CHAPTER SIX

TECHNIQUES

Style is the dress of thought –Chesterfield.

As an artisan or a skilled worker uses some tools, methods and devices in producing an object, whether a piece of furniture or a tapestry, similarly a literary artist has to use some tools, devices and methods in creating a literary work. Technique includes everything that the novelist uses for narrating his story. On finer level it means imagery, symbolism, point of view, chronological order of events, stream of consciousness, schematisation of chapter division or some other basis of division of the novel. Dialogue, language, characterisation and plot are some aspects of fictional techniques. Mark Schorer remarks thus:

Everything is technique which is not the lump of experience itself, and one cannot properly say that a writer has no technique or that he eschews technique for being a writer, he cannot do so. We can speak of good and bad technique, of adequate and inadequate of technique which serves the novel’s purpose. (Schorer 71-72)

Characters are divided into flat and round by E.M.Forster in his Aspects of the Novel. A flat character is built around a single idea or quality. A round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity. “A person in a literary composition who is so fully described as to be recognizable and
individually different from all others appearing in the same work.” (Gupta and Satish 313)

Out of the twenty-seven women characters taken for the research five characters – Indu, Jaya, Maya, Sita and Uma – are round characters and the rest are flat characters.

Every writer has his/her own peculiar choice of words and structures which make his/her writings unique. Anita Desai’s novels can be placed in Bacon’s third category - ‘those which are to be chewed and digested’. Her greatest asset is her language and the novelty of approach is in her technique. Meenakshi Mukerjee observes: “Anita Desai’s language is marked by three characteristics: sensuous richness, a high-strung sensitiveness and a love of sound of words.” (Mukerjee 189)

The aspects of theme and technique in Anita Desai’s novels are not isolated elements. They are inter-related at many levels of structure and texture. In order to convey her theme, the novelist judiciously uses character, situation, dialogues and other elements in relation to the plot. Her themes are original and entirely different from those of Indo-Anglian novelists. Her novels are not political or sociological in character but are engaged in exposing the labyrinths of the human mind and in indicating the ways to psychological fulfilment. Thus, her themes tend to wedge off the tracks of other novelists. Prof. Srinivasa Iyengar rightly observes:

Since Anita Desai’s pre-occupation is with the inner world of sensibility rather than the outer world of action, she has tried to forge a style supple
and suggestive enough to convey the fever and fretfulness of the stream of consciousness of her principal characters. (Iyengar 16)

Anita Desai is able to narrate the story, to portray the characters, to convey the mood, to evoke the atmosphere, to probe the psyche of her characters successfully. And for this she uses flashback technique stream of consciousness technique and symbolism. Dealing with the thoughts, emotions and sensations at various levels of consciousness, Anita Desai found the technique used by D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf and Henry James quite suitable for her purpose of character delineation.

Wherever I (Maya) laid myself, I could think only of the albino, the magician, his dull, opaque eyes, the hand twitching the fold of cloth between the swallowing thighs. It seemed real, I could recall each detail, and yet –God, Gautama, father, surely it is nothing but an hallucination.

(CP 64)

‘I’ narration or the ‘first person narration’ is the technique adopted by epistolatory fiction writers, and novels with first person account of one’s own or someone else’s life experiences. Wayne Booth remarks that The personal account of ‘I’ narration makes the narration dramatic, intense and lively. (Booth 212)

‘Third person narration’ is based on impersonal style of narration. The presentation is direct. This method allows the writer a large scope for depiction of objective as well as subjective states, and also facilitates the description of social and
historical events. Anita Desai adopts ‘I’ narration technique in her novel Cry, The Peacock.

In Cry, The Peacock, Part I and Part III respectively serving as prologue and epilogue are in the third person narration. The main drama Part II is narrated by Maya, the primary character of the novel, who traces her own psychic developments from normal longing for love and life to obsessive tendencies with death and destruction.

