

## Prithvi Journal of Research and Innovation

[A Peer-Reviewed, Open Access Multidisciplinary Bilingual Journal; Indexed in NepJOL]

ISSN 2705-4888 [Print]; ISSN 2705-4896 [Online]

Special Issue "Research & Practice", 15 June 2021, pp. 57-70

eJournal Site: <http://ejournals.pncampus.edu.np/ejournals/pjri/>

----- ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE -----

## Translating across Languages and Cultures: A Study of Culture-Specific Terms in Bhattarai's *Muglan*

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### Article History:

Submitted 04 May 2021

Reviewed 20 May 2021

Accepted 01 June 2021

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### Article DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.3126/pjri.v3i1.37435>

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### Publisher:

Centre for Research and Innovation

Prithvi Narayan Campus

Tribhuvan University

Pokhara, Nepal

[Accredited by UGC, Nepal]

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### ABSTRACT

The article aims to explore and categorize culture-specific terms (CSTs) in Bhattarai's novel *Muglan*, investigate and analyze the strategies applied in the translated version, assess the strategies for plausibility and evaluate gaps in translation. The data for the study were collected from Nepali and English versions of the novel. The basic technique for collecting data was the observation, which was done by using a checklist. The selection of the 220 cultural terms from the novel was done by applying a purposive sampling procedure. They were investigated in terms of five categories and seven strategies. The major finding of the research was that the terms, categorized into five types, employed seven strategies. The most frequent strategy was the translation by cultural substitution, followed by loan word (plus explanation), neutral word and general word. The subsequent strategies were translation by paraphrase (related words), paraphrase (unrelated words) and omission. Moreover, not specific but different reasons were found in the selection and use of the strategies. Finally, the study found that cultural references necessitate the use of appropriate strategies for transferring them across languages.

**KEYWORDS:** Culture, gap, translation, cultural substitution, paraphrase

### INTRODUCTION

The novel *Muglān*, a pioneering work of Diaspora Studies in Nepal, is a mouthpiece of a prolific Nepali writer Govinda Raj Bhattarai, who has authored, edited and translated more than two dozen books. Koirala (2011) has shown the novel's equivalent status with the famous Nepali novels, such as *Muluk Bahira* [Out of the Country], *Sarañārthi* [The Refugee], and *Yamapuriko Mahal* [Edifice of Yampuri]. These four novels particularly have a diasporic appeal. Since *Muglan* has depicted the

Nepali youths' dreams to go abroad to fulfil the basic needs, it is rich in culture specific terms (CSTs). The novel, originally written in Nepali and published first in 1975, has got its fifth edition in 2011. Since it got warm reception within its reader's circle, it was translated by Lekhnath S Pathak into English and published in 2012. It depicts the ethos and pathos of rustic Nepali life at home or abroad.

To enter into the issue of translation of culture specific terms from the selected novel, it is customary to delineate the notion and trend of translation, which is supposed to have existed since intercultural communication began. Yet, its origin is very difficult to pinpoint now. It can only be said that translation began when different linguistic communities came into contact. In such situations, it could be an intermediate tool of communication. Despite this fact, it was given less importance. For example, the Greeks came into contact with other peoples and cultures in the sixth and seventh centuries B. C., but still, there is no discussion of either the practice or the process of translation throughout ancient Greek literature (Connolly & Bacopoulou-Halls, 2011). It implies that translation, in the past, was a random practice in the sense that it was practised without any systematic principles and theories. Recently, its multiple dimensions, theories and disciplines have made its arena a veritable gold mine. As a result, it has its trademark as 'translation studies', a separate field of inquiry and an emerging discipline.

If the translation is viewed just as a matter of linguistic entity, it will not be an appropriate definition of the term. It is a general consent that language and culture are like body and soul. To illuminate the inseparability of the two, Ochs (1988) has asserted, "Acquisition of linguistic knowledge and acquisition of socio-cultural knowledge are interdependent" (as cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 235). Therefore, language is culture-bound. For example, in the Arab world, an 'owl' is often conceptualized as a sign of a bad omen but in the Western culture, it is a symbol of wisdom (Al-Hasnawi, 2007). In this regard, Narsimhaiah and Srinath (1985) have conceded, "It is like a stabilizer between two languages, a mediation between two people, their culture, and their civilization separated by time or space so the excess of one language has to be levelled and balanced when put into the other" (as cited in Bhattarai, 2000, pp. 4-5). This view sheds light on the fact that cultural equivalence is required for a good translation. So, translation is a tool to transmit source language culture to the culture of the target language. Tuning a similar voice, Hatim and Mason (1997) have viewed that it is an act of communication, which tries to relay across cultural and linguistic boundaries (as cited in Ordudari, 2008). Echoing the similar viewpoint, House (2010) has noted, "Since, in translation, 'meaning' is of particular importance, it follows that translation cannot be fully understood outside a cultural frame of reference" (p. 92). Thus, translation is not only a linguistic activity but also a cultural one.

