CHAPTER – V

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5.1 Preliminaries

As has already been stated, speech acts are actions performed with words. One speech act may perform more than one function. Such as while questioning one may be requesting to the hearer or while stating one may be questioning to the hearer. When a speech act contains more than one function then it is called Indirect Speech Act. In the previous chapters varieties of questions, irony, sarcasm etc. have been analysed in detail. In the present chapter, some more forms of Indirect Speech Acts will be analysed like simile and metaphor, metonymic expressions, Euphemism, Synecdoche, circumlocution, emphatic statements, hedging such as denial etc.

5.2 Simile and Metaphor

The use of figures of speech is a way of saying something more than a simple statement. It is generally used as a decorative device in poetry as well as prose. Simile and Metaphor are figures of speech. In both of these figures of speech comparison is made between two things representing different class or category. In simile, comparison is made between two things by using the words such, like, as or as if etc. The definition of simile stated in A Spectrum of Literary Criticism (2001:292) is that a simile,

... consists in comparing two dissimilar objects for some likeness existing between them. The words such
as – as, as-so, like are used to show the likeness between the two things.

Thus, simile is an explicit comparison. Following example will clarify the definition.

Sita sings like a cuckoo.

or

He fights like a lion.

In the above examples of simile, Sita, - a human being representative and cuckoo a bird representative are compared for one common feature i.e. singing. Similarly, ‘he,’ a human being is compared with lion, an animal regarding fighting. However, unlike simile, a metaphor is an implicit comparison where the words – like, such, as etc. are eluded. For example,

Sita is a cuckoo (in singing).

or

He is a lion (in fighting).

Metaphor is defined in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (2009:108),

In a metaphor, a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one kind of thing is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing without asserting a comparison.

Thus, simile and metaphor cannot be considered as plain statements. They carry more than what is stated or one illocutionary force and hence they should be considered as Indirect Speech Acts. Indirect
Speech Acts, According to Searle; (1975:60) have two illocutionary forces.

The title of the novel *The White Tiger* itself is metaphorical where The White Tiger is compared implicitly with the protagonist of the novel – Balram Halwai. It is he who has been entitled as The White Tiger by his school inspector. The conversation between the inspector and Balram goes like this,

‘You, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots. In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals – the creature that comes along only once in a generation?’ I thought about it and said: ‘The white tiger.’

‘That’s what you are, in this jungle.’ (2008: 35)

The above conversation bears thematic significance. The novel itself is about how Balram Halwai, an ordinary driver turns into the white tiger by murdering his master Mr. Ashok Sharma. The seeds of the instinct of becoming a white tiger in Balram’s heart are sown in the above conversation. Balram realizes that he is not a common, ordinary fellow and to prove this, he takes certain decisions in his life and becomes a very rich entrepreneur. As the white tiger does not think before killing anybody, Balram too does not hesitate about the method or way whether it is right or wrong while killing his master to become very rich. Thus, Balram is entitled as The White Tiger and other children are considered as other animals living in that jungle. This jungle refers to the disorganized and undisciplined society full of thugs and idiots. The qualities of the white tiger ‘fearlessness, braveness, intelligence and ferocity are thus attributed
to Balram Halwai who proves himself to be a white tiger in his life. The primary illocutionary force of the inspector’s utterance is that of metaphor and the secondary illocutionary force is of an assertive (claiming) in the form of statement. Thus, metaphors are ‘loaded weapons’ (Bolinger 1980). Jacob Mey explains the importance of metaphor in *Pragmatics an Introduction* (2001:305) in the following words,

> Metaphors are essential when it comes to explaining how people, despite differences in class, culture and religion, are able to communicate across geographical distances and historical periods. For this reason, the study of metaphors provides a unique understanding of the human cognitive capability, as well as an indispensable tool for solving problems in language understanding and acquisition.

However, unfortunately Balram is taken out of school and made to do the work of a coal breaker. The other boys tease Balram and he gets infuriated. Kishan, his brother recognizes this and suggests to Balram,

> ‘Imagine that each coal is my skull: they will get much easier to break.’ *(The White Tiger, 2008: 38)*

Here, coal is implicitly compared with the skull of Kishan who forces him to break the coals. Balram hates Kishan for compelling him to leave the school and break coals. Hence, if he thinks each coal to be Kishan’s skull, he can vent his anger on coals by breaking them. However, Balram is quite aware that both of them are the victims of the condition and tries to forget his school days. The
primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is of metaphor while the secondary illocutionary force is that of directive (suggesting). The perlocutionary effect of the metaphor is Balram’s adjustment with the work—coal breaking which is unavoidable at the moment.

Balram’s father wants his son to go to school and be successful in his life. However, when he comes to know that due to the fear of a lizard Balram runs away from school, he gets angry and kills the lizard in front of Balram’s eyes. He says,

‘My whole life, I have been treated like a donkey.
All I want is that one son of mine – at least one- should live like a man.’

(The White Tiger, 2008: 30)

The mingling of the comparison between the man and donkey in the above utterance is quite interesting. Balram’s father calls himself ‘like a donkey’ but his son he wants to be ‘a man’. Thus, the utterance is laden with extended meaning. The characteristics of a donkey—carrier of loads, hard worker and insensible are explicitly attributed to Balram’s father who does not want his son to follow the same life of donkey. It is noteworthy that in the Indian rural area people or men are treated like donkeys and not as human beings. The primary illocutionary force of the utterance is of simile and the secondary illocutionary force is that of declarative (pronouncing) in the form of a statement. If thought deeply, it is also an indirect suggestion (declarative) to Balram to live like a man. Balram Halwai gets inspiration from his father and the school inspector both who
believe in the potential of Balram. They are as if the guiding stars of Balram’s life.

As a consequence of the above inspiration, Balram decides to learn driving and approaches an old taxi driver. The following conversation takes place between the old driver and Balram.

The old driver asked, ‘What caste are you?’
‘Halwai.’
‘Sweet-makers,’ the old driver said, shaking his head. ‘That’s what you people do. You make sweets. How can you learn to drive?’ He pointed his hookah at the live coals. ‘That’s like getting coals to make ice for you. Mastering a car’- he moved the stick of an invisible gearbox- ‘it’s like taming a wild stallion – only a boy from the warrior castes can manage that. You need to have aggression in your blood. Muslims, Rajputs, Sikhs- they are fighters, they can become drivers. You think sweet-makers can last long in fourth gear?’ (2008: 56)

When the old driver learns that Balram is a sweet-maker he poses a doubt about his learning driving. Hence the rhetorical question ‘How can you learn to drive?’ is an indirect assertion that he cannot learn driving. Further, via simile the driver compares the activity of getting coals to make ice and mastering a car. This simile suggests that as coals cannot make ice, Balram too cannot master driving. Again he compares mastering a car with taming a wild stallion. This comparison is an amazing amalgamation of simile and metaphor. Simile lies in comparing the task of ‘mastering a car’ with ‘taming a
Metaphor lies in the implicit comparison between Balram and a wild stallion. Balram is indirectly considered ‘a wild stallion’ – a fully grown male horse. Wonderfully, the school inspector had called Balram ‘a white tiger’ and the old driver entitles him to be a wild stallion. The activity of teaching Balram to learn driving is as difficult as taming a wild stallion. The form of the last question, ‘You think sweet-makers can last long in fourth gear?’ is assertive but the function of it is posing doubt by asking question. The old driver is indirectly asserting that sweet-makers cannot last long in fourth gear. The expression fourth gear is a metaphor for high speed. The utterance consists of a secondary illocutionary force of an expressive in the form of an interrogative. In spite of the old drivers mistrust, Balram proves to be a good learner and soon masters the car. The old driver praises him in the following words,

‘You’re better than I thought- you are a surprise package, little fellow....’ (2008: 57)

By using metaphorical expression, ‘surprise package’ the driver indirectly tells that Balram has become a good driver unexpectedly. As a surprise package incites excitement similarly, the driver too is excited to witness Balram’s progress. The primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is metaphor while secondary illocutionary force is that of assertive (stating) in the form of a statement.

Balram’s granny Kusum decides that he should get married. Without taking Balram’s permission she has even searched a bride for him. She says,
‘We’ve already found someone for you – a nice plump duck....’ (2008: 85)

Obviously, ‘a nice plump duck’ refers to the girl that Kusum has found for Balram for marriage. Via this metaphor Kusum intends to suggest that the girl is fair and healthy as well as rich. Thus, it has been observed that people compare human beings with birds and animals by using either simile or metaphor. The reason of this comparison may be the common aspect or characteristics between certain animals and birds and certain people. Kusum’s selfishness too can be observed through above metaphor. She is a very greedy and selfish woman who exploits all her family members for the sake of money. The primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is that of metaphor and the secondary illocutionary force is that of assertive (stating) in the form of a statement.

In the novel The White Tiger human beings are compared with animals where as in the novel The Inheritance of Loss animal is compared with human being. It can be observed in the following conversation of Sai and her grandfather, the judge.

“Your dog is like a film star,” said Sai.
“Maybe an Audrey Hepburn,” said the judge, trying not to show how pleased he was at this remark, “but certainly not one of those lurid apparitions on the bazaar posters.” (2006: 33)

Mutt, the pet dog of the judge is a very good looking dog. Sai likes the dog very much and hence she compares the dog with a film star. On the top of it, the judge selects Audrey Hepburn for comparison
and not other common or ordinary film stars. It is remarkable that people compare human beings with animals and animals with human beings. Whether humanity is turning wild or the wild is turning into humanity is a real question that arises in one’s mind due to the above instances of simile and metaphor. The primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is of a simile and the secondary illocutionary force is of an assertive in the form of a statement.

