

ABSTRACT

This is a study that investigates the nativization of rhetorical strategies in three Malaysian short stories. Based on a framework for the analysis of nativization of rhetorical strategies by Kachru (1986), this study investigates rhetorical strategies such as native similes and metaphors, transfer of rhetorical devices for “personalizing” speech interactions, translation of proverbs and idioms, culturally dependent speech styles and syntactic devices. These strategies are investigated to determine the types of cultural presuppositions drawn upon by the writer to create innovative linguistic realizations that exist in a non-native English context.

The data for this study consists of three short stories by a Malaysian English writer. First, the data is analyzed to identify the types of nativization of rhetorical strategies that occur across the three short stories. Then, an interpretative analysis based on Strevens’ (1987) framework is made to determine the types of cultural presuppositions drawn upon by the writer to achieve the nativization of rhetorical strategies.

The study found that the writer used each rhetorical device according to its relevance to the context. Unless the device served a function, such as to convey native cultural thought patterns, social values, ancient wisdom, aid characterization or provide cultural roots to the non-native English text, the writer avoided using such a device. It was also observed that the most common cultural presuppositions that influenced the nativization of rhetorical strategies were from the domain of “philosophy and religion”, “notions of government”, “literature” and “society’s ultimate reality.”