



## The Language of Translation as an Ironic Strategy in R.K. Narayan's Novels

Alessandro Vescovi, PhD 

Department of Language, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy

**Article History:** Submitted 5 Aug. 2022; Reviewed 19 Mar. 2023; Accepted 21 April 2023

**Corresponding Author:** Alessandro Vescovi, Email: [alessandro.vescovi@unimi.it](mailto:alessandro.vescovi@unimi.it)

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3126/paj.v6i1.54668>

Copyright 2023 © The author(s). The publisher may reuse all published articles with prior permission of the concerned authors. This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\) License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ScanToAccess eCopy

### ABSTRACT

Early practitioners of the novel in India could not count on a publishing industry, nor on any vast readership, and could only hope to be published overseas. However, writing for an international readership required some compromise between Indian forms and beliefs on the one hand, and the publishers' expectations on the other. This dilemma asserted itself primarily with the language: what kind of English, if at all, should an Indian novelist employ? Furthermore, what kind of *Weltanschauung* could he rely upon to build the ethical framework of the novel? While Raja Rao chose for his *Kanthapura* a highly stylised English, which does not mimic any spoken variety, Narayan elected a simpler style, apparently unproblematic, but likewise non-mimetic. Both strategies are devised to be accepted by a global English readership, which would remain oblivious to the underlying "translation effect" and the Hindu world picture. With reference to his most renowned novel *The Guide*, this paper argues that the author was consciously moving in a space shared between India and the West. He offered a hilarious mirror of Indian life to South Asian readers while pretending to be speaking to an international audience like a kind of entertaining native informant. His widely appreciated ironical detachment can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, it looks like a modernist device à la Chekov; on the other, it mirrors the detachment of the ascetic who has come to recognise the futility of Maya's world. Writing is therefore a form of *Leela*, an earthly version of the divine play, which a wise author and reader cannot take too seriously.

**KEYWORDS:** Global English readership, translation theory, irony, *Leela*

### INTRODUCTION

In 1934, a young and promising novelist, Grahame Greene, was living in Oxford in a rented apartment when a student from Mysore called Purna approached him with the manuscript of a novel. It was not his own, but the fruit of a friend's fatigue, a countryman called Rasipuram Krishnaswami Ayyar Narayanaswami. The novel's title was *Swami, the Tate*, and it told the vicissitudes of a boy named Swami, nicknamed "The

Tate" after a famous English cricket player for his prowess in the game. The "travelled and weary typescript" (Greene, 1978, p. viii) lay on the table for a few weeks until he picked it up on a rainy day. Greene read and liked the typescript and brought it to the attention of his publisher Hamish Hamilton, who also saw some potential in it. Both Greene and Hamilton agreed that the story was reminiscent of *Stalky and Co.*—allowing for the difference in the settings and nationalities—and that it needed some editing, which Greene volunteered to do. The most evident editorial revisions are visible right from the cover: *Swami, the Tate* became *Swami and Friends* to resemble Rudyard Kipling's title more closely, while the author's name was pruned to R.K. Narayan. Hamilton and Greene offered some explanations for these changes. In a letter dated 10 August 1935, Hamilton bluntly wrote: "[T]he title [which] you had given the book, *Swami, the Tate*, is quite impossible for this country" (cited in Thieme, 2007, p. 200). A few days later, Greene wrote: "Have you any objection to the Swami being left out and your being styled R.K. Narayan?" adding "in this country a name which is difficult for the old ladies in the libraries to remember materially affects a book's sales" (Ram & Ram, 1996, p. 155). The young Tamilian writer, who had seen his book rejected by several publishers, accepted every change with deferential gratitude. Thus, Narayan negotiated his writing identity to cater to an international audience. A reference to Kipling's *Stalky and Co.* appeared on the dust jacket of the first edition and early reviewers disputed over this analogy. Needless to say, Narayan never dreamt of imitating Kipling and probably Greene thought of him chiefly for his association with India. Eventually, Narayan and his two years' older mentor, Greene, became friends. Subsequently, they would discuss all of Narayan's literary projects, with Greene acting as an editor.

On the whole, Narayan continued to write according to the guidelines offered by his first two editors, adapting his language to the expectations of Western readers. Over time, however, this strategy grew ever subtler and more complex. In the following pages, I shall endeavour to assess the author's narrative strategy with the help of postcolonial, translation, and reception studies.

