



## Review Article

# Betrayal in words: Examining the issues with translation difficulties

Waliullah Fazil <sup>1\*</sup>, Saeedulhaq Saeed <sup>2</sup>, Baryalay Azizi <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Pashto Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Nangarhar University, Afghanistan

<sup>3</sup>Department of Pashto Language and Literature, Faculty of Languages and Literature, Nangarhar University, Afghanistan



## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT



### Keywords:

language, translation, problems, dialects, knowledge

### Article History:

Received: 25-02-2024

Accepted: 29-04-2024

Published: 07-05-2024

The translation has faced substantial opposition since its inception, as a multitude of scholars argue that it undermines the authenticity of the source material. Intentionally or unintentionally, challenges and acts of disloyalty occur during the translation process of grammatical structures, phrases, proverbs, quips, verbal imagery, poetry, and other components, according to this assertion. Additionally, translating commonly used terms that frequently conflict with the target language may present challenges. This subject is written in a descriptive and scholarly language. The research possesses importance in its translation, regardless of whether it is presented in prose or poetry format. It enhances the verbiage and fulfills the requirements of the audience. It also provides assistance to educators in the subject of education. Translation serves as a highly effective means of transmitting knowledge. Nonetheless, its efficacy and dependability are contingent on the subject matter's integrity being maintained. This objective can be realized when the translator demonstrates fluency in both languages and has in-depth understanding of the local customs, dialects, and subtleties.

### Cite this article:

Fazil, W., Saeed, S., & Azizi, B. (2024). Betrayal in words: Examining the issues with translation difficulties. *Sprin Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(5), 13–16. <https://doi.org/10.55559/sjahss.v3i5.298>

## Introduction

Throughout history, new civilizations have emerged as a consequence of battles, conflicts, migrations, significant triumphs, natural disasters, and forced relocations. Language serves as the conduit that links the relationships between civilizations, connecting one culture to another. Translation has served as a beneficial tool in facilitating communication and understanding between individuals and nations. The necessity for translation arises when individuals encounter speakers of different languages and are unable to comprehend each other's words. However, it is worth noting that translation has also played a significant role in the ancient history of Pashto literature. The initial translation was conducted by Abu Muhammad Hashem Zaid Sarwani, resulting in a comprehensive and precise rendition. However, some centuries later, another translation was undertaken in the Pashto language by Zarghuna Kakar. She rendered Saadi Bostan into Pashto using a charming, articulate, and uncomplicated style. This series is ongoing, but it explores the distinctions between different forms of translation, the challenges they present, and instances of fraudulent translation. Due to the absence of a dedicated translation center or organization in Afghanistan, there is a lack of opportunities to familiarize ourselves with the innovations and knowledge of other countries through translation. This hinders the enrichment of our own language and literature. (Rahmani, 2020, p. 40)

## Objectives

- Elucidating the flaws and issues in translation, and providing information to the readers.
- Analyzing the factors that contribute to betrayal and dishonesty in translation.
- Examining the themes of betrayal and cultural allegiance in the text

## Questions

1. Why is there a problem in translation?
2. What are the causes of betrayal and cheating in translation?
3. What is the impact of culture or writers on translation?

## Methods

This research is based on data collected from several sources, including books, journals, newspapers, internet sites, and the expertise of academic scholars. The topic of this paper is important because it delves into the often-disregarded problem of constraints in translation. The underlying issues in the field of translations are prominently emphasized. Furthermore, it has been underscored that cultural influences have posed challenges in the process of translating.

## Literature review

The guide of practical translation defines translation as the direct conversion of words. Hassan Ameer defines translation as

### \*Corresponding Author:

Email: [baryalayazizi397\[at\]nu.edu.af](mailto:baryalayazizi397[at]nu.edu.af) ( W. Fazil )

<https://doi.org/10.55559/sjahss.v3i5.298>

© 2024 The Authors. Published by Sprin Publisher, India. This is an open access article published under the CC-BY license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

the process of conveying the meaning of a text from one language to another. In Farhang Ameer's work from 1963 AD, titled "The Principles of Translation," it is said that language can be categorized into several types based on distinct perspectives, such as language and subject matter. Abdul Qadir Khamoosh categorizes translation into two types: free translation and word-by-word translation. In his book "The Art of Translation," Hala categorizes translation into two distinct types: free translation, which involves a word-by-word approach, and meaningful translation. (Hala, 2018). In his book titled "The Jabari Fun," Stanakzain discusses the two main types of translation: literal translation, which is a word-for-word rendering, and interpretive translation, which focuses on conveying the intended meaning. The author acknowledges that the challenges of poetic translation lie in the aspects of weight and rhyme (Stanakzai, 2007). Moreover, the book asserts that the poetry is untranslatable as it loses its essence and ceases to be a poem in the process of translation. (Wahidi, 2017).