Pixie, the daughter of Lola in the same novel is a BBC reporter at New England. Lola advises her,

“India is a sinking ship. Don’t want to be pushy, darling, sweetie, thinking of your happiness only, but the doors won’t stay open forever....” (2006: 47)

‘India is a sinking ship’ is a metaphor in which India is compared implicitly with a sinking ship. The hostile attitude of Indians towards their own country is clearly apparent in this metaphor. The fact that Lola gives more importance to England and considers India to be a sinking ship is matter of introspection. According to her the people who leave India remain happy and that’s why she advises her daughter to remain in England. The ship that is sinking is not only useless but dangerous to life. The condition of India is like that sinking ship. It denotes that India can never progress according to Lola. The primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is of metaphor while the secondary is of assertive (stating) in the form of a statement.
Interestingly, lovers compare each other with edible tasty food items in the same novel. Gyan and Sai converse with each other in the following words,

   Eating momos, dipped in chutney,
   Gyan said: “You’re my momo”
   Sai said: “No you’re mine”. (2006: 140)

Kiran Desai, the narrator describes momo as ‘mutton in dough, one thing plump and cozy within the other- it connoted protection, affection.’ Thus, the lover compares his beloved with that food item which extends protection and affection. Further they continue,

   “Kishmish”, he called her to cover it up and “Kaju” she called him, raisin and cashew, sweet, nutty, and expensive. (2006: 140)

Thus, lovers have compared each other with sweet nutty and expensive dry fruits. It may be because they want to show each other’s important place in their hearts. All the above utterances are metaphors – an implicit comparison to express the love they have for each other. By using these metaphors, Gyan and Sai admit their love and feel overjoyed. The secondary illocutionary force of the above utterances is that of assertive (stating) in the form of a statement.

In Afterwards Maya thinks her house in India to be like a cage and she feels being imprisoned in it. She expresses her predicament when she talks about it with Rahul.

   ‘So he puts you safely away in to a little cage...’
   ‘You must admit it’s a nice cage, though. Three bedrooms, three attached bathrooms, stainless steel
sink in a fully tiled kitchen...’ Her sing-song tone was half mocking and half sorrowful again. (2004: 56-57)

Maya’s husband, an over suspicious man does not allow her to take further education or to go out of their home. When Rahul comes to know this he calls her home to be a cage. Maya too agrees and calls it to be a nice cage superficially. Both Maya and Rahul use metaphor to express Maya’s miserable condition. The primary illocutionary force of these utterances is of metaphor and the secondary illocutionary force is that of assertive (stating) in the form of statement.

Rahul stands as a contrasting figure against Govind. Rahul helps Maya in the kitchen when she invites him for dinner, of course in the absence of her husband. The idea of men working in the kitchen is somewhat unexpected and pleasant to Maya. Hence, she says,

‘To me, it sounds like heaven.’ (P: 44)

It is this contrast between Rahul and Govind that pulls Maya towards Rahul and she thinks of escaping from this cage along with Rahul. Thus, the above simile where the condition of men helping in the kitchen is compared with heaven is very significant. It contributes to the development of the plot of the novel. It serves as a background to the main plot of the novel.

5.3 Euphemism

Euphemism a kind of figure of speech should be considered as a pleasant and skilful use of language. Most of the times the speaker
uses Euphemism to save the situation like wars, quarrels etc. In this figure of speech harsh reality is presented in sugar-coated words. That is why; it is a form of circumlocution where the speaker avoids using plain statement and certain (shocking or sad) news or messages are delivered in a roundabout manner. It is, in simple terms, a replacement of harsh, vulgar words in to milder, pleasant expression. As it is stated in A Spectrum of Literary Criticism by using this figure of speech,

‘.... we express in pleasant terms an unpleasant thing or subject to reduce shock or intended insult in intensity.’(Thorat etal: 2001:296)

The use of mild and pleasant words for constructive purpose is called a euphemistic expression whereas the use of harsh and unpleasant words for destructive purposes is called ‘dysphemistic’ expression. In the novel The White Tiger the landlord, Mr. Mukesh and grandmother of Balram Halwai often use dysphemistic expressions. Likewise, in the novel The Inheritance of Loss the judge uses dysphemistic expressions concerning his wife. Harish-Harry too uses the same dysphemistic expressions regarding Biju. In Afterwards Maya’s parents and her husband Govind use dysphemistic expressions. It is said that words are like swords and they cannot be forgotten by someone who is hurt deeply due to the sharpness of these (dysphemistic) words. The following example will clarify the difference between euphemistic and dysphemistic expression. If a boss tells his employee –‘You have come late for the last time today,’ he indirectly warns him that the next day if he comes late he will fire him. Similarly, if the boss instead says, ‘I will
fire you tomorrow if you come late, it will be a dysphemistic expression where direct threat has been given.

In day to day conversation it often happens that the interlocutors find it difficult to express certain things and activities directly. They feel awkward or embarrassed while speaking about certain prohibited areas like, sex, death, diseases, prostitution, bodily functions and the supernatural. One cannot dispraise others or tell their weak points directly in front of them. These are mutual norms of society which should be observed carefully. Euphemism often functions like a code language which has to be decoded by the listener sharing the same contextual background. As Euphemism is an indirect way of saying something taboo or prohibited expressions, it is obviously an Indirect Speech Act. Considerable use of euphemism has been found in the novels under consideration.

Speaking about ‘death’ directly is generally avoided by people. There are varieties of other expressions that are used instead of the direct mention of death. In The White Tiger for example, Balram tells about the death of his father in the following words,

...my father was permanently cured of tuberculosis.

(2008: 50)

Here, the word ‘permanently’ is highly suggestive that extends the inference of death. The strategy of using a substitutive word as a Euphemistic device is used here to tame the shock.

When Pinky Madam, Mr. Ashok’s wife drives their car in top speed due to the intoxication caused by the drink, she hits a beggar child
on the road and the child dies on the spot. All three of them realize what exactly has happened. However, Balram and Ashok bring the car back to their residence. Pinky, unable to mention about the child, whom she has hit says,

‘We hit something Ashoky.’....

‘We have to take that thing to the hospital’. (P: 164)

Here, instead of saying directly that they hit the child of the beggar she uses the lexical euphemism ‘something’ and ‘that thing’. When reality becomes intolerable people use some other words for the deceased like ‘something’ or ‘that thing’ as can be seen above just to soften its dire effect on their mind. However, Mr. Ashok and Balram do not pay attention to her urge and they drive back to their apartment. Mr. Ashok drags his wife and locks her inside their house. When he comes down, following conversation takes place between him and Balram,

‘Well?’ (1)

I showed him a piece of bloodied green fabric that had got stuck to the wheel. ‘It’s cheap stuff, sir, this green cloth,’ (2) I said, rubbing the rough material between my fingers. ‘It’s what they put on children.’(3) ‘And do you think the child ...’ (4) He couldn’t say the word. ‘There was no sound at all, sir. No sound at all. And the body didn’t move even a bit.’ (5) ‘God, Balram, what will we do now – what will we-’ (6) He slapped his hand to his thigh. ‘What are these children doing, walking about Delhi at one in the morning, with no one to look after them?’(7) When he had said this, his
eyes lit up. ‘Oh, she was one of those people.’ (8)
‘Who live under the flyovers
and bridges, sir’ (9) ‘That’s my guess too.’ (10)
‘In that case will anyone miss her...?’ (11)
‘I don’t think so, sir’. (12)

_________
Then he put a finger on his lips.
I nodded. ‘Of course, sir. (13)
Now sleep well- it’s been a difficult night for you and
Pinky Madam.’ (14) (P: 164-165)

Above conversation between Mr. Ashok and Balram is very
significant pragmatically. Without knowing the contextual
background, one cannot comprehend the above conversation. Out of
context, the utterance loses its significance. Ashok’s utterance in (1)
is an elliptical question. It should not be taken literally ‘Well’
suggests something more. It may mean that Mr. Ashok is listless
and being unable to take the further decision, he is asking Balram –
‘Well, what to do now?’ Or ‘What shall we do now?’ the elliptical
question contains euphemistic mode where the speaker finds it
difficult to express to him clearly when he feels guilty or is shocked
due to some unexpected or unwanted occurrence. Balram, a clever
driver understands his master’s helplessness and indirectly tells him
that the deceased must be a poor child. ‘Cheap green cloth’ is highly
symbolical suggesting the poverty of the child. The person deixis
‘they’ is used to suggest the beggar or poor people. Again in (4) Mr.
Ashok uses an elliptical expression that clearly shows his confused
state of mind and his nervousness. The incomplete utterance may be
– ‘And do you think the child died (on the spot)’. Thus, ‘death’ or
the various forms of this word—died, die, dying etc. cannot be uttered easily due to the terror or misery that surrounds this word. Balram again avoids the mention of ‘death’. Instead of saying that the child died instantaneously, Balram uses euphemism at the sentence level via uttering (5). The insincere questions in (6&7) are the indication of Ashok’s indignation. He is completely helpless in this situation. While asking the question in (7) he suddenly realizes that the child must be a beggar child. The deictic expression ‘those’ in (8) again is a form of lexical euphemism. Instead of saying that the child was one of those people who live under the flyovers and bridges; Ashok uses person deixis ‘those’ to avoid further complications. However, Balram clears the doubt of Mr. Ashok in (9&10). Mr. Ashok’s question in (11) displays a thin ray of hope of escaping from this situation. Balram too supports Ashok’s hope and assures him that the parents of the child will neither miss the child nor go to the police. Mr. Ashok’s non verbal action of putting a finger on his lips expresses the inexpressible. The non verbal action extends the message that Balram should keep mum. Balram, a genius fellow quickly decodes the non verbal signal of Mr. Ashok and assures him both verbally and non-verbally (nodding).

How varieties of expressions can be used to mention the death of someone is evident in the following example taken from *The Inheritance of Loss*. An obituary that Sai reads is written in the following words.

