

Chapter 5

Sociolinguistic Study of Speech Acts in Re. Karthigesu's Novels

5.0 Introduction

As stated earlier, stylistic analysis is a method of linking linguistic forms through reader references to interpretation in a systematic and detailed way and thereby providing as much explicitness as possible for and against a particular interpretation of texts in a novel. As such, in this section, the speech events and acts created by Re. Karthigesu in his novels are scrutinized and the patterns and grammatical structures used in the speech acts are analyzed critically.

By observing patterns of speech acts as well the social significance of the characters (participants) involved and their actions, we are able to understand the characters better, their role relationship and how they relate to one another in a novel. Speech acts like other acts, change the world we live. They have effects on people and, in turn, make them do things. There are different kinds of speech acts practiced in the formal and informal domains of our day-to-day social functions such as *welcoming, introducing, requesting, promising, threatening, stating, suggesting, asking, challenging, contradicting* and so on. All these are shown in the diagram below:

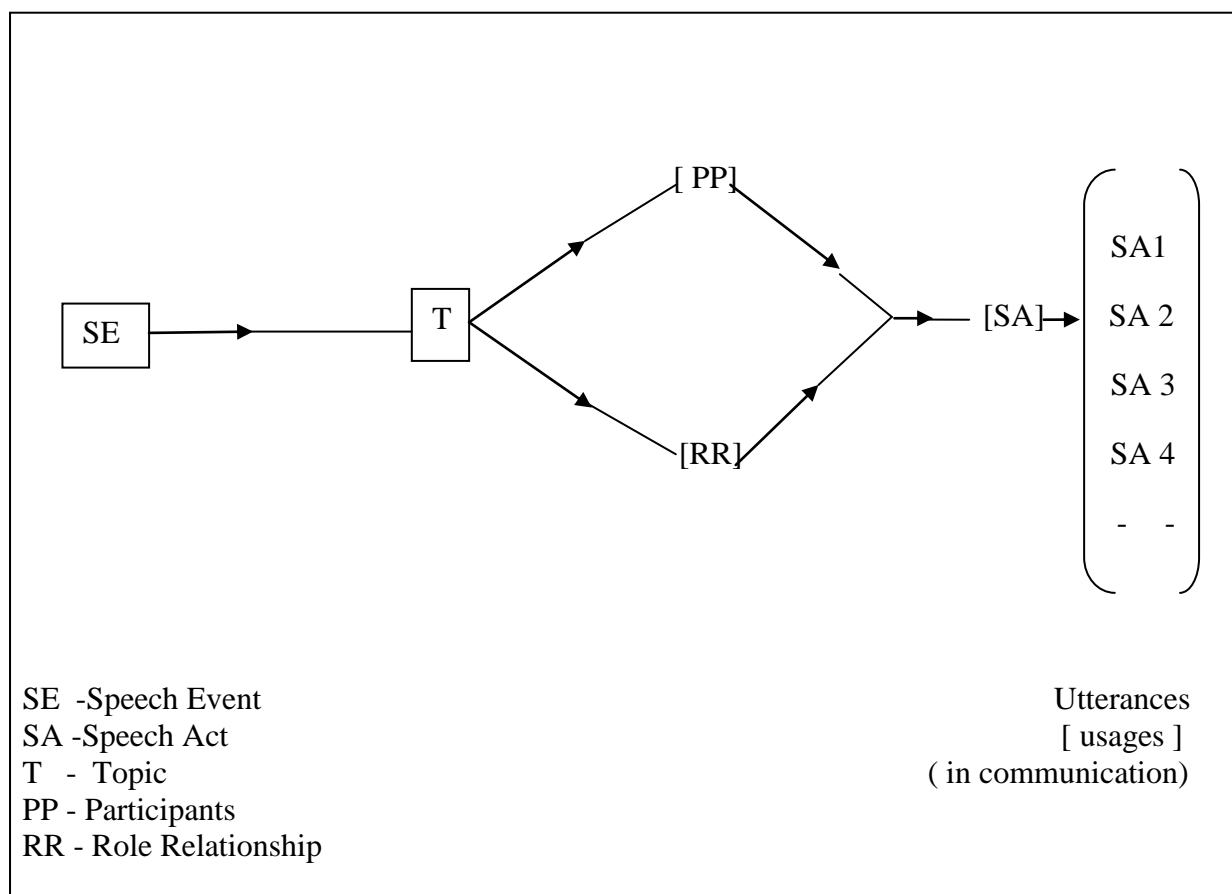


Diagram 5.1 :
Diagrammatic Representation of Speech Acts

5.1 Speech Acts in Re. Karthigesu’s Novels

In Re. Karthigesu’s novels there are several speech events and speech acts that could be identified. These speech events and speech acts found place in the novels with various stylistic features unique to the author. In this section attempts have been made to describe some of the speech acts found in Re. Karthigesu’s novels. For example in the following speech act in the novel *antima ka:lam* the author tries to bring to light that the younger generation of the middle class Tamils in Malaysia are either found to neglect their mother tongue or not preferring their mother tongue for use even in the informal contexts or situations. In the novel, Sundaram a retired secondary school

teacher wants to teach his grandson Prem to learn the Tamil language which happens to be the mother tongue of the child. One evening Sundaram and Prem go to the lake area nearby their house where Sundaram starts teaching Tamil to his grandson. In this speech event, the author creates three kinds of speech acts. In the first act Sundaram prepares his grandson to get ready for learning Tamil. So, the grandfather (Sundaram) asks his grandson whether he is interested in learning Tamil from him. When Prem (grandson) accepts his offer, he starts teaching him Tamil.

In the second act, the author shows the process of teaching a language to a child i.e. from very simple to little complex usages and structures in a graded manner. Normally teachers begin teaching their lessons from the known to unknown to the students. Sundaram too asks Prem, his grandson such questions - whether he knows any Tamil or not. After ascertaining that Prem knows only little Tamil, he starts teaching him the lessons one by one. Sundaram first starts using the informal language(spoken Tamil) at the beginning, and gradually switches over to the use of the standard written variety. He begins his lesson by asking Prem to tell his name in Tamil, '*un pe:ra eppaTic colluva? ate tamille sollu*' 'how do you tell your name? Tell it in Tamil' and then slowly introduces other grammatical structures and finally makes him to recite the first couplet of Thirukkural (Thirukkural is one of the ancient Tamil ethical literatures) which begins with *ahara mutala eluttella:m*

.....

At the end of the lesson Prem was able to recite a couplet from Thirukkural without any error and with correct pronunciation. This makes Sundaram really very much excited and happy over his grandson's proficiency achievement. Then he asks his grandson to recite what he has already learnt to him once, and later on recites to his grandmothers Janaki and Annam when they return home. Through these speech acts the author depicts the pleasure received by the learner's grandparents on seeing his language proficiency achievement.

Speech Event 5.1.1

Topic : Tamil Teaching - Learning (Socio cultural significance)
Participants : Prem and Sundaram
Role Relationship : Grandson and Grandfather
Speech Acts : **Ascertaining, expressing willingness, start teaching Tamil, accomplishing , rejoicing**

Grandfather : *Parama: ! ta:tta: unakkut tamil collikkuTukkiRen. kattukkiRiya:?(111)*
'Parama! Grandpa would like to teach you Tamil. Like to learn? '

Grandson : *I know how to speak Tamil*

Grandfather : *eppaTit teriyum?(112)*
'how do you know?'

Grandson : *My father taught me(113)*
(at that moment father thinks about his son)

Grandfather : *sari, enna collikkoTutta:r ungappa:?(114)*
'ok, what did your father teach you?'

Grandson : *my father always says “ po:Ta: maTaiya:!”(115)*

‘my father always says, “you stupid !”’

