

5. Sum Up

Whilst this is only a snapshot study, the results, first, clearly suggest that current practices among sellers of translation services between Japanese and English are consistent with the Japan Translation Federation’s 2012 statement and, second, broadly support secondary literature on L1 translation and L2 translation.

The preponderance of L1 translation among the study participants (a practice that, as noted earlier, is advocated by the JTF and other translation organisations) runs counter to Lise’s assertion that “almost all of Japan’s J-E translation is done by Japanese writing English as a foreign language” (1997, p. 27). It is conceivable that professional freelance translators working between Japanese and English have shifted away from L2 translation since Lise made his assertion. In the authors’ view, the fact that the preponderance of L1 translation among the study participants stands in such stark

contrast to Lise’s assertion demands a clear explanation. The authors hope to address this issue in future research.

One limitation of the questionnaire is that it did not ask for any respondent’s physical location. The authors’ experiences as professional Japanese-to-English translators suggests that the location of a translator working between Japanese and English can be commercially relevant as, for instance, a Japan-based client with a time-sensitive project may prefer to use a translator based in an earlier time zone in order to take advantage of the time difference. The effects, if any, of physical location may be an informative subject for future study.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that just 20.9% of the study participants were aware of the JTF’s 2012 guide. The JTF guide is, of course, aimed primarily at buyers, not sellers, of translation services. It will thus be interesting to see whether, in the second, follow-up part of the study, awareness of it will be greater among buyers of translation services between Japanese and English.

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Appendix 1: Email requesting help with survey on translation directions

From: [redacted co-author's name] <[redacted co-author's email address]>

Subject: Request for help with survey on translation directions

Date: 2013年11月30日 0:37:21 JST

To: jat-list@jat.org

JATの皆様へ

[English follows Japanese.]

翻訳の方向性に関する学術アンケートにご協力頂ければ幸いです。おもな調査目的は和英翻訳者と英和翻訳者のL2への翻訳、つまり母国語以外の言語への翻訳、の割合を把握することです

。ご協力頂きます皆様方にとりましては、お忙しい中大変恐縮でございますが、極力簡単に構成したつもりでございます。少数の選択質問とそれに関する詳細を書いて頂けたら光栄でございます。

母国語が英語の方も日本語の方も、是非ともご協力頂きたいと思っております。

尚、アンケートは下記のリンクをクリックしてご協力下さい。

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Th3GwY2Aq5zpoSBcT8BaGyG05wbYx9jjWqFpGmDRNtQ/viewform>

この調査は英国の[redacted name of our university] 大学大学院の[redacted name of co-author]博士と私が進めております。[redacted name of co-author]博士は翻訳研究の講師であり、和英翻訳者でもあります。

私は今年JATに加入したばかりですが、20年以上前から翻訳業会で働いております。おもに放送業界と自動車業界の翻訳に携わり、日本で翻訳会社を経営しております。また、[redacted name of our university] 大学大学院の翻訳研究に携わっております。

[redacted name of our university] 大学の [redacted name of co-author] 博士とは今年からこの研究を計画しており、来年中にこの結果を学術誌に載せたいと思っております。プロの翻訳者の方だけにご協力を頂きたいので、JATのメーリングリストだけに投稿致しました。学術誌に載った最終結果をお知りになりたい方は、メールアドレスを教えてください。

以上のことでご質問がございましたら、下記のメールアドレスまでご連絡ください。

[redacted name of co-author]

[redacted email address of co-author]

Dear fellow JAT members,

I should be most grateful for your help with an academic survey on translation directions. A key goal of the study is to gauge the extent of L2 translation (translation into the second language) amongst Japanese-to-English and English-to-Japanese translators.

I appreciate that your time is valuable, so I've made the questionnaire as simple as possible. It's only a small number of multiple-choice questions plus any explanatory comments you feel able to add. It should not take more than a few minutes.

Whether your first language is English or Japanese, I value your input.

The questionnaire is here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Th3GwY2Aq5zpoSBcT8BaGyG05wbYx9jjWqFpGmDRNtQ/viewform>
I'm conducting the study with Dr. [redacted name of co-author], a lecturer at the University of [redacted name of our university] and a Japanese-to-English translator.

A little about me: I joined JAT this year but have been in the industry for more than 20 years. I'm the managing director of a translation company in Japan. I deal mainly with the broadcasting and motor industries. I have an MA in Translation Studies from the University of [redacted name of our university].

Dr. [redacted name of co-author] and I started planning our research this year with a view to publishing our findings in the academic press next year. I'm posting this request only on the JAT mailing list as we hope to hear only from practising professionals. I'll be delighted to share the published findings with every contributor who lets me have an e-mail address.

Please don't hesitate to e-mail me privately at the address below if you have any questions. And please accept my sincere thanks for your time.

[redacted name of co-author]

[redacted email address of co-author]

[Appendix 2: L2 Translation questionnaire](#)

*Required

Your e-mail address

(1) Do you translate in-house or freelance? *

In-house

Freelance

(2) What genre of texts do you usually translate? *

Scientific/technical

Non-scientific/technical

Please give more details if possible.

(3) Are you aware of the Japan Translation Federation guide 「翻訳で失敗しないために：翻訳発注の手引き」? *

Yes

No

Please expand your answer if possible.

(4) In which direction(s) do you usually translate? *

Into my mother tongue only



- Into a foreign language(s) only
- In both directions

If you translate into your mother tongue only, please state which language.

If you translate into a foreign language(s) only, please state which language(s).

If you translate in both directions, please state which languages.

If you translate in both directions, please estimate how much (in percentage terms) you translate into your mother tongue and how much into a foreign language(s).

(5) In which direction do you find it easier to translate? *

- Into my mother tongue
- Into a foreign language
- No preference

Please expand your answer if possible.

(6) If you translate into a foreign language, what (if any) are your main difficulties?

(7) If you translate into a foreign language, is your work checked by a native speaker of the target language as recommended in the Japan Translation Federation guide?

- Yes, always
- No, never
- Yes, in certain cases

Please give more details if possible.

(8) If you translate into a foreign language, do you believe it is necessary for your work to be checked by a native speaker of the target language?

- Yes, always
- No, never
- Yes, in certain cases

Please give more details if possible.

ⁱ JAT is a group of individual translators and interpreters who “help each other do a better job for their clients and a more rewarding one for themselves”) (Japan Association of Translators, 2014, para. 1).

ⁱⁱ JTF is a group of “companies, organizations and individuals [...] engaged in commercial translation”) (Japan Translation Federation, n.d., para. 1).

ⁱⁱⁱ This report states (2006) that about 2,000 translation companies exist in Japan and that the JTF received responses from 137 (6.85%) of them.

^{iv} JAT has no figures about the percentage of its members who are professional freelance translators working between Japanese and English. In the absence of such information, the authors cannot state what percentage of its total membership of professional freelance translators working between Japanese and English responded to our questionnaire.