CHAPTER 3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will deal with four broad areas. The first part of the chapter will focus on the aims of the study. The second part will deal with the definition of terms used in the study. The third part will discuss the research approach, the source of data and method of analysis. The fourth part will focus on the limitations of the study.

3.1 Aims of the Study

This study will look at nativization processes used by K.S Maniam in three short stories. (The term "nativization" will be defined in detail in the next section). The linguistic innovations and creativity evident in non-native writing or the new literatures in English that are emerging from Asia and Africa reveal an attempt by the writers of these literatures to produce meaning in a new context. Using a transplanted variety of English that has developed through colonization and geographical distribution, these writers have produced and continue to produce a body of writing that has come to be known as "non-native literatures" or "contact literatures" or "new literatures in English." Their efforts have made non-native writing a vibrant literary tradition in English and it must be viewed as distinct from already existing native varieties (Kachru, 1986).

One of the ways to view this difference or distinctness is to look at the manner in which the transplanted variety of English is shaped and moulded to convey native thought patterns and concerns that exist in a new sociolinguistic context. This altered meaning system can be viewed through an examination of the various linguistic innovations employed by the writer. As remarked by the renowned Nigerian writer
Chinhua Achebe in Kachru (1986: 11), "...I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings."

In this study, I will focus on an examination of this "altered" state of English by looking at the nativization processes used by K.S Maniam from the perspective of rhetorical strategies as outlined by Kachru (1986) in his chapter entitled The Bilingual's Creativity And Contact Literatures. Kachru's framework does not subscribe to any theory as such but it echoes the post-structuralist notion espoused by Jacques Derrida in Barry (1995) that the text should be viewed as fluid and open to social and linguistic interpretations beyond the text. Furthermore, Derrida states that in modern times there has been a break or "decentring" of our intellectual world from perceiving the West as the norm or centre of all things. Instead, there has been a gradual progression towards viewing the universe as "decentred" or not fixed (Derrida in Barry, 1995). One of the ways of exploring this altered or "decentred" world in relation to non-native literatures is through an examination of the diversity, hybridity and difference inherent in the work by scrutinizing the nativization processes used by the writer. Kachru's framework for the analysis of rhetorical strategies used by a non-native writer consists of five categories for analysis, which are:

1) native similes and metaphors
2) transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions
3) translation of proverbs and idioms
4) culturally dependent speech styles
5) syntactic devices
Each category will be defined and exemplified in the next section.

The purpose of this study is to determine the type of linguistic and cultural resources drawn upon by K.S. Maniam, a Malaysian writer of Indian origin who chooses to write in English. By virtue of his cultural identity and linguistic choice, K.S. Maniam would have to make a wide range of stylistic experimentations to capture "the various native cultures, traditions, customs, thought patterns and social concerns" (Sridhar, 1983: 302) that exist within the Malaysian context. Through an analysis of the nativization of rhetorical strategies evident in three short stories by Maniam, I intend to observe the effects these processes have on his expression of culture.

The old monolingual model for the description and analysis of a literary work is inappropriate for non-native writing because it caters exclusively for works of literature in English produced within a monolingual, monocultural productive and receptive environment. On the other hand, non-native writing or new literatures in English from Asia and Africa are coloured by the bilingual's creativity and this is manifested in an enriching mixture of Western and non-Western resources unique to a particular culture (Kachru, 1986). These strategies used by the writer have implications for our understanding of the bilingual's creativity and thought processes.

In the next section I will define and discuss the common terms used in this study.

3.2 Definition and Discussion of Terms

The terms below, adapted from Kachru (1986) are used in this study:

(a) nativization

(b) nativization of rhetorical strategies
(c) native similes and metaphors
(d) transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions
(e) translation of proverbs and idioms
(f) culturally dependent speech styles
(g) syntactic devices

3.2.1 Nativization

According to Pandharipande (1987: 149),

In the context of English, the term 'nativization' refers to the changes which English has undergone as a result of its contact with various languages in diverse cultural and geographical settings in the Outer Circle of English which includes South Asia, South East Asia, West Africa, Malaysia etc.

(Although Malaysia is part of South East Asia, Pandaripandhe makes a distinction between the two in her definition of "nativization").

Since the process of nativization of English occurs at various linguistic levels, native speakers have traditionally viewed nativizations with skepticism and ambivalence. Instead of viewing them as a "difference", native speakers, especially those who are purists in nature, choose to view them as a "deficiency" (Kachru, 1986).

