

Interpretive communities: Estonia's case study

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Abstract

This paper discusses Stanley Fish's notion of *interpretive communities*, based on interviews conducted with interpreters who operated in Estonia from 1944 to 1991 while Estonia was a Soviet republic. 43 semi-structured convergent interviews were conducted: 21 with people who worked as interpreters and 22 with people who recruited interpreters or worked with an interpreter during this period. In analysing the gathered material, Stanley Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* was extended from readers to interpreters. The researcher aim was to examine whether Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* could apply to interpreters. As results, the paper demonstrates that in the years under review the interpreter community in Estonia fell into two *interpretive communities*, the dividing line being target languages of interpreting (Russian as the A or B language versus English, German, Swedish, Polish, French or Spanish as the B language, etc.) and experience (local versus international). The interpreters, however, were not professionals. The findings of the study expand on our knowledge of interpreting in Estonia after World War II.

Keywords: conference interpreting, Stanley Fish, interpretive communities, interpreting research, lost independence.

Raktažodžiai: vertimas žodžiu, Stanley Fish, vertimo (interpretacinės) bendruomenės, prarasta nepriklausomybė.

1. Introduction

This paper discusses Stanley Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* on the basis of interviews I conducted with interpreters who operated in Estonia from 1944 to 1991. The starting point is the end of World War II, covering the era when Estonia was a Soviet republic (as it had had lost its independence to the Soviet Union) and continuing until the restoration of independence. Apart from increasing our knowledge of interpreting in Estonia in the post-war years, the findings are also relevant to the interpreter profession as a whole.

As a professional conference interpreter myself, reading *Is There a Text in the Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* by Stanley Fish (1980) prompted me to analyse whether his notion of *interpretive communities* could apply to interpreters. The term pertains to a reader-oriented theory of literature (reader-response criticism). His initial definition of *interpretive communities* as being “made up of those who share interpretive strategies” (1980: 171) was further refined a few years later: “Interpretive communities are not more than sets of institutional practices and [...] are continually being transformed by the very work they do” (Fish 1989/2007: 153).

Fish did not consider interpreters. I, however, extended the concept to interpreters and started from the premise that non-professional interpreters operating in Estonia after World War II fell into *interpretive communities* as defined by Stanley Fish. In the context of interpreting, recipients are traditionally members of the audience who receive the output with or without the help of technical devices. In my approach, however, I treat interpreters as listeners of the source text. Interpreters, be it in the consecutive or simultaneous mode, receive the source speech to start processing.

In collecting material for analysis, I conducted, transcribed and analysed 21 interviews with interpreters (and comments on two deceased interpreters).

Prior to discussing Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* in section 4, on the basis of the interviews, I will devote Section 2 to methods and material and Section 3 to the post-war interpreter community that emerged from my interviews: interpreters and the setting in which interpreting took place.

2. Methods and material

In order to explore the goals set and gather data about interpreting in Estonia, I conducted 43 semi-structured convergent interviews: 21 with people who worked as interpreters and 22 with people who recruited interpreters or worked with an interpreter during this period. I also considered colleagues' comments on two interpreters who passed away several years ago. Thus the corpus examined comprised 43 transcribed texts and comments about two interpreters. All the interviewees consented to being recorded. The duration of the interviews varied from one to three hours.

In structuring interviews, semi-structured approach was preferred as it allows sufficient flexibility for the interviewees to recall and to express thoughts and ideas (Hale and Napier 2013: 97). As an

interviewer, I deduced my role to that of a listener prompting or rather keeping the interviewee on track with occasional questions. The questions focused on four aspects: when and under what circumstances did the interpreter first start interpreting, whether he/she had received any interpreter training, working conditions and colleagues as well as events interpreted.

As regards interpretation, which was probably considered of marginal importance, there are very few written sources to rely on that pertain to the post-war years, and those that do exist are fragmented. As summarized by Pöchhacker, the underlying cause of the scarcity of sources lies in

the 'evanescence' of the activity, which does not leave any tangible trace, and its often low social esteem. For the most part, interpreting was a 'common' activity, in several respects, which did not merit special mention. (2006: 159).

In Section 4, I discuss only the 21 interviews with interpreters (and the comments about the two deceased interpreters). The 22 interviews with people who recruited or used interpreters were helpful in identifying interpreters active in the years under review.

