

Секция «Теория, история и методология перевода»

The role of target language (TL) audience in the process of translation

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Translation is defined as the way of communicating an original message to the target language (TL) by means of creating a more or less adequate TL text. Dating back its roots to the times of Cicero and Horace the systematic investigation of translation, otherwise translation studies (TS), addresses the broad scopes of translation incorporating in it all the constituent parts of the process of translation. The abundance of scholarship and accumulated knowledge along with still pending issues on the subject of TL clearly demonstrate the controversial and disputable aspects existing inside the discipline.

Such subjects of investigation as *fidelity of translation*, *concept of equivalence*, as well as *requirement of similar response* are viewed as major concepts of TL analysis. The given study addresses the factor of audience as one of key constituents of ensuring the fidelity and equivalence of translation as well as touches upon its role in conveying a similar response on the TL audience. The reader or the audience is the direct bearer of the TL message transferred through the channel of translation. As Bassnett (2002, p. 32) argues ‘the translator cannot be the author of the SL text, but as the author of the TL text has a clear moral responsibility to the TL readers’. Thus, the ultimate purpose of translation, i.e. the conveyance of an adequately equivalent text, should be conscious of characteristic features of the specific audience to whom the message is targeted and ensure proper degree of comprehensibility of the resulting TL text, because as Nida puts it ‘when a high percentage of people misunderstand a rendering, it cannot be regarded a legitimate translation’ (Nida 1969, p. 127).

In the given study there was made an attempt to define and discuss *prospective audience factor* which should be taken into account while deciding on the discourse type of the resulting TL message. Eugene A. Nida distinguishes prospective audiences according to their decoding ability or capacity, namely *capacity of children*, *double-standard capacity of new literates*, as well as *capacity of average literate adults and unusually high capacity of specialists* (Nida 1964, p. 158). Expanding Nida’s views the given study suggests a range of other criteria according to which prospective audiences can be singled out, among them age, sex, ethnicity, education/profession, social status etc.

The role of the audience obtains much more significance when viewed in the light of defining the concept of a good translation and the task of a good translator. In his *Essay on the Principles of Translation* Alexander Tytler infers that a good translator should produce a work which will succeed in maintaining the sense and spirit as well as the style and manner of the original writing (Gabrielyan 2007, p. 73). With this regard the present study places under scrutiny the task of a good translator as defined by Tytler as well as his suggestions on the laws of translation which should be followed by a translator in order to guarantee the naturalness of expression of the SL message for the targeted audience. In our research the theoretical part is accompanied by results of a small-scale survey carried out among frequent

readers of translated texts in order to reveal contemporary perceptions and views on the definition of a good translation.

Any translation is a creative process of transferring the new knowledge and achievements of the SL culture and one of its major motives is to serve to the enrichment and education of the TL readership. Hence, translation is regarded as an efficient tool to arouse certain sentiments among the given readership as well as instruct and contribute to the refinement of the TL audience.

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