

# An Endeavor to Transgress Borders through Translation: 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference, Department of English, EWU

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*Translation studies is a newly emerging area of interest among academics and practitioners of English language and literature. Living in a time when diversity in cultures and thought is celebrated, and metanarratives are problematized continuously, people have been embracing translation as a way through which they can achieve variety in ideas and thoughts. Keeping this in mind, The Department of English, East West University, in line with its tradition of arranging successful national and international conferences, organized a two-day international conference under the title – 'Transgressing/Transcending Borders Through Translation' on 25-26 January of 2019.*

Friday, 25 January 2019

The conference commenced in the presence of well-known academics as well as nationally and internationally renowned translators. Dr. Mohammed Farashuddin, Chairperson, Board of Trustees, congratulated the department of English for organizing the conference and pointed out that the conference was the brainchild of Dr. Saidur Rahman Lasker, a member of the Board of Trustees. Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman, recapitulated the history of translation studies in his short speech, having adorned the ceremony as its Chief Guest.

Professor Kaiser Haq, former professor of Department of English, University of Dhaka, who is currently a professor and the Dean of ULAB school of Arts and Humanities, delivered the inaugural speech while Professor Fakrul Alam, who also retired from DU recently and as the Pro VC of EWU - chaired the session. In his speech entitled – "On Being a Writer – Translator" Professor Haq threw light on the tripartite classification of translators, - professional, accidental and creative translators and shared his experience of working in all these different domains willingly, and sometimes on request.

Professor Haq's speech was followed by several parallel sessions; among them were sessions on – "Theory, Culture and Postcoloniality of Translation Studies; Poetry in Translation; Textual Interpretation and Translation; and Translation in Adaptations. In addition to all these parallel sessions where translation studies was approached and dissected from various academic, creative and theoretical angles, Dr Jacob Blakesley, University Academic Fellow in World Literatures of University of Leeds, and a renowned translator of poetry, delivered his keynote's address under the title – "The Sociology of Poetry Translation." The day ended with a panel discussion with Rifat Munim, Professor Fakrul Alam and Sohana Manzoor on translating from Bengali to English when the translators exchanged views on translating between these languages and also shared the experiences of translation.

Saturday, 26 January 2019

The second and final day of the two-day International conference began with two parallel sessions, both titled – "Classics in Translation" and "Translation in Popular Bangla Fiction," where old Bengal classics like *Ayeshamangal*, as well as groundbreaking



works of our greatest poets like – Tagore and Nazrul were discussed. In the following session, Professor Niaz Zaman, in her talk entitled – "Father Tongues, Mother Tongues and Other Tongues" noted that to do justice to the original text, a translator should know the source language well, but must have special proficiency in the target language too.

The next parallel sessions were entitled – "Translation in Education, Gender and Development" and "Issues in Machine Translations," where the presenters approached translation studies from its applicability in the fields of Applied Linguistics and ELT. They discussed in their papers the feasibility of machine translation in academia and academic research works. These parallel sessions were followed by a Plenary presentation by Dr. Anisur Rahman.

Professor, Jamia Milia Islamia, in which he delivered his views on his experience of translating Urdu ghazals and through translating literary cultures. The last parallel sessions of the day had "Folk and Indigeneity and its scope in Translation Studies" as well as "Transition in translation" as themes.

There was a very lively student panel as well where young undergraduate students of various universities approached translation studies from their perspectives. They debated on the pros and cons of using code switching in media, of indigenous language learners of Bangladesh, and their impact on learning English; code switching in social media and its impact upon the younger generation of Bangladesh. They also evaluated how the shift from GTM to CLT had marginalized translation for a while. There

were two more students' panel that dealt with fiction in translation and culture in translation.

Among the international presenters, there were two participants from Turkey displaying keen interest in South Asian literature, especially on the works of Amitabh Ghosh and Monica Ali. One of the international participants from India was concerned with theoretical approaches and aspects of translation studies.

The final panel discussion, after which the concluding ceremony took place, had Professor Fakrul Alam as the moderator and Abdus Selim, Khairul Alam Sabuj, Mashrur Arefin, Sajjad Sharif and Kajal Krishna Banerjee as discussants. This lively session focused mostly on translation from English to Bengali. The panel discussions of both days were very fruitful and informative, as the discussants were not only from academia, but also from print.

This EWU conference was successful in stimulating thoughts among participants on this relatively less covered arena in English language and literature called translation studies. In Bangladesh, perhaps, it was the first full-fledged international academic conference on translation studies, where this subject has been approached, dissected and examined from all different point of views. Conference is a place where we all go and thus grow as academics and researchers. This international conference arranged by the Department of English has undoubtedly helped all its participants in that way.

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