CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY

6.1 An Interpretation:

See, now they vanish,
The faces and places, with the self which, as it could, loved them,
To become renewed, transfigured, in another pattern.

This quote from T.S. Eliot in the beginning of the novel *Clear Light of Day* (1980) precisely sums up the hidden message of the narrative. The clear bright light of the cosmic day pierces through the darkness of doubt, misunderstanding, psychological concerns and apprehensions, and finally it leads to the inner brightness of mind and soul. The central theme of the novel unfolds a constant struggle between the inner reality of the dominant self and the outer reality of hard facts and failures. But in the end, the protagonist realizes that togetherness not isolation; love, understanding, acceptance not bitterness and hatred; sublime faith and eternal hope for a better morrow not despair and withdrawal; are the truly cherisable human values. The soothing balm of time heals all the wounds of dejection and failure howsoever deep the scars may be. The timely purgation of emotions and affections leads only to the happy cheerful faith in the wholeness and perfection of love.
The central conflict of the novel has been portrayed through the major protagonist of the novel, Bim. The outside influence of the harmony of sweet musical notes in the beginning of the novel through cuckoo's call, and finally that of the old guru's recital further help in surging out the seraphic love of Bim's affections and attachments with which she embraces all her brothers and sister together.

The impressions of the pre-partition anxieties and horrors, and post-partition tragedies and troubles are writ large on the minds of the residents of an 'old house' in old Delhi which remains the sheltering place of Das children. They all grew up together from childhood to adulthood, sharing their joys and sorrows under one roof.

To a great extent, the novel can also be interpreted in terms of transformation of the souls of these four Das children: Bim, Raja, Tara and mentally retarded Baba. The lives of these children always remained devoid of parental love and indulgence from their early childhood. The mother, who mostly remained sick, always demanded father's attention. The children were only aware of their parents' 'exists' from the house to the club, or their 'arrivals' from the club back to the house. They themselves had to adjust and look after their needs. Bim, the eldest child, had heroic qualities from the very beginning and she always desired to be a heroine.
Raja, the brother too wanted to be a hero. But the little delicate doll-like Tara, simply wanted to be a mother and liked to play with the dolls.

Bim with the passage of time and demands of the family did become a heroine in her own way. The parents expired when the children were still small. Bim supported the whole family and she alone looked after ill Raja and sick Mira masi simultaneously. She got her younger sister Tara married to Bakul and settled abroad. Bim also provided a permanent shelter to her invalid brother Baba (like his own shadow) and never thought of her personal joys and fulfilment.

A distant cousin of their mother, widowed Mira, who had been slighted and humiliated too much in her own world, was brought here to look after the Das children. This frail structured, thin lady:

wanted to be owned. She owned them too, and they needed to be owned. Their opposing needs seemed to mingle and meet at the very roots, inside the soil in which they grew... She fed them with her own nutrients, she reared them in her own shade, she was the support on which they had leaned as they grew... She laughed at the profusion, the beauty of this little grove that was the whole forest to her, the whole world... She was the tree, she was the soil, she was the earth. (p.111)

The children grew up and developed their own individual traits and interests in life. Tara escaped the family
responsibilities by marrying Bakul and never tried to look back, not even to feel sorry over the death of Mira masi who had been to her:

solid as a bed... Tara could wrap herself up in her as in an old soft shawl... Wrapped in the folds of Aunt Mira's white cotton sari, or into her loosely knitted grey shawl,... breathing in her aunt's smell, finding in it a deep, musty comfort. (p.109)

Raja also married Benazir, the daughter of his long cherished hero, Hyder Ali Sahib, and went away to settle down in Hyderabad. He changed his role from a brother to a landlord and had the guts to write to Bim that 'she could keep on paying the same rent as before'. The tone and meaning of the letter deeply stabbed her soul. He too never looked back. Bim found it very hard to reconcile with this harsh reality. The thought of the insulting letter haunted her mind constantly and she failed to understand the real intention of Raja:

Was he trying to make me thank him - go down on my knees and thank him for THIS house in which WE ALL grew up? Was he trying to threaten me with eviction and warn me what might happen if I ever stopped praising him and admiring him? (p.29)

(Emphasis mine)

Finally everyone had gone. Mira expired, Bim and Baba remained alone in the house. Bim was broken inside, her shattered self moaned pathetically and she talked to Baba
painfully but in an assuring tone:

'So now there are just you and I left, Baba, ... Everyone's gone, except you and I. They won't come back. We'll be alone now. But we don't have to worry about anyone now - Tara or Raja or Mira-masi... Really, it'll be just the way it was when we were children ... It wasn't so bad then... When we were children.' (p.101)

The central psychic conflict is portrayed through the major protagonist of the novel, Bim, who has to undergo so many tensions, tortures and mental agonies. But she finally emerges not only as a triumphant personality but also becomes personification of the time eternal. She is symbolic of the time past, the time present and the time future, all meeting at one point.

