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Translation of Japanese Personal Pronouns and Their Connotations to Finnish and English Through the Movie “Your Name.”

Pipsa Mattila

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Department of English

School of Languages and Translation Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Turku

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Japanese personal pronouns are known for their connotations, which include gender, various stages of formality and social relations. This study asks the question of how Japanese personal pronouns with their complexities can be translated to Finnish and English. The goal of this study is to observe how nuances in Japanese pronouns have been translated and bring attention to said methods used. The material of the study is the 2017 animation movie *Your Name*, directed by Makoto Shinkai. The full dialogue of the movie was analyzed with various pronouns and connotations in mind and examples of interest were discussed thoroughly.

The movie features characters from the capital Tokyo and a small town called Itomori. Characters from Itomori speak in a dialect, which the Finnish translator Janne Mökkönen has used to his advantage by making said characters use Finnish dialectal and colloquial personal pronouns. This proved to be a working strategy to not only convey that the characters speak in a dialect, but also to show different levels of formality in speech between the characters. English on the other hand did not appear as capable at translating connotations between English and Japanese pronouns. This can be attributed to the small variety of personal pronouns in the English language.

Key words: personal pronouns, translation, Japanese, English, Finnish.

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1 Introduction

Pronouns are one of the many components binding languages together. This study will only go in depth into *personal pronouns*, with a particular emphasis on 1st person pronouns. The great Finnish grammar book, *Iso suomen kielioppi*, defines them as follows: "Personal pronouns are independent pronouns capable of functioning as a noun phrase, and which are used to refer to participants of speech events (1st and 2nd person) and those targeted by speech (3rd person)" (Vilkuna et al. 2004, 706; my translation). On the field of translation studies, studies focusing on personal pronouns have been largely focused on language pairs of more common languages, many of which being European languages (see section 2.1, prior studies). Perhaps this is due to a perceived simplicity of personal pronouns, particularly from the perspective of those who speak English. After all, the largest variation in personal pronouns in present-day English comes from the 3rd person singular pronouns 'he' and 'she' being gendered. Whether or not there should be a gender-neutral option is a whole another discussion that this study will not delve into. Where variation does exist, is in the history of English pronouns. 'Thou' used to be in common use in Middle English but has become archaic language by today's standards (Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Thou," p.). Nowadays it is typically seen in historical contexts, or even in fiction to portray characters as old-timey. With this example, we can conclude that even in English, variation in personal pronouns can lead to different kind of characterization when utilized. Now, imagine a language where variation such as old-timey sounding pronouns are a typical feature. Japanese has that and much more.

Without delving too much into the grammatical features of Japanese personal pronouns, which will be explained in section 2.3, it is of interest to know that Japanese personal pronouns can include connotations such as gender, social status and formality. In this study, I want to observe differences in the usage of personal pronouns in English and Finnish translations of Japanese. The main material of this study will be the movie *Your Name*. (dot included in the title), particularly the personal pronouns in its dialogue. The study has an interest in social and cultural implications of different pronoun usage, and what kind of differences can be observed when comparing translations of such scenarios. The research question can be summarized as follows: how can Japanese personal pronouns with their complexities be translated to Finnish and English? The goal of this study is to observe how nuances in Japanese pronouns have been translated and bring attention to said methods used.

2 Background

2.1 Prior Studies

In the field of translation studies and beyond, various studies on personal pronouns have been conducted in the past, each with their own focuses and perspectives. Karen Smith (2004) has studied the translation of personal pronouns from English to Russian in advertisements. Of Asian languages, Hailing Yu and Canzhong Wu (2017) have analysed personal pronouns in English translations of Chinese. In studies of pronouns, many have also focused on machine translation. Xin Tan, Shaohui Kuang and Deyi Xiong (2019) for example, researched how machine translations of languages like Chinese and Japanese, which have a tendency to omit pronouns when they can be interpreted from the rest of the sentence, can be improved.

