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Translating Emotion Words in a Japanese Healing Fiction – *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*

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ABSTRACT

Studies on emotion words indicate that they tend to be culture-specific, as there is an inclination for different cultures to use words that are difficult to translate literally due to their cultural attributes. Although numerous studies have explored emotion words, many of them have not considered emotions as cultural-specific items. Therefore, this study is conducted to explore emotion words from one specific culture and to investigate how these words are translated into the English language. The novel 'Days at the Morisaki Bookshop' was chosen because it is considered as one of the 'healing' fictions, and thus centres around the emotions of its characters. To explore the emotion words, firstly, the study chose the most significant emotions words in the book by counting the frequency of its appearance in the book. Next, the translation strategies were analysed by comparing both the original Japanese text and its English translation. This analysis of translation strategies was used to deconstruct Japanese emotion words and to discuss how they were translated in ways that fit into the emotional realm of readers from a different culture. The findings show generic emotion are the most frequent emotion words in the source text, followed by positive emotion words, 'suki' and 'aisuru', which literally mean 'like' and 'love'. The next most frequent are the negative emotion words, 'shinpai' and 'okoru', which literally mean 'worry' and 'angry'. Japanese often expresses emotions through specific words, while English tends to show emotions through actions or context. Translators may leave out emotion words to match English styles, which prefer clear, natural, and less direct expressions. This approach reflects cultural differences and helps keep the emotional meaning and effect when moving between languages.

Keywords: Japanese; emotion words; source language oriented translation strategies; target language oriented translation strategies; healing fiction

INTRODUCTION

Head and heart have been described as central to human motivation. Every action is triggered either by the cognitive process or emotional reaction of an individual (Tabakowska, 2016). Research on emotions encompasses a very broad field and is commonly situated within the domains of social science, cognitive science, and biology. Cacioppo and Gardner (1999, p. 192) explain that the main challenge in emotion research lies in its methods of measurement. Emotions were initially studied as universal phenomena. One method used to measure emotions in research is facial expression (Du et al., 2014; Ekman et al., 2013; Fridlund et al., 1987). Findings show that measuring emotions through facial expressions is consistent, even when respondents come from diverse cultural backgrounds. When facial expressions were used as a tool for measuring emotions, scholars at the time tended to assert that emotional expression is universal. This universality was

referred to as something innate within humans, unaffected by culture or environment. Despite this inclination, Wierzbicka (1992) criticised earlier research that regarded emotions as universal, discrete, and innate. She argued that how can the theory of emotions that were only tested in English be considered as universal. Her argument is comprehensible as English reflects Anglo-cultural norms, and such theories inevitably generalise from an English cultural framework, which is foreign to people in the East. Wierzbicka's (1992) critique aligns with Russell's (1991, p. 444) view that exploring emotions solely through facial expressions is insufficient to explain how humans identify emotions. People from diverse cultural backgrounds and who speak different languages define emotions in different ways.

EMOTION WORDS

Although emotions were initially studied and described through facial expressions, as a symbol of civilization, every matter is eventually expressed in the form of language or speech. Thus, in the real world, emotions are expressed through words known as emotion words. Mulyadi (2003) stated that emotions or feelings are expressed in two ways: verbal and non-verbal. Non-verbal expression occurs when feelings or emotions are shown through facial expressions, hand gestures, eye movements, or other body movements. The verbal form is when a person speaks and states their feelings using emotional words such as "sad," "happy," "worried," "angry," "wanting," "afraid" "heart pounding" "anxious" "pleased" "troubled" and others. Words that describe a person's emotions are known as emotion words. In the early stages of emotion research, which used facial expressions as a research instrument, emotion was considered universal because the faces were understood by respondents from various backgrounds and who spoke different languages. However, when emotion research required emotions to be described using words or verbally, arguments arose that emotions are actually encompassed by culture and are not universal.

Wierzbicka (1992) argued against the statement that emotions are universal because studies that sought to label these emotions were more often conducted in English-speaking cultures. The proposition is strongly supported by Wassmann (2017) who argued that current emotion science methodologies ignore how translation issues between German, French, and English influenced the field, even though physiological psychologists of the period were reading each other in those languages while authoring on identical topics in their respective languages. Holoborodko (2013) also claimed that emotions are expressed in different ways based on the surrounding culture, according to studies by historians and anthropologists. This align with aesthetics, defined by Heidegger and Nietzsche as the very understanding of a community about realities (Panahbar et. el., 2016). The argument that emotions are encompassed by culture created a heated debate when emotional words were attempted to be translated into other languages. Emotional words cause confusion for translators in finding the most accurate equivalent between the source and target languages.

TRANSLATING EMOTION WORDS

The academic literature concerning emotional expression in different linguistic contexts is generally divided into two main strands. The first group comprises studies that examine how participants or respondents' express emotion-related vocabulary, aiming to delineate and compare the semantic fields of emotion terms across different languages (Bak, 2023; Basnight-Brown et al., 2020; Bromberek-Dyzman et al., 2021; Kayyal & Russell, 2013; Kobayashi et al., 2003; Champoux-Larsson & Nook, 2024). These studies gathered data from a diverse range of respondents, including professional translators, bilingual individuals (Chinese-English, Romanian-English, Polish-English, Swedish-English), as well as monolingual speakers such as English-speaking Americans, Arabic-speaking Palestinians, and native Japanese speakers. The second category encompasses research that utilizes literary works as primary sources of data. For example, Utara et el. (2022), Oster (2023), Holoborodko (2013), Hanczakowski (2018), Li et el. (2024), Lamprinou (2011, 2013) explored literary works such as Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard, White Nights by Fyodor Dostoevsky, *La Festa Dei Limoni* by Marco Braico, and *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens. The literary works also include corpus of popular best seller romances as well general corpus such as *DWDS* for German and *Corpus del Espanol* for Spanish.

