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:
(a) I am Jun Nakamura.
(b) Ø Nakamura Jun deu.

Cognitive Linguistics and Translation Studies:
Three major assumptions of Cognitive Linguistics (Creed and Crewe 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.

“Us a mate aru ni” “Sukiyaki”

Google translation:
Let’s walk towards the top
So as not to spill tears
Spring day to remember
lonely night
Let us walk towards the top
Counting the blurred star
Happiness is in the clouds
Happiness lies beyond the sky
Happiness lies beyond the clouds

Subjectivity 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. Thecline of the construals is: from (3) to (2) to (1) from subjective to objective to subjective.

The “construal alternative” is a notion related to the speaker’s construal of referents, and it also 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 situation of the above examples, the speaker is talking about a situation. The speaker’s subjectivity (subjective conceptualisation).

Discussions:
The song in the Japanese source text uses no personal pronouns. The first verse “Us a mate aru ni” is the zero-encoding subject, which; results in semantic ambiguity but also a possibility of multiple interpretations based on constrained alternatives. Thecline of the construals is: (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.

The functional/pragmatic approach: recoverability of deleting disease 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 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.

Further research of Translation Studies has used a linguisitic 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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The contrastive analysis of multiple translations: Sukiyaki song from Japanese to English

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