According to my research however, no study on personal pronouns has focused on the language trio of Finnish, English and Japanese. The language trio itself has not been utilized in many studies. In 1993, Ulla Kaskinen-Saari discussed the topic of formality in her master's thesis *Expressing Formality in Japanese, English and Finnish : an Analysis of Five Short Dialogues from a Japanese Movie and Their English and Finnish Translations*. Her study concluded that while the Japanese dialogue used as material included plenty of formality, the English translation was very neutral in comparison. The surprising finding of her study was how the Finnish translation ended up being more nuanced despite it being translated indirectly through the English translation. Kaskinen-Saari attributed this to the Finnish pronoun system.

2.2 Finnish Personal Pronouns

Table 1. Finnish personal pronouns (Vilkuna et al. 2004, 706) with English equivalents

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	minä 'I'	me 'we'
2nd	sinä 'you'	te 'you'
3rd	hän 'he/she'	he 'they'

Table 1 above lists all Finnish personal pronouns with their equivalents in English. From this we can observe that the personal pronoun systems between the two languages are fairly similar. The largest arising difference is that unlike English, Finnish has a completely gender-neutral third person singular personal pronoun. 'Hän' can therefore be used interchangeably when referring to men, women and those who do not identify as either or identify as

something in between. Aside from that, the table suggests that translations between the two languages are likely similar in terms of personal pronoun usage.

However, this ultimately only applies to written Finnish. In spoken, also known as colloquial Finnish, ‘minä’ can for example be substituted with *mä*, *meikä*, *meikäläinen* or *meitsi*, all of which are just synonyms of ‘I’. When you include dialects, pronouns such as *mie*, *miä*, *mää* and *mnää* are added to the mix (Wiktionary, s.v. “minä,” p.). Similarly, ‘sinä’ has colloquial and dialectal equivalents such as *sä*, *sää*, *sie*, *siä* and *nää* (Wiktionary, s.v. “sinä,” p.). As their name suggests, colloquial and dialectal synonyms are rarely used in formal or written language and carry their own connotations with them. For example, with sufficient knowledge of Finnish dialects, one can seemingly give a rough estimate of what region a Finnish speaker lives and/or grew up in based on what personal pronouns they use.

A focal point of this study will be the analysis of personal pronouns of the movie dialogue’s Finnish translation, in which many instances of ‘mie’ and ‘sie’ can be observed. According to Martti Rapola, many believe that these pronouns belong to the dialects of Eastern Finland. He continues to explain that although the pronouns do indeed appear in the region, they are also observed in the dialect of Southern Lapland (Rapola 1990, 81). We can therefore draw the conclusion that ‘mie’ and ‘sie’ are, at the very least, always considered to belong to dialects outside of the largest urban areas of Finland. For analysis purposes, it will also be important to consider the inflections of these dialectal pronouns. Below I have included a table for the declension of ‘mie’. For the understanding of this study, it is most important to simply realize that words, including pronouns, are declinable in the Finnish language.

Table 2. Declension of the dialectal 1st person pronoun ‘mie’ (Wiktionary, s.v. “mie,” p.)

noun case	singular
nominative	mie
genitive	miun
partitive	miuta (Lappeenranta) minnuu (North Karelia) minuu (Kymenlaakso, most South Karelian localities)
accusative	miut
inessive	miussa
elative	miusta
illative	miuun miuhun minnuun

noun case	singular
adessive	miulla
ablative	miulta
allative	miulle
essive	miuna
translative	miuks
abessive	miutta

2.3 Japanese Personal Pronouns

The following section will go over personal pronouns in Japanese. Out of all three languages, Japanese, has arguably the most complex personal pronoun system. While Finnish complexity can be attributed to dialects and declination, Japanese pronouns feature gender, politeness and social status. In addition, Japanese does not usually distinguish whether or not a personal pronoun is singular or plural, although there are optional suffixes that can be used to make a distinction (Kaiser 2013, 137). In contrast to many European languages, Japanese pronouns also tend to be polysyllabic instead of monosyllabic, meaning they consist of more than one syllable (Ishiyama 2019, 8). On the same page, Ishiyama makes note of Tsujimura Toshiki's 1968 study *Keigo no shiteki kenkyuu [Historical studies of honorifics]* that "lists 51 forms for the first person and 81 for the second person" for Japanese pronouns (ibid.) Due to this apparent large number of different variations of Japanese personal pronouns, this study will only focus on the ones relevant to the material.

