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A Study of the Significance of Translation Studies in the Educational Institutions of Pakistan

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to highlight the importance of Translation Studies as a proper discipline in educational institutions of Pakistan. The analysis has been done by conducting a questionnaire survey, gathering responses from the students of acknowledged educational institutions, both public and private. The findings suggest rather mixed views of the students about Translation and Translation Studies in general. While most of the participants have a clear idea that translation is something beyond mere paragraph translation and reading translated literature, they view translation as not necessarily a part of Humanities students' curriculum. Most of the participants have never found an opportunity to take a translation related course; whereas, they are interested in taking one. However, there were only one to two students who could name an institution that offers a translation studies degree. The majority of the students are also aware of the translational processes around them while using social media or reading print media and are able to identify them. On the whole, this research tries to identify the current situation of translation studies in Pakistan, and at the end some recommendations have been given to improve the situation of Translation Studies in Pakistan because Translation Studies is the ultimate requirement for the progress and development in the field of academics. The world has understood this; Pakistan needs to do the same.

Keywords: academic discipline, awareness, National Language Authority (NLA), translation, translation studies

Introduction

“Without translation, there is no history of the world.” – L. G. Kelly

Translation Studies is a field of study that manages the hypothesis, portrayal, and utilization of translation. Since it analyzes translation both as an inter-lingual step, and as an intercultural correspondence, Translation Studies can likewise be depicted as an inter-discipline which addresses other different fields of information, including relative writing, social studies, sexual orientation studies, software engineering, history, etymology, reasoning, way of talking, and semiotics (Burrow-Goldhahn, 2018).

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Translation Studies has an important role in our lives. Unfortunately, its true value is not noticed or recognized. Translation is unavoidable in the present world. The meaning of translation emerges from its application in different aspects of social, business, financial, abstract, and political parts of present day life. Because of globalization, borders among societies are disappearing, and thus, the requirement for comprehension is arising simultaneously. The inquiry here is the means by which this gap is to be filled and this understanding will occur despite tremendous varieties and assorted disparities among societies. The response to this inquiry would be translation (Saroukhil, [2018](#)).

Translation enriches human life by making it possible to communicate and share information across language borders. For example, religions and knowledge have spread via translated texts throughout the history. Every book, study or research has been written by someone in some language. Even a thought has an original language. The majority of the overall information today is collected piece by piece through translation. Pakistan does not seem to have grasped the meaning or significance of translation. A close nexus exists between translation skills and national development. The promotion of a translation culture is also important to foster values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among faiths, races and countries. The paradigm of Dialogue/Clash of Civilizations is best tackled through translations. The first step towards an examination of the processes of translation must be to accept that although translation has a central core of linguistic activity, it belongs most properly to semiotics, the science that studies sign systems or structures, sign processes and sign functions. Translation is important because not everyone speaks English. English is the most commonly spoken language but Translation is important because people prefer their native language. The people in Pakistan as the L2 speakers of English use translation as a core tool for learning. They have translation all around them both in Educational Institutions as well as daily life. In day to day life nowadays, a person is exposed to social media and social platforms online. The recent trend of watching international entertainment content is another thing that exposes people to translated content. Hence, Translation studies as a proper discipline needs to be established and recognized in Pakistan on account of its importance in Pakistani context.

This paper aims to first find out the current state of awareness about the importance and usage of Translation Studies in Educational Institutes of Pakistan. Apart from addressing the issue of state of unawareness and ignorance toward Translation Studies as an Educational discipline, this study highlights its importance and lists the ways to establish Translation Studies as a proper academic discipline in Pakistani Educational Institutes.

Literature Review

Translation Studies is very closely related to Language Studies as Kelly claims 'to each stream of language theory, there corresponds a theory of translation.' Thus it could be easily affirmed that every development in linguistic theory usually leads to development in translation studies. "The majority of the world's past comes to us in translation." It may not exaggerate the situation," composes Kelly (1979) "to claim that the historical backdrop of the world could be told through the historical backdrop of translation. For sure, one might even declare that, without translation, there is no history of the world." During a time period when people, thoughts, culture and business seem to cross all language barriers, translation as a link among them is a very important thing. Translation activities are not pre-programmed or straight forward, thus translators must be well acquainted with all the necessary knowledge in order to carry out successful translation activities.

