

Reframing the victims of WWII through translation

So far from the Bamboo Grove and *Yoko Iyagi*

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This study examines the ways and extent to which narrative voices encoded in a source text are reframed and mediated through translation. *So Far from the Bamboo Grove* (Watkins 1986), the personal narrative of an eleven-year-old Japanese girl during the final days of WWII, was used as an educational text for primary and middle school pupils in the US until it became the target of heavy criticism from Korean-American parents who boycotted the book, arguing that it misguided young American students by constructing a ‘good Japanese–bad Korean’ binary. The Korean translation was distributed by a reputable publishing house in South Korea until 2007, when its distribution became controversial. Although the book – and its translation – has been the target of much criticism, it has been neglected by scholars of translation studies. Adopting the model of analysis elaborated by Baker (2006) and drawing on the concept of framing by Goffman (1974) and the work of Genette (1997), this study analyses *So Far from the Bamboo Grove* and its Korean translation, *Yoko Iyagi* (Watkins 2005, trans. Yoon), and investigates the framing strategies used by mediators to reframe the narrative in a new setting.

Keywords: narrative theory, framing, paratexts, *Yoko Iyagi*, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, Korean

When I was in 10th grade, one of my buddies asked me, “Why did Koreans do so many bad things to Japanese?” [...] When I asked him why he thinks so, he said he read this novel when he was 6th grade or so. I was astonished how one book can misconstrue the reality so much to an extent that the aggressors and the victims of [sic] are reversed.

(Sung 2012)

1. Introduction

In 2005, *Yoko Iyagi* [Yoko's story], the Korean translation of *So Far from the Bamboo Grove* (Watkins 1986, hereafter *SFFBG*), was introduced to the South Korean book market by Munhakdongne, an established South Korean publishing house. *SFFBG* is a fictionalised autobiography based on the childhood memories of the author, Yoko Kawashima Watkins. First published in the US in April 1986 by Beech Tree books, it is the personal story of an eleven-year-old Japanese girl named Yoko who lived in a bamboo grove in Nanam, a town in the northern part of Korea which at the time was occupied by Japan. The main plot follows the journey of a Japanese family from Korea to their native Japan: as it becomes clear that Japan is losing WWII, Yoko and her mother and sister flee from Korea, escaping by train and on foot. Experiencing gunfire, disease, poverty and starvation, they witness scenes of death and violence and Koreans committing unspeakable acts of vengeance against the Japanese, including rape. Disguised as males to avoid rape at the hands of the Koreans, they finally arrive in Busan (a seaport city located in southern Korea), where they board a ferry to Kyoto, Japan. After arriving in Japan, they must learn again how to survive in a country ravaged by war.

Written in English by a Japanese author, the book received wide recognition in the US shortly after its publication in 1986. It soon became a popular educational text for primary and middle school pupils in several states and it also appeared on the recommended reading list of schools in California, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, and Texas. However, in 2006, Korean-American communities in Boston, which has a large population of Korean-Americans, decided to boycott it, arguing that it misled young students by constructing a 'good Japanese-bad Korean' binary by portraying Koreans as aggressors and Japanese as victims. This movement was triggered by Alex Huh, the then seventh-grade Korean-American student who refused to attend the class when *SFFBG* was distributed as a textbook in the classroom, since she had become aware of Japanese brutality against colonized Korea through her visit to museums in South Korea. Soon after 'Parents for an Accurate Asian History Education' was set up and a protest letter was sent to the Massachusetts State Department of Education by the South Korean consulate in Boston. This boycott ultimately led to the removal in 2008 of the book from some US curricula. For example, in California, *SFFBG* was unlisted from the curriculum thanks to the 'Korean Schools Association of Northern California' which extended the regional boycott to the whole state and also sent a protest letter to the California state Department of Education. In Maryland, a middle-school English teacher initiated this movement, resulting in the book being removed from curricula of more than 171 primary and middle schools. Others following suit in-

cluded states in New England. Nevertheless, the movement was not successful in Massachusetts, where the author of the book lives and delivers lectures.

The book has been “banned in China and Japan since its initial publication” (Park and Sohn 2007). Its ban was motivated by several lines in the book in which Yoko’s mother strongly criticises Japan for provoking the war and dissociates herself from Japanese military actions, including the attack on Pearl Harbor (Watkins 1986, 17). However, the Japanese translation of the book was soon available in the Japanese book market, and, in June 2013, the book became an Amazon Best Seller in Japan.¹ China banned the book because of anti-Japanese sentiment in the country. Historical accounts from WWII indicate that the Japanese military committed severe atrocities until 1945 in East Asia – particularly in China and Korea – and that the Japanese military planned, designed and enforced deliberate, long-term and systematic institutions to perpetrate these atrocities – such as Unit 731² and comfort women³ – during wartime. The Chinese were also victims of these brutalities, as the Nanjing Massacre (or Rape of Nanjing) indicates. These historical accounts – and on-going disputes over the ownership of islands situated between the two countries – continue to create tension between China and Japan. Considering that *SFFBG* has been banned from translation and publication in China to date and that it was not translated into Japanese until 2013, it is notable that it was translated and introduced into the South Korean market in 2005 and had been well received until 2007, when its publication and translation were called into question by a South Korean public TV programme and, as will be discussed in Sections 4 and 5, the novel soon became the target of criticism. After having tried in vain to defend the book, the South Korean publisher decided to withdraw all

1. <https://web.archive.org/web/20130607092730/http://www.amazon.co.jp/gp/bestsellers/books> [last accessed 16 July 2015].

