Chapter VII

Branches, Techniques, Methods and Circulation
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BRANCHES, TECHNIQUES, METHODS AND CIRCULATION

Not only in Tamil Nadu, in the whole of India, 'The Thina Thanthi' holds a pride of place. The great success achieved by this paper is due to Aditanar's vision, preserverance and hard labour. He started the paper at Madurai in 1942. Even in the very first issue, one could see his unique impress. To start a paper in Madurai was, in those days, unthinkable. All newspapers were based at Madras. Only in Madras were the machinery skill and expertise available. In a relative sense, Madurai was most backward in this respect. The journalists were all residents of Madras. Madras was where advertisement could be available. And only in Madras could a daily expect to 'sell'. Aditanar dared to start one in Madurai, an act of courage, unthinkable in those times.²


The first issue

In 1942, Aditanar launched a bi-weekly called Madurai Murasu. Seven or eight of the subsequent issues were (confiscated) banned. Thereafter, he started a weekly and called it ‘Thanizhan’ (July 5th 1942). This weekly had features no other weekly had presented in the past. The popular weeklies of those days were Ananda Vikatan and Prasanda Vikatan. In both these journals the contents were on the literary side, matter appropriate for an elitist audience.

To establish himself in the field, Aditanar stated the daily named ‘The Thanthi’ at Madurai. His intention was to run two journals simultaneously and with success, once a weekly and the other a daily. So, he registered ‘The Thanthi’ as a newspaper on the 15th October 1942. The first issue of Thanthi was released on 1.11.1942.

4. Ibid., p.21.
5. Thina Thanthi Ponvizha Malar, p.28.
‘The Thina Thanthi’s 10 editions

‘The Thina Thanthi’ which was first published in Madurai in 1942, has over a period of 50 years has grown by leaps and bounds. Today it publishes 10 editions simultaneously from Madras, Tiruchi, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Salem, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Pondicherry Vellore and Bangalore every morning.6

‘The Thina Thanthi’ in Madras

Aditanar set up an office for ‘The Thina Thanthi’ in Chidradropet, Madras in 1943.7 Later it was shifted to Luz corner in 1948. He named it ‘The Thina Thanthi’ and from 1953, all editions were known by this name.8 The office moved to Mount Road in 1959. In 1960 it was shifted to a four storeyed building in Egmore.9

‘The Thina Thanthi’ in Madurai

Close on the heals of the Madras edition of ‘The Thina Thanthi’, the Madurai ‘Thanthi’ also assumed the new name in 1950.

8. Ibid.
The paper saw phenomenal growth in this decade, thanks to Aditanar's, untiring efforts. He saw, in the organ, a means of motivating self awareness among the Tamils. His love for Tamil and the Tamil people was extraordinary.\(^\text{10}\)

**The Tiruchi Edition**

Enthused by the encouraging sales at Tiruchi from 1950, Aditanar decided to setup a separate establishment at Tiruchi. In 1954, he acquired space for an office complex at Tiruchi and built an office there. From then on, the Tiruchi Edition became more and more popular. Sales multiplied. The paper was everyone's early morning favourite.\(^\text{11}\)

**The Kovai Edition**

As the paper was selling like hot cakes in Coimbatore, Aditanar decided that a separate Kovai edition was in order. So he set up separate unit in Coimbatore in 1963. Even from 1961, there was a great shortage of newsprint and in view of the great demand for

\(^{10}\) Ibid.  
\(^{11}\) Registered No. M. 6021.
the paper, the need for a permanent source of paper was felt. So, Aditanar set up the ‘Sun Paper Mills near Ariyanayakipuram, close to ‘Cheran Mahadevi’ in 1963 with the help of his brother Dayalbagh Aditanar. He rubbed shoulders with workmen and ensured that all he touched became gold.

The Nellai Edition


Vellore, Cuddalore Editions

In 1969, Aditanar established a separate office for his paper at Vellore and sales grew rapidly. In 1972, Aditanar published the Cuddalore edition too. Wherever ‘The Thina Thanthi’ made an appearance, it became the best seller.

12. Ibid., No. M. 7013.
Salem Edition

On 16.9.1976, 'The Thina Thanthi's Salem edition came out. As was the case elsewhere, here too the paper became the favourite. There was a great demand for the paper in Karnataka. In order to surmount the difficulties faced by the Salem office in sending papers to neighbouring Karnataka, Aditanar decided to set up an office in Bangalore. The Bangalore edition came out on 23.9.1979. The inaugural function of the Bangalore Edition of 'The Thina Thanthi' was presided over by the Hon. Yahia, Finance Minister to the Government of Karnataka. The first issue was received by R.H. Patil, a senior congress leader of the state. This was the 9th edition of 'The Thina Thanthi'.

