CHAPTER VI

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the interpretation of the data in the five selected short stories of authors from different countries, cultures and languages. The analysis of these stories in Chapter-V reveals the occurrence of cohesive elements. It also showed what type of cohesion is involved in terms of reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction and lexical and which cohesive type dominated the story. Further a micro analysis of sub-categories of lexical elements is done to give a comprehensive view of the occurrence of lexical items which play a significant role in the development of the plot of the story. This chapter substantiates the semantic analysis of the words that is presented in the previous chapter. This pragmatic interpretation of the data helps the readers in understanding the story from the perspective of the author to a certain extent. This chapter also shows how the linguistic elements are used in the stories to develop the plot of the story.

The short stories display the occurrence of various cohesive elements that weave a tight-knitted plot. The analysis shows no instances of deviation from the main theme and all the passages are logically connected to one another. The interrelatedness among the sentences in passages is apt and they all make the passages coherent. Coherence is most often discussed in relation to the paragraph. A well constructed paragraph is said to be characterized by ‘unity’ and ‘coherence’. ‘Unity’ is achieved when all sentences in the paragraph relate to a single point represented by a topic sentence.’ Coherence’ is achieved when the sentences “follow each other in a logical order and are linked together by transitions” (William Watt 1959: 54).
A simple endeavour to study the items that contribute to cohesion in the five stories is done. An attempt is also made here to see how cohesive elements contribute to the cohesion of the passage. The discussion includes the occurrence of coherence, as cohesion and coherence go hand in hand.

6.1. Bade Bhai Saab

Premchand’s short story “Bade Bhai Saab”. In the story “Bade Bhai Saab” we find that the cohesive ties are established through reference, lexis, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions. Substitution occurs in the story here and there but is very little. The story progresses through the narrative genre as well as dialogues between two important characters, the elder brother and the younger brother with anaphoric use of he, his, him, I, we, my and mine. The summary of the story clearly states that the entire story revolves around the elder brother and the younger brother. Their identity is maintained by using reference items such as he/his/him or I/my/mine. While reading the story the readers do not face any kind of challenge in resolving the identity of ‘I’ and ‘you’ to the ‘addressee’. We can also infer that the writer has used reference items to describe characters, their attitudes and their idiosyncrasies. The first and second person pronouns ‘I’ and ‘you’ naturally retain their deictic sense; their meaning is defined in the act of speaking. An anaphoric relationship of this kind helps in creating cohesion in the text. Presented with these words, the reader tries to look back to something that has been mentioned before. This has the effect of linking the two sentences or passages into a coherent unity.

The analysis of the story passage - wise displays 458 cohesive elements. The story is dominated by referential ties where most of them refer to the elder brother and the younger brother as these two are the lead characters and the story is about them. The
pronominal ties are more in number than the demonstrative ties. No comparative ties indicating likeness or unlikeness among the references are found. The person deixis gives a clear idea of the person referred to and nowhere do the readers find any difficulty in tracing the reference to the person. The spatial deixis referring to the school, hostel, home, and playground help in the interpretation and understanding of the text. The words like ‘year’, ‘months’, ‘midnight oil’, ‘few hours’, ‘6’, ‘eight’, ‘9 to 9.30’, ‘followed by lunch’, etc., indicate temporal deixis in the story. Social deixis words falling under the sub-category of relational deixis like ‘elder brother’, ‘younger brother’, ‘Amma’, ‘Dada’, ‘mother’ ‘friend’, ‘classmate’ show the relation of the characters and the words like ‘classmate’, ‘doctor’, ‘headmaster’ are absolute deictics indicating the office rather than the personal relation. In the very first paragraph the narrator drives home the point that he could ‘never ever think of defying’ his elder brother. Premchand uses repetition, collocation, synonym and superordinates as lexical devices.

The lexical words in the story weave a pattern and help in the development of the story. The lexical ties add to the understanding of the story providing a sequence of events and connecting one sentence to another in a logical way and they help in structuring the exposition, climax and denouement of a story. The facts which form the basis of exposition are S.1 – S.14 of passage1. These sentences actually help as an introduction to the development of the story and bring out the essential traits of the brothers.

In the very first paragraph the narrator drives home the point that he could ‘never ever think of defying’ his elder brother. Hence the entire story revolves around the elder brother and the younger brother. The younger brother tells how the gap between the
grades of the elder brother and younger brother gradually diminish and all the gap of three grades has come down to just one grade and in spite of all this the elder brother tries to exercise his authority over the younger brother and how the younger brother can never overcome the feeling of ‘awe’ towards his elder brother. Thus the 1st paragraph of the passage introduces us to both the brothers; their views, attitude towards each other, the kind of relation they maintain and the type of responsibility the elder brother feels towards the younger brother and the younger brother’s respect for his elder brother gives the necessary impetus for the rest of the story to take place.

