

## Assessing University Students' Competence in Translating English Discourse Connectives into Kurdish

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**ABSTRACT:** The present study sets out to assess university students' competence in translating English discourse connectives into Kurdish. It also attempts to study the impact of teaching on students' translation competence for rendering these elements. Discourse connectives are one of the main subcategories of textual metadiscourse elements which play a crucial role in text organization and the creation of cohesion. Their class is mainly comprised of conjunctions and adverbials which connect ideas at intrasentential, intersentential, and textual levels. Appropriate recognition, utilization, and translation of English discourse connectives are problematic and challenging for Kurdish EFL learners and translators. Moreover, some connectors are multifunctional and polysemous in nature. This paper aims at highlighting some of these translation problems and assessing students' competence in their rendering at the pre-test and post-test. The research design is mixed method and employs a Translation Task and a Judgement Elicitation Task as two means for measuring translation competence. These tests were carried out on 40 Third-Year students at the Department of Translation, College of Languages, University of Duhok. The study concluded that students possessed enough translation competence for making judgements on the appropriate renditions of the discourse connectives. In contrast, they failed to appropriately translate *besides*, *although*, *nevertheless*, *yet*, *provided that*, *otherwise*, *unless*, *for*, *thereby*, and *so that* in the pre-test. Furthermore, holding teaching sessions on the classifications, functions, and translation of discourse connectives had a significant impact on the acquisition of translation competence in the post-test.

**Keywords:** Discourse Connectives, Translation Competence, Translation Task, Judgement Elicitation Task, Performance, Assessment

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Every cohesive text is characterized by some textual metadiscourse elements which are important for the achievement of text cohesion and organization. Among these elements, Discourse connectives (henceforth DCs) play an essential role. DCs, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), Maure (2006), and Hyland (2019), are mainly conjunctions and adverbial phrases which connect ideas in the text and basically perform additive, contrastive, conditional, causal and resultive functions. Trainee translators need to know the meaning and functions of these connectives in the source text and provide functionally equivalent DCs in their translation. Furthermore, the assessment of translation competence (TC) has received a wide research attention. However, assessing students' competence in translating DCs from English into Kurdish seems to be a new area of investigation. It has been noticed that Kurdish students' translations lack cohesion since they fail to appropriately render DCs. Thus, the rendering of DCs represents a problematic area.

### **1.1 The research problem**

Appropriate recognition, utilization, and translation of English DCs are problematic and challenging for Kurdish EFL learners and translators. Many studies have been conducted on studying English DCs in general and their translation into other languages, such as Arabic, Persian, and so on, in particular. Some studies, like Tawfiq (2002), Shiwani (2003), and Salih (2014) have examined these elements in Sorani Kurdish. Namat (2011) conducted a contrastive study of discourse markers in English and Behdini-Kurdish (also known as Northern Kurmanji). However, to the researcher's best knowledge no attempt has been made to study the TC of these elements from English into Behdini-Kurdish. Another expected area of difficulty is the lack of established and unified equivalence for English DCs in Kurdish. Furthermore, some DCs are multifunctional and polysemous in nature and students fail to identify their intended function and meaning. Translation classes do not allocate enough instruction on the classification, function, and translation of these elements. Therefore, this study is an attempt to bridge the gap in this field.

### **1.2 The aim**

The present study aims at:

1. Assessing university students' TC for rendering DCs.
2. Providing a contrastive analysis of DCs in English and Kurdish to explore the similarities and differences between their DCs systems and highlight some translation problems facing students in rendering DCs.
3. Studying the effect of teaching knowledge about DCs on the acquisition of the TC.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The study is in pursuit of answering the following questions:

1. What is the status of Kurdish university students' competence in translating English DCs into Kurdish?
2. What are the most problematic subcategories of DCs in the pre-test and post-test of the Judgement Elicitation Task (JET) and Translation Task (TT)?
3. Is the English DC system more complex than the Kurdish?

### **1.4 Research methodology**

This study is a mixed-method research that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. It utilized a TT for measuring students' performance in translation and a JET to measure students' comprehension of DCs in both source language and target language. Forty Third-Year students at the Department of Translation, University of Dohuk, voluntarily participated in the pre-test and post-test of this quasi-experimental research. The statistical part has been conducted using the R Computing Program.

### **1.5 The significance of the study**

It is hoped that the present study will be beneficial theoretically and practically for researchers, teachers, translators, lexicographers, and students of linguistics and translation. This subject deserves to be investigated in order to call the translation teachers' attention to the fact that they need to enhance and develop their teaching tools and methods for building and enhancing their students' TC in translating DCs.

## **2. DISCOURSE CONNECTIVES IN ENGLISH**

DCs can be regarded as one of the main subcategories of textual metadiscourse elements. This subclass has been termed and classified differently by different scholars.

### **2.1 Definition**

Various terms have been suggested to refer to expressions belonging to DCs. For instance, Hyland (2019) adopted transition markers, Vande Kopple (1985) used text connectives, Crismore et al. (1993) used logical connectors, Mauranen (1993) used connectors, Halliday and Hasan (1976) used conjunctive relations, Maure (2006) used discourse connectors, and Fathi (2019) used discourse connectives. Moreover, some labels, such as discourse markers, conjunctions (coordinators and subordinators), adverbial clauses, and so on, can also be found in the literature. This study adopts discourse connectives as a substitute label for the aforementioned terms.

For Hyland (2019, p. 59), transition markers are basically conjunctions and adverbial phrases which help the readers and speakers to interpret the pragmatic connections between the stretches of discourse. They demonstrate additive, causal, and contrastive relations. Additive markers add more elements to the discourse and consist of such elements as *and, furthermore, moreover, by the way*, and so forth. Comparison markers signify either similarity (*similarly, equally, in the same vein*, and so on) or differences (*but, in contrast, on the contrary*, and the rest.); and conclusion markers reveal the conclusion drawn (*thus, therefore, in conclusion*, and the others.).

According to Maure (2006, p. 344), discourse connectors are words and phrases which “connect ideas within sentences and between sentences or larger blocks of texts. They comprise coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and transitions.