I (Maya) was caged in this room that I hated – severe, without even the grace of symmetry. I walked to and fro fingering the few objects of value and loveliness that it contained – all of them presented to me by my father, chosen by his forefathers. (CP 99)

A world of images is another special feature of Anita Desai’s novels based on subjective objectivity. The subjective experiences of the protagonists are objectified through concrete images. “A careful study reveals that the images in Anita Desai’s novels produce a surprise effect and a kind of inverted expressiveness.” (Ullman 216)

The interplay of thoughts, feelings and emotions is reflected in language, syntax and imagery. As a novelist her distinguishing qualities are many, the chief among them being the subordination of the background to the characters and the deft handling of language, imagery and syntax in order to convey an intimate expression of the inner world of her characters. Besides enriching the artistic and aesthetic value of the novels, images in Anita Desai, enlarge the critical and interpretative horizon of her art.
Image may be an epithet, a metaphor, a symbol or a simile in the form of a mental picture. Anita Desai’s mastery over words is manifested in her felicitous and deft use of images.

Anita Desai’s novels are based on the texture of a rich and splendid medley of images which is functional rather than decorative. Most of her novels deal with images suggesting the identification of human beings with the forces of isolation. She uses symbolic and functional imagery as the sole ingredient of her art. Her images are literal, metaphorical and frequently symbolical. (Bhatnagar and Rajeshwar 132)

Anita Desai’s novel Cry, The Peacock teems with numerous striking images illuminating the dark and shadowy realms of Maya’s consciousness and her deteriorating psychic states. The image of dead Toto, besides introducing the death motif, serves as the symbol of one abandoned, self doomed to loneliness.

All day the body lay rotting in the sun. It could not be moved onto the verandah for, in that April heat, the reek of dead flesh was overpowering and would soon have penetrated the rooms … Crows sat in a circle around the corpse, and crows will eat anything – entrails, eyes, anything. Flies began to hum amidst the limes, driving away the gentle bees and the unthinking butterflies. (CP 5)
Gautama, the fly, is driving away the gentle bees like Maya and the dead Toto, to utter desolation and isolation. Several disturbing and horrifying images of slimy, creeping, crawling creatures such as rats, snakes, lizards and iguanas figure in close succession in a crescendo till Maya pushes Gautama over the parapet.

I (Maya) leapt from my chair in terror, overcome by a sensation of snakes coiling and uncoiling their moist lengths about me, of evil descending from an overhanging branch, of an insane death, unprepared for, heralded by deafening drum-beats. (CP 13)

The image of the caged monkeys on the railway platform stirs and excites Maya’s agony. She too is caged within her nostalgic remembrances. It signifies her loss of privacy, her isolated life, a life of domestic imprisonment. It is her self-image. The monkeys boisterously struggling into the cage for liberation and release remind Maya of her own alienation and estrangement. She is sensitively prone to self-reflection which dismantles her emotional stability and self-identity.

I (Maya), too, went towards them, looked at them through tears, watching them move, feverishly, desperately, in cages too small to contain their upright bodies. Some clung to the rails, staring out with glazed eyes of tragedy, at the horrible vision of hell before them, close and warm and stifling. Some whimpered, and drooping mothers cradled their young most tenderly … ‘Look,’ I (Maya) cried. (CP 154-155)
The image of the peacock and its anguished shriek for mating call “Pia, pia” reaches out to Maya. She responds woefully to it, but not Gautama.

‘Can you hear them, Gautama? Do you hear them?’ ‘Hear what?’ The man had no contact with the world, or with me. What would it matter to him if he died and lost even the possibility of contact? What would it matter to him? It was I, I who screamed with the peacocks, screamed at the sight of the rainclouds, screamed at their disappearance, screamed in mute horror. (CP 175)

Gautama remains listless to the cry. Maya the pea-hen fails to get a response from

Gautama, the peacock.