The Pondicherry Edition

The Pondicherry Office of the Thina Thanthi was the 10th of its kind. Though under French Rule for over 250 years, this part of South India had a very intimate relationship with Tamil Nadu.

17. Ibid., No. T.N./SLM 12
19. Ibid.
Culturally and socially Pondicherry was inseparable from Tamil Nadu. It was here that Subramania Bharati took refuge during the freedom movement and composed his great patriotic songs. This is where Bharatidasan lived and composed his great pieces. Anandarangam Pillai, whose diary is a source book for research scholars was another eminent son of the soil. It was in the fitness of things that there should be a separate edition of Thina Thanthi at Pondicherry, thought Aditanar.

Techniques and Methods of Thina Thanthi

So committed was Aditanar to the growth of his paper that he took utmost care in the casting of news in a manner different from what obtained in other papers. His first priority was simplicity, precision and clarity. He firmly believed that news should be carried in the language with which the common man was familiar. In this way, he set standards, for news casters (Itazhaal Kaiyedu) and this came out in 1971. This guide clearly sets forth how news should be scripted. A revised edition came out in 1986. In this book Aditanar has clearly

explained how he had fashioned the scripting of news in his paper from its very inception.23

In its newscasting 'The Thina Thanthi' has functioned along the following design.

1. Scripting, classification editing, sequencing, joining, linking repetition.

2. Choice of news

3. Dissemination

4. Headlines

After a clear choice of the news to be scripted, the business of newscasting is undertaken with reference to classification, elimination, linking and re-affirmation.

Classification

The news items chosen for publication may not always pertain to the same core. Therefore, they are classified according to their intrinsic nature and spread over several pages under appropriate headings, relevant to the news given below.

For instance, ‘The Thina Mani’ reports the arrest of Billa and Ranga in connection with a murder in Delhi on 10.10.1978, under one headline and caste the entire news on a single page. The same story has been split into its three facets and spread out over three pages for more clarity and retention of interest. Three sub-titles were given and under each sub-title, one facet of the episode was projected prominently.

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A continuous report often generates interest, particularly if one news item has several facets to it, it should be spread out under different titles. For the readers of his paper, Aditanar has not only chosen, a language that resembles everyday speech but also a format that doesn’t strain their receptivity beyond a point. Aditanar has suggested that no news should be extended beyond a page (continued on col. 3, page 4) and continued on other pages.24

Elimination

A news story is made up of several parts. Some are vital. Others are accessories. When the story is split and spread over several pages, some of the particulars, not relevant to the contents vis-a-vis their sub titles, have to be dropped for greater impact. This makes every part of the news cast cohesive and articulate.25

In a case pertaining to the need for a special court to go into the excesses of the emergency, judgement was deferred after a 21/4 hour argument by the Government pleader Mr. Kakkar. The Thina Mani published this news quoting extensively form the Government counsel’s arguments. On the contrary ‘The Thina Thanthi’ merely reported the fact of the counsel arguing in favour of a special court and of the court deferring judgement. There was no-point in burdening the readers with the finer points of law cited by counsel. Aditanar believed that his readers, not drawn from the elite, would evince little interest in the legal aspects reported by Thina Mani for the benefit for another kind of readers.

25. Thina Mani, Madras, 6 October 1978, p.3.
3. Linking

A news item, to make the proper impact should be suitably fixed in its context. If it is a fall out of an earlier incident, a brief summation of it should precede the news. This is known as the background (or backdrop).

1. The Background

As what had happened earlier the lead up to the event that has made news is of vital importance, it is the duty of a paper to update the reader’s knowledge by a brief prelude so that the news itself might make better sense.26

Illustration

When Indira Gandhi contested the bye election from Chickmagalore, news of her contesting from a Karnataka Constituency was published in ‘The Thina Thanthi’ from 1.10.1978 to 7.10.1978 (except the 2nd October). ‘AThe Thina Thanthi’s headlines read

1.10.1978: “George Fernandes’ Mother to contest against India Gandhi”

26. Larold Evant, Every developing story has to be constructed so that the vital background information is conveyed, 1924 p.14.
Under this headlines, it was reported that the Congress Working Committee has requested Indira Gandhi to contest the Parliamentary Bye-election form Chikmagalore, Karnataka.\textsuperscript{27}

2.10.1978, the head lines was

“Noted Karnataka Star Rajkumar to contest against Indira Gandhi”\textsuperscript{28}

Under this headlines the news was that all parties opposed to the Congress were searching for a common candidate to contest at Chickmangalore. Janata Party was said to have intensified its efforts.

On October 3rd, the headlines was “Who would contest against Indira Gandhi? Janata Executive Debates Issue”.

The Janata Party was dead earnest that Indira Gandhi should be defeated at the hustings. It started locking around for a candidate popular enough to defeat her.