Another dominant current of the novel runs along the lines: 'Time the destroyer, is time the preserver', a quote again from T.S. Eliot, quoted by Desai in the novel, further draws the reader's attention. The annual visits of Tara to her parental home revive afresh the childhood experiences and their memories. That past in all its shades keeps on haunting their minds. The novel abounds in the images (like: 'bloated brassware, yellowed photographs, Mira growing shabbier and skinnier, etc.) which convey effectively the destructive force of time. Under the changed circumstances,
the pleasant memories of childhood and the staring hard facts of life make Bim lose control over her mind and she feels very bitter about Tara and all others. At times she gets very tense and confused: "Her anger was as raw as a rash of prickly heat that she compulsively scratched and made worse... her anger swelled and spread... like the summer itself, rising to its peak..." (pp. 162, 163)

In that moment of utter despair, Bim attacked helpless Baba harshly. The moment becomes significant, because it appears to be a moment of transition for the soul of Bim. She had hit Baba very hard by asking him to go to Hyderabad to live with Raja. But later, when:

Bim's rage was spent... It had reached its peak, its acme, like a great glittering wave that had hovered over everyone and that now collapsed, fell on the sand and seeped away, leaving nothing... (p.164)

But Baba's silence hit her harder and she could not recover from the shock. Her realization of her mistake and crime committed against Baba, Tara's soft pleadings and confessions of her earlier mistakes and misunderstandings, a heavy dust storm raging the physical world around, the inner storm of feelings and emotions and Bim struggling hard in the room the whole night, all the old papers read, re-arranged and thrown, the insulting and unbearable letter from Raja
torn at last, the reader finds a totally new Bim emerging from all this utter confusion and chaos. The tension of Bim's mind crumbles down to the dust. A new awareness and a new horizon - limitless - is set for the human relationships. 'To forget and forgive', to 'forgive and wrest forgiveness', becomes the sole motto of this new person.

The inner darkness of mind and soul is pierced sharply and is replaced with the light of understanding, acceptance and the wholeness of love in its totality, that further lend meaning to this novel. With newly acquired wisdom a 'fresh insight', 'a new pattern' emerges from the cloudy past. Now:

With her inner eye she (Bim) saw how her own house and its particular history linked and contained her as well as her whole family... That soil contained all time, past and future, in it. It was dark with time, rich with time. It was where her deepest self lived, and the deepest selves of her sister and brothers and all those who shared that time with her. (P.182)

Earlier Bim's soul had suffered heavily with the tearing apart of her inner self, oscillating between her inside reality and the hard outside facts of life. She had been:

exhausted - by Tara, by Baba, by all of them. Loving them and not loving
them. Accepting them and not accepting them. Understanding them and not understanding them. (p.166)

Not only Bim but Tara too realized and:

saw how little she had really observed - either as a child or as a grown woman. She had seen Bim through the lenses of her own self, as she had wanted to see her. And now, when she tried to be objective, when she was old enough, grown enough and removed enough to study her objectively, she found she could not - her vision was strewn, obscured and screened by too much of the past. (p.148)

Tara swept by emotions, made confessions because she wanted to 'plaster off' her previous mistakes and to medicate Bim's wound. She did not want to be estranged from her sister. She wanted punishment or even a reprimand, but she definitely longed for an assurance from Bim for the continuation of their relationship. She felt embarrassed at her own behaviour of avoiding all responsibilities. The truth of their shared past and present bring to focus the eternal warmth and affection of their relationship, the significance of loving and sharing, which is the very basis of human happiness.

Bim's consciousness too awakens to this new realization. She understands everything and her mental anguish subsides to a great extent. In that moment of joy she sent
a message to Raja, through Tara, that he should visit them. She will be waiting for all of them and he must come. The tension of mind is released. Tara too appears more eager to come back again to Bim rather than going to the wedding itself. The new light of life is cordially welcomed, after all they are all inseparable parts of her ownself. She cannot live without them. She understands how she loved them.

There could be no love more deep and full and wide than this one,... No other love had started so far back in time and had had so much time in which to grow and spread... the anger or the disappointment she felt in them was only the anger and disappointment she felt at herself. Whatever hurt they felt, she felt. Whatever diminished them, diminished her... Nor was there anyone else on earth whom she was willing to forgive more readily or completely, or defend more instinctively and instantly. (p.165)

She realized if anything went wrong, it was her own fault. The burden of her mind is lightened. The darkness of doubt and bitterness gives way to the new feeling of love and care. She rises above the petty feelings of selfishness and personal sorrow. It is in love that she seeks meaning and perfection of life. The temporary phase of withdrawal and alienation ends with forgiveness, acceptance and
accommodation. The last part of the novel brings a cheering note of human faith and seraphic love. It also implies the reunion of the family.

Among all the women protagonists in Desai's novels, Bim stands apart with her unique and extraordinary capacity to brave and cope with the suffering, the failures and the pains. In a way she is the combination of Maya, Sita, Nanda and Sarah, yet she is much more than all of them together.