### WRITING IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRANSLATION

Even at the onset of his career, Narayan would address an international audience rather than a domestic one (Ahluwalia, 1984) and Greene's editing helped him to reach it. Even when he became an established novelist, his books were published in the U.K. and the U.S. long before they appeared in India, where they did not enjoy much circulation before the publication of *The Guide* (Narasimhaiah, 1979, p. 175). In an interview with Panduranga Rao (1971), Narayan gave some sales figures until 1970, the only ones available to scholars to this date:

Polish: five hundred thousand; Russian two hundred thousand; middling in Italian, French, and Dutch; Hebrew: twenty thousand an edition; U.S. paperbacks: one hundred thousand each. Indian: on an average, two thousand a month; one edition of *Lawley Road* sold thirteen thousand; his own (Indian Thought) edition of *The Guide* sold fifty-five thousand; and the Hindi translation of *The Guide* sold over thirty thousand. But this information came later and elsewhere. (p. 79)

These numbers reflect the peculiar relationship that India entertained with Russia in the 1960s and 1970s, and show that many readers were neither Anglophone nor Indian (Chaudhuri, 2021, pp. 87-89). Narayan knew his audience and adjusted to it. In an article published three years later, the novelist laments: "[F]oreign publishers expect an Indian

writer to say something close to the image of India they have in mind" (cited in Ahluwalia, 1984, p. 60).

Hamilton and Greene were essential in establishing Narayan's reputation in the U.K.—and in Europe, for that matter. Yet they did not need to insist on conforming his work to the expectations of an international audience, as the author was ready to accept their suggestions. Indeed, Narayan had already made the first step towards a compromise by choosing English as his medium. His prose must have seemed comparatively unproblematic to his early readers, but it is not so in hindsight. His prose is simple, polished, always grammatically correct; his lexis rich and refined. Consider the following dialogue taken from *The Guide* (1958); Raju, the protagonist, meets a villager, Velan, for the first time:

Raju waited for the other to say something. But he was too polite to open a conversation. Raju asked, "Where are you from?" dreading lest the other should turn around and ask the same question. The man replied, "I'm from Mangal—" "Where is Mangal?"

The other waved his arm, indicating a direction across the river, beyond the high steep bank. "Not far from here," he added. The man volunteered further information about himself. "My daughter lives nearby. I had gone to visit her; I am now on my way home. I left her after food. She insisted that I should stay on to dinner, but I refused. It'd have meant walking home at nearly midnight. I'm not afraid of anything, but why should we walk when we ought to be sleeping in bed?" (p. 3)

While Raju is a fairly educated urban dweller, Velan is a rustic illiterate; even in Tamil they would not use the same linguistic variety. Indeed, Velan's discourse betrays a certain simplicity in oversharing his family business, but his grammar is impeccable. There is no trace of Bakhtinian hybridisation, even though the tone of the encounter is slightly comical. This is not the kind of prose one would expect from an English novelist of the 1950s. Even Dickens relied on different registers to typify his characters. Narayan's prose, instead, reads like a translation, which flattens all linguistic differences as untranslatable. He writes in English, but his texts are somehow a translation. Rebecca Walkowitz (2015) would call them "born translated," i.e. texts aimed at an international audience that do not pose cognitive or linguistic problems to foreign readers. Such texts, the scholar argues, do not seek to represent the community from which they are born, reinforcing the sense of community, like many national literary works do; they tend to create a transnational community of readers. One might object that Narayan's novels contain non-English words, which may not be intelligible to foreigners. In fact, as G.J.V. Prasad (2016) has noted, Narayan aims at Pan-Indian intelligibility even when he uses non-English words. In this case, he often chooses the Sanskrit term over the Tamil one when a choice is given:

Narayan has a straightforward strategy—try to use English as far as possible. When that doesn't work out, goes for Pan-Indian intelligibility by using Hindi words that have currency even in a Tamil country. And only when that fails the test of people like him understanding without difficulty does he decide to move to Tamil. (p. 38)

In fact, while Prasad talks of Pan-Indian intelligibility, one must consider that Narayan's Sanskrit lexis was known to most Anglo-Indians, too—as Kipling's novels show—and probably familiar to most English readers. I am not arguing that Narayan aimed at an Anglo-Indian readership, but I am suggesting that he took their linguistic competence as a reference point. Apparently, Narayan translated and domesticated India for the community of his overseas audience. Many readers appreciated him as a spokesman for

India. In his "Introduction" to *The Bachelor of Art*, Grahame Greene—who had never been to the Subcontinent—praises Narayan for giving him "a second home" in India, which neither E.M. Forster nor Rudyard Kipling offered. Here he compares Narayan's characters to Anton Chekhov's, arguing that both writers create a gallery of human types, describing them with delicate humour.

