

Contents

Acknowledgements	xi
About this book	xiii
Using this book	xiv
1. Scientific and Technical Translation	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.1.1 Some distinctions	2
1.1.2 Historical significance	3
1.1.3 Modern scientific and technical translation	5
1.1.4 Some legal dimensions	6
1.2 A place for translation theory?	8
1.2.1 Recreating the source text	8
1.2.2 Focusing on the target text	11
1.3 Tools of the trade	14
1.3.1 General tools	16
1.3.2 Text processing tools	16
1.3.3 Translation tools	17
1.4 Who's who in scientific and technical translation?	18
1.4.1 The translator	20
1.4.2 The clients	23
2. Translation and Technical Communication	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 What is technical communication?	25
2.2.1 Generic features of technical communication	27
2.3 Who reads technical documentation?	30
2.3.1 Understanding audiences	30
2.3.2 Finding out who the audience is	35
2.3.2.1 Asking the right questions	37
2.4 Knowing what you're talking about	42
3. Understanding Technical Documentation	47
3.1 Introduction	47
3.1.1 Specific features of technical documentation	47
3.1.1.1 Language	48
3.1.1.2 Facts and specifications	52
3.1.1.3 References	53
3.1.1.4 Graphics	54
3.1.1.5 Formulae, equations and scientific notation	56
3.2 Typical text types	58

3.2.1	Manuals	59
3.2.2	Applications and proposals	62
3.2.3	Reports and scientific papers	63
3.2.4	Presentations	65
3.2.5	Regulatory documents	67
3.2.6	Popular science	68
3.2.7	A word on how texts are structured	69
3.2.8	Making sense of text types in translation	70
4.	Case Studies	74
4.1	Introduction	74
4.2	Scientific Journal Paper	74
4.3	Technical Data Sheet (TDS)	82
4.4	Creating your own document profiles	89
4.4.1	Document Profile Sheet	90
4.5	Test Instructions	91
4.6	Expert Technical Report	94
4.7	User Guide	101
4.8	Popular Science Book	106
4.9	Certificate of Conformity	111
4.10	Technical Case Study	114
5.	Basic Translation Techniques	118
5.1	Introduction	118
5.2	The basics	118
5.2.1	Direct translation	118
5.2.1.1	Literal translation	119
5.2.1.2	Borrowing	120
5.2.1.3	Calque	120
5.2.2	Oblique translation	120
5.2.2.1	Equivalence	121
5.2.2.2	Transposition/Recategorization	121
5.2.2.3	Modulation	122
5.2.2.4	Adaptation	123
5.2.3	Expansion and contraction	124
5.2.3.1	Recycling information	125
5.2.4	Generalizing and particularizing	127
5.2.5	Compensation	128
5.2.6	Restructuring	129
5.2.7	Iconic Linkage	130
5.3	What type of translation are you producing?	132
5.3.1	Instrumental and documentary translations	134
5.3.2	Producing a translation brief	137

5.3.3	When not to translate	138
5.3.3.1	Official translations and proper names	140
5.3.3.2	Laws	140
5.3.3.3	European Directives	141
5.4	Writing within limits	142
5.4.1	Terminology	144
5.4.2	Clarity, readability and usability	145
5.4.3	Editing and proof-reading	147
5.4.3.1	Reviewing the work of another translator	147
5.4.3.2	General hints for editing and reviewing translations	148
5.5	When in doubt	148
6.	Pitfalls, Problems and How to Deal with Them	152
6.1	Introduction	152
6.2	Abbreviations and acronyms	152
6.3	Formulae and Equations	154
6.4	Quantities and units of measure	155
6.5	Currencies	158
6.6	Culture and Familiarity	159
6.7	Errors in the Source Text	161
6.8	Sample text and computer code	162
6.9	Graphics, screenshots and menus	165
6.10	Product names	167
6.11	Contact details	168
6.12	Scenarios and examples	170
6.13	Giving warnings and advice	171
6.14	References to other documents	174
6.15	Partially translated source texts	174
6.16	Latinisms and scientific nomenclatures	175
6.17	Instructions that do not make sense	180
6.18	Tables of contents and indices	182
6.19	Formatting and layout	183
6.20	Managing and naming files	184
6.21	Using the Internet	185
	Bibliography	190
	Appendix 1. Glossary of Terms	196
	Appendix 2. Scientific Notation & Units of Measure	202
	Appendix 3. Hazard, Risk and Safety Phrases	206
	Appendix 4. Sample Document Profiles	212
	Index	226