Salih (2014) follows the above stated categories and uses the label “connectives” in his comparative study of connectives between English and Kurdish.

Regarding the concept of metadiscourse elements, it is a cover term which incorporates spoken or written expressions that can be used to organize and guide the reader through the discourse and reveal the writer’s or speaker’s attitude (Hyland, 2019, p. 18). They can be classified into textual, interpersonal, and visual categories. The DCs are the main subcategories of the textual metadiscourse elements.

Based on the above-mentioned account, DCs can be defined as words and expressions used to connect ideas at intrasentential, intersentential, and textual levels. They are mainly conjunctions (coordinators and subordinators) and transition markers that organize the texts and help to achieve cohesion.

## 2.2 Classification

Numerous classifications have been suggested for classifying DCs, such as Quirk et al. (1985), Halliday and Hasan (1976), among others. For the purpose of analysis, the researcher attempts to adopt Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) classification of the conjunctions with a slight modification into the main categories of additive, contrastive, causal and resultive, and conditional. These subcategories will be elaborated on in the following sections.

### 2.2.1 Additives

Additive DCs signal that a new discourse item is added to the previous ones (Biber et al., 2002, p. 389). They can be subclassified into reinforcing and equative conjuncts (Quirk et al., 1985).

Reinforcing conjuncts add more weight to the preceding piece of information. This subclass involves *also, furthermore, moreover, in addition, what is more*, and so on. Regarding equative conjuncts, they indicate a similar force to what has preceded. They include *equally, similarly, likewise*, and so forth, as shown in the examples below, respectively:

(1) *This food is very delicious and probably people do not find it at home. Also, it is very easy to cook.*

ئەف خوارنە گەلەک یێ ب تامە و دبیت خەلک ل مالدای پەیدا نەکەت. هەروەسا گەلەک ب سەناهییه یۆ لێنای.

(2) *Aram has many responsibilities and, equally, gains a high salary.*

ئارامی گەلەک بەرپرسیاریتی یێن هەین و ب هەمان شێوە، مووچەیهکی بلند ژێ وەرگرت.

(Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 636-337).

### 2.2.2 Contrastives

Schiffrin (1987, p. 187) points out that the adversative relations “preface an upcoming proposition whose content contrasts with that of the prior proposition.”

Adversative conjunctions have been classified into different subcategories. For instance, Halliday and Hasan (1976) classify them into four subcategories of adversative proper (*but, yet, despite this*), contrastive (*but, and, on the other hand*), corrective (*instead, rather*), dismissal (*in any case, in either case*). Quirk et al. (1985, p. 635-636) subcategorize contrastive conjunctions as reformulatory (*better, rather, alias, in other words*), replacive (*on the other hand, rather*), antithetic (*in contrast, conversely*) and concessive (*anyway, however, though, yet, of course* and the others).

(3)-*Although the shooting has stopped for now, the destruction left behind is enormous.*<sup>1</sup>

هەسچەندە نوکە تەقەکەرن یا راوەستایی، لێ وتیرانیین مەزن لدوێف خو هێلاینه.

(4) *He is poor, yet (he is) satisfied with his situation* (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 636).

ئەو يى ھەزارە، بەلى يى رازىيە ب رەوشاخو.

(5) *They had very little money, **but** (they) always bought their children expensive presents<sup>2</sup>.*

ئەوان گەلەك كۆي پاره ھەبوون، لى ھەردەم ديارين گرانبوھا بۆزاروكتين خو دكرين.

It is worth to note that some contrastive DCs are multifunctional and polysemous in nature, such as yet (used as an adverb to mean still, هيشتا and as a conjunction to mean but, الى).

### 2.2.3 Causals and resultives

Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 256) include the relations of result, reason, and purpose under the heading of causal conjunctions. The typical causal marker is *because*.

One of the expected problematic causal markers is *for* when used as causal conjunction. Halliday and Hasan point out that there is a very close similarity between *for* and *because*, claiming they could be "synonyms" of each other and realize the relation "a *because* b" (1976, p. 258). Consider sentence (6).

(6) *She must have been very hungry, for she ate everything immediately*<sup>3</sup>.

بيگومان نهو گهلهکا برسي بوو، چونكي نيكسهه ههمي تشت خوارن.

According to Quirk et al. (1985, p. 638), resultive DCs indicate the result of what was said before. They are *consequently, so, therefore, thus, as a result and accordingly*, and the like. Consider sentence (7).

(7) Parwar was an unjust and unreliable person, so became unpopular.

پھر وہ کہہ سکی نہاد و نہی باور سی ہو، ژبہ ہندی کہس ہنر ژئی نہدکر۔

Furthermore, some conjunctions, such as *so*, *so that*, *in order to*, *to this end*, *so as to*, and so on are used to express purpose in English. Consider the following example:

*So that he could buy a car, he sold his stamp collection.*

تا کو بشیت ترومیله کی بکریت، کولیکسیونا یولین خو فروتن.

### 2.2.4 Conditionals

Conditional clauses express a direct condition. They express that “the truth of the proposition in the matrix clause is the consequence of the fulfillment of the condition in the conditional clause” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1088). ‘*If*’ and ‘*unless*’ are simple DCs (subordinators) for conditional clauses. ‘*If*’ is the most common one and ‘*unless*’ (*if not*) is its negative form. Conditional connectors are either in iconic or non-iconic. When the text segments are ordered (S1 condition, S2 result) the relation is iconic and when text elements are ordered (S2 result, S1 condition) they are in non-iconic relations (Salih, 2014, p. 183). Some other conditional DCs are *assuming that*, *given (that)*, *provided (that)*, *on condition that*, *as long as*, *supposing that*, and so forth. Kurdish Students may face difficulties rendering these conditional connectors into Kurdish.

(8) *Provided that there are enough seats, anyone can come on the trip.*<sup>4</sup>

ب مھر جی ھابو نا کور سینین پیڈقی، ھار کہ سہ کی دسیت گھشتی بکھت.