Down the street the silk-cotton trees were the first to flower: their huge, scarlet blooms, thick-petalled, solid-podded, that made blood-blobs in the blue, then dropped to the asphalt and were squashed into soft, yellowish miasma, seemed animal rather than flowerage, so large were they, so heavy, so moist and living to the touch. (CP 34)

Symbolically it projects the inner void and isolation of a childless housewife. Moon symbolism is also used in the novel. It is on a moon-lit night when Maya pushes Gautama off the roof. And the reason for immediate provocation was that Gautama came between her and the worshipped moon.
And then Gautama made a mistake – his last, decisive one. In talking, gesturing, he moved in front of me, thus coming between me and the worshipped moon, his figure an ugly, crooked grey shadow that transgressed its sorrowing chastity. ‘Gautama!’ I (Maya) screamed in fury, and thrust out my arms towards him, out at him, into him and past him, saw him fall then, pass through an immensity of air, down to the very bottom. (CP 208)

There is a balance of transitive and intransitive verbs. They refer to movements, physical acts, speech acts and perceptions. Mostly factual in nature, a few of them have emotional connotations.

So she (Maya) moved the little string bed on which it lay under the lime trees, where there was a cool, aqueous shade, saw its eyes open and staring still, screamed and rushed to the garden tap to wash the visions from her eyes, continued to cry and ran, defeated, into the house… she sat there, sobbing, and waiting for her husband to come home. (CP 5)

Adverbs of place, time and manner are included. Those of manner give additional information about the characters. For example reflectively, patiently used for the gardener; quickly, quietly used for the husband.

The gardener came and drew its eyelids down with two horny thumbs, reflectively sad as when he laid a dead branch that he had to cut off, on
the compost heap: But he would not bury it, as she begged him to do.

Often in the course of that day he said to her, patiently, ‘The sweeper will do it.’ … her (Maya) husband came home. He was very late. But as soon as he came, he did all that was to be done, quickly and quietly like a surgeon’s knife at work. (CP 5-6)

The following sentence is one of the longest sentences. It pertains to the woman’s reactions, suggesting the complexity of her thoughts.

Now and then she (Maya) went out onto the verandah, and looked to see if he (Gautama) were coming up the drive which lay shrivelling, melting and then shrivelling again, like molten lead in a groove cut into the earth, and, out of the corner of her eye, could not help glancing, as one cannot help a tic, at he small white corpse laying at one end of the lawn, under a sheet, under the limes. (CP 5, 6)

Anita Desai’s novels Cry, The Peacock and Where Shall We Go This Summer? sing the eternal song of human woe and misery and also the release which the soul experiences in a moment of awakening. Anita Desai’s novel Where Shall We Go This Summer? is divided into three parts namely Monsoon ’67, Winter ’47 and Monsoon ’67

The first part Monsoon ’67 presents disintegration, in which the central protagonist Sita is tossed about rootlessly on the waves of a monsoon sea.
The second part Winter ’47, which should essentially precede the first part chronologically, stands for integration, and the third and last part Monsoon ’67 is a continuation of the first part of the novel and is suggestive of reintegration. (Bhatnagar and Rajeshwar 40-41)

It is observed that the structure of the novel is co-related with the content of the story.

The triptych structure of the novel neatly forms the pattern of the thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis. Sita’s consciousness develops through the process of consideration, rejection and then acceptance of the terms of life within this structure. (Dhawan 176-177)

This structure refers to the world of reality, the world of fantasy and the world of reality, again. Thus Bombay represents the world of reality and Manori Island world of fantasy and Sita’s return to reality.