Passage 1 also talks about the elder brother’s studiousness, his idea of taking a break by drawing fancy cats, dogs and birds in his books and also scribbling some mysterious sentences like “someone special, Ameena brothers, because Radhe Shyam, Mr. Radhe Shyam, an hour”. The younger brother’s inability to decipher the encrypted words and his lack of courage to ask his elder brother what it all meant shows the elder brother’s personality and the younger brother’s mischievous inquisitiveness to unravel the mystery and also his respect towards his elder brother.

Passage 1 also describes the nature of the younger brother. The topic sentence of the paragraph is “I was just the opposite as I found it impossible to sit glued to the books”. The entire paragraph presents the younger brother’s playful nature – how he would rush to the playground, throw pebbles in the air, fly paper butterflies and also how his pleasure abounds if he gets the company of a friend or classmate and how they would climb up and down the stairs and ride on the hostel gate and how this joy dissipates once he enters the hostel room.
Between passage 2 and passage 6, the plot moves event by event with the elder brother’s probes and the younger brother’s speechlessness and his silence – an indication of ‘admittance’ of his guilt and this is followed by his elder brother’s admonishing and pointing out the younger brother’s easy going nature. The elder brother takes him to task and implores him to work hard and to learn English. The story reaches climax with the repeated failures of the elder brother. The failure of the elder brother in exams has given a new power to the younger brother. This power went to his head. Though it is not an open defiance, there is a change in the attitude of the younger one. For a moment he gets tempted to confront his elder brother and question him about his penance for gaining knowledge by foregoing extra curricular activities. Once again the younger brother starts continuing with his extra curricular activities

Passage 7 starts with the elder brother resuming his lost authority and slipping into his usual role of the elder brother. The sentences S1 – S.4 show him telling his younger brother to his face that he being elder to him by five years, none can challenge his authority over him. He also expresses contempt for the examiners for being negligent in their duties in S.5. In S.7 – S.14 the elder brother proceeds to enlighten him about the worldly knowledge that he possesses and gives the examples of his ‘Amma and Dada’ who are very wise without ever attending a school. He also makes a mention of the monthly budgets and gives a lively example of his headmaster who earns Rs.1000/- as salary in S.17 and mentions how he depends on his aged mother to run the family. He holds that all the degrees are a waste before the wisdom gained through experience.

Passage 8 closes the gap between the two brothers. The elder brother in the anxiety to establish his superiority over his younger brother loses his cool and becomes
nervous. The younger brother empathizes with him and asserts that he does not hate his elder brother and seeks his forgiveness. This makes him to hug the younger one instantly. At this juncture he becomes emotional and reveals the fact that he too is not against flying kites. He too gets tempted to fly kites. But what prevents him from doing so is his responsibility towards his brother. If he too takes things light, who will look after the younger one.

Thus we find a conflict in the story between the two important characters. The conflict is soon resolved when this temptation to confront the elder brother flees away the moment the younger brother sees his brother’s crestfallen face. Respect and affection dominate rage and he starts empathizing with his new confidence effacing the feeling of guilt that used to haunt him for wasting his time in extra-curricular activities. But the denouement occurs in the story when the younger brother yields to the power of the elder brother not out of fear but out of sympathy and love.

When once they understand each other, the self-imposed role of elder brother, his authority, superiority all become meaningless. Both the brothers become excited like kids running after kites. It is all fun, no authority and no responsibility.

All these elements bring cohesion to the story and makes the plot a tight-knit one and leads to the advancement of plot like the narrator talking of himself as having the opposite nature to that of his brother in passage 1 (S.12) and this continues until S.14 where in the elder brother confronts the younger one in the next passage. The lexical items that have been coded also show that the story is one organic whole delineating the character of both the elder and younger brothers. One is totally serious by nature or at
least he pretends to be so as he considers it as an essential trait of an elder brother. The sentences S.6 – S.11 in passage 1 describe the elder brother and the sentences in passage 2, indicate the character of the elder brother where he toils a lot, to accomplish his task. He tends to be reserved, staying out from mischief and concentrating more on his work. He lacks humour, is known to be less social, more prone to stress and work. When it comes to the other one that is, the younger brother, he is very playful, mischievous and intelligent. The playful nature of the boy is brought out in sentences S.13 to S.14 of Passage 1, S.8 of passage 4 and in S.6 of passage 6. The story as it develops brings forth their points of view. The elder brother’s idea of studying is spending more time with books and not getting entangled in other activities. The younger brother on the other hand, wants to have a kaleidoscopic life full of fun, frolic and excitement.