(9) *He will fail the course unless he gets a 90 on the exam.*<sup>5</sup>

٩٠ تاقيرنئ ب دستفه نهئيئت.

### 3. Discourse Connectives in Kurdish

As one of the universal aspects of languages, DCs play an essential role in text organization and cohesion in Kurdish discourse.



د ههچنده (although), ههچهرا بیت (however), بهروفازی وی چهندی (in contrast, conversely, in contrary), سهه هندیرا (in spite of), د لایهکی دیه (on the other hand), د دمهکی دا (whereas, while) and so on.

One of the expected problems in translating contrastive DCs can be related to the correlative (ههچنده-بیت) rendered into (although-but). It is stylistically not common to use the correlative 'although' and 'but' at the same place. They are usually in complementary distribution depending on the context. In other words, if 'although' is used in a sentence there is no need for 'but'. On the contrary, Kurdish translators translate 'although' into (ههچنده - لئ) (although- but) correlative which is a natural and acceptable contrastive connective in Kurdish.

(12) ههچنده نهوی باش یاری کر، بهلی ب سهه نهکەفت.

*Although he played the match well, he did not win.*

One of the problems associated with the translation of contrastive DCs is the lack of generally agreed upon equivalent for them in Kurdish. There is also a tendency for an interchangeable use of them among the Kurdish translators.

### 3.2.3 Causals and resultives

چونکی (because, since, for), and دهنجامدا (therefore, so) can be regarded typical Kurdish causal and resultive DCs respectively.

د نهچا (thus, hence), د ژ به ر (for this reason) are some other causal markers. (because of, due to), ژ بهر قی نهگهري, دهنجامدا (as the result, therefore, so, accordingly, consequently), لههرا, لههرا (therefore) are some other mostly used connectives for expressing resultive relations in Kurdish.

(13) ناستی شیانین زمانێ داخوازی ژ بهرنامهکی بو بهرنامهکی دی جودایه, لههرا پندقیه ههمی هویرکارین نهوی بهرنامهی بخوینن بین داخوازی بو پیشکێشدهکهن<sup>8</sup>.

*The required language proficiency is different from one program to another; therefore it is necessary to read all the details of the program they apply for.*

Some conjunctions, such as بو هندی, تا, تاكو, تا, تاكو, تاكو (to, in order to, so as to, so that) are some of the widely used purpose markers in Kurdish.

(14) راهیانین وهرزی بکه بو هندی کو ته ژیانکه ساخهه ههیت.

*Do exercises in order to have a healthy life.*

### 3.2.4 Conditionals

ههگه (if) and نه (unless, otherwise) are typical Kurdish conditional DCs. Ahmed (2005) labels these markers as conditional rezha forms and lists some of them as (ههگه, نهگه, ههگه, نهگه, نهگه). For Shiwani (2003, p. 110), نهگه is a conditional subordinating particle which links a subordinating clause to a main clause. It is used iconically (initial position of S1) and non-iconically in Kurdish. The typical connectives that signal the iconic conditional relation in English are *if* and *otherwise* and in Kurdish they are نهگه and ههگه (Salih, 2014, p. 183).

(15) نهگه نهو بهیت, نهز دی چم.

*If he comes, I will go.*

(16) تو چ جارا دلخوش نابی ههکه تو رازی نهبی ب وی تشتی ته ههی<sup>8</sup>.

*You will never be happy, unless you are satisfied with what you have.*

(17) ههکه زمیت بو چهند جارا هاته بکارنیان دی بیته نهگهري زیانین ساخهههین<sup>9</sup>.

*If the cooking oil is heated for several times, it will cause health damages.*

The above contrastive account of some DCs in both English and Kurdish can be beneficial and guiding for teachers and students so as to be familiarized with some available equivalents for DCs in both languages.

#### **4. TRANSLATING DISCOURSE CONNECTIVES**

As one of the main subcategories of Metadiscourse elements, the classification and translation of DCs have not received enough attention in Behdini-Kurdish. However, the translation of these markers from English into other languages and vice versa has witnessed some attention. For example, Fathi (2005) and (2019) researched the rendering of these elements from English into Arabic and Arabic into English.

##### **4.1 Assessment of Translation Competence**

Assessing TC can be regarded as a crucial step in the translator training and development. Here the researcher attempts to briefly shed light on this fast growing aspect in the translation field.

###### **4.1.1 Translation competence**

Competence can be generally defined as skills and knowledge necessary for performing an activity. TC as a technical term has received attention by researchers and some studies, such as PACTE Group (2017), Hurtado Albir (2007, 2015, & 2017) which have been conducted on the area. As the definition, Hurtado Albir (2017, p.12) states that TC is “the knowledge and abilities translators need to translate correctly”. Regarding its components, PACTE Group (2017, pp. 40-41) divided them into six subcategories: bilingual, extralinguistic, knowledge of translation, instrumental, and strategic sub-competences and psycho physiological components.

###### **4.1.2 Assessment of translation competence in translator training**

Palumbo (2009, p. 10) provided a definition stating that assessment (or evaluation) aims to establish the quality of a translated text. The notion of quality is relative; therefore, assessment also relies on relative criteria. It depends on the objectives of assessment and the context of the assessing of the translated text.

To assess TC some instruments are required, such as texts to translate; questionnaires (on knowledge of aspects of translation, a text translation problem, self-assessment questionnaires, and so forth); reflective diaries; reports; translation process recordings; portfolios; and rubrics (Hurtado Albir, 2015, p. 271).

Orozco and Hurtado Albir (2002, p. 375) investigated measuring TC acquisition; they presented three measurement tools for this purpose: (i) measuring translation notions (ii) measuring students’ behaviour when faced with translation problems, and (iii) measuring errors.

One of the assessment components is correcting errors. They are divided into three categories by Hurtado Albir (1996a; 1999b, as cited in Hurtado Albir, 2015, p. 273), namely, errors concerned with ST meaning; expression errors related in the target language; and pragmatic errors, that is to say mistakes that may prevent the translation to fulfill its aim.