The end of the 20th century gave birth to the discipline of "Translation Studies" and the development of institutions that specialize and teach it. James S. Holmes is the pioneer of the term and first used it in his research paper "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" in 1972. From the beginning till the 20th century, interpretation was a special aspect of translation. However, it is a separate discipline now in order to look at the educational and more applicable scope of interpretation. Translation Studies (TS) has a number of approaches that define the outlook of a translator and his tactics for translation. The Sociolinguistic Approach says that a translator is himself a product of his social upbringing and the act of translation is governed by the translator's social context. While the Communicative Approach states that a text cannot be translated but the meanings can be. The researchers such as Seleskovitch and Lederer (1993) are strong advocates of this approach. Another Hermeneutic Approach, based on the work of George Steiner, says that each and every thing communicated is considered as a translation. Moreover, the linguists such as Vinay and Austin examined translation studies with relation to Pragmatism, linguistic structures and literary discourse. Another very important approach is the Literary Approach which claims that instead of considering translation as a linguistic venture, it should be a complete literary act in itself. Lastly the Semiotic Approach identifies the translation as an act of assigning meaning to a text where the cultural and social background is different (Holmes, 1975). Translation is a process invention of thoughts; thus, it is subjective and can't be systematized by laws. Regardless of the way how translation presently assumes a critical role in the modern world, it has been side lined as a second-hand art. For this matter, Belloc believes that translation has never been given the status of an original work. As Savory claims that it is convenient to say that there are no set standards for

translation, in the light of which the concerned translators carry out their tasks because there has been no such agreement before; in this way, there is no general tendency to think about translation as a science (Ordudari, [2008](#)).

Translation Studies (TS), i.e. study about the transference of writings into another language, were not yet a full discipline of its own. But recent developments have weakened this argument as more and more researches are being conducted related to translation studies. Never again are studies on translation and deciphering just an informative supplement of language adapting, rather they have developed into an extraordinary discipline. The technique related is additionally extremely different. In connected TS the emphasis is on interpreter preparing, and exchanging concerned translational devices, educational means and translation feedback. All the more the hypothetical approaches in TS apply enlightening investigation so as to discover translation universals, for example, explicitations, or the between etymological connection between dialects. The improvement of the technology has empowered the translation business and now localization industry is ready to embrace new devices in the translation procedure (Odacıoğlu and Kokturk, [2015](#)).

Over last 30 years, Translation Studies has come to be acknowledged as a proper discipline and is officially instructed at numerous universities. Actually the drive to make learning based economies has driven numerous nations to effectively advance Translation Studies. The World Competitiveness report 2006, showing the worldwide literacy rate, contains only one Arab nation: Jordan positions among the best 60 nations. It is straightforwardly identified with the much mourned truth that the aggregate number of books converted into Arabic over the most recent 1000 years is not as much as the quantity of books converted into Spanish in one year. The other three Muslim nations in this rundown are Malaysia, Turkey and Indonesia - every one of the three nations with dynamic state-supported translation programs. Malaysia is the main Muslim nation to have its colleges positioned among the best 200 on the planet today. The important books written in different languages, and scientific researches, are replicated in Bhasha and Turkish quickly. Pakistan is gaining estimable ground in providing the web and telecom framework. Broadband entrance is set to rise significantly in the following years. What is missing is the language consistence. There is no machine translation capacity in any Pakistani language. Some basic work has been done at the National Language Authority's Center for Urdu Informatics and at the Center for Research in Urdu Language Processing at the Lahore Campus of FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences (Ahmed, [2012](#)). However, it is said that 90 percent of the work stays to be finished. Without fast localization, most of the population will stay without PC use. While various companies give voice network, information

handling is altogether done by means of English. Given the present low rate of English proficiency in Pakistan, we can never plan to get our PC education proportion into twofold figures. In current scenario, when geology is getting to be history and web is invading each space, the significance of English has decreased and languages like Hindi, Mandarin, Japanese, Arabic and other provincial languages have picked up force. The translators and interpreters for languages like English, Chinese, Japanese, French, German, Korean, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Hindi are in high demand over the world. In this changed situation, monetary open doors are in bounty for individuals who can decipher from one language to another, especially from English to the neighborhood or territorial languages. Individuals who are well familiar with more than two languages can go about as translators and get proper government jobs. (Carrasco-Ortíz et. al, [2017](#)).

Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- to identify the current status of Translation Studies in Educational Institutions of Lahore;
- to highlight the importance of Translation Studies as an Academic Discipline in Educational Institutions of Pakistan; and
- to list the ways to establish Translation Studies as a proper discipline in Pakistani Educational Institutes

Research Questions

- 1.Are Pakistani students aware of the Translation Studies as a discipline?
- 2.What is the current situation and scope of translation studies in Pakistani Educational Institutions?
- 3.What measures should be taken to acknowledge the importance of Translation Studies and to establish it as a proper discipline?

Significance of Study

The significance of this research is the analysis of awareness about Translation Studies even at advance levels, where it should be considered significant. The research specifically looks at the current situation regarding Pakistani students and their awareness and requirement of Translation Studies as an academic discipline in particular.

Research Gap

The Translation Studies as a proper academic discipline is yet to be identified and given due importance in the educational institutions of Pakistan. The study

intends to fill this gap. The world has started to recognize the importance of Translation studies. Many researches are being done on the discipline and its importance. The study focuses to do the same by analyzing the current situation of Translation Studies in the most recognized and prestigious Educational Institutions of Pakistan.

Limitations of the Study

The study is conducted in a limited time frame of 8 weeks. It has been conducted using a survey with a limited population of students, from a few renowned educational institutions, in order to find out the current situation of Translation studies in Pakistani educational institutions.

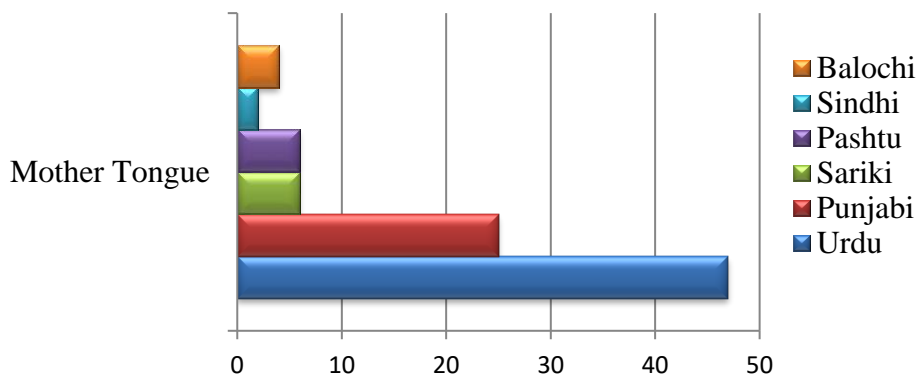
Research Methodology

The quantitative approach for data collection and analysis was followed. A questionnaire that comes under the domain of qualitative research method has been used to collect data. The target population is of total 90 students, 15 respondents each from 6 established and prestigious (3 Public and 3 Private) educational institutes. The sample students were from both graduate and post-graduate programs aging between 17-24 years. For this research, a survey was conducted. A questionnaire had been the main research tool. The research questionnaire was approved by the advisor. It was tested upon students taking two translation related modules at Kinnaird College, Lahore.

Data Analysis and Report Writing

Figure 1

The First Language of the Respondents



The medium of instruction in all 6 targeted educational institutions was English. The responding students were bilingual as well as multilingual. Their medium of study was English but they spoke Urdu language while having other languages as their mother tongue. The above bar chart shows the number of respondents having Urdu, Punjabi, Sariki, Pashtu, Sindhi and Balochi respectively as their mother tongues. 47 were Urdu speaking, 25 were Punjabi speakers, 6 students had Sariki and Pashtu as their mother tongues while 4 were Balochi speaking. 2 respondents were Sindhi speaking as well.