Her inner courage and strength, her real self, surpasses them all and she emerges triumphant with a divine love and affection. Inspite of all dejections and disappointments Bim embraces her brothers and sister in all their totality. She is also unique - the way she cheerfully accepts the truth of life in all its shades—and there in lies the real beauty of her existence. Bim's realization of the meaning of life through love is also expressive of the time's healthy effect on one's psychic health.

6.2 PASSAGE 1

6.2.1 The Immediate Narrative Context of the Passage:

The present instance of psychological conflict highlights an important shift in the mental attitude of one of the major protagonists of this novel, Mira. This change is
visible at two levels:

(a) The growth of Das children from childhood to adulthood has changed the physical environment of Mira, and

(b) besides, this changed atmosphere introduces a feeling of uncertainty and insecurity in the mind of Mira which finally leads to her mental disintegration.

Das children, whose lives were completely devoid of parental love, grew up under the affectionate care of their aunt Mira. Mira too had been much insulted and humiliated in her own family before coming into Das Family. Her arrival here proved beneficial both ways. She owned the children and the children owned her. She proved for them not only the shaded tree but also the soil, the earth itself. Aunt Mira had been:

...as constant as a staff, a tree that can be counted on not to pull up its roots and shift in the night. She was the tree that grew in the centre of their lives and in whose shade they lived... She fed them with her own nutrients... (pp. 110, 111)

and they had become a part of her own being.

But presently those tiny flames (Das children) whom
she had loved, cared, protected and guided have grown older, taller and stronger. The physical changes in the outside world have reversed her role. The children have grown stronger and Mira has grown weaker. The children no longer need her constant care, but Mira needs their attention. This reversal of earlier roles is one of the causes behind her mental tension. Another factor that intensifies the tension of Mira's mind to a great extent is this: being old and weak she needs constant care and attention which is denied to her. Mira's shattered inside and her inability to cope with the hard outside reality make her mind very apprehensive. Not only the children have grown older and stronger physically, they have also become uncontrollable and unmanageable. The clash between the inner desires, demands and the unsavoury outside further heightens Mira's strain. She feels that under the circumstances her life is being threatened. When we reach the text of this passage we find that Mira's mind has quite deteriorated and is further moving towards the brink of insanity.

Since no other option is available, Mira tends to drink more and more. She tries to forget everything and finally falls ill and becomes fully unaware of her surroundings. In that unconscious state, she even intended to commit suicide by drowning herself in the well behind her house.
The content of the passage reveals two important facts about the protagonist. First, she lies in her room surrounded by a pool of wine in a very shabby and disgraceful manner. Under the effect of liquor, she had torn her clothes, had stumbled and knocked over the bottle which fell with a clatter. The whole wine contained in the bottle spread on the floor, soaking her shed clothes... clutched her throat... and she sank onto her bed whimpering.

Another important fact that the reader realizes is that though Mira was fully exhausted and she fell unconscious, but the sub-conscious self of Mira is actively engaged in the thought process. Desai being a master in unravelling the minds of her characters down to the bottom, presents here a very life-like picture of the inner reality of Mira. The reader gets a clear glimpse of the shape of things that reside in the inner world of aunt Mira. Though unaware of her present physical surroundings, her mind can clearly visualize both 'the time present' and 'the time past' simultaneously. She does not make any mistake in her calculations. She is even capable of recalling the exact words uttered by Das children long back, when they were very small and had been planning, though unconsciously, about their would be future. The exact words ring still in her ears, Raja saying:

'I will be a hero',
and the other (Bim) had echoed back, as in a song:

'And I will be a heroine'.

Those tiny tots have now grown not only taller and stronger but also 'fierce and frightening'. They are posing a threat to Mira's feeble self, she needs protection which she cannot secure. Gradually, the sub-conscious self of Mira too calms down and becomes passive with too much fatigue. She forgets the difference between laughing and weeping - both appear to her the same conditions. Therefore, in the same moment, 'she sucked and laughed and sucked and cried'.

The narration of the passage is mostly in the third person form with short interludes of direct sentences, which are revived mentally through the sub-conscious self of the protagonist. The contact between the reader and the inner mind of the character is established not directly by the character herself but through the narrator. The shifts in the position of the protagonist too are related through the narrator but they are so life-like that the reader can mentally visualize everything in detail that is being expressed. The reader further becomes fully aware not only of the changes that have occurred in the outside physical world but also of the shifts in the mental perspective of Mira and the children as well. Thus the shattered illusions, the unrealized dreams and demands of Mira, along with the hard reality outside not only make her very upset mentally, but also drive her towards
a deteriorated psychic condition.