To sum up, assessing TC is important in the translation training courses. TC can be assessed through various means. These means can also be utilized to assess different types of translation and various linguistic and non-linguistic subcategories of TC.

#### **5. Methodology**

##### **5.1 Research design**

This study follows a mixed-method research design. It combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze the data. The design is quantitative as it utilizes percentages and numbers to show the correct and incorrect ratings of the students’ judgements and translations. It is a qualitative design through discussing the findings and assessing the quality of the translations of DCs in the TT and the JET.

##### **5.2 Participants**

This study was conducted on 40 Third-Year students at the Department of Translation, College of Languages, University of Duhok, academic year (2021-2022). These students voluntarily participated in the tests. Ten of the participants were males and 30 were females. Their age ranged between 20 and 23 years. All the students were Behdini native speakers with English as their foreign language.

### 5.3 Research tools

Two measuring tools, namely, a TT (see Appendix 1) and a JET (see Appendix 2) were utilized for the data collection in this research. In the TT, students were asked to translate 18 sentences containing DCs and in the JET, they were asked to make judgements on the provided translations for each DC. The ratings were divided into very good, good, neutral, bad, and very bad. Two translations for each sentence were given to avoid speculated variations among the test items and the test items were randomized so that participants could not create systematic responses. One of the translations contained the appropriate rendering of the intended DC and the other one contained the inappropriate rendering of the element. These sentences used in both tests were economic, scientific, and journalistic in nature and were taken from online corpora, grammar books, and dictionaries.

### 5.4 Data collection and procedures

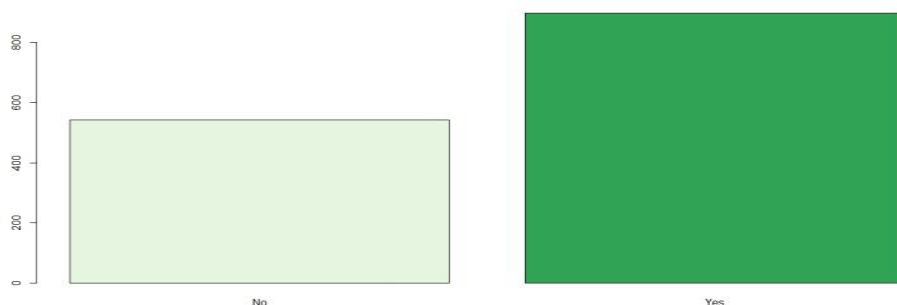
As the first step in the data collection, Kurdish university students participated in the TT. After the completion of this task the JET questionnaires were distributed among the study participants. They were not allowed to use dictionaries and share their translations. After the completion of the pre-test, lecturing on these elements took place during two lectures. In these lectures students were introduced with the definition, classification, and translation of the DCs. The same test items were conducted again on the same students in the post-test. The nature of this study is quasi experimental; the participants were not divided into experimental and control groups. All the participants represented the experimental (treatment) group since it was not ethical to prevent some participants from the teaching sessions on DCs and their translation.

## 6. Data Analysis

This section consists of a general analysis and a statistical analysis of the data besides reporting and discussing the results of the two experiments, namely JET for measuring students' comprehension and the TT for assessing their performance in rendering DCs. The statistical part has been conducted using the R Computing Program.

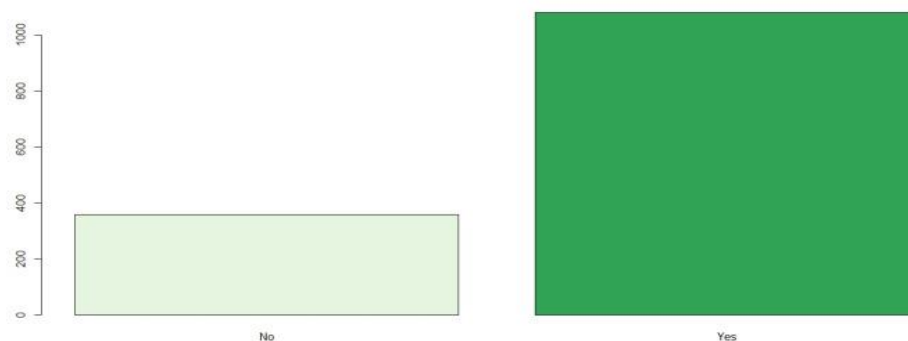
### 6.1 The Results of the Judgement Task

The results of the JET in both pre-test and post-test are shown in Figures 1 and 2 and Tables 1 and 2.



**Figure 1:** Students' Judgement on the Translation of DCs in General in the Pre-test





**Figure 2:** Students' Judgement on the Translation of DCs in General in the Post-test

**Table 1:** Students' Judgement Rates on the Translation of Discourse Connectives in the Pre-test and Post-test

Textual DCs  DCs	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Correct Judgement (Yes)		Incorrect Judgement (No)		Correct Judgement (Yes)		Incorrect Judgement (No)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
	62%	898	38%	542	75%	1081	25%	359

The dark green color in the figures corresponds to correct judgements and light green color to false judgements).

Figures 1 & 2 and Table 1 display the rates of correct and incorrect judgements on the translations of DCs in general for the pre-test and post-test. As noticed, the rate of correct judgements increased in the post-test from 62% to 75% indicating the improvement of translation comprehension.