“Our darling Piu,” an obituary outlined in black had a photo of a smiling child __ “seven years have passed since you left for your heavenly abode, and the pain has not gone. Why were you so cruelly snatched away
before your time? Mummy keeps crying to think of your sweet smile. We cannot make sense of our lives. Anxiously awaiting your reincarnation.” (2006: 108)

Though, this obituary has not much significance in the development of the plot, yet the euphemistic expression, ‘you left for your heavenly abode’, ‘snatched away’ etc. are fine examples of euphemism that are employed as a substitution for the word died or death.

In *Afterwards* Maya, suffocating due to her suspicious and possessive husband turns to Rahul for help. At one crucial moment they flee to London with Maya’s one year old daughter Anjali. However, it was considered as an illicit elopement by Maya’s parents who could not tolerate the disgrace of their family honour and decide to perform Maya’s death rites even when she is alive at that time. When her family members decide to perform her death rites they whisper in following words.

> Better to get someone from far away, they would have whispered.
> ...
> It’s more private, we don’t want too many people talking about it...

> ... the local elayathu might gossip...
> ... And he wouldn’t suffice anyway; you really do need one with a special Knowledge of these things...

> It’s not like performing the usual last rites, you know.
> It’s different when it’s done for someone who is still alive...  (2004:3-4)
Maya’s parents decide to call the elayathu-(a priest who does the death rites) living on a hill side so that the local elayathu and the other people should not talk about it. Instead of using the word death rites, her parents use the deictic expressions like ‘it’ and ‘these things’. It is noteworthy that people usually not only avoid talking about death but also about death rites as can be seen in the above example. However, the activity of performing death rites of one’s own daughter who is still alive is quite ironical. Unfortunately, Maya dies all of a sudden in a car accident while spending her life with Rahul for nearly three years (2 years nine months and a day). Rahul begins mourning bitterly in a restaurant due to Maya’s death. Watching his wet face, two women come closer to him and offer him tissues to wipe his face. Rahul reveals to them the bad news about Maya’s death in the following words,

‘I’m really sorry,’ I said again. ‘I...I’m not...I’ve just had a bit of crisis.’ (2004: 76)

It’s quite obvious that the elliptical expressions of Rahul are due to an excess of grief as Maya whom he has helped to free from her husband’s clutches and whom he has loved very much is dead painfully. ‘A bit of crisis’ is a euphemistic phrase used in place of the actual happening that is death of Maya. When Maya meets with an accident and dies instantaneously the news of her death is delivered in the following manner to Rahul.

There’s been an accident, Sir. We believe one of the persons involved might be your partner. Maya Warrier? She’s in a serious condition at the A & E department at Kings in South London... do you know
where that is, sir...?’ Did they always use the words ‘in a serious condition’ when they really meant ‘dead’?

(2004: 87)

The message has been conveyed in a very careful manner. The phrase ‘in a serious condition’ is euphemistic. Instead of telling directly that Maya is dead on the spot these words ‘in a serious condition’ are used with great care. It is a tactic used for the purpose of saving the hearer from shock on listening about his or her dear one’s death. Otherwise, it is possible that the hearer may die of heart attack after listening to the news of death directly. However, Rahul introspects and asks himself, ‘Did they always use the words in a serious condition when they really meant ‘dead’?

It becomes equally difficult for Rahul to explain Anjali, the poor child of Maya, about Maya’s death. He uses several euphemistic expressions to tell this unfortunate news to Anjali in the following way.

‘Mum’s gone away...’ (P: 98)
‘Mum couldn’t stay, sweetie, to take you there.
That’s why the lady’s come...’ (P: 99)
Damn. Damn. ‘Mum’s not here, Anjali.’ (P: 168)
‘Anjali, baby, you must understand Mum’s gone.
Not coming back. Mum’s- Gone-Away.’ (P: 181)

However, Anjali’s continuous questioning about her mother annoys Rahul too much and at one moment he loses his temper and tells Anjali directly about her mother’s death.

‘...Mum’s NOT here and Mum will never BE
Mum’s gone, Anjali. There’s no Mum any more, Okay? *GONE! DEAD! SO STOP ASKING ME FOR HER. I CAN’T BRING HER BACK! SO PLEASE JUST STOP ASKING!* I honestly can’t bear it any more!’ (P: 185)
‘...Mum’s NOT here and Mum will never BE here__ okay?’ (P: 185)

It’s the final explosion of the news of death as well as Rahul’s suppressed anger. The expression put in capital letter is emphatic. They reveal the explosion of Rahul’s agony. He cannot tolerate Anjali’s continuous questions anymore and hence uses a direct speech act which can be considered as dysphemistic hearing which Anjali runs towards garden and cries loudly. She hysterically demands for her mother followed by screaming and sobbing.

Other characters in the novel too avoid the mention of Maya’s death. For example, Ms Hawke, the social worker, mentions it as ‘Mrs. Warrier’s accident’ (P: 110) Sandy Lockhart, another social worker calls it ‘sad circumstances’ (P: 201).

Rahul meets Maya’s mother to vent his wrath regarding the death rites performed by them prior to Maya’s death. Maya’s mother explains the reason in the following words which is covered in euphemism.

‘Six months after he conducted that terrible ceremony.
I could see it eating away inside him. His mother had
died before the monsoon. It was as if he was waiting for his mother to go and ... soon after, he went too.’

(P: 262)

Maya’s mother uses the expression ‘terrible ceremony’ in place of ‘death rites’ and ‘to go’ and ‘went’ for ‘to die’ and ‘died’ respectively. It is noteworthy that people avoid mentioning about death or death rites directly.

Speaking publicly about sex and prostitution is prohibited. Those who talk about it openly are considered to be vulgar and manner less people. That is why; people speak about it only in a coded language often using euphemism in such manner that only the listener who shares the same contextual background may understand it. One of the drivers tells about prostitutes to Balram in euphemistic manner. He says,

‘...You know what you need? A woman. Have you seen the slum behind the malls? They’re not bad-looking - nice and plump. Some of us go there once a week. You can come too.’

(The White Tiger, 2008: 203)

The word slum indicates the area where prostitution goes on. The person deixis ‘they’ refers to prostitutes. The reason of going there (once a week) is avoided to be told as it is obvious and need not be mentioned. He even offers Balram to visit the place with them. The driver has skilfully avoided the mention of prostitutes and sexual enjoyment and yet not only Balram but even the reader gets the exact inference of the euphemistic expressions in the above
utterance. In euphemism though the meaning is not straight forward, it can be fathomed easily with the help of context.

On another occasion, the fat man, the minister’s ‘sidekick’ asks Mr. Ashok the following question;

‘What’s your situation, Ashok?’

(The White Tiger 2008: 214)

The word situation seems a very common word that refers to present condition. Mr. Ashok too takes the inference of the word ‘situation’ literally and begins to explain him about coal-trading. But the fat man has nothing to do with that situation. To tell in his words,

‘But that’s not what we in Delhi mean when we say situation, dear boy!’ The minister’s sidekick smiled.
‘Basically, what I’m asking is who services you – down there?’ He pointed at a part of Mr. Ashok’s body that he had no business pointing at. ‘I am separated. Going through a divorce’. ‘I’m sorry to hear that,’ the fat man said. ‘Marriage is a good institution. Everything’s coming apart in this country. Families, marriages – everything’. (2008: 214-215)

The explanation of the minister’s side kick is stunningly humorous. By using the spatial deixis ‘there’ and pointing at Mr. Ashok’s private part of body he uses euphemistic question, ‘who services you-down there?’ the meaning of which Mr. Ashok realises quickly. In plain words the man is asking Mr. Ashok about his sexual situation that is about his wife or life partner. Mr. Ashok’s reply is
sensible in this context. Instead of admitting that his sexual condition is worse as he is separated, he only tells the reason of his situation. It is the reason that leads to the consequence indirectly. However, the fat man’s reaction – ‘Marriage is a good institution’ seems ironical as he himself is a corrupt politician who regularly visits prostitutes. The fat man further dares to ask him,

‘When you were in America you must have had a lot of women? I mean – the local women.’ (1)

‘No.’ (2)

‘No? What does that mean?’ (3)

‘I was faithful to Pinky- my wife-the whole time.’ (4)

‘My. You were faithful! (5) What an idea. (6) Faithfully married. (7) No wonder it ended in divorce.(8) Have you never had a white woman?’ (9)

‘I told you.’ (10)

‘God. Why it is always the wrong kind of Indian who goes abroad?(11) Listen, do you want one now? A European girl?’ (12)

‘Now?’(13)

‘Now’, he said. ‘A female from Russia. (14) She looks just like that American actress.’ (15) He mentioned a name ‘Want to do it?’ (16)

‘A whore?’ (17)

The fat man smiled. (18) ‘A friend. A magical friend.(19)

Want to do it?’ (20)