Translation can be classified by several parameters such as language, agent, mode and text. Of them, literary translation refers to the translation of literary genres, such as poetry, prose, fiction and drama. A novel, for Rees (1993), is, "a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and actions representative of real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity" (p. 106). This clarifies that the novel is a prolonged story, which portrays real life, and there are as many worlds in a novel as there are in the real world. Therefore, it can be inferred that translating a novel is a complicated task.

Translation, in the East, has got high dignity and well public reception since the orators' sermons were translated. The exact date of translating oral texts cannot be traced but written translation began in India around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Kothari, 2006). Being influenced by the translation tradition of India, the written tradition of translation in Nepal began from translating texts of Hindi, Sanskrit and

English. Pointing to the difficulty to trace out the history of translation, Bhattarai (1997) has asserted, "Original writing and translating have evolved simultaneously in such a way that the history of one cannot be separated from the other" (p. 9). In this connection, Karmacharya and Ranjitkar (2002) have written that Shakti Ballabh Aryal translated a Sanskrit drama '*Hasyakadamba*' into Nepali in 1798. So, the Nepali written translation tradition began in the late eighteenth century.

Regarding the history of Nepali novel-writing tradition, Parajulee (1988) has written that *Rupmati* (1934) was the first modern novel in the Nepali language (as cited in Kshetry, 2011, p. 367). Similarly, Karmacharya and Ranjitkar (2002) have surveyed the novel translation in Nepal during 1972-2001. Excluding the religious translations, they have concluded that 134 novels have been translated from Nepali to other languages and other languages to Nepali. This confirms that the tradition of translating Nepali novels into English began in 1972. Recently, the tradition of translating Nepali novels into English has been flourishing. After 2001, some other translations include *Saniko Sahas* as 'Sani's Valour', *Samanantar Aakash* as 'Parallel Sky', *Muglan* as 'Muglan', *Palpasa Kyafe* as 'Palpasa Café', *Phoolko Aatanka* as 'Terror of Flower', *Sukarātkā Pāilā* as 'Socrates'Footsteps' and so on (Neupane, 2017). These translations clarify that translating novels in Nepal is flourishing day by day.

Out of the translated novels, *Muglan* is a diasporic one. This is evidenced in Hutt (1988, as cited in Bhattarai, 2012), who has acquainted this novel as a beginning point of Diaspora themes in Nepal. The novel addresses the Nepali attitude to go abroad for financial upliftment. There is a depiction of Nepali culture; therefore, it is enriched with culture-specific terms, which are difficult to translate into English. Some strategies are applied to translate such terms though some gaps occurred while translating. Therefore, this article aims to explore and categorize the culture-specific terms (CSTs) of the text under study, to investigate and analyze the strategies applied in its translated version, to assess the strategies for plausibility and to evaluate the gaps and forward some recommendations.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Written by a prolific writer, Govinda Raj Bhattarai and translated by a university teacher, Lekhnath S Pathak, the novel *Muglan* is about the diasporic experience, which is capable of depicting the plight of life in a foreign land. It depicts the ethos and pathos of rustic Nepali life at home or abroad. Perhaps the hapless pair, Thule and Sutar, are mouthpieces of the author, from whom Nepalese youths' drive (to go abroad for fulfilling basic needs), has been lively portrayed. *Muglan*, the echoed term by the Nepali youths now, connotes to any foreign land to which they wish to enter to fulfil their dreams ranging from meeting their two ends up to high prosperity. In this regard, the author himself has asserted, "*Muglan* is a dreamland, Shangri-La, a utopia you never reach. It is in every Nepali's psyche, rooted deeply" (Bhattarai, 2012, p. ix). As a representative work, it raises voice for those who are and are willing to enter the foreign land for fulfilling their dreams. It also shows how such youths' dreams are shattered into pieces and how they lose their ambitions being mad like Sutar.

The novel is based on the primary motto of highlighting how Nepali wildflowers wither into the swamp of material prosperity. However, as a flash of hope, the author has written at last, "I alone know the tale unwritten since that day until now. I alone know that one-day Sutar will return and the tale will end with a victory" (p. 168).

Critics like Koirala (2011) and Hutt (1988, as cited in Bhattarai, 2012) have labelled the novel as a diasporic one. Further, Dube (1978) has viewed that a film based

on this novel could be a successful one for the Nepali audience (as cited in Bhattarai, 2012).

