

## **Editor's Preface**

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*Trends in Select Sahitya Akademi Award-winning Tamil Novels* is a volume of articles in the series which would evaluate the Sahitya Akademi Award Winning novels in Tamil. The articles have been written in English for the benefit of the readers around the world interested in reading Tamil fiction and its literary analysis.

This is the first volume in this planned series, which presents the current state of fiction writing in Tamil as seen through the Sahitya Akademi award-winning Tamil novels.

Both as an ancient/classical language as well as a modern dynamic language, Tamil is known to possess great literature dealing with human lives and values, apart from Bhakti (religious) literature and literature of ethics and morals for individual and social development. In modern times, poets and creative writers such as Subramania Bharathi, Bharathidasan, Arignar Anna, M. Karunanidhi and others have used various forms of poetry and prose to support the Indian Independence Movement, Social Reforms, Fight against Untouchability, exploitation of workers, etc. Modern Tamil fiction also has grown to be a very impressive source of social record and diverse narrative techniques, characterization and content.

Since Sahitya Akademi Award Winning novels are selected after much consideration of various factors of literary merit for the award, these novels may be considered representing the best for the year or years in the language concerned. Analysis of these Tamil novels in English in terms of literary techniques, content, themes, etc. has not been done in any elaborate manner. This series tries to fill in this gap. Study of these selected Tamil novels presented in English will also encourage better coordination between teachers of Tamil literature and teachers of English literature including Indian Writing in English. In addition, we also would like to contribute our best to popularize Tamil fiction and help develop Tamil fiction in all directions of literary analysis.

The original intent of this series is to focus on the following recent Sahitya Akademi Award Winning Tamil Novels:

Novel	Author	Publication	Awarded Year
<i>Kaval Kottam</i>	Su. Venkatesan	2009	2011
<i>Thol</i>	D. Selvaraj	2010	2012
<i>Korkai</i>	Joe D Cruz	2009	2013
<i>Agnaadi</i>	Poomani	2012	2014
<i>Ilai Uthir Kaalam</i>	Neela Padmanabhan	2005	2007
<i>Kalmaram</i>	G. Thilakavathi		2005
<i>Kallikattu Ithikasam</i>	Vairamuthu	2001	2003
<i>Suthanthira Daagam</i>	C. S. Chellappa		2001
<i>Pudhiya Dharisanangal</i>	Poneelan		1994
<i>Visaranai Commission</i>	Sa. Kandasaamy		1998

The following gives some of the processes using which the novels selected for study may be analyzed. But this is only a suggestion. If you want to contribute your paper to this series, you are most welcome to follow other ways of doing the analysis of these novels. You can choose one of the novels and develop your own theme for your analysis and article. Or you can also choose to write an article that will compare two or more award winning novels of different authors. You can also focus on some aspect/s of the selected novel and ignore other features. You can also focus only on the characters and how the story is told. You can also focus on the social and individual issues of the selected novel.

There are many ways using which you can develop your own theme for your article based on any of the Sahitya Akademi Award Winning Tamil Novels. You will gain more experience in using what you have learned and used in analyzing novels in English and Indian Writing in English.

1. A brief sketch of the author's biography. Make some statement on the author's pen name if she or he has adopted a pen name different from their original name/s.
2. A brief summary of the story of the novel, if this is not going to be repeated in the discussion on the novel within the article.
3. Analysis of the characters, especially main characters who contribute to the progress of the story/novel and statements how these characters impact other characters in the novel.

4. How does the title of the novel reveal or not reveal the intent or meaning of the novel? Are there chapter headings within the novel? If yes, how do these headings help understand the story, how the headings and the content (episodes/events/incidents, etc.) relate to or not relate to other? Literary techniques adopted for narrating the story? Is it third person, second person or first - person narrative? Or is it a combination of these narratives in different parts of the novel? Is there Interior Monologue employed in the novel? For what functions?

5. What is the role of conversation between characters? Does it carry forward and carry backward in thoughts and events? Is the conversation presented in written Tamil or in colloquial/spoken Tamil? What regional or caste or religious dialect is used? What are the special features of these dialect/s employed by the author and for what purpose? Does the author use ungrammatical sentences and for what purpose? Any tendency to use proverbs and sayings presently used or used in the past?

6. Does the author state any reason or purpose for writing this novel? Check with the preface, if there is a preface to the novel. It is also possible there may be an epilogue. What is your assessment: Did the author achieve his purpose? Is his narrative convincing the readers about the logic and rationale of the author's point of view?

7. Are there stories or novels similar to the present novel under study? If yes, a comparison will be interesting.

8. If the author under study here through his or her award-winning novel has several novels, how about placing the award-winning novel in the midst of other novels of the author and make statements of similarities, difference, and continuity of the theme, etc.?

9. Can you also do the same in comparison to other Sahitya Akademi award winning novels in Tamil and other Indian languages?

10. Any influence of Indian Writing in English on this Sahitya Akademi award winning Tamil novel? Any influence of novels from other Indian languages, in terms of themes, characters, events, episodes, social purpose, etc. on the Sahitya Akademi award winning Tamil novel under consideration here?

11. Is this a novel on reality of life? Or is it purely an imaginary life with relevance for the readers? What age group is the target of the author of this novel? Does one need more than ordinary competence in Tamil to understand the story and themes of this novel?

12. Stylistic analysis of the author in terms of the novel under consideration.

13. Does the author deal with social issues such as Caste Differences, Deep-Rooted Superstitions, Dowry and Bribery? This may have been dealt with under another point listed above. If not, you could focus on this theme for a distinct paper.

