Traduzir com autonomia – estratégias para o tradutor em formação. Fábio Alves, Célia Magalhães & Adriana Pagano (ed.). São Paulo: Contexto, 2000, 159 pp.

Traduzir com autonomia – estratégias para o tradutor em formação has as its central aim the praiseworthy proposal of making translators aware of the complexities involved in translational practices. Particularly useful for undergraduate translation students, due to its simple, friendly and straightforward language, this co-authored book, by Fábio Alves, Célia Magalhães e Adriana Pagano, figures as an introductory text: it questions myths which surround translation and proposes strategies which would lead translators to take autonomous and conscious decisions. These strategies vary from external and internal sources of assistance (such as textual sources or inferential mechanisms) to macro and microtextual analyses which might aid translators when making translation choices.

In an attempt to make translators-to-be aware of the complexities involved in the translational process, the book, subdivided into seven moments, actually deals with the various stages which make up a didactic model proposed by Alves and presented in the last chapter. After a discussion on myths and beliefs usually related to translation in the opening chapter, there is one chapter devoted to translation units, an essential notion within the framework of Alves's didactic model. From that point on, each chapter approaches strategies corresponding to the various stages of the model. In the final chapter, Alves proposes ways of applying it. The book is presented as following an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on notions from areas such as applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, discourse analysis, cognitive psychology and computer science. Nevertheless, strong emphasis is put on the cognitive aspects of translation processes.

Each chapter, written by one of the authors, is structured in a similar fashion: presentation of aims, theoretical foundation and activities which aim at applying the theoretical concepts previously

explored (at the end of the book, there are answers for all exercises proposed). There is also a large amount of rich illustrative material, with texts from various genres. Written in a simple and didactic tone, the book is appropriate for classroom works in undergraduate translation courses.

However, those who opt for using *Traduzir com autonomia* would be advised to bear some precautions in mind, since didactic concerns may, at times, lead to a certain oversimplification and generalisation of rather complex issues. These issues are sometimes presented, in a rather vague form, as having been approached by "some scholars", "various experiments", "theoreticians who deal with this issue", etc.

The list containing suggestions for supplementary reading presented at the end of each chapter constitutes a very useful indicator for readers/users interested in improving their knowledge concerning some theoretical issues explored in the book. Another issue is a certain lack of precision in many of the references along the book, which turns out to be problematic. The reader is told, for instance, that Mona Baker has presented a certain notion of the term *word*, which is appropriated by the author of the sixth chapter, but (s)he is not told in which book or article Baker has done so. In this way, there seems to be some lack of rigor when presenting academic references which, to a certain extent, limits the applicability of *Traduzir com autonomia*.

The reader/user has also to deal with other minor flaws which are not so problematic. There is, for instance, an allusion to page 214, when the book has, in a whole, 159 pages. Minor flaws like this one lead to the feeling that, perhaps, a more accurate final revision would be welcome.

But, maybe, the most serious limitation of *Traduzir com autonomia* is related to those moments in which it fails to follow its central proposal: in a book which proposes to make translators-to-be aware of complexities involved in translational processes, the simplistic form in which some domesticating practices are suggested is, to say the least, disappointing. Magalhães, for instance, approaches the translation of forms of address in a rather hasty manner: she rejects the form "Sra. Lincoln" on the grounds that it is not a "cultural

fact of ours to address married women by their surname with the title *Sra*". Such a consideration, valid as it may be for some textual genres, might be questioned when analysing translations of literary texts. In this case, the didactic proposal of the book seems to come central stage to the extent that rather controversial questions are approached as if they were unanimously approved of. Since *Traduzir com autonomia* was published in the year 2000, when a number of tendencies within Translation Studies have been questioning domesticating practices, the proposal of such practices without a due problematisation runs counter to the proposal of making translators aware of complexities involved in translation. Even taking into account that the book is not devoted to a political discussion on translation, there are some moments in which we miss, at least, signs that its authors are aware of cultural and political implications of some suggestions presented in the book.

Despite the limitations signalled above, *Traduzir com autonomia* certainly has its role in a market which is still short of didactic material which aims at translator training programs. When well monitored, most activities proposed may well lead to relevant discussions as regards complexities of translation, as well as question old myths, such as the mistaken idea that, in order to translate successfully, it suffices to speak a foreign language fluently. And, as Alves attests at the end of the final chapter, awareness regarding the various stages of the translational process, as well as regarding their many complexities, leads to a better use of strategies, to sureness about decisions made during translational practices and, possibly, to a higher quality of the target text.

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