Document generated on 07/18/2025 4:19 p.m.

Meta
Journal des traducteurs
Translators' Journal

META

Muriel VASCONCELLOS (Ed.) (1988) : *Technology as Translation Strategy* (American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, Vol. II), State University of New York at Binghamton

Ingrid Meyer

Volume 35, Number 2, juin 1990

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/003644ar
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/003644ar

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal

ISSN

0026-0452 (print)
1492-1421 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this review

Meyer, I. (1990). Review of [Muriel VASCONCELLOS (Ed.) (1988) : *Technology as Translation Strategy* (American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, Vol. II), State University of New York at Binghamton]. *Meta*, *35*(2), 445–446. https://doi.org/10.7202/003644ar

Tous droits réservés © Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1990

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/

érudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

https://www.erudit.org/en/

■ Muriel VASCONCELLOS (Ed.) (1988): *Technology as Translation Strategy* (American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, Vol. II), State University of New York at Binghamton.

This volume presents, in the words of the editor, "a smorgasboard of possibilities" open to professional translators as a result of the various technologies developed in the

1980s. The overview of what is currently available is complemented by a historical perspective as well as predictions on what the future may hold. The articles have something to offer virtually any translator: the beginner still contemplating his computer needs; the more technologically-seasoned professional seeking ways to make better use of, or expand, his computer aids; the teacher of translation looking for useful classroom reading (I have used the volume extensively in an undergraduate course on Computers and Translation). The book is divided into three sections: Sections I and II discuss what has been termed "machine-aided human translation," and focus on word processing and lexical data bases, respectively. Section III deals with "human-aided machine translation," normally shortened to "machine translation."

Particularly noteworthy in Section I are Kingscott's article on advanced word-processing skills ("how not to use the word-processor as a typewriter") and Smith's overview of solutions for dealing with foreign characters. There are also articles on the basics of word-processing (Sachs), networking (Grimes), the translator's work station (Park, Vaumoron), and the teaching of new technologies in the classroom (Bowen and Bowen). Section II describes a number of large- and medium-scale data bases (Termium, United Nations, World Bank, IMF, Venezuela's BTUSB), as well as two small-scale systems on the market — Mercury (Termex in Canada) and AutoTerm. Noteworthy is Melby's article on strategies for sharing lexical data bases.

Section III, which deals with machine translation (MT), nevertheless focusses on the human element of work environments where the translation proper is done by computer. For readers who are just getting interested in MT, Lawson provides an introduction to the field — a typology of existing systems, a simple explanation of how MT systems work, and a discussion of how MT will affect the work of human translators (will they lose their jobs?). Articles by Ryan, Santangelo, Datta, and McElhaney and Vasconcellos all stress the importance of translator involvement (post-editing, dictionary maintenance, algorithm development) to the success of an MT system. Articles by Klein and Vasconcellos on the very important yet complex subject of how to evaluate MT systems should be read by anyone considering purchasing a commercial MT system — a number of commercially available systems (TransActive, Smart, Logos) are also described by their developers. The volume concludes with an article by Hutchins summarizing the current state of translation-related technologies, and offering some predictions for the future. Hutchins makes the important point that many past MT developments have been misdirected, and mistrusted by users, because of a lack of involvement by professional translators — and that increased involvement by the profession is therefore vital in the coming years.

One limitation on the scope of this book (set consciously, and for good reason, by the Editor) is that it focusses on the commercial side of translation-related technologies, and does not attempt to describe, except superficially, some of the many research efforts currently in progress. A word of warning to the reader follows from this: most of the articles describing commercial systems are written by the systems developers themselves, and are therefore biased from the outset. A larger, unbiased selection of perspectives would have provided a more balanced view.

Technology as Translation Strategy is not only a useful addition to the rapidly growing literature on computers and translation, but as a volume sponsored by the American Translators Association, is a noteworthy effort *by* the profession *for* the profession.

INGRID MEYER