

## **A STUDY ON TRANSLATION STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN INTERSEMIOTIC TRANSLATION (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE NOVEL ‘THE ROAD FROM ELEPHANT PASS’ AND THE MOVIE ‘ALIMANKADA’)**

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### **Abstract**

Translators employ various strategies in translation. With respect to the strategies of intersemiotic translation in the translation of the English novel 'The Road from Elephant Pass' into the Sinhala film 'Alimankada', this study intends to identify the categories of strategies used in intersemiotic translation, particularly from written semiotics into cinematic semiotics. Data for the study were collected by observing a selected novel and a movie based on it. Content analysis was used for data analysis. The results of this study are significant as it may have a vital influence on the relevant discipline. Empirically, the study assists to decrease the scarcity that remains in the studies related to intersemiotic translation in Sri Lankan literature. As a result, the researchers have identified three strategies introduced by Olga. They are reduction, reinterpretation, and extensions. Similarly, three new strategies of resemblance, transference, and unification are also found. In conclusion, the researchers have found out the strategies used in the intersemiotic translation to be useful in conveying the source text's message accurately and effectively to the target audience.

**Keywords:** *Cinematic semiotics, Intersemiotic translation, Movie, Strategies, Written semiotics*

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## **Introduction**

Entertainment is an energetic need for each being, from the start of human evolution. Among the methods of entertainment, movies are a more practical way as they contain audio-visual movements. In cinematic creations, fiction can be written as a script to convert a novel into a movie which is called intersemiotic translation according to Olga Leontovich (2019). In 1998, Mona Baker has observed that insufficient studies have been led in the arena of intersemiotic translation (Kazmierczak, 2018). Besides, in Sri Lanka, no study on intersemiotic translation has been conducted referring to its own literature. This study focuses on satisfying the above gaps and supporting the researchers of Translation Studies to be familiar with intersemiotic translation.

‘Alimankada’ is a Chandran Rutnam film based on the Gratiaen Prize winning novel ‘The Road from Elephant Pass’ by Nihal De Silva. Actors Ashan Dias and Suranga Ranawaka were the leading characters of the movie as Captain Wasantha Rathnayake and Kamala Velaithan respectively.

The research aims to discover the strategies employed in the movie ‘Alimankada’ in the process of intersemiotic translation.

Concerning the above research problem, the main objective of this study is to identify the strategies of intersemiotic translation employed in the movie 'Alimankada'

This study provides a broadminded influence on the development of Translation Studies and an assurance to decrease the scarcity remaining in studies on intersemiotic translation from Sri Lankan literature. Furthermore, this study is beneficial for individuals who are interested in evaluating strategies of intersemiotic translation.

## **Material and Methods**

The current study is a corpus-based research with a qualitative approach in which the content analysis method is used. In this case, the English novel 'The Road from Elephant Pass' by Nihal de Silva and the movie 'Alimankada' directed by Chandran Ratnum were selected as the contents to be analyzed. These two materials are the primary data of this study while previous research papers, e-books, and journals were used as secondary data. Collected data were analyzed to identify which strategy is employed in each scene and they were classified according to the strategies introduced by Olga Leontovich. Accordingly, the research problem is solved through observations and evaluation.

## Results and Discussion

In her paper, "A sensible image of the infinite: intersemiotic translation of Russian classics for foreign audiences" (2019), Olga introduces three strategies which are available in intersemiotic translation under the category of verbal to visual translation.

1. Reduction: omission of parts of the original
2. Extension: addition, filling in the blanks and signifying the unsaid
3. Reinterpretation: modification or remodeling of the original in accordance with the director's creative ideas.

Apart from these, another three new strategies are also found by the researchers.

4. Resemblance: converting written semiotics into visual semiotics, rendering a parallel message which is received by the reader of the novel to the spectator of the movie
5. Unification: connecting similar written semiotics as a single visual semiotic
6. Transference: separation of a written semiotic from the corresponding visualized semiotic and insertion of it into a different one.

- Reduction

In this particular intersemiotic translation, the director has reduced the number of written semiotics.

Ex: On their way to the Army headquarters, Velaithan sees a church and wants to get off to pray (p.328). This scene is reduced from the movie showing that they directly arrive at the Army Headquarters from Upali's house.

- Extension

Newly created visual semiotics added by the filmmaker belong to this strategy. In this particular movie, two types of extensions were identified.