6.2. The Hawk and the Tree

The story “The Hawk and the Tree” is in the subjective mode. The entire story is narrated in the first person singular. The narrator is part of the plot and also plays the role of an observer. The story has 151 referential items, 214 lexical items, 11 conjunctive items and 4 elliptical elements. Throughout the story no reference has been made to the name of the narrator. Almost all the characters in this story are nameless, as they represent a mass or a mob. Even the cobbler who is the villain of the story is referred to as ‘cobbler’ by his profession and no name has been mentioned. The two men are referred to as ‘joblessmen’ or ‘loafers’. The person deixis helps in understanding the persons referred to in the story. There is only one occurrence of social deixis i.e., ‘cobbler’, which falls under the subcategory of absolute deixis. The words ‘night’,
‘darkness’, ‘morning’ etc., indicate temporal deixis in the story. The spatial deixis words in the story are ‘dead tree’, ‘neighbourhood’, etc.

This story stands as a communicative event where the narrator successfully transfers to the readers the social consequences such as the cause and effect through various symbols. We also find the information structuring function at the opening where the daily routine of the cobbler has been introduced in S.3 of passage1. The story begins with the narrator watching a dead tree. A ‘dead tree’ is a symbol of lifelessness. Something dead has no value. Beside the dead tree is the cobbler’s shop. This is how the second character in the story has been introduced at the very beginning i.e., in S.3 of passage 1. The daily routine of the cobbler is to open the shop early in the morning and close it late evening (S.4). S.5 of this passage introduces the two men in the same street as ‘jobless’. And in S.6 too the narrator refers to them that ‘the men had no work!’ ‘Joblessness’ and ‘had no work’ add up to the cohesion of the passage. The compact life of the two jobless men was expressed in S.6 of this passage. Their lack of individuality and inability to think was also expressed in S.6 by their description as ‘they were part of the furnishings of the shop.’ They are described so, as they imitate the blank expression of the cobbler.

This text also encrypts in it the intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts; and social, psychological and emotional interdependence of characters. The sentences S.1, S.2, and S.6 of passage 2 show the loafers’ total dependence for emotional sustenance on the cobbler. The contrary emotions of happiness and sadness are shown in passage 2 using the word ‘happiness’ with different combination of words in S.5 and S.13. S.5 shows a springing of happiness and S.13 shows death of happiness in the narrator’s heart.
The word ‘happiness’ is a lexical cohesive element in the passage as it is repeated three times and it has negative impact of emotions in S.10 and S.13. In S.10 it is the cobbler who feels happy out of sadism and in S.13 it is the narrator who says that his happiness died. The cobbler’s sadistic pleasure is physically manifest when he gloats over how the string would get entangled with the branches and how the bird would die in S.10, S.11, S.12 and S.16 of passage 2. S.2 of passage 2 stressed on the fact, that imitation was the second nature of the two jobless men. A similar kind of nature of these two men is observed in S.7 and S.15 of this passage. Thus the role relationship of the two jobless men is well determined in passage 2. S.4 stands as a contrast to S.14. In S.4 we find the author to be more joyful but as the story progresses, in the place of ‘happiness’ the narrator experiences ‘mixed emotion of fear and sadness’.

The cobbler’s cruel attitude, and his expectation that the Sparrow Hawk, should be grateful towards him as he had fed it with ‘live sparrows’ is brought out in S.1 and S.2 of passage 3. The narrator’s sensitive nature can be seen in the lines S.3, S.4, S.5, S.6, S.7. The thought that the bird would die made him sleepless in the night. The dark, black night was associated with ‘gloom and grief’. The narrator also had felt that a vague thought was growing in his sub-conscious. He tried to unfold the thought into a clear picture but it remained a futile exercise. The sentences from S.3 to S.16 delineate the troubled and worried nature of the narrator especially his anguish, helplessness and inability to save the bird which is going to be a victim of the ‘string’ that has been tied to its leg.

The narrator’s obsession with the bird’s plight makes him see strings everywhere, which state has been depicted in S.2 – S.9 of passage 4. The repetition of the word
‘string’ multiple times in the passage adds cohesion to the passage and this particular word occurs in almost every sentence from S.2 – S.9. The thought that he was tied to a string wakes him up trembling to the reality and he understands that he has been dreaming until then. S.10 serves as a connector to S.11 where the narrator wakes up to the routine of the next day. He notices the cobbler dancing with joy and shouting that he was right. S.15 & S.16 show the elation of the cobbler at his prediction being right.

The struggle that the bird has undergone to set itself free and in the process how it has lost its feathers – all is vividly seen through the eyes of the narrator in passage 5 from S.5 to S.9. The scattered feathers of the bird indicate its failed attempts to free itself from the entanglement. The narrator felt that the dead hawk was staring at him to say bitterly that it was the end of the road. The sentences S.4 and S.5 show the contrary feelings of the narrator and the cobbler. The cobbler is very happy because the Hawk was dead but for the same reason the narrator trembled. S.8 and S.11 show the narrator’s sympathy for and helplessness about saving the bird. In S.8 the narrator rightly understands the Hawk’s struggle to set itself free but in S.11 he imagines that the dead hawk was staring at him to say that it was the end of the road.

