

Techniques on Translation of Cultural Terms and Post-modernism

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Abstract

Translation is a process of rendering meaning from one language to another language and translation procedures are the technical strategies adopted by the translator to achieve the closest possible equivalent. In this paper an attempt has been made to evaluate the techniques of translation of cultural terms offered by Newmark that have been employed in translating cultural words. This paper also aims to have an argument on the techniques of translation that focus on target readers in post-modernism. It has been found that in translating cultural terms, ten different techniques are found to have been employed in translating cultural words. Literal translation is mostly used and calque is the least used technique. There is triangular relationship among the translator, the text and the reader. A translator should remove the spectacle of domination and accept the foreign culture and source culture with respect in post-modernism.

Keywords: Cultural bound word, Source language, Target language, Translation strategies or techniques and Post-modernism.

Introduction

Translation is the process of translating the message or idea or the meaning of a text of one language into another one. The term "translation" connects the art of recomposing a work in another language without losing its original flavor. The American theorist Lawrence Venuti defines translation as "a process by which the chain of signifier that constitutes the source-language text is replaced by a chain of signifier in the target language which the translator provides on the strength of an interpretation" (Venuti, 1995). Wills (1982, p.112) defines translation as "a procedure which leads from a written Source Language Text (SLT) to an optionally equivalent Target Language Text (TLT) and requires syntactic, semantic, stylistic and text pragmatic comprehension by the translator of the original text. Newmark (1981) says "the twentieth century has been called the age of translation." In the words of Bhattarai (2000) "translating is primarily an art of transforming message from one language to another or into some other dialects of the same language that are distanced by time or space". Translation is both linguistic and cultural activity.

Objective

The major objectives of this article is to evaluate the techniques of translation of cultural terms offered by Newmark that have been employed in translating cultural words in fictional texts. This paper also aims to have an argument on the technique of translation that focus on target readers in post-modernism. It tries to give multicultural sense in translator's mind despite having many flaws like destruction of original meanings.

Methodology

To accomplish the above objectives, cultural words have been selected through random sampling procedure from both version of the novel "*The Gorkha's Daughter*". Selected words have been analyzed interims of Newmark category.

Cultural-bound words

Newmark introduced the term 'cultural word' that refers to words in which the readership is unlikely to understand. He also categorized the cultural words viz 1) Ecology: flora, fauna, hills, winds, plains .2) Material Culture: food, clothes, houses and towns, transport3) Social Culture: work and leisure4) Organization customs, activities,procedures, concepts: • Political and administrative • Religious • artistic and 5) Gestures and habits

Concepts of translation and translating nepali words

Different countries do have their own style regarding translation techniques. Russians basically use contextual correspondence, equivalence though they use other techniques as well. Russian model is similar to language and parole relationship. Equivalence is possibility in some situations but exact equivalence may not be possible because no languages are identical. Linguistic deficit is found in other language that creates problem in exact replacement. Canadian adopts techniques like concretization, logical formation, compensation, borrowing, claque, literal translation, modulation, transposition and adaptation. They consider that logical formation is more important while translating a translator should forget what is there and have to consider what they mean. Antonymic translation is negatively defining translation. Newmark (1988) has given twelve translation procedures: Transference, Cultural equivalent, Neutralization, Literal translation, Naturalization, Componential analysis, Deletion, Couplet, Accepted standard translation, Paraphrase and Classifier. Harvey and Higgins (1992), (as cited in Awasthi, Bhattarai and Khaniya, 2011, p.48) provided the following major techniques of translation of cultural terms: Exoticism, Claque, Cultural borrowing, Communicative, transplantation. Everest has no meaning until we consider sea. *Sanothiyo* is compared with not big, '*lagatar*' can be compared with without a break

in target language, in English compensation is very heavy, useful term in translation. There is cultural gap. Gaps are inevitable, only to try to fill the gap is compensation, we compensate with similar meaning or equivalent terms like 'Baptism' is replaced by *nawran* in Nepali. Americans have their own methods to translate any source language into target language. Matching, zigzagging, excrescence, re locking, reordering and recoding are mainly focused techniques by Americans. In this article my elaboration of translation techniques is based on the techniques of Scan-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet mentioned on the topic "*A methodology for Translation*". According to Nida (1964) linguistic deficit makes more problems in translation. The English word marker is also called *marker* in Nepali, Hindi and Sanskrit. So rearrangement of words does not make differences in meaning but not possible in English. '*Aphutagaiyo*' passive of Nepali sentence can be possible even in transitive verb but is not possible in English. "*Ram le Ravan lai mare Ram le Ravanlai, raravanlaimle mare*' are possible although there are slight differences but not actually possible in English. In some translation it may be possible to transpose the source language message element into the target language, because it is based on either (i) parallel categories in which case we can speak of structural parallelism or (ii) on parallel concepts, which are the result of meta-linguistic parallelism but translation may also notice gaps or meta-linguistic differences, certain stylistic effects cannot be transposed into the TL without upsetting the syntactic order or even the lexis.