2. Unit 731 was a notorious covert biological and chemical warfare unit of the Imperial Japanese Army that undertook lethal human experimentation during WWII. The victims of Unit 731 were primarily Korean, Chinese, Mongolian, and Russian prisoners, but some African-Americans and Europeans were also tortured. They included men, women, children and infants, who were subjected to a wide range of inhuman experiments, including vivisection without anaesthesia, frostbite, amputation to study blood loss, and similar brutalities.

3. Comfort women were women who were systematically coerced, kidnapped, and forced to become sex slaves to the Japanese military during WWII. Many of the women were from occupied countries, including Korea, China, Philippines, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. There has been a long-standing dispute over this issue between South Korea and Japan, in which the former comfort women have demanded an official apology from the Japanese government. Japan, however, has consistently and perversely denied the historical record of human trafficking and sexual servitude. For more details, visit www.womenandwar.net/contents/home/home.nx [last accessed 16 July 2015].

copies from bookstores in 2007 since the social pressure became so intense (Lim 2014, 41).⁴ Although the book – and its translation – has been the target of much criticism, *SFFBG* has been neglected by scholars of translation studies.⁵

Based on the assumption that translation is a complex and multi-layered process that involves not only translators but also other key actors, including publishing houses, this study aims to identify the strategies adopted by these mediators to reframe the narrative of the source text (ST) in order to make it suitable and acceptable to the receiving culture, and to examine the ways in which, and the extent to which, the reception of the Korean target text (TT) was changed when another layer of a frame was provided. Adopting the model of analysis elaborated by Baker (2006) and drawing upon the concept of framing and the work of French critic Gérard Genette (1997), the main emphasis of the analysis will be on the paratextual framing and reframing of the Korean TT. This article begins by discussing the key theoretical concepts, ‘narrative’ and ‘frame.’

2. Narrative and frame

Stories are fundamental to human interaction. Human beings instinctively create and tell stories, ranging from short accounts of trivial personal incidents to epic tales about significant events in human history. Since the 1960s, narrative theory has penetrated, and been embraced by, almost every discipline and profession. Although the study of narrative has been undertaken across many disciplines and definitions of narrative have consequently multiplied, the concept of narrative employed in this study is informed by more general sociological theories of narrative.

In the social sciences, narratives are stories that people tell to make sense of reality. They are distinct from other forms of discourse because the “events are selected, organized, connected and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience” (Riessman and Quinney 2005, 394). Social science scholars focus on for whom, how, and why facts are assembled, events are narrativised, and stories are constructed, in addition to addressing which events are included in the narration and which are excluded. This approach considers narratives as social behaviours

4. This publishing house is one of the imprints of the Munhakdongne Publishing Group, which was founded in 1993. The company has continued to develop and owned 23 imprints at the time of writing.

5. To the best of my knowledge, no significant movement has been initiated by translation studies scholars in South Korea in relation to *SFFBG* and its South Korean translation. None of them have protested about the removal of the translations from bookstores; nor have any fallen in line with national narratives.

that function as a means of social control and resistance. Because narratives are contextualised and produced in contexts in which humans are already embedded, they influence our behaviour – functioning specifically as mechanisms of social control – and play a crucial role in identity construction. Narratives are therefore frequently called ‘social acts.’ This understanding of narratives was proposed by Baker (2006) in her monograph investigating the way in which narratives and translated narratives are used to “legitimize their version of events” (1).

In translation studies, an approach informed by narrative theory has allowed scholars to examine the translation product – and the entire process of translation – from a more holistic perspective, as a translation may involve the complete repackaging of the original text to be (un)favourably received in a new setting of conflicting ideologies. Because narratives are interactive and social, and because individual episodes are embedded in a larger narrative and individual events are interconnected, analysts employing this approach examine a single text and its relationship to other texts or events, contextualising it. Although the mechanics of translation are still important, purely linguistic analysis under this approach gives way to a wider analytical method in which non-verbal elements that have largely been ignored – such as images – can also be examined. When the translation process is understood as complex and multi-layered, the contribution of a translator cannot be isolated or separated from that of other agents involved in the production process, as will be discussed in Sections 4 and 5 particularly on decisions of paratextual reframing by editors and publishers.

As a more flexible form of conceptual analysis that allows scholars to view translation in a larger context, the narrative approach has proven useful for investigating the impact of translation on a society, thus shedding new light on translation research. In this regard, scholars have proposed a variety of narrative typologies, but this study follows Baker’s original analytical model of narrative theory, since it offers a valuable theoretical insight into how translation is used to construct a reality, particularly in conflict situations, and it also allows us to look beyond the immediate local narrative by contextualising it in the broader set of narratives in which it is embedded (Baker 2006, 4). The application of narrative theory to translation studies has been thoroughly discussed in a series of works by Baker (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010a, 2010b), and particularly extensively in Baker (2006), in which Somers and Gibson (1994), Somers (1997) and Bruner (1991) constitute her major sources. Since Baker (2006), narrative-informed approaches have regularly been exploited in translation studies (e.g., Baldo 2008; Boéri 2008; Al-Herthani 2009; Al-Sharif 2009; Harding 2009, 2012a, 2012b).

Framing is a concept that Baker (2006) adopted in translation studies to discuss how narratives elaborated in a text are embedded in larger narratives and how translational choices contribute to shape the world around us. The term ‘frame’

has been used by scholars in various fields of study, but the concept can be traced back to the work of Goffman (1974, 345): “an individual’s framing of activity establishes meaningfulness for him.” Since Goffman’s work, various scholars have defined frame in subtly different ways. However, this study is not concerned with distinguishing between ‘schema,’ ‘framing,’ and ‘frames.’ Instead, it focuses specifically on the way in which the reception of a narrative can be shifted when another layer of frame is added in the process of translation. It thus understands ‘frame’ as it is used by scholars in social movement studies and translation studies; broadly, “a frame is an interpretive lens through which people attribute sense to, and make sense of, their world” and that can “double up as narratives in their own right” (Baker 2008, 23). As Al-Herthani (2009, 52) puts it, “the power of frames lies in their ability to influence others’ understanding of events by highlighting some aspects of those events and downplaying others.” In this sense, framing is “an active strategy that implies agency and by means of which we consciously participate in the construction of reality” (Baker 2006, 106).

