

# TECHNIQUES ADOPTED IN LITERARY TRANSLATION OF PROSE: A STUDY OF “PALPASA CAFÉ” FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EQUIVALENCE RELATION

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to see the ‘equivalence relation’ between the source text and the target text in relation to ‘paragraph equivalence’ while translating a prose text from the source language into target language.

**Methodology:** The methodology of this study is document analysis. The texts are translated from Nepali into English. Nepali language is known as source language and English language is known as target language in this study. The words and sentences are counted and the difference is found in terms of percentage of the selected paragraphs; Nepali as source language and English as the target language.

**Originality:** This study maintains originality as a text of translation requires originality in the field of syntactic, semantic, stylistic and pragmatic aspects.

**Practical Implications:** This study has practical value because the work of translation transfers languages, among people as well as culture and civilization. In reality, translation has played such type of role that people have the idea of knowledge and civilization through translation.

**Limitations:** This research work is limited to the technique of translation from Nepali into English to show equivalence relation. The texts used are from the Narayan Wagle’s novel, “Palpasa Café” originally written into Nepali language and its translation into English language by .....?.

**Findings:** The findings of this study show that translation techniques are main sources of education from time immemorial. The ancient Vedic, Greek and Roman civilization, which are as sources of knowledge and education, have spread from place to place through the work of translation, if it had not been so, people would remain in their primitive situation in the field of knowledge. We would not read about Homer, Plato, Kalidas and many other writers today if their works were not translated from their source / native languages into other languages such as English/ Nepali/ Hindi. However, there is no exact one-to-one limitation while translating a text from its source language to another target language.

## KEYWORDS

Equivalence, recognition, prose translation, source language, target language, word gap

## INTRODUCTION

Translation has got main role in the process of the development of knowledge. If translation technique had not been applied in education, people today would not have got so vast knowledge like that of today. About the role played by translation today, Bhattarai (2000) has mentioned that the twentieth century has employed translation extensively as a most powerful and indispensable vehicle for disseminating knowledge and information. Likewise, we are confronting today an age of translation which gives us information such as; either translate or die; no third choice is left before us. It will not be an exaggeration to say that translation has been as a storehouse for academicians today which has contributed in our study, teaching-learning and improving our professional norms and values as well as conducting the work of research. We can not deny that translation needs scientific knowledge and skill to verify it.

This paper sets out to investigate the translation of prose text from the point of view of word gap found in Palpasa Café in the translation from Nepali into English. A paragraph, from page-3 of Nepali version of “Palpasa Café”, is taken to compare and analyse the source language (SL-Nepali) and the target language (TL- English). The texts (sentences) in Nepali and English are studied from the perspective of translation study as mechanism of knowledge. This paper can assist the translators of Prose Text/ Novel by identifying the needs to be carried out across in the Target Language and what aspects of the original prose/ novel are to be respected during the translation process.

## DIFFERENT VIEWS ON TRANSLATION

Translation is directly related to the development of education. If the texts from ancient documents were not translated, there would not have been knowledge to us of the past system. Furthermore, translation has been taken differently by different people. Regarding translation, Newmark (1998) has stated “Translation is first a science, which entails the knowledge and verification of the facts and the language that describes them- here, what is wrong, mistakes of truth can be identified; secondly, it is a skill, which

calls for appropriate language and acceptable usage” (p.6). In this sense, translation shows itself as an instrument to demonstrate knowledge of the foreign language and transmit the culture as mentioned in the source language into the target language. Although translation has got much importance today, due to different reasons, there will not be the same impact as found in original text, which is the main concern of this paper. So, there is problem of equivalence relation between source language and target language.

Regarding translation, Malmkjær and Windle (2011) have stated, “The study of translation in its manifold forms is now a well-established field of scholarly activity. Once seen as a homeless hybrid at best, and later as an interdisciplinary area best approached through its neighbouring disciplines- comparative literature (p.1). As mentioned above, translation has occupied the larger field of study and knowledge today. As this paper relates to literary translation, I want to mention that it is necessary to know the nature, problems and characteristics of literary translation. Literary translation is the reflection of artistic reality of the original but the reflection will be approximate rather than absolute. The literary translation intends to show creative intention of the author. Similarly, regarding translation, Bassnett (1991) has stated, “Although there is a large body of work debating the issues that surround the translation of poetry, far less time has been spent studying the specific problems of translating literary prose” (pp. 109-110). But we do not have to think that prose is of lower status literary work and it is easy to translate but we have to consider that creativity is found in all forms (essay, poetry, drama story and novel) of literature, not only in poetry.

## **METHODS AND PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION**

We are presented with the problem of equivalence in translation. About this situation, Lefevere (1992: 4) in his preface mentions, “Translators are allowed more liberties on what one might be tempted to call ‘the purely linguistic level’ certainly if the translation is not meant to represent the original in the translators’ culture” (p.4). However, translation is simply to help translators refine their knowledge of their own language. We have a question before us “Do we continue to have the same text?” As far as possible, the source text and the target text must be equivalent in words, message and grammatical structures. Regarding translation, Munday (2016) has stated, “It is inter-lingual translation, between two different verbal sign systems, that has been the traditional focus of translation studies. Much of translation theory has also been written from a western perspective of Classical Greek and Latin and from Biblical practice (p.10). In this way, it is known that the process of translation has made us known about the store of the past knowledge.

