

Gouadec, Daniel (2007). *Translation as a Profession*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. xv, 396. €110,00 / \$ 149,00. ISBN 978 90 272 1681 6

In this highly-readable book, Daniel Gouadec writes about the second oldest profession in the world in a very clear and direct way, telling truths that sometimes hurt, but at the same time offering the reader a well-needed panoramic view of the translation profession.

The book consists of six sections. The first section starts with a presentation of the diversity of translations and an overview of the translation-localisation process. It moves on to describe the translation sequence broken down into clear and separate chronological operations and it focuses not only on the role of the translator, but also on the roles of the work provider, i.e. the client, and the reviser. The second section describes the translation profession and the translators' markets. It looks at different job profiles, such as that of the project manager, the terminologist, the technical writer, etc., and it provides information on the existing translation markets and the organization of demand. The third section considers the process of 'becoming' a translator, right from the moment people find out whether they have the required qualities to the moment when they set up shop or find a job. The author provides a step-by-step process on setting up one's own business and on becoming a freelance translator, giving special emphasis on how to find and, most importantly, how to hold on to clients. The fourth section concentrates on the vital professional issues of rates, deadlines, productivity, ethics, quality, standards, qualification and certification, as well as professional recognition. The fifth section focuses on the developments that have brought about considerable changes in the profession and industry, such as the ICT revolution and the arrival of workstations and CAT tools, and the impact of industrialisation, internationalisation, and globalisation. In the sixth and final section, which is devoted to the major issues involved in translator training, the author argues that the challenge that academics face nowadays is huge, given that there are many translation graduates who cannot find employment and too many employers who cannot find the right translators, and he goes on to provide information ranging from course structures and curricula, to the recruitment and training of qualified teaching staff. Oddly enough no references are given, but a glossary of terms is provided, together with a list of Websites for further browsing.

In a nutshell, and as the author himself points out, the book seeks to describe and analyse the true world of professional translation and answer the queries of anyone who practices translation and anyone who is thinking of entering the profession. And it indeed answers those queries. It actually helps professional translators by providing them with valuable

information regarding the job market, rates, translation tools and important tips on dealing with clients and avoiding basic mistakes. It also brings aspiring translators face to face with the challenges they have to deal with by focusing on the complexity and technicality of the tasks involved, the lack of official status of the profession and the lack of consideration for translation work. Yet, whether they will decide to embark on a translation career after reading the not so rosy picture of the profession as is painted by the author is highly questionable.

Notwithstanding, it is undeniable that the book is a precious contribution to the very limited literature on translation as a profession, and as such it is an essential read for existing and daring aspiring translation professionals alike. Academics and translation scholars will benefit from the book as well, as it can work as food for thought for research in areas not yet explored.

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