CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preliminaries

Conversation is a purposeful activity. People enter into conversation with certain goals. Thus, it is a goal-directed activity. But, the delicacy of the relationships curtails the attempt to communicate directly. This compels us to employ Indirect Speech Acts in day to day life. Pragmatic approach can enable us to understand various implied meanings expressed through Indirect Speech Acts.

The aim of the present research is to study, how Speech Act Theory and Pragmatic Analysis work effectively in the appreciation of literature. It focuses on the social, political, economic and ethical aspects of linguistic production. It further shows that Pragmatic analysis is fruitful to understand a text, which is itself a kind of communication. It also helps to enhance our appropriation, comprehension and understanding of a text. The present research is an attempt to examine and analyze significant pieces of conversation in the novels, Fasting, Feasting, A Matter of Time, Second Thoughts and The God of Small Things.

1.2 Pragmatic Approach

Pragmatics is a recent and important branch of language study; it is basically concerned with the study of language in context and
its practical usage. In an attempt to define Pragmatics, G. Yule says,

Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said. (Yule 1996:47)

For effective use of language, one must take some aspects of language into consideration. According to David Crystal,

Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effect of our choice on other. (Crystal 1985:285)

The term ‘Pragmatics’ needs to be distinguished from the similar terms used two hundred years ago i.e. ‘Pragmaticus’ in Greek and ‘Pragmaticos’ in Latin. These terms were used for a philosophy that highlighted practical approach. It was William Charles Morris, American Professor of philosophy, who first used this term in 1937 in the sense that it is being used today. While talking about semiotics, Morris presented a threefold division into Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics. According to Morris, Syntax deals with the relation of signs with other signs, Semantics with the relation of signs to what they denote and Pragmatics with the relation of signs to their users. This trichotomy was further developed by later philosophers and linguists finally giving rise to the discipline of pragmatics that is methodically presented by G. N. Leech in his seminal book Principles of Pragmatics published in 1983. Pragmatics is a systematic way of explaining language use in context. It seeks to explain aspects of meaning which cannot be found in the plain sense of words or structures, as explained by Semantics.
Speech Act Theory is currently the most important established part of the Pragmatics. This theory is proposed by J. L. Austin in his lectures delivered at Harvard which is further developed and illustrated by John Rogers Searle. With the help of Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics, we can understand language and its role in day-to-day conversation.

Through each communication, an act is performed. We say something in order to get something done. In a day, one uses language with various purposes and wishes some actions to take place accordingly. In order to get the goal achieved strategic, diplomatic or indirect use of language is employed. This adds the possibility of multiple direct or indirect meanings to the linguistic expressions. This phenomenon of language begets scope for multiple interpretations of the speaker's utterance. Speech Act Theory helps in the understanding of such implied meanings conveyed by the speakers. The present study aims to use pragmatic insights and tool of Indirect Speech Acts to explore hidden messages in the novels under examination.

Besides Indirect Speech Acts some of the key terms of Pragmatics are: Presupposition, Implicature, Turn taking, Deixis etc. Presupposition is a background belief related to the utterance that must be mutually known or assumed by the addresser and addressee for the utterance to be considered appropriate in the context. Entailment is something that logically follows from what is asserted in the sentences. Implicature refers to what is suggested in an utterance, even though neither expressed nor strictly implied by the utterance. The most fundamental feature of an interactive sequence is Turn-taking, where one speaker follows another.
Conversational principles and its maxims also play an important role of lubricant. These maxims are expected to be observed for smooth conduct of communication. Sometimes, an addresser intentionally violates the maxims for communicative purposes. Pragmatics studies use of language as a form of behaviour or social action.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is hypothesised that Indirect Speech Acts characterized by implicature are employed by Indian creative writers to express subtly, strategically and economically through their characters what cannot be said explicitly. By using this pragmatic tool, these writers achieve their goal of depicting the Indian ethos, various relationships and behavioural patterns with brevity. Simultaneously, they create unparalleled aesthetic as well as ideological impact on the readers.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Study

Following are the Aims of this research:

1. to explore the literary discourse created by selected Indian writers in the novels under examination

2. to explain how Indirect Speech Acts help to communicate intended meanings in these novels

3. to evaluate the contribution of Indirect Speech Acts in the development of the novels in general and major characters
4. to examine the role of Indirect Speech Acts in achieving the intended impact on the readers

The objectives are as follows:

1. Various perspectives of the pragmatic theory will be studied.

2. The application of Indirect Speech Acts as a tool of pragmatic analysis will be discussed.

3. Pieces of conversation and related data highlighting employment of Indirect Speech Acts will be collected from the novels.

