



In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation

Mona Baker

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This bestselling *Coursebook* addresses the need for a systematic approach to training in translation studies by drawing on key areas in modern linguistic theory and relating them systematically to a number of translation problems and strategies. The strategies are identified by an examination of authentic examples of translated texts in a variety of languages. No knowledge of linguistics or foreign languages is assumed. Each chapter begins with an explanation of the key linguistic concepts referred to and ends with a series of practical exercises. By striking a balance between theory and practice, the book provides a sound basis for training professional translators.

In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation Details

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Lucy says

This book didn't add anything new to what I already know, therefore I found it useless and a waste of time. However, it's well written and all the ideas are clear and very easy to understand/follow, especially with all the amount of examples in different languages provided.

I'd recommend this book to anyone beginning their translation studies.

Numnum AlQassab says

So, one year later, I decided to change my rating from 2, to 4 stars. It seems that I only realized the value of this book two semesters later. When I first took this, it was like any other textbook. However, I now realize that it has in fact introduced me to terminologies that no other student knows of, it has brought to me examples that have in fact, broadened my horizon, and showed me the interesting side of languages (and translating them).

Lia Wibyaninggar says

well, terima kasih buanyaakkk buat buku ini (dan penulisnya). Buku ini adalah salah satu referensi utama untuk skripsi saya. Recommended sekali untuk para peminat bidang penerjemahan. Saya suka contoh-contoh yang dihadirkan di sana, dari beragam bahasa: English, 'Aroby, Nihongo, Zhong Wen, bahkan bahasa Indonesia. :)

Adrian Buck says

This book has opened my mind to the argument that languages should be protected like endangered species. Previously, I had been in favour of an Anglophone world with hobby languages for the enthusiast - like Spanish, or Chinese. I thought that if there was any need for 41 words for snow, English would pick them up any way. But this book's detailed discussion of the actual differences between languages shows that they are not merely superficial lexicogrammatical differences but there are grammatical categories that English doesn't use at all, such as 'Topic'. Chinese is a topic-prominent language. The absence of whole a grammatical category, means that there is no fully adequate translation, and we might just lose out through language extinction.

Dion Yulianto says

Terima kasih, kamu sangat berjasa untuk skripsi saya *peluk-peluk bukunya walaupun cuma minjem :p

Vivienne Zhou says

A wonderful book for people who are new to translation study. It not only provides the theories for translation but also comes with illustrative examples that help learners grasp the theories and apply to real work. I found it very helpful when writing up my theoretical essay about cohesive devices.

Peggy says

I bought this book as I intend to sit a translation exam, my intention was home study, but I believe the book may also be on the reading list for uni courses. It teaches translation theory which can be applied to all language combinations.

The author, Mona Baker, is a Professor of Translation Studies at the University of Manchester.

The book has 8 chapters which shows the topics covered:

1. Introduction
2. Equivalence at word level
3. Equivalence above word level
4. Grammatical equivalence
5. Textual equivalence : thematic and information structures
6. Textual equivalence: cohesion
7. Pragmatic equivalence
8. Beyond equivalence: ethics and morality

I have never studied translation at Uni and wanted to prepare myself to sit the Diploma in Translation. I found the structure very good as it starts off with basic theories and goes on to more complicated issues. I was easily able to get myself into the basics. I especially liked the way examples are shown to explain certain theories, and even though my language combination is English-German, the examples from other language combinations are easily understood.

In short, the book helped me to understand the basics of translation theory. From about chapter 5, it started to get difficult for me to understand without the help of a tutor, but if you set your mind to it and got peace and quiet at home for it, it can certainly be done. I also found the exercises at the back of every chapter rather hard and would have definitely benefited from a tutor group. I attempted them but quickly gave up.

Again to emphasise that I bought the book as a home study and reviewed it as such. It helped with the basics, but in later chapters I had to admit defeat - it will be perfect for a Uni student or if you have previously studied translation theory in other settings. I would also have to say that I have a Uni degree in a different subject, I don't think I would attempt the book if you have no knowledge of reading academic texts.

Piotr says

The first significant step taken by Baker is arranging the contents into inductive order. Such an approach stands in the opposition with a standard practice of descriptive translation, but it makes the whole thing much

more accessible for learners. It also helps to raise awareness of the meaning of every single linguistic item. The examples in the coursebook are not English-focused which is another advantage, on the other hand, I feel like grumbling about relative low diversification of reference texts. The focus mentioned above is of utmost importance in nowadays world of speeding up globalization which is not in favor of language multifariousness.