Among these studies, some restrict their scope to specific categories of emotion vocabulary, focusing primarily on basic emotion terms or those associated with positive affect. For example, Utara et al. (2022) analysed the types of positive emotions and the translation techniques applied to render these words in the novel Red Queen. Their findings showed that only four out of eighteen techniques of translation applied in the novel including literal, amplification, transposition, and particularization. Bąk (2023) focused on translation equivalence of six basic emotions (anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness, surprise) between English and Polish while Kobayashi et al. (2003) focused on the six basic emotions in Japanese and English. The findings show over 80% of terms in both languages had only partial translation equivalents. The study used translation-back-translation procedure with four professional translators. Kayyal and Russell (2013) focused on equivalence of three emotion terms namely happiness, sadness, and anger in Arabic. To be equivalent, they must have the same referents, and a similar breadth of endorsement when used to refer to emotions. Their respondents consist of 60 English-speaking Americans, 60 English-speaking Palestinians, and 42 Arabic-speaking Palestinians. The findings show that only one translation (happiness–*farah*) passed both tests of equivalence. All others differed with culture or language. By restricting their analysis to specific types or categories of emotion words, these studies yield findings that are inherently constrained by the particular terms under investigation.

Nevertheless, studies such as those by Basnight-Brown et al. (2020), Champoux-Larsson and Nook (2024), Hanczakowski (2018), Oster (2023), Holoborodko (2013), Li et al. (2024), and Lamprinou (2011, 2013) did not confine their analysis to a predefined set of emotion terms. In particular, Basnight-Brown et al. (2020), Champoux-Larsson and Nook (2024), and Li et al. (2024) emphasized individuals such as speakers or translators who facilitate linguistic transfer, rather than focusing on the intrinsic properties of the text. For example, Basnight-Brown et al. (2020) examined how Chinese–English bilinguals process ambiguous lexical items in translation, highlighting the impact of substantial orthographic differences between the two languages. Champoux-Larsson and Nook (2024) investigated whether emotion concepts are more strongly associated with the first language (L1) than with the second language (L2) among bilingual speakers. Their findings revealed no significant dominance of L1 over L2 in emotional association, suggesting that both languages play a meaningful role in shaping individual emotional perception.

In contrast, Li et al. (2024) focused on translators engaged in literary translation, presenting evidence that translators, as socially situated agents within the target culture, exhibit distinct emotional responses to the same emotion conveyed in the source text and its translated counterpart.

While the investigation of bilingual individuals' responses to emotion vocabulary is crucial for understanding emotional expression across cultures, the analysis of established written texts containing emotion terms offers a complementary perspective. Such texts may reflect standardized or widely accepted conceptualizations of emotion within and across linguistic communities. Consequently, studies that extract data from both original and translated literary works can yield a more comprehensive account of how emotion is expressed and interpreted across diverse cultural contexts. Studies such as those by Oster (2023), Holoborodko (2013), and Hanczakowski (2018) have examined emotion vocabulary within literary texts. Oster (2023), in particular, relied on data extracted from a literary corpus, which, while extensive, lacked contextual and situational depth. In contrast, Hanczakowski (2018) employed a detailed set of parameters to identify Italian emotion terms in his analysis of the novel *La festa dei limoni*. However, given the absence of an official English translation of the novel, his interpretation of the emotion words in English was based solely on his own linguistic intuition as a native English speaker. As a result, the comparison between original Italian emotion terms and their English counterparts in Hanczakowski's study is subject to bias, being grounded primarily in the researcher's personal linguistic knowledge and experience. In a separate investigation, Holoborodko (2013) conducted a contrastive analysis of three Japanese translations of a Russian literary text, employing the semantic framework of emotion classification proposed by Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1989). While the study offers a detailed descriptive account of how emotion is conveyed through various translation strategies, it falls short of categorizing these strategies in terms of their alignment with the source text or their orientation toward the target audience's interpretive needs. This highlights the need for further research aimed at systematically identifying translation strategies that either preserve the semantic and stylistic features of the original text or align with the emotional and cultural expectations of the target readership. Therefore, this study is implemented to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the most frequently occurring Japanese emotion words in *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, and how can they be classified according to established emotion word categories?
2. How are the identified Japanese emotion words rendered in the English translation of *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, and to what extent do the translation strategies either preserve the novel's original literary conventions or adjust them to support understanding within the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience?

HEALING FICTION: *DAYS AT THE MORISAKI BOOKSHOP*

Healing fiction is a genre that has recently become popular, due to its heart-warming stories that offer readers comfort. It has been prevalent in Japan since the 1990s, a time when the country was facing tragic calamities which included the Kobe earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attacks. These events, coupled with an unstable economy, resulted in what is known as the "healing boom", where products were commercialized to give consumers a sense of calm and relief (Alter, 2024; Roquet, 2009). These would include literature as well. According to Ummah et al. (2025), the healing fiction genre enables readers to achieve emotional catharsis by stepping into the shoes of a protagonist and providing hope in a time of crisis. Considering the current events that have

occurred in the last few years (covid-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine and Palestine, economic instability), it is no wonder that the translation of these healing fictions have gained traction. Popular titles include *Before the Coffee Gets Cold* by Toshikazu Kawaguchi, *What You Are Looking For is in the Library* by Michiko Aoyama, and *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop* by Satoshi Yagisawa. As illustrated in the titles, these stories often take place in mundane everyday locations such as a coffee shop, library or bookshop, where the focus is in finding joy in the small everyday things.