The novel shows that language and culture are inseparable. Thus, cultural terms are language-specific. In this connection, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis reads like this; “We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages... we cut nature up, organize it into concepts and ascribe significances as we do...” (as cited in Crystal, 2003, p. 25). However, Crystal (2003) has stated that “there are some conceptual differences between cultures due to languages are undeniable, but this is not to say that differences are so great that mutual comprehension is impossible”. It implies that one language may require many words to express something whereas another may enable the users to express something by using a single word. It does not mean that translation is impossible. This case may frequently occur in the case of culture-specific terms (CSTs) that refer to concepts, customs and social institutions specific to a particular language. CSTs refer to the terms related to idiomatic expressions, proverbs, specific expressions, ecological terms, beliefs, customs, religion, costume, etc., which are confined within a language group. The present study categorizes cultural terms, adopting Newmark's (1988) model, which lists down the five types of CSTs such as ecology, material culture, social culture, religious culture and conceptual terms.

Agnes before, Cicero summed up the translator's dilemma in the words, “If I render word for word, the result will surround uncouth and if compelled by necessity I alter anything in the order of wording. I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator” (as cited in Bassnett, 2005, p. 49). Similarly, Culler (1976) believes that languages are not nomenclatures and the concepts of one language may differ radically from those of another since each language articulates or organizes the words differently and languages do not simply name categories; they articulate their own (as cited in Ordudari, 2007, p. 1). This implies that problems are caused due to disparities among languages. These facts lead that different types of gaps occur in translation.

Thus, to translate the cultural references, strategies are needed. Some translation theorists have recommended their preferences. For Newmark (1988), they are word-for-word, literal, faithful, semantic, adaptation, free, idiomatic and communicative translations, transference, naturalization, cultural equivalent, functional equivalent, descriptive equivalent, componential analysis, synonymy, through-translation, shifts or transpositions, modulation, recognized translation, compensation, paraphrase, couplets and notes. These are useful while translating individual units such as sounds, letters, words, phrases and sentences. Similarly, Hervey and Higgins' (1992) list includes exoticism, cultural borrowing, calque, communicative translation and cultural transplantation. Similarly, Baker (2011, 2018) has offered eight different strategies, on which the researcher has studied the CSTs of the selected novel such as translation by a more general term (superordinate), translation by a more neutral/less expressive word, translation by using a loan word or loan word plus explanation, translation by cultural substitution, translation by paraphrase using the related word, translation by paraphrase using unrelated words and translation by omission. These strategies were selected for their plausibility, applicability and usability in this study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This article is based on the research that applied quantitative case study design. This study relied on the CSTs from the selected novel because of its aim to observe and analyze the strategies applied in translating novels from Nepali into English in general and *Muglan* in particular. Similarly, previous studies related to translation, books, theses,

articles, journals, encyclopedias and electronic versions of the related area were used as supportive sources of data. Besides, I used the Nepali-English pair of the novel *Muglan*.

### **The Data and Sample**

I applied the purposive sampling procedure for selecting the novel primarily because all the translated novels from Nepali to English cannot be kept studied and secondly because all the translated versions cannot be found currently in a limited time. I selected a Nepali -English pair of the novel under study from which I selected 220 culture-specific terms randomly because selecting and analyzing all the text in this time-bound research would not be possible. Further, the novel was selected because it is rich in CSTs and connotations; and the purpose of the study was to identify and analyze the CSTs.

### **Procedure**

I used a step-wise procedure for the collection and analysis of data. Firstly, I selected a Nepali - English pair of the novel *Muglan* and underlined the culture-specific terms. Secondly, I selected 220 culture-specific terms from the Nepali version of the selected novel and transliterated them in English by using Turner and Turner's (2009) symbols. Thirdly, I read the English version to find the English counterparts of these terms. Fourthly, I categorized the terms into cultural parameters such as ecology, religious culture, social culture, material culture and conceptual terms. Fifthly, the frequency of the categories was calculated in percentage by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Frequency of each type of cultural categories}}{\text{Total number of frequency of cultural categories}} \times 100$$

Sixthly, I observed Baker's (2011, 2018) strategies applied in their translation and calculated the frequency of the strategies by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Frequency of each type of translation strategies}}{\text{Total number of frequency of translation strategies}} \times 100$$

Then, I envisaged the plausible explanations for the use of the strategies. Finally, I analyzed the translation gaps, primarily linguistic and extralinguistic.