In his book "Leek sheibi," Manali Hiwadmal discusses the topic of translation, particularly in the context of literary translation. Hiwadmal argues that poets employ imagery in their work, but not in a purely imaginative manner. He also highlights the challenges involved in translating both images and imagination. (Manali, 2016) The book titled "The Likwali Emla aw Ensha" discusses the presence of certain proverbs and expressions in the Pashto language that are difficult to translate. Examples include "the dog is biting on the back of a camel," "the sound of one hand is not heard from one hand, but it is heard from two hands," and "baloo and miroo were slaughtered chickens to him." The proverbs and idioms employed in Pashto present a challenge in terms of translation due to their intricate and seemingly untranslatable nature. (Ahmedjan, 1379) The Jabariusool book discusses the difficulty of translation, saying that if a term is not well-suited, it cannot be translated. An example of this is the Urdu statement "balbalghiya," which translates to "the hair was saved." (Khukuli, 1393). The book "The Leek Sheibi" mentions again how difficult—and often unfeasible—it is to translate from one language to another because Pashto writing is highly valued in Pashtun society. Paint cannot be applied on the elbow. (Manali, 2016). In the book Jabari Theory, Mr. Gulrahman Rahmani claims that the translator is essentially the content transmitter, sending the text's content from the source language to the target language with total faith; any interference on his part is regarded as treachery. (Rahmani, 2020).

### Language and loyalty: a comparative analysis

In Pashto, the word for translation is called "Jabara." Translation literally means "to change." The literal definition of translation is the process of accurately and precisely translating a text or voice into another language, as well as the act of doing so (Bassnett, 2014). Translation is defined as the process of transferring meaning from one language to another or stating someone's morals, character, or ancestry in the dictionary Farhang Ameer. (Ameer, 1963) In the past, people were solely familiar with human translation. Today, there are two main types of translation: machine translation and human translation. Since machines are now performing the majority of human labor, there is an attempt to have machines translate. We refer to this kind of translation as machine translation. Habib-ur-Rahman Hala claims that translation can be classified into several categories based on various viewpoints. Recall that translating themes related to diplomacy is extremely delicate; translating topics related to culture and literature is highly challenging; translating topics related to science is extremely accurate; translating press topics necessitates rapid and comprehensive information gathering.

(Hala, 2018) The biggest issue and betrayal in translation is when a translator does not fully comprehend the principles and characteristics of the language. This is because a word can have two meanings: a primary meaning and a secondary meaning. If a translator does not grasp these principles and characteristics, he breaks the language. Furthermore, words can have several meanings when combined, so if a translator knows only one or two meanings and applies them consistently throughout, there could be serious issues and accusations of treason (Bassnett, 2014).

In addition, if a translation alters a text in any way after receiving it, that becomes a problem and betrayal. The translator must translate a text into another language with total trust. He is accused of betrayal if he makes any changes to the trust, whether they are small or large. Example: Since love is lovely and in high regard, if he appropriates it and interprets it as follows: In this place, love is incredibly beautiful and highly valued. The interpreter is a betrayer. is similar to the English word "run," which denotes brisk walking. A major issue arises when a translator purposefully uses the original meaning while ignoring the secondary meaning; this is considered betrayal. For instance, we describe that his nose is flowing rather than that it is running. Furthermore, someone sets the path for betrayal if they lack a thorough understanding of two languages and are unaware of appropriate usage contexts. Take the terms "notorious" and "famous," for instance. Rahman Baba is one of the well-known Pashto poets mentioned in this phrase. Since the translator has not studied both languages, he has substituted one term for another, using "notorious" instead of "famous." Since the word "notoriety" has a negative connotation, it is obvious that he exploited his unfavorable reputation to accuse himself of betraying others rather than his positive reputation. (Fazil, 2022)