For example, in *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop,* the narrative highlights that healing often happens in ordinary ways such as by discovering a long lost book, the smell of paper or even the gentle sound of rain (Chauhan, 2025). According to Hood and Qayumi (2025) reading novels deeply affects personal growth by immersing readers in diverse experiences. Through emotional connections with characters, fiction builds empathy, self-awareness, and resilience. Engaging with stories allows readers to reflect on their own lives, sparking meaningful insights and development. *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop* by Satoshi Yagisawa is a gentle, introspective novel that explores identity and the healing factors of reading books. This novel is divided into two main events which are the healing of Takako and the second part illustrates the healing process of her uncle, Satoru. Set in Tokyo's Jimbocho district—famous for its second-hand bookstores, the novel follows Takako, a 25-year-old woman whose life unravels after a painful breakup. Her boyfriend, also a co-worker, out of the blue, announced he's marrying someone else. Devastated, Takako quits her job and isolates herself in her apartment. Her estranged uncle Satoru, who owns the quaint Morisaki Bookshop, offers her a lifeline: move into the room above the shop and help out. Though hesitant, Takako accepts. What begins as a reluctant escape turns into a slow, transformative journey as she reconnects with literature, community, and herself. This novel is a celebration of quiet spaces, specifically bookshops, relationships, and inner reflection (Crayon, 2024; Margolis, 2023). *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop* was chosen because it is considered as one of the global best-selling Japanese 'healing fiction'.

Days at the Morisaki Bookshop offers a gentle, restorative experience rooted in community and literature—ideal for readers seeking comfort and emotional renewal. In contrast, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki* another Japanese global best-selling novel delves into existential questions and emotional scars, offering a more introspective and symbolically rich narrative (Farhan & Normalis, 2024). Comparing the types of emotion words that appear in both studies could also provide diverse emotional representations of both genres despite coming from the same cultural background.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed quantitative analysis to identify the most frequently occurring emotion words in the novel, as outlined in the first research question. For the purposes of this investigation, emotion words are defined as lexical items or phrases that convey the emotional states or feelings experienced by characters within the narrative. Generally, in Japanese language, the emotion words can be detected through the presence of radicals or *bushu* named *kokoro (心)* in its characters such as 悲しい/ *kanashii* (sad)、怒る/ *okoru* (anger)、愛している/ *aishiteiru* (love). Sometime words that use 女/*onna* as radicals such as 好き/ *suki* (like)、嫌い/ *kirai* (hate)、嬉しい/ *ureshii* (happy) are also emotion words. Words or phrases that uses the character *気/ ki* such as 気を遣う/ *ki o tsukau* (awkward), 気が重い/ *ki ga omoi (heavy heart)* are also categorized as emotion

words. In addition to that, words such as 辛い/ *tsurai*、幸せ/ *shiawase*、淋しい/ *samishii* are also considered as emotion words because these words are denoting the feeling or emotions of the characters although those words do not use *kokoro* or *onna* as its radicals (Hasada, 2006).

It is important to note that although certain lexical items contain the radical kokoro (心), those that primarily reflect cognitive processes rather than emotional states are excluded from the present study's classification of emotion words. Examples include 思考 (*shikō*, thought or thinking), 意図 (*ito*, intention or aim), 意識 (*ishiki*, consciousness or awareness), 想像 (*sōzō*, imagination or envisioning), 憶測 (*okusoku*, conjecture or speculation), 念 (*nen*, idea, thought, or remembrance), 悟る (*satoru*, to realize or perceive), and 憶 (*oku*, memory or remembrance).

The most frequently occurring emotion words identified in the novel will be further analyzed according to the categories outlined in Table 1. These categories of emotional expression refer to the grammatical and semantic structures through which emotions are conveyed by the characters. Drawing on the framework proposed by Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1989), the study adopts seven distinct categories of emotion expression, as presented in

TABLE 1. Categories for linguistics analysis of emotion words

No	Categories	Definitions
1	Generic emotions	Words that refers to emotion in general such as 'feeling' and 'emotion'.
2	Basic emotions	Five basic emotion modes which are "happiness", "sadness", "fear", "anger", and "disgust". Other emotion words that exist are semantically related with one of the five basic emotions. These emotions are also expressed even without knowing its caused. Japanese term for basic emotions namely 喜び (*yorokobi*)、悲しみ (*kanashimi*)、恐れ (*osore*)、嫌悪 (*ken'o*)、怒り (*okori*)
3	Emotional relations	Emotion words under this category must have an object to relate it with the subject. It can also fall under the category of transitive words, which is defined as words that need an object in order for the sentence to make sense. For example, words such as *suki* (like) and *kirai* (hate). Sentences that have those words should also have object that relate to it or otherwise will be considered as incomplete.
4	Caused Emotion	Words that sound strange if the cause of the emotion is not stated in the sentence. It is strange to say, "I am glad but I don't know why". This is because "glad" needs a reason to explain why. Hence, one cannot sensibly assume, "I feel glad but I don't know why". Among words that denote caused emotions are sorrow, panic, 不幸 (fukou), 慌てる(awateru).
5	Causative emotions	It is used to name the cause of emotions, objects and elements that lead to or cause the emotion. In Japanese, the causative emotions can easily be detected using the causative form of verbs which can be in inflection and non-inflection forms. The inflection forms are formed by changing the final う-*u* to あせる-*aseru* for consonant stem verbs, and by changing る-*ru* to させる-*saseru* for consonant stem verbs. Whereas the non-inflection forms are in dictionary forms (e.g. 驚く- *odoroku* – to be scared, be surprised; and 驚かす-*odorokasu* – to scare, to be surprised).
6	Emotional goal	The emotion words that concern goals refer to words that denote the emotion that one wish to achieve and are prone to denote positive and desirable emotion such as *shiawase*, happy, content.
7	Complex emotions	Words denoting complex emotions are experienced as a result of high-level self-evaluations. It can refer to the concern of one's own state, past actions, current situation, or goals. These words are identifiable by asking whether an emotion results from evaluating oneself based on the situation for example "loneliness" denotes the feeling that one is sad in relation to

others and vice versa. Because these complex emotions depend on the model one has of oneself by way of consciousness. According to Johnson Laird and Oatley, complex emotions can be dependable on basic emotions like the example above in which loneliness depends on sad, however there is asymmetry: a term referring explicitly to a complex emotion is restricted to it, and is not interpretable as referring solely to the underlying basic emotion.

