CHAPTER - VII
7.1 General

Though language is viewed simply as a tool for communication, the potentiality of language giving clues and impressions about the attitude, socio-economic background, literacy level, age, etc. of the speaker has been recognized since a long time. Actually the users of a language, while encoding the message which they want to communicate, either knowingly or unknowingly encode several features about their socio-economic background, literary level, etc., apart from the attitude which they possess about the topic of discussion, or on the person spoken to in addition to the message which he/she wants to encode. In fact this stand taken by some of the linguists has given birth to stylistics and sociolinguistics. It has to be underscored here that not only the choice of words but the choice of syntactic structures chosen by the speaker for encoding his message deserves careful attention. It is with this view that Roy's work has been taken up for analysis and we have come out with conclusions of this study.

Although a narrative is defined as a method of recapitulating past experiences, the authors of such narratives differ widely in sequencing the past experiences. While some writers prefer to choose a chronological sequencing of events some like Arundhati Roy choose stream of consciousness technique of narration which is relatively a recent trend in Indian writing in English. Roy, with background knowledge of architecture, gives a blue print of the plot in the first chapter itself. The narrative
begins from the end and moves back and forth in the close. Her experience of serving as a script writer for Doordharshan has induced her to describe minute details with care in the narrative. Since the author has very successfully handled the stream of consciousness technique in her narrative there is no chronological and linear movement of plot and theme. Consequently there is no specific complicating action which is followed by resolution, evaluation and coda. The features of a narrative as identified by Labov (1972).

Arundhati Roy employs a circuitous narrative where events emerge elliptically. There are time shifts, and fast forwards which denote that the novel is post-modern. The length of sentences also differ dramatically. On the one hand there are either lengthy constructions for omniscient remarks, descriptions, narration of events, etc., and on the other hand short phrasal nouns, or single word sentences to carry the emotive burden. In certain instances, one word sentences have been used by the novelist to describe the child's imaginative world. Since the novel is capable of multi layered interpretation it is ideal for all round readership. The descriptions of events and character are often accompanied by the narrator's clues which serve as an aside. The extensive use of parenthesis serves the purpose. These features create an impression of viewing a play rather than reading a novel. The narrative voice though not overt is forever nudging the reader.

7.2. Conclusion

Failure of marriage in the present day social setup, classicism, regionalism, feminism, irony, satire, betrayal and so on have been portrayed very effectively in this
novel. Unfortunately all the marriages that find a place in this narrative end in failure. The narrative speaks about marriages spanning over three generations, however, none of them is successful. Perhaps this description speaks about the failure of marriage as an institution owing to transition of caste and moral values in the present day society.

An analysis of characterization reveals that the author has used narrative statements with a sense of balance to describe character. Instead of portraying characters in terms of environment, class, education, etc., Arundhati Roy has succeeded in portraying them in a balanced manner where the character is for the environment and environment for the character. That is why we have ‘old world paravans’ and ‘paravans with a future’ and fate of a ‘manless woman’ etc. The feelings, emotions and moods of the character are described according to the situations in which they are placed. Since the narrative is told in third person there aren't any dialogue sequences. So the events and actions flow in and out like a memory play. The mental forages of the characters are like monologues.

The poetic richness of Roy's prose is another feather to the Indo Anglian plume. The tone of narrative statements provides cues, nuances of character, satire, humour, etc. Similes form a special feature in this novel. Numerous instances suggest hybridization. Some comparisons like the description of Estha's pain to mango hair between molars, Sophie's skin being as wrinkled as a dhoby's finger, father Mulligan as a Santa, Kochu Maria as a bottled foetus, teeth like piano keys etc., exude cosmopolitan flavour and hybridization. Such analysis reveals the techniques adopted by the novelist to reach their goal. Special collocations are another dominating feature.
There are several new coinages and peculiar collocations to describe the multifaceted theme. The nativisms add to the regional flavour of the novel. Another distinct feature is use of repetitions. Certain repetitions serve as analepses and prolepses. Others either denote emotional state or child(ish)’s description of events. Study of language use enables the reader to assess the nature of kinds of ways the writers adopt for depicting situations, character, etc. in a novel. The different units are combined into a remarkable unity.