To make a distinction between nativization processes that are truly authentic and therefore valid, as opposed to a "mistake", one should keep in mind that nativizations are productive, innovative and contain elements of the new "un-English" linguistic and cultural setting in which the English language is used. They also have typical variety specific features and communicative strategies that are in keeping with a particular non-native speech community. A "mistake" on the other hand, cannot be justified with
reference to the sociocultural context of the non-native variety in which it occurs and also, it does not reveal any linguistically productive innovations (Kachru, 1983).

3.2.2 Nativization of Rhetorical Strategies

Under this process of nativization, the focus is on rhetorical devices that the non-native writer uses which are close or approximations of rhetorical devices from the first language. These strategies include similes and metaphors, rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions, proverbs and idioms, culturally dependent speech styles and syntactic devices (Kachru, 1986) and may be consciously or unconsciously devised and transferred to English. (Each rhetorical strategy will be discussed in detail in the following sections).

I will model this study on Kachru's (1986) framework for the analysis of nativization of rhetorical strategies. This framework was selected for certain reasons. Firstly, as pointed out by Fairclough (1992), the interpretation and explanation of a text is concerned with the relationship between a text and the social context in which it was produced. Therefore, the link between text and social discourse is very important. However, previous models for analysis failed to take into account the bilingual non-native writer's social context. These studies were based on the monolingual Western-Judeo Christian heritage and failed to take into account linguistic innovations that are a part of a non-native variety of English (Kachru, 1986).

In non-native literatures, the writer's creativity introduces a nativized thought process and culture, for example, Nigerian, Indian, Malaysian and so on. These processes and patterns do not conform to a Western model and therefore, a new model for analysis
is required. Kachru's model for the analysis of rhetorical strategies is especially appropriate because a number of strategies that work together are examined. This model treats each rhetorical strategy as a holistic entity that is a part of a text. By examining and analyzing each strategy, we can gain new insights into the linguistic and cultural resources drawn upon by the non-native writer to produce linguistic innovations that capture nativized thought patterns and culture.

In Malaysia, English has lost its position of colonial pre-eminence but it has secured a place as a second language. Fernando in Lim (1994) has stated that the Malay language is used by more than a hundred million people in South East Asia and English has never been and will probably never be able to reach such a status in the region. However, there exists a steady stream of Malaysian writers who still choose to write in English like Fernando, Maniam, Lee Kok Liang and others. According to Lim (1994), in nations where individual experience is almost always ethnic based, the development of a non-ethnic based identity may threaten valued communal bonds and beliefs. In spite of that, non-native writers like Maniam choose English to write novels that "examine immigrant cultures in a period of modernization, that signifies assimilation into quasi-Westernized, state controlled national cultures" (Lim, 1994: 138).

The effect of this is that the non-native writer would have to represent multiple languages, cultures and thought patterns. In the case of K.S. Maniam, there are three languages interacting within his short stories and they are Malay, English and Tamil, each carrying the load of cultural and linguistic presuppositions inherent within them. A native English user who is unfamiliar with these innovations will have to make new efforts to gain a fuller understanding of these linguistic innovations that reflect a world-
view that is distinct and perhaps never before encountered. This is largely due to the rhetorical strategies used by the non-native writer, which shifts the expected historical and cultural milieu of English literature from conventional Greek and Roman wisdom to Asian and African myths, legends, folklore and traditions (Kachru, 1986).

3.2.3 Native Similes and Metaphors

One of the problems faced by the non-native writer in English is in conveying the cultural milieu in which a particular action takes place. Since literary forms are very often determined by culture, writers often find themselves struggling to convey a particular cultural reality to their audience so that the authenticity of a literary work is preserved (Parthasarathy, 1987). Instead of depending on similes that are timeworn, cliched and more importantly, unreflective of a non-native culture, the non-native writer evokes multifaceted modes of feeling and thinking by referring to their mother tongue. Examples of native similes and metaphors include "like a bush-fire in the harmattan", "like a yam tendril in the rainy season", "like a lizard fallen from an iroko tree", "like pouring grains of corns into a bag full of holes" (Kachru, 1986: 167).

3.2.4 Transfer of Rhetorical Devices for "Personalizing" Speech Interactions

Some non-native writers use rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions. This is especially evident in religious texts and epics that speak of gods and goddesses. In these texts, the non-native writer tries to link the past with the present by providing "cultural roots" to English. They do so by transferring rhetorical devices for contextualizing and authenticating speech interactions. These rhetorical devices may
appear empty or meaningless to those who do not share the cultural and linguistic presuppositions of the non-native writer. However, to the non-native writer, they are essential because they contextualize a text and provide a link to the past. Examples of transfer of rhetorical devices for “personalizing” speech interactions include “our people have a saying”, “as our people say”, “it was our fathers who said” and “the elders have said” (Kachru, 1986: 167).

