

## Strategies Used in Translation of *Brahmako Prayogshalabata*

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### Abstract

#### Article History

Submitted 15 Jan 2023

Reviewed 15 May 2023

Accepted 30 July 2023

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#### DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.3126/eltp.v8i1-2.57859>

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#### Publisher

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Faculty of Education, P. N. Campus,  
Tribhuvan University, Nepal  
Email: [enged@pncampus.edu.np](mailto:enged@pncampus.edu.np)  
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*Brahmako Prayogshalabata*, a humorous essay by Bhairab Aryal, is rich in cultural terms and expressions. It may be a challenge for non Nepali readers as well as non-eastern Nepali readers to understand as this humorous essay has been written in eastern Nepali dialect. This essay has been translated in English by Govinda Raj Bhattarai thus his valued work of translation has eased the non Nepali readers as well non-eastern Nepali Readers for acquiring knowledge and insight of reading this essay. This paper aims to explore how the challenges of translating linguistic, pragmatics and cultural terms of native language have been solved while translating into another language. It has adopted corpus-based research design using secondary sources of data and qualitative approach for data analysis and interpretation in order to achieve the set objectives. This paper compares translation of title, words, chunks, culture-specific words and expressions. It concludes that challenges of linguistic, pragmatics and cultural issues can be solved by using the foreignising approach which entails borrowing and literal translation along with substitution, addition, omission, merging, chunking, and expansion of phrases.

**Keywords:** culture specific expressions, literal translation, strategies, substitution

### Introduction

Nepali literature is rich in varieties of genres. Nepalese poems, stories, novels and essays play crucial role in literature and language development. In the literature of Nepal, Bhairab Aryal contributed his great role for language development and translation with his pioneering works in various genres. Born as the son of Khem Kumari Aryal and Homnath Aryal in Lalitpur, in 1936, Aryal is the best remembered for his writings. Based on the social, political, religious and cultural aspects of Nepali lifestyle, his most highly acclaimed literary work *Jay Bhundi* was published in 1965 which included the popular satirical essays. His satirical essay compilation *Jaya Bhudi* still remains one of the most popular works of Nepali Literature. Out of his great contributions, this essay is very popular

among the readers. *Jay Bhundi* includes ten different humorous essays, *Mapai*, *Chandralok kasko*, *Lahureko Yatrasansmaran*, *Neta number ek saya*, *Mahapurush ko Sangat*, *Jay bhundi*, *Brahmako Prayogshalabata*, *Pakhnos*, *Pashu-Pashupati ra manchhe* and *Amarawati Kantipur Nagaree*. Among them *Brahmako Prayogshalabata* is the seventh humorous essay of his collection which is very popular part of *Jay Bhundi* essay collection which was published in 1965. In Hindu mythology, Brahma is known as the creator of the universe and all the creatures of the earth. The original text is based on myths which discuss about human nature and behavior. Interesting thing is that this Nepali literary text has also been translated into English. It is important to explore different strategies followed by Govind Raj Bhattarai because translation is really a challenging task. There is a need of a research about how to mitigate and solve the problems and challenges in the field of translation. Therefore adopting qualitative corpus based comparison and analysis of Nepali and English versions of *From the Laboratory of Brahma*, this paper aims to find out the strategies used to resolve pragmatics and cultural issues. This paper deals with the following research questions for the findings of this study:

- 1 What are the translation strategies used in the text *From the Laboratory of Brahma*?
- 2 How do translation strategies affect the literariness of the text *From the Laboratory of Brahma*?

### Review of Literature

Translation is a challenging task however a translator needs the competence for translating any literal text of source language to target language. Adhikari (2020) conducted a research aiming to assess the quality of translation. He adopted content analysis to investigate frequency and nature of errors and inaccuracies in translation. His study showed that most of the English texts by these students working into English were undermined by a substantial number of categorical errors and syntactic inaccuracies, which leads to a valid conclusion that their English competence is not adequate enough to express the ST content in grammatically acceptable sentences. (p.19). A translator may use different strategies while translating literary as well as non-literary text in terms of translation. The reviewed literature also talk about different challenges and strategies to translate literary text. Adhikari (2019) says, "Literary translation is a complex process of regenerating the given text in a novel form that involves the analysis of layers of meaning and rewriting them in the target language." (p.8).