This rise and fall of the mental conflict of the character as discussed here, is unfolded and reinforced by the select choice of the lexis as discussed in the following part of the analysis.
### Nominals and Modifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete Nouns</th>
<th>Abstract Nouns</th>
<th>Human Bodily Parts</th>
<th>Modifiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strips</td>
<td>Breath</td>
<td>Feet</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>Bottle</td>
<td>Panic</td>
<td>Ankles</td>
<td>Bright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rim</td>
<td>Voices</td>
<td>Knees</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flames (*R 15)</td>
<td>Shadow (*R 7)</td>
<td>Waist</td>
<td>Tall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candles</td>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>Armpits</td>
<td>Fine</td>
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<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Colourless</td>
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<td>Beads</td>
<td>Glassiness</td>
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<td>Fingers</td>
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<td>Splinters</td>
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<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Red</td>
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<td>Scrap</td>
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<td>Nostrills</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
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<td>Paper</td>
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<td>Sockets</td>
<td>Still</td>
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<td>Mummy</td>
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<td>Face</td>
<td>Pretty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pool (*R 9)</td>
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<td>Little</td>
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</tbody>
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*R = Repeated
Nos. = No. of times
Chart-2

Groups of Nominals/Modifiers Based on Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Items</th>
<th>Contrasted Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Voices</td>
<td>(6) Fierce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>Frightening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Bright</td>
<td>Harsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine</td>
<td>Piercing</td>
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<td>Glassiness</td>
<td>(7) Livid</td>
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<td>(3) Quiet</td>
<td>Pale</td>
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<td>Still</td>
<td>(8) Big</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>Straight</td>
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<td>(4) Panic</td>
<td>Towering</td>
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<td>Fright</td>
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<td>(5) Long</td>
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<td>Tall</td>
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...
Lexical Collocation and Groups of Lexical Items

Flames:

Little flames
Pure as flame
Candle flame
Towering flames - Crackling and spitting
Flames - Crackled up
Flames pricked
Flames leapt

A tall, fine - (bottle)
Tall and straight and true - (Raja and Bim)
Tall, towering - (flames)
Low and bright lapping - (Pool)
Tall, slim - (Coolness)
Slender pale - (Glassiness)
Little, little, juicy - (Sounds)

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Chart-4

**Verbs and Adverbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Form</th>
<th>II/ed Form</th>
<th>-ing Form</th>
<th>Adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clutch</td>
<td>Spun</td>
<td>Scorching</td>
<td>Quickly</td>
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<td>Contain</td>
<td>Shot</td>
<td>Burning</td>
<td>Treacherously</td>
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<td>Grasp</td>
<td>Pulled</td>
<td>Crackling</td>
<td>Down</td>
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<td>Torture</td>
<td>Prowled</td>
<td>Splitting</td>
<td>Silly</td>
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<td>Spread</td>
<td>Searched</td>
<td>Lapping</td>
<td>Higher</td>
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<td>Lift</td>
<td>Reached</td>
<td>Rising</td>
<td>Taller</td>
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<td>Stop</td>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>Slipping</td>
<td>Desperately</td>
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<td>Meet</td>
<td>Wrapped</td>
<td>Bleeding</td>
<td>Hurrying</td>
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<td>Lay</td>
<td>Lowered</td>
<td>Lurching</td>
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<td>Touch</td>
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<td>Shut</td>
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<td>Listen</td>
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<td>Manage</td>
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<td>Cope</td>
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<td>Hurt</td>
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<td>Whisper</td>
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<td>Four</td>
<td>Moaned</td>
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<td>Trickle</td>
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<td>Meet</td>
<td>Struck</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feel</td>
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Chart-5

Groups of Verbs/Adverbs Based on Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Items</th>
<th>Contrasted Items</th>
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</table>
6.2.2.1 Nominals and their Modifiers

The chart of nominals reveals clearly that this passage contains more of concrete nouns as compared to the abstract ones. In the list of living 'human bodily parts' we mostly have the different parts of the body referred to: the nose, the eyes, the sockets, even the armpits are not left out. All these parts have been described in a very systematic manner. The pool of wine spread on the floor is lapping the protagonist's feet, rising to the 'ankles', to the 'knees' and so on. This orderly description clearly expresses the minute perceptive power of the character. This fact becomes more important, for the protagonist at the moment is lying in an unconscious state of mind. Mira feels that the pool will further rise up and block her nostrils and she would cease to breathe. The weak physical structure and the shattered inner self of Mira along with her minute observations of her surroundings at the sub-conscious level further intensify the conflict which Mira is suffering from, at the moment.

A prominent concrete nominal 'pool' occurs quite frequently (9 times) in the passage which reveals the obsession of Mira's mind with the object. The same word 'pool'
refers first to the pool of wine that is spread on the floor. But gradually, the size and dimensions of this little pool are enlarged and finally, it becomes a substitute for 'life' itself. The same lexical item represents the concrete phenomenon around and the abstract notion of life as well.

The particularity of things is further described through variant pre-modifiers and post modifiers.