The effects of such a strategy are that it not only provides “cultural roots” for people who live in African and Asian contexts, but also preserves the sense of orality of the discourse. This is important because it conforms to the rich tradition of oral literature that is characteristic of most Asian and African cultures. Furthermore, this rhetorical device also affects the mood of the text. For example, in a religious text, when references are made to gods and goddesses, the mood of the writing can be transformed, hence achieving a reverent tone.

3.2.5 Translation of Proverbs and Idioms

When a non-native writer chooses to use proverbs and idioms, which are translated from his or her mother tongue to English, the literary work takes on the tint of the non-native culture. The translation of proverbs and idioms has the ability to aid characterization, bring to light conflicts, mediate between authorial comments and description and sharpen the presentation of social values (Lindfors, 1963). An example of such a translation is evident in the speech of Okonkwo from Achebe’s Things Fall Apart (1966) who says, "I cannot live on the bank of the river and wash my hands with the spittle,” “if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings”, and "a person who chased
two cats at a time would lose one" (Kachru, 1986: 168). Here, it is evident that Achebe has managed to convey the wisdom and social values within the Nigerian context by translating proverbs and embedding them within the literary work.

Idiomatic expressions are also translated from the first language to convey certain shades of feeling and meaning that are distinct to a non-native writer's particular worldview. For example Raja Rao's "a crow-and-sparrow story (for cock-and-bull story)", "a palm-width of land", "to beat one's mouth and shout", "to stitch up one's mouth", or Narayan's "If I hear your voice, I'll peel the skin off your back" (Sridhar, 1983: 296).

By using proverbs and idiomatic expressions from the mother tongue, the non-native writer has successfully avoided uniform expressions (e.g. "deaf as a post") and other familiar expressions that fail to bring to life non-native thought patterns that are grounded within the Asian and African context.

3.2.6 Culturally Dependent Speech Styles

Each non-native culture has speech styles that are distinct to its context. One of the speech styles used is that of the rambling village storyteller which is distinguished by an earthy folk style. This style is characterized by occasionally putting questions to the audience and making references to the audience whose presence is acknowledged by the storyteller. An example of this style can be seen in Ngugi's *The River Between* (1965: 1),

A river flowed through the valley of life. If there had been no bush and no forest trees covering the slopes, you could have seen the river when you stood on top of either Kameno or Makuyu. Now you had to come down. Even then you could not see the whole extent of the river as it gracefully, and without any apparent haste, wound its way down the valley, like a snake.
In this study, I will examine and analyze Maniam’s use of culturally dependent speech styles to draw conclusions about the types of linguistic resources he draws upon to express culture.

3.2.7 Syntactic Devices

Non-native writers also use a wide range of speech stratifications and conversational conventions to capture the complex linguistic environment of characters. To capture the accurate conversational mode of a Singapore taxi driver, Catherine Lim, in her short story entitled The Taximan’s Story (1978), modifies the narrative to accommodate the basilectal variety of Singapore English as seen in the example below. The driver speaks to a woman passenger about young girls who spend their time with foreign men:

They usual is wait in bowling alley or coffee house or hotel and they walk up, and friend, friend, the European and American tourists and this is how they make fun and also extra money. Madam, you believe or not when I tell you how much money they get? (Platt, Weber and Ho, 1984: 190)

By using a different sub-variety of English as shown above, Catherine Lim, a non-native writer from Singapore, is able to present an authentic characterization of a taxi-driver. Unlike English literature that belongs to the native canon, non-native writing needs to capture subtle complexities of characterization that exist within the Asian and African contexts and one of the ways a non-native writer does this is by paying special attention to the syntactic patterns in the narrative.

Another syntactic device favoured by non-native writer’s is the verbless sentence fragment as used by R.K. Narayan in The Painter Of Signs (1976), for example, "Don't touch, not completely dry yet." and "We must be serious about it, no time to joke, no
joking matter." (Sridhar, 1983: 297) These sentences echo the discoursal patterns of the first language, which in Narayan's case is Tamil.

