

HERMENEUTICAL APPROACH TO TEXT INTERPRETATION: A CASE STUDY

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Summary

The article is based on aspects of a philosophical theory of understanding which were defined by the most outstanding representative of the theory of hermeneutics Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002). The hermeneutic circle describes the process of understanding a text in stages. It refers to the idea that one's understanding of the text as a whole is established by reference to the individual parts and one's understanding of each individual part by reference to the whole. Neither the whole text nor any individual part can be understood without reference to one another, and hence, it is a circle. However, this circular character of interpretation does not make it impossible to interpret a text; rather, it stresses that the meaning of a text must be found within its cultural, historical, and literary context. H.-G. Gadamer and later on other linguists linked the theory of understanding with translation and disclosed identical starting positions of understanding and translation. R. Stolze and C. Nord have focused on the theory of hermeneutics in their works from a professional angle, by developing a number of parameters of text interpretation which help to grasp the conceptual aspects of a text before translator's decisions are made and code switching is started. Two legal texts, *European Convention on Human Rights* and *Rights and freedoms in practice* brochure were selected for a case study and analysed from the point of view of hermeneutics, i.e. from the interpretative perception of a text as an object: its situative background, discourse field, meaning dimension and predicative mode. The differences between the texts became evident after having determined the domain of these texts, the types of the texts, the level of communication (expert/ lay), their function and intention. C. Nord's extratextual factors, such as sender, intention, receiver, medium, place, time, motive and function were applied as effective tools for the development of the translator's hermeneutical circle of text interpretation.