The Study of Cleft Structures in the Translation of Texts from French into Persian in the Framework of Information Structure Theory

Mozhgan Soghani
PhD Candidate in Linguistics, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Bahram Modarresi (Corresponding author)[1]
Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Hamid Reza Shairi
Professor in French Language, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

This research is a case study of cleft structures in the translation of texts from French into Persian in the framework of Lambrecht's information structure theory (1996). The study was conducted on cleft sentences of six books in French and their translations in Persian. In this descriptive-analytic research, the cleft structures in French texts were identified and compared with their equivalents in Persian translations. Then, the collected data were classified separately based on Lambrecht's information structure theory and the topic-focus relations. This research investigated semantic-pragmatic differences as well as distribution of new-old information in each case in the source language and the translation into the target language. The results indicate that despite the possibility of using cleft structures in both languages, 58% of cleft sentences in French have been rendered into Persian non-cleft structures and only 42% of cleft sentences have been translated as clefts in Persian. Moreover, regarding non-cleft translated sentences in Persian, 70% and 30% of the clefted constituents have occupied the topic and the non-topic positions, respectively. In addition, providing examples from the research data, it has been shown that the argument focus in cleft structures has been changed into predicate focus or sentence focus due to the shift of the syntactic structure, and as a result, the emphatic meaning of these sentences in the target language has been lost.