Modulation

It is a variation of the forms of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view. This change can be justified when, although a literal, or even transposed, translation result in a grammatically correct utterances, it is considered unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward in the TL change the point of view, signified remains the same, signifier can be changed. *.sunnelaisoonkomala...* I have done mystery, see the mouse ran ...] This short translation dictionary can not give exact meanings word because, that is bicultural idea "*aphnothaileebadherarakhnuarkolai dosh nadinu*" This can't get into a closed mouth" when they became clinches. The difference between fixed and free modulation is one of degree. In case of fixed modulation, the translators with a good knowledge in the both languages, freely use this method. True modulation does not actually become fixed until it is referred to in dictionaries and grammars and is regularly taught.

Literal translation

Literal translation ranges from word to word level up to sentence to sentence. It preserves linguistic meaning of source language text. It is form-oriented translation and makes no sense in most of the cases specifically in translating idiomatic and phatic expressions. For example, SL (English): He bit tongue. TL (Nepali): *usleji brotokyo*.

Transference/Borrowing

Transference (loan word, transcription) is the process of transferring a SL word to a TL word as a translation procedure. It includes transliteration, which relates to the conversion of different alphabets, e.g. Russian, Greek, Chinese, etc. into English. According to New mark (1988: 82), normally names of people, places and countries, names of newspapers, names of institutions and companies, street names, inventions, brand names, etc. are transferred. In the process of translation the translator transfers the word to show the respect for the SL culture. For example, SL (English): Opium TL (Nepali): aphīm

Substitution

When two cultures display a partial overlap rather than a clear cut presence or absence of a particular element of culture, this procedure is adopted. In other words, the translator replaces the cultural elements with similar words or near equivalent word or generic word/meaning. . For example, SL (English): Basket TL (Nepali): toko

Paraphrasing/Definition

In this procedure, SL terms are replaced by the short definition or paraphrase. This is an amplification or explanation of the meaning of a segment of the text. Normally, if the TLT has not the exact substitution for the source language term, the SL term is replaced by definition or description. For example, SL (English): Pork balls TL (Nepali): sūgurkāmāsukāk wāpkhāneḍallā.

Claque

In this procedure, each unit of source language is translated into the equivalent unit in another language (i.e. TL). The unit of translation for this procedure may be a morpheme, a word, a phrase or even a short sentence. It follows the word order of the SLT. For example, SL (English): Earth God TL (Nepali): prīthvīmātā

Blending

In this process, words are coined through borrowing one constituent from the SL or donor language (DL) and reproducing or translating the other constituent of the construction. In it we find the fusion of two words. For example, SL (English): Silver dollar TL (Nepali): cāndīkāḍalar

Couplets

The combination of two procedures (Borrowing + Literal) is called couplet. It deals with a single problem. They are particularly common for cultural words if transference is combined with a functional or a cultural equivalent.

Naturalization

This procedure succeeds transference and adopts the SL word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology of the TL. For example, SL (English): China(Nepali): cīn

Addition In this technique of translation, some words are added in the TL text. This procedure is necessary in translation of the implicit element in the culture. It makes implicit information explicit.

Post-modernism

Post-modernism has emerged against the structuralism that can be seen as counter movement even in Saussure's linguistic theory in the beginning. This concept has come with the emergence of globalization which rejects logo centralism. Translator and translation are both freely emancipated from the slavery of powerful agencies and rule and regulation of translation. Postmodernist writers break down every conceivable boundary of discourse by fusing forms and confusing different realm, so the post-structuralists deny the distinctions between the traditional order of discourse. Derrida advocated this theory against structuralism to give more priority to all things without saying centrality and peripheral because text has no finality. In other words it is opposition to the notion of centrality, boundaries between high and low form art, objectivity, absolute the truth and materialistic supremacy is post-modernism. It actually rejects perfection, wholeness, completeness and singularities. Venuti(1999) quotes de Man who says that the original text 'cannot be definite since it cannot be translated.' It shows the infinite possibilities of meaning and reinterpretation and even there is polysemous translation in present era . Another scholar Kirkwood(1995) mentions 'appallingly bad translation are bordering on the unintelligible'(p,104). According Klages(2007) the post-modernism is the critique of grand narrative, the awareness that such narrative serves to mask the contradictions and instabilities that are inherent in any organization or practice. From post-modernism the grand narrative does have inauthentic representation of marginalized, poor and women. If we look at *Mahabharat., Ramayan, Bible, Ved*(grand narratives) and *Kuran.,* there is subordination of powerless people and women are represented as second position holder in society. Aforementioned ideas show that the post-modernism has lost the faithfulness towards the grand narrative so this era or post-modernism is characterized by the emergence of little narratives.

