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SĂRMAȘIU ANDREEA. 2024. Investigating the Translatability of Legal Texts: *Designing Effective Transfer Strategies for Legal Translations*. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană. ISBN:978-606-37-2160-1. 182p.

Book Review

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The book falls within the field of philology, with ramifications in translation studies, lexicology, terminology, text analysis and discourse analysis, and is extremely rich in information. The author aims to research the translatability of legal texts and establish effective transfer strategies which can be applied to them. Andreea Sărmașiu completes successfully the PhD research focused on the translation of legal texts in Romania (see Cozma 2006, Zaharia 2011, Jumanca 2013, Reiss 2013, Iancu-Matei 2018, Neagu 2019) and brings added value to it through the originality of her approach, since the concept of translatability had not been investigated in depth in Romania, nor had it been associated with legal texts for the Romanian-English language pair. The book is therefore valuable both through the contribution it makes to the development of translation studies in general, and of legal translation in particular, as well as through its original and innovative approach.

The book consists of three main chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction is preceded by a list of abbreviations, a list of figures and tables, and a foreword; the conclusion is followed by a bibliography and a list of appendices.

The introduction is a chapter in itself, being structured and developed in the following sections: research objectives, research directions, research methodology and presentation of the thesis structure. The ease with which Andreea Sărmașiu uses the specialized discourse, the accuracy of her expressions, the richness of the

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resources used and the very clear way of structuring and presenting the research results are noticeable right from the introduction.

Chapter 1, *Situating Legal Translations within Translation Studies*, is divided into two parts, in which the author (1) makes a series of general observations regarding theoretical approaches to translation and (2) presents the particularities of legal translation from three perspectives, namely linguistic, communicative and professional. In this chapter, Andreea Sărmașiu makes an extensive translational journey, citing and critically commenting on a series of fundamental works signed by authors from European or American translation schools, who laid the foundations of translation studies as an independent discipline, such as Catford (1965), Nida and Taber (1982), Vermeer (1984) and others, but also from other well-established contemporary specialists, such as Munday (2001), Williams and Chesterman (2002), Greere (2003), Vîlceanu (2008), Biel & Engberg (2013), Dejica (2013), and others, thus proving a very good knowledge of the field. This critical synthesis allowed her to achieve successfully the objectives proposed in the first chapter, namely, to present a classification of translation, and implicitly of legal translation, through different and valid perspectives, in order to demonstrate the specificity of legal translation through an interdisciplinary analysis, with an emphasis on translation as process and translation as product.

In Chapter 2, *Determining the Translatability of Legal Texts Through Theoretical Approache*s, the author presents in three sub-chapters the process of legal translation, the problems and strategies for legal translations and the professional skills needed in approaching legal translations. This chapter is one of synthesis as well: it is accompanied by the author's comments, who manages to present in a holistic and integrative manner the essential concepts for the research proposed in order to establish translatability. Examples include textual typologies, linguistic conventions, both general and for the legal field, translation principles, strategies or problems, or professional skills, as introduced and developed in the specialized literature by Swales (1990), Nord (1991), Bhatia (1993), Trosborg (1997), Newmark (1981), Gutt (1991), Venuti (1988), Bassnett (2002), Dejica (2010) and many others. The synthesis is complex, useful and well-structured, and is relevant both for the translation of semi-specialized and specialized legal texts. The commentary is detailed and qualitative, being complemented at the same time by numerous tables, figures and graphic representations, very useful in communicating science. These are the main ingredients that allowed the author to lay the foundations of an original theoretical model to analyze the optimal translatability of legal texts, which she describes and presents graphically at the end of the chapter. The model, which is based on the description of translation from the perspective of theorists, translators and receivers of the target text, will be used as an analysis tool in the next chapter.

In Chapter 3, *Researching legal translation. Applying specific strategies in the legal translation process*, the author addresses the problems and strategies specific to legal translations, which she analyzes from a textual perspective and reclassifies them through a virtual workshop on legal translation. Last but not least, in

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this chapter, Andreea Sărmașiu presents a series of approaches necessary to maintain and develop professional translation skills. To fulfil her proposed objectives, the author builds a corpus of legal texts in Romanian, which she selects in an original manner, using equivalence, and conventional and functional filters. The first part of Chapter 3 is dedicated to their description.

The chapter continues with the analysis of intratextual and extratextual factors. For the intratextual analysis, the author performs an analysis of the translation instructions (translation brief) supplemented by the analysis of the source text (T.O.S.T.A.), as proposed in the specialized literature by Nord (1991) and Barabino (2020). It is worth noting the large and diverse number of texts considered in the textual analysis (100, made from 10 representative texts for 10 different sections), the quality and clarity of the analysis, but also the fact that the author extracted 50 specialized terms and expressions for which she offered possible versions into English, thus proving that she also has the experience and qualities of a true translator and terminologist.

For the extratextual analysis, Andreea Sărmașiu conducted two legal translation workshops in collaboration with the Department of Applied Modern Languages in Cluj-Napoca, through the Zoom platform, in which 40 participants took part. The workshops aimed to investigate and validate the translatability of legal texts from Romanian into English by establishing some contextual aspects (intratextual and extratextual elements) and identifying and reclassifying some problems and strategies specific to particular situations in order to reach a common conclusion regarding the activity of legal translation. The approach proved to be successful, and the author managed to demonstrate the reciprocity that exists between theory and practice, the academic and the professional environment, the field of translation and other fields, through an interdisciplinary approach. During the workshop, the participants also filled out a questionnaire regarding their continuous professional training, the results of which Andreea Sărmașiu comments and presents in a graphic manner in this chapter, as well.

The conclusion is dedicated to the presentation of the research results and some limitations and suggestions for future research. At the same time, Andreea Sărmașiu reconfirms the fact that the main objective formulated in the initial phase of the research, namely the investigation of the translatability of legal texts and the establishment of effective transfer strategies for them, has been fulfilled.

Overall, Andreea Sărmașiu approaches an interesting and extremely complex topic, starting from a vast bibliography, which she assimilates and interprets critically. The topic chosen and the research carried out are extremely useful, the author contributing through her conclusions and results to the development of translation studies and especially of legal translation in Romania.

Regarding the research approach, the author manages to successfully combine her own analysis carried out on the corpus with the results obtained following the organization of two translation workshops, thus proving that she is connected to current trends in research, which recommend combining qualitative and

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quantitative analysis for the fields of linguistics and translation studies, as well (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013).

The book is well structured and coherent, and the chapters are balanced. The appendices include the corpus of analyzed Romanian texts and the questionnaire used in the translation workshops.

The author's bibliography chapter is complex and well-structured in sub-chapters, which include in the form of a list the analyzed corpus as well as the specialized bibliography. From the cited titles, one may identify fundamental works, but also specialized works published recently, in the years 2020 or 2021, which prove that the author is familiar with the most recent publications in the field. This aspect is visible in the very clear description of the research approach, in the detailed syntheses that the author makes in the first two chapters, and in particular, in the applied part of the third chapter of the thesis.

The bilingual tables made by the author, with terms from the legal field, are very useful. I believe that they can be used as a starting point for creating a contextual legal glossary or dictionary, which will certainly be a very useful tool for translators.

The reviewed book is important in in the field of translation in general, and in the field of specialized legal translation in particular. Also, through the original approach and analysis of the translatability of legal texts, the author offers translators and all those interested, the opportunity to understand the field of legal translation better, this aspect representing one of the keys to felicitous translation.

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