STRATEGIES IN TRANSLATING JAPANESE EMOTION WORDS

To address the second research question, namely, to analyze the strategies employed in translating the identified emotion words into English and to evaluate whether these strategies serve to preserve the original literary conventions of the novel or to adapt them for improved comprehension within the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience, the study adopts Pedersen's (2005) classification of translation strategies as its analytical framework. Based on extralinguistic culture-bound references, the translation strategies are categorized into two main types: source language (SL)-oriented and target language (TL)-oriented approaches, as outlined below.

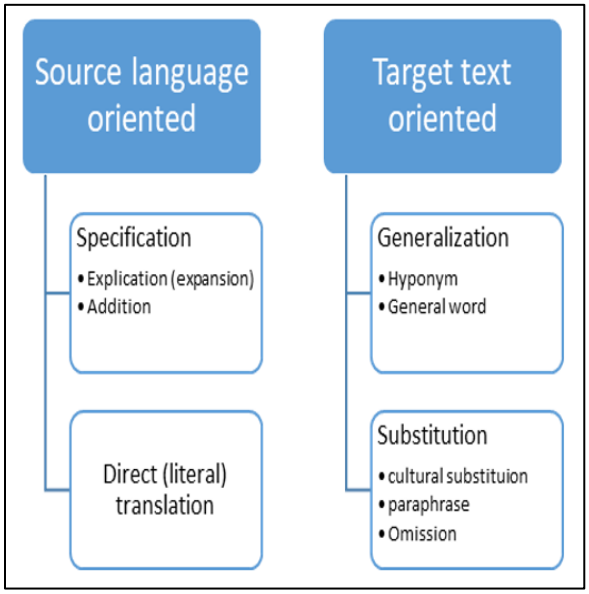

FIGURE 1. Translation Strategies (Pederson, 2005)

Source language-oriented strategy consists of two subcategories: Specification and Direct translation.

Strategy	Definition	Subcategory
Specification	Retains the culture-bound term (possibly untranslated) while adding information not in the source text.	Explication/ Addition
Explication	Expands or spells out implicit content that is not emphasized in the source.	-
Addition	Adds material latent in the source term to guide the target audience.	-
Direct Translation	Literal translation of terms, often used for names of institutions, companies, or technical items.	Calque, Shifted
Calque	The words may not seem familiar to target audience and it may sound odd to them	-
Shifted	Terms that are common in target culture so the audience are familiar with them.	-

FIGURE 2. Source Language Orientation of Translation Strategies (Pederson, 2005)

Strategy	Definition	Subcategory
Generalization	Replacing a specific culture-bound term with a more general one.	Hyponymy/ general term
Substitution	Replacing the source term with a different term or paraphrase.	Cultural Substitution/ paraphrase
Omission	Omitting the culture-bound item entirely from the translation.	-

FIGURE 3. Target Language Orientation of Translation Strategies (Pederson, 2005)

FINDINGS

This study involved extracting emotion-related words from the entire Japanese edition of *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, followed by a comparative analysis with its English translation. In the original Japanese text, emotion words appeared approximately 630 times. Among these, as presented in Table 2, the most frequently occurring were generic emotion terms such as 心 (*kokoro*, heart), 感じる (*kanjiru*, feel), and 気持ち (*kimochi*, feeling), which are defined as lexical items that directly denote emotion in general therefore are neutral. The remaining frequently occurring emotion words can be classified into two broad categories: positive emotions and negative emotions as illustrated by Utara, Rajeg & Puspani (2022). Positive emotion words including 好き / *suki* (16 instances), 愛する/ *aisuru* (14), 嬉しい/ *ureshii* (9), and 幸せ/ *shiawase* (7) convey sentiments of joy, affection, and emotional warmth, which are central to the interpersonal dynamics in the narrative. In contrast, negative emotion words such as 心配/ *shinpai* (13), 怒る/ *okoru* (11), 嫌/*iya* (9), 恥ずかしい/ *hazukashii* (9), and 怖い/ *kowai* (8) reflect emotional tension, anxiety, and conflict, contributing to the novel's narrative depth and balance. Emotion words with fewer than six occurrences were considered statistically insignificant for the purposes of this analysis.

The findings reveal that basic emotion and general emotion categories are the most frequently occurring in *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, aligning with its genre as healing fiction. This genre emphasizes light emotional tones, gentle introspection, and emotional recovery, often conveyed through straightforward and universally recognized feelings such as worry, sadness, and joy. The prevalence of these emotion types supports the novel's therapeutic narrative, which centres on personal growth, human connection, and hope. In contrast, Haruki Murakami's Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage presents a more ambiguous and emotionally complex landscape. The novel explores existential themes such as identity loss, emotional estrangement, and psychological trauma. Emotion words in Murakami's work tend to fall under complex emotion categories, reflecting the protagonist's internal struggle and the abstract nature of his emotional journey (Farhan & Normalis, 2024).

TABLE 2. Frequency analysis of emotion words in *Days of the Morisaki Bookshop*

Category	Word (Romanization)	Translation	Frequency	Explanation	Emotional Element
Neutral	気持ち (*kimochi*)	feeling	33	Refers broadly to emotional states.	Generic Emotion
	感じ・感じる (*kanji/kanjiru*)	to feel / feeling	24	Describes the act or state of feeling in general.	Generic Emotion
	心 (*kokoro*)	heart	20	Symbolic of emotional and mental states	Generic Emotion
Positive	好き (*suki*)	to like	16	Requires an object (e.g., someone or something liked).	Emotional Relation
	愛す・愛する (*aisu/aisuru*)	to love	14	Transitive verb needing an object of affection.	Emotional Relation
	嬉しい (*ureshii*)	joyful / happy	9	Implies a reason for gladness; unnatural without cause.	Caused Emotion
	幸せ (*shiawase*)	happiness	7	Denotes a desired emotional state or goal.	Emotional Goal
	楽しい (*tanoshii*)	fun / enjoyable	8	Typically linked to a cause or event that brings joy.	Caused Emotion
	感謝 (*kansha*)	gratitude / thanks	8	Involves self-evaluation and relational awareness.	Complex Emotion
	喜ぶ (*yorokobu*)	to rejoice / be delighted	6	Closely tied to 喜び (*yorokobi*/ happiness)	Basic Emotion