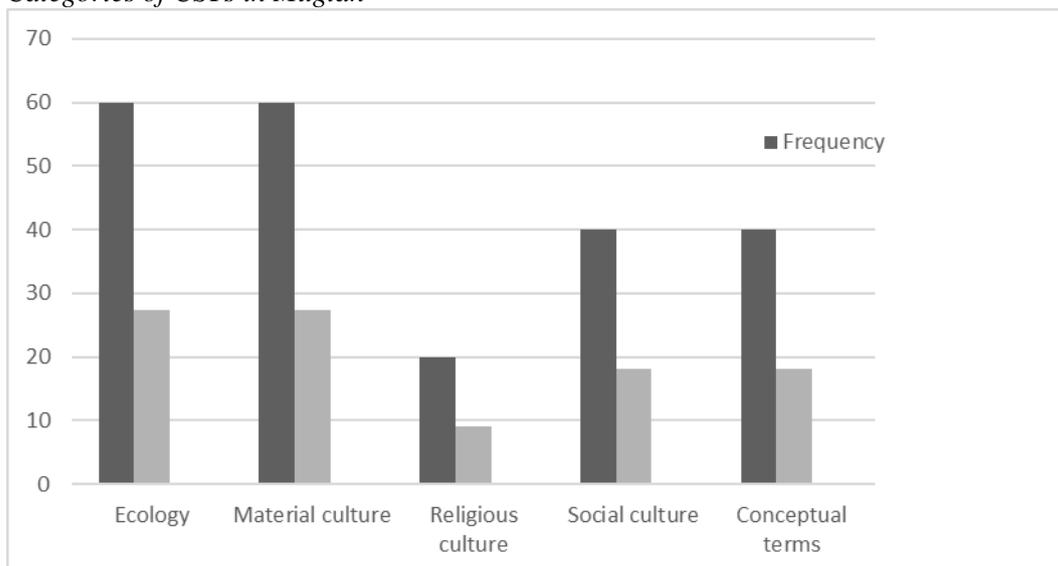
## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from Nepali and English versions of the selected novel, *Muglan*. In the first sub-section, there is a presentation and analysis of CSTs of the novel by adopting the Newmark's (1988) categories, such as ecology, material culture, religious culture, social culture and conceptual terms. In the second section, analysis and interpretation of translation of CSTs, by using Baker's (2011, 2018) seven strategies, have been presented.

### **Classification of CSTs**

Culture is a heritage of a community. It is shared by a specific group of people, who share common beliefs, attitudes, religion, and custom. In Newmark's (1988) terms, culture is "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" (p. 94). It implies that language and culture are interrelated. As there are language groups, there are cultural groups. Therefore, cultural terms are idiosyncratic and they are, in general, opaque in translation. In light of this acquaintance, this study showed the five types of CSTs (Figure 1), which subsume the most frequent terms as ecology and material culture, followed by social culture and conceptual terms. The least frequent ones are religious terms.

**Figure 1**  
Categories of CSTs in Muglan



The ecological terms refer to those terms (words and expressions) which incorporate geographical features, such as places, hills, plants, rivers, natural resources, flowers, mountains, cloud, insects and animals. In light of the aforementioned definition, 60 words (out of 220) are ecological terms. They refer to geographical names, such as Darjiling, Siliguri, Assam, and Kamakshya; hills and mountains, such as *nāgbeli paharā* (serpentine hills), *himālī dādā* (snowy hills), and *gaganchumbī paharā* (skyrocketing cliffs); natural resources and terms, such as *chāḡā chaharā* (waterfalls), *trivenī* (a confluence of three rivers), and *syaulā* (leafy things); trees and plants, such as *datiwan* (a fresh twig stick used as a toothbrush), *guwā* (betel nut), and *dhodre rukh* (hollow trunk of a tree); insects, such as *jhyāukirī* (cicadas), and *jukā* (leech); and animals, such as *thār* (boar), *ghoral* (hog) and *malsāprā* (lizard).

The material culture includes the terms of artefacts or man-made objects. Primarily, this category incorporates the terms related to food, clothes, houses and towns and transport. Based on the acquaintance of material culture, 60 words (out of 220) are terms of material culture. They include food such as *satu* (floor made of grinding roasted grains or beans), *pān* (betel leaf) and *dhīdo-rotī* (very modest food); clothes such as *birke top* (beret cap), *dhoti* (a long winding cotton sheet) and *daurā* (traditional Nepali male attire); tools and weapons such as *kodālo* (spade), *mārtal* (hammer), *gāitī* (pick), and *khukuri* (a Nepali knife); and containers, such as *doko* (a basket woven of bamboo slivers), *theki* (narrow-necked bucket type pot made of wood) and *dhiri* (bamboo vessel).

The terms of religious culture comprise the terms related to mythology or belief deeply rooted custom/tradition, religion, festivals, etc. In fact, in this study, terms of religious culture refer to myths, such as *rāmāyana* (Hindu mythical epic study) and *Veda* (a religious scripture); festivals, such as *dasāī* (the greatest Hindu festival) and *tihār* (second great Hindu festival); religious persons, such as *pandit* (priest) and *silokeharu* (chanters); and religious activities, such as *pūjā* (religious service) and *agni parikhyā* (acid test). This study includes only 20 such terms because, in ratio, they are the least frequently used terms in *Muglan*.

