Cognitive Linguistic Approach in Translation Studies

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Objectives:
To present interdisciplinary analyses between Cognitive Linguistics and Translation Studies by using multiple translations from Japanese to English.

To describe the zero-encoding subject in Japanese in a comparison of multiple translations in terms of "Subjectivity" and "Construal Alternative". Japanese is a SOV and topic-prominence language.

Zero-encoding subject in Japanese:
(a) I am Jun Nakamura.
(b) O Nakamura Jun desu.

Cognitive Linguistics and Translation Studies:
Three major assumptions of Cognitive Linguistics (Credic and Crausde 2004:1):
(I) Language is not an autonomous cognitive faculty
(II) Grammar is conceptualization
(III) Knowledge of language emerges from language use.

Translation Studies: a comparative analysis between two or more different languages in terms of what is retained and what is lost from a source text to a target text. Two main streams of key concepts in Translation Studies:
- Word for Word: Foreignisation, Formal equivalence, Category shifts
- Sense for Sense: Domestication, Functional equivalence, Cultural Norms

Case Study: Translation Project of the song called "Sukiyaki".

The project was conducted in the course of Japanese and EnglishTranslation Techniques in Massey University in 2015 and 2016.

The procedure: Students in the course had to do the translation practice of a song called 'Sukiyaki' from Japanese to English and explain their Skopos and techniques to be used. Then they compared their own renditions with Yoko Ono's translation in the final examination of the course.

Students could prepare for their translations in advance.
Over the two years, 19 students were involved.

Subjectivity and Construal Alternatives in a Cognitive Linguistic approach:
The notion of "Subjectivity" and "Objectivity" proposed by Langacker:

1. Yamasita is sitting across from me.
2. You are sitting across from her.
3. Yamasita is sitting across from you.

When the involvement of an event is expressed in a language it is a 'subjective construal', if the speaker does not express a conceptual element of the event.
The clitic of the construals is: from (1) to (3) is from subjective to objective.
The "construal alternative" is a notion related to the speaker's construal of referents, and it asks how the speaker assigns the same referent with different construals (the speaker is a conceptualiser to construct the situation).

Considering a situation of the above examples, the speaker is talking about a photo which shows the speaker and Yamasita sitting across from the table, (1) and (2) are construal alternatives, one of which is selected based on more or less the speaker's subjectivity (subjective conceptualisation).

Discussions:
The song in the Japanese source text uses no personal pronouns. The first verse 'Ue o muite arukō' is the zero-encoding subject, which contains semantic ambiguity but also a possibility of multiple interpretations based on construal alternatives.

The clitic of the construals 'let us walk' is maximally subjective, because the conceptualiser construes himself/herself as the event with 'subjective' modality. On the other hand, 'you walk' is maximally objective because of exclusiveness of the conceptualiser outside the event. 'I walk' is relatively objective, because it is a monological style and the conceptualiser construes him/herself as the listener.

Four students construal 'let us walk' and two of them kept their construals as 'inclusive We mode', but the other two shifted their construals into 'monological I mode', which was the same construal as the other 15 students.

The significance of Ono Yoko's translation is explainable, not as the language but in the cognitive linguistic analysis. Firstly, she expressed a unique perspective in her construal ('exclusive You' mode), which has never been taken before. Secondly, she dramatically shifted her objective construal into her subjective construal ('exclusive We mode'). That is, the aesthetic effects of her work are not motivated by regular construals.

Concluding Remarks:
This case study demonstrates that the zero-encoding of the grammatical subject in Japanese can be reanalysed in terms of 'subjectivity' and 'construal alternatives' in multiple translations, instead of finding various types of equivalences utilised in a standard model of Translation Studies.

Previous research of Translation Studies has used a linguistic approach to analyse a relationship between a source text and a target text. Therefore, the main field of translation analyses are often considered as applied linguistics or construative literature.

However, the analysis of translation also has a plenty of potential for examining various linguistic hypotheses and concepts.

As a future direction, this case study demonstrates that Translation Analysis is not just for teaching language but can also be used for teaching linguistics.

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