(ta:n ninaitta eNNam sariya:nate:)

‘(what grandfather thought was correct)’

Grandfather : *atella:m ve:Na:m parama:! na:n nalla tamil collitta:Ren, kattukkiRiya:?(116)*

‘Parama! you don’t need all that. I will teach you good Tamil, would you like to learn?’

Grandson : *yes*

Grandfather : *sarinnu collu pa:ppo:m(117)*

‘try to say ‘sari’ (sari means ‘yes’ in Tamil)

Grandson : *sari, ta:tta:.(118)*

‘yes, grandpa’

Grandfather : *sari, ippa un pe:ra eppaTic colluva?(119)*

‘ok, now how would you pronounce your name?’

Grandson : *my name is Prem (120)*

Grandfather : *ataiye: Tamilla collu. en pe:r Prem.(121)*

‘tell that in Tamil. My name is Prem’

Grandson : *en pe:r Prem !(122)*

'my name is Prem (grandson repeats after his grandfather in Tamil)'

pa:TTi enakku pasikkitu (123)

'grandma I am hungry'

pa:TTi enakku cokleT koTu(124)

'grandma! give me a chocolate'

ta:tta: enakkut tu:kkam varutu (125)

'grandpa! I feel sleepy'

Grandfather : *ippa parama:!
konjam kasTama:natu colRe:n kattukkiRiya:?(126)*

'now Parama! I am going to teach you a bit difficult one, like to learn?'

Grandson : *can*

Grandfather : *muTiyumnu collu(127)*

'tell, I can'

Grandson : *muTiyum ta:tta: (ta:tta: konjalai vantatu)(128)*

'can grandpa (he said 'grandpa' with love)'

Grandfather : *(si:r si:ra:ha ta:tta: tirukkuRaLaic collutal- pe:ran atait tiruppic collutal)(129)*

'(grandfather tells the thirukkural word by word – grandson repeats)'

(Thirukkural reciting)

Grandfather : *akara ... (130)*
'(first alphabet 'a' ...)'

Grandson : *akara(repeats)(131)*

Grandfather : *mutala(132)*
'first'

Grandson : *mutala ... (repeats)(133)*

.....
.....

Grandfather : *mutaRRe:. (134)*

'first'

Grandson : *mutaRe: (pronounces wrongly)(135)*

Grandfather : *mutaRe: illa mutaRRe: (136)*

'not mutaRe:pronounce as mutaRRe:.' (137)

'(as the grandson pronounces wrongly, grandfather corrects him)'

Grandson : *mutaRRe: ...(this time pronounces correctly)(138)*

Grandfather : *ulaku (139)*

'world'

Grandson : *ulaku (repeats)(140)*

(Prem could say the whole *kuRaL* correctly. Grandfather becomes very happy hugs and kisses his grandson affectionately)

(Later on Sundaram requests his grandson to repeat the whole *kuRaL* when he returns to their house to his grandmothers Annam and Janaki.

Indeed Sundaram wants to show them his achievement in teaching Tamil to his grandson.)

Grandson : *sari ta:tta:! ‘ akara mutala eluttella:m a:tti bagavan mutaRRe: ulaku’
collikka:TTi ciritta:n. ‘l’ alaka:ha vantu viluntatu. (141)*

‘o.k., grandpa! (he said the whole kuRaL correctly and then laughed. The ‘l’ sound was pronounced correctly)’

Grandfather : *sari, va:!
vi:TTukkup po:vo:m (Sundaram avasarama:ha elutal,
mayakkamuRRu kile: vilutal)(142)*

‘O.k. come! Let us go home’ (Sundaram tries to get up fast and gets fainted and falls down)

Grandson : *ta:tta:!
..... ta:tta: ! (143)*

‘grandpa!grandpa!’

*(pe:ran kataRutalintak kulantaiyai ippaTit taniya:ha viTTuviTTup
po:hiRo:me: enRa ninaippu anta nilaiyilum avarait ta:kkiyatu)(144)*

‘(grandson cried(grandpa!) ‘I am leaving this child all alone in this way - the grandfather thought at that moment.)’

(antima ka:lam , p:186-189)

This is one of the socially significant conversational moments in the story. In this extract there are only two characters (participants) : the grandfather and grandson. The **context** is very clear. It is all in direct speech with very little narrative intervention. Direct speech with inverted commas is found to be quite common in the writings of Re. Karthigesu.

This speech act reflects full of emotion as shown through the elliptical sentence structure, presented with exclamation marks and repetitions of some of the usages. For

example, grandfather expresses in a polite way to Prem and wants to know whether he would like to learn Tamil from him, “ *Paramaa ! ta:tta: unakku Tamil collikkuTukkiRe:n. kattukkiRiya:?(Paramaa! grandpa would like to teach you Tamil. Like to learn?)* In this speech act, Sundaram never uses the pronoun ‘I’(*na:n*) which shows more authority and power, instead he politely and affectionately says that ‘*ta:tta:*’ (grandpa– a kinship term) wants to teach (grandson) Tamil and we know that politeness is an important aspect of human social interaction. As Brown and Levinson(1987) suggest that politeness is a universal phenomenon, affecting linguistic and other social behaviours. We all wish that other people to be polite to us, kind to us and in turn we try to be polite to others by using contextually appropriate politeness expressions(with or without extralinguistic features, suprasegmental features, etc.). This is because: (a) we recognize the socio-cultural significance and the value attached to ‘I’ and (b) if we fail to pay due attention to the politeness aspect (in speech acts in such situations, we are either less likely or unlikely to be very efficient in getting things done(give and take aspect). This kind of social context has been depicted quite clearly and in a well formalized way through this speech act.

Speech Event 5.1.2

As mentioned earlier (in Chapter 3, in the model), the author prefers to use standard Tamil in conversations if the characters participating in it are educated people even though the characters are not of Tamil origin. This is observed in several speech events portrayed in Re. Karthigesu’s novels. To illustrate this kind of language use, a speech event extracted from the novel *antima ka:lam* which takes place in a hospital ward is discussed below. This speech event can be divided into three speech acts as follows:

First, a surprise visit by Dr. Ramli to Sundaram's ward with a young doctor and a nurse. On seeing Dr. Ramli, Sundaram requests him (the doctor) to relieve him from the new treatment which he proposes to do. Secondly, the doctor-patient conversation where the doctor tries to convince and explain (requesting) him (the patient) saying that Sundaram's health is improving steadily after the treatment (speech act : **explaining and convincing**) and finally Sundaram expresses his gratitude first and then apologizes for misunderstanding him (from the past experiences of Sundaram with Dr. Ramli). (speech acts : **thanking and apologizing**)

At first Sundaram appeals to Dr. Ramli to discharge him when he comes to see him in the ward. Dr. Ramli who always looks serious smiles at Sundaram at that moment. The smile brings a change in his appearance, and he starts explaining Sundaram that he is almost cured from his illness. But Sundaram was not so sure that he has recuperated, and so he was bewildered and astonished when Dr. Ramli instructed the nurse to prepare the necessary process to discharge him (Sundaram) from the hospital. Sundaram on hearing about his discharge starts feeling that Dr. Ramli is angry with him because of the past unpleasant happenings during the school days and then apologizes to him. To this Dr. Ramli says that they don't have to keep him in the ward because his sickness is cured.

One is able to notice here a more realistic approach and description of doctor - patient conversation. Through this depiction Dr. Ramli asks questions and explains the findings and observations of the treatment to Sundaram one by one. Finally Sundaram apologizes again to Dr. Ramli for having misunderstood him. Indeed what Sundaram thought was Dr. Ramli might take a revenge on him for punishing (him) during his school days.

Topic : Doctor's Visit (Dr. Ramli) – Treatment given to Sundaram
 Participants : Dr. Ramli, Sundaram, another young Doctor and a Nurse
 Role Relationship : Doctor –Patient –Supporting Staff
 Speech Acts : **Request, Direct, Expressing Apology and forgiveness, Explaining, Convincing**

Sundaram : *Doctor Ramli ! ennai inta sihiccaiyiliruntu viTTuviTungaL.(145)*
*'Doctor Ramli! please relieve me(**requesting**) from this treatment'*

Dr. Ramli : *e:n?(146)*
'why?'

