

BOOK REVIEW

A UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK ON TERMINOLOGY AND SPECIALIZED TRANSLATION (2011, NOA TALAVÁN)

BLANCA GARCÍA RIAZA
UNIVERSITY OF SALAMANCA

Many have been the coursebooks devoted either to Translation or Specialized Languages that have introduced readers to any of the fields, but joining these two apparently detached fields was something that had not yet been covered. *A University Handbook on Terminology and Specialized Translation* provides with an overview on the relevance of Specialized Terminology in the field of Translation practices and can be set up as an essential introduction to both fields, specially aimed at university students.

As already stated in the preface, this book is born out of the mutual dependency of Terminology and Specialized Translation, two fields that do not only benefit from, but also depend upon each other since neither a translation can be carried out without terminological knowledge, nor terminologists can stay apart from new texts being translated. As Talaván asserts in this respect, a merging of both fields will also help students by “enhancing their knowledge of the English language, especially with regard to its use in specialized fields” (p.4).

A pervasive idea developed throughout this book is that of providing readers (mainly specialized languages and translation students) with a balanced combination of theoretical principles, definitions of key concepts and practice, which enables them to get a complete panorama that will be very useful in their further academic and professional life. That is the essence of this handbook.

In a nutshell, the book can be divided into five parts. Each of the five parts constitutes an independent module that develops, in a progressive scale, a relevant issue that outlines deeper aspects in the blending of the two aforementioned fields. The first module is devoted to introducing the readers into the field of Terminology. Different Terminology meanings and users are described together with the resources available and the minimum quality criteria that the latter have to meet in order to be effective. Not until Terminology has been properly defined and depicted does the author introduce the close relationship between Terminology and Specialized Translation, so as to achieve a better understanding and contextualization of the relevance of bringing both fields together in the book.

The second module focuses on Specialized Translation, placing a special emphasis on the differentiation of general and specialized languages, an idea that will be recovered in the last two modules of the book. In this part, terminological units are defined both from a linguistic and from a functional point of view, being the latter perspective amplified with the description of neologisms and word-formation resources such as borrowings and calques. Subsequently, the second module turns its attention to the theoretical part of the practice, that is to say, it presents a series of principles and criteria that guide the practice of Terminography, and differentiates it from translation practices, two disciplines “between which there are a series of differences that should be identified” (p.27). The final part of this module describes the different steps that should be taken in a terminology search work, a very useful knowledge for students to be able to carry out systematic searches of terms, taking the basis of Cabré (1999), Talaván defines crucial stages of the process, such as preparation, elaboration and presentation of the terminological work carried out.

REVISTA ELECTRÓNICA DE LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA (ISSN 1885-9089)

2011, Número 10, páginas 207-209

Recibido: 01/04/2012

Aceptación comunicada: 05/04/2012

The third module of this handbook explores the most relevant guidelines that must be followed in translation practices. The author introduces the description of parallel texts, a necessary concept to later provide readers with “a series of strategies available for us to use whenever we encounter a specific translation problem and do not want to translate it literally” (p.39). These translation strategies are presented using a very clear classification that combines definitions and descriptions of their different uses together with illustrative examples that allow a better understanding of such a challenging process. Apart from considering purely equivalences of words, Talaván devotes a section to highlight the importance of cultural values’ transmission in translation processes. Both domestication and foreignization strategies are presented and portrayed in the light of audience consideration, thus encouraging the readers to bear in mind that they are working to produce a final result aimed to be read. The process of documentation is not left aside in this module, where the author stresses the relevance of searching for parallel texts, seeking the advice of native speakers or using translation memories as means to. Lastly, the third module deals with Computer Assisted Translation (CAT), a process in which the human translator relies on the assistance of software tools that enable him/her to reuse already translated terms. A special remark is made to avoid the association of CAT and Machine Translation (MT); in the latter the machine performs the whole translation process without the intervention of a human translator.

The fourth and fifth modules can be said to follow a similar pattern: a series of specialized languages are described in the context of translation practices that will be later performed by the students. Module four deals with humanistic, touristic and advertising texts, together with the language of Audiovisual Translation (AVT). Within each of these categories, Talaván provides readers with a detailed description of the text-types typically translated, as well as with a summary of the tasks and strategies that the translator has to bear in mind when attempting to carry out a translation in each field. Special attention is paid to the two main forms of AVT, dubbing and subtitling, which are thoroughly described following Chaume (2004) and Díaz Cintas (2003) respectively. Within the realm of AVT, concepts such as synchrony, time and space conventions, punctuation and orthotypographic elements are spotlighted and illustrated by means of examples that portray AVT “as an independent field in translation studies” (p.64).

Module five concentrates on scientific and technical texts, legal and administrative texts and financial texts. Within each of these categories, Talaván provides readers with a description of the contexts and professionals that typically produce this type of texts, followed by an ample repertoire of key terms that are commonly used in the translation of such documents, as well as patters of word formation (suffixes/prefixes, grammar change, etc) that will surely be very useful for students of Translation or Specialized Languages courses.

The whole handbook is peppered with tasks that are introduced to the students as the presentation of knowledge advances. These tasks allow readers to practice the knowledge acquired, in such a way that the book can easily be used in the classroom to enhance students’ autonomy, or even as a self-study coursebook for readers who want to get familiar with Terminology and Specialized Translation on their own. In fact, the pedagogical vision that underlies the whole book is successfully complemented by a final section (p.85-115) in which a key to the tasks proposed along the book is provided. Solutions to tasks are clearly and extensively exposed in such a way that they can be used by students as a resource to self-assess their performance in the modules or as a class material to trigger discussion among students.

In sum, this book is remarkable for its high level of clarity of explanation and exposition, as well as for the presentation of a convincing and up-to-date argumentation throughout the whole work. It represents an original contribution to a field which had not been described

before as a joint between Terminology and Specialized Translation, an innovation that advises the reading of this book.

References

- Cabré, M. T. (eds). 1999. *Terminology: Theory, Methods, and Applications*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Chaume, F. (2004). *Cine y traducción*. Madrid: Cátedra Ediciones.
- Díaz Cintas, J. (2003). *Teoría y práctica de la subtitulación*. Barcelona: Ariel Cine.