When a translator cannot come up with a synonym for a word, there is an issue with the translation; fraud happens when the translator changes the word's meaning. In addition, issues arise while translating poetry and treachery also happens occasionally when translating prose. According to some academics, the poem is not translated since it either ceases to be a poetry in the native language or changes after translation. Translators of literary works and poems do not stay safe; rather, they are always on the side of betrayal in their professional lives, despite the well-known notion that "every translator is a traitor." (Bassnett, 2014) They unwittingly turn traitors. The poem insists on three things: message, structure, and music, thus it is obvious that it does not stay a poem if it is translated into prose. There are several symbols in the poem that are either untranslatable or lose all meaning and value when translated. (Wahidi, 2019) While various approaches to translating the poem have been put out thus far, the most crucial aspect of translating a poem is that the translator and the poem's creator should share harmony, a common understanding, and a shared religion the translator's work is positively impacted by these factors. (Bassnett, 2014) Translating the poetry without ideological understanding is therefore impossible. Poetry translators need to be conversant in both languages' metaphors, similes, and nuances. Poetry translation is an endeavor to be trustworthy and beautiful. The translator should stay true to the source material and avoid straying from it, but occasionally excessive fidelity can lead to the emergence of new poetry. (Al-Hassan, 2013) In this case, the translator has attempted a new poem and has meddled with the poet's work. Should the allegation of betrayal take over the poet's poem, the translator should feel constrained. When this happens, the translator is unable to translate and issues arise regardless of the form. The translation of a poem requires careful consideration of its form, content, and language choice. For this reason, the English poet Percy comments on the poem's translation as follows:

It takes dry labor to translate a poem, just like it takes to shift a flower plant from a damp place to a dry one (Al-Hassan, 2013).

According to Jan Denham, the poetry possesses an unseen spirit that becomes concealed when it is translated from one language to another or molded. This is the reason why certain literary translations—even those that are prose—are deemed insane. Poetry is believed to be difficult to translate because so many ideas are conveyed in a limited number of words, many of which are connected to the language used to produce the poem. (Al-Hassan, 2013) The poem's palace of images is built upon the language, and the music of the poem is connected to the language. Poetry is difficult to translate because concepts are culturally specific and hence hard to communicate to another culture. (Rahmani, 2020) Before translating a poem, the translator should not draft a poetic version in their mind. He alone ought to value beauty and trust. For instance, the rhymes and order that are present in the first language may not be equal in the second, and a free or white poem will be composed in place of a ghazal if he states beforehand that he would translate this ghazal into aghazal. This is a major issue with the translation of the poetry itself, and if someone insists on doing it, that person has moved one step closer to treachery. As such, the translator ought to feel constrained in this position. It is also imperative that a poem written in the native tongue be translated into the target language; else, the effort will be in vain. In poetry, a word's meaning is enhanced by its capacity to lend consistency to the speech pattern. Music is the substance of art, just as poetry is and is made up of words. Poetry is thus referred to as the symphony of words. To create the appealing tune that is in his head, the poet selects words from this type of order and arrangement based on his preferences and style. (Danto, 1997)

Given that poetry is an art in which the translator must select the ethereal and esoteric qualities of words, formal translation is nearly impossible. (Khamoosh, 2011) In addition to other texts and themes, translation is a valuable instrument for society's advancement and for learning about the discoveries of other societies. However, there are numerous issues and constraints with translating poetry, rendering the poem untranslatable. There are issues with translating poetry because it depends on weight, rhyme, and occasionally music, all of which are difficult or impossible to convey. Poetic translation is therefore fraught with difficulties. Although these issues are apparent, they are not disregarded. It is crucial to convey the poem's literary beauty since it is this beauty that gives the poetry its impact (Stanakzai, 2007). Regarding the issues and constraints associated with translation, Mr. Najib Manali states: It's critical to accurately translate particular concepts when translating them. Translation is like a porcupine; its arrows will injure you no matter which way you approach it. The translation should accurately convey what the poet is trying to say. For instance, the poet conveys his message—which is cultural and personal—through imagery. Here, the poet creates beauty by manipulating words, experimenting with sounds, and drawing links between them. As a result, the translator should take these three areas of the poet's work into account when translating the poem. (Manali, 2016, p. 19) The translation of the phrase presents another issue and restriction in translation. A term is not translated if it already exists in one language and has no equivalent in the other. Take "Bal Bal Bach Ghiya" in Urdu, for instance. The meaning is not accurately conveyed when translated into Pashto. That is, like the Persian term Sabz Tuhfae dervish, the hair was spared. In other words, the translation of this language does not accurately communicate the sense in Pashto, which is that the green leaf is a gift from a beggar. Try to discover an analogous term; if not, the translation will not be possible. If there is an

equivalent in Pashto, the term "Tour Totan Ta Qurban" solves the issue.