‘No, thanks. I am seeing someone. (21) (P: 216)
Above conversation between the fat man and Mr. Ashok is a fine example of irony, humour and euphemism. The man uses the word ‘women’ and ‘local women’ in place of prostitutes and thus observes Euphemism to some extent in (1). The question in (3) demands explanation of (2). Actually the man wants to ask the question ‘Why?’ but instead, he asks a longer question in (3) so that the question should not seem odd or impulsive. The explanation of Mr. Ashok is perfect but the reaction of the man is quite ironical. Utterances (5, 6, 7 & 8) are completely ironical. The speaker here intends to suggest that because Mr. Ashok was faithful to his wife, his married life ended in divorce. The opposite of the same can be inferred that if one remains unfaithful to his/her life partner, there is no chance of taking divorce. Both the inferences are equally ironical. If Mr. Ashok was faithful to his wife, there should not be any reason for a divorce. As whatever is expected has not taken place or not meant, these utterances (5, 6, 7 & 8) seem ironical. It is an indirect satire on the institution called marriage. In (9) he repeats his question (1). That is why; Ashok does not repeat his answer. Question (11) of the fat man is sarcastic through which humour has been aroused. Actually, Mr. Ashok is a perfect man who went abroad. He is a good specimen of the Indian male- a faithful husband. However, according to the fat man as he did not enjoy a white woman he is a wrong man to go abroad. Obviously the utterance is not only ironical but also humorous. The next question in (12) is illicit. ‘Do you want one now?’ indirectly means ‘Do you want one prostitute for sexual enjoyment?’ However, these words are eluded euphemistically but the question can be understood by Mr. Ashok and Balram as they share the same contextual background. The man tells about the woman as – ‘a female from
Russia.’ Here too he uses the word ‘a female’ in place of ‘a whore’.
However, Mr. Ashok, who is not used to such kind of suggestive and
euphemistic language, asks him directly in (17). But the man is not
ready to yield. He again uses the lexical euphemism ‘a friend. A
magical friend’ for a whore and repeats (19) the same question
without going in detail. Mr. Ashok replies directly in (20) and even
states the reason of his negation. It is notable that the man who is
crooked, corrupted and lusty is using Indirect Speech Acts while Mr.
Ashok, a straight forward man is using direct speech acts. Thus,
people who visit to a ‘whore’ do not use the same word in their talk.
They might be feeling guilty in using such direct words. However,
the man seems very shameless as he insists Mr. Ashok to meet a
Ukrainian whore and to have sexual enjoyment with her. When all
this gets over and Mr. Ashok comes out of the hotel where he had
enjoyed the whore, he tells Balram,

‘The meeting’s over, Balram,’ (P: 219)

Surprisingly, Mr. Ashok has started using euphemistic language by
calling his sexual intercourse with that whore as ‘the meeting’. Thus,
the fat man is a rotten apple who corrupts Mr. Ashok completely who
too has started using Indirect Speech Acts via euphemism like the fat
man.

Balram Halwai, the only witness of his master’s deterioration,
decides to imitate him. He collects seven thousand rupees by using
unfair means and manages to enjoy a woman with golden hair in a
hotel because the Ukrainian girl was also golden haired. The above
example tells us that corruption is the strange path where people
bend their way and even misdirect others to follow them. Another
driver (Vitiligo lips) gets very excited to see Balram’s courage and cheers him,

‘Good luck, Country- Mouse- do it for all of us!’

(2008: 233)

Country Mouse is another name of Balram given by Vitiligo lips. Euphemism lies in the deictic expressions ‘it’ which is a substitution for ‘sexual act’. Balram’s other expressions like ‘...Time to get started!’ and time to dip my beak in her. (P: 235) are again suggestive and euphemistic that carries amorous associations. Similarly the pan seller and milkman appeal to Balram on another occasion in the following words,

‘Chew paan – it will help if you’re having trouble getting it up!’--------
‘Drink hot milk – it helps too!’ (2008: 251)

It is observable that without using any sexually related word these people encourage their customers for buying paan or milk. Avoidance of the precise words and replacement of other less gaudy /sharp words is another skill of using euphemism.

In The Inheritance of Loss, Biju loses his virginity due to his friends, the other immigrants, who incite him to go to whores. In the beginning, Biju expresses his disgust,

“How can you? (1)Those, those women are dirty,” (2) he said primly. “Stinking bitches,” (3) sounding awkward. “Fucking bitches, fucking cheap women you’ll get some disease. (4)... smell bad ... hubshi...
all black and ugly ...they make me sick (5) .....”

The question in (1) asked by Biju is an incomplete rhetorical question. The complete question should be – how can you fuck with those women? The incompleteness of the question displays its euphemistic mode. Biju indirectly asserts via this question that ‘you cannot fuck with those women’. The deictic expression – ‘those’ refers to the Dominican whores whom his friends often visit after work. He tells the reason behind his disgust towards these women in (2, 3, 4 & 5). Biju’s hatred towards these women is actually a veiled expression to cover his timidity. However, Romy his friend is too bold in making the statement in (6) again ‘it’ the deictic expression deals with sexual enjoyment. It should be taken into account that people usually employ deictic expression when they do not want to use bold or obscene words, phrases or sentences.

Once a man from Biju’s village who worked in the city says,

“Be careful of the hubshi. Ha, Ha, in their own country they live like monkeys in the trees. They come to India and become men.” (P: 76)

The superficial meaning of a man or men seems to be a male or males. However, in the above utterance the speaker means to say that black men ran about attempting to impregnate every Indian girl they saw. (P: 76) The word man has been used in the above utterance euphemistically as a substitution for the man who is sexually capable. Even Biju cannot fathom the meaning of this word quickly.
Similarly, in *The White Tiger* the old driver gives Balram a chance to enjoy a whore as a reward of his hard work. He tells Balram,

‘... I’ve taught you to be a driver and a man-...’ (2008:59)

Here too, the old driver means to say by the word ‘a man’ as a male who has capability of enjoying woman sexually. Thus, the word ‘man’ can be used euphemistically.

In *The Inheritance of Loss* Jemubhai Patel marries Bela – the daughter of Bomanbhai Patel. Being too young to understand the meaning of marriage both of them get frightened of each other on the first night. The next day, the curious relatives make fun of them in the following manner.

Next morning the uncle’s laughed. “What happened? Nothing?” (1) They gestured at the bed. More laughter the next day. The third day, worry.


“Chase her and pin her down,” (6) the uncle’s ordered Jemubhai. (2006: 91-92)

All the above utterances (1 to 6) are indirectly related with sexual intercourse between Jemubhai and Bela – Nimi Patel. The relatives of Nimi and Jemubhai are forcing the pair to involve in this activity without even mentioning it. Avoiding mentioning the exact expressive words – sexual intercourse is a euphemistic strategy that is applied in the above utterances. However, in the presence of these
relatives, Jemubhai and Nimi were unsuccessful but when these relatives were out of house for selling the jewels, this newly married pair was successful in this mission. Writer Kiran Desai has described their intercourse euphemistically with only one speech act – (euphemistic) and the reader becomes aware about the involvement of the couple in to each other. The description goes like this,

While the family was out selling the jewels for extra money, he offered her a ride on his father’s Hercules cycle. She shook her head, but when he rode up, a child’s curiosity conquered her commitment to tears and she climbed on sideways. “Stick your legs out,” he instructed and worked away at the pedals. They went faster and faster between the trees and cows, whizzing through the cowpats. Jemubhai turned, caught quick sight of her eyes—oh, no man had eyes like these or looked out on the world this way.... He pedalled harder. The ground sloped, and as they flew down the incline, their hearts were left behind for an instant, levitating amid green leaves, blue sky. (2006: 92)

While reading the above description the reader wonders whether it is the description of riding of a cycle of the couple or their first experience of sexual interaction. Thus, stating one and meaning another that is double meaning of the same description or utterance seems to be strategic use of euphemism. The euphemistic expression here refers to the non verbal aspect or sexual intercourse and carries picturesque quality.
Jemubhai completes his education and comes back to his native place. That very first night he and his wife quarrel with each other on the issue of powder puff. The relatives outside the room assume their quarrel to be sexual enjoyment and they say in excitement,

“Break the bed,” (P: 168)

“Now she will settle down,” (P: 169)

“That girl has too much spirit.” (P: 169)

All the above utterances deal with physical relationship of Jemu and Nimi Patel. Instead of using the vulgar and coarse words, symbolic words are replaced euphemistically in order to avoid offence. Certain things and activities are considered impolite and awkward or embarrassing such as, private parts of body and bodily functions like excretory activities.

The Vitiligo lips in *The White Tiger* reveals a secret about his master by using euphemism in following words,

‘Want to know a secret? My master likes film actresses. He takes them to a hotel in Jangpura, with a big, glowing T sign on it, and hammers them, there.’ He named three famous Mumbai actresses his master had ‘hammered’. ‘And yet he looks like a goody-goody. Only I know- and I tell you, all the masters are the same. One day you’ll believe me.’ (2008: 201)

Euphemism lies in the word ‘hammers’. One of the literal meanings of hammer if taken as a verb is to hit an object such as a nail with a hammer. However, in the above expression of Vitiligo lips
‘hammers’ refers to sexual act. It also refers to man’s private part of body which is equated with a ‘hammer’. His utterance, ‘And yet he looks like a goody-goody is ironical because the person who does such immoral act should not appear ‘good’ but the master of vitiligo lips looks ‘goody-goody’. It is the mask of goodness on the face of the rich, powerful and political people that deceives others. His belief that ‘all the masters are the same and one day Balram will believe it’ functions as if a prediction of the future because just after a few days Mr. Ashok goes to the same hotel and hammers a Ukrainian whore. (P: 202)

‘Ammonia break’ (2008: 202) is a euphemistic phrase that Balram uses for the excretory activity like ‘urinating’.

In the novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), Saeed starts meeting a new, white girl friend about whom his beloved Thea has no idea. Naturally, his other friends feel jealous of Saeed. Omar, one of Saeed’s friends expresses his dislike about white women in following words.

“You better watch out,” said Omar. “White women, they look good when they’re young, but wait, they fall apart fast, by forty they look so ugly, hair falling out, lines everywhere, and those spots and those veins, you know what I’m talking about....”  (P: 101)

Euphemism lies in the deictic phrase, ‘those spots and those veins.’ By using these words Omar is mentioning the unmentionable that is the private parts of the woman’s body. The listener understands what Omar is talking about due to his further explanation- ‘you know
what I’m talking about...’ this elliptical remarks are euphemistic in which the inexpressible is avoided to be expressed.

