

The Current Trend of Translation into Pashto

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Abstract: *We witness an ever increasing trend of hundreds and even thousands of books and literature translated into Pashto language. Should we look at the number of such translations performed since 2001, we realize that it's something not achieved in the past hundreds of years. The Pashtoon authors and youth have turned to translation in an unprecedented manner, as a result of which, we have a new book translated into Pashto by every passing week. The number of these books surpasses the number of those, authored by Pashtoon authors itself. These translations are undertaken voluntarily by Pashtoons living in Afghanistan, Pashtoonkhwa, Quetta and any other parts of the world. Even though it's a positive and praiseworthy effort, it also can bring an alarming rate of damages and problems that needs to be prevented. The major problem that is caused by this speedy process is nothing else but bringing many harms to the language itself. One of these harmful effects on the Pashto language is the entry of many alien vocabularies that was only possible through hasty translation. There's a visible damage brought to the core and original structure of the language. As a result, the Pashto language has lost its original taste and has adopted a new but fabricated nature.*

Keywords: translation, translator, problems, factors, principles, books

1. Preface

In to Pashto, the national and official language of Afghanistan has been translated more than at any time in the past. In addition to small texts and articles, books are translated into this language on a daily basis. Dozens of new translated books are released every month and this number is increasing day by day. Some of them translate articles and everyday texts, some of them translate books. Some of them are professional translators who are trained and translate better. But some of them translate without the necessary professional training and competence. Some translate to serve their language, culture and community, but some translate for fame and money. Some of them may have political, religious and other purposes. The current flow of translation is good, but it also has problems, a large part of which are language problems. In this article, we discuss the current trend of translation, its developments, problems, factors and solutions.

2. Current trend of translation

One of the efforts to enrich and develop the Pashtoons is the translation trend. A large number of translators have turned to translation for the advancement of the Pashtoons and the development of the Pashto language. Hundreds or thousands of books have been written and these efforts are increasing day by day. Should we look at the number of such translations performed since 2001, we realize that it's something not achieved in the past hundreds of years. Pashtoon authors and translators have translated heavily and now two or three books translated into Pashto weekly. Publishers in Kabul also believe that the number of translated books is higher than the number of books written in Pashto. There are also publishing houses and bookstores, most of which are translated books. Aksos Publishing and Bookstore in Kabul in 2019 shows that 90% of the books published by this publication were translated books. Next to it, you can find newly translated books every week in every bookstore.

Pashto translation has now become a natural movement, with

Pashtoon translators translating books from various languages into Pashto in Afghanistan, Pashtoonkhwa, Quetta, and around the world. Some translators use translation to find money. In recent years, the book market in Afghanistan has improved. Some books sell well, and publications and bookstores make a lot of money, part of which is given to the translator. Last year, some books sold thousands of volumes over several months. Previously, a thousand-volume Pashto book was published, which was not sold for several years and in some cases the author was forced to distribute their book to the public. There are now books that have sold thousands of volumes in one year and some of Aksos Publishing books have even sold more than ten thousand volumes, including (You can win), (Representative), (Speak to win) and other important books are included.

Is the current trend of translation into Pashto based on necessity?

In addition to the speed of translation, the question also arises as to whether this translation is based on the needs of the Pashto language and culture?

Many of the books that have been translated in Afghanistan in recent years include books on psychology, self-improvement and ways to make money. It is true that the Pashto language lacked information in this area and the Pashtoons need it, but this section is not a priority. In the second category are political books that provide information about Afghanistan, the region and the world. Pashtoons also need political books in the field of politics and they should be aware of politics in order to get out of the current problems, but this does not mean that this field should be given priority over some areas. The greatest need of the Pashtoons is the field of science, but there are very few translated books in this field. There is a need to focus more on scientific and teaching books. This is Afghanistan's priority. After this, pay attention to areas such as psychology and politics.

