

**Montalt Resurrecció, Vicent and González Davies, María (2007). *Medical Translation Step by Step. Translation Practices explained.* Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 252 pp. £18.00. ISBN 1-900650-83-5**

This book deals with the basics of medical translation and with learning how to translate medical texts. It is the product of the authors' professional activity and it is aimed mainly at translation students, teachers of medical translation, professional translators, documentalists and physicians. The authors focus on three main aspects in this book: medical writing, translation practice and exploration of different learning paths. They follow a top-down approach to medical translation, that is why this book is a flexible tool to be consulted.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter contains several translation tasks, which are not restricted to any particular pair of languages, and a comprehensive list of detailed bibliographical references. Chapter 1 is an introduction to professional practice. It deals with several aspects such as: a historical overview of medical translation, characteristic features of medical translation, steps in the translation process, approaching the medical translation market, socialising with other translators, and specific competencies needed to become a professional medical translator.

Chapter 2 deals with understanding medical communication. In this chapter, authors explore the dynamic nature of medical communication, the type of participants in medical communication, the relationships among texts in written communication, and finally some common medical genres (fact sheets for patients, informed consents, patient information leaflets, case reports and review articles, among others).

The third chapter focuses on the acquisition of background medical knowledge. In fact, the first section can be considered as a self-study starting-point for the medical translator without a medical degree. Some aspects that are also discussed have to do with comprehension strategies, such as: text mapping, using etymological information, exploring metaphors and paraphrasing implicit information.

Chapter 4 pertains to the drafting of the target text. The first section is dedicated to the general principles guiding this process. A three-step drafting methodology is then discussed: composing, crafting and improving. These steps are presented one after the other and are considered to be interrelated aspects which feed back to one another (sections 3, 4 and 5). The chapter ends by discussing the concept of "transgeneric translation" and giving some guidelines to draft research papers in English.

Chapter 5 explains how to detect and solve translation problems. The

chapter starts with a description of different translation problems, strategies and solutions. Then, the different degrees of fidelity in any kind of translation are discussed. Sections 3, 4 and 5 tackle the problems of ambiguity, the translation of metaphors and cultural references. The concept of the "written protocol" is then explained in section 6. Finally, there is a short section dedicated to facing problems in the production stage which puts into practice the performance steps outlined in the former section. The whole chapter refers the reader to Appendix I, which provides a list of potential medical translation problems, strategies, procedures and solutions. However, only a few examples are given to illustrate these translation problems in English and Spanish. Therefore, it would have been helpful to have included a list of practical examples obtained from authentic medical texts in Appendix I.

The sixth chapter provides essential information about different types of sources to solve translation problems. For example, there are different guidelines to look for the adequate type of sources during the three stages of any translation assignment. Then, the authors explain how to build a virtual medical translation library by compiling an exhaustive list of electronic links related to different kinds of medical documentation. There is also a section dedicated to the danger of online information overload (section 3). Section 4 provides some information about how to find parallel texts in medical translation and how to obtain the collaboration of subject matter experts and other more experience translators.

The final chapter is dedicated to the study of medical terms and other units of specialised knowledge. The mechanisms of terminologisation are discussed in the first section. Then, the importance of Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes in medical terminology are discussed in depth. Two general tendencies of relevance for the translator can be observed: one towards standardisation and unification (section 3) and the other towards variation and innovation (section 4). More specifically, section 4 is devoted to the study of different terminological features that have to do with intra and interlinguistic variation. The concept of "de-terminologization" is defined in the next section. There are also some examples of translations that need to be adapted extensively in this fifth section.

The book ends with two appendices. Appendix 1 details some translation problems to be solved, explaining some translation strategies, procedures and solutions. Appendix 2 presents the most common Latin and Greek roots in medical terminology. Up-to-date references are provided at the end of the book and there is a detailed index that allows the reader to easily find specific topics.

The authors of this book do an excellent job of explaining the process of medical translation since they present a lot of guidelines about how to perform it successfully and they include many translation tasks that can be done either individually or in group. However, it would have been

helpful to provide the solutions to these tasks, since the answers would be very useful, especially for the Spanish readers.

In summary, this book is a well-written, comprehensive and practical textbook on medical translation. As the authors point out in the introduction, there are little literature and course books on medical translation. Therefore, this volume is an invaluable companion for medical translation students, lecturers of medical translation and also medical experts who wish to know the fundamentals of medical translation.

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