As a text is mediated in a new receiving culture of conflicting ideologies, the context around a translation also shifts; and because narratives are closely linked with the society in which they are positioned, several discursive and framing strategies can be employed simultaneously. Baker (2006) describes a wide range of devices that are used to frame and reframe narratives when translating and interpreting in various contexts; this article focuses on paralinguistic devices that include an array of elements, such as intonation and typography, visual resources such as colour and image (Baker 2007, 158). These paralinguistic elements are crucial since they guide the interpretation of a text, projecting a narrative from a particular angle. Genette argues that “a text without a paratext does not exist” (1997, 3) and that “this fringe of the printed text, in reality, controls the whole reading” (1991, 261). Genette divides paratexts into peritexts and epitexts. The former includes texts around or within the text itself, such as titles, notes, the foreword, blurbs, and cover; the latter includes texts physically distant from the volume, such as interviews, reviews, letters, and diaries.

Paratexts play a crucial role in “fram[ing] the translation to present it to the reader and indicate how texts and their authors may be perceived in translation”; similarly, “decisions made in the presentation of the translated text are representative of the narrative frames in which the target culture positions the text, and indicate how texts and their authors may be perceived in translation” (Summers 2012, 172–173). As Al-Sharif (2009, 75) notes, “these framing devices are not usually controlled by translators alone, since editors and publishers also have an important input in the process of selecting and reframing translated material to satisfy their own interests and fulfil specific purposes.” As I will demonstrate below in Sections 4 and 5, *Yoko Iyagi*, the Korean translation of *SFFBG*, was also heavily

framed by mediators – including publishers, editors and a translator – through the careful use of labelling in the text's paratexts, and it also exemplifies how the reception of the same ST can be changed in a target culture when it is wrapped in a different set of paratextual material.

3. Narrativising *SFFBG* in the US

In the English-speaking world, particularly in the US, *SFFBG* is regarded as a remarkable true story of courage and survival. Since its publication in 1986, it has won several awards, including the Literary Lights for Children Award given by the Associates of the Boston Public Library in 1998; Watkins was also given the Courage of Conscience Award by the Peace Abbey, and the book became one of sixty books recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Education for grades 5 through 8 (Walach 2008, 17). As mentioned earlier in the introduction, it later became an educational text for primary and middle school pupils in other US states and has been read by millions of students across the whole country and around the world to date. For example, it has been used as a textbook in some schools in Africa and several international schools in South Korea (J. Lee 2007).⁶ Although "it is inconceivable that American teachers today would assign a book that glossed over Germany's oppressive occupation of continental Europe or the atrocities committed in the concentration camps," *SFFBG* has ironically achieved "precisely this kind of easy entry and unquestioning acceptance into middle school classrooms" (Walach 2008, 18).

Acceptance of the book in the US may have been possible for three reasons. Firstly, the American narrative associated with WWII-era Japan largely centres on the dropping of the atomic bombs, which enables the narrative of the Japanese as victims to be maximised when the horrors and tragedies of the war are told through the mouth of a little protagonist who is placed on the high ground of victimhood as an innocent fragile and pitiful victim of chance (S. A. Lee 2007; Lim 2010; Shibata 2016). There are of course co-existing American public narratives – shared stories of individuals or events that are more encompassing than personal stories – about Japanese aggression relating to other events, such as the attack on Pearl Harbor, the maltreatment of Americans in Okinawa and of Australian and British prisoners of war (POW) elsewhere in the Far East. However, according to Lim (2010, 6), who examines a transnational history of "victimhood nationalism" and "history reconciliation" in East Asia, Japanese victimhood is further reinforced by statements such as "Japan as 'the only nation ever to have been atom-bombed'

6. All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

could enjoy a privileged position in the competition for victimhood,” and the frequent comparison by American writers of “Auschwitz and Hiroshima as terrible twin symbols of manmade mass death.” Even Watkins herself devoted half of a page in the self-authored *SFFBG* study guide (Watkins 2000) to a detailed historical account of Japan’s devastation by two atomic bombs. In particular, delivering the narrative of civilian victimisation and survival in the first-person makes readers empathise more easily with their suffering. *SFFBG* is mostly narrated from the viewpoint of Yoko, a civilian child, with the exception of several chapters that follow the quest of Hideyo – her brother – to reunite with his family. The choice of these viewpoints has meant that Japanese aggression against Americans in Pearl Harbor and Okinawa has been too easily glossed over and Japanese responsibilities for the maltreatment of POWs cancelled out, whilst American readers were reminded of the damage inflicted by the US on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Second, the larger context in which WWII-era Japan is situated prominently is absent from the book, and the text itself does not offer insights into the atrocities committed by Imperial Japan or into any other additional context; thus Carter Eckert, professor of Korean history at Harvard University, argues that *SFFBG*’s story is incomplete, if not distorted, due to the absence of the larger context (Eckert 2006). US narratives of WWII-era Japan tend to omit the atrocities committed during WWII by the Japanese military in neighbouring countries: the ferocious acts of aggression committed by Japan against its neighbours are largely absent from this narrative (Walach 2008, 17). Minear, who surveyed twenty-four American teachers in order to examine the dominant narratives of American schools’ teaching about the Pacific War and post-war Japan, argues that it leaves out too much (Masalski 2000, 273). She explains that the meta-narrative – “a super narrative that cuts across geographical and national boundaries and directly impacts the lives of every one of us, in every sector of society” (Baker 2005, 7) in which “we are embedded as contemporary actors in history” (Somers and Gibson 1994, 61) – in all of the texts under investigation, which are used in American schooling, highlighted “slow American response to Japanese aggression, Japan’s surprise attack at Pearl Harbor [...] Japan’s fanatical resistance, Hiroshima, surrender, peace, and friendship” (Masalski 2000, 274). Scholars like Lim (2010) argue that even the term ‘Pacific War’ downplayed Japanese military aggression against its Asian neighbours. Furthermore, “Japan’s imperialist policies in Korea and its consequences are elided” in Watkins’s lectures and her books (S. Lee 2007, 86), and Watkins makes no attempt to offer “insight into the role of Imperial Japan as a long-term occupier of Korea, perpetrator of Unit 731,” and the coercer of comfort women (Walach 2008, 20). In *SFFBG*, for example, Watkins explains that “the Koreans were part of the Japanese empire but they hated the Japanese and were