14. How about Man – Woman relationship? Related themes?

15. Please check with the recent issues of Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) in which many novels in Indian Writing English are discussed. In particular, I would suggest that you log in and check the October 2017 and November 2017 issues, in which several novels written by Indian diaspora novelists and other Indian authors living in India are discussed in terms of content, narrative techniques used, character analysis, comparison between characters, comparison between novels, themes, etc.

“While analyzing events and characters she rises above the personal level and is quite objective. Gooneratne’s art of characterization is superb. A character can be presented in various ways, by a psychological analysis of character, by dialogue, by action and the reaction which is very closely connected with the main concern of the narrative. Yasmine Gooneratne characters are not types but are individuals with strongly defined personalities. Her style is characterized by lucidity, precision and control, quickness, confidence, eagerness and masterly control over vocabulary. It is as if her own life of action and drama has been transposed into the pattern of her novels.” J. Anitha <http://languageinindia.com/oct2017/anithagoonaratnenovels1.pdf>

### **Narrative Technique**

“Narrative technique is art of telling story. It is a style and it can be conveyed through pictures, songs, poetry, speech, fiction and non-fiction as well. Narrative techniques are the methods that authors use to tell their stories. Through the narrative techniques serves as a prism through which ideas are transmitted to the readers where narrator detains the past, holds the present and prepares readers for the future. It is considered as an important tool in presentation, interpretation and evaluation of the novel.”

“In Bhagat’s novel the reader can distinguish the narrative techniques into two as major narrative technique and minor narrative technique. Major narrative techniques are Narrative hook, First person narration, Stream of consciousness, Flashbacks, Autobiographical elements, Phases of life, and Prologue. Minor narrative techniques employed in the novels of Bhagat are Plot twist, Leitwortstill, MacGuffin, Interlinking, Narrative jump, Epistolary, Linear narrative, Images, Romantic comedy and Breaking the fourth wall. The reader can see all these narrative techniques present in both the novels *The Three Mistakes of My Life* and *Two States: The Story of My Marriage*.”

“One of the most important aspects of technique is the use of language in a novel. Language defines both the character and atmosphere. The spoken language is the mirror of the speaker and of the moment. Bhagat uses lucid narrative style and simple language. The reader can feel that Bhagat’s novels will hook the readers. He has used the technique Narrative hook (in the opening of a story that ‘hooks’ the reader’s attention so that he or she will keep on reading).” K. M. Keerthika <http://languageinindia.com/oct2017/keerthikatwonovelsbhagatfinal.pdf>

“Narrative techniques are the methods and devices that writers use to tell their stories, whether in works of literature, film, theatre or even oral stories. All literary devices can be analyzed as texts with narrative aspects that include storyline, character, narration, point of view, etc. Tan’s writing relies heavily on Memory Narrative, Storytelling, use of Myths, Prologues, Autobiographical elements, Language and Symbols.” V. Parameswari <http://languageinindia.com/oct2017/parameswaritwonovelsamytan.pdf>

“Technique is the means by which the novelist chooses to tell his/her story. The novel is like a living organism. It grows and leaves its impact on the readers and inspires the readers to think it and practice in his life. When a novelist imagines a story and works out its plot and characters, he starts the process of composing the subject matter. Experience, discovery, use of language all come together to bring forth the work of art. The writer has to write the story in a convincing manner. A pattern takes shape, it acquires a rhythm with words and the story starts developing. In other words, technique is ‘craftsmanship.’”

“In the novel *Jazz*, Pathos, First Person Narrator and Third Person Narrator, Jazz Music, Self-Fulfilling Prophecy, Story within a story and In Media Res are the techniques used by Toni Morrison. The techniques like Division of the chapter, italization of ‘L’, Structural Opposition, Time Organization, Red Herring, Flashback, and Plot Twist are used by Morrison in her novel *Love*.”

“One of the most important aspects of technique is the use of language in a novel. The language that the writer uses is made to yield larger meanings through conscious manipulations. Even the selection and arrangement of words is also conscious and meaningful. So, language defines both the character and atmosphere. The spoken language is the mirror of the speaker and of the moment. The author’s reporting speech builds up the atmosphere through its linguistic features including its tone, just as a character’s speech is revelatory of personality by its very style.” B. Selvalakshmi, <http://languageinindia.com/oct2017/selvalakshmiloveandjaztonimorrison.pdf>

In this volume of the series, the authors have dealt with different themes of literature in the selected novels. It is good to see that the authors have presented the contemporariness and the

universality of the novels taken for study. Social, political, gender-oriented and linguistic elements are discussed in detail, on a par with global research standards.

For the forthcoming volumes of the series, we accept articles on Sahitya Akademi Award-Winning novels from Tamil language and literature, discussing the different nuances of literature in the light of the contemporary literary theories and analyses. Every article should not exceed 20 pages in 1.5 - line space.

I take this opportunity to sincerely acknowledge my gratitude to my *Guru*, teacher, mentor and guide Prof. Dr. Saravana Selvan, Professor and Head, Department of English and Foreign Languages, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, for all the encouragement and help I receive and have received in my career. I am also thankful to the members of the Board of Editors of Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) who chose me to develop this series of volumes on Tamil novels. I also wish to extend my thanks to Bharathiar University, which is enshrined with the lofty motto “Educate to Elevate,” carrying the legacy of the great national visionary poet Subramania Bharathiar, for providing me an opportunity to serve the student community and the literary community with passion and dedication. I also congratulate the authors for taking up this challenging task and accomplishing it in the most effective manner.

This is a mission that I have undertaken to contribute something to the establishment of the Tamil language and its literature at the global level. It’s indeed my pleasure to seek your contribution for the same.

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