Sundaram : *inta sihiccaiyil enta munne:RRamum iruppata:hat teriyavillai..... inta maruttuvamanaiccu:lalil enakku veRuppa:ha irukkiRatu. en vi:TTukkut tirumbiDa virumbuhiRe:n.(147)*
'I don't see any improvement in my health condition from this treatment I hate this hospital environment. I prefer to go back to my home.'

Dr. Ramli : *(failil e:to: eluti muTittal) – piRahu, “ nurse, inta patientai discharge seytuTTe:n. avarai vi:TTukku anuppuvataRka:na e:Rpa:TuhaLaic seyyungaL”(148)*
'Dr. Ramli writes something in the file – then, “ Nurse I have discharged this patient. Please make necessary arrangements to send him home. '
(Sundaram eNNippa:rttal: da:kTarin ko:bam – no:ya:Liyin e:ma:RRam – parita:ba uNarvu illa:mai)(149)
'(Sundaram thinks: doctor's anger – disappointment of the patient – no sign of sympathy)'

Sundaram : *Doctor Ramli, ennai mannittuviTungaL(please '**apologize**' me). ni:ngaL ko:bam koNDatupo:l terikiRatu?(150)*

Dr. Ramli : *illai na:n ko:bappaDavillai(151)*
'No, I am not angry'

Sundaram : *appuRam e:n ittanai viraiva:ha en ko:rikkaiyai e:RRukkoNDu seyaRpaduttini:rkaL?(152)*

'Then why did you accept my request and took action so fast?'

Dr. Ramli : *Mr. Sundaram! ungaLukku, na:ngaL in̄ta maruttuvamanaiyil seyyamuDintatu ve:Ru onRumillai (153)*

(no:y t:ivirama:hiviTTato: ena eNNi varuntatal)

'Mr Sundaram ! in this hospital we have nothing else to do for you'

(Sundaram worries that his sickness has become more severe)

appaDiyillai. ungaLai ingu vaittu na:ngaL sihiccai aLikka ve:NDiya te:vai onRumillai. ungaL no:y kuNama:hiviTTatu.(154)

'Not that. we don't have to keep you here for treatment. Your sickness is cured.'

Sundaram : *Da:kTar Ramli! enna solhiRi:rhaL?(155)*

'Doctor Ramli! what are you saying?'

Doctor : *ungaLukku ippolutella:m talai valikkiRata:?(156)*

'Do you have headache now a days?'

Sundaram : *avvaLava:ha illai(157)*

'not so much'

Doctor : *ne:RRu ungaL pe:rappiLLaiyin maraNac caTangukaLukkup po:ni:rhaLe:! *ataRkuria palam iruntata:?* mayakkam vantata:?(158)*

'did you have the strength to go and participate in your grandson's funeral ceremonies, yesterday? did you have the strength?did you have any giddiness?'

Sundaram : *illai (159)*

'no'

Doctor : *vayiRRukkumaTTal, va:nti?(160)*

'stomach upset, vomiting?'

Sundaram : *cila na:TkaLa:have: illai (161)*

'not for(quite sometime) some days'

Doctor : *cappa:Tu vayiRRil tangukiRata:?(162)*

'Does food stay in your stomach?'

Sundaram : *o:raLavu ca:piTa muTihiRatu (163)*

'can eat a little bit'

Doctor : *to:lin raNam?(164)*

'pain in your skin?'

Sundaram : *kuRaintuta:n irukkiRatu (165)*

'has decreased definitely'

Doctor : *kaika:l vali?(166)*

'pain in your limbs?'

Sundaram : *kuRaintirukkiRatu (167)*

'has lessen'

Doctor : *anRaikku cakkara na:Rka:liyai viTTu eluntu paDukkaivarai naDantu
po:ni:rkaLa:me:!(168)*

'That day you got up from your wheelchair and walked to your bed, it seems.'(Is that what happened?)

Sundaram : *a:ma:m (169)*

'yes'

Doctor : *appuRam, sihiccaiyil onRum munne:RRamillai enRu sonni:rhaLe:!
itella:m munne:RRam illaiya:?(170)*

'then, it seems that you said there is no improvement in the treatment! aren't all these improvements?'

*(tanakkuL 'munne:RRanta:n' enRu collikkoNDu uDalnilai kuRittu
eNNippa:rkkiRa:r)*

'(Sundaram says to himself that there is 'improvement' and thinks about his health condition)'

Sundaram : *uNmaiya:? Dr. Ramli!(171)*

'Is it true Doctor Ramli?'

Doctor : *.....ni:ngaL payamilla:mal sa:ta:raNa va:lkkaikkut tirumbala:m.
komoterapikku maTTum vantu po:ykkoNDirungaL. po:vataRkumun cila
maruntukaL koDukkiRe:n.(172)*

‘.....you can return to normal lifestyle without fear. you must come only for chemotherapy. I will give a few medicines before you leave from here.’

Sundaram : *(unnaippaRRi ennavella:m ninaitt:en Ramli!na:n mihavum koDuttuvaittavan)(173)*

‘(Ramli ! I was thinking so bad about you I am... really a very lucky person)’

ennai mannittuviTungaL Dr. Ramli. e:to: palaiya visayangkaLai ninaintu(174)

‘please forgive me Dr. Ramli. I was thinking of the past incidents’

Doctor : *parava:yillai, cinna visayam. na:n eppo:to: maRantuviTTe:n.uDambaip pa:rttukkoLLungaL, bai ...bai!(175)*

‘it’s alright, it is a small matter. I have forgotten it long time ago.....please take care of your health, bye.....bye!’

(antima ka:lam, p:308-311)

There are a number of such speech acts which take place in our everyday life. In this speech act the author has used standard Tamil compared to the previous one (cf. 5.1.1-grandfather and grandson) because both the characters are professionals and it takes place in a public place. There is no reduction of phonemes or morphemes in their usages (conversation). But there are six English words **doctor**, **nurse**, **patient**, **mister**, and **chemotherapy** which are normally used by people in such contexts (as transcribed into Tamil), as these are contextual and technical words/usages quite pertinent and needed.

The doctor –patient conversation looks very natural and more realistic both with reference to content and expression. In the first speech act the author creates a suspense in Sundaram and among the readers when ‘he told the nurse that he has discharged him’. Sundaram starts thinking that his sickness has become very severe, but later on by asking several relevant questions Dr. Ramli made Sundaram to realize that as a matter

of fact his health was improving from the treatment. For example, Dr. Ramli creates a confidence in Sundaram by saying “....*cakkara na:Rka:liyai viTTu eluntu paTukkaivarai naDantu po:ni:rkaLa:me:!*” (“...*from your wheelchair and walked to your bed it seems, is it not?*”)

The questions posed by Dr. Ramli to Sundaram are more direct unambiguous questions and needs only single word answers like ‘yes ‘or ‘no’ . For example, *talai valikkiRata:* (do you have headache), *vayiRRukkumaTTal, va:nti?* (any stomach upset, vomiting?), *kaika:l vali?* (any pain in your limbs?)

Speech Event 5.1.3

Radha, Sundaram’s daughter because of her misunderstanding with her husband Sivamani leaves for London to join her friend Henry, leaving her son Prem under the custody of her parents. After a few days , Radha makes a phone call to Sundaram to enquire about her son’s health. In this speech event the directive, commissive and expressive speech acts are very obvious.