Besides that, Narayan also uses the syntactic device of sentences with no subjects which again is a feature of his first language, Tamil, as seen in the line, "Still a lot of space - why don't you buy a few things that you may need on the way?" (Sridhar, 1983: 297)

As illustrated above, the nativization process of syntactic devices cover a range of linguistic innovations and are heavily influenced by the first language of the characters in a non-native text. Sometimes one character will use different syntactic devices to adapt his or her conversational style depending on the speech community he or she interacts with. In Achebe's No Longer At Ease (1961), Joseph talks to his foreign educated brother Obi in Standard English on the telephone. Then, turning to his friends, he comments in pidgin, "E like dat. Him na gentleman. Not fit take bribe." (Sridhar, 1983: 300)

Besides reflecting the speech patterns of characters, another reason non-native writers opt for communicative styles such as the above is to reflect the solidarity that exists within a speech community. Language has a symbolic role in that it has the ability to realize abstract notions such as nation, class or power. One of the ways these notions are realized is by using language to confer solidarity in a speech community (Labov, 1966). It is in employing this new and vibrant manner of speaking English that is evident in Asian and African contexts that the non-native writer attempts to express personal and national identity.
3.3 Methodology

The methodology of this study will be discussed in three sections, the research approach, the source of data and the method of analysis.

3.3.1 Research Approach

According to Nunan (1992: 3), "research is a systematic process of enquiry consisting of three elements or components: (1) a question, problem or hypothesis, (2) data, (3) analysis and interpretation of data." Based on Nunan's definition of research, my study addresses the question of what linguistic and cultural resources Maniam draws upon in his efforts towards the nativization of rhetorical strategies. Secondly, for the data, I will refer to three short stories by Maniam from his collection entitled Haunting The Tiger (1996). Thirdly, the analysis and interpretation of data will be carried out using the case study approach.

I selected the case study method because it has certain advantages. One of its advantages is that it is grounded in reality and seeks to exemplify issues and concerns by giving individual meaning to a particular investigation (Nunan, 1992). Although a case study is not generalizable to other contexts, it does provide invaluable insights into the area or context being studied. In the case study, the emphasis is on detail and not voluminous empirical data on a phenomenon under investigation. Besides that, a case study presents a multiplicity of viewpoints and interpretations, which can serve as a base for further study by future researchers. The implication of this is that these viewpoints and interpretations can alter in the light of new information or knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation. This is interesting because it means that knowledge in
the area under study is not fixed but ever changing as new ideas emerge from future researchers. This is especially true in the field of discourse analysis of non-native literatures, which is a relatively new area. Pioneers like Kachru, Smith, Strevens and others have paved the way for new researchers who will add their insights and observations in the field.

Not many researchers have adopted the case study method. Moreover, those who did, like Pariola (1987) and Weir (1983), whose studies were reviewed in the previous chapter, tended to select a few different writers and merely glossed over a book by each writer. Although they derived invaluable insights from their studies, such a research approach appeared to give a sketchy representation of nativization strategies used by these writers. In order to avoid such a pitfall, I will focus solely on one writer (K.S Maniam) and select three short stories from his works. Treating each story as a case study, I will examine and analyze the nativization of rhetorical strategies used by K.S Maniam in three short stories. To do so, I will refer to Kachru’s (1986) framework, which is divided into five categories for analysis. These categories are far from sketchy because they cover a wide range of strategies such as:

(a) native similes and metaphors
(b) transfer of rhetorical devices for “personalizing” speech interactions
(c) translation of proverbs and idioms
(d) culturally dependent speech styles
(e) syntactic devices
3.3.2 Source of Data

For the purpose of this study, I will be referring to K.S. Maniam’s collection of short stories entitled *Haunting The Tiger* (1996). This collection, published in 1996, brings together thirteen short stories that have been written between 1976 to 1995. Since it is beyond the scope of this study to analyze in detail all the stories, I have selected three stories which are representative of Maniam’s style and mood. Each story will be treated as a case study and analyzed according to the method outlined in the next section. In fact, all the stories in this collection are a variation on a single theme or concern, which is the individual’s struggle to carve a niche for himself in the multi-cultural, multi-racial landscape of Malaysian society. Consequently, it is a linguistic as well as intellectual struggle faced by Maniam to represent the Malaysian socio-cultural context that is of interest to this study.

K.S. Maniam has produced several outstanding works of fiction, and over time has emerged as a leading literary figure in Malaysia. He wrote poetry in the 60's and 70's and his first novel entitled *The Return* was published in 1981. His short stories have been published in *Commentary, Southeast Asian Review of English, Solidarity* and anthologized in *Malaysian Short Stories, Encounters: Selected Indian and Australian Short Stories* and *Rim of Fire: Stories from the Pacific Rim.*

His educational background encompasses an early Tamil school education followed by an English one at the Ibrahim School, Sungai Petani. He trained to be an English teacher at Brinsford Lodge, Wolverhampton, England, and taught in Kedah for several years. After that, he furthered his education at the University of Malaya where he
received an M.A, and subsequently became an associate professor in English at the very same university.

