TRANSLATING CONNECTIVES FROM FRENCH INTO ENGLISH: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Connectives, while important in establishing textual cohesion, present certain challenges when translating from French to English. While French is replete with connectives, English is very restrictive and uses them less often. However, what strategies can be used in translation to overcome the challenges presented by this difference is not apparent in literature. By utilizing three texts in two different genres, two of these translated by the researcher for this study, and one already translated, this study fills the gap left in the literature by examining strategies that can be used in translating French connectives into English. It also identifies which connectives would be more amenable to which strategy and in which linguistic context.

Connectives were grouped into the grammatical categories to which they belong (adverbs and adverbials, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns), their functional categories (opposition, emphases, causation, explanation etc.) and the linguistic contexts in which they are found (initial and medial). The data suggest that connectives in the medial position are more likely to be omitted than those in the initial position. In addition, due to the difference in use connectives will be translated directly, change grammatical and functional categories, change their position, will use circumlocution minimally, or will be omitted altogether by elimination or by punctuation which can be used in their stead.