Greene, and most of Narayan's Western early readers with him, failed to see that Narayan's "domesticating translation" (Venuti, 2008) of India, in all its simplicity, was a strategy of resistance (Wyatt, 2002) as well as a communicative compromise. Like a black and white picture, it invites the onlooker to imagine the colours, the erasure of heteroglossia requires an extra ability of the model reader (Eco, 1994)—imagining it. Narayan's Tamilian reader will probably see the language of the characters beyond the neatness of English prose and even non-Tamil Indian readers may imagine native languages and dialects. Non-Indian English readers can only acknowledge their limitations or overlook them. They can enjoy certain narrative levels, but only guess at others.

### **IRONIC RESISTANCE AND SECULARISM**

The linguistic strategy of resistance just described is consistent with another domesticating feature of Narayan's literary efforts, namely the secularisation of the implied author (Booth, 1961). Narayan is ever careful that his writing persona can be construed as secular even when he portrays religious characters or foreshadows spiritual crises and ethical dilemmas. However, this secular stance should be taken as a form of irony.

Indian sociologists and intellectuals have often pointed out that the word secularism has two meanings: one common also in the West, and one peculiar to the Subcontinent. According to the first meaning, the state must not interfere with religious matters and vice-versa. The corollary at a personal level is that one's faith should be cultivated in private, and it should not interfere with one's public life, one's job or public encounters. Jawaharlal Nehru believed that secularism would bring about the modernisation India so sorely needed, which he equated with socialism. Even non-Nehruvian intellectuals, after the communal riots of 1947, regarded secularism as a bulwark against the religious hatred. This fact brought to the second, less evident, meaning of the word secularism, which is typical of South Asia, namely secularism as equality of different confessions and mutual respect; it implies equidistance between the political power and all religions. For a generation of Indians, secularism has become synonymous with anti-communalism, anti-casteism, gender equality and social justice.

Given the situation, a secular stance offered two advantages to a novelist: firstly, it helped to deflate the tension among different Indian communities; secondly, it helped to negotiate meaning on a common ground to meet non-Indian readers. Non-Hindus are not loath to read about Hinduism, but they would feel quite uneasy if asked to endorse Hindu beliefs to interpret the story—or to react emotionally to the plot. They would rather retain a detached anthropological interest in it. Writing from a secular standpoint does not mean avoiding every religious discourse or avoiding the description of religious characters. More subtly, it means that the author does not endorse a religious worldview or supernatural explanations for the events, but leaves the readers ever free to choose their interpretations. Individual piety in the characters is viewed as any other eccentricity of theirs.

The 1960s started a movement whereby many Westerners got seriously interested in Indian religions and spirituality, creating a new readership also for Indian literature. However, in the 1930s, Narayan could only refer to the English he had met as

colonial masters, whose attitude towards Indian culture must have been very different. According to his autobiographical memoir entitled *My Days* (1974), he attended a Christian school, where he was the only brahmin boy. Most children were Christian converts. This is how he describes his scripture classes:

The scripture classes were mostly devoted to attacking and lampooning the Hindu gods, and violent abuses were heaped on idol-worshippers as a prelude to glorifying Jesus. Among the non-Christians in our class I was the only Brahmin boy, and received special attention; the whole class would turn in my direction when the teacher said that Brahmins claiming to be vegetarians ate fish and meat in secret, in a sneaky way, and were responsible for the soaring price of those commodities. (p. 10)

Colonial religious discrimination must have played a role in convincing Narayan to stir clear of straightforward religious issues. Possibly he feared misconstructions or even scorn. Yet, like his domesticating original “translation” can be interpreted as a form of resistance to cultural assimilation, by the same token, his secular portrayal of religion lends itself to a double reading.