- Topic : Personal Enquiry – seeking forgiveness – Expressing sentiments over phone
- Participants : Sundaram, , Janaki, Radha and Prem
- Role Relationship : father – mother –daughter – grandson
- Speech Acts : **Directive, Apologize, Commissive, Expressive**

[*ma:lai ve:Laiyil vi:TTil so:rntu paDuttirun̄ta:r Sundaram. appoḷutu telephone aTittatu*]

'[One day in the evening, as Sundaram was tired he was relaxing in his house. At that time the phone rang]'

Sundaram : *hello !(176)*

'Hello!'

Radha : *appa:!
Radha pesuRe:n (177)*

'Father! It is Radha speaking'

Sundaram : *Radha! eppaTimma: irukke:?
ippata:n ku:ppiTa manasu vantata:
unakku? (ko:bam tavirttu, kavanama:hap pesuhiRa:r)(178)*

'Radha! How are you? Now only you have the heart to call me? (he avoided anger and talked carefully)'

Radha : *London-la iruntuta:n pesuRe:n
appa:!. eppaTi irukki.nga?(179)*

'Father! I am calling from London. How are you?'

Sundaram : *e:to: irukkiRomma:!
(180)*

'We are so.. so..!'

Radha : *appaa, ungakiTTa pesave: veTkama:
irukku. enna manniccirunga ...
(181)*

'Father, I feel very shy to talk to you. please forgive me

Sundaram : *sari, sari. seyRata sejjittu ippa alutu enna puNNiyam. anga ni:
suhama: irukkiya:mma:?(182)*

'ok,ok. Done is done, what is the use of crying now. Are you fine over there my child ?'

Radha : *ingu suhama: irukke:m'pa:. Henry romba nallavar, anba:navar. ni:nga
avara romba virumbuvi:nga appa:!(183)*

'I am fine here. Henry is a good loving person. Father! you will like him very much.'

Radha : *Prem eppaTiyirukka:n appa:?(184)*

'How is Prem, father?'

Sundaram : *irkkiRa:mma:!
unnaikke:TTapaTi irukkiRa:n. e:kkattil avanukku
aTikkaTi uDambu ku:Ta sariyilla:ma po:yiTutu.(185)*

'so... so! He always asks about you. He is yearning for your love and gets sick frequently.'

Radha : *avanukku uDambukku ennappa:? (kural tal_utal_ulukkiRatu)(186)*

'What's wrong with his health, father? (her voice stammers)'

Sundaram : *cumma: irumal ka:yccalta:n. maru_untu va:ngik koTuttirukkiRo:m. sariya: po:yiTumnu nenaikkiRe:n.(187)*

'Just fever and cough. We have given him medicine. I think he will be fine.'

appuRam Premaik ku:ppiTTu pesina:L (188)

'then, she talks to Prem'

Prem : *'Why are you not coming to ta:tta:'s (grandfather's) house. I am sick. ta:tta:(grandfather) is also sick' (189)*

(pin amma: JanakiyuTan pesukiRa:L)(190)

'(then talks to her mother Janaki)'

Janaki : *ippaTi paNNiTTup po:yiTTiye: Radha, itu unakke: nalla: irukka: (191)*

'Radha what have you done, do you feel it is good for you?'

Sundaram : *e:mma:! e:ta:ccum onnunna: unna eppaTi na:nga toTarbu koLRatu? onno:Da telephone numbarak koDukkiRiya:?(192)*

'Radha! if anything happens how shall we contact you? Can you give us your telephone number?'

Radha : *ippa ve:Na:mba! pinna:la koDukkiRe:n. na:ne: ungaLukku aTikkaTi phone paNNit teri_njukiRe:n.(193)*

'now I do not want to give you father! I will call you frequently to find out.'

appa:! en Premai pattirama:p pa:ttukkunga! eppaTiyum reNDu ma:sattukkuL na:n van_u avana alaccikiTTu vantirRe:n'pa:. maRupaTi enna manniccikkunga, appa:! ni:ngaLum amma:vum enna mannicciTunga (194)

'Father! please take care of my Prem! I will come and take him back with me within two months. Please forgive me again, father! You and mother please forgive me.'

(antima ka:lam,p:157-159)

This is an informal telephone conversation among family members. It begins with Radha (making a call from London) and Sundaram, enquiring each other about their well being. Sundaram doesn't want to show his anger explicitly and so he is very **careful*** while talking to Radha over phone. He asks Radha very politely, 'eppaTimma: irukke:?' (how are you my child? Radha).

But his unhappiness towards his daughter's action is shown (as a long silence without contact) in the following phrase, 'ippata:n ku:ppiTa manasu vantata: unakku?' ('Now only you have the heart to call me'). But Radha avoids to answer this question directly (**maxim of relation**). Instead she says that she is calling from London. The listener or the reader has to wring out the meaning through the reply that was not relevant to the context. On the other hand when Radha asked her father about his health, he answers, 'e:to: irukkiRomma:!' (we are so... so...my child!). This is a real violation of cooperative principle (**maxim of quality**) used by the author. Sundaram is not revealing the truth to Radha. He is hiding his illness because he wants to go ahead with the conversation without any break or pause. But, the readers can understand that Sundaram was not keeping good health because of his illness.

[* There are two different speech styles distinguished by sociolinguists viz., 1. careful speech style and 2. casual speech style (Labov, 1967)]

Then, Radha expresses her apology (**Expressive**) sadly for leaving her son and leaving the country haphazardly. Then she wants to know about her son Prem (**Directive – request**) and talks to her son. After this, she starts talking to her mother. Janaki was not able to control herself expresses her anger overtly. Then Sundaram asks for her phone number to get in touch with her in case of any emergency need, but she refuses to give it to him. Finally, before putting the phone down Radha once again pleads to her mother to take care of her son. She promises (**Commissive**) to take him back to London within two months.

This is an informal context and characters (participants) are from the same family. So, the language used in this speech event is the informal variety of the spoken language. A number of phonemic reductions in the use of morphemes are found to occur in the usages.

For example,

<u>Written Tamil</u>		<u>Spoken Tamil</u>
pe:sukiRe:n	>	pe:suRe:n
‘u’	>	‘i’ and
‘ki’	>	‘Φ’ (deleted)

Radha talks in English with her son Prem. Prem reports (**Representative**) that he and his grandfather are sick and he asks (**Directive**) his mother when is she coming to his grandfather’s house.

It is possible to phrase speech acts in various ways for instance an apology can be expressed directly without using the term for ‘apologize’. In this speech event the speech acts created by the author are found to be quite clear and direct, and don’t confuse the readers or listeners at all. Moreover, they are all found to be quite natural as well.

Speech Event 5.1.4

Datok Gunasegaran and his friend doctor Sundaram are waiting at the Subang airport to welcome Datok Gunasegaran’s son Ananthan who is returning from the United States of America after finishing his masters program (M.A. program) in business administration studies in the Harvard University.

Topic : Welcoming son who is returning from overseas
Participants : Datok Gunasegaran, Doctor Sundaram, Ananthan
Role Relationship : father –son and their family friend
Speech Acts : **Declaration, Welcoming, Expressive, Directive**

[V.I.P. lanjin veLiye: poRumaiyilla:mal paTapaTattava:Ru, munnum pinnum naTantukoNDe: irunta:r Datok Gunasegaran]

[Datok Gunasegaran was walking up and down outside the V.I.P lounge without patience]

Datok Gunasegaran: *Stupid peoples! arai mani ne:ram late paNNi viTTa:rhaL!(195)*
'Stupid peoples!(they are late by half an hour!)

Dr.Sundaram : *poRumaiya: iruppa: Gunasekaran! vima:nanta:n vantu se:ntirucce:, ini enna?(196)*

'Be patient Gunasegaran! The plane has arrived, what else?'

(Datok Gunasegaran was imagining how the Harvard M.B.A graduate would look like. Passengers are getting down from the plane but he could not find his son Ananthan.)

Datok Gunasegaran *teriyuta: Sundaram?(197)*

:
'can you see Sundaram?'