The play of meaning has been manipulated by Arundhati Roy and the novel has numerous symbols which can be interpreted according to the skill of the reader. The events and even scenic backdrop have symbolic connotations. The non-verbal strategy has also been exploited and like in a mimetic mode the emotions of guilt, sorrow, anger, etc. are not voiced directly by the characters but are suggested through signs. Within the conceptual frame work, there are too many arrivals / returns and deaths.

The novel is a cinematographic description of the cultural milieu of Kerala amidst the changing phases of colonialism, independence, emergence of communism, etc. in India. The events and comments make the novel appear as a document of social, political and religious and cultural aspects. Questions are raised by the author regarding political, social and religious sham which dominate modern Indian society.

Interpretation of a literary work does not depend solely on the reader’s knowledge of the language system but as an interactional activity between a writer and the reader. This involves correlating the meaning of an item of the linguistic code with
the meaning it takes on in the context in which it occurs, and whether it is appropriate to the situation. The author's narrative statements regarding identity of participants in communication, their relation, social status, sex, age, the degree of formality of the situation, their attitude or emotional involvement, domain, etc., have been taken into account for analyzing the situations presented in the novel.

On the whole, Arundhati Roy is quite successful in presenting situations and events, whether they are humorous, competitive, convivial, with precision and clarity. The subtle nuances of verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the characters have been presented admirably by the novelist as was seen in the analyses.

The syntax provides clue to the textual structure. The text uses the technique of repetition at the levels of lexis and syntax. The repetitions of certain sentences is important. There is occurrence of two main types of structures – those that function to describe the events through direct narration and those which function to represent the speech of people are reported by the narrator. The discourse situation heard in the novel is not monologic. Within the narrative framework, other frameworks are encompassed, particularly the frame work of belief that exists in the culture such as gender, class bias, etc. The narrator's voice controls the discourse presentation to the reader. The fact that the narrator is omniscient is made clear. The disjointed one word sentences account for the presence of staccato rhythm in the narration.

Semiotic interpretation of Roy's work has shown that it is possible to have multiple projections in the tale. Descriptions about non-verbal behaviour involving
facial organs, gestures were found in plenty in this story. Since the entire narrative is in third person with little use of dialogues, the readers are told about the emotive basis of characters through non-verbal gestures and movements. It is astonishing to note that the look of people has been described in a variegated manner thereby expressing different emotions. A single word used by the author speaks volumes about the emotions displayed by the character. In other words, it can be said that words are used in denotational, connotational, evocative sense all at once.

The novel is a systematic presentation of the variegated Indian socio-cultural matrix. Often writers of English in India made deliberate efforts to depict the distress of the downtrodden classes, Gandhian ethos, contemporary social milieu or the private sphere of people. It is indeed very interesting to note that all the above mentioned aspects have been encompassed in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*. We can trace the gradual progression where the author proceeds from delineation of individual’s life and quest in all its varied and complex forms to their psychological state.

Arundhati Roy has succeeded in using English for her communicative purpose and the artifacts have been manipulated to convey her thoughts. Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* mixes magic, realism, romance, melodrama, family and social tensions. Her style is inimitable. The narration moves in tangency from gorgeous descriptions to metaphorical recall.
7.3. Future perspectives

From the study carried out, we can assess the nature and way in which the novelist has succeeded in capturing the readers with an enthralling tale. Based on this study, a comparative study of other authors who have used the same style of narration can be made. There is enormous scope for analysis of syntactic structures also.

The technique of presenting stories employing stream of consciousness has been experimented by Tamil writers like La. Sa. Ramamritham, and others. The themes chosen by the Tamil writers are mostly indigenous describing the lives and problems of native people. The writings of such authors may be taken up for comparison with those of Roy and others.

Usually each of the chapters in a novel will commence with author's remark. The writers will either preach or take a position with regard to a particular issue and in the light of those authorial comments the plot will move. But this particular work is unique in this respect and we never came across even a single word as a direct remark made by the author. Further she never directly sympathises with any character even though she has portrayed characters with very sensitive states of mind. The narratology can be taken up for study in the future.