Furthermore, a word in one language may have multiple meanings depending on the context. There is a rise or fall in the translation if the proper location is unknown. Dokhtar, Dokhtar min ast" can mean "This girl is my girl," but in this case, the translator has taken control of the text, which is treasonous. Therefore, the correct translation of this statement is "This girl is my daughter." (Fazil, 2022). The translator also has a significant issue with the frequent phrases and catchphrases used by rural residents. A translator may encounter many challenges if he is unfamiliar with these people's collective speech. An Afghan man was asked by a foreigner, "How is your harvest this year?" Briefly stating in common language, he said, "This cannot happen here because this is ours, which is lying in this, the air is also this, and the water is difficult to get this." Someone who is conversant in this people's language and has knowledge of idioms and other linguistic facets can now translate this sentence. But this is how the complete and accurate sentence looks. The problem is that gardens and agriculture cannot flourish here because our hamlet is situated in an arid desert with unfavorable weather and difficult access to water. As a result, the translator can interpret this text and fill in each gap by eliminating one since they are familiar with the word's context and the report's elements. (Manali, 2016)

Proverbs and speeches that are deeply ingrained in a country's culture are sometimes impossible to translate into another language; when they are, they sound like fairy tale phrases. Take Munshi Ahmad Jan's translation of the narrative of Adam Khan and Durkhani, which he embellishes with Pashto idioms. When Durkhani's aunt's daughter was married one day, she fell in love with Adam Khan, a prince from Baz dara. Thus, while they traveled, they continued to gaze at one another. Adam Khan's pure heart would not allow him to visit other people's homes, even if he wants to see his friend Durkhani in the late evening. Addiction to literary translation, as in the case of this nation's translation: "I do not have a home in this world." However, the literary translator highlights the oppression of refugees by translating it in this way. I'm not interested in this vast universe of God. When a verb is employed in multiple ways without analyzing the source and target languages, the translator only employs it in one of those ways. For instance, to go is a verb in Pashto. In Russian, this verb has several meaning modifications. Take walking (Итий), traveling by automobile, rail, bicycle, etc. (Джаръ), or traveling by plane (Дзжаръ). It has an impact. Ignoring and leaving out the recipient, such failing to translate acronyms (PTM) indicates a shortcoming and increases dependence on technological tools. For instance, the computer converts the noun "beautiful" into an adjective. Another issue is that machine translation is used for special names instead of human translation. For example: beauty academy (adjective + noun), or beauty chamber (noun + noun). Beautiful Academy is accurate (Fazil, 2022).

### Controversy and challenges

Translating is widely recognized as a demanding and arduous endeavor by numerous scholars and translators. Consequently, there exist substantial issues in this field that individuals can independently settle. In my opinion, any unresolved issues or betrayals in the field of translation can be attributed primarily to the scholars and translators themselves. Despite their efforts to address these issues and the recognition they receive, they acknowledge the flaws in their own work (Al-Hassan, 2013).

Nevertheless, these problems did not occur during the translation process. These challenges only occur when the translator lacks poetic expertise and does not possess the skills of a poet. Another factor is that a translator, who is knowledgeable about all the symbols in both the original and target languages, or equivalents for each word, will be able to fully grasp the translation of the prose portion, including the elements of dilemma and treachery present in it (Al-Hassan, 2013). Having knowledge of the structural differences between languages, a translator will not depend on technical tools or dictionaries, but instead on the language used by ordinary people. Nevertheless, in the initial volume, asserts that it is simply the act of translating the significance from one language to another (Danto, 1997). In my opinion, the process of translating a word or sentence involves transferring the underlying concept from one language's structure to another language's structure while ensuring accuracy and reliability. Habib-ur-Rahman Hala asserts that there are multiple sorts of translation, which can be categorized based on diverse viewpoints, such as the subject matter and the language involved. Rafiullah Stanakzai categorizes translations into two distinct types: meaningful translations and free translations (word-by-word). Abdul Qadir Hamoush categorizes the translation into two distinct groups: literal (word-by-word) and liberal (free). Rafiullah Stanakzai asserts that human translation is the most dependable, despite the existence of two primary translation systems. According to Mr. Rafiullah Stanakzai's book "The Jabari Fun," the primary challenge in translating poetry is the presence of rhyming. Moreover, Asadullah Wahidi asserts in his book *The Jabari Lar* that poetry cannot be accurately translated due to the inherent alteration that occurs during the translation process. According to Mr. Abdul Qadir Hamoush in his book "Translation (The Jabarishaleed Ow Hooner)", the task of translating an image is deemed impossible. Poetry translation possesses a tangible visual manifestation. Mr. Najib Manali's work "Leek Shibe" delves into the challenges of translation, namely in the realm of poetry. He highlights that poet utilize imagery in their work, but they do not convert them into fictional structures, and that translating both imagery and imagination is a tough task (Al-Hassan, 2013).