In the same novel, Lola a helpless woman goes to Gorkha Commander Pradhan to complain that his (Nepali) boys have illegally occupied the premises of her house without her consent. She wants her premises to be vacated. Lola is Bengali and Pradhan is Nepali. The Nepalis hate the Bengalis. The Gorkha movement is the Nepali struggle against the Bengali. That is why; he insults her impolitely in the following words,

“In fact,” he said, “as you can see,” he gestured out, “I am the raja of Kalimpong (1) A raja must have many queens.” (2)_____

“I have four, but would you,” he looked Lola up and down, tipped his chair back, head at a comical angle, a coy naughty expression catching his face, “dear Aunty, would you like to be the fifth?” (3)_________

“And you know, you won’t be bearing me any sons at your age so I will expect a big dowry. (4) And you’re not much to look at nothing up” he patted the front of his khaki shirt “nothing down’ he patted his behind, which he twisted out of the chair (5)

“In fact, I have more of both!” (6) (P: 244)

Pradhan has used both verbal and non-verbal speech acts effectively in the above speech. He begins with direct speech acts stating his importance in (1) and (2). His impoliteness begins from (3). He calls her ‘aunty’ and still asks her to marry him is indeed ironical. His proposal is not serious. In fact, the real intent of this proposal is to
humiliate Lola; hence he is flouting politeness principle in ascending order. He goes on attacking her by more inhuman and lusty remarks, As Lola is too old to have children, he expects a big dowry in (4). Utterance in (5) is euphemistic superficially. Through this Indirect Speech Act he states that she is not beautiful. He uses elliptical remarks – ‘nothing up__’ ‘nothing down__’ but these elliptical remarks are non verbal actions that indicate the private body parts of Lola – the woman. Strangely enough, though Mr. Pradhan’s elliptical remarks are the characteristic of euphemism, the non-verbal actions are dysphemistic that bring humiliation to Lola. It is obvious that he neither follows the politeness principle nor the cooperative one. His rude talk is attacking Lola’s ‘face’. It is a face threatening act of Mr. Pradhan. He ironically asserts his superiority in (6). Euphemistically he uses the word ‘both’ indicating his private body parts. The non verbal actions of Pradhan bring a picture in front of our eyes through the present scene. He is again breaching the approbation and modesty maxim of politeness by self-praising and dispraising other. The perlocutionary effect of this utterance of Lola is very severe. She not only runs away from the place but blames her dead husband for her degradation and humiliation in a complete nervous breakdown state.

In Afterwards (2004) different lexical and phrasal euphemism has been used for excretory activity like urination. When Maya dies Rahul’s friend Kevin calls him out of concern to see whether Rahul is completely broken or facing nervous breakdown. The telephone conversation goes like this,

‘Rahul, hi, it’s me_ Kevin’.
‘Kev, hi,’ I responded, emptying my bladder.
‘Rahul? Where are you, what’s that sound?’
‘It’s bloody me trying to take a leak in peace, do you mind?’
‘Oh, sorry,’ he sounded relieved, ‘you sounded like you were drowning in the bathtub. Do you normally answer the phone while, performing in the john?’

(P: 106)

In this conversation euphemism is found in the expressions like ‘emptying my bladder’, ‘to take a leak in peace’ and ‘performing in john’. All the three phrases above are used as a substitute for excretory activities like urination and defecation. The substitution of words, phrases or sentences is a strategy of using euphemism.

After Maya’s death, Anjali, her only daughter (nearly 4 years old) becomes lonely. She even does not understand where exactly her mother has gone. To remove her loneliness and to cheer her Rahul takes her for outing to Regents Park Road. While enjoying swinging and sliding there she suddenly tells Rahul that she wants to visit toilet urgently. When Rahul manages to find out toilet and puts Anjali down she looks helplessly at Rahul. In a bewildered state Rahul asks,

‘What?’ I asked her. Go on and do your thing ___ quickly...’ (P: 128)

Here, Rahul uses the sentence level euphemism – ‘do your thing’ refers to excretory activity of urinating. However, Anjali wants Rahul to come with her as her mother, would do when she was alive. As it was not decent to go in ‘Ladies toilet’ with Anjali, Rahul searches for Gents toilet and then goes with her. He tells her,
‘Look, sweetie, here’s the toilet, now go in there and do your wee wee.’ (P: 128)

‘Wee wee’ is an expression used for young children’s urination, wee –wee is much milder than directly stating ‘Do urinate here’ to a child. In Marathi also ‘shoo’ is the word used for children’s urination so that one can use it in public place without much offence.

5.4 Hyperbole and Litotes:

Hyperbole is an exaggeration of fact or idea. When anything is overstated than it actually is or should be, then it should be considered as hyperbole. For example,

‘He gave me ten thousand reasons for not attending the party’.

It is stated in A Handbook of Literary Terms M.H. Abrams/Geoffery Galt Harpham (2009:133) that,

‘The figure of speech or trope, called hyperbole (Greek for “overshooting”) is bold overstatement, or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or of possibility. It may be used either for serious or ironic or comic effect.

The figure of speech Litotes is exactly opposite of Hyperbole. It is a form of understatement. In this figure of speech much less is said than the fact or actual. In A Spectrum of Literary Criticism by Ashok Thorat and et al (2001:298), it is stated,

‘... this figure uses a negative before a word to assert or affirm its opposite.’
For example, ‘I am not bad’ affirms ‘I am good’. As both hyperbole and Litotes suggests more or less or opposite of what is stated respectively, they should be considered as Indirect Speech Acts.

In the novel *The White Tiger* (2008) both hyperbole and litotes are employed skilfully in various speech acts. When Balram’s mother dies, Kusum, Balram’s Granny that is the mother- in-law of the deceased says,

‘She was a good, quiet girl the day she came to our home,’ (1) Kusum said, as she put a hand on my face.  
‘I was not the one who wanted any fighting.’(2) (P: 17)

The above statement is ironical. In the utterance (1) Kusum – the mother-in-law is praising her daughter-in-law by using the adjectives – good, quiet etc. however, the day she came to our home implies something different. The value of the first part of the utterance loses its effect due to the second part of the same utterance. ‘... The day she came to our home’ suggests indirectly that it is afterwards she (daughter-in-law) started quarrelling. Utterance (2) is litotes. ‘I was not the one who wanted any fighting,’ indirectly suggests that it was Balram’s mother who wanted fighting. Multiple layers of meanings can be carved out through the above example of litotes. Kusum is indirectly blaming her daughter-in-law as a quarrelsome lady as well as praising herself. However, not only Balram and other relatives but also the reader is quite aware of Kusum’s cunning nature and hence by the virtue of sharing the same contextual background she can easily infer that it is Kusum who might have been fighting with Balram’s mother and that may be one of the reasons behind his
mother’s death. Thus, the use of litotes here proves very helpful in sketching the characters of Kusum and Balram’s mother.

When Balram goes along with Vitiligo-lips to a hotel to enjoy a golden haired woman (a whore) she says to him,

‘You’re not a bad- looking fellow- and you’re quite sweet’,... (P: 234)

The negation in the first part of the utterance is meant to be taken its opposite meaning. This is clarified in the next part of the utterance. Obviously, the utterance is in the form of litotes. However, whether a whore’s statement should be taken as authentic or not is another issue. The litotes used here implies indirectly that the prostitutes might be praising all their customers professionally just to please them.

Balram reveals the guilt in his mind only to the premier Wen Jiabao via E-mail. He states,

All the skin-whitening creams sold in the markets of India won’t clean my hands again. (P: 318)

The revelation of Balram’s guilt due to murdering his master Mr. Ashok is in the form of hyperbole. Indirectly Balram is stating that his crime is too hideous to be reformed. The intensity of Balram’s emotions and guilt is suggested through the above hyperbole. The hyperbole is used here for serious effect. This hyperbole reminds us the often quoted and well-known sentence, ‘Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?’ (Macbeth
2.2). Obviously, it is a hyperbole used in the world famous play *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. (About.com.Classic Literature)

Similarly, in *The Inheritance of Loss* Biju’s assurance to his father, “Yes,” Biju had said, “I am growing fat– ten times myself,” (P:233) is an example of hyperbole. Biju though assures his father that he is ten times fat actually finds that he has to buy his shirts at the children’s rack. This hyperbole intensifies irony due to the paradox between the expectation and the fact. It also displays the hollow ideals that are craved for by Indians that if an Indian goes abroad, he becomes rich and fat.

The following example taken from *Afterwards* is a fine combination of hyperbole and simile. When it is decided that Govind – the biological father of Anjali will take her along with him to India, both Rahul and Govind begin packing Anjali’s bag. Anjali demands that she will take her red coat. However, due to the hot weather in Kerala the coat is not required. Govind tries to pursue Anjali for not taking the red coat. However, she refuses to budge. Then Rahul begins to convince Anjali in following words,

> Look, my sweet, you take your red coat and you’ll just melt in the heat’, I said, adding darkly, ‘like that candle on the dining table down stairs. That’s how you’ll go... mellllt... and then splutter, splutter, until you go out...pffft...’ I ended dramatically. (2004: 210)

In the above utterance ‘You’ll just melt in the heat like that candle ...’ is not only hyperbole but also simile, where Anjali is compared with a candle. As nobody melts in any amount of scorching heat it
may be that the above utterance serves as a hyperbole. Anjali understands the exaggeration in Rahul’s utterance and hence says, ‘No I won’t melt! I’m a girl, not a candle. I won’t melt!’ (P: 210) However, due to Rahul’s effective verbal and non-verbal communication, Anjali agrees that she would not take the red coat along with her. The simile and hyperbole in these utterances are very significant as it shows the intimacy between Rahul who is not a biological father of Anjali but plays his role like a father very well, in fact better than Govind who claims to take Anjali along with him to India only because he is her biological father.