not happy about the war” (9) but offers no explanation for the Koreans’ attitude. Goodreads user Angry Kitty explains,

if [the book is] taught without a little history, the Koreans look like total barbarians. [I]t’s unfortunate that at the end of the book, there is a note [by the publisher] saying that it’s not important to know of the history of Korea to understand the book.⁷ [T]hat’s kind [of] true, but also very false [...] [I] think that guilt about the atomic bombs may have something to do with this.⁸

Similarly, Lisa Yoneyama, a professor at the University of California, San Diego, questions whether “a story about the struggles of a girl from a Nazi family in The Netherlands escaping back to Germany immediately after World War II [would] have been published as unquestioningly as *So Far From the Bamboo Grove*” (Choi 2007). She argues that:

Yoko’s Story closely resembles that of *A Little Princess* (a 1905 children’s novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett). Both have the backdrop of a colonialist history that is not American and leave the impression that the United States is not connected with the history of colonial rule. That’s why mainstream American society appreciated *Yoko’s Story* as a book depicting the suffering of war. In this book, the historical background of Japanese colonial rule in Korea is wiped clean. This is related to the lack of historical awareness in the United States of their own colonial domination of others. (Sakovich 2008)

Thirdly, in her lectures to students, Watkins positions herself within a meta-narrative of survival against the odds and constructs herself as a voice calling for an end to war. Adopting a humanistic posture within a meta-narrative of this type in her visits and lectures, she has actively engaged in promoting her book as a book about peace. As a result, she has successfully positioned herself in meta-narratives of humanism and has gained pseudonyms such as the ‘Anne Frank of the East’ and ‘the angel of peace in a kimono’ (Voluntary Agency Network of Korea 2012). It is worth mentioning here that Beech Tree Books, the publisher of *SFFBG*, also published *Anne Frank: Life in Hiding*, in 1993. Her attempts at this re-positioning continue in her *SFFBG* study guide, in which she introduces herself as follows (Watkins 2000, 9, emphasis added):

In addition to writing about her experiences, Watkins also gives lectures *calling for an end to war*. She visits many schools, answering questions and giving advice to students. Watkins tells students *that even though they suffer, they should be grateful*

7. “You do not need to know Korean history to be caught up in this story” (Watkins 1986, 102).

8. http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/120728.So_Far_from_the_Bamboo_Grove [last accessed 7 April 2015].

because suffering can make them better people. "All wisdom comes from suffering," she says.

Even in her sequels, including *My Brother, My Sister and I* (1994), Watkins's subjectivity is "consistently constructed in terms of victimhood" (S. Lee 2007), whereas the voices of the Koreans, the ethnic others of this narrative, are muted.

4. Framing *SFFBG* through translation

On its publication in 2005, *Yoko Iyagi*, the Korean translation of *SFFBG*, initially received lukewarm responses from the Korean media, and reviews were neither enthusiastic nor critical. The tone of the internet book reviews by South Korean readers was largely positive. It was, indeed, regarded more positively as a 'touching' human story. *The Dong-A Ilbo* introduced it as a "story that shows special humanism in the sense that it tells how the Japanese felt when Japan collapsed during the war and that it shows much affection for Koreans, which has never been treated in literary works to date" (Dong-A Ilbo 2005). The review goes on to describe the story as the "bildungsroman of a fragile little girl caught in a swirl of gigantic history, growing up like a dandelion amidst the ruins thanks to her love and affection for her family" (ibid.).

No issues were raised about this book and translation for almost two years until 2007 when the South Korean TV programme called *Great Inheritance 74434* placed a new layer of frame, using as a subtitle, "Shock! Yoko's Story, Are Koreans Evil?" This programme sparked much controversy and outrage among the South Korean audience (see Section 5 for more detail).⁹ However, the South Korean publisher knew that the *SFFBG* narrative clashes with Korean public narratives about WWII. The author, the translator, and even the publisher held a series of interviews with South Korean mainstream media outlets in which they explained that they felt it to be meaningful to present it as a book that offers a different perspective; they "embarked on and launched the Korean translation in an attempt to offer a more nuanced, balanced approach to understanding the war to Korean teenagers through Yoko, another victim of the war" (Kim 2007). The facts that the mediators were all well aware of the conflicting narrative featured in the ST but that the South Korean translation had been well received for two years, without any attempt to problematize it, logically suggest that several discursive translation and framing strategies used in the process of mediating *SFFBG* for the Korean context were successful before another layer of frame was placed by the South Korean TV

9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szjZ3lBLfIk> [last accessed 7 April 2015] until 3:10.

programme, leading to the frequent reporting and discussion in a number of news reports, blogs, and forums of various shifts found in the translation. This section will thus discuss these various discursive framing strategies, with a view to identifying any paratextual and textual shifts.