In the AIIC classification of working languages (e.g. <http://aiic.net/node/6/working-languages/lang/1>) 'A' languages are the interpreter's mother tongue or equivalent and 'B' languages are languages in which the interpreter is perfectly fluent, and can therefore work into. In Western Europe, interpreters interpreted mostly into their mother tongue. In Estonia, interpreters worked back and forth between their A and B languages. Explaining to his readers the difference between interpreting at multilingual and bilingual meetings, Roderick Jones (1998) argues that at bilingual meetings interpreters often work both ways between the two languages, whereas in multilingual meetings they usually work into their mother tongue. US researcher Lorain K. Obler comments on interpreters working in both directions, saying that "rare cultures – the former Soviet Union among them – predominantly work the opposite way, into a highly proficient second language, thus ensuring native-like comprehension." (2012, 16(2): 181). In the case of Estonia (but not only), there were bilingual meetings for the period studied. Multilingual meetings were first held in the 1980s (personal communication).

The ethnographic method applied allowed me to identify interviewees who, through a snowball sampling (Hale and Napier 2013, Tracey 2013), also known as the chaining process or chain referral sampling (Tracy 2013), then helped me recruit more interviewees. Snowballing is applied when the target group members know each other or belong to the same social network, which interpreters obviously do. As the years have passed, however, the target group has thinned. In

answer to the question of how many interviews are enough, Tracy (2013: 138) quotes Kvale: “[a]s many as necessary to find out what you need to know”. After having conducted 43 interviews, this point seemed to have been reached, as no new relevant data emerged and no new names of interpreters appeared. The amount of data thus seemed sufficient (Strauss and Corbin as cited in Tracy 2013: 195).

3. The interpreter community

3.1. Chance interpreters

After World War II the linguistic environment in Estonia changed, with Russian introduced as the language of international communication (Kasekamp 2010; Lagerspetz 1996; Lauristin et al 1997; Mole 2012). The early post-war years also marked a period of isolation from the rest of the world. Russian thus emerged as the prevailing source and target language of interpreting in Estonia. Eleven interpreters interviewed had Estonian and Russian as their A-B language pair, as did two who have already passed away. The remaining ten had English, German, Swedish, Polish, French or Spanish as their B language. All interpreters had an undergraduate degree, except for three Russian-Estonian interpreters who had only received secondary education. Those with degrees included people who had studied languages and who had English, German, Swedish, Polish, French or Spanish as their B languages, seven who had degrees in Russian, a teacher of Russian, and two historians, all with Russian as their A or B language. Sixteen had Estonian, six had Russian and one had Polish as their mother tongue.

Three interviewees with German and English B languages who occasionally interpreted in the 1960s and 1970s mentioned that their continuing education took them to Leningrad (now St Petersburg) or Moscow University, as well as to the Maurice Thorez Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow. There they saw for the first time how simultaneous interpreters were trained. (The leading representative of interpreting studies at the Institute was Ghelly Chernov.) Two interpreters with Russian as their A and B languages, respectively, had been to the Institute in the late seventies. This was a one-off experience, however, that did not lead to any training in simultaneous interpreting. A Russian-Estonian-Russian interpreter who had a degree in history and who also learned Arabic and Turkish at Moscow University (but never interpreted from or into them) had received some training, but primarily in consecutive interpretation. The other interviewees had

never received any interpreter training. These facts demonstrate that interpreters in Estonia in the years under review were non-professionals.

The early interpreters were 'chance interpreters' as defined by Franz Pöchhacker (2006: 28); i.e. linguistically knowledgeable individuals who happened to be at hand. This argument was confirmed in all 21 interviews. All interpreters quite elaborately described their first interpreting experience either as "I was asked to help out" or "since I spoke the language, I was told to interpret".

3.2. Interpreting setting

Considering the setting in which and the events for which interpreting (mostly simultaneous) was provided, I find the term 'conference interpreting' appropriate to describe the job performed by the interpreters interviewed.

The AIIC definition from the early 1980s (as cited in Pöchhacker 2011: 308) describes 'a conference interpreter' as

a person who by profession acts as a responsible linguistic intermediary [...] in a formal or informal conference or conference-like situation, thanks to his or her ability to provide simultaneous or consecutive oral interpretation of participants' speeches, regardless of their length and complexity,

thus supporting the view that the interpreters interviewed were in fact conference interpreters. Estonian-Russian or Russian-Estonian interpretation was indeed used in 'formal or informal conference or conference-like situation[s]', such as party conferences, training of party officials and state or executive officials, plenary sessions of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party and the Young Communist League, plenary sessions of the Supreme Council of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic – i.e. the Soviet-era equivalent of the parliament – lectures held by the *Teadus* (Knowledge) society, congresses of the Estonian Writers' Union, meetings of the Estonian Bar Association, etc. The definition also covers interpreting from and into other foreign languages, which took place when foreign delegations or tour groups visited Estonia (field trips and visits to collective and state farms, factories, kindergartens, schools, Pioneer Palaces, etc.), as well as when Estonian delegations/tour groups went abroad and interpreters interpreted sightseeing tours or meetings.

