

## **Career in Language Translation Book Excerpt:**

Translation involves more than the conversion of text from one language into another. As a translator and/or interpreter, our role is to facilitate the cross-cultural communication that is needed in our world today. In addition to converting words or text, we transmit concepts and ideas from one language into another. A translator or interpreter, must fully understand the subject matter in which he or she works, in order to accurately convey the information. At times, translation involves research. Words or expressions evolve over time. And also, new words or expressions are created from generation to generation. As a translator or interpreter, we must familiarize ourselves with the current trends and expressions being used so that our translation accurately reflects the actual cultural meaning in the target language.

A translator or interpreter must be fluent in at least two languages; their native language and a secondary language; some translators and interpreters are fluent in more than two languages. Their native language, sometimes referred to as their active language, is the primary or first language they learned since early childhood and this is the language they translate into (target language). Their secondary language also referred to as their passive language (source language), is one they must have excellent knowledge of. Translators who are near-native speakers of a language, in other words, who have mastered both the language and its sociocultural norms at a native speaker's level, translate from and into both languages, their native language and their near-native language.

Even though the words translation and interpretation are used interchangeably, there is a significant difference between the two. As a professional, you must be aware of that difference and recognize which one you have the expertise in. Translation is the conversion of written text from one language into another. As a translator, you must have excellent writing and analytical skills. You must also have good editing and proofreading skills.

On the other hand, interpretation involves the conversion of one spoken language into another. This means that a good interpreter must pay careful attention to what is being said, he or she must understand the subject matter being communicated, and must be able to clearly express the thoughts and ideas needed to be conveyed. Strong memory skills, analytical skills and communication skills are required.

A translation career can be a very lucrative one. The industry is a very fragmented industry. There are few large companies; many medium ones and small ones generating less than \$500,000 in annual sales; the very small companies are comprised of freelancers who've incorporated and run their companies alone.

A freelance translator has great potential to earn revenues as high as \$80,000 a year.

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