The contrastive analysis of ST and TT reveals subtle textual shifts in the book proper. A few examples include the omission of ‘Yokaren,’ which in the English ST Yoko’s brother has decided to join: “one night Hideyo [Yoko’s brother] told Mother he had made a decision: to join Yokaren, the student army” (16). Yokaren was initially an air force training programme, but it became a kamikaze programme as the war drew to a close. Kamikaze is the Japanese term for Japanese ‘suicide’ pilots, who first appeared in Pearl Harbor during WWII. They were recruited because Japan was by then short of money and oil and could not provide enough oil to travel both ways between Japan and Hawaii. This word can spark direct emotional responses from those with either first-hand or second-hand experiences of the war. Yokaren is introduced as a “student army” in the ST and is again simply and naively translated as “학도병” [a student soldier] in the Korean TT, a neutral or even positively connotated emotional word in the Korean target culture. The Korean dictionary defines a “학도병” as a student soldier or a group of students who joined an army (Naver Online Korean Dictionary 2015). According to the Doosan Online Encyclopaedia (2015), however, this term also refers to “patriotic student volunteers who joined the war to guard South Korea against the North Korean invasion during the Korean war, but it also refers to the young Korean students who were conscripted by the Japanese army during the WWII.”¹⁰ Thus, in the Korean context, this lexical detail arouses the audience’s sympathy by eliciting heart-breaking images of patriotic young students who bravely took up arms to fight for the country and of the students who were forcibly drafted into the Japanese army.

Another example of a shift in translation relates to the change in the use of the conjunction *but*, which results in a huge shift in the meaning of a crucial sentence. The English ST sentence “[t]he Koreans were part of the Japanese empire *but* they hated the Japanese and were not happy about the war” (8, emphasis added) is given in the Korean TT as “조선은 일본제국의 지배 아래 있었다. 그래서 조선인들은 일본인들을 미워했으며, 전쟁에 대해서도 달가워하지 않았다” [Korea was under the rule of the Japanese empire. *Therefore* Koreans hated the Japanese, and were not happy about the war] (p. 27, emphasis added). Whereas the English ST naively presupposes that Koreans should be happy about the war and friendly to Japanese people only because they were ‘part of the Japanese empire,’

10. <http://terms.naver.com/entry.nhn?docId=1160860&cid=40942&categoryId=31748> [last accessed 14 July 2015].

thereby silencing the voice of Koreans who were against the war and who suffered under the colonial rule of Japan, the Korean TT explains that Koreans did not like Japanese because they were controlled by them: the former may not sound convincing and not acceptable to South Korean audience, the latter seems to be more compelling. This subtle change in translation produced two different versions of the same story, removing the potentially offensive remarks in the TT.

However, apart from lexical shifts of this kind (i.e., changes in a single word), no significant syntactic or stylistic intratextual reframing is found. This means that, although there was no marked attempt to renarrate or reframe the ST in the new receiving culture, the TT, whose narrative still clashes with that elaborated in South Korea, had been accepted by South Korean society. This suggests that the paratextual framing strategies employed by the publishing house to tailor it to the narratives of the target society were indeed successful.

As Al-Herthani (2009) acknowledges, paratexts make ample use of the visual devices, including the cover image. The cover image is as vital as the title because this visual device (i) summarises and visualises content, (ii) places the text within a certain frame through which it is meant to be perceived, and (iii) is one of the easiest and most concise ways of conveying a message to prospective readers. Baker (2010a, 353) also notes that “the cover functions as a frame in that it anticipates and anchors our interpretation of the narrative elaborated in the book.” In many cases, the cover image of the ST is not used for the TT. The cover of *SFFBG* features three women, among whom is a small girl. They are wearing traditional Japanese clothing and are being chased by armed soldiers. Attacks can also be seen in the distance: several bombs dropped from three airplanes and flames are featured in the cover. Interestingly enough, this is identical to the ‘Japanese as victims’ narrative in the Japanese mainstream media in Japan, whereby “the suffering of the innocent civilians of the homelands, i.e., the sight of the burnt wastelands and the women and children fleeing in flames” is accentuated (Shibata 2016). This stands in stark contrast to the peritextual features of the Korean translation, *Yoko Iyagi*: the front cover image of the Korean TT makes minimal reference to Japan. The focus is shifted away from the three women onto one girl whose nationality is concealed. She wears a neutral outfit whose style resembles South Korean male student uniforms from the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, this girl’s face shows a faint smile. Standing in the right corner of the frame, she appears to look at something in the distance. The colours of the cover are white and bright, suggesting innocence and purity. This impression is amplified by the petals scattered over the blank space.

Back covers frequently contain images, but the back covers of *SFFBG* and *Yoko Iyagi* are reserved for blurbs. A blurb is another device playing a pivotal role in reframing or shaping readers’ interpretations of a translated text. A blurb is “likely

to influence the reception of the book and pre-empt the reader's interpretation of its content" because it is "one of the first elements to be encountered by the reader" (Al-Herthani 2009, 133). Whereas the back cover of the English ST offers a short description of the story and defines it as "a true story of courage and survival," the blurbs placed at the top of the back cover of the Korean TT state that the book is a curricula must-read in the US and that it describes Korea before and after Korean independence through the eyes of a Japanese girl. The middle and bottom sections of the back cover list the nominations and awards the book has received and features a series of succinct testimonials from magazines, such as "a marvelous story based on a true story" and "misery of war, presented in clear and touching writing." Notably, an interrogative sentence, written in a comparatively larger font size, occupies the middle of the back cover of the Korean TT. Clearly designed to draw attention, it reads, "Why did the Japanese and Chinese governments ban this book from publication?" This question – placed between the two statements "describes Korea before and after independence" and "this book is banned from publication in Japan" – is enough to mislead readers into assuming that the book tells a story that is sensitive enough to upset the Japanese government, which ruled Korea from 1910 to 1945.