The terms of social culture include the terms related to work and leisure, customs, political and administrative terms, habits, artistic terms, legal terms, etc. Based

on the definition, this study has found the sub-categories of social culture as political and administrative terms such as *lāhure* (soldier), and *gallāwāl* (an agent) and *jimdār* (a title); domestic animals, such as *khasī* (castrated male goat) and *bhote kukur* (Tibetan breed of dog); castes such as *bāniyā kshetrī* (a caste), *kāmi* and *limbu*; social concepts, such as *bharti* (to be enlisted in the army), *nisantān* (issueless), *bātsalya* (affection) and *cakhewā-chakhewī* (lovebirds); and tradition, such as *noumati* (nine musical instruments), *mārūni* (Nepali dance) and *baibāhik gātho* (nuptial knot).

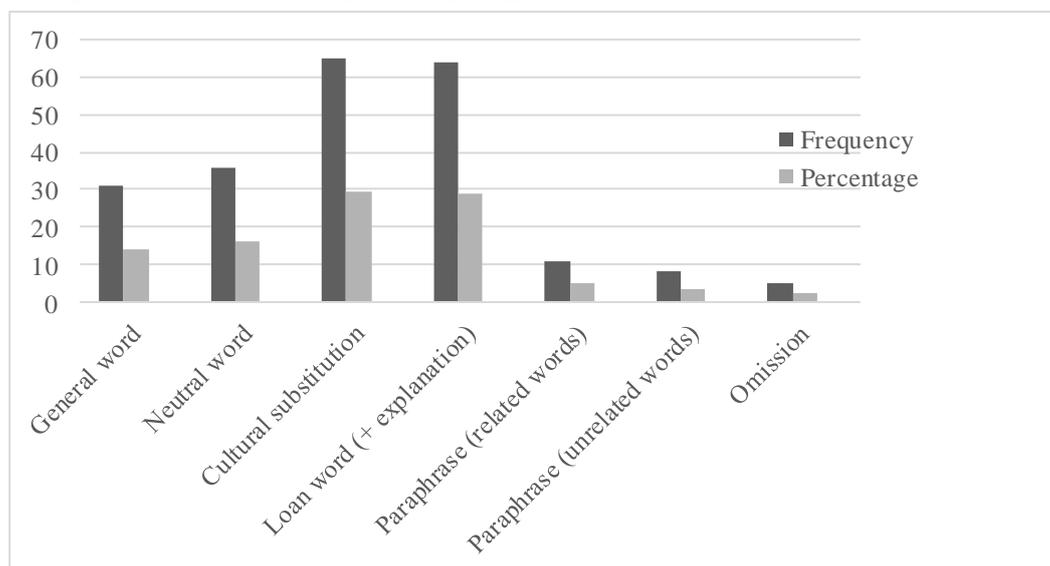
The conceptual terms include abstract terms, which are common within the system of language shared by the member of a speech community. Such terms can be clarified by defining terms. In this study, the conceptual terms include typical expressions bound to a particular speech community and onomatopoeic words. For example, *naulā ākhāharū* (curious eyes), *lakh katnu* (fathom) *jhyāmyān jhyāmyān* and *pāle punya māre pāp* (keeping is a virtue and killing a sin).

### Strategies Applied in Translating CSTs

The cultural terms and concepts are language-specific. For this reason, there is a case of no equivalence in translation. To study the translation of CSTs of the selected novel, i.e. *Muglan*, I used the theoretical framework of Baker (2011, 2018), which has forwarded eight strategies.

**Figure 2**

*Strategies Used in Translating CSTs of Muglan*



The present study has found only seven strategies in use (Figure 2). Translation by cultural substitution was found to be the most frequently used (29.54%), followed by translation using loan word (plus explanation) (29.09%), translation by using more neutral/less expressive words (16.36%) and translation by using general (superordinate) words (24.09%). Similarly, translation by using paraphrase (related words) paraphrase (unrelated words) and omission are 5%, 3.63% and 2.27% respectively.

The plausible explanation of how the strategy was possibly used is elaborated with illustrations in the succeeding sub-sections.

**Translation by a More General Word (Superordinate)**

This strategy is one of the frequently used strategies to deal with the cases of non-equivalence in the domain of propositional meaning. In other words, it used to overcome the lack of special word in the target language. This strategy appeared most frequently in translating ecological words, followed by material culture and religious culture. Likewise, in translating terms of social and religious cultures, too, this strategy is used.