Table 1*Responses of the Respondents to the Questionnaire*

Sr.	Questions	Yes	Not sure	No
1	Are you aware of the term "Translation Studies" i.e. the study of theory and practice of translation and interpretation?	51%	18%	31%
2	Have you ever taken any course related to translation?	26%	3%	71%
3	You view Translation as a source of:	Cultural exchange 18%	Language transfer 20%	Communication in modern world 62%
4	Are you aware of any translated material on social media?	55%	21%	24%
5	Are you aware that most of the text on print media is translated?	45%	32%	23%
6	Can you identify any translated text on social or print media?	51%	27%	22%
7	Do you watch dubbed/subtitled programs e.g. movies, dramas etc?	89%	2%	9%
8	Are you aware of any translated literary work e.g. novels, poems etc?	71%	13%	16%
9	Do you mentally translate your academic text i.e. from	76%	4%	20%

Sr.	Questions	Yes	Not sure	No
	English to Urdu in order to understand it?			
10	Does translating your academic text help you understand it better?	77%	12%	11%
11	According to you, studying translation involves:	Studying translated literary works 46%	Translating paragraphs 12%	Understanding nature of translation 42%
12	You think translation for academic purpose and understanding is mandatory for second language speakers?	64%	21%	15%
13	Do you think only language or literature students require translation related courses?	31%	18%	51%
14	You think you can effectively translate a text from English into Urdu or vice versa?	85%	12%	3%
15	Do you think your institute should offer a degree in Translation Studies?	62%	18%	20%
16	Are you interested in taking a translation related course. e.g. translation into Urdu etc.	61%	11%	28%
17	Is there any educational institute of Lahore in your knowledge that offers a degree (Graduate/Post-Graduate) in Translation Studies?	13%	46%	41%

The first question attempts to focus on research question 1 of the study. The majority of the students were aware about Translation Studies being a study about theory and practice of translation and interpretation. Half of the student population participating were familiar with the concept of Translation Studies while many had no idea about it. A small portion of the students were not sure what the term really means. Over all, the majority of students in Pakistani educational institutes had an

idea what Translation Studies means. They were aware of the term “Translation Studies” in general.

Question 2 attempted to know the percentage of students undertaking graduate or post graduate program, who somewhere along their degree had taken any translation related module or course. Majority of the students responded with ‘no’ as an answer. More than half of the students had never taken any course related to translation. The rest of students were not sure about it. While 3% of population of students replied with a yes, because they did somewhere along their degree had taken any sort of translation related course. Hence the majority of the students had not studied any translation related course, but a significant amount had.

The third question asks for the views of students regarding translation. It attempts to show how many students view translation as a source of cultural exchange, language transfer and communication modern world respectively. Majority of students viewed translation as a source of communication in modern world while some respondents take translation as a mean of language transfer, the other respondents view translation as a vector for culture exchange. Thus a very significant amount of the respondents view translation as an important source of communication in modern world, thus verifying its significance in today’s era.

The answers to question 4 and 5 demonstrate whether students were aware about the translated material present on social media. 55% of the students were well aware of translated materials uploaded on social media. More than half of the students were well aware that there is translated material on the social media sites and forums that they use every day. 21% were not sure whether they were not aware, or cannot tell if there is any translated material present on the social media sites that they commonly visit; while 24% of the students were not aware of the presence of any translated material on social media websites. A significant amount of students were well aware that translation is present on the internet as well which shows that students were not totally unaware of the presence of translation around them.

The answer to question 5 shows the number of students in the educational institutions who were aware that the print media nowadays is largely a translated text. The responses by the students were overlapping. Half of students were aware, less than half of the students had no idea while 23 percent of students were not aware that print media nowadays rely mostly upon translation. This shows that a significant amount of students are well aware about the presence of translation in print media as well.

The question 6 in the above result table depicts the percentage of respondents that could actually identify translated materials present on either social or print media if or whenever they come across one. A large percentage of respondents replied with a positive response. 51% of respondents could actually tell whether a text was translated or not when they came across one on either social or print media.