We should have knowledge about how we can understand the relation between translations and their source text. But the basic problem is that although translations are assumed to be somehow the same as the original but they are obviously different. The equivalence is produced by the translators and whether it is accepted or not is the matter of the readers. The matter of equivalence relates to phonetic equivalence, phonological

equivalence, morphological equivalence, syntactic equivalence, lexical equivalence and semantic equivalence. These days, there is trend of making inter-sentence equivalence or paragraph equivalence which will be of great importance to translate a text written in prose form. Furthermore, this paper has focused to analyse the 'paragraph equivalence' of prose text in terms of words, sentences and events/ activities.

Likewise, translation has got different aspects. About translation, Newmark (1998:48) has mentioned that the methods of translation are word-for-word translation, literal translation, faithful translation and semantic translation for second language [SL] emphasis and adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation for target language [TL] emphasis. Taking into consideration of all these methods we can say that the study of translation is constantly expanding in a world that has experienced a flourishing situation of translated texts unparalleled in human history.

### **Translation of Texts and Analysis of Equivalence**

The truth of translation is somewhere in between equivalence and acceptability. While translating a text from one language into another language, there will be differences in terms of language structure so that syntactic equivalence of source language into target language is not possible and this is also true between English and Nepali texts. Regarding translation, Nida (2000) has mentioned that since no two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences, it stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages (126). As Nida has mentioned, it is due to the complexity of language function.

### **Translation of Sentences**

The lines taken for study from "Palpasa Café" paragraph three and their translation techniques are as follows:

**Source Text (Nepali):** Kafiko surupsangai arko tabal bata myaun gardai biralo airaheko dekhen. Maile dhuwan udaundai lekhiraheko tasbirsahit yo upanyas- tayariko khabar chhapne Nepal magazinema malai man parne arko resturentko biralobareko prasanga samabesh thiyo. Tyastai biralo matira lamkiraheko thiyo. Chheuma kritrimrupale umarieka lalupateka bernaharu hurkera fulna thaleka thiye. Tyo biralo kakhaima aera basyo, tyo arko resturentma jhain.

**Target Text (Translated into Target Text/ English):** A cat miaowed, approaching my table. An article about my novel published in Nepal magazine had mentioned another cat in another restaurant. I frequented my favourite restaurant. This cat looked like that one and, like the other cat, jumped up and curled up on my lap. Beside my table, potted poinsettia thrust themselves forcibly out of the budding stage. After I finished my coffee, I phoned Drishya again.

### **ANALYSIS**

As mentioned previously, this study is related to literary translation of Prose form,

the sentences are taken from “Palpasa Café” a Nepali Prose book. In this study, the analysis of the source text (Nepali) taken from a paragraph in page No. 3 is as follows:

Kafiko surupsangai arko tabal bata myaun gardai biralo airaheko dekhien.

Maile dhuwan udaundai lekhiraheko tasbirsahit yo upanyas- tayariko khabar chhapne Nepal magazinema malai man parne arko resturentko biralobareko prasanga samabesh thiyo.

Tyastai biralo matira lamkiraheko thiyo.

Chheuma kritrimrupale umarieka lalupateka bernaharu hurkera fulna thaleka thiye.

Tyo biralo kakhaima aera basyo, tyo arko resturentma jhain.

In the above sentences, total lines are five and total words are 54. Translation of the above text into English is as follows:

A cat meowed, approaching my table.

An article about my novel published in Nepal magazine had mentioned another cat in another restaurant.

I frequented my favourite restaurant.

This cat looked like that one and, like the other cat, jumped up and curled up on my lap.

Beside my table, potted poinsettia thrust themselves forably out of the budding stage.

After I finished my coffee, I phoned Drishya again.

In English, the total Lines are 6 and the total words are 68.

It is found that there are five sentences in the source text but there are six sentences in the target (English) text. In the source (Nepali) text there are fifty-four words but in the target text, there are sixty-eight words and the difference is of twelve words with a difference of 22. 2%.

This analysis of words and sentences shows that there is problem of equivalence relation between source text and target text. There is difference in the activities of the narrator between these two texts. In the first sentence of the source text, the narrator is having coffee but in the first sentence of the target text the translator has not mentioned the drinking of coffee. In the second sentence of the source text, the narrator is smoking, perhaps, but it is not mentioned in the target text. The third sentences of the both texts are also different because they show different activities-movement of a cat and the narrator’s visiting a restaurant. The analysis of the fourth sentence of both the texts shows that they have no any equivalence in words and semantic relation because the source text mentions about the flower but the target text mentions the activities of a cat.

The fifth sentences of the both texts also show difference without equivalence in words and sentences. On the other hand, the fourth sentence of source text is related to the fifth sentence of the target text and the fifth sentence of the source text is related to the fourth sentence of the target text. There is not sixth sentence in the source text but it is in the target text. The word “coffee” mentioned in the first sentence of the source text is found in the sixth sentence of the target text.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS**

It is necessary that the equivalence relation should be in words, sentences, activities and meanings. However, I could not find the equivalence relation of words and meanings in terms of sentence-wise analysis of the source text and the target text. About such situation, Bhattarai (1997) has mentioned for equivalent problems in terms of word level difficulties as well as sentence level and pragmatic world and states. A translator can guarantee the full understanding, an appropriate understanding, an appropriate interpretation of the sense, but he may still doubt whether the source text expression has perfectly struck the balance (pp.380-381).

In the analysis of these texts, it is found that the translator has missed the spirit of the original text and deviation is clearly found. He should have translated the paragraph sentence- by- sentence to make the prose translation meaningful in orderly way instead of choosing the zigzag way. But whatever the situation may be Newmark (1998) mentions “Hence the translator’s task must never be to copy what is said” (p. 80). Translation is the base of modern education, as a whole. As the study finds, there is great value of translation in the process of knowledge formation and transformation of views and educational theories.

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