The mob psychology of the onlookers is felt all the more with the crowd shouting with joy at the sight of the dead bird. There seemed to be a sort of foolish joy and satisfaction. The narrator feels that the crowd was cheerful as they might have felt that it was the bird that had been hung and not themselves. The narrator imagines strings tied to the feet of the people. He sees just not strings to their legs but strong chains. He views the strings made up of round links and each link was in the form of a word. The word
that the narrator reads as a link to the chain tied to the feet of the people present there was ‘ego’ (S.10). The sentences S.1 – S.14 of passage 6 depict the mob psychology.

It is the narrator’s consciousness which makes him imagine that the people around him are tied to the chains of egoistic nature (S.10 – S.18 of Passage 6). It is this ego which makes them unsympathetic and unkind towards others. It is because of this ‘ego’ they fail to respond to the bird’s tragic condition. They are happy that it is not themselves who had been hanging from the tree but only the bird. They are so indifferent to the suffering of the bird.

The narrator continues to imagine strings to his feet too which are made up of several links reading ‘ego…ego…ego…’ The thought which had been in his subconscious as captive all the while had finally taken the form of strings with links of ego. The narrator also imagines a scene where all of them were hanging to the branches of the tree just like the bird. He also imagines the hawk with a string tied to its foot and this string is made up of live sparrows.

6.3. The Cop and the Anthem

O. Henry’s story “The Cop and the Anthem” is non-subjective. The narration is done not from the first person point of view but it is done in the third person singular. The protagonist’s attempts to get into the prison to escape the severity of winter are viewed from the narrator’s perspective. The story is dominated by lexical items amounting to 204, followed by 187 reference items, 15 conjunctions, 3 substitutions and 2 ellipsis. The entire story revolves round Soapy. The semantic distinction in the personal system confirms the story as objective and the protagonist is always
characterized in the third person and hence falls broadly under the category of ‘speech role’- and specifically under ‘other role’. Since the trait of the third person form is cumulatively anaphoric, it is observed that the story has 185 anaphoric references. The words ‘bench’, ‘Madison Square’, ‘park’, ‘four streets’, ‘Mediterranean’, ‘Vesuvian Bay’, ‘Island’, ‘board and bed’, ‘Blackwell’ etc., indicate spatial deixis. The words indicating temporal deixis in the story are ‘nights’, ‘winter’, ‘annual’, ‘corners’, ‘time’, ‘three months’ etc. The words ‘Policeman’, ‘magistrate’, ‘head waiter’, ‘the officer’, ‘law’s minions’, ‘cop’, ‘Yale lads’ indicate social deixis and fall under the subcategory of absolute deixis. ‘Dead leaf’ in S.3 of passage 1, is an object pointer of environment that indicates temporal deixis. The personification of winter in S.4 – S.6 of passage 1 envelops person deixis and temporal deixis. The specific deictic ‘that’ of S.4 in passage 1 refers to ‘dead leaf’ which heralds winter. Thus Soapy becomes aware of the fact that winter is near at hand. With no high ambitions, Soapy resolves to go to prison. S.11 of passage 1 refers to the time Soapy wants to stay in prison. Temporal deixis ‘three months’ is S.11 has the quality of same item as it helps in realizing lexical cohesion with ‘Three months’ of S.12 in passage 1. The allusive reference to ‘Boreas’ and ‘Blue coats’ in S.12 of passage 1 stand as grammatical markers of participant roles of person deixis. ‘Palm beach’ and ‘Riviera’ of S.2 in passage 2, stand in contrast to ‘hospitable Blackwells’ of S.1 in passage 2.

The words ‘winter’, ‘island’, ‘night’, ‘lap’, ‘bench’, ‘square’, ‘charity’, ‘philanthropy’ are word repetitions mostly falling under the category of remote tie as they have distant reference to lexical items of passage 1 and passage 2. As Soapy hated the provisions made in the name of charity, he devised certain strategies to get arrested. S.14
– S.16 of passage 2 reveal his first plan to accomplish his goal. S.13 has an elliptical quality as it simply dispenses the words ‘easy way’ and mentions ‘pleasantest’.

As O.Henry unfolds the story, the readers are left clueless in matching his proud thoughts to base motives. In passage 2, S.6 – S.11 depict Soapy as one who scorns charity. But his plans to go to prison fail at various places as in S.14 and S.15 of passage 2, S.7 and S.8 of passage 3, S.5 – S.7 of passage 4; S.5 – S.6 of passage 5; S.6 and S.7 of passage 6, S.8 and S.9 of passage 7 and S.7-S.11 of passage 8. But in passage 9 the readers find the starting of the seeds of transformation of thoughts in Soapy. S.2, S.3, S.4, S.5, S.6, S.7, S.8, S.9, S.10, S.11 and S.20 show Soapy in a new perspective where he gets transformed into a responsible citizen. But the twist in the tale is that ‘Soapy gets arrested for no fault of his’.