**Table 1**

*Examples of the Strategies Used in Muglan*

S.N.	SL Terms	Back Translation	TL Terms
1	<i>hatiyār</i>	weapons	tools
2	<i>jholā ra katurā</i>	bag and small bags	baggage
3	<i>gallāwal</i>	a person to enlist somebody in the army	an agent
4	<i>sumlā</i>	a mark of cane whip	scars
5	<i>nāgbeli paharā</i>	zig-zag hills	serpentine hills
6	<i>kahālī lāgne bhir</i>	terrifying steep	dizzy cliffs
7	<i>agni parikshyā</i>	fire test	acid test
8	<i>naulā ākhāharū</i>	new eyes	curious eyes
9	<i>ek kancī</i>	one money	a single penny
10	<i>rote ping</i>	round swing	giant wheel
11	<i>khāsta</i>	a kind of shawl	just a wrapper
12	<i>khādal</i>	ditch	furrow
13	<i>sātu</i>	the roasted floor of grains/beans	satu (floor made of grinding roasted grains/beans)
14	<i>pāthi</i>	a unit of measuring solid things	pathi (a unit of measurement)
15	<i>datiwan</i>	a type of plant	datiwan (a fresh twig stick used as a toothbrush)
16	<i>naumati bājā</i>	a band of nine musical instruments	noumati (nine musical instruments)
17	<i>purāno jinko daurā</i>	old jeans pants	old ragged daura
18	<i>bāskā dhungraharū</i>	pots made of bamboo	bamboo hollows
19	<i>bhote sallā</i>	a kind of pine trees	Tall slender pine trees
20	<i>tikho jādo</i>	biting/severe cold	very bitter chilly cold
21	<i>pātāl</i>	dismal part	dense forest

In the first four examples (Table 1), tools, baggage, an agent and scars are superordinate terms and they include the SL terms like *hatiyār*, *sāadhan*, and *sāmagri*, which are co-hyponyms and the relation between *hatiyār* and tools is one of hyponymy. The same is the case for other terms, too. Therefore, the translator used general words in translation to give superordinate/general term so that the target audience would understand the general meaning of the CSTs.

**Translation by a More Neutral/Less Expressive Word**

When the SL term does not have TL equivalent, this strategy is applied. In this case, the SL term should be replaced by a near equivalent TL term, albeit it may be more neutral/less expressive. As presented in Table 2, this strategy appeared to be in 36 words

(26.36%). This strategy appeared most frequently in translating ecological terms, followed by the conceptual terms, material culture and social culture. The least frequent use is in translating religious terms.

In examples 5-8 (Table1), the Nepali term *nāgbelī* does not have its equivalent term in TL (English). However, the translator used serpentine, which is a less expressive word. Similarly, *kahāli*, *naulā*, and *agni* are replaced by near-equivalent terms, which are more neutral. The translator has done so because he might want to give a sense of CSTs.

#### ***Translation by Cultural Substitution***

The culture-specific terms create the cases of non-equivalences. In this context, the translators replace/substitute the SL item/expression with a TL item/expression, having dissimilar propositional meaning but it may have a similar impact on the target audience. For example, the Nepali term 'Dashain' does not exist in English culture but it is culturally equivalent to 'Christmas' as both are the greatest festivals of respective cultures. This strategy occurred in 65 terms (29.54%). It appeared most frequently in translating material culture and least frequently in religious terms.

The examples (9-12) in Table 1 clarify that the SL terms are Nepali culture-specific and therefore they do not exist in English culture. For this reason, the translator has used this strategy to substitute the SL terms with English terms, somehow similar to the SL context.

#### ***Translation by Using a Loan Word (Plus Explanation)***

This strategy is particularly used in translating CSTs, modern concepts and buzz words (Baker, 2011). When it is very difficult to give equivalent, at any rate, the translators borrow the SL term. In this case, sometimes, a loan word is required to explain to make the TL audience understand. In light of this introduction, the researcher has found that this strategy has been used in translating 64 terms (29.09%). Out of this figure, the most frequently used domain is the terms of material culture and the least frequently used domain is for the conceptual terms.

The SL terms in examples (13-16) are typical Nepali terms and so they cannot be translated by using any type of equivalents. For three reasons, this strategy has been used: English has no generally used equivalents; Nepali terms sound better, and the translator wants to retain the real sense/feel of the SL (Nepali). Therefore, the translator has borrowed these terms and has offered some explanations to make the targeted audience understand the sense.

#### ***Translation by Paraphrase Using Related Words***

This strategy is used when "the concept expressed by the source item is lexicalized in the target language but a different form" (Baker, 2011, p. 36). It implies that when the literal translation does not work, the translators should paraphrase by using the related words. Based on this concept, the researcher has found that this strategy has appeared in 11 terms (5%), and it is most frequent in translating the terms of material culture. However, it is absent in religious and conceptual terms.

In the examples (17-20), the SL terms are translated by paraphrase, using related words like *daurā*, bamboo, pine trees and chilly cold. Perhaps the translator has used it to retain the meaning of the SL terms into the TL terms.