2.3.1 Japanese Personal Pronouns in More Detail

As mentioned previously, Japanese personal pronouns can have additional meanings that Finnish and English personal pronouns lack. In this section those most relevant to this study will be explained.

2.3.1.1 *Watashi and watakushi*

Watashi and *watakushi* are generally regarded to be the basic first-person pronouns in Japanese. They both share the same *kanji* 私, that is a Chinese character, meaning that in written language they are indistinguishable. They are both considered to be neutral, usable by men and women alike. However, when contrasted to male-only pronouns, 'watashi' is often considered to be more feminine (Kaiser 2013, 137-139). Perhaps due to this, when used by males, 'watashi' also comes off as more formal (Ishiyama 2019, 5). While both pronouns are

formal, “watakushi ‘I’ is the most formal first person pronoun used in such contexts as a business setting or when talking to someone who holds a significantly higher social position than the speaker” (ibid).

2.3.1.2 *Ore and boku*

In standard Japanese, *ore* and *boku* are common first-person pronouns used by males. They are both less formal than ‘watashi’, with ‘boku’ being neutral, and ‘ore’ being the most informal of the three (Ishiyama 2019, 5). While not observed in this study’s material due to its less frequent use, the only more informal feminine first-person pronoun than ‘watashi’ is ‘atashi’, which true to its looks is simply a reduced form of ‘watashi’ (ibid.). It can therefore be argued that it is more common for men to speak informally than women.

2.3.1.3 *Anata and kimi*

Anata and *kimi* are common second-person pronouns. ‘Anata’ is “the most formal second person pronoun used by both male and female speakers” (Ishiyama 2019, 5) and ‘kimi’ is “an intimate-sounding form of address for males or females” (Kaiser 2013, 138). Due to its perceived neutrality, ‘anata’ has a label of being overused by foreigners. Where native speakers would tend to omit it from the sentence, foreigners would include it (Kaiser 2013, 141). This makes sense when you compare it to a seemingly neutral pronoun like ‘you’, which does not have connotations like ‘anata’ does. As argued by Kaiser (ibid.), “anata is used when the speaker/writer does not know what the social level of the person/s addressed is” and “anata is also typically used by a woman to her husband or lover (although less so by the younger generation)” (ibid.).

2.3.1.4 *Anta and Omae*

Anta and *omae* are also second-person pronouns. They differ from ‘anata’ and ‘kimi’ by being more informal, with ‘anta’ being more informal than ‘omae’ (Kaiser 2013, 139). When used by women, ‘omae’ can even be perceived as derogatory (Ishiyama 2019, 5). This backs the earlier argument of men speaking typically in a more informal manner, which normalizes their usage of pronouns such as ‘anta’ and ‘omae’. Therefore, when such pronouns are used by women, the perceived lack of politeness is greater.

2.3.1.5 Washi

Washi appears to be the most uncommon of all personal pronouns introduced in this study, which can be deduced from its seeming absence in books such as Ishiyama's *Diachrony of Personal Pronouns in Japanese* (2019). Even Kaiser's *Japanese: A Comprehensive Grammar* (2013) mentions it once in table 5.3 on page 139, without further explanations than it being a very intimate first-person pronoun and used by males. Nishimura brings further context to the pronoun by stating that 'washi' is "a form that is used by senior men to younger people" and uses the character Albus Dumbledore from J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series as an example of a character that would use it (Nishimura 2016, 267).

3 Material

For this study, I will be analysing the Japanese animation movie *Your Name*. (2016) directed by Makoto Shinkai. Specifically, I will be focusing on the English and Finnish translations of the movie, in the form of subtitles. The Finnish subtitles were taken from the 2017 Finnish DVD release of the movie, and English subtitles were taken from the anime focused online streaming platform Crunchyroll. The Finnish subtitles are credited to Janne Mökkönen and appear to be translated directly from Japanese, and no translator was credited for the English subtitles.