The pool is low and bright... treacherously rising, and the protagonist feels herself threatened by its vastness and strength. She tries to 'gather it', 'contain it', in order to keep it within limits and thus have full control over it. Then Mira talks of the bottle of wine in hand and distinguishes it from other bottles. This ordinary 'bottle' of the first sentence later becomes 'a tall, fine bottle'. One attributive relates to the visual sense and the other to the sense of touching. The lexical collocation of different words further helps in revealing the true nature of the things described. Mira is initially aware of the 'neck' of the bottle but soon the other parts also gain equal significance. In order to have a complete view of the object around, 'her fingers went round it - almost around it'. The minute observation of the character further highlights the active consciousness of the self.
The abstract nominal 'life' too needs special mention here. This abstract notion has been described further in abstract terms, keeping its intrinsic nature fully intact. The life:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{it lay so 'quiet'} \\
\text{so 'still'}
\end{align*}
\]

that one is lured to touch it very delicately. But the moment one goes near it to caress it lovingly, this very 'quiet' and 'still' thing 'leaps up' ferociously and strikes one 'full' in the face. Then 'one spins about and spins about gasping', which implies and refers to the hard, tough struggles of life.

The content word 'flame' too deserves close scrutiny. In the moments of Mira's mental strife, this nominal also changes its meaning and becomes symbolic of living human beings who, in this particular context, are the four Das children. With the very mention of the word 'children', the protagonist plunges deep down in the distant past at a point when she had just entered into the life of the Das family. In a state of mental reverie the link with the present is broken and the long lost past is revived afresh. Mira had come to look after the much neglected children who needed to be owned. She too, being a homeless person had wanted
someone to own her. Consequently, she owned the children, and they also owned her. At that time these children were innocent, pure and bright. They were not frightening or threatening at all. They were 'pretty (even) in the dark'. The children were pretty, for they were alive, bubbling with life with all its hopes, aspirations, dreams and visions. They were totally unaware of the outside world. The noun 'dark' presenting here a sharp contrast to the noun 'pretty', becomes expressive of the fact that they were hidden and obscure not only from the outside world but also from the inner reality of their own minds as well. Their lives were dark because they were devoid of their parents' love and had no experience of the ways of the world around.

Mira found these small children like the 'tiny flames' of life burning in a suffocating atmosphere. Together these flames appeared to be so many (though they were only four) candles at a celebration. Their very company was a grand festivity. Even the sub-conscious self of Mira is active enough at the moment that she can very well hear the exact words uttered long back by Raja and Bim, who were tall and straight and true. They were tall both physically and in their visions and dreams about the future.

But with the passage of time those 'tiny flames' have turned out to be 'tall', 'towering flames', 'crackling
and spitting', making Mira shut her eyes and cower within. The -ing form of verbs in a chain highlights the presentness of the past moments still being experienced afresh. Thus awakened with a jerk, the past is left behind and the present gapes frighteningly at the face of small, thin, feeble Mira and scared she shuts her eyes. The verb 'shut' here also refers to the sealing up of the past memories for the time being. Since they have grown unmanageable, she tries to stop them but instead is pricked by the flames like pins pricking out beads of blood. Her fear and backward posture make these flames jump still higher. They grow upward fiercely and she turns more and more inward, thus withdrawing herself away from the outside reality.

The flames and their shadows collocating differently: vivid shadows, huge shadows, etc., occur 7 times. These flames dance together menacingly. The shadows have been given the personhood by attributing them the human senses: shadow... did not listen. The flames and the shadows of flames advance on each other, merge together and the fragile self of Mira is caught between them. She feels helpless as a splinter, a mere scrap of paper and finally that little self of Mira gets crushed and disappears in this fierce dance of destruction. Mira needed protection, she wanted to hide herself away but the flames prowled about and at the end
searched her out. The threatening outside, the battered soul inside in a semi-conscious state (Mira) touched the liquid around her. She brings the bottle close to her mouth and sucks little sips to seal up the past memories and to run away from the present. She gets the soothing effect of liquor and falls back in the indolent mood and knows no difference between laughing and weeping. 'She sucked and laughed, sucked and cried simultaneously. This brings us to a close consideration of verbs/adverbs in the passage.

6.2.2.2 Verbs and their Modifiers

The chart of verbs shows that most of the verbs in this passage are used in their past participle form. In almost first half of the passage the tension of the mind is building up, we have more of stative verbs which are expressive of Mira's mental and emotional state. She is lying in a shabby manner in her sub-conscious state reviewing her situation mentally. The past blissful state when Mira's involvement in the lives of Das children was absolute, is presently slipping out of her hands. The voices of those children were ringing and singing in her ears with the exact words used at that time.

