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# Growing Needs of Translation to Build and Promote Indo-Turkish Dialogue: Cultural Perspectives

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## Abstract

21st century age is called an age of translation, technology and information. Translation is a bridge between two nations and it creates such a condition where cultural and commercial, social and political dialogue can be established and promoted to resolve the age-old conflicts, contradictions and differences. It breaks the culture of silence and builds the culture of dialogue which is essential to socio-economic development, political progress and bilateral relations in this age of globalization. Translation bridges social, economic, cultural and linguistic gaps which separate us from one another.

Language, Literature and culture can play very significant role in promoting Indo-Turkish dialogue. Cultural and linguistic awareness can well be disseminated through the translation of literary texts. The study of translated literary texts roots out cultural and linguistic prejudices and biases and helps us to understand one another better. Cultural and linguistic differences hamper the prospects of bi-lateral dialogue and economic relations. Translation enables us to go beyond these barriers and expand, establish and strengthen Indo-Turkish dialogue and bilateral relations for the development of both nations and for the welfare of whole humanity. If Turkish literature will be translated into Indian languages and vice-versa then we can understand the culture and society properly and in this way we can come closer to one another to enhance and enrich Indo-Turkish dialogue and to promote bilateral relations.

This paper attempts to explore the prospects and significance of translation to build and promote Indo-Turkish dialogue and strengthen economic and bi-lateral relations. It emphasizes on how translation helps us to change our prejudiced and biased mindset and see the other nation with friendly perspective. The paper discusses how translation functions and will function as a bridge between India and Turkey to promote in-depth dialogue and development and how lack of translation

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creates misunderstanding and misconception among masses which may hamper economic relations and bi-lateral dialogue. The paper also tries to examine how translation of literary texts can expand our academic engagement and interactive prospects at the level of higher education to encourage mutual understanding pertaining to language, literature, culture and society. The effort has been made to explore the prospects of teaching Turkish literature in translation in Indian universities and vice-versa to strengthen the age-old Indo-Turkish ties because we have American, Canadian, Australian, African, French and Russian literature. So we should also have Turkish literature in our syllabus at institutional level. Commercial investment and trade agreement cannot be very well successful and durable without cultural transaction and cultural transaction is only possible through the translation of Indo-Turkish literature and its promotion in higher education.

**Keywords**: Translation, Indo-Turkish dialogue, Bilateral relations, Cultural refinement, Understanding, Literature, Promoting economic development.

## Introduction

"I translate, therefore I am"

-Jhumpa Lahiri

Life cannot be perfectly perceived and conceived without translation. Translation is the axis upon which our life revolves because every act of thinking and imagination is an act of translation, as Lahiri connects our existence with translation. Gregory also rightly asserts that "Every act of communication is an act of translation" (If This Be Treason). It is needless to mention the practicality and utility of translation in an era of globalization. It is an undisputable fact. If literature is the mirror of the society then translation is the illustration of the excellence of literature, culture and civilization.

Every act of writing is an act of translation and every writer, in profound sense, is a translator. Lahiri reveals that the representation of India in her book is a "translation of India" (Lahiri 118). Every writer is a translator also in the sense that he/she translates the voice of his/her characters. Jhumpa Lahiri goes to extent saying "Almost all of my characters are translators, in so far as they must make sense of the foreign to survive" (Lahiri 120). The same fact has been expressed by Sashi Deshpandey when she says "As a writer in English, I was in effect a translator – because we are not only translating our lives here into English but we are also translating the words of those characters who would not be speaking English" (Deshpandey 2013:2). In this way every writer and every character is a translator.