**Table 2:** Students' Judgement Rates on the DCs' Subcategories in the Pre-test and Post-test

DCs subcategories		Pre-test				Post-test			
		Correct Judgement (Yes)		Incorrect Judgement (No)		Correct Judgement (Yes)		Incorrect Judgement (No)	
		%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Additives	Moreover	64%	51	36%	29	75%	60	25%	20
	Furthermore	67%	54	33%	26	85%	68	15%	12
	Besides	62%	50	38%	30	76%	61	24%	19
Contrastives	Although	59%	47	41%	33	59%	47	41%	33
	However	44%	35	56%	45	69%	55	31%	25
	On the other hand	72%	58	28%	22	82%	66	18%	14
	Nevertheless	65%	52	35%	28	74%	59	26%	21
	Yet	62%	50	38%	30	75%	60	25%	20
Conditionals	But	49%	39	51%	41	57%	46	43%	34
	Provided that	49%	39	51%	41	72%	58	28%	22
	Otherwise	67%	54	33%	26	89%	72	11%	8
	Unless	61%	49	39%	31	70%	56	30%	24

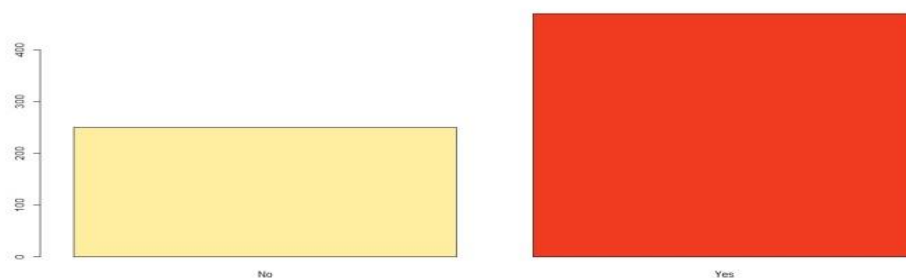
Causal Resultives	For	59%	47	41%	33	62%	50	38%	30
	So	50%	40	50%	40	79%	63	21%	17
	Therefore	82%	66	18%	14	84%	67	16%	13
	Accordingly	70%	56	30%	24	85%	68	15%	12
Purpose marker	Thereby	64%	51	36%	29	70%	56	30%	24
	So that	75%	60	25%	20	86%	69	14%	11

Table 2 shows that Kurdish student's correct judgement on DCs (*however, but, provided that*) is below 50% in the pre-test. The post-test indicates the positive impact on students' judgements by correct ratings above 50% for all the DCs investigated in this study.

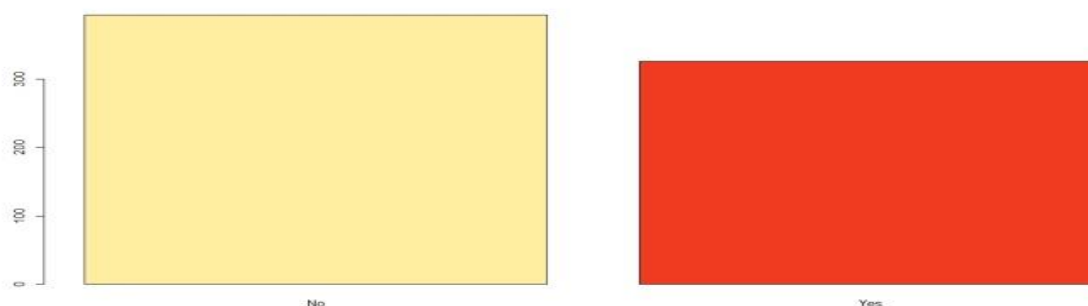
## 6.2 Translation Task

In the performance test represented by the translation task, the correctness of students' translation of DCs is based on some criteria. Participants' translations are compared against the standard rendering of the DCs as given in English into Kurdish Dictionaries and the translation provided by three advanced/academic translators. These equivalences and possible acceptable standard equivalences are deemed to be sample equivalents for DCs investigated in this research. Thus, assessing the translation of DCs is an objective process.

The results of the TT in both pre-test and post-test are displayed on Figures 3 and 4 and Tables 3 and 4.



**Figure 3:** Translation of DCs in General in the Pre-test



**Figure 4:** Translation of DCs in General in the Post-test

**Table 3:** Translation of DCs in General in the Pre-test and Post-test

Metadiscourse Micro Categories	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Correct Translation (Yes)		Incorrect Translation (No)		Correct Translation (Yes)		Incorrect Translation (No)	
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Textual DCs	45%	326	55%	394	65%	470	35%	250

Figures 3 & 4 and Table 3 display the rates of correct and incorrect translations of DCs in general for pre-test and post-test. As noticed, the rate of correct translation increased in the post-test from 45% to 65%, indicating the rate of 20% as improvement of translation performance.

**Table 4:** Translation of DCs Subdivisions in the Pre-test and Post-test

Textual Metadiscourse DCs subcategories			Pre-test				Post-test			
			Correct translation (Yes )		Incorrect translation (No)		Correct translation (Yes)		Incorrect translation (No)	
			%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Discourse connectives	Additives	Moreover	58%	23	42%	17	78%	31	22%	9
		Furthermore	60%	24	40%	16	67%	27	33%	13
	Contrastives	Besides	15%	6	85%	34	55%	22	45%	18
		Although	22%	9	78%	31	37%	15	63%	25
		However	57%	23	43%	17	85%	34	15%	6
		On the other hand	82%	33	18%	7	92%	37	8%	3
		Nevertheless	20%	8	80%	32	62%	25	38%	15
		Yet	43%	19	53%	21	55%	22	45%	18
	Conditionals	But	92%	37	8%	3	92%	37	8%	3
		Provided that	7%	3	93%	37	35%	14	65%	26
		Otherwise	47%	19	53%	21	65%	26	35%	14
		Unless	30%	12	70%	28	45%	18	55%	22
		Causal	For	22%	9	78%	31	42%	17	58%
	Resultives	So	65%	26	35%	14	92%	37	8%	3
		Therefore	65%	26	35%	14	77%	31	23%	9
		Accordingly	60%	24	40%	16	65%	26	35%	14
		Thereby	20%	8	80%	32	80%	32	20%	8
	Purpose marker	So that	42%	17	58%	23	47%	19	53%	21

Table 4 presents the rates of correct and incorrect translations of DCs subcategories. Among the DCS, the translation of the additive *besides* received the rate of 85% as incorrect translation. This rate reduced to 45% in the post-test indicating 40% improvement of students' TC.