In one of the research paper, Neupane (2013) aims to explore onomatopoeic words and the strategies used to translate them in the translation of Bhattra's Nepali novel *Muglan* into English translated by Lekhnath Pathak. Neupane has selected 88 onomatopoeic words from the Novel and found that 10 strategies have been used to translate them. I agree that Nepali is an onomatopoeic language as there are many onomatopoeic words in Nepali literature. Neupane says that it is very difficult to translate onomatopoeic words because there is no link between sound and meaning. In his research paper, he concluded with some strategies used to translate onomatopoeic words of *Muglan* are borrowing, cultural substitution, adverbs, adjectives, idioms, nouns, verbs, combination of words, explicative paraphrases, and omission. The study also shows that use of explicative paraphrase is far better than other strategies used in case of non-equivalence (p. 114).

In another research paper, Neupane (2019) compared the two translated English versions of Nepali novel *Basain* of Lal Bahadur Chettri by two foreign writers Michael Hutt and Larry Hartsell. Through this study, he investigated how cultural elements of Nepali have been rendered into English. Neupane found that Hartsell has used borrowing and a few footnotes whereas Hutt has used borrowing

and extensive endnotes however they both have used foreignising techniques to transport the heavy load of cultural elements. He said, “I have found three techniques in their translations, use of same forms, words and meanings, use of same forms and meanings but different words, and use of same forms, almost similar meanings but different words” (p.126).

Adhikari & Magarati (2022) conducted a research to set out to analyze the lexical and syntactic features of 'Abstract Thought: An Onion, the English translation of the Nepali essay by Shankar Lamichhane. He used document analysis to collect and analyze the data from the essay *Abstract Thought: An Onion* (2003) and its Nepali source '*Yābstyarakṭ Chintan: Pyāj*' (1967) by Shankar Lamichhane. He found borrowing, lexical explicitation and syntactic parallelism as the major linguistic features of this translated text.

Neupane (2021) likewise explored and categorized cultural specific terms (CSTs), and investigated and analyzed the strategies applied to translate Nepali novel *Muglan* by prolific writer Govind Raj Bhattarai into English by Lekhnath S Pathak. In his study, he selected 220 cultural terms from the novel and found that seven strategies have been used in the translation of CSTs from Bhattarai's *Muglan* into English which include translation by using general word, less expressive word, cultural substitution, loan word, paraphrasing related words, paraphrasing unrelated words and omission (p.69). Another research paper by Neupane (2021) aims to test the prevailing models for translating proverbs from Nepali into English and to develop an appropriate model. For this study, he collected twenty proverbs and are analysed qualitatively and interpreted by testing Wilson's model. According to Neupane translating proverbs requires multidisciplinary knowledge as proverbs are related to sociology, semiotics, anthropology, pragmatics, folklores, culture, etc. (301). Neupane concluded that proverbs are culture-specific. He admits that there is possibility to translate not exactly but approximately into other terms of target language. The research paper by Sah and Sinha (2022) aims to examine the problems and prospects of translating Maithili fictions into English along with it tries to delve deep into the linguistic and cultural barriers that translator faces while translating Maithili literary texts. According to the writers translators have to face challenges while translating phrases, idioms, proverbs, symbols, metaphors, titles, cultural terms, regional expressions, figures of speech, and satirical and humorous expressions. Similarly, writers provide some approaches or strategies to overcome such challenges like; providing footnote or endnote, sense to sense translation should be rendered, glossary, foreignization and domestication. Writers concluded that translation should be developed to provide local literatures a global platform.

### **Methodology**

I followed corpus- based research design using secondary sources of data including original and translated versions of the selected essay. It implicates the investigation and collections of texts that have been gathered accordance of specific criteria for clear analysis. Saldanha & O'Brien (2014) states that texts are created by establishing links within the text and between the text and the situation through the textual function. Relevant linguistic choices include, for example, word order, repetition and inter textual references. (p.81). Therefore I collected forty cultural words and expressions (Appendix) from the source text for textual analysis and interpretation to reach the finding of the research. I used random sampling technique for selecting the words. Then I compared their translated version using qualitative approach to analyse and interpret the corpus data in order to achieve the set objectives. After the data

analysis, I explored how the translator has made the adjustments of the crucial aspects of translation, namely, linguistic, pragmatics and cultural issues. This paper concerns to the descriptive study on the basis of comparison of two versions i.e. original version of *Brahmako Prayogshalabata* in Nepali and translated version of *From the Laboratory of Brahma* in English.

### Results and Discussion

This section presents, analyses and interprets data from the original and the translated versions of the selected essay.