Dr.Sundaram : *teriyalaye:! innum iRangalainnuta:n nenaikkiRe:n?(198)*

'can't see! I think he hasn't come down yet ? '

Datok Gunasegaran: *oru ve:Lai pilaiTTai ma:ttiyruppa:no:?(199)*

'may be has he changed his flight?'

Dr.Sundaram : *poRumaiya: iruppa:! pa:rppo:m! (200)*

'Please be patient! we wait and see!'

(from first class door through the entrance two flight stewards carried out a patient and put him in a wheel chair. Then a nurse pushed the wheelchair towards the exit entrance. Gunasegaran looked at him keenly.)

Datok Gunasegaran: *Sundaram ! atu ...? atu...! (201)*

'Sundaram! that ...? that...!'

Dr.Sundaram : *a:ma:, Gunasegaran! Ananthan ma:tiritta:n teriyutu!(202)*

'yes, Gunasegaran! looks like Ananthan!'

Datok Gunasegaran: *oo mai god!(203)*

'Oh my God!'

(Datok Gunasegaran wants to run towards the plane but an airport guard stopped him. Gunasegaran and Sundaram looked at in dismay. Then Ananthan comes nearer to them and smiles.)

Ananthan : *appa:!
ma:ma:!* (204)

'Daddy! Uncle !'

Datok Gunasegaran: *ennaTa: a:nanta:?
unakku enna a:ccu? e:n ippaTi?*(205)

'Ananthan what is this? What happened to you? What is all this?'

Ananthan : *na:n no:ya:Li appa:!
itai eluti ungaLukkella:m kalavarttai
uNDa:kka ve:NDa:mnu elutala!
ippa ni:ngaLe:
teriñjikiTTi:nga! (a:nantan punnahaitta:n)*(206)

'Father I am a patient! I didn't want to write all these and make you all sad! Now you can see it by yourself! (Ananthan smiles)'

Datok Gunasegaran: *no:ya:Linna:?
Enna no:y a:nanthan?*(207)

'What do you mean by patient? What sickness(you have), Ananthan?'

Ananthan : *da:kTar ma:ma:vukkuc
conna:l puriyum! muRRippo:na
nuraiyi:ral puRRuno:y!
Amerika da:kTarkaL kaiviTTa ke:s!
en kaTasi na:TkaLaik kalikka
ta:y_{na}:TTu maNNukku
van_tirukke:n
appa:!*(208)

'If I say to doctor uncle, he will understand! Chronic lung cancer! American doctors were not able to treat me! I have come to spend my last days in my motherland, father!'

(va:nattu ve:lihaL,p:152-153)

In this speech event Datok Gunasegaran and his family friend Dr. Sundaram are waiting to receive Gunasegaran's son Ananthan at the Subang airport who is coming back home after spending eight years in the Harvard University, U.S.A.. Datok Gunasegaran was very impatient and angry because the plane was late by half an hour and so he says , **"stupid peoples" (Declaration)**. Dr. Sundaram asks (**Directive**) him to be patient and tells him that the plane has safely arrived, *' poRumaiya: iruppa: gunasekaran!
vima:nanta:n van_tu se:rntirucce:, ini enna?'*. Datok Gunasegaran's love for his son is reflected through his utterance (cf. sentence 205).

Datok Gunasegaran's imaginations were shattered when he saw his son in a wheelchair as a (cancer) patient. He asks his son several questions in a nick of time. Ananthan replies saying that he is a cancer patient and wants to spent his last days in his home.

All the speech acts in this speech event are direct ones. Enthusiasm and eagerness of a father waiting to see his only son who is returning home after eight years has been portrayed in a natural way by this author. Disappointment and sadness of Datok Gunasegaran are reflected in the speech act, '*ennaTa: a:nanta:? unakku enna a:ccu? e:n ippaTi?*' (Ananthan! what is this? What had happened to you? Why like this?)'

There are code mixings in this conversation such as , 'stupid peoples', 'flight', 'Oh my god', 'doctor', and 'case'. These are all relevant words and phrases which help to have free flow of communication in the said context.

Speech Event 5.1.5

In the following event Suriya is returning from London to see his father who is very sick in the hospital. Suriya has arrived at the Subang Airport and before taking the connecting flight to Penang, he telephones his family to find out the health condition of his father . Poongkody, Suriya's girlfriend answers his call.

Topic : Personal Enquiry – seeking information – Expressing sentiments
Participants : Suriya , Poongody
Role Realtionship : Friends
Speech Acts : **Directive, Representative, Commissive**

[mutala:m terminalil pina:ngu 'flight' ai uRutippaDuttikkoNDu, pina:ngil tan vi:TTiRku Suriya phone seyhiRa:n]

[after confirming the flight to Penang at the first terminal, Suriya telephones his family at Penang]

Poongody : *Hello (209)*

'hello'

Suriya : *hello... ya:ratu? inge:....(210)*

'hello ... who is that? here

Poongody : *Suriya:, ni:ngata:na:? engiruntu pe:suRi:nga?(211)*

*'Suriya, Is it you ? Where are you calling from? '
(poongodiyin kuralta:n)*

'(Suriya confirms that it is Poongody's voice)'

Suriya : *poongody, n:iya:? K.L.la iruntut:an pesaRe:n. appa:vukku eppaTi irukku poongody? (Suriyavin kural paTapaTattatu)(212)*

'Poongody,Is it you? I am calling from K.L. Poongody! How is father?' (Suriya's voice was heard in haste.)'

Poongody : *onnum ma:RRamilla suriya:!ninaivu po:Ratum varatuma: irukku(213)*

'There is no change in condition Suriya! His consciousness fluctuates'

Suriya : *chandran enge:? amma: enge:?(214)*

'Where is Chandran? Where is mother?'

Poongody : *ella:rum a:spatrikku po:yiTTa:nga Suriya:. pine:ngle airporTukku na:nta:n vantu ungaLa pik ap paNNap po:Re:n (215)*

'All have gone to the hospital Suriya I will pick you up at Penang air port.'

Suriya : *sari. onbataraiikkella:m vanturu!(216)*

'Ok come there by nine thirty!'

Poongody : *sari Suriya! na:n ippave: puRappaTTu a:spatrikkup po:Re:n. ni:nga vantiTTa visayatta unga amma:kiTTa solliTTu ne:re: airporTukku vanturre:n (217)*

'ok Suriya! Now I will leave to the hospital. I will inform your mother that you have arrived and then I will go to the airport straight. '

Suriya : *Poongody...(tayangina:n) (218)*

'Poongody (he hesitated for a while) '

Poongody : *ennanga?..... (Poongody ka:ttirunta:L)(219)*

'Yes ? (Poongody waits)'

Suriya : *appa: nelame...romba mosama: Poongody?(220)*

'Is father's condition very serious poongody?'

Poongody : *(sollat tayanguhiRa:L).enna sollaTTum Suriya:? ni:nga vantu se:rra varaiyil avaru irukkaNumnu ve:NDikinga. avvaLavuta:n,(221)*

'(she hesitates to tell). What to tell Suriya? Please pray that he should be alive until you reach here. That's all.'

telephonai ka:til vaittava:Ru marattup po:na:n (222)

'With telephone over his ear Suriya becomes still'

Suriya:? (223)

'Suriya: ?'

Suriya : *pina:ngila pe:sikkuvo:m.(224)*

'Let us discuss in Penang.'

(te:Tiyirukkum taruNangaL,P:5-6)

In this informal telephone conversation between two friends we can see the three types of speech acts, *Representative, Directive, and Commissive* as grouped by Searle. Suriya telephoning from Kuala Lumpur and asking Poongody (**Directive**), "*Poongody, ni:ya:? K.L.la iruntuta:n pe:saRe:n. appa:vukku eppaTi irukku poongody? (suriya:vin*

kural paTapaTattatu) ‘ Poongody, you? I am talking from K.L. How is father, Poongody?) (Suriya’s voice was in haste.) Then Poongody says all in the family have gone to hospital and she would pick him from the Penang airport. Then Suriya requests her to come to the airport by nine thirty (**Directive**). Poongody says she would inform his arrival (**Representative**) to his mother and then she would go straight to Penang airport to pick him (**Commissive**).