An episode that takes the better part of chapter one in *Swami and Friends* (1935) may offer an example of this double interpretation. Swami, the protagonist, has a teacher called Ebenezer (a funny name that would remind any English reader of Scrooge). The teacher compares Jesus Christ and Krishna to the detriment of the second: “Did our Jesus go gadding about with dancing girls like your Krishna? Did our Jesus go about stealing butter like that archscoundrel Krishna? Did our Jesus practise dark tricks on those around him?” (p. 4). Incensed, Swami polemically asks:

“If he did not, why was he crucified?” The teacher told him that he might come to him at the end of the period and learn it in private. Emboldened by this mild reply, Swaminathan put to him another question, “If he was a God, why did he eat flesh and fish and drink wine?” As a brahmin boy it was inconceivable to him that a God should be a non-vegetarian. In answer to this, Ebenezer left his seat, advanced slowly towards Swaminathan, and tried to wrench his left ear off. (p. 4)

The episode is written like a short story with an open ending. However, it is notable that, in the end, the religious strife is deflated into a generational contrast between adults (teachers) and youngsters (pupils). Rhetorically, Swami and Mr Ebenezer are brought to the same level and treated as equals: Swami is naïve because of his young age, Ebenezer is a ridiculous zealot incapable of teaching anything. In the exchange quoted above, Swami is wittier and Ebenezer is stronger. In the real world, Ebenezer has the upper hand, while in the fictional world the reader is inclined to admire Swami's wit in the debate. Religion itself slips into the background in this exchange has neither a contender as a reliable theologian or spokesman for his creed.

The sentence pointing out that for a Brahmin a non-vegetarian god is unthinkable shows that Narayan's intended audience, even in his first novel, was not confined to India. Thus, the difference in the religious creed is described as a curiosity about the world of Malgudi that fuels the story's development. The implied author's attitude may be considered secular, as he does not bother to go beyond the surface of religious differences. Indeed, religion appears as a pretext to dramatise the encounter of Swami and his chums with the adult world. However, since we know that the author himself suffered religious discrimination at school, the reference to an obtuse English Christian teacher may as well be considered an act of resistance. In the words of Thieme (2004):

In *Swami and Friends*, Malgudi is, then, far more than an anglicised version of South India and it provides Narayan with a locus that enables him to stage some

of the conflicts and conjunctions that characterised the social world in which he had come of age during the latter days of the Raj. (p. 179)

While Thieme foregrounds postcolonial resistance, I wish to make a case for the particular resistance that Narayan put up against secularism through irony. Readers from the same class and generation as the author may find an echo of their own experience in the text. World readers—even competent ones like Greene—would probably miss Narayan's ironic resistance but would nonetheless appreciate other features of his stories.

Ironic resistance is not easily detectable in Narayan's early novels because it merges with other forms of irony, verging into the comic. Following Booth's (1974) distinction between overt and covert irony, we could argue that secular irony is covert—and therefore hard to descry—while other forms of irony are overt, directly inviting the reader to see through them. Critics and general readers alike have often praised Narayan's overt irony. The term has often been loosely applied to his novels and short stories without much reference to philosophical or rhetorical studies of irony. Thus, different rhetorical and narrative devices have been subsumed under this label, sometimes confusing irony with humour and comicality. Muecke (1969) lists several kinds of irony but he argues that irony is always associated with a sort of duplicity. It may be duplicity between the expected and the actual outcome of an action, between what is said and what is intended, between the world picture of the character and that of the author-audience, etc. According to Booth (1974), irony needs a tryptic in order to work: an author, also called ironist; a victim of the irony; an audience that can appreciate both viewpoints, that of the ironist and that of the victim. The ability to create a double perspective and to read through it implies a sort of detachment from the situations narrated. Thus, in the example above, one can say that the narrator sympathises with Swami, but fails to perceive the tragic predicament of the boy in the same way the youngster does. At a rhetorical level, this kind of "situational irony" (Harris, 1992) is realised by describing Swami's actions rather than his thoughts and by having him more acted upon than acting. Duplicity, and hence a form of irony, also lies in the expected outcome of Swami's actions and the plot's actual development.