Negative	心配 (*shinpai*)	worry	13	Related to sadness and fear;	Basic Emotion
	怒る (*okoru*)	to get angry	11	Directly expresses anger; one of the five basic emotions.	Basic Emotion
	驚く (*odoroku*)	to be surprised / shocked	10	Often paired with 驚かす (*odorokasu*, to cause surprise).	Causative Emotion
	嫌 (*iya*)	dislike / hate	9	Related to disgust; one of the five basic emotions.	Basic Emotion
	恥ずかしい (*hazukashii*)	embarrassed	9	Involves self-awareness and social evaluation.	Complex Emotion
	怖い (*kowai*)	scary / afraid	8	Directly expresses fear; one of the five basic emotions	Basic Emotion

GENERIC EMOTIONS

As shown in Table 3, *kimochi* is translated with various strategies often paraphrased or omitted, reflecting a tendency toward naturalization in English with 5 out of 7 strategies are categorized as Target-Language Oriented. However, in emotionally pivotal moments such as excerpt 1, 4 and 7, translators do preserve its meaning through direct or near-direct equivalents. Pivotal moments in the narrative arise when the protagonist expresses emotions related to the love of their life, as these instances represent the emotional centre piece of the plot. Other than 'feeling', the word *kimochi* can also indicate the meaning of 'sense' and 'see' as shown in Table 3 excerpt 2 and 5. Although words such as 'see' and 'sense' are not typically classified as emotion words in English due to their association with physical perception, their use in translation reflects an effort to maintain linguistic naturalness in the target language. This suggests that expressions of inner emotional states in Japanese may, in English, be rendered through words that also conveys physical or sensory experiences, highlighting a cross-cultural overlap between emotional and physiological interpretation. There are also instances (excerpt 3 and 6) where the word *kimochi* has been omitted in the translation. For example, the literal meaning of excerpt 3 is "I couldn't understand why he felt that way." but when omission strategy is applied therefore, the translation became "I couldn't understand why" where the word 'felt that way' is deleted. Then, excerpt 6 "what was it like" if translated directly should be" what it felt like", again the word 'felt' has been omitted. Therefore, the analysis concluded that the omission translation strategies were used for the excerpts. This could be due to English language tendency to favour concise expressions, especially when emotional meaning is already implied through context. Phrases like "I couldn't understand why" are pragmatically sufficient, and adding "he felt that way" may be seen as redundant. Japanese often externalizes emotion through specific terms like *kimochi*, while English may internalize or generalize emotion through broader experiential or cognitive framing. Thus, translators may omit the word "feeling" to align with English norms of emotional expression.

TABLE 3. Excerpts of *Kimochi*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation strategy	Justification
1	その時の私の気持ちがまさにそれだった	That's what it felt like.	Paraphrase (TL oriented)	気持ち is rephrased as a general experiential phrase, losing its lexical identity but retaining emotional tone.
2	初めて神保町に来たとは全く違う気持ちで	…saw the neighbourhood so differently.	Omission (TL-oriented)	気持ち is not translated and the emotional nuance is implied through the characters perception (saw)
3	彼の気持ちが理解できなかった	I couldn't understand why.	Omission (TL- oriented)	Emotional nuance is abstracted into a cognitive interpretation (why), removing direct emotional reference.
4	私にもちょっとだけ叔父の気持ちがわかる	I think I can understand a little bit of what he felt then.	Direct translation (SL-oriented)	気持ち is semantically preserved as felt, maintaining emotional specificity.
5	自分の気持ちや価値観に正直に生きることができたらと私も大学時代よく夢想したものだ	In college, I used to dream about living a life that felt true to my own values, my own sense of things.	Substitution - paraphrase (TL Oriented	気持ち is softened and generalized; emotional tone retained but lexical form altered.
6	その時はどんな気持ちだった？ 悲しかった？	What was it like, when it happened? Were you sad?	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	Open-ended emotional inquiry is replaced with a culturally familiar phrase.
7	彼の気持ちがつかみきれなくて言った	"Still..." I couldn't understand how he could feel that way.	Direct translation	Emotional term is preserved in meaning and function, though slightly rephrased.

The second most frequently occurring generic emotion word is *kanjiru.* Literally *kanjiru* is a verb form which means feel and the noun form is *kanji* which means feeling. Table 4 includes excerpt of *kanji* that indicate the senses aspect as well as emotional aspects of the words. The term kanji signifies 'sense' in excerpt 1, and in except 2 it refers specifically to perceptual sense because it describes the situation of a place. Meanwhile the emotional aspect of the description can be found in excerpt number 3 ~ 6. This analysis shows a clear preference for target-language orientation, especially through paraphrase and omission, which reflects a translator's effort to maintain naturalness and idiomatic fluency in English. Only one instance (excerpt 3) retains a direct emotional framing through the word 'felt like'. As explained previously, direct translation is used when it involves the expression of protagonists' feelings towards their love interest which is the core plot of the narrative. The application of various translation strategies suggest that the word *kanji* has a more complex semantic field compared to *kokoro* and *kimochi.* It is due to the word *kanji* can be conjugated to verb form *kanjiru* while *kokoro* and *kimochi* are noun forms and cannot be conjugated to a verb.