Current translation language problems

Translation also has great implications for losses and problems. For example, in addition to profits and benefits,

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translation into language also has disadvantages. Because during translation, the effect of one language remains on another. The low and high of this influence is related to the extent to which the translator understands the language and the translation. The translation that has been done in Pashto so far has also defective Pashto prose in addition to usefulness. Language problems are somewhat obvious in two parts. The first in the vocabulary section and the second in the language structure section:

1) Problems that arise in the vocabulary section

The first problem that can be seen in current translations is many words from other languages. This may be a compulsion and we may not have proper words in the target language, but current translations use a large number of expressive words for which we have equivalent, better and more general words in Pashto. Mr. Ziar says: "A language should have up to 25% of vocabulary in other languages and the remaining 75 in vocabularies should be new, old and accented words" (4: 133) Now, it is not a problem if the words of the statement are more than 25% by a little, but if this number becomes too much, it will cause problems. During translation, translators are often confronted with new concepts, ideas, and terms that are not equivalent in Pashto. Or they are in Pashto, but they are not aware of this and translate the words of other languages into Pashto.

2) Problems that arise in the structure of language

The biggest problem with the translation trend is that it damages the structure of the Pashto language. Translators who translate from other languages into Pashto use the structure of the source language instead of Pashto. They forget that each language has a specific structure of sentences, combinations, etc. And that the structure of other languages and expressions should not be transferred to Pashto. By doing so, they are breaking the backs of Pashto themselves and the damage of this part is very great compared to the field of expressive words. In this section we discuss the problems that arise in the structure:

Each language has a specific structure for its sentences that may be more or less similar to other languages, but their differences are certain. At present, most translations of sentences are written contrary to the structure of Pashto sentences. Pashtoons always use simple sentences and compound words are seldom found in their speech. The problem is not in the speech but in the writing. The structure of Pashto is such that behavioral and written languages are close to each other, but some authors have widened this gap. When they speak, they use simple and short sentences, but when writing these sentences, they are very long. This is the effect of translation and is seen in many translated texts.

Persian sentences are long and when Pashtoon translators encounter these sentences, they translate them in the same way. For example, there are problems in compound sentences. "Composite sentences are divided into sentences that consist of one or more simple sentences and present a complete content. Or that the sentence is composed of two or more present units." (3: 141)

There are other types of compound sentences, but we will not discuss them here, we will only discuss how these types

of sentences have been translated into Pashto.

Here, most of the time, the problem is not the short compound sentences, but the problem that arises when the sentences are long and compound. Now if we say: "Ahmad came and took Mahmood" there is no problem, it is a compound sentence, but it is not long. Most of the time when we come across long compound sentences, most of them come through translation into Pashto.

Another problem is the protest sentences. The demurrer sentence or item is given in the middle of the sentence for more information. The demurrer sentence is rare in Pashto, but has many uses in Persian and English. Professor Ziar says: "In the main sentence, quoting the demurrer sentences is not more than a common one and in the Pashto written language that has been promoted recently, it does not correspond to pure written Pashto..." (6: 253)

Professor Ziar does not say that this is the effect of translation, but I have compared the translated texts with the texts written in Pashto and we have found that there are many protest sentences in the translated texts. This sometimes prolongs the sentence during the translation and makes the prose tasteless. Consider the following examples:

Ahmad Shah Baba, who founded contemporary Afghanistan in 1747, came to power in 25 years by the Loya Jirga.

We can deal with the demurrer sentence in two ways. The first is to remove this demurrer sentence from the main sentence and make it a separate sentence. We take the translated sentence above and make a separate sentence from it:

Ahmad Shah Baba came to power at the age of 25 through Loya Jirga. In 1747, he founded contemporary Afghanistan.

In this example, we removed the object sentence and the sentence from the main sentence and wrote the main sentence at the end. On this basis, both simple and short sentences were made and the concept was easily transferred.

Language also has a special structure in the field of combinations and terms, which in some cases not only does not consider the structure of combinations, but instead of Pashto combinations and terms, combinations of other languages are translated word for word.