As for the contrastive markers, *although* was rated as 78%, *nevertheless* as 80%, and *yet* as 53% which have been incorrectly rendered into Kurdish. Among these elements only the rate of incorrect translation of *although* has remained 63%. This signifies that students have not acquired enough TC for rendering this element and still face

difficulties in finding appropriate Kurdish equivalent for this contrastive element. This also entails the need for more training on its translation.

Concerning the conditional DCs, *provided that*, *otherwise* and *unless* have been incorrectly translated into Kurdish and have scored 93%, 53%, and 70% as incorrect translations respectively. However, the rates of incorrect rendering for *provided that* and *unless* have remained high and have scored 65% and 55% respectively. The high rate of incorrect rendering indicates the lack of enough TC even after teaching.

Regarding the students' translations of *for*, the score rates in both pre- test and post-test have remained above 50% for incorrect rendering.

The high score rate of incorrect rendering of the resultive discourse connective *thereby* reveals that the Kurdish students faced difficulties for the correct rendering of this marker in the pre-test. The post-test score signifies the acquisition of TC for the correct rendering of this connective.

### 6.3 Findings and Discussion

Based on the results obtained through the tests conducted, it was found that among the DCs, the translation of contrastive and conditional markers appeared to be the most problematic. This finding is in line with that of Fathi (2005) who found that text connectives, particularly adversatives, indicated a high frequency of inappropriate rendering. Among DCs categories, *however*, *but*, *provided that* were rated below 50% in the JET, while *besides*, *although*, *nevertheless*, *yet*, *provided that*, *otherwise*, *unless*, *for*, *thereby*, and *so that* possessed a high frequency of incorrect rendering in the pre-test of the translation task. It was also observed that *provided that* was the most difficult element for students to translate and judge upon.

Low rates of correct translation for *besides*, *for*, and *yet* are likely to be attributed to their multifunctional and polysemous nature. The additive *besides* functions as a preposition and means *other than* or *except* (ژ بلی). It also functions as an adverb and is a synonym to *also*, *moreover*, *furthermore* (ههرومسا، زیدهباری). The contrastive *yet* operates as an adverb in the negative sentences and questions to talk about something that has not happened or you expect that it may happen. In such a case it is synonymous to *so far* (تا نوکه) and *still* (ههشتا). It is also a conjunction that operates like *nevertheless* and *but* to express contrast (Hornby, 2000, p. 1504). Some of its possible equivalents are (بەڵێ ههشتا، بەڵێ، دیسان ژێ). The causal *for* functions as a preposition (بو)، and causal marker (چونکی، ژ بهر کو). It is prominently used as a preposition but in this research it is a DC. Sometimes translators resort to literal translation. For example, the conditional *provided that* (ب وی مەرجی کو) might be literally rendered into (دابین کر کو). Among the DCs investigated in this study *provided that* appeared to be the most problematic DC for the students.

One of the possible explanations for these incorrect renderings might be the students' lack of familiarity with the available equivalents of these elements in the Kurdish language. Behdini-Kurdish lacks comprehensive bilingual English-Kurdish and Kurdish-English dictionaries. Translators usually resort to English-Sorani Kurdish dictionaries, mobile dictionaries, and Google Translate to look up the meaning of a word. Thus, they may not be able to provide suitable equivalents for DCs.

The incorrect rates for these devices entail that students have not been well instructed on how to solve these translation problems and choose the appropriate equivalent for these devices. Furthermore, they draw our attention to the importance of considering and allocating enough instruction on utilizing appropriate equivalents and translation strategies for addressing difficulties facing students in this area. The better results achieved in the post-test prove this point. These findings will help the translation course designers avoid marginalizing these elements in the curricula they devise. Additionally, when the students were exposed to the rendition of these elements, they could judge the appropriateness of the translation better than providing the correct equivalent for translating the same elements.

### 7. Conclusions

In this section the study research questions will be restated and answered based on the results and findings obtained from the tests conducted. Moreover, some other general conclusions will be outlined.

**RQ1. What is the status of Kurdish university students' competence in translating English DCs into Kurdish?**

It is concluded that the participants possessed enough TC for making judgements on the appropriate renditions of the DCs. In contrast, they failed to appropriately translate some of these elements. The attainment of better results after teaching sessions on DCs signifies the positive impact of instruction on the acquisition of TC. It is noticed that students' translation potency varies according to the type of task, and the availability and acceptability of the English DCs equivalents in the Kurdish language.

### **RQ2. What are the most problematic subcategories of DCs in the pre-test and post-test of the JET and TT?**

According to the JET results, Kurdish students could not provide appropriate judgements for the rendering of the DCs *however, but, and provided that* in the pre-test. On the other hand, none of the DCs was difficult to judge upon in the post-test. In accordance with the TT results, *besides, although, nevertheless, yet, provided that, otherwise, unless, for, thereby and so that* were the most problematic elements to render in the pre-test. However, the DC *although, provided that, unless, and so that* were still difficult even after the post-test.

### **RQ3. Is the English DC system more complex than the Kurdish?**

It appears that both English and Kurdish follow the same classificatory systems for classifying DCs. However, it is found that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the English and Kurdish connectives. English is richer than the Kurdish in terms of vocabulary for expressing connectivity relations. Additionally, the English possesses some multifunctional and polysemous DCs, such as *besides, yet, for, and so on*, which pose translation problems for students.

It can be further concluded that:

1. DCs as one of the main subcategories of textual metadiscourse elements can be defined as words and expressions used to connect ideas at intrasentential, intersentential and textual levels. They are mainly conjunctions (coordinators and subordinators) and transition markers which organize the texts and help to achieve cohesion.
2. Assessing students' comprehension through JET and their performance through the TT provided better insight into the possession of the TC.
3. At the post-test performance level, teaching impacted students' performance and improved the percentages of appropriate renderings from 45% to 65%.

## **8. Recommendations**

Students are recommended to broaden their knowledge of the subcategories of DCs in the source language and the target language. They further need to know how, where, and when to use appropriate translation equivalents for DCs.

## **9. Implications**

Advocating some teaching classes on the classifications, functions, and translation of DCs can be the leading point in the translation classes to familiarize students with appropriate renditions of these elements. It will also help to solve some DCs' translation problems.

