



Freelancer spotlight

Gain inspiration
from other
translator's stories

Liana Acquaviva

Language pairs:
EN-IT

SDL*

How long have you been a translator?

I started to work professionally as a freelance translator in 2001. Before my freelance career, I briefly worked as an internal translator/reviewer for a Milan-based localization company, with which I then continued to work as an external translator.

What made you want to pursue languages as a career?

Foreign languages have always been at the center of my cultural interests. I studied two foreign languages in high school and then earned my university degree in Foreign Languages and Literature. During my university studies, I had the opportunity to deepen my knowledge about subjects including Linguistics, History of the English Language, Philology and Translation.

The world of translation fascinated me straight away with the philological studies of Wulfilian translation of the Bible, which was the first integral translation of the Greek version of the Bible into Gothic. My linguistic interests have deep roots! While studying, I decided that my professional life would be centered around translation.

What was your path into translation?

After getting my degree in Foreign Languages and Literature, I attended a two-year course in Literary Translation. In my last year of university, I realized that literary translation would have been a natural professional outlet for my studies, but at that time there was no specific course in that field.

Magically, during that year a new school opened in Turin: the S.E.T.L. (Scuola Europea di Traduzione Letteraria, which stands for European School of Literary Translation). It was a pioneering school; nothing similar had ever been attempted before. It had limited admission with only five languages and 20 students per language, for a total number of 100 students. I passed the initial English language test and found myself living an extraordinary cultural and educational experience. Whole days dedicated to translation alternated with workshops and conferences by leading figures of the Italian and international cultural world.

While focused on literary translation, the school addressed other domains of translation as well, such as medical/scientific translation. I believe this course marked a major milestone in my education and future work – from theory of the university I moved to the practice of translation: working in the field, directly with text.

Why did you end up with a specialism in Finance?

After the S.E.T.L. experience, I started to explore the profession. Initially, I did not work as a freelance translator but acquired experience with publishing companies, including translating books and editing text.

When I started to work as a freelance translator I translated for a variety of fields moving quickly towards the translation of marketing contents, which I felt was more in line with my education and disposition. From marketing translation, I developed an interest in other fields, including financial translation. I put aside fields such as IT localization and technical translation for the domains I believed to be more stimulating in terms of topical issues and research. Financial translation was ideal for me in this respect.

What qualifications do you need to be a financial translator?

I believe that a crucial aspect is my interest in topical issues. Reading newspapers and trade press is fundamental to understand not only the economic reality but also the political scenario. It is necessary to have a very broad vision because what happens at a financial level is inextricably linked to economic policy themes and social issues.

Obviously, it is important to have a solid education, which you can acquire by following specialty courses and studying sector books and manuals to ensure you use the correct terminology and grasp nuances and differences. Last but not least, style is crucial. Financial translation has its own language and syntactic construction, which are not less important than content accuracy.

What training have you completed?

I attended a Master in Economics, Banking and Finance Translation held by the University of Genoa. It was an interesting experience, especially from the point of view of theoretical content. The world of financial and economic translation is extremely broad and tackling such a huge amount of content can be a true challenge. This course allowed me to organize the various areas and deepen the theoretical knowledge of those I wanted to pursue.

What kind of texts do you typically translate?

I mainly translate content connected to stock exchanges and financial markets, investment funds, securities and asset management. I often deal with bulletins, prospectuses and fund manager overviews or perspectives.

How do CAT tools help you with financial translation?

I use several CAT tools for my work, but I only use SDL Trados Studio for financial translation, which is the tool currently required by agencies with which I work in this field. I am pleased with this since SDL Trados Studio is the CAT tool I prefer. I find features such as AutoSuggest particularly useful since it allows me to reduce typing activity.

How do you stay abreast of industry developments in the finance and banking world?

I mainly read the trade press — newspapers, journals and specialized websites, such as Fund Manager sites which offer interesting insights on topical themes. I also find institutional sites useful, in particular that of the Bank of Italy, which includes important documents about the political and economic scenario at a European and global level.

How do you see your role in the future?

I intend to keep working on my financial translation skills in areas I have not yet explored fully, for example, translation of financial statements. I also would like to deepen my knowledge of the legal aspects connected to financial translation.

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