Abstract

To analyse the stylistic features of the select novels of Anita Desai and those of her daughter, Kiran Desai, is the interest of this undertaking. The analysis forms the basis for the discussion on the diversities and similarities in the prose styles of the mother and the daughter. The thesis is in two parts: 1. Theoretical and Analytical Framework, and 2. Analysis. The first part is preceded by ‘Introduction’ and the second part is followed by ‘Conclusion’.

The introductory chapter of the thesis raises some irresistible questions, puts strong arguments for and against the seemingly odious comparison, puts forward the aim of the work and provides an overview of the methodology. It also comments on the justification for the selection of the primary data and the stylistic tools to be applied for the analysis.

The first part of the thesis begins by considering some theoretical issues; relationship among language, literature and the fictional world, a discussion on style, stylistics, numerous interesting and valuable ways of approaching literary and non-literary texts, major issues in stylistics, and a historical review of stylistics. It gives a brief survey of Indian English Fiction, with a special attention on the Indian women novelists. It surveys the various critical views on the authors and their works included in the study, and throws light on the background to the setting and life experiences that the authors had to undergo, which, in turn, will help in fetching out the contextual meanings. Then it moves to the methodological and analytical framework for analysis; it includes different tools and a set of questions, which we can ask eclectically to draw on linguistic insights and to relate them with the literary importance of the texts in order to achieve the fuller interpretation of the language effects in relation to the literary effects.

The second part, a three-phase analysis, constitutes a stylistic analysis of the novels. Firstly, it talks through the various ways the select novels are structured and points out the different viewpoints put forward in the novels. The second phase analyses the ways the two writers use the macaronic aspect of English language in terms of lexical and structural deviation and explores how the Desais have been successful in
maintaining exonormative and endonormative balance in their works. Thirdly, the analysis moves to the deep level lexical and structural analysis and pinpoints the stylistic nuances both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The concluding pages of the thesis provide the result on the basis of the analysis done in the second part of the thesis.