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**How Motion Sounds/Looks in Japanese and English:
Mimetics in the Typology of Motion Expressions**

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Abstract

This paper examines based on a video clip-aided experiment whether the high availability of mimetics (or sound-symbolic words, ideophones) and some other expressions in Japanese allows its speakers to express manner of motion as frequently as English speakers. Slobin and his colleagues' series of studies (e.g., Slobin 1996, 1997, 2000, 2004; Oh 2003) in the name of "thinking for speaking" have discussed that speakers of Talmy's (1991, 2000) satellite-framed languages (S-languages; e.g., Germanic, Slavic, Finno-Ugric) frequently express manner of motion while speakers of verb-framed languages (V-languages; e.g., Romance, Semitic, Basque, Korean) tend to omit such information. This contrast has been mainly observed in a picture book explanation task and novel translation analyses and ascribed to the lexical/syntactic fact that manner is most likely to be encoded in head verbs and adjuncts in S- and V-languages, respectively. Ohara (2002) and Sugiyama (2005) argue against this generalization, claiming that English-to-Japanese translations preserve manner information with great frequency with the help of mimetics and some other nonhead expressions. Our experiment revealed that this is also the case in a spontaneous speech production task of explaining the content of short video clips. Significantly, Japanese speakers expressed both auditory and visual manners of motion as frequently as English speakers even when they are not salient. The current study thus suggests that the thinking-for-speaking theory should accommodate the high accessibility of such special lexical resources in some languages, both satellite- and verb-framed, which might not necessarily be under the reign of the motion typology.