#### The Original Texts and the Translated Texts

The original text *Brahmako Prayogshalabata* is the culture -laden humorous essay. It has typical Nepali cultural words such as *Jhus, Jagalta, Akabari, Chhya, Tilmilayo, Thoparthapar, Mora, Aude- khaude*, etc which are really challenging to understand for non- Nepali readers while reading this essay. Therefore, Govinda Raj Bhattarai translated this essay in English version to bring the Nepali text among the wider access of readers. The translated version has an influence of the setting and context of the source text. Bhattarai has rendered seven pages of Nepali version into five pages of English Version. The translator has used word to word, Literal and pragmatic translation in the translated text in order to give the flavor of original text for all who are the non Nepali readers and can read the text in English.

#### Translation of the Title

This study finds that the translator has used literal translation and borrowing techniques for translation of the title. While comparing and analyzing both the source text and the target text, I observed that the title *Brahmako prayogshalabata* from the source text is translated using word to word translation and borrowing techniques. The term *bata* has been translated into *from*, *ko* has been translated into *of* and *prayogshala* has been translated into *laboratory* in the target text whereas the term *Brahma* from the source text has been borrowed exactly same in the target text for translating the title.

#### Translation of Proper Nouns

Neupane (2019) writes, "Proper nouns refer to the names of particular person, place, things and animals"(p.223). They are just names of proper person, place, things and animals which are usually translated using foreignizing the terms of the source text into the target text. According to Nida' (1964), "The most common phonological problems encountered by translators involve transliteration, especially of proper names, such words usually be borrowed" (p. 193). I agree this statement as I found that only the two terms *Brahma* and *Brahmaji* have been used as proper noun in both the source text and the target text and these proper nouns have been borrowed exactly the same and foreignised into translated text. Therefore this paper admits that proper nouns are usually borrowed from the source text in the target text in terms of translation.

#### Borrowing and Foreignising

These strategies are used if there is a lack of equivalent words in target language.

It was found that the translator has borrowed two words exactly same from the source text while translating into the target text. These Nepali words have been translated into English using foreignising strategy.

Table 1

*Borrowing and Foreignizing Strategy used in Translation*

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>Brahma</i>	Brahma
<i>Brahmaji</i>	Brahmaji

Table 1 shows that the translator has used the strategy of borrowing and foreignising for translating the original Nepali text into English. Some words were found exactly same in both texts. For example the terms *Brahma* and *Brahmaji* from the source text have been borrowed exactly the same terms and foreignised in the translated text.

**Use of Merging**

Some of the two or more than two words from the source text have been merged into one word in the translated text.

Table 2

*Use of Merging Strategy in Translation*

Source Text	Translated Text
bango-tingo	twisted
srijana sworup	creation
pitda pitdai	beating

Table 2 presents that the term *Bango-tingo* from the source text has been merged into twisted, *srijana sworup* has been merged into creation and the term *pitda pitdai* has been merged into beating in the translated text.

**Semantic expansion**

This paper finds that some words and phrases from the source text have been translated using expansion techniques.

Table 3

*Use of Semantic expansion*

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>mora</i>	idiot fool
<i>ek jhokka</i>	a single gust of wind

Table 3 shows that the word *mora* has been expanded into idiot fool, and *ek jhokka* has been expanded into a single gust of wind. This technique makes the translated text more meaningful and clear for the nonnative readers.

**Translation of Culture-specific Words**

This paper finds that the culture specific-words of the source text have been translated using pragmatic strategy.

Table 4

*Translation of Culture-specific Words*

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>jhus</i>	hair throughout the body
<i>jagalta</i>	hair of head
<i>akabari</i>	wonderful
<i>chhya!</i>	pooh!
<i>tilmilayo</i>	raged with anger
<i>thopar thapar</i>	mixed
<i>mora</i>	idiot fool
<i>aude khaude</i>	fragmented

From the Laboratory of Brahma is a humorous essay which consists local and cultural specific words incorporating culture loaded elements. Some local and cultural words like *jhus*, *jagalta*, *akabari*, *chhya*, *tilmilayo*, *thopar thapar*, *mora*, *aude khaude* etc have been translated on the basis of linguistics and pragmatics aspects of both the source text and the target text. The term *jhus* from the source text has been translated as hair throughout the body, *jagalta* has been translated into hair of head, *akabari* has been translated into wonderful, *chhya* has been translated as pooh!, *tilmilayo* has been translated as raged with anger, *thopar thapar* has been translated as mixed, *mora* has been translated as idiot fool and *aude khaude* has been translated as fragmented in target text using linguistic and pragmatic aspects incorporating contextual meaning.

**Addition**

This paper finds the addition of some words in terms of interpretation and translation which are only found in translated text but not seen in the source text. Use of addition technique seems to be more elaborated which has solved the challenges of translation and helped in making translated text more readable and meaningful.