5.5 Metonymy and Synecdoche:

Metonymy and synecdoche are similar to each other in some respects. However, in *A Spectrum of Literary Criticism* (2001:294-295) both of the figures of speech are distinguished in detail. In synecdoche a part is substituted for the whole and the whole is substituted for the part, for e.g. part of body like hand, head, hair etc. represents for the whole body like a worker or a sculptor. Likewise, the word India may be a substitution for Indian people or ‘houses’ may be used in place of ‘people’.

In Metonymy this substitution stands for various things, like i) an individual is substituted for the class. ii) the concrete is substituted for the abstract and the abstract for the concrete iii) the material is substituted for the thing made iv) the instrument is substituted for the agent and v) the author is substituted for his work or genre etc. The examples of synecdoche and metonymy in the novels under consideration will clarify these figures of speech. As a thing stands
for something different it should not be considered as a direct speech act but to be an indirect one.

In *The White Tiger* (2008) one driver has a skin disease – vitiligo that has turned his lips bright pink. Balram calls this driver as Vitiligo-lips. A part of his body has been used for the whole that is for this driver, thus the figure of speech synecdoche has been used intelligently here. As a reader we never come to know the name of that driver throughout the novel. On another occasion when Balram goes to a book market, one of the book sellers reads a couplet of a poem,

“‘You were looking for the key for years/
But the door was always open!’” (P: 253)

These lines are metonymic. ‘Looking for keys’ do not refer to any ordinary keys but it indirectly stands for the means to get success whereas ‘the door was always open’ stands for the way to achieve it. The words key and door are not used here in any ordinary sense, but they stand for something else. Later when Balram spends a sleepless night he recites the couplet over and over again.

I was looking for the keys for years
But the door was always open. (P: 267)

Here the change in pronouns you- I is highly suggestive. It suggests that Balram’s wish to become rich and successful can be achieved by killing his master Mr. Ashok. Balram had never thought about this plan. Thus, the use of metonymy in these lines is predictive it predicts the next event- death of Mr. Ashok very suggestively. The superficial meaning of the above lines is that - I was looking for the
keys to open the door but there is no need of the keys because the door was already and always open. The deeper meaning of the same lines might be Balram was thinking of the means through which he could become rich and powerful. However, there was no need of thinking about the means because he himself was the means to success which was much easier than what was thought about.

Balram decides to murder his master Mr. Ashok while going to Sheraton hotel. He stops the car mid-way. The following conversation takes place between Mr. Ashok and Balram. This conversation is highly significant from its metonymic point of view.

‘It’s been giving problems ever since that night we went to the hotel in Jangpura.’ (1) He looked up from the mobile phone at once ‘The one with the big T sign on it. (2) You remember it, don’t you, sir? (3) Ever since that night, sir, nothing has been the same with this car : (4)

‘Come out of the car, sir. Trust me.’ (5)

‘Come over this side, sir. The bad tyre is on this side.’(6)

‘It’s this one, sir- and be careful, there’s a broken bottle lying on the ground.’(7)

‘Here, let me throw it away. (8) This is the tyre, sir.(9) Please take a look.’(10)

‘It seems fine’. (11)
'Well, you know more about this car than I do, Balram. Let me take another look.' (12) And he peered again at the tyre. The black highway appeared before me once more, with the white paint marks leading to the crown spot. ‘There is a problem, sir. (13) You should have got a replacement a long time ago.’ (14) ‘All right, Balram.’ (15) He touched the tyre. ‘But I really think we__’ (16) I rammed the bottle down. The glass ate his bone. (P: 283-284-285)

Balram tells the reason of stopping the car in (1). However, the reference of the hotel in Jangpura in (1) indicates that Balram is not talking about the car but about himself. The deeper level meaning of the utterance (1) is that Balram is disturbed due to Mr. Ashok’s degraded behaviour in the hotel in Jangpura where Mr. Ashok enjoys a whore sexually and thus gets corrupted completely. From that moment he feels that all the masters are equally corrupt. Consequently, he decides to murder his master and run away with the red bag full of money. His explanation in (2, 3, and 4) further clarifies the same. ‘—nothing has been the same with this car’; does not refer to the car. Actually, it refers to Balram, who changes his thinking and his honesty to his dishonesty whereas utterance (5) is a direct speech act. In utterance (6) the bad tyre refers to the black heart of Balram full of murderous thoughts. The broken bottle stands for Mr. Ashok’s death in (7) and hence ironically Balram warns Ashok to be careful. Utterance (8) is Balram’s false assurance of the security of Mr. Ashok’s life. Utterances (8, 9, 10&11) are Direct Speech Acts. Utterance (12) seems to have double meaning and
hence indirect. The plans and motives of Balram are known to him only and Mr. Ashok is quite unaware of the workings of Balram’s mind. The black highway white paint marks and crown spot etc. are the examples of synecdoche they refer to Mr. Ashok’s head with a minute description. Individually, they can be considered as metonymic expressions where the black highway refers to the parted hair of Mr. Ashok, white paint marks refer to the partition where it seems to be white or to hair colour and crown spot stands for the top most place of the head from where other hair grow out. Utterance (13) & (14) again metonymically refers to Balram – the driver. It means that Mr. Ashok should have replaced his driver previously so that Balram won’t have any plan of murdering him.

Thus, in the above conversation ‘the car’ represents its driver Balram. The metonymic expressions used here are highly significant. Without understanding the metonymy of the expression, the scene would be less impressive as well as less effective. It is the metonymy and synecdoche that has made the scene of murdering Mr. Ashok highly heart-throbbing or impulsive.

Similarly, the assistant commissioner says to Balram who has now assumed his name as Mr. Ashok the owner of ‘White Tiger Drivers’,

‘You’re very lucky that your Qualis hit a man on a bicycle.’ (P: 309)

This utterance is metonymic where ‘Qualis’ stands for the rich and the bicycle stands for the poor. The metonymy used here, indirectly extends the inference that the rich people are not generally
punished if they kill poor people in an accident or by some other means.

5.6 The Illocutionary Force

According to Searle, Indirect Speech Acts have two illocutionary forces in Cole and Morgan (Ed. 1975:60). Hence, the analysis of the present section deals with the two different illocutionary forces employed in the selected utterances. The analysis will be helpful in differentiating the literal and implied meaning of the one and same utterance. Diverse illocutionary forces have been analysed up till now such as, rhetorical questions, the incongruity between the form and function of the selected utterances, irony and sarcasm, simile and metaphor, euphemism, metonymic expressions, hyperbole and litotes etc. have also been analysed in the previous section.

In the present section, the analysis of Indirect Speech Acts will be carried under different categories dealing with various illocutionary forces like, blaming and accusing, complaining, inviting, etc. in brief.

5.6.1 Blaming and Accusing

The speaker blames a person for something bad when he thinks that the person is responsible for it or he has caused it. Blaming is exactly opposite to praising. ‘Praising’ takes place when something right/good takes place whereas blaming takes place when something wrong/bad takes place. ‘Blaming’ is the consequence of some outward action or happening and the speaker’s personal opinion
about someone or something. Thus the speaker blames, “while presupposing that something is bad” (Vanderveken 1990:217) Thus, blaming can be both assertive and expressive. Accusing someone of doing something wrong or dishonest means believing that someone has done it.

In *The White Tiger* (2008) a school inspector blames and accuses a school teacher in the following words.

‘There is no duster in this class; there are no chairs; there are no uniforms for the boys. (1) How much money have you stolen from the school funds, you sister-fucker?’ (2)  (P: 34)

In the above utterance the school inspector is blaming the teacher for his carelessness due to the absence of duster, chairs, uniforms etc. He even accuses him for stealing money from school funds. He blames in (1) through assertive speech act where as in (2) he accuses through a question. The question in (2) is not asked for receiving any answer; such as the exact amount that the teacher might have stolen, but to accuse the teacher for stealing money. Indirectly the inspector is calling the teacher ‘the thief’ via this question. The primary illocutionary force of the above utterance is blaming and accusing via assertion and a question in (1&2) respectively.

In the same novel, Mr. Ashok blames Balram in the following words,

‘Why didn’t you tell me?’ (1) he said, tightening his hold on the collar, almost choking me. ‘Why didn’t you wake me up at once?’ (2)
‘Sir ... she said... she said.... she said...’ He grabbed me and pushed me against the balcony of the apartment. The landlord inside him wasn’t dead, after all. ‘Why did you drive her there, sister fucker?’ (3) ‘Did you want to ruin my family’s reputation? (4)

(P: 182)

In all the four questions above, Mr. Ashok blames Balram for not telling him about the incident (1), for not waking him up at midnight (2), for driving his wife to the airport without his permission (3) and for wanting to ruin his family’s reputation. As Pinky finds it difficult to cope with Mr. Ashok’s views and Indian lifestyle, she decides to run away and at the midnight she orders Balram to drive her to the airport for the purpose of fleeing to New York. When in the morning Mr. Ashok realizes about his wife’s escape he obviously gets angry and vents his anger on Balram in the above quoted words. Instead of saying, ‘you wanted to ruin my family’s reputation’ Mr. Ashok asks him a question in (4) and thus indirectly blames him of doing something wrong i.e. driving his wife without his permission. Thus, these questions are not sincere. But the function of these questions is to blame Balram for his misdeed. This ‘blaming’ has taken place in the form of interrogatives here. The utterances of Mr. Ashok are quite ironical too. Actually, Mr. Ashok is aware of the reason due to which Pinky has left him. He even knows that Balram is ignorant and he cannot answer to his questions. However, Mr. Ashok is too agitated to think practically and hence his allegations to Balram in the form of questions are indeed ironical from both Mr. Ashok and Balram’s point of view. It is noteworthy that in both of the above examples the abusive words ‘sister fucker’
are used to explode the indignation by the speaker. It is apparent that unpleasant and abusive use of language is a characteristic of ‘blaming’ or ‘accusing’.