In Anita Desai’s novel Where Shall We Go This Summer?, the tumult and chaos in Sita’s mind has been symbolically projected through the image of the monsoon wind. “(Sita) lay in a kind of paralysis, listening to the tide come in, the wind lift, the palms storm and lash till, before morning, the monsoon set in again with fully restored and renewed passion.” (WWS 28)

Anita Desai emblematically delineates the conflict in Sita’s life through the image of a crowd of crows attacking an eagle. This incident serves as an apt objective correlative to Sita’s alienation from her husband. A group of three fell on the eagle...
together. It struck out with its effete wings and the crows shot upwards, like witches speeding skywards, and beakfuls of soft breast feathers fluttered down. (WWS 35)

The image of the jellyfish has been used to highlight Sita’s entanglement and her consequent alienation.

‘Perhaps I (Sita) never ran away at all. Perhaps I am only like the jellyfish washed up by the waves, stranded there on the sand bar. I was just stranded here by the sea, that’s all. I hadn’t much to do with it at all,’ she sadly admitted. (WWS 135)

Verbs are frequent in the following passage. They refer to actions, events, physical acts, speech acts and psychological states.

She (Jamila) cackled to see him come and served him (Moses) his favourite cashew nut spirits in a thick, smeared glass and stood scratching her head with a long hairpin as she watched him drink … Moses sank lower onto the bench, growing softer, darker, thicker. He nodded and he smiled and twisted, his face grotesquely as the religious music rocked him and entered into him, sweetly. (WWS 8, 12)

Three major classes of adverbs are included – manner, direction and time.

He (Moses) was served respectfully – it is not everyone who is paid, has been paid for twenty years, merely for waiting. He was not altogether comfortable, however. It was growing steadily hotter and muggier under
the low, hammered-out, tin-can roof of the tea shop. The monsoon had temporarily withdrawn to the horizon. (WWS 7)

The following passage has a number of epithets which describe both psychological and physical states.

Waiting was what he (Moses) did most of his time: it was not only his prime but also his legitimate occupation. So, with some righteousness in the lift of his heavy chin, he left the shallow dinghy to loll on the muddy waves, leaving his own monumental patience behind on the narrow seat to guard the oars, and wrapping his brilliant lungi more closely, more attractively about his hips, went into the tea shop on the beach to which a transistor radio allured him by its trilling songs, so ripe with sensuous promise. (WWS 7)

The objective adjectives include hotter, muggier, heavier, stiffer, purpler, smaller, and darker.

It was growing steadily hotter and muggier … the rain to begin again, and soon, with growing righteousness making his jaws ever heavier and stiffer and purpler. Moses rose and slipped through the back door of the shop into the smaller, darker, hotter precinct behind where only known and trusted customers such as Moses were permitted and welcomed.

(WWS 7-8)
Colour adjectives are used.

Sita, standing up to watch, remembered how she had twined herself about a freshly painted white pillar to see the village folk come up that path, in winter sunshine, with flat baskets on their heads containing offerings for her father – green coconuts in bunches, pink shrimps fresh from the sea with a giant lobster or two wriggling beneath them, or paper roses.

(WWS 97)

Anita Desai’s novel Fasting, Feasting brilliantly confirms Anita Desai’s place among today’s foremost writers in English. She dresses up each section of the novel in different tones and narrative techniques. Her prose is as stylish and lucid as ever. The novel Fasting, Feasting is divided into two parts. The fist part deals with a family in India – Papa, Mama and their children. “The first part covers the family of MamaPapa and though it is a third-person narrative, we see things through the eyes of the plain, older daughter Uma.” (Bhatnagar and Rajeshwar 247)

The second part deals with the Patton family in the United States – the link with part one being Arun who spends his summer break with the Patons famiy.

It was the first time in his (Arun) life away from home, away from MamaPapa, his sisters, the neighbourhood of old bungalows, dusty gardens and straggling hedges where he had grown up, the only town he
had ever known … The summer in the US stretched out open, clear and blank. Arun had every intention of keeping it so. (FF 172)

Anita Desai opens her story with a busy domestic scene, as the parents fussily ask whether daughter Uma has given orders to the cook and prepared a package for son Arun, who is studying in America.