The pronames are scattered here and there in the story, especially in the passages 1, 4, 5 and 6. Majority of the pronames occur in passage 6, followed by passage 4. The proname ‘Jack in S.4 of passage 1 refers to ‘winter’. Here the author personifies winter season as ‘Jack’ and ‘the dead leaf’ as ‘Jack Frost’s card’. The pronames ‘Jack Frost’s Card’ and ‘paste board’ hint at the approaching winter referring to the ‘dead leaf’ as a business card or visiting card of ‘Jack’ i.e., winter. Various pronames for the police have been used by the author in the story. In S.12 of passage 1, the proname ‘Blue coats’ has been used for ‘the police’ while talking about the desire of Soapy to get shelter during winter season. Similarly in S.7 of passage 4 Policeman is referred to as ‘Brass buttons’, ‘the officer’, and ‘Law’s minions’ as Soapy plans to get into the prison by smashing a glass window of a shop with a cobblestone. But the failure of the plan is seen in S.7, S.8, S.9, S.10 and S.11 as the policeman’s mind refused to accept Soapy as a culprit, as
culprits normally run away from the police instead of parleying with them. The proname ‘Bedelia’ in S.10 of passage 6, refers to the young lady who Soapy tries to woo in order to get the attention of the police and wanted to be complained by her to the police. But she being a pimp responded “sure Mike”. Here ‘Mike’ is a proname for Soapy. Both the pronames ‘Bedelia’ and ‘Mike are used by the author as generic nouns to name any unknown person. Since the characters of the story are known, there is no difficulty in attributing these pronames to the young lady, and Soapy respectively. The pronames ‘Limbo’, ‘insular haven’, ‘island’, ‘station house’ etc., refer to the prison.

Passage 10 talks of Soapy’s realization and his intention to change. His heart responding to the novel mood is expressed in sentences S.3 to S.11 in this passage. But the surprising twist at the end comes when the policeman comes and arrests Soapy for no fault of his in S.12 to S.17 of passage 10. The setting places the character in a recognizable reality. The effect of verisimilitude is very strong in the short story. It is achieved by the author’s wide usage of toponyms like New York city, Madison Square, Mediterranean cruises, Vesuvian bay, Palm Beach, Riviera, Mediterranean, Broadway and Fifth avenue, Hartford in various sentences like S.5, S.10 of passage 1, S.2 of passage 2, S.2 of passage 3 and S.11 of passage 7; some pronames like Ceasar, Brutus, Jack Frost have been used. The author wanted to create a simulated background to the events in the story. The setting brings out the clear gap between the rich and the poor. It reveals an unequal society. The description of dying nature and wintry weather in sentences S.3-S.6 of passage 1 is used to portray the inner state of protagonist and his solitary state.
6.4. Selvi

The analysis of the story “Selvi” displays the cohesive items referential, lexical, substitutional and conjunctive, with the exception of elliptical items. The major devices of the story are referential items and lexical items.

The summary of the story clearly demonstrates that all the events revolve around Selvi the protagonist. It is the story of a woman told by a semi-omniscient narrator with an internal focalization shifting from Mohan /Selvi’s husband to Varma, a representative of Selvi’s fans. The other characters in the story are minor and some are just mentioned like Selvi’s mother, brother and sister without a single dialogue. ‘Mother’, ‘brother’, ‘sister’ and ‘neighbour’, ‘wife’ are social deixis words falling under the sub-category of relational deixis and these words show the relation of the characters. ‘The Proprietor’, ‘patrons’ etc., are the ones who admire Selvi. ‘Secretary’ is an assistant to Mohan who takes care of Selvi’s concerts. These words fall under the category of absolute deixis which is a subcategory of social deixis. The words falling under the spatial deixis are ‘concert’, ‘dais’, ‘exit’, ‘hall’, ‘train’, ‘car’, etc. These words indicate the places where Selvi, the main character, is associated with. The temporal deixis words in the story are ‘end’, ‘moment’, ‘lot of time’, ‘doom’s day’, etc. They indicate the time of action in the story. Even the talk of the ‘admirers’ was narrated and except for Selvi’s neighbour by the end of the story, nobody speaks to Selvi for a full length of time. It is better to say that Mohan does not allow anyone to have access to Selvi. This is clearly seen in the sentences S.2 – S.5 of passage 8. R.K.Narayan uses all types of pronominal variants he, she, they, them, I and we with anaphoric use. The identity of the characters is maintained by using reference items such as she/her (for female characters and he/his (for male
characters). In passage 1 *she, her, herself* refer to Selvi. *He, him and his* refer to Mohan. ‘They’ in S.2 refer to ‘autograph hunters’. Instead of repeating the names, the author has used personal reference items. At the very beginning of the story we understand that Selvi is meek and submissive and Mohan exercises authority over her and does not miss a chance of exhibiting it in the public. The lines S.3-S.6 of passage 1 help the readers in analyzing the characters of Selvi and Mohan.