The term translation has been derived from the Latin word "translatum" which is made up of two segments – 'Trans' i.e. 'beyond', 'through', 'across' and "latum" means 'to carry'. Thus the term translation refers to taking/carrying something beyond or across. According to Nida "translating, consists in producing in the message of the source language, first in meaning and second in style". Translation is such a medium through which we can travel the whole world sitting in our home "***Yatra Vishwam Bhawati, Ekneeram***" (qtd in Agarwal 1999:15) and it makes us realize "***Vasudhaiv***

***Kutumbakam"*** (the whole world is my family). Translation plays a key role in national unity and cultural integration and it is true in the case of India. It was the translators who saved the unity of India by translating great Indian classics and disseminating the valuable knowledge. Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal's poem reveals the facts:

> Yoonani, Mistree, Roman sab mit gaye jahan se
> Kuchch baat hai ki hasti mitti nahi hamari
> Sadiyon raha hai dushman daure – jahan hamara
>
> (The Greek, the Egyptians, the Romans were all defeated, there is something within that prevents us from being defeated. Even though nations stood against us in enmity since ages.) (Ravi 2012: 9)

Translation connects us with various unique culture, community, country and continent which are yet unfamiliar to us. It changes our mind set and ignites the ways we perceive and portrays the world and enlarges the diversity of human experiences. Amitabh Ghosh emphasizes that "……and the thing translation is that there is no way around it. In a country as multilingual as ours, unless you have really good translation, you are doomed. (Ghosh 1994)

## Indo-Turkish Relations: Past, Present and Future

The relationship between India and Turkey is age-old. This relation refers to political, financial, cultural and foreign affairs between the two nations. "Economic cultural relation between ancient India and Anatolia date back to Vedic age (before 1000 BCE). During the World War I, the Indian Empire played a key role in the successful allied campaign against the Ottoman Empire" (Wikipedia).

In 1948, the diplomatic relationship between India and Turkey was established Turkey's embassy is in New Delhi and consulate general in Mumbai. India's embassy is in Ankara and consulate general in Istanbul. The relationship between India and Turkey has been strained due to the close ties of Turkey with Pakistan, an arch rival of India. Turkey advocated the position of Pakistan on Kashmir issue and Turkey was also against the inclusion of Indian into the nuclear suppliers group.

At present, the Indo-Turkish ties have been strengthened due to bilateral support in the field of trade, technology and education. The GMR group of India is one of the major state holders in the International Airport in Ankara. There is increase in trade from 28 million in 1985 to US$ 6.6 billion in 2012. Salman Khurshid's visit to Turkey aims to strengthen collaboration and co-operation forthe year 2014-2016. This proposal plan covers various areas like trade and technology, science and sport, education and culture, and defence and investment. Both the countries want to promote the relations. This will increase the communication at both the levels official level and between the common masses. "In the final analysis Indo-Turkish relations should depend not so much on past grievance as much on the current developing scenario in Today's World. The ties have not yet reached the level of depth and strength that it would be immune to third party factor and influence. The need for new chapters to revitalize the relationship will fade away only when the two nations pursue the present path of

mutual consolations and corporation. This will yield in enduring bonds and compatible strategic outlook" (Wikipedia).

Translation is one of the effective media of communication which reaches even to the common people and it brings us closer and together to deepen and promote Indo-Turkish dialogue. Translation functions as a bridge which connects the diplomats of two nations to boost the development and collaboration due to common strategic goals to emerge as powerful nations in the whole world. "At the turn of the century India and Turkey emerged into the multi-polar world with a renewed sense of openness and co-operation. While one is a bridge between Europe and Asia, and is held as an example of democratic engagement with the political Islam in the middle East and Megherb region, the other is an undisputable leader in South Asia, sits at the centre of the Indian Ocean and is a founder member of many global south-south co-operation block"(Wikipedia). This is how both the nations are inter-related and inter-dependent.

## Turkish Literature

Turkish literature is very rich and has profound depth and strength. It encompasses oral and written compositions in Turkish language. The history of Turkish literature covers the time span of almost 1300 years. It is comprised of two traditions – folk tradition and written tradition. The important phases in the history of Turkish literature-the folk literature include the epic tradition, folk poetry and folklore. The Ottoman literature consists of Divan poetry, early Ottoman prose and the 19$^{th}$ century literature and western influence. The 20$^{th}$ century Turkish literature witnessed three important movements which are the new literature movement, the dawn of the future movement and the national literature movement. The republican literature has two genres prose and poetry.