On the 4th October, ‘The Thina Thanthi’s headlines read,

“Indira to contest. Starts Campaign tomorrow”\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{27} Thina Thanthi, Madras, 1 October 1978, p.1.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid. 4 October 1978, p.1.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
Under this headline it was reported that though an official announcement of her candidature is yet to be made, it is certain that she starts her campaign soon, said top leaders of the party.

On October 5th 1978, the headlines was,

“Actor Rajkumar declines to contest against Indira Gandhi”

Under this headline it was reported that the Janata Party decided to field Rajkumar against Indira Gandhi.\(^{30}\)

On the 6th October 1978 the headline read as follows

“Virendra Patil to contest at Cickmangalore”

In the news cast, it was said that the Janata party had fielded a strong candidate against Indira.\(^{31}\)

In the issue dated 7.10.1978, the headline read

“Indira Gandhi files nomination papers”

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 5 October 1978, p.1.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 6 October 1978, p.2.
The news under this headline was of the election slated for 5.11.1978 and of Indira contesting the seat.\textsuperscript{32}

The foregoing analysis is indicative of the technique adopted by ‘The Thina Thanthi’, providing the background to every news items. Gerald Jones, a great Journalist, has commented that the tendency to provide lengthy prologues, to make a news item meaningful, is retrograde. It might tend to lessen reader interest.\textsuperscript{33} ‘The Thina Thanthi’ always provides comprehensive (and therefore lengthy) background material, it might tire the readers a little. However, it must be remembered that this background material is provided for the casual reader, who would benefit most from it.

2. Elucidation

Besides providing the background for proper perception of the news, ‘The Thina Thanthi’ also explains the salient features of a news item, for the benefit of its readers.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 7 October 1978, p.1.

Putting out news about the prohibition Act, the paper also published the following as implications of this act.

“From now on, prohibition offenders will not be let off with a fine. They would have to serve a jail term as well.

Before this act came into force, those who were charged with consuming illicit liquor were only fined. They paid the fine and came back to their illicit drinks once again. They can’t do that now. For a prohibition offences, a jail term has been made obligatory to eradicate the menace of illicit provisions.34

Other papers seldom bother to explain the provisions and their impact on the affected (common) man in this way. ‘The Thina Thanthi’, keeping in mind the intellectual handicaps its readers suffer from, always goes out of the way to enlighten them. This is elucidation at its best.

Repetition for Emphasis

In view of the importance of a particular news item, ‘The Thina Thanthi’ uses the same expression in the headline, body of the

spread and also in the conclusion. A repetitive reminder of its seriousness is a feature of this paper. For instance the provision in the Prohibition Act, specifying a life term in jail for selling illicit liquor will be repeatedly stressed in Thina Thanthi. Other papers like The Thina Mani, would not bother to mention it more than once.

For instance, this speciality could be discerned is the news flash on this act, in the issue dated 3.10.1978.

Headline “Life Term for Vendors of Spurious Liquor”

Prelude: It has been clarified that in the event of death due to consumption of spurious liquor, the vendor of the brew is liable to a life term in jail and also a fine.

Body

If some one dies after drinking spurious liquor, the one who sold it faces a charge that could lead to life imprisonment and a hefty fine. The word spurious (Poisonous) liquor has also been explained fully for the benefit of the paper reader.

35. Ibid. 3 October 1978, p. 2.
Choice of Newsworthy Material

Aditanar had a clear idea of what constitutes news fit for publication. Not the run of the mill, common place but the unusual is news.

According to Aditanar

1. A dog biting a man is not news but reserve is

2. A training arriving on time is not news. A delay of four hours is.

The normal repetitive routine is not news. If the reader could wonder, “could this have happened?” that would be news.

Here too, a distinction should be made Birth and death are routine events, not normally newsworthy. But if a minister delivers a child, it is news. If a great leader dies, that is news. Every thing depends on the person who is born, who is dead. 36 If a Minister is bitten by a dog, it is a front page news.

In assessing the quality of happenings and deciding on their newsworthiness, experience and familiarity with readers’ preference

could be of great help to newspaper men. The new entrant may find merit in all events and make them part of his news spread. With experience, he rejects happenings not related to the readership, news the readers might have no interest in.

Those new to the field cannot resist the temptation of publishing everything that reaches them. It is like a child swallowing all the sweets at one go. News casters should exercise judgement on whether or not an event is noteworthy at that particular point of time. If he understands the nuances of news printing, he would retain a bit of some news sometime for future use. Published at the right time, items, retained for deferred use become top news. A good newscaster has a news bank, retained items of news for later use.37

It could also be said the only news that the readers look for in a paper is newsworthy. So items preferred by the majority of readers are chosen for publication.38

In the evening edition of a paper, the events during the day should be given prominence. The main news printed in the

morning papers should be avoided. New details, as they come in, should be incorporated.\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{News Announcement}

Whenever possible an advance announcement of a likely event should be put out. After publishing news about the due-to-happen-event, preferably on the first page, news of its happening (after it takes place) could be relegated to the second or third page.

