**About the Book**

How about taking your writing skills, and that second language you learned in highschool, and do something very profitable with them, entirely from the comfort of your home? Are you aware of the possibilities in the freelance translation business, that you can actually make a lot of money from your home if you're a good writer and ready to make the effort to be an efficient translator?

**EXCERPT: Preface**

Welcome to the world of translations! Not many people are aware of the excellent income opportunities that exist in this business. Opportunities that are there for just about anybody that can write well in any language, that knows a second language fairly well, and has access to a computer, a phone line, and an Internet connection from home or an office.

A basic estimate in the translation business is that an in-house employee shall be able to translate 2,500 words per day. Multiply that with, say, 200 days a year, and you get a total of 500,000 words for the year. Well, even at this "slow" rate of work, you as a home-based freelance translator can earn $50,000 per year with the price per word as low as 10 cents (US), given that you find the customers to keep you busy. This is the key, finding good customers.

There are also some things you can do to make more money, or lessen the amount of work hours put in for the same money, and the established translation companies also do this. You can raise the prices by working directly for "regular" companies instead of specialized translation companies. Or, as a freelancer, you can specialize in a specific language pair, translation direction and subject field, and get real fast.

Personally, I have specialized in English to Swedish translations in the field of computer technology, and in that translation direction and subject field, I can now do more than double the standard translation speed when working in larger documents. I've also chosen to work for translation companies and specialized software localization companies, since this gives more freedom, less hassles, and larger projects. I'll show you how to become fast and efficient. And, the business works the same for most
big languages.

I had no professional linguistic or writing experience when I started out, I had no translator "accreditation" or education in the area, and I had little or no experience of PCs and modern word processing or DTP software. I had my degree in Computer Science, but I had worked exclusively on the old cumbersome mainframes and minicomputers. Although, I enjoyed writing in Swedish, and I knew English fairly well. One day I saw an ad for a part time job as a technical translator at a local company. I applied, and beside my regular job, I got started translating a small book about programming in Turbo Pascal. The rest is a matter of experience. There's no schooling required (even if an education in translation is a big plus), it's just a matter of getting started.

So, if I could do it, you can do it, if you know how to write well in one language and know a second language fairly well. The business works the same for most big languages. Whatever your language skills are, the market is there. There are hundreds of specialized translation companies out there, looking for people with skills in all languages, and in all subject areas. There are excellent income opportunities when you find good customers.

Apart from the financial aspects of things, there are other benefits in working as a home-based, freelance translator. As long as you meet your deadlines, you have total freedom in choosing your work hours and dress code. When I lived in Los Angeles, I often spent my days hanging out in cafés or by the pool, doing my proof-reading, reading newspapers and books, and doing what everybody else does in LA, working on my movie ideas. In the afternoon and into the night, I then did my actual translation work. No bosses around.

Also, you learn a lot of new things when you do translations, earning well while you learn. If you translate 700 pages about Desktop Publishing, or 100,000 words of a help system for a graphic design software product, you learn a lot about those topics. If you translate a booklet covering the rules which govern the game of soccer, you'll pretty much know how to become a professional soccer player. Well, let's not get drastic here, I guess there's some jogging training to be done as well. Sigh! But, jokes aside, the build-up of knowledge is there, when you do translations. Knowledge that you can use in other areas.

I usually translate technical stuff, but one spring I did a detour into legal translations, and translated some 90,000 words of legal texts coming from the European Union. Interesting, and now I know the legislative lingo and how to write laws. I could become a politician. Scary. Among the texts I translated was the law regulating the transportation conditions for animals in Europe. Even if I eventually got out of that subject field, I take a certain pride in knowing that the pigs in Sweden now travel in greater comfort thanks to me.

Again, jokes aside, but you get the picture. In this book, I have focused somewhat on translation of technical material and software localization. This since software translation is one of the most difficult in the translation field, where the translator actually becomes part of the product development team, and, to a certain degree, creates a new product. In other areas, such as medical or legal translation, the translator has to have a good grasp of the subject matter and know the terminology, but no "development work" is done. Even if you settle for medical, financial or legal translation, which, by the way, can be even better paid than technical translation, you'll hopefully benefit greatly from reading this book. A lot of the information about the translation business that I supply is general, and to my knowledge common to most translation fields.

And don't worry too much about engineering skills, etc., in the field of technical translation and software localization. As a translator, you're only supposed to translate those lengthy documents into your target language, and there will be other people handling the engineering stuff. Although, if you learn how to handle texts that are formatted for software manuals and help systems, a very lucrative field will open

up to you. Those manuals and systems can be very big, and the terminology is somewhat constrained, so it becomes fairly easy to earn good money when you work in such projects.

So, as said, you'll hopefully benefit a lot from reading this book, even if you eventually want to settle for some other field of translation than technincal translation and/or software localization. Here, I'll just give you one example: A woman living in the U.S.A. read an earlier version of this book, about half a year ago. She emailed me, and we have then communicated a bit over email. She wanted to settle for translations of films for the movie industry, and thus concentrated her marketing efforts in that direction (if you read this book, I'll show you how to market your translation services). Well, this lady has now (June 2004) already completed atleast two assignments, where she's translated films (i.e. translated the so called subtitles for the films) from English into Swedish. And, it is of course my hope that she was helped in her efforts by reading this book, and that the same principles that she followed also applies to other language pairs than English/Swedish.

Lastly then; in this this book I've also included pointers for the absolute beginner, if you think that you belong to that group. I've included a little advice on how to better your writing, how to freshen up on a foreign language, and how to learn about computers.

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