Table 5

*Use of Addition Strategy in Translation*

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>gijyaoinann</i>	tease and ask
<i>chuli</i>	snowy peak
<i>aglo-hocho</i>	high and low
<i>besari chhichyayo</i>	gave a shrill cry
<i>unilai sanko lagyo</i>	a doubt crept into his mind

Table 5 shows that the term *gijyaoinann* from the source text has been translated into tease and ask where the word 'ask' is added one, Similarly the term *chuli* has been translated as snowy peak. In this case, we find the addition of the word snowy (TT, p.147), other added words like hits (TT, p. 147) in high and low for *aglo-hocho*, and is added (TT, p.147), the term 'gave' has been added as gave a shrill cry for *besari chhichyayo*. The term began, frustration, crept (TT, p.147) have been added only in translated text which are not found in the source text.

## Literary Translation

This paper finds that the translator has also used literary translation though while translating literary texts, it is difficult to find word to word connection and same grammatical form. Thus, in such cases literal translation can be applied. Wright (2016) argues that literary-translation quality depends on how well a translation functions as a literary work that is mediated for target culture audiences by a specific translator, and that although translators need to understand the source's literariness, the degree and nature of the textual match between source and target text is less crucial as stated in (Jones 2019: 109-10).

Table 6

### *Use of Literary Translation*

Source Text	Translated Text
<i>tairin tairin budhi bakhri kina</i>	once a debtor, always debtor

Table 6 indicates that the translator has used literary meaning for translating the proverb. The proverb *tairin tairin budhi bakhri kina* from the source text has been translated as once a debtor, always debtor in the target text. This technique gives literary meaning of the source text while translating into target language.

### Use of Substitution

Sometimes it is very difficult to find the same words having one-to-one correspondence. Therefore it is a challenge for translation. In such condition substitution strategy plays important role to cope the problems. As I compared and analyzed both the source text and the translated text, I found some words were substituted in the translated text.

Table 7

### *Use of Substitution Strategy in Translation*

Source Text	Translated Text
dikka lagyo	worried
brahmaji baje	old brahmaji
tantun garepani	tried hard
manmanai vane	said to himself
baliyo	durable
thulo	powerful
basneharu ko gati	fate of who survive
dhikkar hosh	cursed it be
barkat	strength
jode	collected
unlai sankha lagyo	a doubt crept into his mind
dhulo dhalo uthayera	collecting dust
khachakhch	crowded
chamkilo	brilliant
manxe babu	dear man

Table 7 represents the words of the source text mentioned in the left column and the substituted



words in the right column as they were found in translated text. The Nepali word *dikka lagyo* may be translated as bored in English but it was substituted as worried in the translated text. Similarly, if we talk about word to word translation of the term *Brahmaji baje*, it is translated as *Brahmaji* grandfather or Grandfather *Brahmaji* but it has been translated as old *Brahmaji*. It means the term old in the translated text is the substitution for the term *baje* of the source text. Likewise the term *chamkilo* of the source text means bright in English but the term brilliant is the substitution found in the translated text instead of bright for the term *chamkilo* in the source text. Therefore substitution is one of the strategies used for translating literary text.

### Omission

Although the strategy of omission is not considered good as the translated text may lose the flavor of originality, this paper finds the use of omission in terms of translation of some difficult words like onomatopoeic words-*ghyacha*, *suiyya*, *Charlyamchurlum*, *charakka*, *tharra*, *chuiikka*, etc. The above words of the source text haven't been addressed and adopting omission, the translator translated the text into the target language. Some cultural specific words like *samaan* and *katkut* from the source text also have been omitted in the translated text.

### Translation of Onomatopoeic words

According to Chiarantano (2006)," Onomatopoeic words mimic the sound they represent and the sound of the word imitates the object makes." It means onomatopoeia is a word that represents the sound and manner of the objects or things. I found some onomatopoeic words in the source text but they were omitted in the translated text. Although the onomatopoeic words of the source text could be translated using idioms in target language, the translator has omitted them. For example, onomatopoeic words-*ghyacha*, *suiyya*, *Charlyamchurlum*, *charakka*, *tharra*, *chuiikka*, *chitchit*, etc of the source text have been omitted in the translated text.

### Conclusion and Implications

From the Laboratory of Brahma, a popular Nepali essay was written by Bhairab Aryal and translated by Govinda Raj Bhattarai. The translated version of such a culture-loaded text is really interesting and insightful for non-native scholar to study. It renders a rich source of literature for non-native readers and scholars. One potential meaning of the title of this text can be explored as Brahma is known as the creator of the earth according to Hindu mythology. It concerns with the various creations and human beings in this earth and every creation is unique and different from each other.