Orhan Pamuk, one of the greatest writers of Turkey, won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2006. His major works have been translated into English. These works are ***My Name is Red***, ***The Innocence of Objects***, ***Snow***, ***The White Cattle***, and ***The Black Book***. Like Orhan Pamuk there are many great writers who write in Turkish language and their works have also been translated into English e.g. "A.H. Tanpinar's", "The Time Regulation Institute", Yasar Kemal's "Memed, My Hawk", Elif Shafak's "The Bastard of Istanbul", Aziz Nesin's "Socialism is Coming: Stand Aside". Irfan Orga's "Portrait of Turkish Family" etc……. There are many great poets who have contributed a lot in the development of Turkish literature such as Sait Faik's ***Sleeping in the Forest***. Stories and Poems, he is regarded as "The Turkish Chekov." Apart from this there is Nazim Hikmet whose greatest work "Poems of Nazim Hikmet, Revised and Expanded Edition."

Turkey has such a rich literature with great depth and influence but these writers and their works have not yet been translated into Indian languages. They are only available in English translation due to this they don't have much popularity in India like American, Australian, Canadian literature etc. It is a matter of great concern. The reputed works of great Turkey writers should be translated into important Indian

languages and vice-versa so that the culture of communication between the people of two nations may take place for cultural and scholarly exchange.

## Strengthening Ties through Translation

We have received/are receiving the knowledge of world's greatest literature through translation. The translation of the ***Bible***, the ***Gita***, the ***Mahabharata***, the ***Ramayana***, the Vedas, the Upnishadas, ***Panchtantra***, etc. has revolutionized the whole world and history is a witness that translation of the ***Bible*** has played a crucial role in spreading Christianity. We have been reading the greatest writers of the world ion translation such as Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Kalidas, Tagore, Tulsi, Tolstoy, Dante, Petrarch, Virgil, Horace, Cicero etc.... and it is a long list. "Classical influence flows into the literature of modern nations by three ways- translation, imitation, and emulation." (Highet 1949:104) Had Indian sacred texts such as the Vedas, the Upanishads, the ***Gita*** been not translated, Indians would not have emerged as spiritual leaders across the globe. The ***Gita*** has been translated in many languages and many times in the same language after the ***Bible***.

If we can read Tolstoy, Gorky, Stendhal, Marquez in translation why not we can have Pamuk, Yasar Kemal, Elif Shafak, Ahmat Hamdi Tanionar, Nazim Hikmet, Sait Faik etc… in Indian languages? If we can have Russian, French, Garman, Canadian, Australian, American, African literatures in our syllabus at college and university levels then why not we can have Turkish literature? If we include Turkish literature in translation in our syllabus then we not only easily expand, enhance and enrich our knowledge of culture and literature but also we can build the culture of dialogue between two nations and can promote Indo-Turkish ties and can also resolve the conflicts during the course of time. Translation will enable us to breathe in the fresh air of dialogue, development, hope and harmony. If they include Indian literature in Turkish language then they will be able to understand us deeply and in this way we can come together and stand for the common cause to benefit mankind.

"Once the Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey, an Indophile, who had translated works of Rabindranath Tagore and the ancient Sanskrit text Bhagwat Gita into Turkish, injected a positive and new tone in the diplomatic parley" (Wikipedia). Translation of the texts and teaching them in school, college and university level can expand and enlarge our academic engagement, literacy prospects and interactive possibilities. If we can teach our children the stories of Anten Chekhov Mupassant the poem of Frost and Atwood etc. at school level than why not we teach Sait Faik, the Turkish Chekhov, Nazim Hikmet etc… to learn the best from Turkish culture, literature and society. The need is also to establish the department of Translation studies in the university and launch the courses of B.A. M.A. M.Phil. and Ph.D. as we have these courses in departments of foreign language studies.