Your Name. or 君の名は。 (In Latin alphabet: *Kimi no Na wa*.) as it is titled in Japanese, is applicable to this study for multiple reasons. It is one of the most well-known and well-received anime movies of the past decade, if not all time. It has received ratings such as 8.4/10, been nominated for 27 awards and won 17 times (IMDb n.d.). On a dynamic list of highest-grossing Japanese films maintained on Wikipedia, *Your Name*. is also estimated to be the third highest grossing Japanese film in Japan and worldwide, only a little behind Studio Ghibli's *Spirited Away* (Wikipedia n.d.). While reputation gives credit to any movie, that is not the sole reason for why *Your Name*. was chosen for this study. In Japanese, personal pronouns are complex and require consideration of social relations, making their usage in the original dialogue very purposeful and well thought out. This is further emphasized by the plot of the movie, which focuses on the coming-of-age story and romance between its two teen-aged protagonists: a girl from the countryside; Mitsuha, and a boy from the capital; Taki. Fantasy-like reimagining of folklore makes the two protagonists capable of swapping bodies between each other, which results in various situations that allow for the protagonists to be out of their comfort zone in a place of high contrast to their usual social setting. The difference between the two's typical lifestyle not only makes the characters grow, but also indirectly teaches the audience about Japanese society. After all, the life of a rural town's major's daughter, who is also the heir to its local shire, can be vastly different to the life of an average city boy with a part-time job and a crush on his co-worker.

4 Methods

The methodology of this study is adequately simple. The data collection will begin through manually noting down all uses of personal pronouns in the original Japanese dialogue and in the translated English and Finnish subtitles. The entire dialogue will then be analysed, with a focus on discovering connotations behind the used personal pronouns. Certain scenes will then be brought up as examples in the analysis. The scenes chosen featured either different kinds of Japanese pronouns within a short duration of time or highlight the translations of them in an attempt to observe a variety of translation strategies, therefore being a sufficient fit for this study's length and goals. Context for the scenes will also be provided. The focus of the analysis is about what can be said of the translations. The connotations of the Japanese personal pronouns will be interpreted, following an analysis of the full translated sentences in an attempt to notice whether or not the additional meanings are carried over into the target language. Main points of interest for each translation were:

- 1) Social relations. Does the translation convey social relations between the characters through pronouns or other means?
- 2) Formality. Is formality visible through the translation via pronouns or other means?
- 3) Gender. Does the translation attempt to include gender in the target language, if it is even possible? Is it substituted for anything else?

Furthermore, each character's preferred pronouns will be made note of for more detailed analysis. Following analysis will be discussion on the results.

5 Analysis

5.1 Personal Pronouns of Choice

To begin the analysis, we can start off with a simple comparison of the two protagonists' dialogue and personal pronouns of choice. I will refer to the scene shown in table 3 as the 'realization scene'. In this scene, Mitsuha and Taki are saying the same line as the camera cuts between them in their respective homes, contrasting the different personal pronouns used by the main characters.

Table 3. 0:28:26. The scene where Mitsuha and Taki realize they are switching places. Personal Pronouns have been underlined. Finnish to English translation by me.

Japanese	English	Finnish	Finnish to English
Mitsuha: Haa...? Korette moshikashite... Taki: Haa? Korette moshikashite hontouni... M: <u>Watashi</u> , yume no naka de ano otoko no ko to... T: <u>Ore</u> wa, yume no naka de ano onna to... Both: Irekawatteru!?	M: Is this... Could this be... T: Could this be that <u>we</u> 're really... M: In our dreams, that guy and <u>I</u> are... T: In our dreams, that girl and <u>I</u> are... B: Switching places?	M: Voiko olla, että... T: Onko mahdollista, että... M: ...unessa <u>mie</u> ja se tyyppi... T: ...unessa <u>mä</u> ja se tyttö... B: ...vaihdamme paikkaa?	M: Could it be that... T: Is it possible that... M: In a dream I (dialectal) and that guy (gender neutral)... T: In a dream I (colloquial / dialectal) and that girl... B: are switching places!?

Taki uses the informal pronoun 'ore' to refer to himself, and Mitsuha uses the formal leaning 'watashi'. In the English translation, both characters are limited to the pronoun 'I'. In these sentences, nothing is able to convey the formality of 'watashi' or the bluntness of 'ore'.

