



Book Review

Taibi, M. (2011). *Tarjamat al-khadamaat al-'aammah* (Community interpreting and translation). Rabat (Morocco): Dar Assalam.

Reviewed by Dr. Ali Yunis Aldahesh
The University of Sydney
Ali.aldahesh@sydney.edu.au

In *Tarjamat al-khadamaat al-'aammah*, Dr. Mustapha Taibi, a practitioner, researcher and trainer in the field of community interpreting and translation, skilfully scrutinises the main issues in this emerging sub-discipline of translation studies.

Drawing upon scholarly work and professional practice in different countries (Australia, Spain, Sweden, the USA and the UK), the book introduces this field of translation and interpreting to the Arabic-speaking audience in general and to Arab translation and interpreting stakeholders in particular. The book specifically aims to draw the attention of Arab governmental and non-governmental institutions to the critical need for community interpreting and translation in the Arab world, where millions of people from non-Arabic speaking backgrounds reside. These people include, but are not limited to, migrant workers, tourists, and pilgrims as well as citizens belonging to minority ethnic and linguistic groups.

Given the fact that the subject matter of the book is not unfamiliar to English-speaking specialists, who have access to a number of studies on the topic, Dr. Taibi understandably opted to write the book in Arabic. Such an option has a significant role to play not only in putting together the nitty gritty of the field of community interpreting and translation in his mother tongue, but also in getting the book's message across clearly and directly to the intended readership. Hence, the book, as rightly claimed by the author, is the first of its kind in Arabic.

Community interpreting and translation comprises seven self-contained chapters followed by a conclusion. In the first chapter, the author discusses the nature and scope of community interpreting and translation. He attends to this by reviewing the variety of labels given to the field by different scholars, and through depicting its typical settings, characteristics and particularities.

The second chapter is dedicated to three main settings of community interpreting: medical, legal and educational. Elaborating on the characteristics of each setting, the author provides ample details of the characteristics of its dominant discourse and the expected role of the interpreter working in a given field.

In the third chapter Dr. Taibi defines and discusses the characteristics of community translation, reviews the scarce literature specifically addressing this sub-field of translation, and describes the current situation in a few countries.

The fourth chapter briefly explores sign language interpreting, including its definition, history and the role of the sign language interpreter.

The top three leading countries in the field of community interpreting and translation (Australia, Sweden and Britain) are the focus of the fifth chapter, which adequately reviews the underlying values, policies, regulations, bodies and institutions, services and educational programs which make these countries pioneers in the field.

In the sixth chapter the author delineates three essential requirements for quality to be ensured in community interpreting and translation. These are: political will, standard setting bodies and training programs.

The main thesis of the book is attended to in the last chapter, which is assigned to sketching a clear picture of the status quo of community interpreting and translation in the Arab world. The three most obvious examples where such services are badly needed are the linguistic minorities in almost every Arab country, pilgrims in Saudi Arabia and foreign human resources in the Gulf States. The chapter closes with a number of recommendations for the Arab stakeholders to take into account if they are to improve the situation of community interpreting and translation in their countries.

One outstanding contribution of the book is the great effort Dr. Taibi puts in to review the existing literature and portray the status of community interpreting and translation in developed countries (Australia, Sweden and Britain) in an attempt to provide a prototypical image for stakeholders in the Arab world to take as a reference point.

Another outstanding feature is the clarity of writing and beauty of the Arabic prose Dr. Taibi utilises. In addition, the volume is characterised by being well-structured and user-friendly.

This volume is recommended, and will likely be of great benefit, to Arab translation and/or interpreting students and instructors, scholars specialising in the field of translation as a whole and in community interpreting and translation in particular and, most importantly, Arab governmental and non-governmental institutions and decision makers who are concerned with quality in such a crucial communicative service.