Pöchhacker (2006) stresses the need to differentiate between the level of socio-cultural communities and the format of interaction when discussing international (conference) interpreting

vs. intra-social (community) interpreting. Community interpreting involves an individual human being as one of the parties, speaking on his/her own behalf. Pöchhacker also points to the unequal social status and different educational backgrounds of the parties. The inference drawn from the above examples of the interpreting setting is that community interpreting was not practiced in Estonia. Thus, my focus is on conference interpreting, leaving aside community-based dialogue interpreting (which, according to Pöchhacker (2006), includes health care and legal interpreting and, in the case of sign language interpreting, also includes educational and religious settings as well as theatre), since it does not apply to the years studied.

4. Stanley Fish's *interpretive communities*

Prior to applying Stanley Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* to the interviews conducted, we must first look at the theory. In his 1980 book *Is There a Text in the Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*, Stanley Fish defined the concept in general terms:

Interpretive communities are made up of those who share interpretive strategies not for reading [...], for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions. In other words, these strategies exist prior to the act of reading and therefore determine the shape of what is read rather than, as is usually assumed, the other way round (171).

This provided an answer to the question of why there was both agreement and disagreement as to the source of interpretive authority. Over the years Fish refined the concept, adding an element of change: “[An interpretive community] is an engine of change because its assumptions are not a mechanism for shutting out the world but for organizing it” (1989/2007: 150).

If we take Stanley Fish's notion of an *intended reader* whose education, opinions, concerns, linguistic competences and so on make him capable of having the experience the author wished to provide (1980: 160) and replace it with an *intended recipient*, who in our case is an interpreter listening to the speaker's text, we could ask ourselves whether the interpreter's efforts (just like the efforts of Fish's readers) to understand actually mean that the author's intent is fulfilled. In other words, does the interpreter convey the speaker's intention by making “a succession of decisions” as argued by Fish (1980: 161)? Daniel Gile developed his Effort model in the early eighties and years later revised it (2009). Analysing simultaneous interpreting and its components (a listening and analysis component, a speech production component and a short-term memory component), he “called these components ‘Efforts’ to stress their effortful nature as they include deliberate action which requires decisions and resources” (Gile 2009: 160). Understanding and comprehension are

essential for an interpreter. In his basic and fundamental introduction to conference interpreting, Roderick Jones, an experienced conference interpreter, explains that the interpreter “has first to listen to the speaker, understand and analyse” (1998: 6). As for comprehension, Pöchhacker argues that comprehension “depends crucially on what is already known” (2006: 119) and refers to expectations generated by prior knowledge. Preparation for the task of interpreting (background research, study of documents, preparation of glossaries) enhances knowledge, which helps the interpreter process linguistic input.

Interpreting is one of the few professions that require continual decision-making in any professional setting. A conscious decision precedes every single utterance by the interpreter: what to say and when to say it. Jones (1998) stresses that linguistic understanding does not suffice to render ideas in another language. The interpreter has to understand the speaker's meaning (that is, his or her ideas), because the interpreter interprets ideas and not words. The decision-making process starts by deciding what is of primary and what is of secondary significance.

According to Jones (1998: 80), “the interpreter must be able to express something meaningful if they are to open their mouth”, but also “must come closest to respecting the speaker's intended meaning” (1998: 88). Fish is convinced that this intended meaning is not in the text (i.e. in the speaker's utterances) but rather is verifiable through interpretive acts. His position (Fish 1980: 164) is that “intention is known when and only when it is recognized; it is recognized as soon as you decide about it; you decide about it as soon as you make a sense; and you make a sense [...] as soon as you can”. The interpreter (as a reader, a recipient) has to recognize the main ideas expressed by the speaker. Harry Obst, a White House German language interpreter who has interpreted for seven US presidents, compares interpreting in challenging situations to brain surgery, saying that “the professional interpreter is required to carry more general knowledge into each assignment than architects and engineers in the daily exercise of their profession” (Obst 2010: xi).