For instance the proposed visit of say, a Prime Minister should be flashed on the first page under a banner headline before it takes place. His visit, after it materialises could be covered on the second and third page.

Aditanar was also very particular that pre-publishing in the form of advance coverage of a likely event, should not be availed of by politicians, who are in the habit of making others spread news about them. What 'The Thina Thanthi' did was to foretell coming events purely on the basis of their newsworthiness. It would never serve sectarian political interest.\textsuperscript{40}


\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ibid.}, p.72.
In regard to news from abroad or news from other states, there needn’t be a total ban on them. If some of the events from abroad were newsworthy and found wide coverage in the elitist papers, they should find a brief reference in ‘The Thina Thanthi’. Its readers should not feel that even such important news could not be obtained from ‘The Thina Thanthi’. The point to remember is that, instead of a substantial spread, such items of news could be accommodated in one column. If three or four foreign news bits deserve to be published, they could be printed under a caption “News from Abroad”. Everything depends upon how far it is relevant to Indian (Tamil) readers. If a policy statement by a Minister of a foreign country (or of another state) is considered newsworthy, it should be given a two column projection. If some happening in a foreign land is considered good enough to be part of ‘The Thina Thanthi’s newscast, it should be reported with illustrative diagrams. In reporting war events, a map indicating the scene of action is a must. Without such pictorial aid, printing of foreign news would not make sense to the reader.

In regard to political news, Aditanar insisted on a non-partisan policy as he was aware that there could be a change in the


fortunes of political parties periodically.43 The paper set up separate columns for ‘election connected news’ and news about Assembly proceedings.44

Aditanar aimed at providing the latest news sooner than others did. Even if he had to report on news already published in other dailies, he effected modification. Instead of a verbatim copy of, say, a speech by Rajaji, published in another paper, Aditanar numbered the points made by the speaker and put them forth in proper sequence.45

In projecting political news, Aditanar wanted his paper to exercise great caution. If it was claimed that 200 communists joined the Congress it should not be published as such without verification. In the absence of a list containing the names of persons who had switched loyalties, no credence could be given to such claims, thought Aditanar. He also insisted that news about accidents and legal battles, to find a place in the paper should have happened locally, regionally, in places

where the papers are widely read or at least within the borders of Tamil Nadu.\textsuperscript{46}

False, derogatory news about a person would amount to defamation. If such a news is reported against a dead person it would be wilful character assassination. So Aditanar wanted to avoid both. He set his mind against publishing unauthenticated news. If a politician is reported to have made a statement which is in conflict with the party's policy, it should not be published without verification.\textsuperscript{47}

Aditanar insisted that no one connected with ‘The Thina Thanthi’ should print news about his friends or relatives. The latest news should be on page 1 less important news should be in the other pages.\textsuperscript{48}

**Fashioning Headlines**

Aditanar laid great stress on the quality of the headlines, A news item consists of three parts - the caption, the prelude and the body of the news spread. Only if the headline is attractive would it


rouse interest in the news that follows. So Aditanar said that the caption should be well thought out.\textsuperscript{49} The shape and size and also the position of the caption requires a methodology that is different from the prelude and the body that follow. For this reason it could be said that the care in regard to the caption is well taken.

In regard to the text of the caption, Aditanar has a formula. When someone, after reading a news item, conveys its gist to a friend, he would first refer to the core of the news. For instance if one were to tell his friend "Indira ha lost!", that, according to Aditanar, should be the headline that makes the reader scan the rest of the news with great interest. As regards the nature of the headlines, Aditanar has three bits of advice. In the first place, one should satisfy himself whether the news is important enough to deserve a banner headline. Secondly the caption should be rich in thought and impact. Finally, it should be couched in words that throb with energy and drawing power. Such familiar words scream, amazement, confusion, cruelty and moaning (the expression Tamil equivalents). These should be used in captions, says Aditanar.\textsuperscript{50} If in the speech of a loader, the usual ferocity and fury are missing, the caption should not read

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p.106.

“Vituperative attack by ...!” He advises against the use of long phrases in headlines. For example, the concessions offered to those who voluntarily undergo Family Planning Operations should read “Family Planning Incentives”.