#### ***Translation by Paraphrase Using Unrelated Words***

This strategy is used when a semantic complication appears in the translation process. It means when the SL item cannot be lexicalized in the TL, this strategy is used.

Shedding light on this fact, the researcher has found that this strategy is used in translating eight terms (3.63%). It is present in translating the ecological, social and conceptual terms.

The word in example 21, *pātāl* is common to the Nepali audience but not for English people. So, the translator has, perhaps, translated it as 'dense forest'. Similar cases might have happened to other terms, too.

#### **Translation by Omission**

Some terms can be omitted if they are unimportant or redundant to the understanding of the discourse. However, it is risky to omit something without judging its value in the discourse.

The researcher has found that only five terms (2.27%) are translated by omitting them perhaps because they play a less significant role in the development of the text and so the translator might have omitted them in translation.

#### **Mixing up of the Strategies**

In translating six terms, the researcher has found that two strategies are fused (Table 2).

**Table 2**

#### *Mixing up of Strategies in Translation*

S.N.	SL Terms	TL Terms	Strategies
1	<i>khāgiko pent</i>	khaki pant	Loan word + Omission
2	<i>bagedako bhat</i>	bageda	Loan word + Omission
3	<i>purāno jinko daurā</i>	old ragged daura	Paraphrase + Omission
4	<i>phui phui hāwā lāgne dādā</i>	windy hills	General word + Omission
5	<i>dhedu bādar</i>	monkeys	General word + Omission
6	<i>bhungre jwaro</i>	fever	General word + Omission

In the first pair in Table 2, two strategies are used. 'khaki' is a loan word and there is the omission of *bibhakti 'ko'*, which does not exist in English. Similarly, in the second pair, there is a loan word and omission of *bibhakti 'ko'* and *bhāt* (rice). In the third pair, there is paraphrasing and omission of *jinko* (jeans). Likewise, in the fourth, fifth and sixth pairs, there is the use of general words and omission of *phui phui*, *dhedu* and *bhungre* respectively.

#### **Category-wise and Strategy-wise Comparison**

I found out that the CSTs of *Muglan* can be categorized into five types and for translating them, seven of the Baker's (2011, 2018) strategies have been found in use (Table 3).

**Table 3**  
*Category-wise and Strategy-wise Comparison*

S.N.	Categories  Strategies	Frequency/ Percentage						
		Ecology	Material culture	Religious culture	Social culture	Conceptual terms	Total (freq.)	Total (%)
1	Cultural substitution	17	19	3	10	16	65	29.54
2	Loan word (+ explanation)	15	18	14	16	1	64	29.09
3	Neutral word	11	7	2	6	10	36	16.36
4	General word	10	8	1	4	8	31	14.09
5	Paraphrase (related words)	3	7	-	1	-	11	5.00
6	Paraphrase (unrelated words)	4	-	-	1	3	8	3.63
7	Omission	-	1	-	2	2	5	2.27
8	Illustration	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
	Total	60 27.27 %	60 27.27 %	20 9.09 %	40 28.28 %	40 28.28 %	220	100

Out of selected 220 terms, terms of ecology and material culture are 60 each, social and conceptual terms are 40 each and religious terms are 20. In terms of strategies, seven of Baker's (2011) strategies have been found in translation. Out of the seven strategies, cultural substitution (29.54%) is the most frequently used strategy. Then in terms of occurrence, loan word (plus explanation) (20.09%) is the second, neutral word (16.35%) is the third, general word (14.09%) is the fourth, paraphrase (related words) is the fifth and paraphrase (using unrelated words) (3.63%) is the sixth strategy respectively. Omission (2.27%) is the least frequently used strategy. However, translation by illustration has not been found in the study. The seven strategies are found in use in translating social culture; six strategies in ecology, material culture and conceptual terms. However, religious culture has employed only four strategies.

### Gaps in Translation

I have found some gaps in the translation of *Muglan* (Table 4) from Nepali into English, although the translator has attempted to minimize gaps in translation.

**Table 4**  
*Examples of Gaps in CSTs in Muglan*

S. N.	SL Terms	TL Terms
1	<i>kahālī lagne bhir</i>	dizzy cliffs
2	<i>datiwan</i>	a fresh twig used as a toothbrush
3	<i>jholā ra kuturā</i>	baggage
4	<i>kumlāharū</i>	Bundles
5	<i>dhāmijhākrī</i>	witch doctor
6	<i>mantra</i>	Mantra
7	<i>nisantān</i>	Issueless
8	<i>tamsuk</i>	contract paper

9	<i>hariyo nadī</i>	bluish river
10	<i>man amiliyo</i>	deeply maimed

### **Ecological Terms**

While translating ecological terms, some gaps have occurred. In the first pair (Table 4), *kahālī* refers to terrifying/horrifying and *bhir* refers to the steep landscape. However, 'dizzy cliffs' cannot catch the real meaning and as a result, the TL audience cannot understand the true sense of the source expression. Similarly, in the second pair, only *datiwan* cannot be used as a toothbrush; even plants like *sajiwan*, and *pāti*. can be used as a toothbrush in the villages. The TL audience cannot understand exactly which fresh twig has been addressed in translation.

