# **Becoming a Translator**

An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation Third Edition

# **Douglas Robinson**

With additional technology-related contributions by Dorothy Kenny



# Contents

	List of figures	ix
	Acknowledgements	xi
	Introduction	1
1	External knowledge: the user's view	5
	Internal and external knowledge 6	
	Reliability 7	
	Textual reliability 7	
	The translator's reliability 11	
	Timeliness 14	
	Cost 17	
	Conclusion 17	
	Discussion 19	
	Exercises 20	
	Suggestions for further reading 21	
2	Internal knowledge: the translator's view	23
	Who are translators? 24	
	Professional pride 26	
	Reliability 26	
	Involvement in the profession 27	
	Ethics 27	
	Income 30	
	Speed 31	
	Project management 45	
	Raising the status of the profession 45	
	Enjoyment 45	

#### vi Contents

Conclusion 47 Discussion 52 Exercises 57 Suggestions for further reading 57

### 3 The process of translation

The shuttle: experience and habit 60 Charles Sanders Peirce on instinct, experience, and habit 62 Abduction, induction, deduction 63 Karl Weick on enactment, selection, and retention 65 The process of translation 67 Discussion 71 Exercises 71 Suggestions for further reading 72

### 4 Drawing on experience: How being a translator is more than just being good at languages

73

What experience? 74 Intuitive leaps 77 Pattern-building 82 Rules and theories 83 Conclusion 86 Discussion 86 Exercises 87 Suggestions for further reading 88

## 5 Starting with people: Social interaction as the first key focus of translators' experience of the world

**89** 

"The meaning of a word is its use in the language" 90 Experiencing people 92 First impressions (intuitive leaps) 93 Deeper acquaintance (pattern-building) 95 Psychology (rules and theories) 101 Conclusion 102 Discussion 104 Exercises 104 Suggestions for further reading 106

# 6 Working with people: The workplace as the interactive setting for specialized terminologies 107

A new look at terminology 108 Faking it (intuitive leaps) 109 Working (pattern-building) 111 Terminology studies (rules and theories) 116 Conclusion 116 Discussion 119 Activities 119 Exercises 119 Suggestions for further reading 121

# 7 Translation as an operation performed in and on languages

123

Translation and linguistics 124 What could that be? (intuitive leaps) 125 Doing things with words (pattern-building) 128 The translator and speech-act theory (rules and theories) 132 Conclusion 135 Discussion 136 Exercises 137 Suggestions for further reading 142

### 8 Working and understanding through social networks 143

The translator as social being 144 Pretending (intuitive leaps) 146 Pretending to be a translator 146 Pretending to be a source reader and target author 149 Pretending to belong to a language-use community 150 Learning to be a translator (pattern-building) 153 Teaching and theorizing translation as a social activity (rules and theories) 154 Skopos theory 156 The sociological turn in twenty-first-century translation studies 160 Conclusion 164 Discussion 165 Exercises 165 Suggestions for further reading 172

## 9 The impact on translation of culture(s) 173

Cultural knowledge 174 Self-projection into the foreign (intuitive leaps) 178 Immersion in cultures (pattern-building) 180 Intercultural awareness (rules and theories) 183 Conclusion 188 Discussion 190 Exercises 190 Suggestions for further reading 195

### 10 When habit fails

The importance of analysis 198 The reticular activation system: alarm bells 200 Checking the rules (rules and theories) 204 Checking synonyms, alternatives (pattern-building) 210 Picking the rendition that feels right (intuitive leaps) 211 Conclusion 211 Discussion 212 Exercise 212 Suggestions for further reading 213

Bibliography Index **197** 

215

227