

BOOK REVIEW

THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD OF TRANSLATION AS SEEN BY DANIEL GOUADEC

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Translation as a Profession, Daniel Gouadec, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007, 409 pp, €110.00 (hardcover), ISBN 9789027292513

Translation as a Profession by Daniel Gouadec aims to paint a picture of the translation world, describing and defining translation as a profession while also serving as a guide to anyone interested in joining this field of activity.

On a macro level, the volume is divided into 6 sections and 17 chapters, for a total of roughly 383 pages, walking a thin line between being a scientific book and a practical manual. Even the language used corroborates its dual nature, dancing to the tune of the chapter or section's objective. In the scientific parts, the language is methodical and rigorous, whereas in the more practical parts the author engages with the reader, giving advice in a way that feels natural and familiar.

The key word to describe the book is its comprehensiveness, as every single conceivable aspect of translation as a professional topic is covered at considerable length. However, comprehensiveness is also a double-edged sword. It is no secret that the translation market is not a big, clearcut circle divided into other smaller circles. It is rather a collection of splatters and odd shapes that overlap, converge, and intersect to form a large abstract painting.

The book can be grossly divided into two parts with two different objectives. The practical part aims to aid the reader in carrying out specific tasks and advise them on how to achieve their goals, while the scientific part describes the many different areas of translation as professional work.

In the more practical part, the author offers help and clears up misconceptions. This section is filled with tables and questions for self-assessment to guide the reader to success. The range of advice is massive, from simply helping the reader become a translator, to setting up a company, to even offering the author's opinion on how to manage a translation course and how future translators should be taught. Gouadec spreads his net very wide, so there is literally something for everyone.

The scientific part focuses on capturing the translation process and the translation market. Although it is no replacement for area-specific books, the descriptions it offers are far from shallow and serve as great entry points for anyone interested in a specific sub-area.

The book was released in 2007 and is, for better or worse, a product of its time. Both the practical and the scientific parts to some extent bear witness to this, as the landscape

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painted has now largely faded away. It is amusing and even nostalgia-provoking to read about "burning a CD/DVD" or PRAT (pencil and rubber-assisted translator). In other words, as time goes by, these pages will gain historical value, acting as a reminder of how much the market has changed and will continue to change, thus adding an additional layer.

Despite this, Gouadec's book still has much to offer anyone working in the field. Whether the reader is someone experienced in the field, a curious amateur, a researcher, a translation professional, or anyone in between, this work will undoubtedly have something for everyone to learn and is therefore worthy of being dubbed a bible of the field.

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