Aditanar also felt that the headlines should not give the impression of being secretive. It should not also sound like an offensive reference. For instance a series of in-camera discussions should not come under a caption that suggests something else. The names in the headline should be familiar ones (Kamala, Lalitha, Raman etc.) Captions should not include strange, unheard of names. (Urmasabooshani, Sthapathy or Stapathi). He is against the repetitve use of word ‘Love’. He says that headlines should reflect human preferences. Captions should breathe life; they should not consist of lifeless references. They should be simple and easy to read. A noun that is descriptive of the action should be preferred to the corresponding verb. No headline should hurt the feelings of people of any political persuasion.51

The exclamatory mark is a favourite with Aditanar. He is against repetitive use of the same expression. A caption should be

51. Ibid., pp. 108-110.
a self-explanatory precise, not a confusing, meaningless nothing. For instance a caption that read, “Accident” is of no news. “Car hits trees”, “Plane Catches Fire” would be more utilitarian. In regard to outstation (other states) news, captions should be of use only to the extent the news that follows is of relevance to Tamil readers.

The Journalistic Diction of Thina Thanthi

The most widely read newspaper in India is ‘The Thina Thanthi. Two factors account for its great popularity. The contents are such that most people are drawn to it. Secondly the language employed strikes a resonant chord in the reader’s sub-conscious. It is the language he uses in everyday speech. Only if his favourite reading matter is clothed in the language he is familiar with will the message carry, or else there would be a snap in communication. Keeping this in mind, Aditanar undertook a serious research to evolve the most appropriate mode of communication. In the use of the letter, worked and phrase, he aimed at a simplicity of rendition and clarity in import.

In order to put his to effect, ‘The Thina Thanthi’ adopts a two fold strategy. 1. Adoption of a simple, straightforward style

52. Ibid., p.117.
2. Adoption of a simple dictional mode.

The methodology adopted by 'The Thina Thanthi' to evolve an 'easy to read, easy to understand' style could now be studied in detail.  

1. Easy to read

In order to provide 'easy-to-read' material care is taken in the deployment of letters, words and phrases.

Letters

The life and vitality of a language is not dependent on its literature or men of letters. Rather it depends upon the use it is put to by the people. If people show no interest in the use of a language in daily intercourse, the language becomes a 'dead language'. Aditanar believed that this would apply also to journalistic language. He decided to report news in a language that approximates to everyday speech. He felt that with the growth of literacy and an improvement in the language of common intercourse, the diction of newspapers could also show improvement.

Besides writing in his own paper and setting standards in newscasting for the common man, Aditanar has also published a Guide Book for Newspaper journalists.\textsuperscript{55}

It is not enough if the style is simple, the words used should be those in common, everyday use, he says. He recommends the simpler word for bird, Kuruvi in preferences to ‘Paravai’ a name of scholarly usage.\textsuperscript{56}

Aditanar has boldly dispensed with the vowel --- (ouh) and its consonant combination. This letter being a little hard to pronounce, is also a bit confusing as it reads like two letters. So Aditanar has employed a substitute combination that approximates to its tonal effect. For instance, ‘Ouhwaiyar’ he has changed to ‘Avvayar’, ‘Kaourie’ to ‘Kavuri’, ‘Vaouwhaal’ to ‘Vuvaal’ and ‘Droupathi’ to ‘Druppathi’.\textsuperscript{57}

If the Tamil vowel ‘OUH’ is followed by the consonant with ‘V’ sound, it can be written ‘AV’. This results in the lower lip


\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Ibid.}, p.21.
coming into play. If the consonant following is ‘P’, then both lips are involved.

Aditanar has also suggested the avoidance of ‘o’ a letter rarely used. It is almost like K (With a H effect) and could be dispensed with without causing any inconvenience. The Tamil equivalent for steel has this letter in the middle. By using the more familiar “Irumbu” (Iron) this letter could be put aside.58

To the extent possible Sanskrit letters cold be avoided for the sake of clarity. Sanskrit words, long used and familiar, can also be replaced by Tamil equivalents. Raja is Sanskrit because it has the J sound. ‘Irasa’ is the Tamilsed form but ‘Mannan’ could be an authentic Tamil Substitute (Rajaji cannot be recast ‘Rasaasi’). The Sanskrit ‘Pushpam’ is redundant when there is the Tamil ‘Poo’ everybody is familiar with. And the Sanskrit ‘Jalaam’ has to give way to the commonest Tamil word for water, ‘Thanneer’.

The changes make for clarity and easy reading.

Easy Comprehension

Verbal economy combined with words easy to pronounce should be given priorities. It would be ideal if the longest word used doesn’t have more than eight letters. The scholarly habit of combining two words into one should be dispensed with. Some of the equivalents now in use could make reading easier and understanding less difficult.

1. Driver - Ohuttunar (Tamil)

2. Vakil - Vazhakkaringar(Tamil)

3. Manthiri - Ammaichar (Minister)

Aditanar has no objection to using old familiar words in place of nascent Tamil equivalent. His intention is to make news easy to understand.

