
Sprung, Robert C. (ed.) *Translating into Success: Strategies for Going Multilingual in a Global Age*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2000, 239 pp.

Translating into Success: Strategies for Going Multilingual in a Global Age, edited by Robert C. Sprung, also editor of *Language International* (a trade magazine for the language professions), is a collection of inspiring case studies and process reviews of real companies struggling and succeeding in multilingual expansion. The American Translators Association sponsors the compilation, as part of the Scholarly Monograph Series, aiming, according to Sprung, to provide the language industry with urgently needed "standards of excellence." Each of the fifteen case studies is embedded in one of the five sections of *Translating into Success*: Cross-Cultural Adaptation, Language Management, Localizing the Product, Language Tools and Techniques, and Language Automation. *Time magazine*, Microsoft, and Eastman Kodak are among the companies engaged in globalization that

recount their successful battles of *internationalization* (designing a product so that it supports usage around the world) and *localization* (taking a product and tailoring it to an individual local market).

Rather than express a direct opinion on the mechanics of translation, Sprung cites translation as a thankless job lacking force in the United States, a phenomenon that he blames on the educational system. He affirms that a good translation "does not enjoy praise, it merely avoids criticism," but claims "the tides are turning," as more companies contribute billions of dollars to important multilingual versions of their products. *Translating into Success* focuses on translation as less of "a secretarial job" and more of an art, according to Sprung. Issues addressed in the compilation include adapting of products into global markets, while at the same time maintaining the style of the product in the original language, *localizing* products for markets throughout the world, and lessening the time that multilingual products are delayed entry into the market due to translation issues.

In "Adapting *Time Magazine* for Latin America" Sprung collaborates with Alberto Vourvoulias-Bush, deputy editor for Time Latin

America, to report on the preparation of *Time* magazine for a Latin American audience in both Spanish and Portuguese. Two of the major hurdles *Time* needed overcome included preserving their signature style in the foreign-language version in order to achieve the varied audience *Time* captures in the United States and working within a forty-eight hour time frame in order to convert 10,000 words to the second languages every week. To maximize multilingual potential, *Time* employs a translation company, Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Harvard Translations, Inc., of which Sprung is both chairman and founder. Perhaps the most important translation technique employed in the extremely successful multilingual versions of *Time* released in Latin America is the presence of idioms and headlines that have significance to the Latin American target audience. Sprung admits that the retention of a signature style in the second language is a great obstacle, but is an attainable goal as long as the translators are intensely familiar with both languages. A novel introduction concept to a global audience utilized by *Time* was the publication of smaller articles written by *Time* within newspapers in Latin America, serving to familiarize and

publicize the arrival of *Time Latin America*.

Bernard Kohlmeier, executive vice-president for strategic development at Browne Global Solutions, recounts the *localization* of Microsoft *Encarta*, an encyclopedia software program, for both German and Spanish consumers. The most valuable advice contained in the "Microsoft *Encarta* Goes Multilingual" chapter is the expansion and cultural adaptation of software to guarantee its success in a global market. In a multilingual version of an encyclopedia, or any periodical for that matter, it is important for the company to provide detailed articles on topics of interest to the target audience. For example, in a Spanish or German version, as in the case of *Encarta*, Kohlmeier deems European history as worthy of more extensive and comprehensive articles than one would expect to find in the original US version. Translation for a multilingual audience includes editing and marketing decisions that recognize a target audience's needs and interests.

Suzanne Topping, owner of Localization Unlimited, which provides localization consulting and training services, contributes "Shortening the Translation Cycle at Eastman Kodak" to the "Localiz-

ing the Product” section of *Translating into Success*. The article presents the dilemma faced by Kodak in the extremely competitive worldwide market for digital cameras. Topping affirms that while Kodak strives to schedule new product announcements strategically around the world, once products are released in the US, worldwide demand tends to rise faster than Kodak can handle. Instruction manuals need to be translated before a product can be advertised in a global market, which signifies that the absence of a translation severely jeopardizes the product. It is interesting to note that in selling a camera in another language, one must consider more than the instruction manual. So much more must be translated into the second language, including the camera-user interface, packaging, software included with the product, help systems, read-me files, installers, and CD sleeves. Topping proposes that the cause of the lengthy translation cycle lies in product development. She proposes centralized

testing of products as a manner of reducing time between versions on the route to a final multilingual product. According to Topping, “as long as the time spent on localization is greater than zero, there will always be pressure to do it faster, better, and more cost-effectively.”

What can companies aspiring to become multilingual forces in the global marketplace anticipate in the increasingly wired new millennium? *Localizing* software, *internationalizing* products, and decreasing time to market for multilingual versions can seem both expensive and timely. However, the monetary benefits to be gained by tapping into global markets outweigh the costly effort of creating multilingual versions. *Translating into Success: Strategies for Going Multilingual in a Global Age* provides valuable suggestions for minimizing both the time required and the cost of creating multilingual product versions so that companies can succeed in their multilingual endeavors.

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