As we go through the story, we view Mohan as a manifestation of hypocrisy. There are instances of this in S.8 – S.14 of passage 1, S.8 and S.9 of passage 5 and S.1 – S.9 of passage 9. ‘Cosmetics’ of S.11 pair up with ‘skin cream and talcum’ to form lexical cohesion and these terms play a key role in bringing out the true colours of Mohan, the Gandhian follower who does not wish to expose himself as the one encouraging his wife ‘Selvi’ to use cosmetics.

The way he isolates Selvi from her mother, brother and sister is ruthless and callous. S.7 of passage 9 depicts Selvi’s timidity in asking Mohan to bring her mother to her and his unsympathetic negligence and unwillingness to respond to her just desire. This is in contrast to his nature when he tried to make friends with Selvi and her family. In passage 5 we see Mohan as a person who visits Selvi’s family as a well wisher and his behaving as a ‘benign God’ to that family. S.8 and S.9 of passage 5 demonstrate his efforts to make the family believe in him. He gives the family an impression that sitting high in the chair in front of an inspired artist was blasphemous. But the very same person utilizes every opportunity to exercise and display his authority over Selvi. This we find at the very beginning of the story in passage 1 between the sentences S1 – S.6, where he
calls Selvi to hurry up for not missing the train. Since Selvi was not in the habit of contradicting him, Mohan considers it a golden chance to command her in public.

Though Mohan initially builds a rapport with the family of Selvi as a true well-wisher, after taking the reins of the family into his hands he never cares for Selvi, her wishes and her emotional needs. He feels that his clever manoeuvrings have made Selvi a celebrity. The opening lines of Passage 4 state how hard Mohan had worked to build up the image of Selvi (S.1 – S.2). S.3, S.4 and S.5 of the passage demonstrate the wide publicity that Selvi has got through publication of write ups or photographs in various journals and papers. It was Mohan who created the demand for her. S.4 – S.7 displays Mohan’s smartness in organizing musical events for Selvi. His business mind, his tactics are visible in the lines S.9 – S.13. He merely rejected several offers to reserve rarity to Selvi.

There is only one instance of substitution in S.24 of passage 11. It is verbal ellipsis. It is part of conversation between Selvi and Mohan. After her mother’s death, Selvi prefers staying at her mother’s old house. When Mohan consulted her about the change in the dates of Bhopal’s concert, she simply asks him to do whatever he likes. In response to this he demands what she means by ‘that’. ‘That’ is a substitution to the clause “Do what you like.” We do not find ellipsis in the story.

At the very outset of the story the readers are introduced to the popularity of Selvi with the people around her seeking autographs. They are referred to as ‘autograph hunters’. ‘Ethereal entity’ in S.6 of passage 1 is a reference to Selvi. Mohan took care of her make-up and made her look beautiful. The public who do not know her real
complexion considered her a rare ‘ethereal entity’. S.6 – S.14 is all about her make-up, cosmetics and these being supplied by one of the adoring fans of Selvi.

The proname ‘habitues’ in passage 2 is used for the regular visitors of Boardless. ‘the proprietor’ of which is Varma. Since Varma is rich, he craves for the favour of ‘Goddess Saraswathi’. The readers find no difficulty in understanding that ‘Selvi’ in S.4 of passage 2 is referred to as ‘Saraswathi’ and ‘divine singer’.

Mohan is the one behind the screen maneuvering the events of Selvi. Once when she sings for a film star, she gets a huge amount which Mohan invests in buying a huge house for them to stay. Passage 3 describes the house and how Mohan bought it. In S.9 we find the phrase ‘fat cosmetic dummy’ which refers to the film star. By singing for that star, Selvi attains much glory. S.8 & S.9 show how Mohan decides to shut out all film offers and establish her as a unique phenomenon.

Since then Mohan does his best in managing the concerts and making Selvi a pop icon. He is good in maintaining public relations. In passage 5 S.1, S.2 and S.3 is all about the parties, guests and the proname ‘international figures’ refers to the V.I.Ps that visit Selvi. S.8 & S.9 of passage 5 describe Mohan’s acquaintance with the family, his plan of getting access to them through music and sitting down dramatically on the floor while listening to music as if it was blasphemous to sit high in the chair in front of an ‘inspired artist’. S.10 & S.11 show how he slowly performed little services to the family and gained control over them and made Selvi his wife.

Selvi is very balanced in nature. Passage 6 is all about Selvi’s equanimity. In S.1 everybody of Selvi’s family gets excited at the new big house. But Selvi remains quiet
and composed. In S.9 the real nature of Selvi is described as “In any setting –mansion or Five star Hotel with luxurious guest rooms and attendants, or a small town or village home with no special facilities or privacy – she looked equally indifferent or contented;” S.2-S.13 of this passage delineate the character of Selvi as ‘undemanding, unenquiring and uncomplaining’.