But the later part of the text is replete with dynamic verbs. The mind and emotions have undergone a great change, not only in Mira but also in those tiny flames. The
flames (Das children) which were a festivity earlier have grown taller, fiercer, towering over her and threatening her very existence. They do not listen to her anymore. If she tries to touch them, they strike her back and scorch her. The flames crackle and split outside, the deep anguish tears her head and heart inside. Towering over her, they dance fiercely and try to crush her. The weak, broken self of Mira longs to escape their growing menace by hiding herself away. But they prowl about and easily find her out. Finally, the feeble self of Mira is broken like the splinters. Being helpless, she takes the help of wine and sips little sips. Gradually, the tension is suspended under the intoxicating effect of liquor and she lies quite unaware of her surroundings.

The past and the present both have gone beyond the reach of her mind. By the end of the passage the reader finds that the agitated and shattered self of Mira has become fully unconscious of the difference between laughing and crying. She has reached above any worldly experience. 'She sucked and laughed and sucked and cried'. Thus with the help of the selected lexical items, the verbs collocating with the nominals and the elegant variation, not only the physical atmosphere but the inner landscape of Mira—the progression of her mental conflict and the suspension of her tension—too
have been portrayed very realistically.

6.2.3 The Pattern of Syntax: An Analysis

The present passage is comprised of fifty sentences - a combination of simple and complex sentences. The sentence length varies from 3 to 78 words.

The structural analysis of the passage reveals that a variety of sentence pattern is used here to portray the inner reality of Mira's mind. When the mind of the protagonist is tense, we have short sentences one succeeding the other. The use of infinitive structure in a succession also helps in mounting the tension of Mira's mind:

She had to...
She had to...
She would...
She could... etc.

The things which Mira hesitated to do or did not like to do, had to be done, which further increase her mental tension.

Sentence No. 7 —

'Gather it, contain it'.

begins with a verb phrase and another verb phrase (a close synonym of the first one) completes the sentence, thereby signifying the action involved, that Mira really desires to do. When the conscious self of Mira is threatened with the
present situation, she withdraws from the outside world and turns inward mentally towards the old happy moments spent with Das children. In that state of mental reverie Mira utters long sentences with many clauses and sometimes even those long sentences are left incomplete at the end. They are expressive of the break in thought, in the protagonist's mind and also the numbness of her consciousness. In such moments, Mira fails miserably to think and reveal her real self.

The similarity of sentence structure also brings out grammatic cohesion. A few examples of incomplete sentences in the passage are analysed below:

Example-1
Sentence No. 46:
Structural Analysis
She reached out for the hand
that would help her,
protect her...

(1) The Main Clause:
(S + V + Adv + Prep + D + N)

(2) The Trailing Element:
Sub. Cl.
that (Rel. Conj + M + V + S + V + S)
expressive of her inner desire and demand.
Interpretation:

This sentence provides only incomplete information. The protagonist under mental strain tries to reach that hand, which she hopes would help her and protect her. The use of two stative verbs in a sequence, expressive of the similar meaning, reinforce Mira's immediate need for some outside help. But at the same time the sentence is left incomplete. The reader has to interpret the gap himself. It further indicates that the expected help did not reach, therefore, the depressed self of Mira became numb. The form of the sentence not only emphasizes something important, but also draws the attention of the reader towards its significance.

Example 2

Sentence No. 49:

Structural Analysis:
If she got her fingers around it, +
its slender pale glassiness+ and (conj)
then drew it closer, close to her mouth, +
she could close her lips about it + and (conj)
suck, suck little, little sips, with little, little juicy sounds, and (conj)

(1) The Main Clause:
If (S ♦ V ♦ Pn ♦ N ♦ Adv ♦ Pn) +
(Pn ♦ Adj1 ♦ Adj2 ♦ N ♦ and) +
(Adv ♦ V ♦ Pn ♦ N ♦ V ♦ Prep ♦ Pn) +
S ♦ M ♦ V ♦ Pn ♦ N ♦ Adj ♦
Pn ♦ Conj ♦ V(2) ♦ Adj(2) ♦
N ♦ Prep ♦ Adj(3) ♦ N ♦
Conj +
it would be so sweet, so sweet again, +

just as when they were little babies,

little babies for her +
to feed, herself a little baby
sucking, sucking at the little
trickle of juice that came hurrying in, sliding in...

(2) The Trailing Element:
Showing the effect of the cause, with dependent clauses.

NP ♦ Adj ♦ Adv ♦ Adv ♦
NP ♦ VP ♦ NP ♦ VP ♦ NP ♦
that cl. ♦ V ♦ Adv ♦ Adv

Interpretation:

This is the longest sentence of the passage running almost into seven lines but is still left incomplete, that becomes expressive of much more than is formally described. This sentence presents a fine example of mental reverie which finally leads the struggling consciousness of Mira to the Elysian state of mind. She feels so much excited with the ecstasy that she forgets, not only to think but even to speak. The main verbs used in this sentence are stative verbs: got, drew, close, suck, all belonging to the same semantic field which are further expressive of Mira's obsession with the idea.