If we can read and teach the works of Marquez, Tolstoy, Stendlal, Gorky, Dostoevsky, etc. then we can also read and teach Yasan Kemal, Orhan Pamuk, Latif Tekin, M.M. Samer, Elif Shafak etc. for intense academic discourse, scholarly

transaction and interactive prospects which will enable us to understand many social, cultural, linguistic practices and philosophic issues taking place in the societies.

This will open a new era in the relations between both the nations and it will also create employment in the field of translation and also at the academic level. Without cultural, linguistic and knowledge transaction, commercial investment and trade ties will not be durable because all relations, treaties and ties are based on understanding and translation would help us to understand one another profoundly.

Translation of Indo-Turkish literature only, will not help us to achieve our desired goal, therefore, we have to also pay attention to the translation of knowledge texts i.e. philosophy, sociology, science, psychology, education etc. which will instill into us valuable knowledge and enable us to comprehend the social processes and philosophical thoughts cropping up in the societies. We also need to focus on the translation of Indo-Turkish music and cinema which will have enduring impact on the minds of the people of both the nations.

The poorest of the poor and the commonest of the common people have access to music and cinema. Even the illiterate and uneducated those who cannot read or write, but listen, watch and understand message inherent in the music and cinema. Films and movies are the reflection of society's culture and social problems and prospects. So, they would help us to comprehend social perspectives and correct social and cultural problems. There is a great scope of translation in this field which will lead to socio-economic development and boost bi-lateral relations.

There are three activities from which nations can be developed "War to expand their territory, commerce to accumulate wealth and expand their economic activities and translation to expand their cultural, artistic and economic productions." (Nyongwa, 2012: 34)

There is one more way to promote Indo-Turkish dialogue i.e. to start teaching and learning Indo-Turkish language. In India, as we learn French, German, Spanish, Portuguese etc. then we can also learn Turkish language which will provide the forum of academic engagement and generate employment prospects. In the same way if the people of Turkey will learn and teach Indian languages then they will have deeper understanding of diverse cultures and social practices of India. For all this we need Turkish language department in Indian Universities as we have German and Romance studies department in University of Delhi where foreign languages are taught. In the same way Turkish Universities may have Indian language department which will provide profound academic engagement and intense interactive possibilities. Such types of learning will enable Indian students to visit Turkey and vice-versa to understand the linguistic, cultural and religious practices.

## Conclusion

The progress of the nation and refinement of culture are centered on the axis of translation. No country can progress or develop in isolation and therefore the unity of the nations is needed for cultural, intellectual, moral and spiritual enrichment and also

for socio-economic development and it is possible through translation. Translation is the barometer of nation's advancement in the field of education and employment, culture and literature, cinema and mass media, bi-lateral dialogue and diplomacy etc. Translation is an effective medium of promoting dialogue and diplomacy, education and employment, bi-lateral relations, socio-economic ties and treaties etc. It is emerging as a global means of communication in an era of globalization. Translation is a powerful weapon through which we can unite all the nations under one banner and establish peace and harmony across globe and ensure bi-lateral dialogue and development in the field of education, tourism etc. among all nations.

Indo-Turkish dialogue can be strengthened and promoted through the translation of Indo-Turkish literature and teaching of translated texts at school level as well as higher educational level. Without cultural understanding the foundation of any relations will be weak and temporary. For Indo-Turkish ties and bi-lateral relations we need solid foundation and it will come through understanding of culture, language and literature, and the understanding of the language, culture and literature will come through teaching and reading Indo-Turkish literature in translation which will prepare the soil for Indo-Turkish dialogue, bi-lateral relations and socio-economic ties that will lead to Nation building:

Nation Building

Indo-Turkish dialogue, economic ties, bi-lateral relations
Mutual cultural understanding

Reading and teaching translated Indo-Turkish literature
(Academic engagement)

Translation of Indo-Turkish literature, music, cinema

Indo-Turkish literature- music, cinema

Translation encompasses various aspects related to language, culture, literature, philosophy etc. of the society which need to be studied, imparted, and incorporated into academic curriculum at institutional level for the expansion and promotion of intense interactive possibilities that will result in strengthening Indo-Turkish dialogue, bi-lateral relations, and economic ties.

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