I chose to investigate K.S Maniam’s short stories out of the growing pool of Malaysian writers writing in English for two reasons. Firstly, it is because he is a Malaysian of Indian origin. By virtue of his ethnic background, he not only has a native culture which is Indian, but also a national culture which is Malaysian, to reconcile. Using a non-native variety of English, he strives to capture not just Indian characters, but also Malays and Chinese. In short, he uses English to capture the Malaysian cultural landscape and I find it particularly intriguing to examine the nativization strategies he uses to achieve that.

Secondly, I chose Maniam because his stories have a common theme running through most of them and that is the individual’s struggle to find balance in an all-engulfing, close-knit community. Due to this conflicting situation, Maniam’s characters are often pushed to great lengths to carve out a niche of their own. This struggle and the vibrant use of language to capture the social context makes Maniam a very interesting non-native writer to study. Moreover, being a Malaysian of Indian origin myself, I am extremely interested to investigate the nativization strategies used by a writer who I think I can relate to.

I chose the short story as a genre before selecting Maniam’s short stories. I decided to focus on the short story because as a genre, it lends itself to a detailed and focused analysis of the nativization of rhetorical strategies. It is hoped that from such an analysis, conclusions can be made about the effects of these processes on Maniam's attempts to express culture. Unlike a novel, a short story expresses the human experience
in comparatively fewer words and that in itself becomes a challenge for the writer. The short story writer has to come up with an original idea, believable characters, a convincing background, a good opening, conflict, suspense and a satisfying ending within a restricted framework (Doubtfire, 1996). The challenge is further heightened for the non-native writer who has to capture an ethnic and national identity that is removed from the cultural mainstream of native English canons.

Before non-native writers like Maniam, the Malaysian socio-cultural context was expressed through purely foreign eyes. Writers like Clifford tried to capture the impenetrable Malaysian jungle, the world of magicians, wild beasts and court mysteries. Conrad painted the evil lurking behind dark Southeast Asian shorelines and Maugham captured British high society amidst cowering "natives" huddled in corners. In Maniam's short stories, the Malaysian landscape is captured through local eyes and the cultural axis revolves around not one, but several cultures existing together.

In my analysis of these stories, attempts will be made to identify the points of contact of these non-native cultures thorough an examination of Maniam's nativization of rhetorical strategies and the effects of these strategies on culture.

3.3.3 Method of Analysis

Kachru (1986) has outlined five categories for the analysis of nativization of rhetorical strategies:

(a) native similes and metaphors

(b) transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions

(c) translation of proverbs and idioms
(d) culturally-dependent speech styles
(e) syntactic devices

The method of analysis used in this study will be as follows. Firstly, each story will be analyzed to identify the nativization of rhetorical strategies according to the five categories listed above. Secondly, these linguistic innovations will be listed out one by one (see Appendix). Thirdly, attempts will be made to explain the type of linguistic and cultural resources drawn upon by Maniam to achieve these linguistic realizations. Fourthly, conclusions will be made with regard to the effects these nativizations have on Maniam's expression of culture.

3.4 Limitations of the Study

Based on Kachru's (1986) framework, this study only examines the nativization of rhetorical strategies, which namely consist of native similes and metaphors, transfer of rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions, translation of proverbs and idioms, culturally dependent speech styles and syntactic devices. There are other types of nativization processes outlined by Kachru (1986) which have not been examined. These processes include "nativization of context" and "nativization of cohesion and cohesiveness." I have not explored these as such a move would push the boundaries of this study beyond the scope necessary for this thesis.

In keeping with the case study method, this study examines an instance of a phenomenon and reveals its functions within a specific context. In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is the use of nativization of rhetorical strategies by K.S Maniam in three short stories from his collection entitled *Haunting The Tiger* (1996) and
the context in which these rhetorical strategies function is the Malaysian sociolinguistic context. Some may perhaps argue that the case study approach is another limitation. However, the focus of the case study approach is on understanding a particular instance and not on making wide-scale generalizations in distant contexts. As stated by Adelman et. al in Nunan (1992: 75), the case study is the study of an "instance in action" and I, like them, believe that the "investigation of a single instance is a legitimate form of enquiry."

It is on such a rationale that this study is based.

3.5 Conclusion

The conceptual framework for this study is based largely on Kachru's (1986) framework for the analysis of nativization of rhetorical strategies. These strategies include similes and metaphors, rhetorical devices for "personalizing" speech interactions, proverbs and idioms, culturally dependent speech styles and syntactic devices (Kachru, 1986). The type of research approach adopted for this study is that of the case study approach and the data consists of three short stories by K.S Maniam from his collection entitled *Haunting The Tiger* (1996).