The lexical repetition as illustrated below and the related verbs of similar meaning in a sequence too, not only reinforce the idea behind but also highlight the unity of thought and action:

drew it closer...
close to her...
could close...
little, little sips;
little, little juicy sounds;
so sweet, so sweet;
little babies, little babies - a little baby;
sucking, sucking;
hurrying in,
sliding in, etc.

The sentence beginning with 'If', conditional, joined by more than 15 phrases with commas is left incomplete at the end, which presents some grammatical deviation also. The two modals used (could and would) though expressive of two different moods, convey the positive features of Mira's personality. The progression of thought and the intra-sentential cohesion in this long sentence is brought about with the help of lexical repetition, pronominal substitution and also through the use of synonyms. The adjective/adverb 'little' has been used seven times and almost invariably with variant nominals and verbs. The pause markers, the change of topic, all in a way mark the gaps of silence and abrupt brakes in thought. At times, the same markers are indicative of the continuity and discontinuity of thought as well. They further signify the relationship between sound and silence, which is one of
the prominent features of Anita Desai's work.

Another important feature of the sentence structure to be noted here is that the form of the sentence itself declares the power and position enjoyed by the protagonist. When Mira is fully conscious of her capacity and is capable of taking the decision, she is the foremost agent of the sentence. She is the doer, it is in her control to desire and manage, as for instance:

- She had to get out of it...
- She had to lift herself...
- She whispered...
- She had it...
- She could...
- She drew back, etc.

But then the position changes. The children have grown taller, fiercer, stronger and now they tower over her. It is Mira who needs protection and help. Her first in rank position too slides into the place of a passive object in a sentence, which is expressive of her helplessness and inability to save her little self from being crushed. Her helplessness is conveyed not only through the passive form of sentences but also through her physical condition, as marked below:

- They cast huge shadows... around her.
The shadows lurched... towards her.
They merged... she was caught between... etc.

The complex sentences of the passage reveal clearly the complexity of Mira's mind. She is occupied not only with so many things and ideas simultaneously at the moment but she is also oscillating between the time 'present' and the time 'past' mentally. The reader can very well participate in the mounting tension in the mind of the protagonist and also its gradual release.

The deteriorating mind control tends to lean towards insanity. By the end of the passage, Mira is hardly aware of her physical situation and also of what she utters. Her helplessness under the situation, her physical weakness, the shattered inside and the increasing danger from outside, all strain her mind so much that she cannot differentiate between laughing and crying. But this very unconsciousness helps in diffusing the tension of her mind and it also provides the protagonist with the much required peace of mind.

Another important feature of the passage is that it is replete with negative expressions referring to the negative mind view of the protagonist.
Example 3

Sentence No. 36:

She could not manage them, she could not cope - they were too big for her, too hot and fierce and frightening.

(Emphasis mine)

Interpretation:

This single sentence conveys two sharply contrasted situations: the position of the protagonist, Mira, on the one hand and that of Das children on the other. The first part of the sentence with the same modal and the synonym verb expresses Mira's mental helplessness. Though she wished, but she could not manage, could not cope with the situation. The second half of the sentence not only reveals the frightening and fierce attitude of the children towards Mira, but also further intensifies the mental affliction of Mira by contrast.

This single sentence contains 6 negative expressions in a sequence:

Could not manage,...
Could not cope...
too hot...
too big...
fierce...
frightening...

which reveal the true physical and mental condition of Mira.
In addition to these, many more negative expressions are used in a sequence throughout the passage, such as:

1. She wished they would stop, it hurt so, it was torture.
2. She pulled her white hair about her face, shielding herself.
3. And some soft cloth to stop up her ears, her nose, shut herself, hide from them.
4. They prowled about, searching her out, menacing her.
5. She moaned in fright.
6. She needed protection.
7. She wanted help.
8. She reached... that would help her, protect her...

All these expressions further reflect upon the mental agony and poor physical condition of the protagonist. The feeble self is frightened, and is unable to cope with the situation, yet the desire to save herself and escape the torture is very much present. Not only the mind of Mira is tense with the strain but the reader also feels the burden on his mind.
The maximum number of dynamic verbs is used in these simple but important sentences (hurt, torture, pulled, prowled, scorching, menacing, etc.). The pause markers too, not only provide breath gaps but also prove significant in drawing the attention of the reader.

Example 4

Sentence No. 11: She would contain it.
12: Pour it into a glass.

In the second sentence though the agent is missing, the required information is provided. Through the technique of ellipsis not only the repetition is avoided but the new information is supplied to the reader, further clarifying the meaning of the first sentence.

These two simple sentences in succession, consisting of 4 words each strike the new tone of Mira's faith in her own spirits. First she desires to contain within limits the life threatening pool and then wants to pour it into a glass. The decision softens the tension of her mind to some extent. The direction is realized and gradually afterwards, the length of the sentences increases accordingly.