Techniques used in translation of ecological terms

Identification of the techniques used in translation for the selected terms are presented here.

Table 1: Techniques used in translation of ecological terms

Procedure	SL Terms	TL Terms	Fre.	%
Literal Translation: The technique which search for close correspondence of meaning between source text (ST) and target text (TT).	Bamboo	bāñs	19	38
	Beast	Jantu		
	Tobacco	Sūrtī		
	Mist	Kuīro		
	Ass	Gadhā		
Substitution: SL terms are replaced by similar or near equivalent or generic word or meaning in TL.	Pipe	kakkaḍ	13	26
	young rice	dhānkobīu		
	Zenith	ḍāñḍā		
	Paddy	Dhān		
	Snowing	Asināpānī		
Claque: Each unit of SL is translated into the equivalent unit in TL. The unit may be a morpheme, word, phrase or even sentences.	wild bees	Banmaurī	7	14
	pine tree	dhūpīkorukh		
	sun and rain	ghāmpānī		
	ice and snow	hiūratuṣāro		
	cash crops	nagadebālī		
Transference: SL terms are borrowed into TL through transliteration process.	Dragon	ḍryāgan	3	6
	Opium	Aphīm		
	Coffee	Kaphī		
Blending: The single term of SL is translated with the combination of two procedures, i.e. often a phrase.	eel fish	īlmāchā		
	Himalayan	himālayaparat	3	6
	mountain			
	KwenLwen	kwenlwenpahāḍ		
Addition: In this technique, some words or terms are added in the TL text.	mountain			
	Earth	prithwimātā	3	6
Paraphrasing: SL terms are replaced by the short definition or paraphrase in this technique.	Harvest	Khetībālī		
	Sun	pracandātāpkosūrya	1	2
Deletion: In this technique, SL word is deleted in the TL text.	a good			
	basketful of eggs	ekṭokarīphul	1	2

(Air, 2016)

The above table shows eight different techniques which are used by the translator in the process of translating the ecological terms of source language text into the target

language text. Some techniques are frequently used whereas some others are rarely used. So the researcher presented more examples of frequently used techniques whereas less examples of rarely used techniques in the above table. Among the eight different techniques, literal translation is mostly used which has 38% and paraphrasing/definition and deletion are the least used techniques, i.e. 2 % for all two. Substitution is the second widely used technique which has 13 percent.

Techniques used in translation of terms.

In the process of translating the terms under material cultural, nine different techniques are used by the translator. These techniques have been presented in the following table with some examples.

Table 2: Techniques used in translation of terms of material culture (artifacts)

Technique	SL Terms	TL Terms	Fre.	%
Literal Translation	bread	roṭī	17	34
	dirty	Phohar		
	veranda	Bārdalī		
	hut	Chāpro		
	transport	Āwatjāwat		
Substitution	basket	ḍoko	12	24
	noodles	Cāucāu		
	Hat	ṭopī		
	carriages	Baggī		
	spindle	Carkhā		
Clique	worn knife	Bhuttechurī	6	12
	bamboo silver	bāṅskosinkā		
	bamboo bars	bāṅskolāṭhī		
	sacks	Borā		
Transference	ricksha	Rikśā	4	8
	chopisticks	capastīk		
	cake	Kek		
Addition	rags	Jhutrāthāñnā	4	8
	girdle	Ijārkoṭhailī		
	knife	Churiracuppī		
Blending	cotton coat	sūtīkokoṭ	2	4
	cot and trouser	koṭrasuruwāl		
Definition	pork balls	Sūgurkāmāsukā kwāpkwāpkhāneḍallā	2	4
Couplets: It is the use of two techniques for dealing with a form of SL into TL.	mill	mil (ghaṭṭajāto)	2	4
Deletion	short-handled scythe	Hāsiyā	1	2

(Air, 2016)

The above table shows nine different techniques which are used by the translator in the process of translating the terms under material culture of source language text into the target language text. Some techniques are frequently used whereas some others are rarely. Nine different techniques have been applied to translate these 50 terms. Out of these 9 techniques, literal translation is the most widely used technique, i.e. 34% and deletion is the least used technique, i.e. 2%.