TABLE 4. Excerpts of *kanji*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation method	Justification
1	それが余計に余計な感じを強めてもいる。	They only ended up making the place seem even more bizarre.	Substitution-paraphrase (TL Oriented)	感じ is rephrased as 'seem even more bizarre', which conveys the effect but omits the lexical form.
2	昭和の香りに染まっている感じだった	everything seemed suffused with the scent of the Showa era.	Substitution-paraphrase (TL Oriented)	感じだった is rendered as seemed suffused, which captures the experiential tone but avoids literal translation.
3	どれだけ話しても一向に距離が縮まらない感じがしてしまう。対岸に立って、お互い話しているかのように途方もない距離を、私は時々彼女に対して感じてしまうのだ	It felt like no matter how many times I talked to her, I could never close the gap between us. Sometimes it felt like we were standing on opposite side of a river, talking to one another from across an enormous divide.	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	感じ is translated as felt like, preserving the emotional framing and experiential metaphor.
4	だから和田さんが私を見て、そう感じたのはあながち間違いじゃないのかもしれない	So it might not be out of the question that Wada could sense that when he looked at me,	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	感じた is translated as sense, which shifts from emotional perception to cognitive inference, aligning with English norms.
5	感じの良い、見ていて安心できる笑顔だった。	He had a nice smile that put you at ease.	Substitute-paraphrase (TL-oriented)	感じの良い paraphrased as 'at ease'
6	諦めが混じっているように感じられる	You could hear in his voice that he had half resigned himself to it.	Substitution-paraphrased (TL oriented)	感じられる is rephrased as you could hear in his voice, shifting from emotional perception to auditory inference.

The third most frequently occurring generic emotion word is 心/*kokoro/heart.* According to Maynard (2005) *kokoro* refers to many things, including mind, heart, soul, and spirit, and it is used in many ways for describing emotion especially when related to feelings of being touched and moved (p. 56). Considering that this novel is in the healing fiction genre, it is expected for this word to frequently appear. The character 心/ *kokoro* can appear standing alone or attached to another character to indicate different lexical such as 心配/*shinpai*、熱心/*nesshin*、感心/*kanshin, 心細い/kokoro bosoi.* The translation of the word *kokoro* is shown in the excerpts listed in Table 5. As mentioned in the literature review, *kokoro* literally means heart. There are instances where *kokoro* is translated directly as 'heart' as shown in excerpt 1, 2, and 3. Direct translation is applied when it aligns with familiar English idioms for example 'heart' as in 'bottom of my heart'. There are also different translation methods used but still under the target language orientation such as Substitution where it is translated as 'one self' or 'inner self' as in excerpt 4, 5 and 6.

These translation choices illustrate a cultural transition from the overt emotional expression typical of Japanese to the more implicit emotional inference favoured in English, with an emphasis on idiomatic fluency and naturalness. In Japanese, emotions are often explicitly conveyed through lexical items such as *kokoro* (heart), which symbolically represent inner feelings. In contrast, English tends to substitute 'heart' with expressions like 'inside you,' suggesting that internal experiences are conceptually aligned with emotional states, even if not directly labelled as such.

TABLE 5. Excerpts of *Kokoro*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation method	Justification
1	彼の傷だらけの心がほんの一時ではあるものの、癒されていくのだ	It is through his relationship with her that he starts to heal his wounded heart however briefly.	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	心 is translated directly as heart, preserving both emotional and metaphorical meaning.
2	心はトランポリンみたい	Just being together made my heart bounce like a trampoline	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	The metaphor is retained, and 心 is rendered as heart, preserving the figurative emotional imagery.
3	心の底から彼女を愛おしく思った	I loved her from the bottom of my heart.	Direct translation	The internal emotional space (心の中) is not translated; emotional nuance is implied through to myself.
4	心の中でつぶやいた	I murmured to myself	Omission (TL-oriented)	The internal emotional space (心の中) is not translated; emotional nuance is implied through to myself.
5	私の心の複雑な動きの説明にどちっともなっていない	Couldn't begin to describe the complex things happening inside me	Substitution -paraphrase (TL- Oriented	心 is rephrased as inside me, shifting from lexical emotion to experiential framing.
6	今までずっと心の奥で眠ていった読書欲が。。。	the love of reading has been sleeping somewhere deep inside me	Substitution paraphrase (TL-Oriented)	Emotional depth of 心の奥 is rendered metaphorically as deep inside me, preserving tone but not lexical form.
7	心の底から 言った	I meant it.	Omission (TL-Oriented)	The emotional emphasis of 心の底から is removed; I meant it conveys sincerity but lacks emotional depth.

POSITIVE EMOTION WORDS

Johnson-Laird and Oatley (1989) categorized an emotion word that requires an object as emotional relation. *Suki* or literally ‘like’ in English is categorized as an emotion word that requires an object. A sentence will not make sense if the object for the word ‘*suki*’ is not mentioned. As shown in all excerpts of Table 6, objects for the word ‘*suki*’ are indicated as ‘him’, ‘sleep’, ‘what’, ‘Tomo’,

'prussian blue', 'dormouse', 'Jimbochou', and 'festival'. Even when the object is very general such as in excerpt number 3, the object is stated as 'what'. Only when the translated word is not 'like', then the object is not mentioned as shown in excerpt 8. Substitute strategies which include cultural substitution and paraphrase were used to translate *suki.* . In addition to that, the English language has a variety of equivalents for the Japanese *suki.* As demonstrated in Table 6, it can also be translated as 'rather', 'want', 'crush', 'favourite', 'loving'. This suggests the word 'like' in English has a wider semantic field than Japanese *suki.* In Japanese, suki can express a wide spectrum of feelings from casual preference (e.g., favourite food) to deep romantic affection. In English, "like" is often too weak or ambiguous to capture this range, especially in emotionally charged contexts. Suki can carry emotional depth, especially in interpersonal relationships. Translating it as "like" may understate the intensity. For example, *suki desu* in a romantic confession is often rendered as "I have a crush on you" or "I love you" to match the emotional tone. Translators rarely use "like" for suki in a romantic context because it lacks the emotional nuance, cultural resonance, and grammatical flexibility that suki carries in Japanese. Instead, they opt for paraphrase, substitution, or idiomatic expressions that better reflect the intended meaning in English.

