0. INTRODUCTION

Devanur Mahadeva was born in 1948. He is considered as a powerful, balanced and representative dalit creative writer in Kannada. Both the State and the Central Sahitya Academy's have honoured him with awards. He came to the limelight through his short stories. The novelette "oDala:La" and the novel "kusumaba:le" earned him a lot of fame and name. Kusumaba:le because of its metaphorical and mystical overtones earned a lot of criticism as well.

When I wanted to do research, I considered it to be my duty to do justice to the Dalit writings by analysing the writings of Devanur Mahadeva. With the consent of my Research Guide Dr. K. Anban, I started my research work on the stories of Devanur Mahadeva. Initially I intended to include the novelette and novel too as stories and proceeded in preparing cards for all the lexical items found there. To my amazement, I had to prepare nearly 40,000 cards with lexical items in phonemic script, meaning in English and reference numbers-book-story-page-line-etc. It taxed me a lot financially and otherwise. Finally I had to request my guide to find a way out so that I can handle the materials with reasonable case at the same time not loosing the original intention of doing justice to the speech used by Devanur Mahadeva. Finally we decided to confine to the seven short stories. Nearly 8000 cards depicting the language used in those stories were taken out from the bulk of 40,000 cards with a sigh of relief.

These seven stories, written by Devanur Mahadeva in his twenties deal with a variety of themes and contain characters of different hues. Hence, the language-though by and large seemed to be one homogeneous system-shows a lot of variations under almost all the morphemes. Therefore, the overall pattern is analysed and hence the bulk of allomorphs.

Assigning meaning to the items was not an easy job. Inspite of having a number of dictionaries-both monolingual and bilingual, I had a tough time to arrive
at a conclusion because of the localised usage. Fortunately I was trained by my guide to go to the core and decide.

First of all, I read all the stories once. Then I numbered the lines on each page. Then I began to write the cards. In each card one lexical item was written in phonemic script; meaning in English was given; grammatical label was given wherever possible. In case of the doubtful ones they were given once. I had discussion with my Guide. For easy handling of cards during analysis, reference numbers were given to the cards at the right hand upper corner. This turned out to be a boon when I was doing the morphological analysis in particular.

Then I started checking the items with my guide. I had to discuss a lot, refer the originals in context to satisfy him about the correctness of the data and the meaning. On a number of instances, I had to rewrite the meaning. Though it was tedious and at times irritating, it has paid its dividends now.

As I had spent a lot of time in preparing cards for the novelette and the novel in addition to the seven stories, I had to be satisfied by excluding Syntax from my description. I really feel sorry for that. However I have tried my best to present the other aspects in a detailed manner which I hope one can easily see in phonotactics, syllabic structure and morphophonemics.

The present thesis consists the following.

0. Introduction:

This section gives a birds eye view of the material studied, methodology used and the outcome of the study.

1. Phonology:

This section deals with Phonemic Inventory, Phonemic Contrasts, Distribution of Phonemes, Phonemic Clusters and Syllables. Phonotactics and the syllabic structures are dealt with in detail. Results are quantified.
2. Morphophonemics:

All the Sandhi changes found are analysed in detail and morphophonemic rules are framed. The formulated morphophonemic rules are ordered on the basis of the instances where more than one rule are used in a single construction. Thorough checking is made and necessary rules are formulated.

3. Noun Morphology:

The Inherent nouns, Derived nouns and the Compound nouns are classified in this section. All the nominal constructions are studied. The Gender Number Markers, Case Markers, Pronouns and Numerals are studied in detail.

4. Verb Morphology:

The verb stems are classified into five classes. The Transitive-Causative Markers, Tense Markers, Pronominal Terminations, Infinitive Marker, Verbal Participle, Relative Participle, Modal Constructions, Verbal Noun and Verbal partcipial Noun are studied in detail.

5. Modifiers:

The adjectives and adverbs-both inherent and derived- are analysed.

6. Clitics:

The different types of Clitics are presented.

7. Special Words of Dialect:

Certain unique words of the present dialect are presented.

8. Lexicon (Verbs Only):

As hundreds of words are given as illustrations in phonotactics and other sections, only the verbs are presented here for easy reference.
Bibliography:

Contains the list of books used during the study.

This thesis may be considered as an authentic record of the language used by a representative dalit creative writer of Kannada language during the seventies of the twentieth century. It is hoped that this study kindles the minds of other scholars to study different genres of Dalit literature in Kannada and other languages.