Reference to gender in the sentences is purely from the literal translations of 'ano otoko' and 'ano onna', translated as 'that guy' and 'that girl'. In the Finnish translation, gender is even less present. This is due to 'se tyyppi' being a gender-neutral expression. Formality, however, is actually observable. 'Watashi' and 'ore' are translated as 'mie' and 'mä', which are both dialectal variants of 'minä', making both of their speech informal. This brings us to the next section.

5.1.1 Japanese Pronouns Substituted as Finnish Dialectal Pronouns

What makes the original dialogue of the movie interesting, is how the two main characters use a different dialect on their day-to-day lives. Taki appears to use more generic Japanese and Mitsuha a regional dialect. This naturally does not only apply to the main characters either, as

minor characters from both the countryside and city seemingly speak in their respective dialects as well. The dialect can be best observed from Mitsuha's grandmother's speech visible in table 6, although this study's scope does not allow for a direct analysis of it. It appears that the English translation does not convey the dialect in any way I was able to notice. Mökkönen's Finnish translation on the other hand, while still not containing as much variety as the original dialogue, does its best to convey the difference. Taki and other characters from Tokyo use 'mä' and 'sä' in their speech. The residents of Itomori, Mitsuha's hometown, all use the personal pronoun 'mie' when talking about themselves and in similar fashion 'sie' of others. However, this is only a surface-level dialect. For the most part, the subtitles are in plain, written and therefore formal Finnish, and lack any indications of dialectal features excluding personal pronouns. When characters speak, their lines tend to be a vague mix of spoken and written Finnish. This is likely to make the dialogue, especially spoken dialogue, sound more natural.

5.1.2 Inconsistent use of Dialectal Pronouns in the Finnish Translation

As previously mentioned, Mitsuha and others' dialect seems to only be a surface-level dialect, enough to give the viewer an occasional impression that the characters indeed speak a dialect. Although this study focused on analysing personal pronouns, it could be simultaneously noted that excluding personal pronouns, the rest of the dialect did not appear to have any dialectal declensions or other words originating from a dialect. To further prove it, Mitsuha and others from Itomori only appear to use 'mie', which is the nominative form of 'minä', the neutral word for 'I' in Finnish. At no point in the movie do they use other declensions of the pronoun. This is most prevalent in Mitsuha's line, shown below in table 4, that is repeated throughout the movie in flashbacks.

Table 4. 1:09:37. Underlined example of Finnish translation where the pronoun was not translated as a dialectal variant, underlined. The English translation of Japanese is also a direct translation of the Finnish translation.

Japanese	English	Finnish
Mitsuha: Taki-kun. Taki-kun! Oboete nai?	Mitsuha: Taki. Taki. Don't you remember me?	Mitsuha: Taki. Taki! Etkö muista <u>minua</u> ?

'Minua' is the partitive form of 'minä'. As previously established, Mitsuha should use the dialectal pronoun 'mie' when referring to herself. If the translator wanted to commit to a dialect, he should have used either 'miuta', 'minnuu' or 'minuu' (Wiktionary, s.v. "mie," p.).

One might suspect that perhaps Mitsuha being the main character is a special case, and that maybe she speaks in a more neutral language to make the translation easier to digest, but this is incorrect. For example, here Mitsuha’s friend Sayaka says the following:

Table 5. 1:20:23. Mitsuha’s Friend Sayaka not using a dialectal pronoun in genitive, underlined. Finnish to English translation by me.

Japanese	English	Finnish	Finnish to English
Sayaka: Eeh?! Watashi, hontouni yaru?	Sayaka: What? I really have to do it?	Sayaka: Pitääkö <u>minun</u> oikeasti tehdä se?	Sayaka: Do I really have to do it?

As an Itomori resident, Sayaka is shown using ‘sie’ and ‘mie’ elsewhere in the dialect. Here, the dialect accurate declension would have been ‘miun’ (ibid.)

Curiously, for the 2nd person pronoun ‘sie’, the forms genitive, adessive and allative were observed. Table 5 below depicts Mitsuha’s grandmother’s speech, where ‘siun’, the genitive of ‘sie’ can be seen.

Table 6. 1:02:14. Example of Finnish translation where personal pronouns were properly conjugated. Personal pronouns have been underlined. Finnish to English translation by me.