4. Collected data will be analyzed and the findings will be reported along with implications and suggestions.

1.5 Research Methodology and Selection of Data

In the present study application of pragmatic theory will be made to a work of art, hence the applied research methodology will be employed.

The novels, *Fasting, Feasting, A Matter of Time, The God of Small Things* and *Second Thoughts*, possess necessary potential to offer the data for the analysis from a pragmatic point of view. Authors have employed Indirect Speech Acts in the development of characters. The use of Indirect Speech Acts in these novels is an attempt to convey the hidden messages of the characters and the authors through verbal acts. The present study will focus such Speech Acts employed in the novels.
Since the study is focused on the analysis of Indirect Speech Acts, the significant pieces of conversation where Speech Acts are employed will be identified. The identified Speech Acts will be logically arranged. The selected Speech Acts will be classified, analysed and discussed from the pragmatic perspective. The analysis will be done in the light of Indirect Speech Acts. The context of every speech act will be examined and most authentic interpretation will be established.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Speech Act Theory is the primary area of this study and the focus will be kept on the Indirect Speech Acts. The study of Indirect Speech Acts will be confined to the selected novels, *Fasting, Feasting, A Matter of Time, Second Thoughts* and *The God of Small Things*. It will be a detailed analysis of Indirect Speech Acts. This research comprises analysis of dialogues used by the characters in the light of Speech Act Theory.

The research is limited to the application of Speech Act Theory as propounded by Austin and Searle. Moreover, it will be applied only to the fictional discourse in selected Indian novels in English. Keeping the scope and constraints of the research in mind, only Indirect Speech Acts will be explored in order to fulfil the aims of the study.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The aim of this research is to study Indirect Speech Acts used in the novels under examination. The analysis of the selected
passages and dialogues, with the help of principles and contextual factors, can throw light on various characters, their relationships, their attitude, their intention and also the authorial point of view. The research aims to apply the theory of Speech Acts, and also it is an attempt to add a new perspective to the series of research studies already done in this field. Speech Acts will enhance students' delight of reading and the level of understanding the novel. The study will help to improve readers' abilities to understand the intentions hidden in the Indirect Speech Acts used in illustrated novels, *Fasting, Feasting, A Matter of Time, Second Thoughts* and *The God of Small Things*.

1.8 Rationale of the Study

The very idea of applying Speech Act Theory to fictional discourse and to explore the implied meaning in what has been said and thereby trace the contribution of Speech Acts, particularly, the Indirect Speech Acts, in the development of a novel is new and untapped. The background reading into pragmatic theory and reading of the selected novels pragmatically brought to the fore the potential of this kind of analysis. Speech Acts have been creatively employed by great writers in order to achieve the intended impact. The selected novels are deeply rooted in the Indian culture and therefore contextual factors play a significant role in the development of characters and structure of these novels. The context being the prime concern of Pragmatics, Pragmatic Analysis, especially Speech Act analysis helps one delve into the whole submerged portion called context against which the novels are set. Language is a social practice and as such expresses all the kinds of relationships that exist in a
society. In this sense, we can look at a novel as a socio-linguistic fact and by exploring the fictional discourse pragmatically one is reconstructing the universe of discourse created by the creative writer. This is what Roger Fowler argues in his book ‘Literature as Social Discourse’. The researcher also finds it necessary to treat a novel as socio-linguistic fact and with this conviction plans to undertake Speech Act analysis of the selected novels.

1.9 Justification for the Selection of the Novels

Four novels, *Fasting, Feasting, A Matter of Time, Second Thoughts* and *The God of Small Things*, have been selected for the application of Indirect Speech Acts. Excellent use of language is the common feature of the selected novels. The characters in the novels make use of Speech Acts with various communicative purposes which gives scope for multiple interpretations. This usage of language carries an underlying purpose of communication, hence proves worthy to be studied from a pragmatic point of view.