TABLE 6. Excerpt of *Suki*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation method	Justification
1	自分が好きで好きでたまらない	I like him so much that I could barely stand it.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	The emotional intensity of 好き indicated through repetition is preserved through intesifier 'so much'.
2	寝てる方が好きなんです	I'd rather sleep	Cultural substitution (TL-oriented)	Preference is expressed through a natural English modal structure (I'd rather) instead of a direct emotion word.
3	自分の好きなことをやって	You are doing what you want	Cultural Substitute-paraphrase (TL-oriented)	好きなこと is rephrased as what you want, shifting from emotional preference to volition (want).
4	ともちゃんのこと好きですか	Do you have a crush on Tomo?	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	好き is rendered as have a crush, a culturally familiar term for romantic interest.
5	好きな色は	Her favorite color was prussian blue	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	好きな is translated as favorite which is considered as cultural substition of the word like.
6	好きな動物	favorite animal was dormouse	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	好きな is translated as favorite which is considered as cultural substition of the word like.

7	好きな街	favorite neighbourhood was Jimbochoo	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	好きな is translated as favorite which is considered as cultural substition of the word like.
8	詮索好きなマスターには「あの二人はできている」	This led to the surprisingly nosy owner starting the false rumor among the regular customers that Takano and I were together.	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	詮索好き (fond of prying) is substituted with nosy, a culturally resonant adjective.
9	祭りごと好きの叔父は	my festival loving uncle	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	好き is rephrased as loving, conveying enthusiasm in a natural English form.

The next most frequently occurring emotion words are words symbolized with the character 愛/ai/ *love.* Direct Translation is frequently used in romantic or interpersonal contexts as shown in excerpt 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 10. In those excerpts 'love' is expressed towards the main subject of the narrative which is *Momoko* (excerpt 3, 5, 7 and 9), Jimboochoo (the neighbourhood) in excerpt 6 and the bookshop itself as in excerpt 10. These are the core characters of the narrative. Paraphrase is applied when 愛/ai/ love appears in compound forms for example *aijou, itooshii* which is noun and adjective. As in excerpt 2 and 11 where both *aijyou* and *itoshii* are translated as love in verb form. Cultural Substitution is evident in expressions like 偏愛/*hen'ai* (partial love) or 愛想/*aishou/* social charm, which are rendered as "devoted" or "friendly," reflecting culturally resonant interpretations in English. The translation of 愛/*ai*/ love into English reveals significant cultural differences in how love and emotional intimacy are conceptualized and expressed across different cultures. In Japanese, 愛/ai/ love encompasses a wide emotional spectrum from romantic love and familial affection to aesthetic appreciation and moral devotion. This lexical richness often requires nuanced translation strategies to align with English's more compartmentalized and idiomatic treatment of love. These substitutions reflect cultural expectations around how love is expressed, often more explicitly and idiomatically in English, compared to the subtle and context-dependent expressions typical in Japanese.

TABLE 7. Excerpts of *Aisuru*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation method	Justification
1	その目にはとても愛おしいものを見るような	There was something tender in the way he looked at the book	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	tooshii conveys deep affection; tender captures emotional tone in a culturally familiar way.
2	たまらなく、愛おしく感じるから不思議だ	I loved that musty scent of old book so much I couldn't get enough of it.	Paraphrase (TL-oriented)	Emotional intensity is preserved through paraphrasing; avoids literal translation of itooshii.
3	心の底から彼女を愛おしく思った	I loved her from the bottom of my heart.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Emotional depth is retained through idiomatic expression; bottom of my heart aligns with 心の底から.

4	そういう人々に偏愛的に愛されていれば、それでいいのだ	They are devoted to it...	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	Hen'ai (partiality in love) is softened to devoted, a culturally appropriate equivalent.
5	でも僕は本気で愛したただ一人の女性なんだ	The one woman in my life that I truly loved.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Preserves emotional sincerity and intensity of honki de aishita.
6	この街を愛している人はいないもの	No one loves this neighborhood more than your uncle.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Preference and emotional attachment are clearly conveyed.
7	いまだに愛しているのだ	He still loved her.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Maintains emotional continuity and clarity.
8	サトル叔父さんのことをまだ愛しているなら、なおさら	She really still love my uncle	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Romantic attachment is clearly expressed.
9	僕はまだ桃子を愛しているんだ	I'm, still in love with her.	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	In love adds romantic nuance, aligning with English idiomatic usage.
10	この店を愛する人も存在する	There are people who love this store.	Direct Translation (SL-oriented)	Emotional attachment to place is preserved.
11	次第に愛情を覚えるようになった	That how I learned to love the second hand bookstore that handled these books.	Paraphrase (TL-oriented)	Aijou (affection) is rendered as learned to love, capturing emotional development.
12	桃子さんが愛想よく対応した	Momoko handled the customers for my uncle, talking to them in a friendly way.	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	Aiso (social charm) is translated as friendly, a culturally resonant term.
13	もうちょっと愛想のいい顔をしなきゃ	Takako, you need to smile more, try to be a little friendly.	Cultural Substitution (TL-oriented)	Social expectation of aiso is adapted to English norms of friendliness.

NEGATIVE EMOTION WORDS

The most frequently occurring negative emotion words in a Japanese healing fiction are the words 怒る/*okoru/ angry* and *心配/ shinpai/ worry*. As shown in the table, the word *okoru* is translated directly into English 'angry' and the translation strategies also retain the form of the translated words. As shown in the table, the translated text retained the verb form. *Okoru* is categorized as basic emotion words because it represents a fundamental and universally recognized human emotion—anger. The direct translation of 怒る as angry, with verb form retention, is culturally justified by the universality of anger as a basic emotion, the structural alignment between Japanese and English, and the shared narrative convention that emotions can be expressed without explicit cause. This strategy respects both linguistic fidelity and cultural nuance.

