

Response to Tucker Johnson article on xLQA

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Translation Quality is Dead.
Long Live Translation Quality!
Thank you, Tucker!

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Tucker Johnson on translation quality

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- Tucker:
 - "impending disruption of industry-standard quality management systems"
 - "they have to go"
 - They are implemented "without any input whatsoever from the end-users"
- Response from ISO & ASTM:
 - Agreed! End-user needs, expressed as specs, are everything.

How did we get into this mess? Part 1

- AKM: The translation industry missed the memo about Functionalism in translation.
- Tucker on translation principles: The trend is from "metaphrase" to "paraphrase".
- Metaphrase–paraphrase contrast became prominent in the late 1600s (see Dryden). Focus was on source text.
- Functionalism became prominent in the late 1900s (see Vermeer, Nord, and others). Focus is on the end-user (audience) and purpose.

How did we get into this mess? Part 2

- AKM: The translation industry missed the memo about modern quality management.
- The US automobile industry took notice of Deming, Juran, and others when some consumers started preferring Japanese cars in the late 1900s.
- “Quality: degree to which a set of inherent characteristics [...] of an object [...] fulfils requirements [...]” (ISO 9000 2015, 18)

How do we get out of this mess?

- Upcoming translation quality standards from ISO and ASTM International are based on modern views of translation and quality.
- Translation requirements take into account end-user needs and are expressed as translation specifications. Each translation quality metric is based on a set of translation specifications.

Making peace between TQE and customer focus

- Tucker writes: "Mistakes are not important. Customers are important".
- This requires some decoding. One interpretation: Validation (in quality management) is essential.
- Application of validation to translation quality evaluation (TQE): Determine whether mistakes detected by a TQE metric are relevant to customer satisfaction. If not, fix the metric, not the customer.
- Bottom line: The old views of translation and quality from the 1800s are dead. Long live the new views in upcoming translation quality standards. Thank you, Tucker, for setting the stage.