While Aditanar advocates the avoidance of Sanskrit words and expressions and also a fault free, grammatically flawless Tamil,
he does not favour the high faulty verbose style of Pundits. In his opinion, it was possible to be both simple and grammatical.\textsuperscript{61}

When a news caster refers to something very well known, he needn’t add “It is common knowledge that” (Therin Thathae). As everyone knows that Gandhi won freedom for India, a reference to his fact need not be accompanied by this tag. Repetition of the same word even to convey the same sense, should be avoided. ‘Black Money could be referred to as ‘Hidden Money’, ‘Unaccounted Money’.\textsuperscript{62}

He has also cautioned against replacing simple words with sophisticated equivalents. For instance ‘Said’ need not be substituted by ‘declared’, ‘announced’ or ‘proclaimed’. Aditanar favours the return to explicit Tamil Words that are available and therefore need not be ignored in favour of fashionable Sanskrit terms. ‘Sambantham’ in Sanskrit means ‘relationship’, ‘connection’. The Tamil word which means the same is ‘Thodarbu’ should be used, says Aditanar.\textsuperscript{63} A simpler, more familiar expression should be used to describe a person

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., pp. 30-31. \\
\end{flushright}
presiding over a meeting. His main concern is not to burden the simple reader with those elitist expressions.

**Phraseological Brevity**

In his Guidelines for Newscasters, Aditanar has suggested brevity in sentence structures. Short pithy sentences with a verb ending make for easy comprehension. The temptation to combine sentences with conjunctions and the propensity to use parenthesis should be overcome.64

If a word could convey two meanings it should be avoided. The Tamil word for 'drunkard' has a close tonal resemblance to the one that means tenant. So, if the report is of a murder, it should be said that it was done under the influence of liquor.65

Never begin a sentence with an unusual or hard-to-understand word, says Aditanar. This would result in the semi literate reader giving up even without reading the news with which he gets stuck with the opening word itself. There should be no errors of

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grammar. Singular / plural subjects should have the appropriate verb ending, says Aditanar. Gender too should be borne in mind.66

Aditanar insists on comma (,) Semi-colon (;) and colon(:) and full stop at the right places to indicate pause, the normal pause observed in normal conversation. Aditanar has also given clear instructions on the use of hyphens, a short one for a compound word and a long one for the rare parenthesis. If there is to be a repetitive averment, the same expression should not be repeated. For instance an attack with a knife should in the first instance speak of the murder weapon and in the second, the manner of the assault. That way the reader's interest is sustained.67

In order that the reader gets to know the content of the news without difficulty Aditanar has said that monotonous repetitions of the same structures should give way to varied averment. The opening part of the report should be formal expansion of the caption whereas the body should offer the details, substituting different forms

66. Ibid., p.117.
67. Ibid., 115.
of expressions one after the other. In this way proper linkage is achieved.68

‘The Thina Thanthi’s Columns

‘The Thina Thanthi’ is unique in regard to the structuring of its columns. Not one of them exceeds 5 cm in width. They are positioned under captions with great finesse. Aditanar’s wish was that the flow of news from one column to another should not be impeded on any account. If the news spread flows form one column to another and if a paragraph ends somewhere above the bottom of a column, the next paragraph, which continues in the next column should have a small subtitle. this facilitates easier absorption of the content of the news. It could be said that this accounts for the great popularity enjoyed by ‘The Thina Thanthi’ among its rural audience.69

Translation methodology in ‘The Thina Thanthi’

While translating words from English to Tamil, Aditanar insisted that the translation should convey the sense of the original rather than its form. For instance he has translated ‘Air conditioning’

68. Mallai Murasu, Vellivizha Malar, Madras, pp.165-166.
as that which provides a cool ambience, not as how 'Air' is 'conditioned'. He has adopted the same principle while translating 'Hartal' (closure of all establishments), Sangham (Mandran, an assemblage of like minded people), Deputy Minister (one who assists the cabinet-ranked Minister) and emergency resolution (one introduced or passed because of urgency), keeping in view the sense and implication of the original, not its form.