The question 7 was designed to inquire how much of the target population i.e. students, used translation generally in their routine or leisure hours. Nearly all the respondents used translation in the form of dubbed or subtitled programs. 89% of the target population claimed to be a regular viewer of dubbed or subtitled programs in the form of movies, dramas etc. 2% did not know what to answer while, 9% of respondents did not use these forms of translations what so ever. These responses clearly demonstrated that a very large number of students utilize translation in their routine or leisure hours in the form of dubbed or subtitled programs.

Question 8 attempted to determine how much of the target population i.e. students of bachelor and M. Phil level are aware of the translated literature in form of novels, poems etc. A significant portion of students in the targeted public and private educational institutions of Lahore are aware of translated literary work. 71% of the student population replied with a positive response. While the result of the question clearly implies the awareness amongst the students of graduate and post graduate students regarding the abundance of translation in literature.

The question 9 and its results above tend to determine the significance of translation at academic level especially regarding a second or third language speaker. The targeted students were bilingual as well as multi-lingual. The medium of instruction was English in all the targeted institutions. The 76% of the students as the L2 Speakers do translate their academic text mentally either voluntarily or involuntarily in their minds in order to effectively grasp the meaning of their academic text. 4% of students were unable to tell and were not sure. This clearly showed that translation is significant in the Pakistani scenario with L2 speakers especially for the academic purposes for better understanding.

The question 10 and its results in the table above tend to determine the significance of translation at academic level especially regarding a second or third language speaker. Thus, translation helps them a lot academically. The 77% of the students as the L2 speakers do translate their academic text in order to effectively grasp the meaning of their academic text. 11% of the respondents thought they did not require translation for understanding their academic notes or texts in order to grasp the true meaning and for good understanding. This made it clear that

translation is very important for Pakistani L2 speakers especially for the academic purposes.

Question 11 demonstrated what the respondents thought of studying translation really involves. Amongst the three given options, 46% of the respondents assume translation study as the study of translated literary works, while 42% of the respondent population assumes translation studies as study about the understanding nature of translation. A very small portion i.e.12% of respondents think translation studies as translating paragraphs from texts. Over all the majority of the respondents have a very clear idea that Translation Studies is beyond the mere translation of small texts. It is more about understanding how the science of translation works by looking at the prominent translated literature.

Question 12 attempted to determine the significance of translation at academic level especially regarding a second or third language speaker. 64% of the students as the L2 speakers do considered it very significant for students enrolled in any major degree program. This indicated that translation is not mandatory for the L2 speakers according to the majority of the responding population

The question 13 tends to determine if the students at educational institutions belonging to various majors have an impression that studying translation is a requirement of literature and linguistics students only. The responses are mixed showing that students have mixed views about this. 51% of the students do not view translation as something bound to the language or literature students. While 31% of student population views translation as something only required by language and literature students as a part and parcel of their study area concerned. However, 18% of the population is not sure whether only literature and language students are concerned with translation studies and not any other major. This concludes that while a majority of students do realize that translation is not something bound to language or literature major, but there are a lot of students that are under an impression that translation is not their concern.

Question 14 attempted to gather views of students regarding their academic processes that involved Translation. And whether those students thought that they were able to translate a piece of text effectively. Being an L2 speaker and having English as a medium of instruction, students sometimes are bound to translate their academic texts at some point. Overall, 85% of the students thought that they are able to translate any text from English to Urdu or Urdu to English efficiently. Only 3 percent of students did not think they can translate very effectively. Overall a significantly large amount of students are sure they are able to translate their text from English to Urdu or vice verse effectively.

The percentage of responding students who think that their educational institution should offer a proper degree in Translation Studies i.e. Masters, BS. Or M. Phil levels has been indicated through Question 15. The majority of the respondents had positive responses. 62% of the responding student population was of the view that their institution should offer a proper Translation Studies degree.