Japanese	English	Finnish	Finnish to English
Grandma: <u>Anta</u> , Mitsuha ya naiwa G: [...] kokontoko no <u>omae</u> o mitottara omoidashitawa. G: <u>Washi</u> mo shoujo no koro fushigina yume o mitotta oboe ga aru	G: <u>You</u> ’re not Mitsuha, are you? G: [...] watching the way <u>you</u> behaved lately triggered some memories G: <u>I</u> also remember seeing strange dreams when <u>I</u> was a young girl	G: <u>Sie</u> et olekaan Mitsuha G: [...] <u>siun</u> outo käytös G: Toi mieleen muistoja. G: Kun <u>mie</u> olin tyttönen- G: <u>Miekin</u> muistan nähteeni outoja unia.	G: You (dialectal) aren’t Mitsuha after all G: [...] your (dialectal) strange behaviour G: Brought memories back to my mind G: When I (dialectal) was a little girl- G: I (dialectal) also remember seeing strange dreams.

This line of dialogue is also interesting for the inclusion of the pronoun ‘washi’, which Mitsuha’s grandmother uses of herself. As a masculine pronoun, ‘washi’ is not what one would first expect to see used here. Perhaps Mitsuha’s grandmother’s seeming archetype of a “wise, older character” overwrites the gender associations with the pronoun. The use of ‘anta’ and ‘omae’ on the other hand, could be understood as derogatory, but here it is likely a sign of closeness within family. Relationships between characters is the main topic of the next segment.

5.2 Intimacy Between the Characters

5.2.1 The Lunch Scene

The lunch scene, shown at the first half of the movie, is a scene where Mitsuha (in Taki's body) talks to Taki's friends (who she met for the first time only minutes ago) at the school's rooftop during lunch break. She now has to explain why she arrived late. The scene was chosen as an example because of a gag in the dialogue that heavily relies on Japanese personal pronouns for its delivery, and thus requires special attention in the translations. Below is a segment of the dialogue in all three languages:

Table 7. 0:20:23. Conversation during a lunch scene. Personal Pronouns have been underlined. Finnish to English translation by me.

Japanese	English	Finnish	Finnish to English
Friend: Mayotta? Mitsuha: Un. F: <u>Omae</u> saa, dou yattara tsuugaku de michi o mayoenda yo M: Aa... Eto... <u>Watashi</u> ... F: " <u>Watashi</u> "? M: Ah! <u>Watakushi</u> ! F: Hm? (leans forward) M: <u>Boku</u> ? F: Ha? (leans even closer) M: <u>Ore</u> ? F: (grunts and nods in approval)	F: <u>You</u> got lost? M: Yeah. F: How could <u>you</u> get lost on the way to school? M: Uh... Well... <u>I(watashi)</u> ... F: Feminine? M: <u>I (watakushi)</u> ! M: <u>I (boku)</u> ? M: <u>I (ore)</u> ?	F: <u>Sä</u> siis eksyit? M: Joo. F: Miten ihmeessä voi eksyä koulumatkalla? M: Tuota... <u>Mie</u> ... F: " <u>Mie</u> "? M: <u>Meikäläinen</u> ... M: <u>Mää</u> ? M: <u>Mä</u> ?	F: So you got lost? M: Yeah. F: How on earth can one get lost on the way to school? M: Well... I (dialectal) F: "I (dialectal)"? M: I (colloquial)... M: I (dialectal)? M: I (dialectal / colloquial)?

For clarification, neither of the translated captions include dialogue for the confused grunts from the friends, which have been included here for better understanding of the scene. In the scene, it is one of Mitsuha's first times possessing Taki's body. Her lack of knowledge about Taki as a person is clear, including not knowing which pronouns he uses to refer to himself. Oblivious to the issue, when asked a question, she starts off with a 'watashi' out of habit, until she eventually stumbles to the correct pronoun.