The information wanted by Suriya was given in detail to enable Suriya to understand the situation well (**maxim of quantity**). Poongody also avoids giving too much information, at the same time does not want to hide anything from Suriya (**manner of quality**). So, she asks him at the same time to pray that his father would be alive until he arrives at the hospital. The utterances in this conversation are arranged in an orderly way in order to ensure that both the listener and reader understand the message correctly(**maxim of relation and maxim of manner**). So, the author has applied the cooperative principles in an adequate way that it helps to interpret the conveyed meaning.

This is a direct speech act and spoken Tamil is used in this speech event. Since Tamil is a diglossic language, people don’t talk as they write in the informal settings. Even though Suriya and Poongody are educated they use spoken Tamil in this context. There are phonological and morphological reductions found in these speech acts.

For example,

- irukku < **irukkiRatu** (it is)
- po:Ratum va:ratumaa < **po:vatum varuvatuma:ha** (fluctuates)
- onnum ma:RRamilla < **onRum ma:RRamillai** (no change at all)
- irukkaNumnu ve:NDikinga < **irukka ve:NDum enRu ve:NDikkoLLungaL**
(pray he is still alive)

Speech Event 5.1.6

Dr. Kathiresan joins the University Science of Malaysia as a new lecturer. After the staff meeting he goes to his office room first. Sometime later somebody knocks on his room door.

Topic : Personal information – Expressing sentiments

Participants : Dr. Kathiresan and Dr. Nordin

Role Relationship : University Lecturers in the same faculty

Speech Acts : **Commissive, Expressive, Declaration**

Dr. Kathiresan : *masuk (va:rungaL)...(225)*

'please come in....'

Dr. Nordin : *Dr. Kathiresan ! na:n ku:TTattil pe:siyatai oru ve:Lai tavaR:ahap purintukoNDirunta:l ennai mannittuviTungaL (226)*

'Doctor Kathiresan! In case if you have misunderstood what I said in the meeting please forgive me.'

Dr. Kathiresan : *appaTi illai Dr. Nordin. enakku entap pa:Dattilum viruppu veRuppu enbatillai. enakkuk kiTaitta pa:TangaLil enakku mahilccita:n! ungaL me:l na:n varuttappaTa entak ka:raNamumillai!(227)*

'Not that Dr. Nordin. I don't have any like or dislike for any subject. I am happy with the subjects that I got! I have no reason to get angry with you!'

Dr. Nordin : *ataRka:hac collavillai. inta dean enna:Lum ennaik kavilppatiRke: muyaRci ceyhiRa:r. nam tuRaiyil ni:ngal oruvara:ha a:hiviTTata:l atai ungaLukkuc collip po:hala:m enRuta:n vante:n!(228)*

'I am not telling that. Everyday this dean tries to put me down. Since you have joined as a faculty member in our department, I have come here to tell that.'

Dr. Kathiresan: *appaTiya:!
e:n dean appaTic ceyya ve:NDum? (229)*

'Is it so! why dean wants to do that?'

Dr. Nordin : *e:nenRa:l en me:l poRa:mai. na:n avarai muntikkoNDu munnukku vantuviTuve:n enRa bayam. na:num ivarum ite: palkalaikkalahattil paTittavarkaL. ivar me:le: uLLavarhaLaik ka:kka:y piTittu munnukku vantuviTTa:r. ivaratu paTTata:ri ma:NavarkaLin eluttukkaLait tiruTi a:rayccik kaTTuraihaL enRu patippittu inRu pe:ra:siriyar a:hiviTTa:r. ennaip pa:rungaL. appaTiye: innum virivuraiya:Lara:ha irukkiRe:n. inta dean ettanaip periya tiruTan enbataip po:happo:hat terintukoLvi:rhaL! (230)*

'Because he is jealous of me. He is afraid that I will overtake him. We both studied in this university. He came up by rubbing shoulder with people at the higher level. He stole his graduate students articles and published them as his research essays and has become a professor. Look at me. I am still a lecturer . As time passes on you will understand how crook this dean is.'

(su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam,p:47-48)

This conversation is presented in direct speech and no reporting clauses are found in it. There are no adjectives or adverbs to indicate high emotions as in the previous conversations. This conversation helps us to understand the feelings of a frustrated staff explaining to a new staff member with some narratorial intervention. The feelings of Dr. Nordin against the Dean is put subtly to Dr. Kathiresan. There is minimal use of spoken Tamil although it is an informal situation. There is fluency in the flow of Tamil language use. Dr. Kathiresan uses a Malay word, *masuk* to welcome Dr. Nordin.

There are three speech acts in this speech event viz., commissive, directive and expressive. Dr. Kathiresan welcomes (**Commissive**) Dr. Nordin to come into his room and Dr. Nordin asks for apology (**Expressive**) if Dr. Kathiresan misunderstood him in the meeting. Dr. Nordin attempts to create a wrong impression about the Dean to Dr. Kathiresan (**Declaration**).

5.2 Thought Act or Soliloquy

In everyday life the thoughts of others, unlike their speech, are never directly accessible to us. We can only infer what others might be thinking from their speech, action, facial expressions and so on. But in fiction the authors use exactly the same language type as those used to represent character speech to reflect the thoughts of the characters (Mick Short, 1996:311).

Mick Short classifies five types of thought presentation in novels which are widely used by authors:

- i) Narrator's Representation of Thought (NRT)

Example : He spent the day thinking.

- ii) Narrator's Representation of Thought acts (NRTA)

Example : She considered his unpunctuality.

- iii) Indirect Thought (IT)

Example : She thought that she would be late.

- iv) Free Indirect Thought (FIT)

Example : He was bound to be late!

- v) Direct Thought (DT)

Example: 'He will be late.'

However, the effects associated with two of the categories, **Direct Thought(DT)** and **Free Indirect Thought(FIT)**, turn out to be different from other thought acts. According to him **FIT** turns out to be the most common form of thought presentation in novels and direct thought presentations are used to present conscious, deliberative thought of characters by the authors.

In the analysis of fiction section of the corpus, there are many examples where access to a character's internal viewpoint results in the presentation of that character's internal state but without any indication that he or she is engaged in anything that could be described as a specific thought act.

Mick Short (1996:312) says that direct thought has the same linguistic form as the soliloquy in drama, which is notoriously ambiguous as to whether the character involved is thinking aloud or talking to the audience. However, in novels soliloquy is so often used to represent imaginary conversations at times which looks more realistic which characters have within themselves. In direct thought we don't see the use of reporting clauses or quotation marks as we see in the direct speech.

On the other hand, through **FIT** an author will bring a reader closer to the character in a novel, i.e. almost inside the character's head as he/she thinks, and sympathise with his/her view point. This close effect is more or less the opposite of the effect of free indirect speech which makes the readers feel distanced from the character and is often a vehicle for irony. Normally **FIT** mode contains a mixture of Indirect and Direct features. They are all in the past tense, the tense of the narrative, and they are characterized by third-person reference for the man thinking because the **FIT** form combines the position of the character and narrator (Mick Short,1996:315).