Thieme (2004) argues that Narayan's attitude changed when he visited America in the 1950s. Coming in contact with an Anglophone audience other than the colonial English interested in Indian spirituality makes him understand that he can afford to be less reticent in using the Indian tradition. This change of attitude gave birth to novels like *The Guide* and *The Man-eater of Malgudi* along with his English renditions of *Puranas* [a Hindu religious text] and *Itihasa* [history].

*The Guide* displays a complicated relationship with secularism, which again ends up in irony. Naik (1983) considers this phase of Narayan's writing his best because here irony becomes structural; he calls this structure "irony of vision." Initially, the reader is invited to smile at the simple faith of Velan and the villagers from Mangala who consider Raju a holy man. They appear to be the victims of irony because the author and the readers know very well that Raju is not an ascetic as he pretends. As the plot develops, however, Raju deepens his spirituality until "[f]or the first time in his life he was making an earnest effort; for the first time he was learning the thrill of full application, outside money and love; for the first time he was doing a thing in which he was not personally interested" (Narayan, 1958, p. 212). It is difficult to say if these words should be taken as a statement from the omniscient narrator or as free indirect speech. However, either way, we are witnessing a change of heart, which could be temporary or definitive, sincere or provoked on the spur of the moment, as it happened in *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937). The issue cannot be decided. Narayan had the occasion to discuss his plans for the novel with Greene, whom he visited in England. The two diverged as to the ending of the story:

Graham Greene liked the story when I narrated it to him in London. While I was hesitating whether to leave my hero alive or dead at the end of the story, Graham was definite that he should die. So I have on my hands the life of a man condemned to death before he was born and grown, and I have to plan my narrative to lead to it. This becomes a major obsession with me. (Narayan, 1974, pp. 165-166)

Graham Greene's western outlook foreclosed the perception of Narayan's covert irony at the expense of secularism. He believed that Narayan's writing persona was entirely secular and therefore could not bear the idea of facing Raju becoming a real *sannyasin* and bringing rain. In effect, the novel's open ending lends itself to either a secular or a non-secular interpretation:

It was difficult to hold Raju on his feet, as he had a tendency to flop down. They held him as if he were a baby. Raju opened his eyes, looked about, and said, "Velan, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it coming up under my feet, up my legs—" He sagged down. (Narayan, 1958, p. 220)

To a secular reader, this ending suggests the comic impossibility of ever calling the protagonist's bluff. Ironically, such as one would think, his unsought death will be taken as a proof of Raju's holiness, while it is only a proof of his fickleness. This is how myths are born. To the non-secular reader, the ending suggests an entirely different train of reactions. Firstly, it is immaterial whether Raju lives or dies once he has reached *moksha*—he may die right then or later. Secondly, as he was destined to be a spiritual guide, his obedience to *dharma* brought about his liberation. Of course, we can never be sure of another's mind, but people do reach *moksha*, so why not Raju? Thirdly, Raju was converted thanks to the *bhakti* (devotion) of his disciples (Sankaran, 2007).

While Greene was probably the first kind of reader (in fact, he was a Roman Catholic, but in reading Indian fiction, he had perforce to meet it on a secular basis), Narayan as a reader might have been more inclined to the second approach. However, Narayan as a writer stands on yet another level. He is a supreme ironist: he consciously creates two alternative interpretations, well knowing that his audience will choose only one of the two. There is no right way of deciding which reading is right and which wrong; both are authorised by the text; both are correct in their partiality.

When we consider *The Guide* as a Hindu novel dealing with the origin of holiness, this undecidability of the ending appears absurd or even capricious—an unnecessary concession to secularism. Even irony may seem out of place. However, Narayan was undoubtedly a religious man, but his attitude towards religion was philosophical, Vedantic. Priests and very orthodox brahmins fare rather poorly in his novels—for instance, in Narayan's *Mr Sampath* (1949) and *The Painter of Signs* (1977). The author is sceptical of rituals that try to make an impact on the material world; he appears more preoccupied with the harmony of the universe. While he tells the story of Raju's conversion, Narayan draws from the Sanskrit topos of the sage trickster (Sankaran, 2007), which he shapes like a realistic novel. This is how he speaks to different audiences, recounting the same mythical truth. Here, his covert irony can be identified with the Hindu notion of *Leela*, which designates divine playful creativity. Like God plays with the universe and gives birth to it, so does the novelist with his Malgudi. Although he knows that his characters have no ultimate reality, he enjoys following their stories, shaping their destinies (*kismets*), watching their passions with an indulgent eye and invites his readers to do the same. However, those readers who are ready to move beyond the story's pathos are invited to recognise the ultimate illusionary quality of literature. Ironically, this recognition, often suggested through an open ending,

is the most realistic of his legacies. It closely mirrors the ultimate illusionary quality of the world. Irony becomes a ploy to get at it.