The proname ‘national figure’ in S.1 of passage 7 shows the popularity of Selvi in the country. In S.2 of the same passage, people considered her a ‘Goddess of melody’. S.7 gives wide range of people like ‘unsophisticated listener’, ‘pundits’, ‘theorists’ and ‘musicologist’ who are equally impressed by her concert. ‘The star’ is another proname for Selvi in S.1 of passage 8 where her fans try to curry the favour of Mohan to get near her. Mohan never allows anyone to reach her. He had seen to it that even the V.I.Ps could talk to her for not more than a minute or two. S.1 - S.11 of passage 9 state how Mohan alienated Selvi from her mother and siblings. Her anguish that she could not see her mother touches the hearts of the readers in S.11.

Things go out of Mohan’s control in passage 10 with the death of Selvi’s mother. The proname ‘nondescript’ is used to refer to Selvi’s neighbour whom Mohan tries to stop from speaking to Selvi, which has been stalled by Selvi in S.13 of passage 10. It was so unusual and unlikely of Selvi that Mohan became helpless. Passages 11 and 12 are about the apathy of Selvi towards Mohan and her determination to lead the rest of her life at ‘Vinayak Mudali Street’. The proname ‘ungrateful wretch’ in S.16 of passage 13 is a reference to Selvi. When Selvi does not yield to what Mohan proposes, he feels that he has been betrayed and calls her an ‘ungrateful wretch’ in a helpless rage and defeat.
The conjunction ties in the passage are very few and they occur in S.5 and S.14 of 
passage 1 and S.13 of passage 7. ‘And’ and ‘but’ are the conjunctive ties in the passage 
where they act as additive and contrastive.

6.5. A Devoted Son

The cohesive elements that occur in the story “A Devoted Son” are reference, 
lexical, conjunction, substitution and ellipsis. Though ellipsis occurs in the story, it is not 
found frequently. There is only one instance of it in S.4 of passage 7. It is lexical ellipsis 
where the subject pronoun ‘it’ is generic and the meaning of what is ‘unheard of’ is 
derived from the previous sentence i.e., a son refusing his father the food he craved for. 
In fact the readers find no difficulty in understanding the sentence. There is only one 
substitution element in passage 10 of the story. It occurs in S.4 of passage 10 with a 
cataphoric reference to S.5. ‘The same’ in S.4 is a reference to ‘cold heartlessness and 
tyrranny in disguise’.

The story has more number of spatial deixis. Words that represent spatial 
‘vegetable market’ etc. The words that indicate temporal deixis are ‘morning’, 
‘beginning’, ‘birthday party’, ‘evening’, etc. The words that occur under relational deixis 
falling under the broad category of social deixis are ‘father’, ‘son’, ‘parents’, ‘family’, 
‘daughter-in-law’, ‘papa’, etc. The words falling under absolute deixis which is 
subcategory of social deixis are ‘visitors’, ‘cook’ etc.

The pronames used in the story are very few but they add to the coherence of the 
story. In S.6 of passage 1 we find the word ‘wunder kind’ to refer to Rakesh. Similarly
the pronames ‘doctor son’, ‘devoted son’ refer to Rakesh. ‘Illiterate cook’ is the proname used for Varma’s wife. The words ‘plump’, ‘uneducated girl’ in S.8 of passage 3 and ‘Hypocritical pudding’ in S.7 of passage 12 are used for Veena, the wife of Rakesh. This proname is used derogatorily while referring to Veena when she comes to pile up the pillows under the head of her father-in-law in the verandah to make him breathe fresh air.

In S.8 of passage 13, Rakesh is referred to as a ‘devoted son’. When Rakesh in the evening comes home from the clinic, he goes straight to his father without even looking at his wife, who asks whether he wishes to have tea or coca-cola or should she fry samosas for him. Being so devoted, his first preference is his father over anything else.

‘Old man’ is a proname used for Varma Rakesh’s father, here and there in the story. ‘The old men’ is used for Varma and his friend Bhatia in S.5 of passage 8; when Bhatia visits Varma, his son Rakesh, would help his father get into the garden, arrange him a night bed under the tree and leave the two old men’ to discuss something of their interest.

In passage 1 the reference items refer to Rakesh, his neighbours and his father. At the very beginning we see Rakesh as a role model of a good child which every parent expects his daughter or son to be like. There is festivity at the ‘small yellow house’ as Rakesh stands first in the country in the field of medicine. S.4 – S.7 of passage 1 is all about the celebrations and encomiums that the visitors shower on Rakesh and his parents.

Rakesh’s father takes pride in telling his visitors what his son did after seeing the results. S.2 and S.3 of passage 2 say about the humble nature of Rakesh and the rest of
the sentences in the passage is all about the neighbours envy at the luck of Varma for having such a son.