So, now we shall see the types of thought acts or soliloquies as depicted in Re. Karthigesu's novels. A number of thought acts or soliloquies are reflected through some of the characters in the novel or as those expressed by the author himself (by Re. Kartigesu). As mentioned in chapter 3 (p:86-87), the author uses the standard Tamil in

soliloquies. In many such instances simple sentences are used to express them. Philosophical thinking and interrogative sentences are also found in Karthigesu's thought acts. For example, in the novel *antima ka:lam*, Sundaram who narrates the story uses interrogative sentences to voice out his feelings.

kaTavule:! na:n seyya ve:NDiyataic ceytuvITTe:n. na:n ceytatu sarita:n:a? itu eppaTip po:y muTiyum enat teriyavillai . na:n ivarkaLukkup perita:? na:n oruvan avama:nap paTuvatum ve:lai ilappatum ivarkaLukku oru poruTTa:?(231)

(antima ka:lam, p: 90)

'Oh God! I have done what I can do. Is it right what I did? I didn't think it will end up like this. Am I important for these people? Is there any effect if I loose my job and get disgraced'

There are also **NRT** and **NRTA** widely used by Re. Karthigesu in his novels. For example in *antima ka:lam* (p: 184) Sundaram, the narrator talks within himself as follows:

enakkumta:n muTivu ceyyappaTTirukkiRatu. a:na:l na:n va:lntu ivarRaiyella:m anubavittup pa:rttuvITTe:n. enakku itu sa:yunga:lam. enakku itu anti. koñjam s:ikkirama:ha intap polutu sa:yave:NDum enRu irukkiRatu. atu parava:yillai.

a:na:l ito: ivanukku itu viTika:la:ip polutallava:? kilakku veLukkumpo:te: astamanama:? arumbile: curungip po:vata:?(232)

(antima ka:lam (p: 184)

'the final day is also fixed for me. I have lived so long and enjoyed everything. For me it is late evening. For me it is dusk. For me it is stated that the dusk has to come a bit early. It's alright.

But for him(Prem his grandson) is it not like the beginning of the day? As sun rises in the east, can the dusk also set in at the same time? Should the bud shrink before it blossoms?'

In this thought act the author has used interrogative sentences for which answers are not directly given. But one has to interpret and understand the situational meaning. Here, the author tries to create sympathy among the readers through his narrative technique which happens to be one of his styles of narration.

5.3 Use of Non –Verbal Communication

Man communicates with others using verbal and non- verbal expressions. For example, in Bharatam (an Indian classical dance) through the gestures of eyes alone a dancer can express various meanings or feelings. Similarly, in a discourse with the company of non-verbal features (like body language, extra linguistic features, gestures, etc.) may bring out quite an effective communication to the listeners and readers.

In a written or spoken discourse it is not sufficient to know what words mean in isolation. One must also have the ability to interpret them according to the socio-cultural context and situation because it involves not only linguistic knowledge but also human psychology and practical realities in life. We also convey meaning through our body movements, postures, looks and through our voices i.e. by intonation, rhythm, accent etc. . All of these may have paralinguistic functions, in other words, they can run alongside the words thus contributing to the total meaning of the communication, either by reinforcing the word meaning, or sometimes, contradicting it (Finch, 1998,p:136). Thus, in the analysis of all the selected novels of Re.Karthigesu, it is observed that the author has blended in a coherent manner the verbal discourse along with gestures which reveal many emotions and meanings.

Normally, in direct speeches the author uses inverted commas or completes it with a finite verb form like *enRa:r*, 'said', *ku:rina:r*, 'told', and so on. But in the following context, the character Arumugam in the novel *su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam* asked the Inspector angrily what mistake did he do and why did they handcuff him. When the Inspector explained to him about the new law for child abuse the anger in him disappeared and fear was seen in his face - *vi:Ra:ppu maRaintu maruTci terintatu*. When the inspector wanted to put him and his sister in jail for abusing Kathiresan, Arumugam put his head down - *talaikuninta:r* and apologized to the inspector.

Conversation:

Topic : Investigation

Participants : Arumugam, Inspector

Role Relationship : Accused – Investigator

Speech Acts : **Threatening, Accusing, Apologizing, Pleading**

Arumugam: “*na:n enna kuttam paNNune:nnu enna ippaTi velangu po:TTukkoNDa:ntinga?*” *enRu a:rumugam vi:Ra:ppa:hak ke:TTa:r.* (233)

‘what mistake did I do and why did you bring me here with a handcuff? Arumugam asked with an angry tone.

Inspector: *un paiyanap po:TTu aTicci cu:Tu vacciya:?(234)*
“*Did you beat your son and burn him?*”

(The inspector showed him photos of Kathiresan with burn wounds.)

Arumugam: *a:rumugam muRaittup pa:rtta:r. “enna meraTTa:tinga! en piLLai ka:su tiruTina:n. aTicce:n. atu kuttama:?”* (235)

‘arumugam stared at him .! what is it? Don’t threaten me? I beat my child because he stole the money. Yes , I beat him. . Is it wrong?’

Inspector: “*..... piLLaic cittiravataik koTumaikku etira: putusa: caTTam vantirukku. unna anju varusham uLLat taLLa muTiyum. teriyuta:?(236)*

“.....there is a new law enforced now for child abuse. Can put you in jail for five years. Do you know that?”

Arumugam: *arumugattin kaNgaLil vi:Ra:ppu maRaintu maruTci terintatu.(237)*

‘Anger in Arumugam’s eyes disappeared and he was frightened very much’.

Inspector: *rombap pe:sina: unno:Ta ce:rntu kathire:sanaik
koTumappaTuttinatukka:ha un tangacci
me:layum ke:s po:TTu uLLukku taLLiTuve:n!”
enRa:r(238)*

*‘if you talk too much I will put your younger
sister also in lock up with you for torturing
Kathiresan’ said.*

Arumugam: *“talaikuninta:r. appuRam conna:r : “teriya:map
paNNiTTe:n. enna manniccu uTRunga aiya:.
kuTumbattak ka:ppa:ttunga sa:r!” enRa:r.(239)
(su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam, p:81-82)*

*‘he put down his head. Later he said. I did this
not knowing the consequences. Please forgive
me, sir. Please help my family sir!’he said.*

The highlighted words, *vi:Ra:ppa:hak* ‘with anger’, *muRaittu* ‘having stared at’,
vi:Ra:ppu maRaintu maruTci, ‘anger disappeared and fright appeared’ and
talaikuninta:r, ‘put down his head’ are all non- verbal expressions.

When Arumugam (*muRaittu pa:rta:r*) stared at the Inspector he is trying to say
that he has all the right to punish his son for stealing money. When the Inspector
threatened him with evidences that he and his sister abused Kathiresan, he put down his
face ‘*talaikuninta:r*’ – he felt ashamed, and realized his mistake and finally apologized
and pleaded to him.

But, in *antima ka:lam*,(p: 253), the stare that Sivamani gave his mother brings out a
different connotation:

Sivamani avaL muhattai muRaittup pa:rtta:n. “ni:ta:n iteRkella:m ka:raNam!” enpatu po:la anta muRaippu iruntatu.(240)

‘Sivamani stared at his mother’s face. The stare indeed meant, that she was the root cause for all these problems.’

In this context , Sivamani first accuses this mother. Then, Sivamani wanted to give his mother in-law (Janaki) some money for his son’s (Prem) medical treatments but she turned her face without responding him directly (*Janaki muhattait tiruppik koNDa:L*), as Janaki was quite angry with Sivamani regarding what all have happened.

The gestures as revealed by the facial expressions and body movements of the characters in fictions envisage sentimental feelings such as anger, love, friendliness, accusation, sadness, happiness of the characters concerned. This in a way helps the readers or listeners to understand the progression of the discourse and the personality of the interlocutors involved well in them.

5.4 Communicative Act : Performed Through Letter Correspondences

Language is a tool for communication used or performed in various ways in our day to day activities. Writers, especially fiction writers tend to use various speech acts to make sure the incidents created by them become more realistic and appropriate in the free flow of their story. In Re. Karthigesu's four novels, one of the distinctive stylistic features that has to be highlighted is the use of letter writing (letter correspondences) as a communicative act as mentioned by Geoffery (1998:38) to convey the intention to communicate indirectly, in written form. All the letter correspondences found in these novels are informal ones.