### **Material Culture**

The terms of material culture (artefacts) differ from one speech community to another. Some gaps of this category have been illustrated in examples three and four. The first pair share some common features. However, *jholā* is a bag and *kuturā* refer to small bags, being wrapped around. On the other hand, 'baggage' refers to the equipment carried by an army. So, the TL audience cannot get the denotative meaning of the Nepali terms. In the second pair, English people understand 'bundle' as a collection of things fastened or wrapped together, a lot of something, a large amount of money, etc. So, 'bundle' is a general term but '*kumlāharū*' is one specific bundle.

### **Religious Culture**

Based on religion, the terms differ. The names of Gods and Goddesses, religious concepts, myths and activities differ from one religion to another. Therefore, in the selected novel, too, gaps are found in the translated version.

The equivalent TL terms 'witch doctor' for *dhāmijhākṛī* is not exact. The SL term '*jhākṛī*' has typical meaning, i.e., it refers to a person with a long robe, long hair, worshipper of spiritual beings, person who chases witches/ghosts/spiritual evils, among others. On the contrary, the witch doctor is too general to give the specific meaning of SL terms. The second pair is amazing because the SL and TL terms are the same. The TL reader cannot get into the true sense of the word.

### **Social Culture**

The researcher has found some gaps in the translation of the terms of social culture.

In the first pair, 'issueless' is a less expressive and more neutral term. The SL term *nisantān* refers to the state of being childless. Therefore, the TL audience cannot get the real meaning of the SL term. Secondly, *tamsuk* is a bond paper, written when a person gives a loan to pay at a certain time with a certain interest. On the other hand, 'contract paper' refers to the agreement paper signed by the two parties after negotiation. So, the TL audience cannot catch up with the real sense.

### **Conceptual Terms**

Some of the gaps in the translation of conceptual terms are enumerated and elaborated on in the following examples. In the first pair, *hariyo* has been rendered into 'bluish' but is not it 'greenish'? The TL audience might be confused about the colour of the river on the bottom of the green hills. Likewise, in the second pair, the English reader understands 'injury causing permanent damage' by 'maim'. In Nepali term, *man amiliyo* means he feels bitter and so the gap is obvious here.

Besides the aforementioned gaps, there are many other types. It highlights the fact that gaps in the translation are natural. Therefore, the translators should pay due attention to minimizing them.

## CONCLUSION

Seven strategies are found in the translation of CSTs from Bhattarai's *Muglan* into English which include translation by using general word, more neutral/less expressive word, cultural substitution, loan word (+ explanation), paraphrase (related words), paraphrase (unrelated words) and omission. Of them, translation by cultural substitution is the most frequently used strategy whereas omission is the least frequently one. Four of them, (i.e. cultural substitution, loan word + explanation, neutral word and general word) are present in all the cultural categories, such as ecology, material culture, religious culture, social culture and conceptual terms. The remaining three are present only in three separate categories. The translator of the novel has applied various strategies because the novel incorporates various types of terms. For instance, cultural substitution is used when there are no similar propositional meanings in the TL, loan words are used in such cases where cultural equivalence is impossible to find out, and more neutral words are used when the translator does not find approximants in the TL. Likewise, omission strategy has been used as a last resort in such contexts in which the SL terms play a less significant role in the development of the text.

Some gaps have been found because of the differences between the two languages and extralinguistic and conceptual differences between SL and TL. Some gaps are found because of a lack of knowledge in proper word selection, editing and proofreading. The evidences of gaps shed light on the fact that the cultural aspect is found to be problematic in novel translation.

These findings imply that translation is a collaborative activity. Therefore, the author and the translator should be together to share and interact to produce better translations. Further, translation is a multidimensional activity in terms of language, culture, and context. Thus, a translator should have multiple eyes and can explore them into practice; and a translator should be well-equipped with translation tools such as dictionaries, thesauri, term banks, computers and samples before sitting for the actual task.

This is a time-bound and partial study. Therefore, it would be noteworthy to study other translations of the same author to observe and analyze whether the strategies applied here are similar or not. This study is limited to 220 CSTs only. It would be interesting to study translations of sentences, expressions and discourses. Such kind of study framework can be implemented in the translated versions of the other novels, stories, essays, articles, journals and dramas.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*This article is based on the mini-research, carried out in 2012, supported by the Centre for Research and Innovation, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I acknowledge the centre for granting me the opportunity of conducting the research.*

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