

Henri Van Hoof. (1999). *Manual Práctico de Traducción Médica*. Granada: Editorial Comares. pp. 405. \$ 94.50 ISBN 2224011830

This handbook is a Spanish translation and adaptation of the original book written by Professor Van Hoof dealing with English-French medical translation. The handbook is translated and adapted by four Spanish translators, two of them University professors.

In the introductory chapter the Spanish translators explain the research methodology they have adopted in the translation of the book into the Spanish language. They say that the major difficulties when translating the handbook were related to terminology, since they introduce the medical Spanish equivalents of the English and French examples given by the author.

Chapter one deals with the process of translation. Van Hoof lists ten universal propositions about language and translation as the ten essential tools of communication.

Chapter two explains the relationship established between English and French since they are two languages in contact. Van Hoof establishes some propositions to describe this relationship, such as the English language is more synthetic and the French language is more analytic or the English language is concrete and the French language is abstract. The author also includes some pedagogical questions and also some medical translation exercises at the end of each proposition. These translation exercises have been adapted by the translators for the Spanish readers.

Chapter three includes different sections dedicated to different translation techniques, such as modulation, transposition, adaptation, equivalence and so on. Each translation technique is illustrated by examples in English, French and Spanish taken both from general language and medical language. There are again some practical translation exercises from English into Spanish at the end of each section of the chapter.

In chapter four Van Hoof describes specific problems in English-French medical translation. There are three sections in this chapter: (a) the first one deals with some terminological usage differences in the English and French medical community, that is, the use of a popular term or a formalized term depending on the medical register; (b) in the second section, Van Hoof explains the difficulties when translating general language terms used in English and French medical language; (c) finally, the third section is dedicated to some terminological differences between English and French, related to the use of suffixes, synonyms, eponyms and acronyms. All the sections are illustrated with examples in English, French and Spanish, except

section two. In this section only English and French general language terms are provided; however, the Spanish equivalents would have been of great interest for the Spanish translators and would help the reader to do the translation exercises at the end of each section.

The last chapter, chapter five, is a mini-dictionary of medical terms in English, French and Spanish. The chapter is divided into 16 sections, each section including basic terms pertaining to the body and organ systems. At the beginning of this last chapter the author explains that the last section of chapter five is devoted to medical phraseology; however, this section is missing in the book.

There are two major weaknesses in these five chapters: one is that the author/translators do not include the key to the translation exercises included at the end of the different chapters and the other one is that the translators do not explain how and where they found the Spanish equivalents of the English and French medical terms.

Finally, there is an appendix which comprises some medical texts in French that the reader has to translate into Spanish. Again, the author/translators give no clue as to how to solve some problems that may arise in the Spanish translation.

In conclusion, this is a useful handbook, especially for the English-French translator. The examples presented in the three languages are clearly illuminating and useful, although no clue is given as to the documentation of the different terms.

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