In total six letters (in the form of letter writing) are identified in the four novels of Re. Karthigesu for this analysis. All these letters were written in the letter writing format except the letter mentioned by Dr. Kathiresan which was in the form of a note scribbled in a small piece of paper without mentioning the name and address of the sender. The table below presents details about who wrote the letter, to whom it was written etc.

**Table 5.1:
Communication Through Letters**

No.	Name of the novel	who writes	to whom	pages
1.	aṅtima ka:lam	Radha(daughter)	Sundaram (father)	95 -97
2.	te:Tiyirukkum ka:langaL	Saminathan(father)	Suriyamoorti (son)	104-113
		Suriyamoorti(as student)	Professor J.Hamilton	155 - 156
		Professor J. Hamilton	Suriyamoorti	203 -204
3.	va:nattu ve:lihaL	Gunasegaran (friend)	Tunku	104 -106
		Tunku	Gunasegaran	106
4.	su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam	Saratha (mother)	Dr. Kathiresan (son)	26-27, 58

Although all are informal letters, the author has used standard Tamil in these letters, and spoken Tamil is not used at all. In these speech acts letters, one can observe the application of cooperative principles as classified by Searle (cf. chapter 2, p:58).

When we do something wrong knowingly, we dare not admit it or say it directly to those whom we love very much. But at the same time we may tell it indirectly or write a letter to convey our apology or regret for our wrong doing. This kind of act is clearly portrayed by Re. Karthigesu through Radha in *antima ka:lam*. Because of the misunderstanding with Sivamani (her husband) Radha wants to part with him and leave her son in the custody and care of her parents in order to join with her friend in London. So, Radha writes a personal letter and keeps it in Sundaram's house and leaves to London without telling anything else to her parents or son. Radha expresses her apology and requests them to forgive her for leaving the house suddenly at night.

*ippaTi kaTitam eluti vaittuviTTu iravo:Tu irava:hap po:vatu,
atilum en anbu mahanai viTTup po:vatu enakku veTkama:ha
irukkiRatu. a:na:l enakku ve:Ru valiYillai. ennai
mannittuviTungaL. (requesting Apology) (241)*

'I really feel ashamed for leaving my loving son and parents at night after writing this letter. But I don't have any other alternative. So, please forgive me.'

(antima ka:lam, p : 95)

Further, she complains that her husband made her life a hell, ' en kaNavar en va:lkkaiyai narakama:kivitta:r' and used her as a money producing cow, ' paNam kaRakkum ma:Ta:ha naTattat toTangiviTTa:r' (**Declaration**) . Before closing the letter she again apologizes to her parents, and promises to them that she will come and take her son within two months, to London.

In *te:Tiyirukkum taruNangaL* Saminathan, Suriyamoorti's father wrote a long letter(in three pages) of advice to his son. In this letter he declares that Suriya is his son but not born to Parvathi.

*ni: en piLLaita:n suriya:! saminathan – parvathi piLLai alla!
a:na:l saminathan – sellamma:vin piLLai!(242)*

(te:Tiyirukkum taruNangaL,p:108-109)

*'you are my child Suriya! not Saminatahan –Parvathi's child!
but Saminathan –Sellammah's child! '*

Saminathan confirms this by asking Suriya to see his face in the mirror to notice his resemblance with his grandfather and his physical features. On the other hand, the letters written by Suriyamoorti and Professor J. Hamilton are found to be more formal, and no emotions are shown in them. Professor J. Hamilton just expresses his condolences to Suriya about his father's sad demise,

a:lnta anuta:bangaLai terivittukkoLhiRe:n (243)

'my deepest condolences '

(te:Tiyirukkum taruNangaL, p:203)

In this letter the author has used standard Tamil which brings out the maturity and experience of a learned person like Professor J.Hamilton. Similarly in *va:nattu ve:lihaL*, Gunasegaran a law student writes a very formal letter to Tunku dated 29, November 1950. There in he expresses his thanks for introducing a good friend in London and **promises** indirectly, '*ungaL anaivarin nambikkaiyaiyum pa:la:kka:mal na:n paTittu munne:Ruve:n'*

In *su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam* a short letter written by a mother was sent to her son by mail. Neither the address of the sender of the letter nor the signature of the sender of that letter is found in it. The earlier letters sent by the same person were thrown out after reading by Dr. Kathiresan. However, he keeps the last letter in order to show it to his well wisher Mr. Murugesan (his primary school teacher). By reading this letter one can feel the love of a mother who is yearning to see her son before she dies. It goes as follows:

en kaNNe;,

'oh dear'

evvaLavuv vaLarntuviTTa:y? un ninaiva:ha irukkiRe:n. enna:l ta:La muTiyavillai. na:Lukku na:L... oru na:L settuviTuve:n. ataRkumun unnai orumuRai pa:rkkave:NDum. a:na:l innum antat tairiyam varavillai. un muhattaip pa:rttu eppaTi na:n mannippuk keTkappo:hiRe:n? teriyavillai. teriyavilai. nanRa:ha iru. en a:sihaL. (244)

(su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam, p:26-27)

'you have grown so tall? I am always thinking of you. I can not stop it. Day after day one day I will die. Before that I must see you at least once. But until today I don't have the courage to do so. How shall I face you and ask for apology? I don't know. Don't know. Have a prosperous life. My blessings to you.'

The feelings of the characters are elaborated and well represented by the author of these novels in a realistic way but at the same time the messages are conveyed in a more polite and pleasing manner.

5.5 Conclusion

Speech acts which are performed through the medium of language are intended to accomplish something, whether straightforward acts of informing, requesting and directing or the more complex ones of giving pleasure and warning (Geoffery.F:168). As such, in Re. Karthigesu's social theme based novels it is noted that there are several kinds of such speech acts presented both in direct and indirect forms.

There are only a few formal speech events in these novels. For example in the novel *su:ta:TTam a:Tum ka:lam* there is only one formal speech event that is when Dr. Kathiresan reports for duty as a lecturer to the Registrar and the Dean of the School of Communication in the University of Science Malaysia(p:21). In the novel *antima ka:lam* a formal investigation was carried out by the Deputy Director of Education regarding a rape case in the Headmaster's office. In this formal event Sundaram, Mr. Talib, the headmaster of the school, Ramli, the student involved in the case and his father Datok Yusof (p:82-87) are found to use standard Tamil. In the other novels formal speech events are not found to occur. As mentioned in the model in chapter 3 (phase 3 and 4), in formal speech acts even though the characters are non Tamilians and because they are all from higher social strata and educated they use more polite expressions and standard Tamil in their conversation.

On the other hand, in these novels there are a number of informal speech events which contain at least two speech acts. These speech acts involve a minimum two characters - family members, friends, common people..... . These speech events are quite appropriate to the situations, and speech acts are carefully created by the author. As discussed in the model, the characters use spoken Tamil even though they are highly educated. Emotions are expressed through words to show love, anger, dislike and so on

(cf. for examples in 5.1.1-5.1.6). Phonological and morphological reductions are abundant when the characters show various emotions during the speech act situations (cf. 5.1.3).

Re.Karthigesu also has used thought acts or soliloquy technique when the character is in real distress (cf. 5.4). In thought acts we find the use of several interrogative utterances, use of simple sentences and quotations drawn from different ethical and religious literatures etc.

In all these novels, letter correspondence (process of letter writing) is used as a means of communication by the characters. For example, a daughter writing an informal letter to her father; a father writing a letter to his son; Gunasegaran writing a letter to Tunku and Tunku sending a short reply ; Professor J.Hamilton writing a letter to Suriyamoorti (a student) and later on Suriyamoorti replies; and the letter written by a loving mother to her son whom she left when he was a mall boy.

On the whole, the speech events and acts found in Re. Karthigesu's novels display both authenticity and reality. Re. Karthigesu's language varies according to the social strata of the characters and social variables such as, education, gender, age, profession as described in the model in chapter 3 and it also reflects the Malaysian culture well.