The word *shimpai* was prone to be translated directly except for two excerpts examples where substitution strategy was used and *shimpai* which literally means worry was translated as 'danger' and 'discreetly' as in excerpt 9 and 10. The direct translation also retain the verb form of the source text. *Shinpai* has been linked with the semantic field of 'fear'. *Shinpai* belongs to a broader semantic field that includes fear, anxiety, concern, and apprehension. In Japanese, *shinpai* is often a social emotion, tied to relationships, obligations, and empathy (e.g., worrying about others). In English, worry can be both internal (personal anxiety) and external (risk assessment), which explains why translators sometimes shift toward terms like danger or discreetly to match the context and tone. The translation of *shinpai* reflects a balance between linguistic fidelity and cultural adaptation. Direct translations preserve emotional clarity, while substitutions like danger and discreetly reflect deeper cultural and pragmatic shifts−translating not just words, but ways of feeling and expressing.

TABLE 8. Excerpts of *Okoru* and *Shimpai*

No	Emotion Word	Translation	Translation method	Justification
1	父親にしょっちゅう怒られたもんだよね	My father was always getting angry at me.	Explication (SL-oriented)	Japanese passive verb 怒られた implies being scolded, but the English version makes the emotional experience more explicit. This adds clarity not overtly stated in the source.
2	怒りよりも断念悲しみが上がった	Far more than anger, I felt grief.	Direct translation (SL-oriented)	The noun 怒り is directly rendered as anger, preserving the original lexical item without adaptation. This is a literal, source-faithful strategy.
3	怒り狙うのが目に見えたからだ	I could just imagine my mother flying into a blind rage.	Addition (SL- Oriented)	The phrase blind rage intensifies the emotion beyond the neutral anger. This added nuance is latent in the context but not explicit in the source, aligning with Pederson's definition of Addition.
4	まるで神の怒りに触れたバベルの	struck down by an angry god.	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	The adjective 'angry' is a direct rendering of 怒り. It's familiar to the target audience and doesn't sound odd.
5	叔父さんはどうして怒りもしないで受け入れちゃうの	why did you just welcome her in without getting upset?	Generalization (TL-Oriented)	The term upset is broader and less intense than anger. It generalizes the emotional tone to suit English norms, which often soften emotional expressions.
6	母も随分心配していた	that my mother was really worried	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	The verb 心配していた is rendered directly as worried, maintaining the original meaning and grammatical function.

7	床が抜けるかともちょっと心配したが、	I was little worried that the floor might collapsed	Direct translation (SL-Oriented)	心配した is translated literally as worried, with no cultural or lexical shift.
8	僕も姪が心配でついね	I was worried about you.	Cultural substitution	This shift likely reflects a conversational tone or narrative adaptation where the speaker is addressing the listener directly, making the emotional connection more immediate and natural in English.
9	本がなくなる心配もなかった	there was no danger I'd run out of books	Substitution – paraphrase (TL-Oriented)	The term 心配 (worry) is replaced with danger, which conveys the underlying concern but removes the emotional term.
10	私は心配してロボコップみたい	I whispered to him discreetly	Substitution – omission (TL-Oriented)	The emotion word 心配 is entirely removed in the translation. The focus shifts to behavior (whispered discreetly), which is a valid omission strategy when the emotion is implied through action.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the analysis illustrate how Source Language-Oriented (SL-oriented) translation strategies prioritize fidelity to the Japanese source text by preserving its lexical form, emotional nuance, and grammatical structure. For instance, Direct Translation is frequently applied to emotion words such as 怒る (*okoru*, "to get angry") and 心配 (*shinpai*, "to worry"), which are rendered directly into English while retaining their verb forms and emotional clarity. This approach is culturally justified by the universality of basic emotions like anger and worry, which are structurally and semantically compatible across languages. SL-oriented strategies also demonstrate the retention of culturally embedded lexical items such as *kokoro* (heart), *kanji* (feeling), and *kimochi* (emotion). These terms symbolically convey inner states and reflect Japanese tendency toward overt emotional labelling. Translators often maintain the original grammatical form (e.g., verbs) and emotional tone, respecting the source text's narrative conventions and cultural depth.

In contrast, Target Language-Oriented (TL-oriented) strategies adapt the Japanese source to align with English norms of idiomatic fluency, emotional inference, and cultural expectations. Strategies such as Paraphrase and Cultural Substitution are employed when Japanese emotion words lack direct English equivalents—for example, *suki* (like/love) or *ai* (love). Translators tend to favour idiomatic expressions that more accurately reflect emotional nuance in English, which typically compartmentalizes and explicitly labels emotional intimacy. Moreover, Japanese abstract or symbolic expressions (e.g., *kokoro*) are often rendered in English as metaphorical phrases like "inside you," reflecting Western conceptualizations of emotion. The word *shinpai* is sometimes translated as danger or discreetly, illustrating English's preference for situational or behavioural

framing over direct emotional labelling. Omission and Implicitness are also common TL-oriented strategies, as English favours concise expression—especially when emotional meaning is already implied through context or action. This results in the omission of overt emotion terms in favour of behavioural cues, aligning with English stylistic norms.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated the nuanced interplay between Source Language-Oriented (SL-oriented) and Target Language-Oriented (TL-oriented) translation strategies in rendering Japanese emotion words into English within *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, a representative work of healing fiction. By identifying frequently occurring emotion terms and analysing their treatment in translation, the research highlights how SL-oriented strategies preserve the semantic integrity and stylistic conventions of the original text, while TL-oriented strategies adapt emotional expressions to align with the cultural expectations and interpretive norms of English-speaking readers.

The findings affirm that emotion words translation is not merely a linguistic exercise but a culturally embedded process especially vital in healing fiction, where emotional resonance is central to the genre's impact. SL-oriented approaches maintain emotional clarity through direct translation and lexical retention, reflecting Japan's explicit emotional words. Conversely, TL-oriented strategies, such as paraphrase, substitution, and omission reflect English's preference for idiomatic fluency and implicit emotional inference, ensuring that the therapeutic essence of the narrative remains accessible to the target audience. Ultimately, this study contributes to a more systematic understanding of how emotion is conveyed across languages, offering a framework for evaluating translation choices that balance fidelity to the source with cultural sensitivity. It underscores the importance of thoughtful strategy in translating healing fiction, where emotional nuance must be preserved or adapted with care to maintain the genre's restorative effect across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

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