Moreover, all the novels have been published in the same decade, which connects them with each other by the age they have been written and published. The selected novels belong to the decade which is considered dynamic and insightful in the Indian social development. The selected novels have been written by women writers and the principal characters in all the selected novels are women. The selected novels develop in Indian background and Indian socio-economic, traditional and custom rooted settings.
1.10 Novels Selected for the Analysis of Indirect Speech Acts

_A Matter of Time_ by Shashi Deshpande (1999)

Shashi Deshpande’s novel _A Matter of Time_ is considered as a continuation of her exploration into the various facets of feminine experience in writing. In this novel she deals with the various themes like, Silence, gender differences, passive suffering, and familial relationships into much deeper realms. Every character of this novel evolves through excellent use of Speech Acts employed by the author. This usage of language carries an underlying purpose of communication, hence proves worthy to be studied form pragmatic point of view. It is a story encompassing three generations of women coming to terms with their life in an all-female world. The relation women characters share with their men is hovered with silence, absence or indifference. It is a book to savour and re-read, to discover the meaning of words with every reading.

_Fasting, Feasting_ by Anita Desai (1999)

Anita Desai is one of the subtle writers who achieve powerful and poignant effects by fine craft. Her novel, _Fasting, Feasting_, is a finalist for last year’s Booker Prize. The novel narrates the apparently spare story of one Indian family and the varying fates of its two daughters and single son; it is only on the novel’s final, quiet page that Desai’s intricate structure becomes clear and the complexity of her emotional insight makes itself felt. Development of novel takes through the employment of language at higher skills. Thus novel is alluring work of literature to be studies under the light of Pragmatic theories.
Second Thoughts by Shobha De (1996)

Second Thoughts is most admired and received work of Shobha De. The novel very beautifully reveals the psychological facets and a romantic love story of the lead character, Maya, who has a great attraction towards the glamorous lifestyle of Mumbai and wants to escape from her middle class life of Calcutta. She moves to Mumbai after marrying a very ambitious boy from a wealthy family and who also holds a degree from a renowned American university. Maya takes every step to become ideal wife. After some time Maya discovers that her husband is completely different from her expectations. He was conservative and didn’t allow complete freedom to Maya. In the course of time she experiences loneliness and is a stranger in the urban life of Mumbai. She does not have friend or relative in that city of India. She has no one with whom she can spend time with or share some of the special moments of her life. Maya happens to meet Nikhil, who is a college boy and lives near her house. She befriends him in a short time. They both get attracted towards each other. In a short duration they come very close to each other. Maya falls in love with Nikhil and starts betraying her husband.

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy (1997)

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy tells the story of one family in the town of Ayemenem in Kerala, India. Its epigraph "Never again will a single story be told as though it's the only one" is a quotation from contemporary writer John Berger. Roy uses this idea to establish her nonlinear, multi-perspective way of storytelling. The story unfolds the lives of people in Kerala who
are the captives of Communism, the caste system, and the Keralite Syrian Christian way of life. Author's craftsmanship takes the novel to the considerable height as far as the linguistic aspects are concerned.

1.11 Plan of the Thesis

The thesis would be divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter - I

It deals with language, communication and various concepts of Pragmatics. The key concepts related to Pragmatics have been discussed. The chapter includes, Pragmatic Approach, Aims and Objectives of the study, Hypothesis, Significance of the study, Selection of the novels, Scope and limitations of the study, Data, Methodology and Techniques, Plan of the thesis and Conclusion.

Chapter- II

Chapter-II entitled, “Theoretical Framework of the Speech Act Theory stated by J. L. Austin.” It is a distinguished theory, which is related to the direct and indirect acts of speech. It includes definitions of Pragmatics, Sentence and Utterance, the emergence of rules and approaches to conversation, Pragmatics and Semantics: Major differences, Presupposition, Speech Act Theory, Direct and Indirect Speech Act Theory, Co-operative Principle and Politeness Principle, Deixis etc.
Chapter- III

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the Indirect Speech Acts selected from the novels, *Fasting, Feasting* and *A Matter of Time* using the theory of Speech Acts. Some pieces of conversation from the novel will be selected and analyzed. Indirect Speech Acts will be interpreted from the contextual point of view.

Chapter - IV

This chapter will study the use of Indirect Speech Acts in the novels *The God of Small Things* and *Second Thoughts*. Some pieces of discourses will be selected from the above mentioned novels for the interpretation and analysis. Researcher attempts to understand the purpose of author in using indirect speech act in the selected situations.

Chapter - V

The last chapter entitled, Conclusion discusses the findings of the study. It also gives some pedagogical implications and the possibilities for further research.