The present study aims to investigate how the problems of translating culture-laden elements have been solved and what strategies are used in translation of Nepali text into English. However translation is a challenging task, this paper based on comparison and analysis of the source text and the translated text, concludes that challenges of linguistic, pragmatics and cultural issues can be solved by using different strategies such as borrowing, foreignising, substitution, addition, omission, merging, chunking, semantic expansion, literary and pragmatic translation. For translating culture specific words, pragmatic translation has been used for instance the word '*Akabari*' has been translated into the term 'wonderful'. Similarly, using semantic expansion, the word '*Mora*' has been translated as 'Idiot fool'. For translating proper nouns, foreignising technique has been used in the translated text to transport the heavy load of cultural elements. Likewise using Additive translation, the word '*Chuli*' has been translated into 'snowy peak'. Literary translation is also one of the ways for solving the problem



of translation. For instance, the expression '*tairin tairin budhi bakhri kina*' has been translated as 'once a debtor, always debtor'. Borrowing strategy can also solve the problem of translation for example the word '*Brahmajī*' has been borrowed in the translated text.

This study can be useful for the translators who are involved in translation of Nepali literary texts into English and the idea and insights imparted in this research can be implicated by the researchers who want to conduct a further research in the field of translation.

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## Appendix A

### Sample Translations of Culture Specific Words and Expressions

#### Source Text (ST)

1. Jagalta (ST, p.62)
2. Jhus (ST, p.62)
3. Dikka lagyo (ST, p.57)
4. Aude khaude (ST, p.62)
5. Brahmaji baje (ST, p.57)
6. Tantun gare pani ( ST, p.57)
7. Manmanai vane (ST, p.57)
8. Baliyo (ST, p.57)
9. Thulo (ST, p.57)
10. Basneharu ko gati (ST, p.57)
11. Dhikkar hos (ST, p.58)
12. Barkat (ST, p.57)
13. Chhya (ST, p.62)
14. Tilmilayo (ST, p.62)
15. Thopar-thapar (ST, p.62)
16. Mora (ST, p.63)
17. Bango-tingo(ST, p.57)
18. Srijana sworup (ST,p. 58)
19. Pitda-pitdai (ST, p.58)
20. Ek jhokka (ST, p.57)
21. Gijyaoinann (ST, p.62)
22. Chuli (ST, p.58)
23. Aglo-hocho (ST, p.57)
24. Besari chichyayo (ST, p.60)
25. Jode (ST, p.58)

#### Translated Text (TT)

- Hair of Head (TT, p.150)
- Hair throughout the body (TT, p.150)
- Worried (TT, p.147)
- Fragmented (TT, p.150)
- Old brahmaji (TT, p.147)
- Tried hard (TT, p.148)
- Said to himself (TT, p.147)
- Durable (TT, p.147)
- Powerful (TT, p.147)
- Fate of who survive (TT, p.148)
- cursed it be (TT, p.158)
- Strength (TT, p.147)
- Pooh! (TT, p.150)
- Raged with anger (TT, p.150)
- Mixed (TT, p.150)
- Idiot fool (TT, p.150)
- Twisted (TT, p.147)
- Creation(TT,p.148)
- Beating (TT, p.148)
- a single gust of air (TT, p.147)
- Tease and ask (TT, p.150)
- Snowy peak (TT, p.147)
- High and low (TT, 147)
- gave a shrill cry (TT, p.148)
- Collected (TT, p.148)

26. Unlai sanko lagyo (ST, p.58) a doubt crept into his mind (TT.p.148)
27. Dhulo-dhalo (ST, p.59) Dust (TT, p.147)
28. Khachakhch (ST, p.60) Crowded (TT, p.148)
29. Chamkilo (ST, p.60) Brilliant (TT, p.148)
30. Manxe babu (ST, p.62) Dear Man (TT, p.150)
31. Akabari (ST, p.62) Wonderful (TT, p.150)
32. Darho (ST, p.57) Strong (TT, p.147)
33. Tharra kamchha (ST, p.57) Quakes (TT, p.147)
34. Charakka chiriera phatnu (ST, p.57) Crack and break (TT, p.151)
35. Thulo bhukammpa(ST, p.57) Powerful earthquake (TT, p.151)
36. Tairin tairin budhi bakhri kina (ST, p.61) Once a debtor always a debtor (TT, p.150)
37. Chuikka bolena (ST, p.61) didn't speak (TT, p.149)
38. Harre! (ST, p.61) My god! (TT, p.149)
39. haat khutta pagliye(ST,p.61) Hands and feet became numb(TT,p.149)
40. Giddi (ST, p.61) Brain (TT, p.149)