Titles are also significant, primarily because the main stories and ideas of the text are concentrated, preserved and represented in the title. Baker (2006) also notes that titles can be used very effectively to (re)frame narratives in translation. In the case of *SFFBG* and *Yoko Iyagi*, the shift of the frame is clear, as the vague and abstract focus of the ST (i.e., so far from the bamboo grove) is transformed into the specific one of an intimately personal story (i.e., Yoko's story). In addition, a map on the first page of the ST showing the geographical position of Japan and Korea does not appear in the Korean TT. Notably, part of the western Pacific Ocean is clearly labelled the "Sea of Japan" in the original map in the ST, which would have provoked much controversy in South Korea had it been included in the TT. In South Korea, this sea is known as the "East Sea," and there has been a long-standing dispute in the United Nations over this body of water's official name, and the controversy remains unsettled. Many mass media outlets, such as *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, refer to the area as "the body of water between Japan and Korea" or alternate between the two designations (the East Sea/Sea of Japan). *CNN* was strongly criticised for referring to the East Sea as the Sea of Japan, and South Koreans remain outraged by this reference.

Another attempt to shift the frame of the narratives of the ST is found in the preface to *SFFBG*. A preface is another site for framing, and the "notes from the publisher" that appeared in the preface of the ST are replaced by a letter from the author in the TT. In the English ST, a total of eight pages are devoted to the "notes from the publisher," three pages of which offer the historical account of the

background of colonised Korea, and five pages the explanations of several terms appearing in the book, such as “the Thirty-eighth Parallel,” and more detailed historical background to some of the scenes and incidents mentioned in the book, such as a description of Korea’s independence celebrations in Chapter Five. Some of the historical accounts provided in the first three pages contain controversial and potentially problematic comments such as “[e]arly in the seventeenth century, Korea began to be dominated by China” (177), and “Korea no longer existed as a nation as the US and other nations withdrew their diplomatic missions from Seoul” (178). The following statements by Theodore Roosevelt were also considered to be controversial: “Japan was allowed to convert Korea into a protectorate,” and “Japan’s claim to a ‘special interest’ in Korea” (ibid.); hence, all these were completely removed in the Korean TT. The latter example is particularly problematic in the Korean context, since they imply that Japan was ‘given a right’ by other countries to control Korea, whereas the narrative accepted in Korea is that Japan forcibly took the peninsula and illegitimately controlled the country. G. C. Lee (2007), who offers a detailed discussion on the removals and shifts of emphasis in the Korean translation of *SFFBG*, also argues that these lines can be interpreted as implying that Japan’s control of Korea was legitimate and that it had been acquired as a result of competition between the ‘great powers.’ In a 2007 interview with *JoongAng Ilbo*, a South Korean mainstream media outlet, the publisher and editor explained that they deleted the “notes from the publisher” section because it represents the American publisher’s perspectives, and that a Korean audience would not require them. The deletion of these notes indeed contributes to the genre shift to a great extent from a personal narrative – narratives that individuals circulate about the self – to a novel. While the factual account of events and detailed historical background provided in the ST give weight to the author’s claim that it is a true story, which made it an autobiography, the South Korean publisher’s removal of eight pages-long peritexts results in the book being treated and interpreted more as a novel than as an autobiography.

Accordingly, the lines appearing in the “notes from the publisher,” which read as follows: “1945 was a bad time for a Japanese girl to be living in northern Korea. More than ever, the Koreans resented the Japanese who had taken over their country and ruled it as their own. [...] she [Yoko] would be caught in the middle of a real-life story – so grim, so tragic,” was also completely removed in the TT, and replaced by a letter from the author, in which she clearly defines the book as “a book about peace” and positions herself on the side of Korean readers:

When I told the Korean students that “I have never treated Koreans badly, but would you feel better if I make an apology to you on behalf of the Japanese government?” I could see that they melted at my words; so I bowed deeply to

apologise to the Korean students there. As soon as I made an apology to them, a tear came down onto my face because I wondered if these students can understand how much I love Korea and Koreans. I told them the story about my dear close Korean friends, and [...] I also explained [to the Korean students] how cruelly the Japanese military government treated people. [...] the Japanese government made many people's lives miserable, and caused lots of pain.

The paratextual framing used to legitimise Watkins's version of the story in the Korean translation continues in the translator's note, which appears at the end of the TT. The translator's note is another appropriate site for reframing. In this note, the participants are repositioned: the Korean translator, Hyeon-Joo Yoon, tries to ensure that this book is understood as a novel produced by one who deeply sympathises with Koreans by devoting a significant part of the note to advocating for Watkins. Yoon explains in the translator's note that Watkins has strongly criticised the Japanese government for whitewashing its nation's wartime history. Yoon also introduces the author's claim that her father served six years in prison in Japan because he had said that the Japanese government should respect Korean culture and that he disagreed with Japan's colonial policy, which later was challenged by others, who argued that he had been sentenced because he was a war criminal.