4.1. Stanley Fish's *reader's activities*

Fish (1980: 158) suggests that reader's activities should not be devalued or underestimated and disposed thereafter. For him “the reader's activities are at the centre of attention” (1980: 158). In my approach, which replaces ‘the reader’ with ‘the interpreter’, Fish's description of *the reader's activities* describes mental activities familiar to conference interpreters:

... the making and revisiting of assumptions, the rendering and regretting of judgements, the coming to and abandoning of conclusions, the giving and withdrawing of approval, the specifying of causes, the asking of questions, the supplying of answers, the solving of puzzles (ibid: 158-159).

Jones (1998) summarizes this by saying the simultaneous interpreter does not know where the speaker is going, nor how the sentence is going to end.

Most of the interviewees indicated that with years of work experience these activities became slightly easier. In receiving the speaker's text, they could rely on and be supported by their judgements, conclusions, and interpretive activities arising from previous occasions. These interpretive activities are continuously reorganizing themselves. The decisions the reader, or in our case the interpreter, takes about a speaker's intention include "every aspect of successively intended worlds" (Fish 1980: 161). Considering that the interpreters in Estonia worked into their B language, their decision-making process must have also involved lexical and syntactic choices to be able to express the essentials, occasionally compromising style (see Pöchhacker 2011). An interpreter with German as her B language recalled an interpreting event in 1978 at which she interpreted for an East German delegation of farmers to an Estonian state farm. She had paused a bit too long to decide whether 'in granules' is '*im Granula*' or '*im Granuli*' in German when the Estonian head of the state farm said to her: "Why do you come here to interpret if you do not know how to do it". The interpreter drew but one conclusion: although she had compiled a detailed glossary of agricultural terminology, she had still not prepared enough.

Fish (1980: 152) argues that for expectation, the context is experimental, with significance established via the borders and restrictions of that context. Experience-defined meaning comes from reading, and how one reads a text is culturally constructed. Here interviewees with Russian As or Bs could have been involuntarily misled by being too automatic, by anticipating clichés, and by not getting involved in the "reader's/interpreter's activities". They frequently said that "no one listened to us anyway", meaning, on the one hand, that interpreting from Russian into Estonian was often not necessary since most people understood the language or did not care, and, on the other hand, that the audience anticipated what was coming. One interpreter recalled that in the Supreme Council (the Soviet-era parliament), sessions took place twice a year and that during delegates' four-year terms interpreters "could guess by the speaker's name what he or she would speak about. For example, if a milkmaid was given the floor when the national budget discharge was debated, she would say how many litres of milk she milked last year and how many she was going to milk this year and that there were still some shortcomings in our lives: not enough gauze to filter milk; and

that she was in favour of the discharge of the national budget". Despite this, however, as an interpretive community the interpreters could not become too automatic or careless in their "successive decisions" since their output was monitored. A former head of the Documentation Department of the Presidium of the Supreme Council (1949-1991) mentioned in her interview that she was occasionally asked to listen to the interpreting to check the quality. In the late 1980s the quality was checked by comparing transcriptions to the original recording of Supreme Council sessions. The transcribed texts were translated and published in Estonian and Russian. If a delegate complained that he or she had not used one word or another, he or she could verify by listening to the recorded text.

4.2. Stanley Fish's *structure of the reader's experience*

Fish draws attention to the importance of the structure of the reader's experience. In interpreting, the structure of the reader's – i.e., the interpreter's – experience could benefit from preparation (cf. the example in 4.1). Only one interpreter with a Russian B mentioned preparing word lists, which were short lists of more difficult or rare terms. Another interpreter with a Russian A mentioned that he often made a list of relevant acronyms in both languages. Nine interpreters with English, German, Polish or Swedish as their B language described drawing up glossaries of various lengths and levels of detail.

Preparation for an interpreting assignment is assumed to increase the availability of necessary technical terminology, while linguistic and world knowledge are also helpful (Gile 2002/1997: 172). This is a view, which many authors share (cf. Pöchhacker, Jones, Obst, Ronald). Describing outstanding interpreters in the first half of the 20th century, Ruth A. Roland (1999/1982: 158) quotes a US Secretary of State as having said of Paul Mantoux, a superb interpreter, that no statement was too dry to make him inattentive or too technical for his vocabulary. Generalizing on high-level diplomatic meetings, Obst (2010: x) concludes that

the success or failure of these private meetings did not just rest on the two principal interlocutors. They rested in large measure on the analytical abilities, intellectual acumen, communication skills, and emotional stability of the only two people the leaders could fully understand – their professional interpreters.