He has also insisted that while translating from English to Tamil, the most familiar equivalents of common usage should be chosen. For instance the word 'Queen' should be translated 'Rani', the more familiar equivalent than 'Arasi' which smacks of elitist snobbery. In the same way, 'Arts College' should be translated 'Kalloori' rather than 'Kalai' (Art) Kaloori (College) because all college offer courses in Arts and a reference to it is redundant.\footnote{S. Prasana Kumar, \textit{Op. cit.}, pp. 10-11.}

While reporting on Budget proposals, Aditanar has suggested appropriate Tamil equivalents to Income Tax, Production Tax, Sales Tax and Death duties. For Advocate General, Chief Prosecutor and such judicial officers, Aditanar prefers the familiar 'Vakil' to the
more sophisticated ‘Vazhakkaringar’ a modern coinage that hasn’t yet reached the masses.\textsuperscript{71}

Aditanar wants a distinction to be made in the translation of the guns by the police and the Army. He has a word of advice on the facets of translation. His ultimate objective is to reach the largest number of readers. He has succeeded admirably in this.\textsuperscript{72}

By paying attention to every aspect of news casting and taking care that a reader is not encumbered in anyway while reading the paper, Aditanar has made ‘The Thina Thanthi’ the most widely read newsheet in Asia. His untiring work and persistence have ensured a great success, truly a saga of achievement.\textsuperscript{73}

Unlike investment in other industries which provides returns from the start, one has to suffer losses in the early days of running a paper. Aditanar started ‘The Thanthi’ at Madurai in the full knowledge of this possibility. In 1942, out of the first day’s issue of 500 copies less than 200 were sold. But Aditanar persevered. In 1943 he started


the Chennai edition. From 1953 onwards all editions of the morning paper bore the name 'The Thina Thanthi'.

Undeterred by the return of 320 copies of the very first issue of The Thanthi at Madurai, Aditanar kept going. Very soon the paper came to be recognised as the one that gave news earlier than other papers. Particularly when 'The Thanthi' flashed the news of Lakshmi Kanthan's murder before other papers got wind of it, its readership grew. From 3000, the sales shot up to 12,000 per day. And the trend hasn't stopped.

As early as in 1953, 'The Thina Thanthi' led the rest in daily sales. It continues to be the leader even today. The process doesn't seem to stop. Sales continues to grow. It has also another distinction of being the only paper to publish 10 editions simultaneously from 10 regional offices.

'The Thina Thanthi's daily sales figures have touched 6 lakhs. This is a great achievement compared to sales of other papers.

A Bombay based institution while making bi-annual surveys in the field


of newspaper sales and readership has come out with the statistics that are self revelatory.

In 1981, Thina Thanthi sold 2,55,522 copies per day.\textsuperscript{77} Next year its sales shot up to 2,72,787 an increase of over 25,000 the previous year.\textsuperscript{78} Madras alone accounted for 62,235, Madurai 8145, Tirchy 6,628, Coimbatore 8,693, Salem 5,246 and Bangalore 10,570.\textsuperscript{79}

The edition released from the Madras office is sent to all states of North, East India, Andhra, Maharashtra, Delhi, W. Bengal, Punjab, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Orrisa besides Manipur and Nagland.

The Madras edition is also sent to Tambaram, Chengelpat, Poonamalle, Tiruvellore, Thiruvottiyur, Avadi, Arakonam, Conjeevaram, Ponneri and Thiruthani.\textsuperscript{80}

The Madurai edition covers an even wider range which includes Virudhunagar, Sattur, Sivakasi, Rajapalayam, Kovilpatti,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{77} Audit Bureau of Circulation, Bombay, certificate No. 67/106, 17 February 1982.
\item \textsuperscript{78} Ibid., Certificate No. 68/106 19 February 1983.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Ibid., Certificate No. 68/106, 25 February 1982.
\end{itemize}
Cumbum, Gudalur, Bodi, Periyakulam, Theni, Usilampatti, Perayur, Kodaikanal, Mana Madurai, Sivangana, Karaikudi, Ramnad and Rameswaram.\textsuperscript{81}

The Tiruchi edition reaches readers in Lalgudi, Thiruverumbudhur, Idaivillaipatti, Thurayoor, Puthur, Thiruvaroor, Mayiladurai, Kumbakonam, Pattukottai, Nagapattinam, Sirhazhi, Mannargudi, Thiruthuraipoondi, Ahdudurai and Naachiarkoil.\textsuperscript{82}

The Coimbatore edition reaches such destinations as Pollachi, Mettupalayam, Udumalaipettai, Valparai, Singanallur, Annamalai, Pathanur, Perur, Peelamedu and Avinashi.

The Tirunelveli edition is sent to Tuticorin, Thiruchendur, Sathaankulam, Nagercoil, Ambasamudram, Shenkottai, Kayalpattiinam, Sankarankoil, Pavoor Chatram, Kulasekaram and Thakkalai.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 19 February 1983.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., Certificate No. 70/106, 25 February 1984.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
From the Vellore office, copies of ‘The Thina Thanthi are sent to Thiruvannamalai, Gudiyatham, Arani, Ambur, Thirupathur, Arcot, Vaniambadi, Ranipet and Vandavasi.84

The Cuddalore edition is sent to Chidambaram, Villupuram, Virudhaachalam, Thindivanam, Panrooti, Neiveli Kollakurichi, Uzhandurpettai, Karaikal and Pondicerhi.