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## Appendix 1: The Translation Task

Translate the following sentences into Kurdish:

1-Moreover, today's world is faced with problems that affect or may affect all human beings and not only the citizens of some states.
2- It is difficult to imagine the mosaicist working without this tool, for it is capable of fracturing the hardest stones,
3- The economy is strong, yet there are frequent strikes.
4- Provided that labour is homogeneous in quality, employers would have the incentive to hire the cheaper labour.
5- It's easy to imagine robot cleaners and factory workers, but some jobs need human connection and creativity.
6- In addition, foreign adoption is not cheap. In fact, the average cost of an international adoption in 2009 was \$44,000. Furthermore, parents have the expense of traveling to the country and staying there for many weeks while the process is being completed.
7- This will not happen unless there is strong commitment from the European private sector and strong, supportive government policies.
8 There are frequent strikes. Nevertheless, the economy is strong.
9- We expect that the epidemic of Corona virus in China will exist until May 2020. So, we set the simulation period is from Dec. 1, 2019.

10- Although the infection ability of MERS is lower than in SARS, the mortality is higher (in about one-third of patients) because of the deeper infection site [13]
11- On the other hand, malignant or cancerous tumors usually increase faster and spread from the primary source to other tissues or body parts and destroy them. In other words, malignant tumors can invade their surrounding tissues or organs.
12-You want to introduce this person to your friend. However, just as you say "Nancy, I'd like you to meet ...," your mind goes blank, and you can't remember the person's name.
13-I was worried about memory loss on my part; therefore, I decided to do some research into the problem.
14- Rewards could come in the form of money, holidays, promotions or profit sharing. Again the target must be attainable, otherwise the worker will not attempt to reach the goal and clearly the workers performance would not be altered.
15-His campaign manager wanted to find out how people felt. Accordingly, he took an opinion poll of the local voters.
16- I urge the Council to approve this directive this month so that it will pass at first reading.
17-European production continued to expand, thereby reducing the region's dependence on foreign goods especially those of the US.
18-In addition, we should lower the interest rate and show more flexibility in accessing EU funds. Besides, Greece must also be ready to take its fate in its hands.

## Appendix 2: The Judgement Elicitation Task

Dear Students,

Please Tick one of the options for each translated sentence below. Only judge the translated sentences in Kurdish, not the source sentences in English.

Age: ( ) years old Gender: (Male - Female)

Mother tongue: ( )

#	Source text	Translation	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
1	Regular exercise strengthens the heart, thereby reducing the risk of heart attack.	وهرز شکرنا ریکستی دلی ب هیز دخیخت و دبینه نەگەرئ کیمکرنا مەترسیا نیشتا دلی.					
2	New technology is safer than old technology, provided that employees are familiar with the technological change.	تەکنەلۆژیا نوی ئیمنتەر ژ تەکنەلۆژیا کەف، چونکی فەرمانبەر زانین دەربارە ی گوهرینن تەکنەلۆژی هەنە.					
3	Unless there are changes in immigration patterns nearly one in five people will be an immigrant in 2050.	هەتا گۆرانکاری د شێوازی کۆچبەرین دا بهێتە کرن نیزیکی 1 ل سەر 5 ئ ژ خەلکی ل سالا 2050 ئ دئ بنە کۆچبەر.					
4	Nuclear power is relatively cheap. On the other hand, you could argue that it's not safe.	ووزا ئەتۆمۆمی تارا دهمەکی یا ئەرزانە، ژ لایەکی د یقە، دبیت تو بیژی کو نه یا نیمنە.					
5	Furthermore, free financial advice should be made available to retired people so that the stress of worrying about money could be reduced as far as possible.	زێدەباری فی چەندئ، بێدقیە شیرەتکاریا دارایی یا بی بەرامبەر بۆ کەسێن خاوەنشێن بهێتە تەرخانکرن داکو هەندی دشیاندا بیت فشارا خەما پاران ل سەر وان بهێتە کیمکرن.					
6	The Ukraine War is only a week old, so	شەڕ ئوکراینا د هەفتایا نیکی دایە، لەمۆرا هێشتا					

	it's far too soon to make any judgments about its outcome.	گهلهك زوويه برياران ل سمر دهر نهجامين وي بدهين.					
7	Nuclear power is relatively cheap. On the other hand, you could argue that it's not safe.	ووزا نهتوومي تا رادميكي يا نهمرزانه، نانكو دببت تو بيژي كو نه يا نيمنه.					
8	The cost of materials rose sharply last year. Accordingly, we were forced to increase our prices.	بهائين كهلوپه لان ل سالا بووري گهلهك بلند بوو. د نهجامدا نهم نهچار بووين بهائين كهلوپه لين خو بلند بكسين.					
9	He has a good job, and yet he never seems to have any money.	نهوي پيشهكا باش يا هه ي هيشتا چ جاران لي ديار نينه كو وي پاره بين ههين.					
#	Source text	Translation	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
10	Although the equipment was expensive, it was unreliable.	ههه چنده ئالاف بين گرا نهبا بوو، بهلي نهو نه جهي باوهريي بوو.					
11	Some people suffer economic hardships. Therefore, they want to leave their countries.	هندهك كهس ژ ناستهنگين نابووري د نالن، لهورا همز دكهمن وهلاتي خو ب جه بهيلن.					
12	I don't want to go shopping. Besides, I haven't got any money.	من نهقيت بچه بازاري. زيدهباري في چهندي، من چ پاره زي نينن.					
13	New technology is safer than old technology, provided that employees are familiar with the technological change.	تهكنولوژيا نوي نيمتره ژ تهكنولوژيا كهفن، ب مارجمكي فرمانيه ل گمل گوهور بينن تهكنولوژي دكههي بن.					
14	Adopting a baby from abroad is expensive. Parents have to pay the adoption agencies. Moreover, they have the expense of traveling to pick up the baby.	خهرجين خدانكرنا زاروكهكي ژ دهرقه گهلهك يا گرانه. پندقيه دايك و باب مهراختين دهرقههين خدانكرني بدن، زيدهباري في چهندي خهرجين گهشت كرني بو نينا زاروكي زي ل سمر وانه.					
15	Some people suffer economic hardships. Therefore, they want to leave their countries.	هندهك كهس ژ ناستهنگين نابووري د نالن، چونكي همز دكهمن وهلاتي خو ب جه بهيلن.					
16	He has a good job, and yet he never seems to have any money.	نهوي كارهكي باش بي هه ي، بهلي پا چ جاران لي ديار ناكهت كو نهوي پاره بين ههين.					
17	It helps to lower blood sugar so that you feel less hungry.	نهو هاريكاري كيمكرنا شهكرا خويني دكهت ژ بهركو تو كيتر ههست ب برسي بووني بكه ي.					
18	Technology is supposed to make our lives easier, but it can also be frustrating at times.	وسا دهينه هزركرن كو تهكنولوژيا زيانا مه ناستنتر بكهت، بهلي بهروفازي ههروسا دببت هندهك جاران بي هيفي كمر بيت.					
19	The Ukraine War is only a week old, so it's far too soon to make any judgments about its outcome.	شهري نوكرانيا د هفتيا نيكي دايه و هيشتا گهلهك زوويه دا كو برياران ل سمر دهر نهجامين وي بدهين.					
20	We all forget things. Nevertheless, we shouldn't worry.	نهم ههمي تشتان ژ بير دكهين، ههروسا پندقي ناكهت نهم خهمي ژي بخوين.					
21	I don't want to go shopping. Besides, I haven't got any money.	من نهقيت بچه بازاري و دگلهدا من چ پاره زي نينن.					



