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-prominent language.

Zero-encoding subject in Japanese:
- I am Jun Nakamura.
- 0 Nakamura Jun desu.

Cognitive Linguistics and Translation Studies:
Three major assumptions of Cognitive Linguistics (Coffey and Cruse 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 contrastive 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 → Foreignization → 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 English Translation 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.

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

(1) Vanessa is sitting across the table.
(2) Vanessa is sitting across the table from me.
(3) Vanessa is sitting across the table from Veronica.

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 cline of this notion is from (3) to (2) to (1) 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 construe the situation).

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

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

Previous research of Translation Studies has used a linguistic approach to analyze a relationship between a source text and a target text. Therefore, the main field of translation analyses are often considered as applied linguistics or contrastsive 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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an analysis of students’ approaches to translations.

The contrastive analysis of multiple translations: Sukiyaki song from Japanese to English

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