‘First go and tell cook, Uma. Tell cook fritters will not be enough. Papa wants sweet … Then come back and take dictation. Take down a letter for Arun. Justice Dutt’s son can take it with him. When is he leaving for America?’ ‘Now you (Mama) want me to write a letter? When I am busy packing a parcel for Arun?’ (FF 4-5)

The novel Fasting, Feasting posits food as a metaphor for emotional sustenance. Everything centers around food.

She (Mira-masi) makes the very best ladoos. Mm, so round and big and sweet! … the outdoor hearth specially built for her with bricks and clay so that she could cook her own meals at a safe distance from the cook who laughed contemptuously in the kitchen where he fried up onions and garlic and stirred the mutton curries and grilled the kebabs. (FF 40-41)

Anita Desai’s tone in this novel is not merely unhappy but bitter.

‘It is not good to go running around. Stay home and do your (Uma) work – that is best,’ Mama opines with an air of piety. ‘I do my work all the
time, every day,’ Uma cries tearfully. ‘Why can’t I go out sometimes? I
never go anywhere. I want to go to Mrs. O’Henry’s party.’ (FF 114)

Jingle is a special feature of Anita Desai’s novels. It is a catchy little piece of
verse, simple in construction and having a jingling sound. As an infant she (Uma) had
sung louder than any other child in class: ‘Jesus loves me; this I know, For the Bible tells
me so!’ (FF 20)

There are verbs with ‘-ing phrases’ in Anita Desai’s novels. An ‘-ing phrase’ is a
phrase containing a present participle. The present participle is the form of the verb that
ends in –ing.

It consisted of Papa raving and ranting at one end, the mother-in-law
screaming and screeching at the other, the brothers shouting and
threatening in between, and the sisters-in-law clustering together to watch
all the parties in a kind of bitter satisfaction. (FF 94)

Anita Desai makes use of alliteration. It is the use of the same letter or sound at
the beginning of words that are close together. Her (Melanie) face is beaded with
perspiration, and white as the flesh of a fish fillet in the supermarket. (FF 189)

Assonance is another special feature. This effect is created when two syllables in
words that are close together have the same vowel sound, but different consonants, or the
same consonants but different vowels. Ramu beams at her (Uma) as she bends to pour
his tea. (FF 47)
Indianized usage is found in Anita Desai’s novels. Ayah is a woman whose job is looking after children and doing domestic tasks. Mali is a person who works in a garden.

**If anything needed to be communicated to Mrs. Joshi, it was ayah or mali or, now and then, Uma who was sent across with a message. (FF 129)**

Shashi Deshpande is the mistress of the well-rounded novel rooted in middle-class minutiae. Her prose is starkly real and refreshing. Everything is said as it should be, not a superfluous word to be found anywhere. Readers encounter an intimacy, a kind of secret bonding with her, as if she were speaking to them alone. Shashi Deshpande’s best-etched characters are feminine, her palette unapologetically domestic. Shashi Deshpande says,

> **Technique is very important. I have a story to tell. So how do I tell it?**

> **This is as much a part of the story as the people, the events and the language I use. At the same time, the technique is something one has to work at consciously. Each novel demands its own technique; the material dictates the way you present it. There is a lot of exploration and searching before I find the right way. For me each novel is completely new. With each novel one has a feeling of moving on. (The Hindu 2004)**

Shashi Deshpande’s **Roots and Shadows** is the story of Indu, a middle-class young woman, brought up in an orthodox Brahmin family headed by Akka. The novel begins with the heroine’s return to her ancestral home. The novel opens with the
It was the day before the wedding. When I (Indu) awoke it was still dark, but there was, even at that hour, a subdued bustle inside the house. Most of the lights were on. (RS 1)

It is a novel in which past and present are intermingled. This novel is not a story told along a straight line.