Passage 3 speaks more about the glorious heights that Rakesh reaches. There are more number of lexical ties here and also the majority of the cohesive elements refer to Rakesh and a few to his parents. In this passage the readers could not but appreciate Rakesh for his genius combined with humility. He very obediently accepts a plump and uneducated girl whom his mother selects. S.8 of passage 3 shows his obedient attitude towards his parents.

S.1 – S.9 of passage 4 is all about Rakesh’s heights of glory, his sense of responsibility towards his parents, wife, children, friends and patients and the awe he arouses among the known circles of his talent and skill inspite of being born to illiterate parents.

When something becomes routine, it ceases to be eventful. Similarly Rakesh’s success too stopped dazzling people since it has been continuous for a very long time. S.1 and S.2 state this in passage 5. Varma being old and having lost his wife developed several complaints and suffered from mysterious diseases. He became cranky, spiteful, jealous and intolerant about his sons happy life. S.3 and S.4 of this passage is all about this. It has also become impossible for Rakesh to know when it was illness and when it was a ‘peevish whim’. S.4-S.5 is about his strange behavior of lying down like a corpse. Even this illness of his has been taken as a peevish ploy by everyone except Rakesh. The lines S.6 – S.7 is all about Varma and his tricks.
S.1 – S.4 of passage 6 mention Rakesh’s deeds of gratifying his father by giving him tea with his own hands, in his favorite brass tumbler and moving him into the garden for fresh air and also reading him news every morning. But the old man’s dislike towards his son starts from S.6 of passage 6, once Rakesh starts supervising the diet of his father and restricting him from taking sweets, butter, oily foods and fried items.

The weak old man was filled with shock and disbelief at his son’s restrictions (S.1 – S.2 of passage 7). Unable to eat boiled vegetables he starts missing his wife. He even loses discretion and bribes his grandson to get him the forbidden sweets. S.14 – S.18 contain reprimands that the father gets from his son in passage 7.

The only pleasure that the old man gets is the visits from elderly neighbours. The entire passage 8 is about the old, how they could not frequently visit one another due to age factor and illnesses and how Bhatia and Varma talk of certain things loudly from either side of their verandahs. Here the references are to the two old men and Rakesh.

It is true that people find cold comfort in complaining to others. Varma too does this in S.6 of passage 10. He narrates his woes of taking pills and potions and the treatment that his son gives him in S.7, S.8, S.9, S.10 and S.11 of passage 10. Varma begs to allow him to die in S.1 – S.3 of passage 11 and Rakesh pleads him to be reasonable and Varma protests in S.8 & S.9 for depriving him of food.

Vitamins and tonics kept him alive. Varma was leading a spiritless life without a zest for it. S.1 – S.4 of passage 12 shows his struggle to give up his ghost. His devoted and dutiful son takes care of his father with all new medicines to keep him alive. But Varma has become so obsessed with the idea of getting rid of this life that he flings the
medicine bottle from his son’s hand and says “God is calling me – now let me go”. S.16 – S.18 of passage 14 depict this and the end was so pathetic that the readers do not know whom to sympathise with – the doctor or his father. But one definitely understands that leading a vegetable life is futile.

The conjunctions that contribute to the cohesion in the passage are ‘and’, ‘but’(4x), ‘thereafter’, ‘however’, ‘then’(2x), ‘so’ and ‘or’ in various passages of the story. ‘And’ in S.1 of passage 3, acts as an additive, presupposing S.8 of the preceding text. ‘Thereafter’ in S.2 of passage 4 acts as a causal conjunction to the preceding sentence that after acquiring so many degrees and qualifications his fame appeared to be dimmer as people got accustomed to it. ‘However’ in S.4 is contrastive to the idea that it did not take Rakesh to become famous and rich in a short period of time. ‘But’ occurs in several sentences, in various passages of the story, stating a different idea from the existing one. Then in S.14 of passage 7 and S.6 of passage 12 has been coded C35.1 and C41.1 respectively as it functions at one place as conditional simple and at another place temporal under the subcategory of sequential. The conjunction ‘so’ in passage 13 has the property of causal occurring as a result of S.8-S.10 in the preceding text. Or in S.5 of passage 13 suggests an alternative to S.4. Thus the conjunctions play a vital role in contributing to the cohesion of the story. The lexical items like the synonyms, same items, morphological variants and pronames are given in the tabular form here for the convenience of understanding and quick glance.

6.6. Conclusion

In this chapter the interpretation of “Bade Bhai Saab”, “The Hawk and the Tree”, “The Cop and the Anthem”, “Selvi” and “A Devoted Son” is dealt with in order to
substantiate the analysis that was made in the previous chapter. This chapter also has shown the beginning, climax and denoument of the stories and it has shown that cohesion and coherence go hand in hand. The pronames have been interpreted showing their presupposition element in the story. The significance of deixis too is brought out. In the following chapter the conclusion of the study is made by relating the objectives to the findings.