What makes this scene particularly interesting is the different approaches used for the translations. The Finnish translation does not rely on the viewer having any prior knowledge of Japanese. Where the original joke focuses on gendered pronouns and formality, Mökkönen chose to highlight Mitsuha's origins in the countryside instead. In the Finnish translation, 'watashi' is replaced with 'mie'. Upon being given suspicious looks, Mitsuha quickly tries to correct herself with a more formal pronoun, likely from habit as it would be unusual for a young woman like her to use 'boku' or 'ore' to refer to herself. This, of course, is even weirder to Taki's friends, who are in a seemingly close relationship with him and have likely never heard Taki say the pronoun 'watakushi' aloud, at least in a casual conversation. Mökkönen's choice to translate 'watakushi' as 'meikäläinen', a very colloquial pronoun, instead of a very neutral pronoun and similarly unheard of in a casual environment, 'minä', seems peculiar at a first glance. While 'meikäläinen' could not be further away from a formal pronoun, its use here is rational. Mökkönen's translation is in reality a localization as far as personal pronouns are concerned. As previously discussed, all characters are loosely split between the dialectal pronouns 'mä' and 'mie' and expect each other to stick to said pronouns in casual conversations. Thus, any change in a friend's speech pattern would start raising eyebrows. This is the exact same premise as in the original dialogue, where the characters are taken aback by change in formality. The pronoun used simply happens to be on the opposite end of the spectrum of formality. While already a clever use of pronouns, the translation could have been made even clearer by replacing 'mä' with another pronoun more distinct from 'mä', for example 'meitsi', a similarly colloquial pronoun as 'meikäläinen', but perhaps more common. It is only my speculation, but people less versed in Finnish dialects may not instantaneously consider 'mä' and 'mä' separate from each other, as the difference is only a matter of longer vowel pronunciation.

While the English translation, lacking any different pronouns, may seem inferior on the first glance, it does, at the very least, attempt to explain the gag by stating that 'watashi' is a feminine pronoun. While it is the common pronoun for women to use in casual conversations, it is incorrect to label it as purely feminine, as it is used by men in formal language. Therefore, Taki's friends could just as likely be surprised by the sudden switch in formality instead. This is further emphasized by the next pronoun Mitsuha uses, 'watakushi', which is even more formal. The rest of the pronouns aren't explained likely due to time restrictions, as each line are allocated only a couple seconds of time. Therefore, the English translation

heavily relies on the viewer to have a basic knowledge about Japanese personal pronouns to fully understand the bit.

5.2.2 Friendly Rivalry

As the movie follows the story of teenaged characters in a coming-of-age genre, there is not many scenes of adults or people in otherwise higher social status interacting with the main cast. One of such few cases is the instances where Mitsuha interacts with her grandmother, which we briefly discussed at the end of the last section. The intimacy between Taki and his friends was touched upon when discussing the lunch scene, visible in table 6. While strangers at first, Mitsuha and Taki grow closer throughout the movie as well. Table 8 below shows a scene that takes place soon after the realization scene shown in table 3. The context is both Mitsuha and Taki communicating through a diary where they complain about various things the other has messed with in their lives. In this particular case, Mitsuha loves the fancy cafés of the capital and is seen ordering expensive desserts throughout the movie.

Table 8. 0:30:24. Scene of Taki and Mitsuha complaining to each other. Personal Pronouns and possessives have been underlined. Finnish to English translation by me.

Japanese	English	Finnish	Finnish to English
Taki: Hito no kane o mudadzukai sunna!	T: Stop wasting <u>my</u> money!	T: Lopeta rahan tuhlaaminen!	T: Stop wasting money!
Mitsuha: Tabeteru no wa <u>kimi</u> no karada!	M: It's <u>YOUR</u> body eating. And I'm working too!	M: Kehosi vaatii ruokaa. Teen osan työstäsi.	M: Your (integrated to the noun) body needs food. I (integrated to the verb) am doing a part of your job.
<u>Watashi</u> datte baito shiterushi.	[...]	[...]	[...]
[..]	M: <u>You</u> work too many shifts!	M: Liian monta työvuoroa.	[..]
M: <u>Anata</u> baito iresugi...!	T: It's 'cause <u>you</u> waste money!	T: Koska tuhlaat <u>mun</u> rahat!	M: Too many shifts.
T: <u>Omae</u> no mudadzukai no sei daro!			T: Because you (integrated to the verb) waste <u>my</u> (colloquial/dialectal) money!