I (Indu) woke up with my usual feeling of total disorientation. For a few moments I lay absolutely still, letting consciousness seep into me. Slowly the fragments came together, the sparrows, with their noisy chirping, sounding like school children let out for the break … all of these forming a whole. This is our house. I am home. Ten years I stayed away from this house. (RS 33-34)

The novel Roots and Shadows clearly bears the stamp of Shashi Deshpande’s writing. In the manner typical to her writing the story is revealed through the inner consciousness of one central character. It is a book where no image, no description is superfluous. Father was finishing his rice and curds with loud slurps, while Mini was daintily licking her fingers clean of the pickles like a cat. (RS 174)

For the readers, the reading and re-reading of the novel Roots and Shadows promises to be an enriching and a satisfying experience. The following paragraph contains one short simple sentence. Of course, most writing does not consist entirely of simple sentences, containing only one subject and one verb. The real strength of simple
sentences is that they can be short and punchy. In the right place they can be very powerful. It is important not to overdo it, however. Too many short sentences can make a text seem jerky or immature. The bus starts and suddenly I (Indu) remember I have left someone behind. I panic. ‘Stop, stop,’ I yell and scream. But the bus moves relentlessly on. (RS 10)

Shashi Deshpande makes use of ellipsis that is the shortening of a sentence by the omission of a word or words that may be readily understood from the context. I (Indu) thought you (Old Uncle) knew. His (Naren) foot … it was wedged between two rocks. They had to … I swallowed and stopped. (RS 178)

Shashi Deshpande uses the word et cetera. This word is borrowed from the Latin language and it means ‘and the rest.’ It is used in its abbreviated form etc. which is added to a list to indicate that there are others besides those mentioned. We’re always measured against your stature … your (Indu) first classes, your medals, your writing, your job, et cetera, et cetera. And let me tell you frankly, we fail miserably. (RS 40)

Neologism is found in Shashi Deshpande’s novels. She introduces words that she has slightly changed. It was a subdued, very un-kakaish voice. And then suddenly he burst out laughing. His natural loud laugh. (RS 72)

Onomatopoeic words are used by Shashi Deshpande. Onomatopoeia means combination of sounds in a word that imitates or suggests what the word refers to. The
water in the pot seethed and bubbled and the steam rose up from it in a cloud. (RS 2)

Shashi Deshpande makes use of palindrome. It is a word that reads the same backwards as forwards. On seeing me (Indu), he (Sharad) bowed low, flinging out his arm, and bringing his hand, palm up, towards his chest. ‘Here comes the heiress. Welcome, Madam.’ (RS 73)

In Shashi Deshpande’s novels, extra informations are given in parentheses. Parenthesis is an additional word, phrase or sentence inserted into a passage which would be complete without it. It is separated from the rest of the text using brackets, commas or dashes.

I (Indu) would look after the old, help the deserving, (Yes, Vithal, you little know, as you sit there reading quietly in the moonlight, because they grudge you their electricity, how I hold a glorious future for you in my hands!) scorn the weak (Yes, Sunanda-atya, nothing in this for you) and ruthlessly turn my back on the useless. (RS 144)

That Long Silence is a book in which Shashi Deshpande surpasses herself as a writer, and underscores her place in the scene of international literature in English as a writer to be read, to be respected. Shashi Deshpande says, Looking back now, I do feel that with That Long Silence I came to the end of a phase. (The Hindu 2004)
Shashi Deshpande’s use of dreams as a literary device allows her to describe in symbolic and artistic terms the reality about the life of her heroines.

I (Jaya) have dreams about trains leaving me behind or carrying me away, separating me from someone I wanted to be with. Sometimes I was trapped in ghostly passages and there were sepulchral, deep voices that filled me with horror. (TLS 87)

The metaphor of silence under which the novel That Long Silence is organized helps to impose quietude. Silence was there in Jaya’s life. It was a forced silence when she had refused to communicate openly with those around her for she feared that she would hurt them. I (Jaya) had neither any questions nor any retorts for Mohan now, and yet there was no comfort. So many subjects were barred that the silence seemed heavy with uneasiness. (TLS 27)

The memories of the past enlighten the present and the recurring images, the sparrow story and the myths lend a universal touch to her tragic predicament.