The Salem edition serves readers in Tiruchengode, Aathoor, Pallipaalayam, Erode, Gopichettypaalayam, Idaipatti Bhavani, Satyamangalam, Tarapuram, Anthiyoor, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri.85

From 1983, the Madras office sent copies of the paper to Maduranthakam and to Hong Kong.86

The Madurai Office sent copies to Sivangangai in Ramnad District.

The Tiruchi edition was sent to Ariyalur and Mannapaarai, while the Tirunelvlei edition reached Virkamashinghapuram and the

86. Ibid.
Vellore and Cuddalore editions were sent to Thiruvanthipuram and Nellikuppam respectively.\(^{87}\)

As a result Thina Thanthi has maintained it huge lead over other papers in regard to sales.

According to statistics available in 1984, the total sales touched 3,23,675. Madras alone accounted for 75,875. Madurai sold 9289, Tiruchy 9,271, Coimbatore 9,613, Nellai 3,099, Salem 6.484, Vellore 3,613, Cuddalore 2,786 and Bangalore 18,886.\(^{88}\)

Madurai office extended services to Vandiyur and Thirupatur. From Coimbatore papers were sent to Somannur, Seerranaikanpalayam, Palladam and Kanyamuthur. Tirunelveli office sent papers to Thiruchendur, Salem to Sankari, Omaloor and Kangeyam.\(^{89}\)

According to 1985 figures, total sales touched 3,13,624. Madras alone sold 67,503 copies, Madurai 7,129, Tiruchi 7,814,

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\(^{88}\) Ibid, 16 February 1985.

\(^{89}\) Ibid.
Coimbatore 8,217, Nellai 2786, Vellore 2939, Cuddalore 2407, Salem 5870 and Bangalore 16207.

In 1986, ‘The Thina Thanthi’ sold 2,84,470 copies. In 1987 ‘The Thina Thanthi’ sold 2,91,653 copies. This is about 7000 in excess of the previous year’s sale. Madras alone sold 70,655 copies Madura 7269, Tiruchi 7527, Coimbatore 10,367, Nellai 2,907, Vellore 3,381, Cuddalore 2,637, Salem 6,447 and Bangalore 16,908 copies. In the rest of Karnataka 7,511 copies were sold.

The Madras office sent copies of ‘The Thina Thanthi’ to Thiruttani. Tiruchi edition was sent to Perambalur. Coimbatore office extended service to Kallaipettai and Valparai. From Vellore copies were sent to Tiruvanthapuram.

The figures of 1988 show a total sales of 3,12,450 copies. Of this Chennai sold 76,988 copies, Madurai 7551, Tiruchy 8900,

92. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
Coimbatore 11488, Nellai 2,822, Vellore 3,622, Cuddalore 2,737, Salem 6,637 and Bangalore 16,263 copies.95

The Madras office sends copies to Manali. From Coimbatore office copies are sent to Kadayam.96

The 1989 figures show a total sales of 3,10,714 copies. Chennai led with 73,154, Madurai sold 6,813, Tiruchy 8,581, Coimbatore 11,920, Tirunelveli 2,499, Vellore 3,703, Cuddalore 2,548, Salem 6,144 and Bangalore 14,512.97

In 1990 total sales stood at 3,01,059. Chennai sold 75,903, Madurai 7570, Tiruchi 9,410, Coimbatore 12,787, Nellai 2,442, Vellore 3,640, Cuddalore 2,769, Salem 5,761 and Bangalore 13,837.98

The Vellore sent copies of the paper to Walajhapettai. It cannot be denied that the growth of 'The Thina Thanthi' year after year has been steady. From 1990 to the present day, this trend seems

96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., Certificate No. 82/106, 10 March 1990.
to continue. No competition from any other paper can prevent this upward surge in the sales of this paper.

In 2000 A.D. the sales figure reached 5,84,713. From this it could be seen that during the past decade, there has been an average daily sales of over 200,000 copies of the paper each day. This could be attributed to the innovative approach adopted by the paper ever since its inception.99

The Head office at Chennai alone sells 1,89,517 copies. Madurai 49,367, Tiruchi 36,517, Coimbatore 63,069, Nellai 31, 678, Vellore 28,618, Cuddalore 23,627, Salem 44,424, Bangalore 33,536 and Pondy 577 copies. From Erode 20,520 copies were sold. In Nagercoil alone 20,369 copies are sold.100

It could be seen that ‘The Thina Thanthi’s sales has always shown an upward trend. If it leads the race among all papers in sales, the credit should go to Aditanar. New nuances, and reader friendly inputs have contributed to the success of the paper. Its circulation swelling by the year, there has been need for regional offices in more and more places. This trend is likely to continue.101

100. Ibid.