
Laviosa, Sara. *Corpus-based Translation Studies: Theory, Findings, Applications*. Amsterdam – New York, NY: Rodopi B.V., 2002, 138 pp.

Sara Laviosa's book, *Corpus-based Translation Studies: Theory, Findings, Applications*, explores the field of linguistic translation through a relatively new light; that of corpora. A corpus, as defined in Chapter 2, "Historical Review," is "a collection of texts assumed to be representative of a given language, dialect or other subset of a language, to be used for linguistic analysis." Author of six other works investigating this corpus-based approach, Laviosa defines and explains the principles, methodology, and discoveries of this type of linguistic translation.

In Laviosa's introduction, she describes the four following chapters of her study: "Historical Overview," "The Theory," "The Findings," "The Applications," and finally "Overview of Research in Progress," as well as providing a brief summary of their contents.

"Historical Overview" discusses the groups of tools necessary for the enhancement of corpora studies,

such as corpus retrieval programs used for sorting various formats of corpora, tools that work with different levels of corpora ("e.g. syntactic, semantic, pragmatic/discourse") and finally tools "which permit the interchange of information between corpora and lexical grammatical bases." Laviosa writes that the 1980s and '90s constituted decades of incredible growth with regard to corpus linguistics in the English-speaking world as well as in Europe. She quotes Leech as saying, "In January 1990 general monolingual corpora had already been created for sixteen European languages with a total of 365 million words."

Laviosa describes the theories of the motivation and rationale for studying corpora in "Corpus-based Translation Studies: the Theory." She asserts that a translation is a prisoner to the text that surrounds it and must respond accordingly to "its own immediate context." In other words, the context of the text exerts a great deal of pressure on the translation. In addition, Laviosa continues to touch upon the stresses of translation, drawing on Frawley's "third code," which states that "a translation is a derived, rather than an autonomous text," and that "translators' choices and solutions are influenced by the perceived so-

cial status of the text they are producing.” The author reiterates this statement as a primary example of the necessity of corpus-based studies in different languages, due to the unique ways of interpreting and translating the original text depending on the given culture.

The following chapter focuses on the “definition and construction of the object of study.” Here, Laviosa provides a general definition of a corpus, calling it “either a collection of texts or a collection of pieces of language.” She goes on to explain that these “texts and/or pieces” are put together based on certain criteria. Later in the chapter, she affirms that “a corpus designed for translation purposes can consist of only two works, for example, a source language text and a target language text.” By providing numerous examples of corpora translation, as well as by using numerous languages to support the previous statement, Laviosa does in fact illustrate the exclusivity of corpora when relating them to different languages and cultures. Corpora are then affected by the linguistic differences between cultures.

The last chapter outlines the way in which such corpus-based translation studies can and are being ap-

plied. Laviosa describes two different types of translators: those with “bilingual comparable corpora” and those with “monolingual comparable corpora.” She also explains how the professional translator can benefit from corpora studies: “S/he can draw on the insights provided by descriptive studies into the differences and similarities between languages, the different styles of translators, the optional and obligatory shifts which characterize the translation process, the patterning of translational language independently of the influence of the source language, the patterning of different text categories, as well as the most common translation equivalents.”

According to Sara Laviosa, uses of corpora studies are vast. However, the difficulties posed by outside factors when translating through corpora can also be enormous. The aim of *Corpus-based Translation Studies: Theory, Findings, Applications*, is to “examine and evaluate the main ideas, methods of analysis, findings and pedagogical applications in this relatively young and fast moving field of research.” Laviosa has done just that in a complex book that is most suitable for graduate studies.

Ginnelle Morley
St. Lawrence University