For the sake of clarity, it is of importance to note that sometimes personal pronouns in Japanese translate to possessive pronouns in English. This is what has happened in Mitsuha's first line where she says 'YOUR body'. Another point of interest is the Finnish translation where words such as 'kehosi' [your body], 'teen' [I do] and 'tuhlaat' [you waste] have pronouns integrated to the words through different declinations. In sentences like this, pronouns are often optional and could have been omitted for more natural sounding dialogue. Sounding natural is important to the illusion of closeness after all

I chose this scene as an example because the English translation that so far has looked inferior in comparison to the Finnish one, chose to include a capitalized 'YOUR'. This adds emphasis to the playfulness of Mitsuha's original dialogue. The use of a more informal 'kimi' is a sign of Mitsuha having gotten comfortable enough around Taki to playfully tease him. When faced with the consequences of her actions, that being Taki signing up for more work shifts, the tone of the dialogue stops being playful. This can be seen from the more neutral pronoun 'anata'. Taki on the other hand, does not hold back and addresses Mitsuha with 'omae' like he does of his friends. Taki's last line is interesting from the point of view of the Finnish translation as well. Here, Taki uses a colloquial 'mun', a genitive form of 'mä'. This makes the conversation feel more casual.

6 Discussion

It seems like Finnish may have an advantage over English in conveying connotations of Japanese personal pronouns. As English lacks variation in personal pronouns, many connotations were either left untranslated or came down to the rest of the dialogue to explain. As observed in table 8, English translations can still use common linguistic strategies like emphasis to its advantage, although this is something that the Finnish translation could have utilized too.

The advantage of having dialectal pronouns, however, does appear superior. Then why did Mökkönen choose to only make the pronouns dialectal? At a first glance, it could easily come down to the translator's proficiency in dialects. Not possessing the knowledge of how to write convincing dialogue in a dialect would be the simplest explanation. Alternatively, granted they had access to the know-how, they may not have had enough time or pay to result in a large-scale project like researching dialects. However, I suspect the real reason comes down to the nature of subtitling. Jorge Díaz Cintas (2010, n.p.) notes that "viewers do not normally have the possibility of back-tracking to retrieve information" and that "if [subtitles] are to be easily understood in the short time available, each subtitle ought to be semantically self-contained and come across as a coherent, logical and syntactical unit" (ibid.). In other words, when subtitling a movie, the primary purpose is to get meaning across cultures in a specific time frame. There is only so much space on the screen at a given time, and there is other information for the viewer to focus on too, such as audio, and what is actually happening in the movie. Reducing the dialect to only personal pronouns makes dialogue easier and faster to digest for the viewer. Therefore, it can be argued that giving the occasional feeling that the characters come from the countryside is sufficient. After all, from the stark contrast between Mitsuha and Taki's lives, her background is evident. It is not information that the viewer would not be able to grasp without it explicitly being spelled out.

7 Conclusion

At the end of the study, it seems Finnish personal pronouns are the key to conveying differences in Japanese society in Finnish, similar to what Kaskinen-Saari (1993) discovered in her study. While their meanings are not identical, it is possible to simulate formality and intimacy with neutral forms such as ‘minä’ and combinations of dialectal and colloquial pronouns such as ‘mie’ or ‘mä’. English on the other hand does not appear as capable at translating connotations between English and Japanese pronouns. This can be attributed to the small variety of personal pronouns in the English language. Neither language is perfect, however, and many connotations such as gender and social relations between the characters would likely require either further explanation within the plot or for the viewer to have a sufficient amount of knowledge on Japanese culture. Fortunately, social relations at least tend to be in the center of many stories and can likely be conveyed to audiences of different cultures without the need of focusing on a single grammatical feature such as personal pronouns.

As this study only used one translation in each language, it is worth acknowledging that the study’s scope was not large enough to conclusively determine how Japanese personal pronouns are typically translated to English and Finnish, and ultimately only focused on the researched material. This study did also not delve very far into dialects, and only focused on them from the perspective of personal pronouns. Further studies could include corpus-based analysis on a wider dataset, or perhaps comparisons between different Finnish or English translations of the same material. Further studies could also delve further into personal pronouns in relation to pragmatics or social linguistics and craft a methodology for the analysis of translating personal pronouns usable for analysis in many different languages.

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