Some translators who are weak and face (for the first time, for the last time, forever...) English or with (for the first, for the last time, forever ...) Persian, in Pashto (for) Translates and writes in English: (for the first time, for the last time, for forever ...). There are two problems here, one problem in meaning, because if I go (I came first), it means that the purpose of my coming is first. Secondly, we say in Pashto that (I came first, I came last, I always go ... and here it is not necessary to use (for). The same is confirmed by Mr. Asadullah Ghazanfar "where "(Always) conveys the message, (forever) either distorts the meaning or makes the prose tasteless. It makes the prose tasteless because it is not a compound clause of Pashto and is a translated phrase." (8: 406)

It is another tasteless, useless and unnecessary combination that has been translated into Pashto (inside, inside). This combination comes from Urdu through translation into Pashto.... "(2 - 174)

In Pashto, we do not go like this without being affected, but we shorten it (it ends in ten days). If this is the case, it is both a Pashto language and a short one. The use of such incorrect combinations can be seen even in the books of reputable authors, for example, in some translated texts we read Pashto, a conference was held, demonstrations were held, competition was held, work was held ... Hearing such sentences for Pashtoons seem absurd and artificial, because the composition (was held) is not a Pashto composition and has been translated from Persian. The conference does not have to be (held), that is why it comes to be meaningless and tasteless. The same competition has no end. This is a Persian translation (done) that is useless in Pashto. We have to keep it simple. As we have seen (done or done) the composition is used to such an extent that authoritative and powerful authors use it unconsciously. Mr. Ziar says that this combination should not be used, but he himself has used it unconsciously in several places and cases. For example, in the book (Leek Laarshood) he brings examples of the Pashto-influenced language from Urdu and makes good suggestions instead. (5:43)

Thus, it has a role, it has a responsibility. In these sentences, he has also transferred the composition (in charge) from Persian to Pashto in the form of a translation. This combination is not used by the Pashtoons, nor does it convey the concept it provided in the original language. That is why this combination is tasteless and complex that should not be used. Pashtoons when confronted with the combination (in charge), and translated it into Pashto. "Where did these tasteless and ugly combinations come from in Pashto?" "This combination was first introduced from English into Persian in an impermissible way, and after the imitators of the Pashto language saw it, they also brought it to the Pashtuns." (1:30)

Causes of current translation problems

In the world, every language that is translated has its own problems to some extent. These problems are related to their factors, the smaller and weaker these factors are, the fewer problems there are and the more and more powerful these factors are, the more problems there are. Here is a brief discussion of the causes of the current Pashto translation problems:

Lack of Pashto lexical vocabulary: The problem with the Pashto language is not that it lacks scientific works, but that the problem (Pashto lexical reserve) is low. There are thousands of words and expressions in international languages such as English that are not equivalent to Pashto. This problem is especially great in the fields of technology and new sciences. When Pashto translators encounter such terms and words while translating, they cannot find alternatives in Pashto. Pashto dictionaries and related sources do not meet this need. For this reason, translators are forced to either use the same word or term expression or translate that word on their own.

Lack of knowledge of translation and its principles: One of the disadvantages of translating into Pashto is that translators are not aware of translation and its principles. For example, they did not understand that proverbs and idioms are not translated, but when they came across proverbs and idioms during translation, they translated them as idioms, which in Pashto's proverbs and idioms mean a lot. Also in these cases, Pashto idioms and proverbs were forgotten and translated idiomatic proverbs and idioms that were not in line with our culture and values.

Lack of fluency in the source language: The majority of Pashto translators were not fluent in the languages they translated, so it is difficult to translate them in most cases. These problems affect the second language in most cases. There have been many translations in Pashto that the translator was not fluent in the source language and therefore broke the back of Pashto during the translation. The word has two meanings, one of which is original and the other of which is implicit and pseudonymous. Words still have different meanings in different combinations, but because the author understands one or two meanings, he uses the same meaning everywhere. A practical translation guide says: "English's Run and Go give 350 meanings in different places. That is, when it comes in the form of verbs, nouns, adverbs, adverbial expressions and other linguistic forms, it gives different meanings". (9:16)

Not Understanding Pashto

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and later during the civil war and even after that, millions of Afghans left their country and migrated to different countries. In addition to the many disadvantages, they also benefited from learning other languages. Among them, a number of them tried to translate books in different languages into Pashto. They translated the works and books of the Iranians into Pashto, but the problem was elsewhere. Due to their distance from the environment, etc., they do not have complete mastery of their mother tongue. Because they were Pashtuns, he spoke Pashto, but did not fully learn Pashto and had difficulty writing it. They understood English, etc., they understood concepts in those languages, and when they wanted to express these concepts, thoughts and ideas in Pashto, they encountered problems.