1. Addition

Conveying a fresh message which is only received by the spectator but not by the reader

Ex: A woman listens to the discussion in the truck (21:25 – 22:49)

In the written semiotics, they only discuss their further plans but no one hears it.

2. Signifying the unsaid

Conveying the hidden messages in the written semiotics by a fresh scene which is to be only known by the spectator but not by the reader

Ex: Burying a dead body on the way to Pooneryn (14:16 – 15:51)

On their way from the shelter to the main road to Pooneryn they find a dead body. Velaithan, assuming him to be a Tamil, tries to bury it while Captain finds his NIC, and recognizes that he is a Sinhalese. Then Kamala gets angry and leaves. Captain keeps the NIC found on the body and leaves. Here, the likes and dislikes of the two enemies and their hatred towards the enemy but their warmth towards their own people are emphasized.

- Reinterpretation

In the present analysis, two types of reinterpretations are recognized.

1. Recreation with the central message

Change of the roles while preserving the central message. Here, both the reader and the spectator finally received the same comprehension through dissimilar imageries.

Ex: Splitting the haunch of the doe (49:17 – 19:27)

In written semiotics, Velaithan is the one who splits the haunch of the doe with her kitchen knife. In visualized semiotics, Captain splits the haunch of the doe while Velaithan is standing at a distance. Here, the roles of the characters have changed. However, the central idea that they split the haunch of the doe is preserved.

2. Reorientation

Enhancement of written semiotics with an addition while creating a variance between the awareness of the reader and the spectator.

Ex: Snakes (1:10:41 – 1:10:49)

Written semiotics mentioned that snakes are not met. However, one day the Captain is bothered by the fear of snakes. Conversely, the filmmaker shows a snake on their way and the pair unexpectedly gets frightened. Here, the imaginations of the reader and the spectator run through different orientations regarding the same fact.

- Resemblance

Ex: Kalliyadi Police Station (23:14 – 23:19)

Written semiotics: "A prominent new signboard carried the Tiger Emblem and some writings in Tamil. Below that, proudly in English – POLICE STATION KALLIYADI." (p.37). The filmmaker has thoroughly followed the written semiotics. As the reader gets the imagery of a signboard with Tiger Emblem, Tamil letters, and English letters, the spectator also sees the identical signboard through the visuals.

- Unification

Ex: Uprooting lotus yams and conversation on Tamil's traditional homeland (56:08 – 58:58)

Written semiotics convey the message that Captain uproots yams alone while Velaithan is preparing the meal. They cook them and eat them. After that, they start their conversation. Written semiotics expressively delivers the image of Captain uprooting yams alone but the filmmaker has unified two incidents to show they argue on the above fact while uprooting yams.

- Transference

Ex: Kamala reveals her information (11:08 – 11:57)

In written semiotics, Velaithan reveals her information in a shrubbery at Alimankada, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter. The corresponding visual semiotics of this part has been inserted into the scene in the shelter at Wannu, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.

The followings are a numerical summary of the findings.

**Table 1:**

*Frequency and percentage of each strategy*

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Reduction	52	24%	
Extension	14	7%	
Reinterpretation	Recreation with the central message	30	14%
	Reorientation	8	4%
Resemblance	72	33%	
Unification	36	17%	
Transference	3	1%	

**Table 2:***Challenges that are overcome by each strategy*

Strategy	Challenge overcome
Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracting the major storyline</li> </ul>
Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining the interconnection between different scenes</li> </ul>
Reinterpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding impracticality</li> </ul>
Recreation with the central message	
Reorientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing the spectator's fearful experience</li> </ul>
Resemblance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserving the authenticity</li> </ul>
Unification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing time</li> </ul>
Transference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid impracticality</li> </ul>

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The researcher concludes that in the scenes for which the resemblance strategy is used, the target film seems to function as a repeated text and a text of recreation of the written signs. In the scenes for which the extension and reinterpretation strategy is used the target film seems to function as a text of emphasis among the signifiers of the written signs. In the scenes for which the transference strategy is used the target film seems to function as a text of transference of information of the signifiers of the written signs.

It is suggested that other researchers analyze diverse sources to identify more strategies that could develop the faithfulness of intersemiotic translations. For that purpose, the present study will be productive in enhancing explorations and unveiling the untouched areas in Translation Studies.

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