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Scientific Integration and Common Values: Issues relating to the research of Turkic languages

Talking points of Mr Jandos Asanov, TurkPA Secretary General

In his philosophical work Future Outlook: Spiritual Revival published on the 12th of April, 2017 Leader of the Nation, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev dwells on the further development of the Kazakh language. The Leader of the Nation emphasised the need to put on the scientific track the linguistic translation and requested to translate into Kazakh one hundred leading textbooks of the world and to set up a national translation bureau.

If to take into consideration the fact that the Leader of the Nation is recognised as the Aqsaqal (Alderman) of the contemporary Turkic world, it is noticeable that his views as regards the Kazakh language can also be related towards other Turkic languages. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-speaking Countries (TurkPA), which came into being on the initiative of the Leader of Kazakhstan, in its work pays serious attention to the deepening of cultural, spiritual and humanitarian ties among the brotherly countries and lends legislative and other types of support to the undertakings and decisions adopted within the framework of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States (Turkic Council).

The documents that TurkPA adopted in the field of culture and humanitarian issues draw attention to the fact that the linguistic translation is a complex issue. Currently, translation from one Turkic language into another has not been put yet into scientific track, preparation of professional interpreters is being overlooked and this in its turn creates obstacles on the way of full-fledged development of interstate relations in all the spheres.

Underdeveloped state of the above said translation issue has its negative sides and the following are some of them. For example, the information flow between Kazakhstan and Turkey, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan is well below of what is needed. Our countries rely on the third information sources and as its result the incoming news passes through the prism of the views of other countries. Even think-tank centres of our countries rely on the information and expert opinion of other third sources when the issues of our countries are considered. Since our countries rely on the third information sources the news of the developments in other regions come in full detail whereas the news about the developments in the brotherly countries reach with significant alterations.

Full-fledged information flow among the countries ensures enlargement of interaction in all the fields, including the trade, tourism, ties between the persons and industries.

The only way to tackle the above highlighted issues is putting of linguistic translation from one Turkic language into another on the scientific track, preparing of
professionals, preparation of specific textbooks in the field of translation, language learning, compilation of general linguistic and specialised dictionaries (including the development of their online versions). To take up these issues TurkPA held joint conferences in cooperation with the International Kazakh-Turk University named after Hoja Ahmed Yassawi, which is located in the town of Turkestan, Kazakhstan as well as with the Kyrgyz-Turk Manas University in Bishkek.

Another issue that needs a serious attention is the comparative study of the Turkic languages. The Turkic peoples that have common roots each now has its own language, literature and culture. Therefore, it would be useful to carry on the research into the Turkic languages in the following two fields – history of the Turkic languages and comparative study of the modern Turkic languages.

Researching the history of the Turkic languages will help us to reveal the essence and rich nature of our languages. And this in its turn will help return many forgotten words and along with them historic traditions into our languages.

In 2016 on the 17-18th of May in Ankara within the framework of a TurkPA event a scientific research work titled “Comparative grammar of Kazakh and Turkish languages” was presented (authors: Bayan Junusova and Nurullah Taşdelen). The said book is one of fruitful results of the Bolashaq University located in Qaraghandy and Atatürk University of Erzurum. It would be very useful to continue the said types of research. Apart from that comparative studies of the lexicon, phonetics, stylistics would help reveal the nature of modern Turkic languages and serve as a booster in their development.

TurkPA is sponsoring a scientific project on the compilation of large English-Kazakh Dictionary. Particularly, TurkPA lent support in opening a special web-site (www.eng-kaz.kz) and it currently works and new words are regularly added to it. Thus TurkPA is already contributing to the initiative of the Leader of the Nation to translate other cultures’ best values into Kazakh.