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 Alternatives’. Japanese is a SOV and topic-prominent language.

Zero-encoding subject in Japanese:

(a) I am Jun Nakamura.
(b) 0 Nakamura Jun desu.

Cognitive Linguistics and Translation Studies:

Three major assumptions of Cognitive Linguistics (Creef and Crane 2004:1):
1. Language is not an autonomous cognitive faculty
2. Grammar is conceptualization
3. 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

COP

Google translation:

I am walking with volition
So as not to spill tears
Spring day to remember
Lonely night
I walk towards the top
Counting the blurred stars
Happiness is in the clouds
Happiness lies beyond the sky
Happiness lies above the sky
Happiness may seem just out of sight
Beyond the clouds, try as we might

Subjunctivity and Construal Alternatives in a Cognitive Linguistic approach:

The notion of ‘subjunctivity’ and ‘objectivity’ proposed by Langacker:

1. Yoko is sitting across the table.
2. Yoko is sitting across the table from me.
3. Yoko is sitting across the table from Veronica.

When the involvement of an event is expressed in a language as ‘subjective construal’, if the speaker does not express a conceptual element of the event.

The ‘subjective’ construal is from 1 to 3 from subjective to objective.

The ‘subjective construal’ is a notion related to the speaker’s construal of reference, and it also how the speaker assigns the same referent with different construals.

Considering these examples, the speaker is talking about a photo which shows the speaker and Veronica sitting across the table. (1) and (2) are construal alternatives, one of which is selected based on more or less the speaker’s subjective construal (subjective conceptualization).

Discussions:
The song in the Japanese source text uses no personal pronouns. The first verse ‘I am walking with volition’ is the zero-encoding subject, which contains semantic ambiguity but also a possibility of multiple interpretations based on construal alternatives.

The example of the construal: ‘Let us walk’ is maximally subjective, because the conceptualiser constructs himself/herself inclusive of the event with ‘partitive’ trajectory. On the other hand, ‘you walk’ is maximally objective because of exclusiveness of the conceptualiser outside the events. ‘I walk’ is relatively objective, because it is a monological style and the conceptualiser construes himself as the line.

Four students construal ‘let us walk’ and two of them keep their construals in ‘inclusive We’ mode, but the other two shifted their construals into ‘monological I’ mode, which was the same construal as the other 13 students.

The significance of One Yokos’s translation is explainable, not as the language, but in the cognitive linguistic analysis. Firstly, she expressed a unique perspective in her construal (inclusive ‘You’ mode), which has never been taken before. Secondly, she crucially shifted her objective construal into her subjective construal (inclusive ‘We’ mode). That is, the aesthetic effects of her work are not minimized by regular constraints.

Previous linguistic approaches to the zero – encoding subject in Japanese:

The formal syntactic approach: grammatical omission, which means the absence of what there should be on a syntactic rule.

The functional/pragmatic approach: recoverability of deleting discourse information, which is based on the cooperative principles of the speech act participants.

Translation Analyses: depending on translation directions

From Japanese to English, addition of a subject
From English to Japanese, deletion of a subject

Both strategies are aimed for ‘domestication’ with functional equivalence.

Concluding Remarks:

This case study demonstrates that the zero-encoding of the grammatical subject in Japanese can be reanalysed in terms of ‘subjectivity’ and ‘contral alternatives’ in multiple translation, 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 analyse a relationship between a source text and a target text. Therefore, the main field of translation analysis are often considered as applied linguistics or construal 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.

Acknowledgement: Funding support from the School of Humanities, Massey University and the students in the course 242307, Massey University.

Ethics Approval: From Human Ethics Northern Committee in Massey University, NOR 16/11 Sukiyaki project: an analysis of students’ approaches to translations.

Bibliography:


(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.

Student 1

Let’s walk looking up
So as not to spill tears
Spring day to remember
Lonely night
Let’s walk towards the top
Counting the blurred stars
Happiness is in the clouds
Happiness lies beyond the sky
Happiness lies above the sky
Happiness may seem just out of sight
Beyond the clouds, try as we might

Student 2

I hold my head up as I walk
So as not to spill tears
Remembering those spring days
And the lonely nights
Let’s walk looking up
I count the stars with tearful eyes
Happiness lies above the sky
Happiness lies above the clouds

Transcribed by Yoko Ono (2014):

Let’s walk looking up
So as not to spill tears
Remembering those spring days
And the lonely nights
Let’s walk looking up
I count the stars with tearful eyes
Happiness lies above the sky
Happiness lies above the clouds

Beyond the clouds, try as we might

Source Text Domain

Let us walk
We walk
I walk

Target Text Domain

You walk

Shifts of Subjectivity

© indicates ‘Conceptualiser’

Subjectivity and Construal Alternatives

I hold my head up as I walk
So as not to spill tears
Remembering those spring days
And the lonely nights
Let’s walk looking up
I count the stars with tearful eyes
Happiness lies above the sky
Happiness lies above the clouds

Blurred star ACC counting
Happiness TOP cloud GEN up LOC
Happiness TOP sky GEN up LOC

Happiness lies in the clouds
Happiness lies in the sky

Happiness lies in the clouds
Happiness lies beyond the sky
Happiness lies beyond the sky
Happiness may seem just out of sight

Beyond the clouds, try as we might

Reference:

Dr. Jun Nakamura
Lecturer in Japanese, School of Humanities
Massey University

Acknowledgement: Funding support from the School of Humanities, Massey University and the student in the course 242307, Massey University.

Ethics Approval: From Human Ethics Northern Committee in Massey University, NOR 16/11 Sukiyaki project: an analysis of students’ approaches to translations.

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

Nakamura, J

2016-11-21