

and are also extremely useful to locate and apprehend the text regarding the representation of worldviews in interactional contest, in search of dialogue.

All in all, I honestly consider it necessary to value the relevance and possibilities offered by the concept of liminality at the present time of literary studies, engaged in a rich interdisciplinary relationship with cultural studies, comparative literature, translation studies and discourse analysis, among others, without forgetting the growth of interest in thresholds and boundaries,

associated especially with genre studies, postcolonialisms and gender studies. Reading this book, liminality, which could be related to other useful cultural bridging conceptualizations such as Homi Bhabha's 'third space' or Gloria Andaluza's 'borderland/*frontera*', is presented in an intensive and accurate way, from a conscious picture of its possibilities, from a concise and potential aperitif that conveys a very good taste.

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Anabel BORJA ALBI.

El texto jurídico inglés y su traducción al español.

Barcelona: Ariel, Lenguas Modernas, 2000.

*Legal equivalence is not possible;
legal translation is.*

Anabel Borja

In less than one year of existence, Dr. Borja's book has become one of the most used and useful references in legal translation teaching and practice. It could not be otherwise. Its author's professional profile, her research, and also the remarkable time translation studies is going through have all contributed to the quality of this work, a first step in a series of specialised studies in translation that Ariel has set up to publish.

This book comes into being in the era of the specialised translation. For centuries, the translation of literature, or even of poetry alone, has been the only concern of translation theory. Whereas this area of studies continues to be the most prestigious in an academic milieu, the professional market has been pushing for some decades for the specialised areas to find a place in this

context. Works like the one by Dr. Borja's echo this reality and become a most valuable resource for scientific, technical, economic, or legal translators.

The book aims at studying the legal translation between two major languages: English and Spanish. Following a bottom-up perspective, it covers three areas, which lead to an increasingly deeper view of legal translation as a professional, discourse activity. Thus, the author covers in her research legal language and texts, legal translation itself, and the legal translator.

The first block, which comprises chapters one to five, is a survey of traditional and recent studies of English legal language from a discourse analysis point of view. This part leads to the definition of the features of English legal language as a textual phenomenon. In chapter one, the author suggests a functional definition of 'legal language' as that language which is used in the communication between, from, or directed to public authorities, as well as that used

between individuals in activities which may have legal consequences (such as agreements or wills). Next a historical framework is offered (chapter 2) which supports the functional view of legal language and allows the author to trace back the features of English legal language as described in chapter 3.

In chapter 4, we are gently driven from a microlinguistic analysis into a textual perspective where text and context are seen as interwoven. Here we can appreciate the influence of the discourse analysis trend in translation studies where theorists such as Hatim & Mason (1990) plead for a three-layered textual analysis, where pragmatic, semiotic, and communicative features are taken into account. Anabel Borja applies this framework to legal texts and text types and the result is a sound reflection into the use of English legal language as seen in real texts, and the context where it develops.

The author offers in chapter 5 her own classification of legal texts, focusing on text type relationships between both source and target culture. In establishing her criterion, she surveys typologies based on the branches of the law, the function of texts, or the communicative situation. However, the classification produced in this book sets off, for example, a sales agreement and an act regulating the sale of goods, whereas this act would be under the same category as an act to regulate the relationships between landlord and tenant. The final taxonomy is reached inductively and takes in the way in which primary users (such as lawyers or judges) organize their own textual knowledge. In presenting her classification, we are offered a wide view of legal texts in the Spanish and the English culture, which includes the description of the communicative situation, the purpose the users pursue in choosing one text or the other, and an overview of the textual features of some documents.

Such a classification is planned to lead to the establishing of relationships between source culture (that is English) and target culture (Spanish) text types. Therefore it is a useful reference for the identification of parallel texts (e.g. a 'judgment' and a 'sentencia'), a tool with which a translator is able to compare for example source and target terminology and phraseology, or also text type conventions.

In the next chapter – 6 – Dr. Borja defines what legal translation is and discusses the confusion of this with official translation. Most illustratively, one example tells us that whereas an official translation may be needed for a love letter to be presented in court, legal translation would be restricted to law-related texts. In her definition of legal translation, the author stresses the fact that it is not restricted to one mode (written texts), but it also includes audiovisual translation and interpreting (oral texts). The last pages in this chapter are a very useful survey of a wide range of articles dealing with legal translation, distinguishing different groups of concerns for researchers of legal translation.

Chapter 7 is devoted to the profession of legal translators. This is a sound description of the actual profile of translators and interpreters faced with legal translations to be consumed in Spain and of the legal framework in which they work. The author shows a deep view of this professional activity in tackling the concept of 'equivalence in translation' in chapter 8. Conceptual density and lack of equivalence between legal systems are difficulties facing the translator who, even under these circumstances, finds an equivalence in translation. The strategies translators apply in finding the solution depend, as the author tells us, on their customer and the function of their translation. These remarks are illustrated with real examples and some concluding guidelines for legal translation.

In chapter 9, the book deals with the sources of documentation legal translators have at their disposal. The author offers a general view of existing resources and stresses the importance of the knowledge acquired through practice and which can take a material shape and be systematically filed by translators themselves for future use. This chapter ends by giving a great deal of useful references which include electronic data bases, web sites, and newsgroups.

In her epilogue, the author sketches some future perspectives for research in the field of legal translation. She particularly focuses on the usefulness of corpus linguistics, empirical studies of translation practice, and the developing of software which takes advantage of the recurring phraseology and structures of legal text types. Finally, we have a generous catalogue of literature on this subject and

also a very generous list of reference works for the practice of legal translation between English and Spanish.

All in all, the book under review here is a very generous work where a professional and researcher lets the general public into some of the magic formulae otherwise reserved to those who dare to undertake this complex branch of translation. The author's final wish, stated in the epilogue, for the legal translator to lead a better life, is undoubtedly a guiding principle for her research, and hers is a very remarkable contribution to that cause.

References

Hatim, B. & I. Mason, *Discourse and the Translator*, London, Longman, 1990.

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Mireia LLINÀS,
Petites paraules. ¿D'on surt la gramàtica?
Barcelona: Empúries, 2001.

Petites paraules. ¿D'on surt la gramàtica? is a comprehensive overview of the basic concepts and corollaries of Generative grammar, a theoretical framework first proposed by Noam Chomsky which attempts to approach language scientifically by formulating and checking hypotheses, by predicting what language will allow and what it will not. This theory basically seeks to explain (i) adult grammatical knowledge from a global point of view, that is, including all languages in the world, and (ii) how language is acquired and develops in the human mind assuming that humans are genetically endowed to acquire an adult grammar.

The book is divided into five main chapters which, in turn, are further subdivided into more specific sections headed by an explanatory title. A great deal of useful examples are included throughout the text in order to clarify theoretical issues, as well as to lead the reader to think about his or her own linguistic knowledge. An analytic index of relevant concepts is included at the end, so that the book can be used for quick consultation.

Simplicity (but not shallowness) is a key word to define the book: the author tries to move away from specialised jargon when possible, offering plain definitions and explanations whenever a tech-