Techniques used in translation of terms of mythological pattern

Techniques are presented in the following table with some examples.

Table 3: Techniques used in translation of terms of mythological pattern

Technique	SL Terms	TL Terms	Fre.	%
Literal Translation	Temple	Mandir	18	36
	Virgin	Kumārī		
	Heaven	Swarga		
	Wife	Swāsnī		
	Dowry	Dāijo		
Substitution	Pair	Dampatī	14	28
	he and his wife	Logneswāsnī		
	God	Bidhatā		
	Soul	Ātmā		
Clique	Corpse	Sab	8	16
	earth god	prithwīmātā		
	new year	nayābarṣa		
	sticks of incense	dhūpkāsinkā		
	death-like	murdākojasto		
Addition	sacred scars	pabitrādāg	6	12
	starving	anikālpīḍit		
	Burials	antyeṣṭīkriyā		
	marriage	Śubhabiwāha		
Transference	Wife	Dharmapatnī	1	2
	Buddha	Buddha		
Blending	Taoist temple	tāosampradāya	1	2
Definition	Coffin	mritaśarīr	1	2
		rākhnebākas		
Deletion	funeral fire	Citā	1	2

(Air, 2016)

The above table shows eight different techniques which are used by the translator in the process of translating the terms of mythological pattern of source language text into the target language text. For transmission of these fifty terms, 8 different techniques were employed. Among these, 8 different techniques, literal translation is the most widely used technique, i.e. 36% and transference, blending, definition, and deletion are the least used techniques.

Techniques used in translation of terms of social culture and organizations

In the process of translating terms of social culture and organizations, eight different techniques have been used by the translator. These techniques are presented in the following table with some examples.

Table 4: Techniques used in translation of terms

Technique	SL Terms	TL Terms	Fre.	%
Literal Translation	Soldier	Sipāhī	22	44
	Quarrel	jhagaḍā		
	School	Bidhyālaya		
	Dowry	Dāijo		
	Emperor	Bādsāha		
Substitution	wooden head	ghaṅṭāuke	9	18
	Gateman	ḡhoke		
	Court	Darabār		
	Madam	Āmā		
	distant parts	Muluk		
Claque	old mistress	būḡhīmāliknī	6	12
	land proprietor	Jamīndār		
	ideal state	ādarśarājya		
	old lord	būḡhomālik		
Transference	stone bridge	ṣṭonbrīj	4	8
	Pence	Pens		
	Feet	phīṭ		
Addition	War	Yuddhakalā	4	8
	Teacher	māstarsahib		
	birth feast	janmadiwaskobhoj		
Naturalization: In this technique one naturalizes the TL terms into SL terms	China	Cīn	3	6
	Russia	Rus		
Couplets	Street of Bridges	ṣṭrīṭaphbrījes (pulkosaḡak)	1	2
Blending	silver dollar	cāndīkādalar	1	2

(Air, 2016)

The above table shows eight different techniques which are used by the translator in the process of translating the terms of social culture and organizations of source language text into the target language text. Some techniques are frequently used whereas some others are rarely. For the translation of these 50 terms, 8 different techniques were employed. Among these 8 different techniques, literal translation was the most widely used technique, i.e. 44% and couplets, and blending were the least used techniques, i.e. 2%. In terms of descended order of frequency, the techniques of translating the terms of social culture and organizations could be graded as literal translation, substitution, claque, transference, addition, naturalization, couplets, and blending.

Conclusions

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of the data, the following findings have been summed up. In translating cultural terms, ten different techniques (literal translation, substitution, claque, transference, addition, blending, definition, couplet, deletion and naturalization) are found to have been employed in translating cultural words in the novel. In terms of merit order of frequency the techniques of translation of cultural words could be graded as literal translation (38.4%), substitution (23.2%), claque (13.2%), addition (8.4%), transference (5.6%), definition (3.6%), blending (2.8%), deletion (2.4%), couplet (1.2%) and naturalization (1.2%). Literal translation is the most widely used technique in translating ecology, material culture (artifacts), social culture and organizations, conceptual terms and mythological pattern. Substitution is the widely used technique in translating mythological pattern than other cultural categories. Post-modernism has presented a radical reconstruction of the translation theory to subverted created dichotomies and binary features of modernism or colonial concept. Understanding the target reader is very important in setting strategies while translating the historical novel. The problem of context is one of the major problems in the process of translation. There is triangular relationship among translator, text and the reader. A translator should remove the spectacle of domination and accept the foreign culture and source culture with respect.

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