

## **Celebrity Translators and their Translation Practices: Exploring the Variability of Murakami Haruki's Translation Strategies**

This paper analyses the translation strategies of celebrity Japanese novelist and translator, Haruki Murakami. Its analysis demonstrates how Murakami, using his creativity as a writer, combines two opposite translation strategies in order to optimize the translation for the target readership; one which conforms to target language norms and another which focuses on those of the source culture. It will also discuss the relationship between Murakami's translation strategies and his celebrity status.

Literary translators in contemporary Japan generally have two options in the choice of translation strategies; one that focuses on the readership and another, the original author. Texts in the former are fluently written, to the extent that can be read as the original, while those in the latter retain the foreign feel of the original text, potentially to the distraction of readers. However, Murakami's choices are not constrained to one of these two choices. He can employ one, both or neither.

Murakami frequently optimizes his translations by adopting both strategies, switching one to another where necessary. His approaches contrast sharply with several of his counterparts' who are established but have not acquired the same degree of celebrity status. Good examples are seen in the works of Takashi Nozaki and Takayoshi Ogawa, both of whom, like Murakami, have translated *The Great Gatsby* (F.S. Fitzgerald, 1925). The former employs the source text-focused approach, while the latter takes reader-focused approach. This paper argues that Murakami's unconventional approach to translation is made possible by his celebrity status, which allows him a certain freedom in the choice of translation strategies.

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