This problem was not limited to Afghans living in poverty, but also to those living in cities in Afghanistan and Pashtoonistan. "Some people have lived in cities, they may not be fully aware of the words, idioms and proverbs of their language, and they may not be able to change the meaning of sentences if they become shapes," writes AjmalShkwalai. These translators inadvertently bring the effects of another language into their own language and destroy their own language...(7:21)

Not knowing differences between the two languages: One principle of translation is that the translator must be fully aware of the differences between the two languages. That is, be aware of the differences between the language he is translating and the language he is translating. Each language has specific structures and features, some of which are different from others. The structure of sentences and the use of their members' cases is the structure of new important

combinations and parts that the translator needs to be aware of.

Lack of accurate translation guide: Several years ago there was no guide in the Pashto language that said anything about translation. If anything had been written about it, it would have focused a lot on history or theory. There has been some books and research in this area lately, which is (De JhbareUsool) and (De ZbareLaar) remarkable, but these are rudimentary and by no means sufficient. This gap needs to be filled, and to fill this gap, both theoretical and practical work is needed. So far, there are no works or works that are a practical guide to English and Pashto languages. There is no Persian or Pashto guidance, Urdu or Pashto or other languages and Pashto.

Press Translation: One of the negative factors of Pashto translation is press translation. There are a lot of people in the press who understand journalism to some extent, but do not understand any language correctly or completely, or to some extent. Pashto is the language of translation in most media, so Pashto has suffered from this. Unfortunately, in the faculties of journalism, journalists are not taught the language, and again this situation is very bad in Pashto. The language taught there is not only used in the media and translation, but also focuses heavily on literature and history. Speed is important in the press and time is short, so while there is little time for translation and it should be translated quickly, naturally no special attention is paid to language. Accordingly, when on the one hand there is a rush in translation and on the other hand there are unreliable translators, it is nothing more than breaking the pieces of language.

In today's press, these two reasons (translators' incompetence and speed) break the nuts of the Pashto language. If the Pashto language of televisions is seen in Kabul, it can be seen from afar that this Pashto is a translated Pashto, tasteless and artificial.

3. Conclusion

As much as we focus on translation, it has got the biggest disadvantage to the structure of the Pashto language. Pashto prose is now mostly influenced by other languages and this influence has been mostly through translation. Due to the increase in the translation of expressive words, it has also increased in Pashto. In addition, the main structure of the Pashto language has been damaged. This negative effect has rendered Pashto language translation tasteless and artificial. This does not mean that the translation process should be stopped in order to prevent losses. The translation must continue and must speed it up, but other solutions are needed to prevent its losses. Those who translate should be encouraged, but at the same time they must understand the disadvantages.

All translators who translate into Pashto need to increase their knowledge of their native language, be aware of the principles of translation, increase their vocabulary, be aware of the structure of the Pashto language, be aware of the order of sentences, and continue to understand the characteristics of the Pashto language. They should read existing works and

books in this field. During the translation, in addition to transmitting the concept, they must keep in mind that translating them into Pashto does not harm them. The translation process must continue in the same way, because there are many benefits of the process for Pashto and the Pashtoon people, but if we do not pay attention to the harm it does to the Pashto language in this way, we will have great disadvantages as well as great benefits.

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Author Profile



Assistant Professor Asadullah Waheedi is a senior lecturer of translation in Pashto Department of the Faculty of Language and Literature of Kabul University. Mr. Waheedi has written extensively in the field of translation and before these his two books about translation were published in Pashto by the Aksos Bookstore. His first book is (Par Pashto Nasar de JhbareAghez) which discusses the effects of translation on Pashto prose and how to avoid its negative effects on Pashto language. Mr. Waheedi's second book is (De JhbareLaar). This is a practical translation manual and guide used by Pashtoon translators. AsadullahWaheedi received his bachelor's degree from the Pashto Department of the Faculty of Language and Literature of Kabul University in 2008 and his master's degree in 2011. Since 2013, he has been teaching translation in this department.