In *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) when Jemubhai returns from England he finds himself to be a stranger among the crowd of his relatives. When he starts checking his belongings he finds the powder puff missing. He accuses every one present there in the following expression,

“Someone has been through my belongings.” (P: 167)

This is not merely a statement but the illocutionary force of the statement is accusing. Jemubhai is here indirectly accusing that someone has stolen his powder puff. However, accusing directly without any proof is considered rude and hence he indirectly accuses everybody present there in a general statement. However, nobody understands the word powder-puff and hence Jemubhai shouts,

“What the hell do all of you know?” (P: 168)

Here too a rhetorical question is applied to denote indirectly that ‘They all do not know anything’. He blames them to be ignorant under the mask of a rhetorical question. Eventually, his eyes turn towards his wife and he accuses her,

“You must know something” (P: 168)

The modal auxiliary ‘must’ extends the firm assertion of Jemubhai that his wife must have stolen his powder puff. In the form of the above statement Jemubhai is accusing his wife indirectly and yet
confidently of stealing the powder puff. Nimi, his wife instead of accepting her guilt (taking his puff) says,

“I haven’t seen it. Why should I pay it any attention?”

(P: 168)

The question is used to assert her ignorance and innocence and not intended for acquiring any answer. Nimi, his wife has indirectly proved that she has not taken the puff because she has not seen it. However, when Jemubhai sees the powder puff taken by Nimi he screams,

“You filth!” (P: 168)

Blaming / accusing is related with the abusive word-filthy here. One can blame via not only questions but also statement as can be seen in the above example.

In the same novel, when Sai comes to know that it is her lover, Gyan who has planned the robbery of Cho-Oyu-her residence, she bursts out,

“You told them about the guns, didn’t you?” She was shouting all of a sudden. “You told them to come to Cho-Oyu? You did, didn’t you, DIDN’T YOU?”

(P: 261)

The explosion of Sai’s anger can be observed easily in the above utterance. In the form of a question Sai has blamed Gyan of being a supporter or director of the plan of robbing ‘Cho-Oyu’. The emphaticism can be seen in capital letters and the repetition of the same question again and again. Thus when one is angry he/she uses emphaticism and repetition. However, it is worthy to note that Sai
has not used any abusive word or curse in her utterance. It is one of the characteristic of feministic language where women generally avoid using abusive linguistic expressions. Thus, the interrogative has been used for statement, the primary illocutionary force of which is of accusing Gyan for sending robbers at ‘Cho-Oyu’.

5.6.2 Complaining

It is dissatisfaction about something or someone that gives rise to ‘complaining’. ‘Complaining’ carries a negative force with it. It is a kind of disapproval against something that is considered wrong or bad generally. About complaining Weirzbicka says,

“... the speaker says that something bad is happening to him, and expresses a feeling caused by this.”

(1987: 241)

The speaker may complain about both living and non-living things and situations. Pinky madam complains in The White Tiger in the following conversation. This conversation takes place between Mr. Ashok and his wife Pinky.

‘Give me the steering wheel.’ (1)
‘No, Pinky, don’t, you’re drunk, let him --’ (2)
‘What a fucking joke! (3) Everyone in India drinks and drives. (4)
But you won’t let me do it?’ (2008: 159)

The context is that Pinky is drunk and on the top of it she wants to drive their car. Mr. Ashok does not give her permission which seems quite right. But Pinky- an American woman does not
surrender to the situation and ironically complains that in India everyone drinks and drives at the same time. But Mr. Ashok, her husband does not allow her to do it. It is a fine combination of irony, paradox and complaint. The perlocutionary effect of this complaint is that Mr. Ashok gets irritated at first and finally let’s Pinky madam drive the car.

Another way of complaining is found in *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006). The judge complains every now and then by asking various questions such as,

“Where is the tea?” (1) (P: 2)

“Why is there nothing to eat?” (2) (P: 3)

“Why the hell can’t he make it over wood?” (3) (P: 3)

All the above questions are not asked in any anticipation of answer. The primary illocutionary force of these questions is ‘complaining’. The judge is complaining That the tea is late (1) , there is nothing to eat (2) , the cook can make something over wood but he is too lazy to make anything (3). Thus, interrogatives are used for complaining against the prevailing condition.

5.6.3 Invitation

According to Vanderveken, “... to invite is to request someone to become a party to something, perhaps a group or a process and this is a propositional content condition.” (1990:191)

Thus, inviting is a directive type of speech act in which the speaker wants the listener to do something or to come somewhere. If the
perlocutionary effect of blaming is unpleasant, the perlocutionary effect of invitation is generally pleasant. In *Afterwards*, Maya invites Rahul for dinner in the following words,

‘Look, why don’t you come over tomorrow... for dinner.’ (P:36 )

It is obvious that Maya has used a question for inviting Rahul. Invitation in general sense is an assertive act that begins with ‘I invite you to...’ However this expression is used formally and most of the time ‘invitation’ is performed via imperatives like, ‘Come for lunch’ or via interrogative like, ‘Why don’t you come for lunch?’ Here in this above example Maya is using an interrogative carrying the illocutionary force of inviting, that means ‘I invite you to come over tomorrow for dinner.’

### 5.7 Emphatic Statements, Circumlocution and Hedging

The speech acts with an additional force of emphasis are Emphatic statements. These emphatic statements convey more than the literal meaning of the utterance. Emphatic statements are used effectively due to their strong perlocutionary effects. Rhetorical questions are used effectively due to their emphatic characteristics. This emphatic force is due to the force of assertion and also the force of exclamation (P.Syal.1987) Apart from rhetorical questions there are many other examples of emphatic statements in the novels under consideration, especially, in *The Inheritance of Loss*. In this novel emphatic statements are used to vent the anger of the speaker on the hearer such as when Gyan shouts irritatingly at Sai who asks him the reason of yarning.
“BECAUSE I’M BORED TO DEATH BY YOU, THAT’S WHY.” (P: 163)

Lexical emphasis is used for abusing or cursing. Gyan calls Sai ‘FOOL’ emphatically when they quarrel with each other.

“__ it only shows to the whole world that you are a FOOL.” (P: 163)

He further criticizes her emphatically

“Don’t you know, these people you copy like a copycat, THEY DON’T WANT YOU!!!!”(P: 164)

Gyan’s linguistic emphasis is not only seen in capital letters but also in four exclamation marks denoted cleverly by the novelist. On page number 230, 231, and 232 many emphatic utterances are used in the same novel that shows the eagerness of Biju and his father, the cook to know each other’s wellness Their love and care for each other is quite apparent in these utterances. As these pages are full of Emphatic utterances, a few representative utterances are given here as an example.

“ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?” ______

“DON’T WORRY ABOUT ME.
DON’T WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING HERE. ARE THERE PROPER ARRANGEMENTS FOR EATING AT THE HOTEL? IS THE RESTAURANT GIVING YOU ACCOMODATION? ARE THERE ANY OTHER PEOPLE FROM UTTAR PRADESH THERE?” (P: 231)
Similarly, the judge’s anxiety and love for Mutt-his pet dog is clearly seen in his following lexical emphatic utterance when Mutt disappears.

“MUTT-MUTT MUTTY-MUTT MUTTY MUTT MUTT” (P: 289)

Similarly, in *Afterwards* when Anjali does not find her mother, Maya, who is actually dead her anxiety shoots up and she uses emphatic statements.

‘I wanna go HOME!’ (P: 168)
‘I WANT MY MUM! I WANT MY MUM! I DONT WANT YOU!’ (P: 185)
‘PAPA GO AWAY! I WANT MY MUM!’ (P: 186)

Similarly, Rahul too expresses himself emphatically when he is fed up of Anjali’s recurrent questions about her mother.

GONE! DEAD! SO STOP ASKING ME FOR HER.
I CAN’T BRING HER BACK! SO PLEASE JUST STOP ASKING! (P: 185)

It is noteworthy that extreme emotions are reflected in emphatic utterances. Repetition also denotes emphasis which has been already analysed elsewhere in this thesis.

Circumlocution is another skilful use of language which is a way of saying something in roundabout manner instead of being clear and direct. In *The White Tiger* for example, Balram reveals a secret about the senior driver Ram Persad to the Nepali guard in circumlocutory manner.
‘I just saw a film, sir.’

‘Fuck off’

A great film, sir. Lots of dancing. Hero was a Muslim. Name of Mohammad Mohammad.’

‘Don’t waste my time, boy. Go clean the car if you’ve got nothing to do.’

‘Now, this Mohammad Mohammad was a poor, honest, hardworking Muslim, but he wanted a job at the home of an evil, prejudiced landlord who didn’t like Muslims- so just to get a job and feed his starving family, he claimed to be a Hindu! And took the name of Ram Persad.’

The twig fell out of the Nepali’s mouth.

‘And you know how he managed to pull this off? Because the Nepali Guard at this house, whom the masters trusted absolutely, and who was supposed to check up on Ram Persad’s background, was in on the scam!’ (P: 109)

The secret of Ram Persad, the driver in the landlord’s house is that he is a Muslim. When Balram comes to know this he decides to use this information for his own favour and also to nab down the Nepali guard who had harassed him once. Interestingly, he unfolds the secret by telling a story of film.

In his circumlocutory description he exposes the deal between Ram Persad and the Nepali guard. Indirectly, he threatens him that he may reveal the secret to their masters. He uses the circumlocution for the purpose that only the hearer should get the intended message (Nepali
guard) and nobody should understand anything. The perlocutionary effect of this circumlocution is very strong on the Nepali guard who obeys Balram’s order due to the fear of the exposure of his foul deal.