Decades ago an American ambassador is said to have cast doubt on the use of interpreters in a diplomatic environment since intonations, emphasis and humour could get lost (e.g. Roland 1999/1982: 151). US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's statement (Albright 2004/2003: 254) should alleviate any such doubt: "Interpreters play a vital but overlooked part in diplomacy. The

best ones are able to translate not only words but also points of emphasis and tone, and are careful to ensure that idiomatic expressions are not misunderstood". Madam Albright's words apply to more than just diplomatic interpreting. According to Fish (1980: 161) intention and understanding are two ends of a conventional act. The "Golden Rules" for conference interpreters (Jones 1998) include a recommendation to never attempt to interpret something the interpreter has not properly heard or understood.

The structure of the reader's (interpreter's) experience could also benefit from better interpretation skills. All interpreters confirmed that they learned on the job. However, interpreters with English, German, French, Polish, Swedish and Spanish Bs reinforced the significance of international experience. They had the opportunity to see colleagues from Moscow or Leningrad work and thus to pick up some skills (such as using a notebook for taking notes and choosing a good position from which they could hear when working in consecutive mode, etc.). Interpreters with German or English and Russian as their B languages could work at conferences not only in Estonia but also in Russia.

In my treatment of *interpretive communities*, I extended Fish's notion of readers to interpreters. For Fish, there is the author (the speaker) and the readers (the audience), while in my reasoning interpreters act as a kind of interface between the speaker (the author) and the audience (the readers). The strategies interpreters choose, their experience, the decision-making skills they master – it all builds up to a relevant structure. The structure of the interpreter's experience, being in constant creative evolution, is "at every moment settling and resettling questions of value" (Fish 1980: 159). That structure can be sensitive and dynamic. Speaker input may send signals, which within seconds transform the community, as the following examples indicate.

4.3. Stanley Fish's *interpretive strategy*

Several interpreters with Russian As or Bs spoke of cases where a speaker read a prepared text word for word, including comments not intended to be read aloud (e.g. "Comrade Aus gets the floor"). These speakers also stumbled at hyphenated words at the end of the line or page ('*meid rōō-mustab*' (makes us happy) interpreted into Russian as '*nas ra*' and '*dujet*' – 'make' and 'sus happy'), or repeatedly split compound nouns spelt as one word in Estonian into two nouns in the wrong place, giving the word a different meaning (e.g. '*laekaunistus*' – 'ceiling decoration' into '*laeka unistus*' – 'a dream about a casket'). The speakers' mistakes were intentionally included in

the subsequent interpreting. Considering “what could have been understood to have been meant by what was said” (Fish 1980: 161), however, these examples indicate not only an unprofessional approach to interpreting but rather a subtle political intent to reveal the speaker's unpreparedness to take the floor. Listing eleven ‘Golden Rules’ for simultaneous interpreting, Jones highlights the need to “not [...] be distracted by focusing attention on individual problematic words” (1998: 78) as well as the need to be able to split one's attention. In the above example the speakers stumbled at hyphenated words and the interpreters intentionally did the same. Fish (1980: 161) uses a notion of the ‘*informed or at-home reader*’, which as a profile allows characterizing the author's intention but needs a community with which to share interpretive strategies. Fish argues that “the informed reader's interpretive perceptions and aesthetic judgments are [...] socially constructed” (Keitel 2010: 348). The interpreter behaviour here is thus clearly unprofessional. It included a certain automatism while interpreting, as well as anticipation of the end of the speaker's sentences, concomitant activities such as knitting and playing chess, and intentionally emphasising text-reading errors made by the speakers. Indeed, the interpreters even seemed to take pride in doing so. No interpreters with other B languages mentioned any such attitude.

There is no reason to doubt that the interpreters belong to the category of “the informed”. Thus, the above examples reveal that, depending on certain conditions surrounding what is said, they opted for a particular approach, which Fish defines as *an interpretive strategy*. *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (Malmkjær and Windle 2011) dedicates an entire subsection to strategies in the section on simultaneous interpreting, referring to the definition of ‘strategies’ as “a goal-oriented process under intentional control” (Kohn and Kalina as cited in Malmkjær and Windle 2011: 288). Pöchhacker does this as well in his *Introducing Interpreting Studies* (2006). For obvious reasons, however, strategies do not include intentional humorous/political adaptation: it is unprofessional to apply such a strategy.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study has presented a new perspective for the consideration of *interpretive communities* as defined by Fish. It has demonstrated the applicability of the notion on the basis of interviews conducted with interpreters. It is clear that interpreters apply *interpretive strategies*, depend on *reader's activities* and on the *structure of the reader's experience*.