As a result, as Al-Sharif (2009, 78–79) notes in his analysis of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) and its translation programme, “the resulting image established jointly by the title and introductory material brings to the foreground a particular theme that guides readers through the process of engaging with the text.” This kind of framing of the text continues in the epitexts, particularly in an interview with the author conducted in 2005. In this interview, Watkins strongly criticised the Japanese government for its constant denial of the Japanese military's wartime atrocities. She also claimed that her father was sent to prison because he was against the then-Japanese government's policies (Kwon 2005). While emphasising that the Japanese were also victims of the war, she ascribed all the brutalities and cruelties to the Japanese government and military. These peritexts and epitexts greatly contribute to distancing the author from the Japanese government, framing her as a humanistic figure whose book is affectionate towards the Koreans.

5. When a new layer of frame is placed: Anger over the reversal of victims and victimisers

These reframing strategies ultimately failed, however. Watkins ended up being branded as an untruthful author and the daughter of a war criminal in South Korea – in stark contrast to her reputation as the ‘Anne Frank of East Asia’ in the US – when a new layer of frame was placed by a South Korean media outlet.

In 2007, a South Korean TV programme entitled *Great Inheritance* 74434, a sub-genre of the educational TV programme aired by the South Korean public broadcasting system (KBS), discussed the Korean translation of *SFFBG*. Coming with the subtitle ‘충격! 요코이야기, 한국인은 악마...?’ [Shock! Yoko’s Story, Are Koreans Evil?], this programme reminded the Korean audience of the dominant Korean public narrative of Korean victimisation by showing disturbing photos of comfort women, burnt houses, and captured Korean prisoners of war. It argued that *SFFBG* manipulated history and that it turned the victimisers into victims, adding that no one had problematised the translation of the book in South Korea. The South Korean TV programme not only uses the very extreme noun “evil” in its title (this word was never used to refer to Koreans in *SFFBG*) but it also intentionally ignores the fact that *SFFBG* and its Korean translation feature the narratives of Hideyo, Yoko’s brother, in which Koreans appear as ‘good guys’ who help him survive, nurse him back to health, and treat him like their son.

Once this new frame was placed on this book, not surprisingly, the translation was soon caught in the crossfire of various Korean media outlets. The South Korean media point out that the book transgressed the dominant war victim narratives of Korea, while providing the audience with counter-narratives, and began to actively participate in shaping and framing *SFFBG* as a threat to dominant domestic public narratives of South Korea. Soon thereafter, *SFFBG*-related narratives of varying scopes began to emerge with increasing speed. In addition to a number of independent personal narratives, public narratives resonating with the South Korean narrative – ‘we’ (Koreans) are the victims and ‘they’ (Japanese) are to blame for those brutalities – were brought to the fore. The personal narratives of victims of the Japanese colonisation of Korea went viral through personal blogs and websites, and internet-based petitions and protests against the book and the translation followed, for instance a YouTube video entitled “The Truth of Yoko Iyagi” posted by VANK (Voluntary Agency Network of Korea).

The narratives produced in South Korea were not limited to the discussion of *SFFBG* but were extended to, and intertwined with, other narratives about Japanese imperialism, including those about the comfort women and Unit 731. For example, *The Dong-A Ilbo*, a mainstream, right-wing Korean newspaper outlet, conducted an interview in 2007 with Park, the Korean-American who initiated the protest against the book in the US, in which clear reference is made to Unit 731. In the interview, Park explained that *SFFBG* was on the compulsory reading list for seventh-grade students and that she had thoroughly researched the author and the book to determine whether the historical account was distorted. The interview emphasises that Park found evidence that Watkins’s father was involved with Unit 731 (G. H. Lee 2007).

OhmyNews, a left-wing online newspaper outlet, also mentioned *SFFBG* in a recent interview with Dr. Ahn, a Korean-American OB/GYN and the granddaughter of a patriotic female nationalist who received a presidential citation. The point of the interview was to emphasise the dire need for books about the Japanese colonial period and Korean resistance and for stories about female independent activists written in English to educate Korean-Americans about these events. However, the report also discussed *Rape of Nanjing* by Iris Chang and *SFFBG*, which Dr. Ahn had read. The article reporting the interview also featured a disturbing picture of two Japanese second lieutenants with a caption explaining that they were betting on who would behead the most Chinese in Nanking (Lee 2012). Other news reports also showed a member of a Japanese conservative group holding the cover of *SFFBG* in front of a group of South Korean comfort women holding a rally in Osaka, Japan.¹¹ As a result, *SFFBG* was also associated with the comfort women.

Other news articles, interviews, blogs and editorials in South Korea discussing *SFFBG* also questioned the credibility of the author. Watkins explained in a 2005 interview that everything in the novel is true with the exception of two details: the fact that her brother was unable to return to Japan for three years (not one year) and the names of the Korean family who helped her brother (Kwon 2005). Her claim to truthfulness has been strenuously challenged by good evidence offered by scholars and news editorials and blogs who engaged in historical fact-checking. For example, (i) 'the bamboo grove' in which the author claims to have lived in the Nanam area of North Korea, could not have grown at latitude 42° (Yoo 2006); (ii) the book states that Yoko's family left Nanam in July 1945 due to a US airstrike, but there is no record of a US attack in that area in July 1945; and (iii) *SFFBG* claims that Yoko, her mother and sister had to wear the uniforms of dead Korean communists to avoid being raped but the fact is that the Korean Communist Party was not established until 8 February 1948. However, there are counter-arguments, also: *sasa*, a genus of running bamboo, is distinguished for hardiness in winter, and Hamheung, where Yoko lived, is relatively warm in winter due to the influence of the East Sea; and the record shows that there was an airstrike in Cheongjin, North Korea, thus it is possible that Yoko, who lived in Hamheung, witnessed a bomber flying towards Cheongjin.