Question 16 shows that nearly three fifth of the targeted student population was interested in taking a translation related course, e.g. translation into Urdu, world literature translated into Urdu etc. While 61% of respondents showed interest. This clearly indicated that students from different majors were interested in taking an elective course or module that came under the domain of Translation Studies and showed a positive response.

The last question inquired whether students were aware of any educational institution in Pakistan which offers a proper degree in Translation Studies of any level i.e. graduate or post graduate what so ever. The half of the student respondents were not sure if there was any educational institution in Pakistan that offers a Translation Studies Degree of any sort while less than half said that there were no Educational Institution in their knowledge that offered a proper degree in Translation Studies. The result clearly depicts the situation of Translation Studies as a proper educational discipline in Pakistan. The situation demands attention. And even if there are any programs being offered, they are not enough to grab attention or knowledge in the students.

Discussion / Recommendations

Pakistan is a multi-lingual country. In schools at least two to three languages are taught i.e. English, Urdu and Arabic usually. This is one of the main reasons why Pakistani students have a hard time gaining a full command in any one of them. Those educational institutions where the medium of instruction is mainly English, native speakers, having Urdu or any other regional language as their mother tongue, require translation at each and every step during academic learning process. The survey clearly indicates that majority of the people are familiar with what Translation Studies is and what it is about. However, a large proportion of students is unaware of what Translation Studies is and why it is very important. This indicates the situation of Translation Studies in Pakistan. The majority of the people are not sure or totally aware about whether there is any educational institution that offers a proper degree in Translation Studies. While there are people who are familiar with the translational processes around them at everyday level and are able to point them out, most of them are still ignorant to the vast amount of translated

material on print/social media. Majority of the students are also interested in taking a translation related course.

Since most of the respondents, as indicated by the survey results, had a very basic ideas about what Translation Studies is, but they did require it and were exposed to translated materials in their academic and day to day life, the respondents according to their basic knowledge did try to give recommendations for improving the status of TS as a discipline and awareness about translation as whole. The rest of the recommendations are included by the researcher in light of the information gathered during research process.

The recommendations for spreading awareness regarding the significance of translation studies and to establish it as an educational discipline are listed below as follows:

- The translation of scientific researches should be done. It would help to preserve Urdu language, which has become stagnant due to shortage of scientific words. It would also evolve Urdu language and help the native speakers who are not very competent in English.
- Media are an integral part of today's world. Three types of media are present: print, social and electronic media. Media use translation in redundancy. But it can be used as an important source to give awareness to general public about the importance of translation studies.
- Many people in Pakistan belonging to different areas and regions still don't have a proper 3G access to internet. The books about translation should be available in book stores. This will help in restoring book reading culture as well.
- Translated materials should be easily available for the students in institutional as well as public libraries.
- Translated materials e.g. articles, reports are used by print media in abundance. Print media should promote translation as well. While printing translated articles, articles about translation should be printed as well.
- Considering the importance of translation in literary and scientific areas, translation should be included as a category for book awards.
- Pakistani universities where Translation Studies is not being offered, should offer degree programs for TS.
- Necessary funds should be allocated to National Language Authority so that it can be upgraded on a large scale.
- The National Language Authority should establish a specialized library of all old and new books of translations as part of the library of its translation house.

- The important books should be translated under the supervision of the National Language Authority, into Urdu (national Language) and published.
- Since there is a shortage of good translators in Pakistan, a translator training center should be established under the National Language Authority and Translation Studies should be introduced and established as a proper educational discipline in all universities of Pakistan.
- Nowadays translation between regional languages and national language is facilitated by using latest translation machine technologies (phenomena known as the Localization). This machine translation facility should be properly utilized.

Conclusion

Translation is an essential part of today's world. It is in fact inevitable. Especially after the localization, Translation Studies is the means of progress. This study is an attempt to address the issue of ignorance of this very important discipline i.e. Translation Studies. The study also looks into the need and requirements of Pakistani students for Translation Studies in the educational institutes. The people in Pakistan must be aware of the importance of the translation processes and be able to identify them in order to make better use of them and progress. Pakistan is no more isolated. Thus to interact with the world translation is the best tool.

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