### CONCLUSION

While initially Narayan chose for his novels a plain English style in order to reach a wider audience, over time, as his themes gained complexity, this stylistic choice assumed an ironic overtone. Ignoring linguistic complexity became for Narayan a ploy to resist the hegemony of the West. His novels read like domesticated translations from Tamil, which reminds Western readers that while they need to make no particular effort in reading the text, they are still unable to fully comprehend the underlying original. At the same time, his apparently ingenuous style points to the ultimate illusionary quality of literary creation and, philosophically, to the delusional appearance of all things. His novels are therefore a kind of *Leela*, an earthly version of the divine play, which a wise author and reader cannot take too seriously.

### REFERENCES

- Ahluwalia, H. S. (1984). Narayan's sense of audience. *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, 15(1), 59-65.
- Booth, W. C. (1961). *The rhetoric of fiction*. Chicago UP.
- Booth, W. C. (1974). *A rhetoric of irony*. Chicago UP.
- Chaudhuri, S. (2021). Which world, whose literature? *Thesis Eleven*, 162(1), 75-93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513621996493>
- Eco, U. (1994). *Six walks in the fictional woods*. Harvard UP.
- Greene, G. (1978). Introduction. *The bachelor of arts* (pp. v-x). Viking. (Reprinted in 2000)
- Harris, W. V. (1992). Irony. *Dictionary of concepts in literary criticism and theory* (pp. 178-183). Greenwood Press.
- Muecke, D. C. (1969). *The compass of irony*. Methuen & Co.
- Naik, M. K. (1983). *The ironic vision: A study of the fiction of R.K. Narayan*. Sterling.
- Narasimhaiah, C. D. (1979). R. K. Narayan's *The guide*. In M.K. Naik (Ed.), *Aspects of Indian Writing in English* (pp. 172-198). MacMillan.
- Narayan, R. K. (1935). *Swami and friends*. Hamilton.
- Narayan, R. K. (1937). *The bachelor of arts*. Nelson.
- Narayan, R. K. (1949). *Mr sampath—The printer of Malgudi*. Vintage.
- Narayan, R. K. (1958). *The guide*. Penguin.
- Narayan, R. K. (1974). *My days. A memoir*. Penguin.
- Narayan, R. K. (1977). *The painter of signs*. Heinemann.
- Prasad, G. J. V. (2016). *Writing India, Writing English: Literature, language, location*. Routledge.
- Ram, S., & Ram, N. (1996). *R.K. Narayan*. Viking.
- Rao, V. P. (1971). Tea with R. K. Narayan. *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 6(1), 79-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002198947100600109>
- Sankaran, C. (2007). *The myth connection: The use of Hindu mythology in some novels of Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan* (2nd ed.). Peter Lang.
- Thieme, J. (2004). The double making of R. K. Narayan. In S. C. Aikant (Ed.), *Critical spectrum: Essays in literary culture in honour of Professor C. D. Narasimhaiah* (pp. 172-191). Pencraft.
- Thieme, J. (2007). *R.K. Narayan*. Manchester UP.
- Venuti, L. (2008). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation* (2nd ed.). Routledge.



- Walkowitz, R. L. (2015). *Born translated: The contemporary novel in an age of world literature*. Columbia UP.
- Wyatt, H. C. (2002). Resistance through sub/mission in the novels of R. K. Narayan. In G. Stilz (Ed.), *Missions of interdependence: A literary directory* (pp. 197-203). Rodopi.

**To cite this article [APA style, 7<sup>th</sup> edition]:**

Vescovi, A. (2023). The language of translation as an ironic strategy in R.K. Narayan's novels. *Prithvi Academic Journal*, 6, 146-154.

<https://doi.org/10.3126/paj.v6i1.54668>