22	Some couples want to adopt American children. However, there are very few babies available in the U.S.	هندەك هەمژێنان دقێن بۆ خۆ زارۆكێن ئەمریکی خۆدان بکەن، سەر فێ چەندێ را، هژمارەکا گەلەك كێم یا زارۆكێن ساقا بۆ خۆدانكرنی ل ویلايەتێن ئێكگرتنیين ئەمریکا هەنە.					
23	Although the equipment was expensive, it was unreliable.	هەر چەوا بێت ئالاف بێ گرانیها بوو و نه جەهێ باوەریی بوو.					
24	I would not be too concerned, though, for it's also very common.	هەر چەندە ئەز گەلەك خەمی ژێ ناخۆم چونکی ئەقەژی تێشتەکی زۆر ئاساییه.					
25	We all forget things. Nevertheless, we shouldn't worry.	ئەم هەمی تێشتان ژ بێر دكەین، ل سەر وئ چەندێرا پێدقی ناکەت ئەم خەمی ژێ بخوین.					
#	Source text	Translation	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
26	Technology is supposed to make our lives easier, but it can also be frustrating at times.	وێسا دھێتە هزرکرن کو تەکنۆلۆژیا ژيانا مه ئاسانتر بکەت. بەلکو هەروەسا دبیت هەندەك جارەن بێ هەبێ کەس بێت.					
27	The cost of materials rose sharply last year. Accordingly, we were forced to increase our prices.	بەهائی کەلوپەلان ل سالا بووری گەلەك بلند بوو. چونکی ئەم نەچار بووین بەهائی کەلوپەلێن خۆبەلند بکەین.					
28	Unless there are changes in immigration patterns nearly one in five people will be an immigrant in 2050.	ئەگەر گۆرانکاری د شێوازیێن کۆچبەریی دا نەهێتە کرن نێزیکی 1 ل سەر 5 ئێ ژ خەلکی ل سالا 2050 ئێ دێ بێه کۆچبەر.					
29	It helps to lower blood sugar so that you feel less hungry.	ئەو هاریکاریا کێمکرن شەکرە خوینی دکەت دا کو تو کێمتر هەست ب برسی بوونی بکە.					
30	Adopting a baby from abroad is expensive. Parents have to pay the adoption agencies. Moreover, they have the expense of traveling to pick up the baby.	خەرجینی خۆدانکرنا زارۆکەکی ژ دەر فە گەلەك یا گرانه. پێدقییه دایک و باب مەزاختینی دەر گەهێن خۆدانکرنی بدەن، هەر چەوا بێت، خەرجینی گەشت کرنی بۆ ئێنانا زارۆکی ژێ ل سەر وانە.					
31	Furthermore, free financial advice should be made available to retired people so that the stress of worrying about money could be reduced as far as possible.	سەرەرایێ هەندێ کو پێدقییه شیرەتکاریا دارایی یا بێ بەرانبەر بۆ کەسێن خانەنشینی بهێتە تەر خانکرن ئەقەجا هەندێ د شیاندا بێت فشارا خەما پاران ل سەر وان بهێتە کێمکرن.					
32	Older people should eat several small meals a day. Otherwise, their memory might deteriorate.	پێدقییه ل سەر کەسێن خۆدان ژ بێن مەزوتر چەندین دانێن خوارنی بێن بچوێک ب درێژاها روژی بخۆن چونکی دبیت بێردانکا وان تێک بچت.					
33	Regular exercise strengthens the heart, thereby reducing the risk of heart attack.	وەرزشکرنا رێکخستی دلی ب هیز دنیخیت و پاشی مەترسیا نیشا دلی کێم دکەت.					
34	Older people should eat several small meals a day. Otherwise, their memory might deteriorate.	پێدقییه ل سەر کەسێن خۆدان ژ بێن مەزوتر چەندین دانێن خوارنی بێن بچوێک ب درێژاها روژی بخۆن ئەگەر نه دبیت بێردانکا وان تێک بچیت.					
35	Some couples want to adopt American children. However, there are very few babies available in the U.S.	هندەك هەمژێنان دقێن بۆ خۆ زارۆكێن ئەمریکی خۆدان بکەن، لێ هژمارەکا گەلەك كێم یا زارۆكێن ساقا بۆ خۆدانكرنی ل ویلايەتێن ئێكگرتنیين ئەمریکا هەنە.					