In addition, South Koreans also claimed that unethical, dehumanising issues in the book are either silenced or cleansed by depicting the Japanese as victims. As alluded to above, some claimed that Watkins's father was involved in Unit 731 (J. Lee 2007). Watkins was therefore "suspected and branded as a daughter of a Japanese war criminal, 'presumably' an officer of Unit 731 infamous for its

11. For example, <http://home.kppa.or.kr/news/view/?idx=1200> [last accessed 7 April 2015].

bio-warfare experiments” (Lim 2010, 4). Although it has yet to be proven, “this suspicion of itself was enough to suggest that Yoko, the daughter of a Japanese war criminal, could not be an innocent victim” (ibid.). Although fact-checks have been produced, and debates held, regarding the accuracy or otherwise of Watkins’s account, it is not the purpose of this article to either support or contest them. However, Aoyagi (2007), herself a Japanese national, who has studied the lives of Japanese living in Korea during that period, compares *SFFBG* and 北朝鮮からの生還 [A Return from North Korea], by Gukimura Hisasi (2006), who also fled from Nanam in North Korea where Yoko says she lived, when he was ten – a similar age to Yoko, argues that what Yoko claims to be facts in *SFFBG* conflicts with descriptions provided in other texts that she has analysed. In South Korea, *SFFBG* eventually became regarded as “a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and ‘narrative necessity’ rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness” (Bruner 1991, 4–5), and Watkins was constructed as an untruthful author whose book delivers a fabricated story and distorts the truth.

In an interview following the public outcry, the South Korean publisher explained that they had not anticipated the backlash because the book was published as a novel. In the translator’s note and in the interview, Yoon, the South Korean translator, explains her understanding of the book as a novel, not a history book; and she described the author as one who has positioned herself alongside, and sympathises with, the Korean point of view, and who criticises the Japanese government. However, their claims that they regarded the book as a “novel” conflict with the translator’s note in which she clearly says the book is “a true story” (292). The controversy over the translation eventually led to the complete removal of the translation from bookstore shelves. At the time of this writing, *SFFBG* is only available through few second-hand bookstores and in some national libraries in South Korea.

6. Conclusion

Watkins was informed in the 2005 interview with *The Dong-A Ilbo* that some Koreans had taken issue with *SFFBG* and *Yoko Iyagi*. These people argued that Koreans did not need to hear a story about the hardships that the Japanese had in surviving the end of the war when the Japanese government has not apologised to the Korean government for the torture and atrocities committed against Koreans. Watkins replied as follows:

[A]part from what has to be solved between the two governments, I wanted to describe the hardships I had to go through, as a young girl. I regard Korea as the hometown in my heart. The people who bullied and harassed Koreans were the

Japanese government and army. Japanese lay people were also harassed by the Japanese army. It was the world of the army (the army came into full power at that time). However, I think peace is not what the government and the army bring, but peace springs out of individual people understanding each other.

Although Watkins moves herself closer to Koreans, her answer also signals that she wrote this novel on an intimately personal level, believing that her literary work could reconcile individuals in Korea and Japan. This narrative delivered in *SFFBG*, the English ST, that the Japanese were the victims of the war, was easily aligned with the public narrative in the US about WWII-era Japan as a defeated country that was reeling from the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This poignant story of a young girl in dangerous circumstances has therefore been accepted as a story of courage and survival in the US. In contrast, *SFFBG* challenges the dominant public narratives in South Korea – the fixed ideas about Korean victimhood during the Japanese occupation and the WWII era.

Although Watkins's personal narrative, which involved the “mythologizing of ordinary Japanese in the public memory of the war as innocent victims of a system rather than accomplices in war atrocities” (Lim 2010, 6), was deemed unacceptable in South Korea and could not enter through the eye of the South Korean needle, the South Korean translator made little attempt to mediate or renarrate it in her translation, since she believed that it was worthwhile to offer a more nuanced perspective on the war. Yet, knowing that the original ST narrative could clash with the existing shared narratives of the target culture, the publisher tried to constrain readers' interpretation of the underlying narrative by employing a range of extensive and discursive paratextual framing devices designed to shift and fit the text into a society that does not share the same cultural sensibility. This paratextual framing was done through elements such as the colours used in the cover design, images, blurbs, the editor's note and the preface, which were drastically changed in the service of reframing the text and downplaying items deemed offensive to the target readership. As a result, although ST and TT are fairly close with no direct manipulative intervention as such in the translation itself, the ST is framed and reshaped in a way that conformed to the public narratives of the target culture through translation, thereby allowing the publisher to lend legitimacy to their own narratives (“offering a nuanced perspective on the war”); which, to a large extent, was acceptable to members of the target society, given that no issue had been raised until press and media outlets introduced negative concerns. However, this attempt has ultimately failed, as it provoked the ire of Korean readers when the South Korean media programme discussed the ST and TT from a very different angle. Paratexts such as images and a strongly worded title (“evil” Koreans) were effectively used to accentuate explicitly the main argument developed in the media

that ‘this book and its Korean translation turns victims into victimisers,’ which triggered the dissemination of various counter-narratives that undermine the narratives of the ST (and its translation). When the narrative in the TT proved highly controversial, the translation was eventually removed from bookstores.

This study has shown that a text can be heavily framed and reframed through translation in order to subscribe to different narratives, and that it can be dressed in different paratextual material aimed at different societies. It also adds further weight to the arguments that the same narrative indeed can be “framed in very different ways by different narrators,” and that the frame “undoubtedly plays an important role in defining the boundaries of the image (or narrative) and constrains our understanding or appreciation of it” (Baker 2008, 22–23); and that paratexts are a powerful means by which the text can gain currency and legitimacy, which links the text and everything else that surrounds it (Al-Herthani 2009, 60).

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