That story about the foolish crow who built his house of dung, and the wise sparrow who built hers of wax. And when it rained, the house of wax stood firm, while the crow’s house was washed away. And the poor crow, shivering and sodden, went to the sparrow’s house … begging to be let in … the sparrow finally says, “Come in, you’re all wet, aren’t you, poor fellow?” And she points to the pan on which she’s just made the
chapatties. “Warm yourself there,” she says. And the silly crow hops on to it and is burnt to death. (TLS 16-17)

Lying solitary in her room, Jaya’s mind shuttles between the past and the present and thus covers the whole span of her life. Shashi Deshpande executes the stream of consciousness technique to project the psychic reverberations of her characters in order to make the story more real and authentic.

The soot-covered blades of the fan rotated noisily. The sound hinted at some memory. What was it? I felt as if I had lost my yesterday, all my yesterdays. No, I hadn’t really lost them, for this was not the terrifying blankness of amnesia but the comforting assurance of having those yesterdays at a convenient arm’s length. They had receded, but I could get them if I wanted to. I didn’t need them though – not now, anyway.

(TLS 178)

Shashi Deshpande makes use of italics in her novels. The adjective italic derives from the Greek Italikos, meaning ‘pertaining to Italy apart from Rome.’ In the sixteenth century Aldus Manutius, a Venetian printer, introduced a sloping type that became known as italic.

I (Jaya) had stood up, stared at him (Dada) in hatred and walked back into the hostel. Past the brightly lit rooms full of chatting girls. Thinking –
I’m cast out of happiness for ever. Tasting the words, enjoying them and feeling my grief at the same time. (TLS 136)

A compound word often saves a much longer phrase. It is a noun, an adjective or a verb made of two or more words, joined by a hyphen. ‘Poor Ganpat,’ I (Jaya) smiled.

‘I suppose to Ai and Vanitamami he’s still Joshibua’s snotty-nosed kid.’ (TLS 108)

Shashi Deshpande’s power of description is wonderful. The following sentence is one of the longest sentences.

From his (Mohan) description they had appeared to me (Jaya) like women in a surrealist painting – eyebrows arched in an impossibly high, haughty curve, hair swept up above their necks, diaphanous saris floating about them in an airy abandon, giving them an appearance of floating rather than walking. (TLS 89)

Shashi Deshpande makes use of onomatopoeic words. They are words containing sound similar to the noises they describe. Putting his (Vasant) arms round her (Revati) while she crouched in an agony of grief; he had patted her back, murmuring those curious shushing sounds we use to soothe babies. (TLS 80)

Shashi Deshpande borrows words from German language. The biggest question facing the woman of these diaries had obviously been: what shall I make for breakfast / lunch / tea / dinner? That had been the leit motif of my (Jaya) life. (TLS 70)
Shashi Deshpande uses past participle. It is the form of a verb that ends in –ed and –en. The woman who had shopped and cooked, cleaned and cared for her home and her family with such passion. (TLS 25)

Indianized names and words are used in Shashi Deshpande’s novels. Kaajal is a black cosmetic used to make the eyes darker or to make a mark on the forehead of women. Behnji is an elder sister.

Ladoos loaded with ghee, beaten rice soaked in oil – may be it had been ajji who had hastened Appa’s death, feeding him with all that … ’When I (Nayana) was born, she (Nayana) said, she (Nayana’s mother) saw those eyes first. She put kaajal in my eyes every day. Now, behnji, I don’t do it any more. What’s the use? The kaajal will flow away with my tears.

(TLS 134)

With these fictional techniques, their writings attain maturity and full flowering. They produce strong mental images by using unusual words. Their choice of words and structures make their creations unique.