Another tactful use of language is Hedging. The speaker finds it risky to give a direct and an honest answer to the question asked by others. At such times he avoids giving a direct answer to save his ‘public face’. Especially politicians know very well how to use ‘hedging’—the linguistic strategy through which a straight forward answer can be eluded to certain questions. For example, in *The White Tiger* when a radio reporter asks a Great socialist,

‘Do you want to become prime minister of India?’ (1)

The Great socialist says, ‘Don’t ask me such questions. I have no ambitions for myself. I am simply the voice of the poor and the disenfranchised.’ (2)

‘But, surely sir_’ (3)

‘Let me say one last word, if I may. All I have ever wanted was an India where any boy in any village could dream of becoming the prime minister. Now, as I was saying, women walk for...’” (4) (P: 269)

In the above conversation, the Great Socialist uses ‘hedging’ twice. First he reciprocates to the question of the reporter by another question. He tries to show off himself as a leader of the poor and common people. When the radio reporter realizes that the Great Socialist is avoiding giving precise answer, he insists again in (3). However, the cunning politician has again tactfully answered. By showing off his concern for the poor people he is tactfully trying to get the votes of the poor people to win the forthcoming election.
Thus, the Great Socialist by using evasive tactics provides an indirect answer. Hedging saves the speaker from any unwanted reaction or criticism of the hearer. Denial and silence can be considered as a means of hedging. This will be analysed separately in detail in the following section.

5.8 Denial:

Most of the time, when the hearer does not want to answer the question or refuses to answer it, he uses Indirect Speech Acts as well as indirect way or means to convey his/her unwillingness to answer or respond. Denial should be considered as a means of hedging. Special attention is required on denial due to various plentiful examples observed in the selected novels. Vanderveken says, “... to deny a proposition is to negate that proposition by asserting the contrary or opposite proposition.” (1990:170)

The various ways through which the hearer refuses or denies to the speaker’s question can be exemplified in the novels under consideration. For example, in *The White Tiger* when Mr. Ashok asks his father,

‘Do you have to hit the servants, Father?’ (P: 72)

His father denies answering the question by saying,

‘This is not America, son. (1) Don’t ask questions like that.’ (2) (P: 72)

Here, the father has denied answering the question of Mr. Ashok in a straightforward manner. On the other hand he suggests to him not to
ask questions regarding the matter. In his utterance (1) he provides a hint as to why he should not ask such questions. In (1) he means to say that there is considerable difference between India and America concerning the treatment given to servants. Thus, refusing to answer the question can be performed via suggesting ‘not to ask questions’. However, denying answering the question is breaching the co-operative principle by flouting the maxims of quality and manner.

Similarly, one can deny answering by conveying the unsuitable surrounding for it, as can be seen in the following conversation between Mr. Ashok and his wife Pinky.

‘You lied about returning to America, didn’t you, Ashok- You’re never going back, are you?’
‘There’s a driver in the car, Pinky- I’ll explain everything later.’ (P: 81)

Pinky is eager to go to America from where she has come to India due to her marriage with Ashok. Ashok promises Pinky every now and then that one day they will go to America. However, in fact, he does not want to leave India. That is why; he avoids answering the recurrent questions of Pinky regarding this topic. In the above conversation also he avoids telling his wife directly that he will not take her to America. For this purpose he tells her that ‘there’s a driver in the car’. Superficially, Mr. Ashok’s response is irrelevant and hence breaks the cooperative principle. However, if considered deeply, one can generate the inference of his utterance. Mr. Ashok actually conveys to his wife that due to the presence of the driver he cannot speak to her on this topic. However, the reason he tells to Pinky of not talking on the subject is fake. In actual sense, Mr.
Ashok is denying to answer Pinky’s question directly. The reason of this avoidance may be to save the critical situation which otherwise may ensue arguments between them. Thus the answer of Mr. Ashok is cooperative at the deeper level and it also observes politeness principle by using tact maxim.

One may refuse to continue the conversation or to exhibit the reluctance of involving in further talk just by telling lies such as giving the excuse of health problem. It can be seen in Pinky’s utterance when she tells to her husband,

‘Ashok. I have a headache. Please.’ (2008: 156)

Telling lies may be polite in conversation but certainly not cooperative as the maxim of quality is flouted due to such utterance.

One can deny answering both verbally and non-verbally as can be observed in the following conversation between Pinky madam and Balram.

‘Get ready. You’re going to drive me.’ (1)
‘Yes, madam,’ I said, rubbing my eyes. ‘What time is it?’ (2)
She put a finger to her lips.__________
‘Where to?’(3) I asked. It was two in the morning.
She told me, and I asked, ‘Isn’t Sir coming?’ (4)
‘Just drive.’ (5) (P: 181)

Pinky orders Balram in (1) to get ready and drive for her. But when Balram asks her about time she reciprocates through non-verbal communication. Her act of putting a finger to her lips is a pragmatic
act communicating Balram to keep quiet. Mey J. has included ‘body moves’ including gestures in ‘pragmeme’ which is a broader concept that includes both verbal and non-verbal acts in it. (2001:222)

As Pinky madam is fleeing to America without telling Mr. Ashok she denies answering the question of Balram in (4). Her denial of answer in (5) displays that an order can be used as a reaction to the question for the sake of avoiding the real answer. Pinky’s utterance is neither polite nor cooperative but Balram understands the exact implication and stops asking her questions any further.

One can pose false ignorance to avoid giving the true answer of the unwanted question. When other drivers ask Balram whether Pinky has forsaken her husband, Balram says,

‘I don’t know what you’re talking about.’ (P: 183)

In this way, by feigning ignorance or indifference Balram tries to avoid satisfying the queries of other drivers and tries to be faithful to his master. It is one of the linguistic strategies to save the ‘face’ as well as to observe politeness principle by breaching cooperative principle’s maxim of quality.

In *The Inheritance of Loss* the judge refuses to answer Sai’s question indirectly in the following conversation.

“Who was my grandmother?” Sai then asked the judge sitting poised like a heron over chessboard. “Did she come from a very fancy family?” He said: “I’m playing chess can’t you see?” (2006: 88-89)
Sai asks the judge about her grandmother that is the wife of the judge. As we know that the judge disliked his wife immensely, he does not want to speak about her. He is not interested in the topic at all. That’s why; when Sai asks him this question he tells her that he is busy in playing chess. The rhetorical question ‘Can’t you see?’ indirectly asserts that Sai can see that the judge is playing chess. Superficially the response of the judge is irrelevant. Sai has not asked him a question, “What are you doing?” yet the judge tells her about the chess playing. However the exact meaning of the judge’s utterance can be fathomed out using logic behind his answer. As all of us know that one can do one thing at a time and hence if the judge is playing chess he cannot talk with Sai due to the fear of distraction from the game. Thus, the judge has used ‘hedging’ by showing off that he is busy.

Amazingly, a rhetorical question may serve as a means of refusal. When Biju slips on rotten spinach in Harish-Harry’s kitchen, he suggests Harish-Harry indirectly by asking a question,

“Can you get a doctor?” (P: 187)

Harish-Harry responds violently,

“Doctor!! Do you know what is medical expense in this country?!” (P: 187)

Both Biju and Harish-Harry talk indirectly via questions. As can be seen Harish-Harry’s response is not relevant outwardly. However if thought in depth one can carve out the meaning of it. Harish-Harry by asking the above question conveys that Biju is ignorant of the fact that the medical expense is very high in that country. If the medical expense is dear then naturally Harish –Harry does not want to
expend his money on treating Biju’s knee. Thus, the inference is an indirect refusal. Harish-Harry simply denies going to a doctor. Instead of saying it directly, Harish–Harry uses rhetorical question to express his volcanic burst or anger over Biju.

Keeping silence is another way of avoiding giving (true) answer usually. However, as it is considered as a Pragmatic act, it is not analysed in the present thesis.

5.10 Conclusion

Miscellaneous Indirect Speech Acts have been analysed in the present chapter. The analysis has revealed that Indirect Speech Acts like Simile and Metaphor, Euphemism, Hyperbole and Litotes, Metonymy and Synecdoche, varieties of illocutionary forces like blaming and accusing, complaining, inviting, emphatic statements, circumlocution and hedging and denial etc. are used by the speakers as an indirect mode of expression. Use of such forms of Indirect Speech Acts is more influential than using plain, bland Direct Speech Acts. Varieties of Indirect Speech Acts can be applied to convey one and the same thing. The choice of the mode of expression depends upon mainly the speaker-hearer relationship, their psychological state and the context. Various figures of speech are used from its indirect view point. Similes and metaphors used in the selected novels bear thematic and structural significance. The discrimination between people and animals in Indian society is revealed through metaphors.
Indians point of view towards India and abroad is revealed through the analysis of simile and metaphor. They are used both to praise and dispraise certain things. Deictic expressions are used as a tool of euphemism as a substitution of mentioning prohibited things. Both verbal and non-verbal communication is helpful in presenting euphemistic aspects of certain taboo topics. Euphemism works at lexical, phrasal, syntactical and elliptical level. Varieties of expressions are used as a substitution for death. Euphemism is observed to be working as a hinting strategy of the speaker both verbally or nonverbally. Euphemism has been employed regarding death, excretory activities, sex and prostitution, private parts of body and dysphemistic expressions are also used to humiliate the hearer. Hyperbole and litotes prove great help in character sketch and give rise to humour. Metonymy and Synecdoche carve out the deeper meaning of the superficial utterance. Characters’ distinctive features can be expressed by metonymy and synecdoche. Metonymic expressions work like a key to reach to the precise interpretation of the utterance. Abstract things stand for the living being and sometimes living beings stand for abstract things in metonymy. Diverse illocutionary forces such as blaming, accusing, complaining, inviting, emphatic statements, circumlocution, hedging and denial etc. perform various tasks. The reader can differentiate the literal meaning and figurative meaning of the same utterances with the help of these illocutionary forces. The difference between the gender languages could be seen through the use of these illocutionary forces. The different use of language by the Indians and NRIs as well as foreigners was also brought out. Hedging and denial are interesting topics from their indirect point of view which create suspense and excitement in the mind of the hearer and reader.