Additionally, Munshi Ahmadjan has incorporated various other proverbs and idiomatic expressions in his work titled "hoonarinasr," which is cited in the book "Leekwaliemla aw ensha" (Ahmadjan, 2000). These include phrases such as "A dog may not bite us on the back of a camel," "A tiger eats with both hands," and "Sound is not heard from one hand, but from two hands." Baloo and Mirooare demonstrated the killing of chickens to him. Translating these idioms can be somewhat difficult. Translating the author's works into another language is unattainable due to its inherent connection to the Pashtun cultural milieu, rendering it untranslatable in any other framework. As to the book authored by Mr. Ajmal Khukoli, there is a problem associated with the translation of terminology. For instance, the term "BALbalbachghiya" signifies "a hair was spared," yet there is no appropriate designation for it. An idea, acting as a transmitter, faithfully conveys the content of a text from the source language to the target language. However, if it exerts influence over the content, it has deviated from the original language. Every concept possesses inherent value, in my perspective. However, when a poet,

translator, or poetry enthusiast undertakes the task of translation, it is crucial for them to be acquainted with the original author's mindset. Nevertheless, the task of translating proverbs and jokes is considerably more demanding. It is impossible to comprehend unless the translator is completely fluent in the language of the country and possesses a comprehensive knowledge of its culture, folklore, history, geography, literature, tradition, and traditions (Danto, 1997).

## Conclusion

During the writing process, translation can be accomplished despite the challenges and potential misinterpretations. However, this is only possible if the translator possesses a deep understanding of the grammar in both languages, as well as the cultural traditions and customs of the speakers. Additionally, the translator must be well-versed in literary arts, the stylistic features of the writer, dialects, and have familiarity with terms, jokes, and proverbs. It is also important for the translator to be able to effectively translate poetry, find equivalent proverbs and terms, although this task is often difficult due to the fact that certain terms and proverbs are deeply rooted in the specific society's culture and lose their meaning when translated into another culture.

## Suggestions

- An auditor should be recruited to verify the accuracy of the translation.
- The translation should adhere to professional standards.
- Only the book that is susceptible to the encroachment of foreign culture should be translated in order to prevent the infiltration of alien cultural influences.

## References

- Ahmadjan, M. (2000). *Leekwali Emla Aw Ensha*. Peshawar: Rafat Library.
- Al-Hassan, A. Y. (2013). The Importance of Culture in Translation: Should Culture be Translated? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 2(2), 96–100. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.2n.2p.96>
- Ameed, H. (1963). *Farhang Ameen*. Tehran.
- Bassnett, S. (2014). *Translation*. Routledge.
- Danto, A. C. (1997). *Translation and betrayal*. *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 32(1), 61–63.
- Fazil, W. A. (2022). *The Jabari Fun aw Usoul*. Jalalabad: Classic Publishing Society.
- Hala, H. R. (2018). *Principles of Translation*. (A. Amanullah, Trans) Peshawar: Khawar Khaparandiya Society
- Khamoosh, A. Q. (2011). *Art and background of translation*. Jalalabad: East.
- Manali, N. (2016). *The leek Sheibi*. Jalalabad: Classic Publishing Society.
- Rahmani, G. (2020). *The Jabari theory*. Kabul: Samoon Publishing Society.
- Stanakzai, R. (2007). *The Jabari Fun*. Kabul: Samim Literary Society
- Wahidi, A. (2017). *The effect of translation on Pashto prose*. Kabul: Axos bookstore.
- Wahidi, A. (2019). *The Jabari Lar*. Kabul: Oxus.