In analysing the gathered material, I applied a novel approach and extended Stanley Fish's notion of *interpretive communities* from readers to interpreters. My conclusion is that Estonia's post-World War Two interpreter community falls into two interpretive communities, the dividing line being languages used (Russian as the A or B language versus English, German, Swedish, Polish, French or Spanish as the B language, etc.) and experience (local versus international).

While this study focused on interpreters in Estonia after World War II until the restoration of independence in 1991, it could be beneficial to compare the findings with other Baltic and East European countries. The analysis of interviews revealed that the interpreters operating in the years reviewed did not always meet the requirements of a professional interpreter. They were all interpreters by chance, however, not professionals.

It should be recognized that factors such as the interpreting setting and preparation, as demonstrated in the above examples, played an important role. This research could be taken a step further and interviews conducted with interpreters active since the restoration of independence.

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It should be recognized that factors such as the interpreting setting and preparation, as demonstrated in the above examples, played an important role. This research could be taken a step further and interviews conducted with interpreters active since the restoration of independence.

Interpretuojančiosios bendruomenės: Estijos atvejo tyrimas

Karin Sibul

Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje aptariama Stanley'o Fish'o *interpretuojančiųjų bendruomenių* (angl. *interpretive communities*¹) sąvoka pritaikant ją tyrimui, kurio pagrindą sudaro pokalbiai su Estijoje 1944–1991 metais dirbusiais vertėjais. Tuo metu Estija buvo Sovietų Sąjungos respublika. Tyrimui surinkti 43 pusiau struktūruoti interviu: 21 iš jų buvo paimtas iš žmonių, kurie dirbo vertėjais žodžiu (angl. *interpreters*), ir 22 – iš žmonių, kurie tuos vertėjus įdarbino ar kartu su jais minėtu laiku dirbo.

Šiame tyrime pateikiama nauja Stanley'o Fish'o *interpretuojančiųjų bendruomenių* sąvokos perspektyva, išryškėjusi ją taikant iš vertėjų žodžiu paimtų interviu. Vertėjai taiko *interpretavimo (vertimo žodžiu) strategijas*, kurios labai priklauso nuo *skaitytojo* ir nuo *skaitytojo patirties sandaros*.

Analizuojant surinktą medžiagą, buvo pritaikytas naujas metodas išplečiant Stanley'o Fish'o *interpretuojančiųjų bendruomenių* sąvoką. Minėtoje analizėje ji apėmė ne tik skaitytojus, bet ir vertėjus žodžiu. Straipsnyje daroma išvada, kad Estijos pokario (po Antrojo pasaulinio karo) vertėjų žodžiu bendruomenę sąlygiškai sudarė dvi bendruomenės, kurių skiriamasis bruožas buvo vertimui pasitelkiamos kalbos (rusų kalba kaip A arba B kalba, o anglų, vokiečių, švedų, lenkų, prancūzų ar ispanų kalbos kaip B, ir t.t.) ir patirtis (vietinė ir tarptautinė).

Šiame tyrime labiausiai domimasi Estijoje po Antrojo pasaulinio karo dirbusiais vertėjais žodžiu, tačiau tyrimo rezultatus būtų įdomu palyginti su situacija kitose Baltijos ir Rytų Europos šalyse. Interviu analizė parodė, kad nagrinėjamu laikotarpiu dirbę vertėjai ne visada atitiko profesionaliems vertėjams žodžiu keliamus reikalavimus. Visi jie buvo vertėjai-mėgėjai, ne profesionalai.

Reikia pripažinti, kad tokie veiksniai, kaip vertėjo žodžiu darbo aplinka ir pasirengimas darbui, kaip matyti iš pateikiamų pavyzdžių, buvo labai svarbūs. Šis tyrimas galėtų būti tęsiamas įtraukiant tuos vertėjus žodžiu, kurie nuo nepriklausomybės atkūrimo aktyviai tebedirba iki šiol.

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¹ Angliškas žodis *interpret* gali reikšti tiek *interpretuoti*, tiek *versti žodžiu*.