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J.P. Vinay & J. Darbelnet. *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995.

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This book, as the title suggests, is a translation-oriented contrastive and stylistic analysis of two languages, French and English, which combines description with methodological guidelines for translation.

The various chapters are filled with very detailed information which captures the reader's attention. For instance, the first chapter introduces the theoretical foundation for the comparative stylistic discussions of the subsequent chapters, and presents the methods of translation which provide the points of view of analysis for the other chapters which fully

examine and exemplify the seven approaches considered. In chapters two to four, the reader will notice a progression from the contrastive discussion of the individual items of the lexicon to syntactic structures and the full message. And in the appendix, the authors demonstrate the move from theory to practice by presenting a selection of nine texts with translation and short commentaries which illustrate the translation methods adopted.

This new edition of Vinay and Darbelnet's *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* is both a translation and a revision of the original published by Didier in Paris in 1958. It favours readers in the sense that the authors have made some alterations. These improvements have provided even more practical information: first, the French-English correspondences, equivalences and translation examples have been ex-

tended; second, worth noticing is that even though changes in linguistic fashion have occurred in the last decade, the original concepts and terminology have been preserved, but in a few cases comments are provided in the glossary; third, because the practical aspects of translation have grown rapidly, and in order to account for the changes in particular aspects of language usage, the authors have decided to attach to each chapter a list of books in English and French for further reading; and last, another interesting point is that the enlarged first chapter now presents two major sections, which will facilitate the reading and comprehension.

Although *Comparative Stylistics of French and English* is a valuable guiding tool for professional translators and students of translation and linguistics, it provides particulars of both the English and French languages which require a careful and attentive readership. Moreover, it could be claimed that Discourse Analysis is the basis of any real translation, that the linguistic analyses practised by Vinay and Darbelnet study "sign divorced

from messages", and that they cite "practical and pedagogical reasons" to justify their approach. This suggests that their practice in effect lends too much importance to the formal and contingent aspect of linguistic signs at the expense of the meaning that they carry in discourse.

From this perspective, I tend to agree that the linguistic analysis of French and English in the comparative stylistics falls short of discourse analysis, and it appears to lead to it only indirectly. Vinay and Darbelnet have contributed to translation in the sense that their study reveals many of the structural differences between the two languages, but as comparative linguists, they do not fully account for translation as a particular form of interpersonal communication where the translators associate words with ideas.

Nevertheless, this book is very enlightening and certainly suits some of my translation purposes. So, I recommend it for translators and students of translation in general as a guiding source of information.

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