I believe the whole thing is a must-read for those who take any translation-related courses. Maybe but the last chapter - that one takes too much focus on the lengthy theoretical explanation of linguistic phenomena that we instinctively can describe and apply in practice. 'In other words' is all about sharing the essentials, so I fully understand the need for doing so, yet it was not a grand finale for this amazingly practical and interesting coursebook.

Ty Kendall says

Faaaaaaantastic book!

Great introductory read to translation studies.

Nicely presented and they did a great job with clarity when it came to non-roman scripts, especially when presenting Chinese examples.

I would have like more Hebrew examples lol ;-)) naturally... but the Arabic ones they used were of similar interest nonetheless and usually applicable to Hebrew anyway.

Chapter 5 on textual equivalence was a bit dense, but not insurmountable. I have a definite preference for the Hallidayan framework! The Prague school of thought on this matter is a bit mind-boggling!

Also found the chapters on cohesion and coherence very useful! I've studied these before but not from a translation angle, definitely added a new dimension.

The final chapter on ethics and morality is a nice addition to this new edition of the book but it read a bit like a wikipedia article, very factual and clinical, quite exhaustively defining ethics and morality. Think I might have to re-read this chapter if I am to really absorb it. It was useful though, especially when moral dilemmas were illustrated using real examples and the tactics translators use to deal with them.

Although I squirmed at the translator who refused to translate a glossary of slaughterhouse terminology simply because she was a vegetarian; that's not an ethical dilemma, it's over-sensitivity and borderline hysteria (how typical of a woman) :-P

A definite improvement on the last edition, especially aesthetically and with the added bonus of the extra chapter on ethics.

Wesley Gerrard says

This Mona Baker book is a core text on my Translation (MA) at Cardiff University. We use the text to accompany the Translation Methods Course. The early chapter of equivalence at word level and how to translate non equivalence is particularly interesting, useful and a strong section of the well-written precise coursebook. On occasion there is perhaps an abundance of examples although Baker covers a range of different languages, often straying into non-European, non-standard foreign tongues. In this new edition there is a valuable additional chapter on Ethics and Morality. This is a fashionable area of current Translation research. I feel that the book is an essential read for anyone considering Translation as a profession or those who study it at degree level. To a lay reader, perhaps the in depth detail is a bit profound. However, the book remains very accessible and is an ideal entry level text for students. This book will be well-thumbed in my reference section.

Mohammad Aboomar says

This is a book that strikes a really difficult balance between theory and practice in the field of translation. Handling translation difficulties is supported by examples and is very conscious of differences between languages.

Chapter 8 about translation ethics can be of interest to anyone who has a general interest in ethics.

Steve Wales says

Reliving my days at uni in Manchester learning Translation Studies as taught by the author, among others...

A very informative book addressing issues of difficulty in translation from a more general perspective than most, i.e. rather than basing theories on a standard set of (usually European) languages and assuming they apply to languages less familiar to the proponents of such theories, Baker here presents practical examples of translations into and out of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and some far less well-known tribal languages. Information can be conveyed in the source by stress or intonation, word order, punctuation, inflexion or agreement of verbs, adjectives, etc.: ways which may be unfamiliar or impossible in the target language or culture. The book covers a number of such difficulties for translation to make translators aware of potential pitfalls and suggests strategies for dealing with them.

The book summarises a number of major theories related to translation and, more importantly for the professional rather than academic translator, explains how these theories can be put into practice.

Babsidi says

So if you want to know anything about translation, start here. Baker does a beautiful job laying out the basics with evidence from a wide variety of language and cultures, in writing that is clear and understandable without being condescending.

Also she casually calls out misogyny and racism in the examples, and the field in general. A++ all around.

Nadeenmohamed says

A fantastic book

Katya says

Borrowed from my university library.

As a beginner in translation studies I find the structure of this book makes it easy for me to understand. Starting from equivalence at word level to the text level and beyond, it provides a wonderful introduction to

the issues of translation.

Another feature I like is its integrated approach to the art. With a take on both the theories and the application, the book gave me hints on how to improve my work in translation and how I should pursue the study after I finish my undergraduate program.