The inclusion of a greater number of indefinite articles in the passage as compared to the definite ones
also denotes the deteriorating mind of Mira, her hesitancy and confusion. The helplessness and weakness of Mira are highlighted against the background of strength and threat posed by Das children, as for instance:

They were too big...
They did not listen...
They made such harsh piercing sounds...
They prowled about...

These expressions clearly convey the better position of the children and this was also one reason that in comparison with their growing strength and danger, Mira felt herself shattering and cowering within.

6.3 PASSAGE 2

6.3.1 The Immediate Narrative Context of the Passage

The present instance of psychic conflict points towards an important change in the mental atmosphere of the major protagonist of this novel, Bim. To realize this change fully, we have to take into consideration some of the preceding events that lead to the text of this passage.

Earlier Bim's conscious self was reliving mentally the past experience, which was a mixture of happy moments as well as of the periods of great anxiety and concern. This
past had been left far behind and from the distance of time she could examine it more objectively. While reviewing the past subjectively, she could not be fair and thus felt disappointed and frustrated. In the process her mind view of the world and the people around became narrow and biased.

On the other hand her younger sister Tara too had experienced some moments of retrospection and became aware of the lapses of duty on her part:

Tara saw how little she had really observed - either as a child or as a grown woman. She had seen Bim through the lenses of her own self, as she had wanted to see her. And now, when she tried to be objective, when she was old enough, grown enough and removed enough to study her objectively, she found she could not - her vision was strewn, obscured and screened by too much of the past. (p.148)

Tara felt ashamed of her own behaviour. She really wished to lighten the burden on her conscience by confessing everything to Bim and also apologizing for her past carelessness - she had not helped Bim when she was attacked by the bee-swarm when they had gone for a picnic and she had married Bakul as an escape from the gloomy atmosphere of the family. She had neither owned any family responsibility nor had she ever tried to look back towards her family, the greatest guilt that lay heavy on her conscience was that she did not even come to
attend the funeral of Mira *masi* who had ever looked after the children:

as constant as a staff, a tree
that can be counted on not to pull
up its roots and shift in the night.
She was the tree that grew in the
centre of their lives and in whose
shade they lived. (p.110)

It were these confessions of Tara's weak moments
that she wanted to give an air, therefore, she tried to talk
to Bim. But Bim, born with heroic traits of courage and
confidence, had never wanted to share her moments of weakness.
Very stubbornly and strongly, she avoided all confrontation
with Tara and never bothered about such matters. Bim alone
supported the whole family, nursed ailing Raja and Mira
simultaneously, provided an unflinching support to her invalid
brother Baba and she never asked for any help. She did not
even complain when Raja, her favourite companion, married
Benazir and settled down in Hyderabad. But when he changed
his role from a brother to a landlord and wrote that 'unfor-
givable letter', she became extremely tense. She was so upset
that she did not like either to remember the past, or Tara
speaking about it and reminding her. Instead she becomes
furious, as we learn: "Her anger was as raw as a rash of
prickly heat that she compulsively scratched and made
worse." (p.162)
The little actions of Tara made 'Bim go pale with anger'. And the all afternoon her anger swelled... acquiring demonic proportions. Finally, she strode into Baba's room and asked:

I might have to send you to live with Raja. I came to ask you... 'Are you willing to go and live with Raja in Hyderabad?' (p.163)

Though she said all this unaware of its effect on Baba but that very moment something seemed to slam inside her own head. painfully, when she looked at Baba.

She was hit harder than she had been able to hit Baba. Baba remained silent and his silence saved Bim from committing an inhuman crime. Baba's silence and Bim's realization of the present situation both make her breathless. She does not know what to say and how to say it. With the result we get one long sentence from Bim with four hypens as joiners, to allow herself the breathing time and also the thinking space:

'I mean,' she cried, leaning out of her chair towards him, 'I mean - it's just an idea - I've been wondering - I wanted to ask you, Baba - what you thought...' 'I didn't mean,' she said hoarsely, 'Baba, I didn't mean_' (p.164)

It is in this tense state of mind that Bim is portrayed in the present instance.
The content of the passage reveals two things clearly:

(i) that there was a motive behind Bim's attack on Baba's silence. She wanted to ransack, to rob his reserve, his other worldiness, though it caused greater pain to the heart of Bim herself than to Baba, but she did it deliberately, and

(ii) Bim was newly made aware of her deep-rooted and ever-present feeling of love and goodwill for all her brothers and sister. The aftermath of the attack awakens her conscience and she realizes that her anger and disappointment too were nothing but a reflection of her own deep love for them. She could not live without them, nor could they survive without her. All of them together made a whole, and no one could be taken out of that whole. If they had been wrong somewhere, it was due to her own imperfection of love. In that moment of awakening she forgave even that 'unforgivable letter' from Raja and she also wished to wrest forgiveness from Baba for her unworthy behaviour.

The narration of the passage is in the Free Indirect Speech in third person form. Most of the passage reveals the state of mind of the major protagonist of the novel, Bim. The contact between the inner reality of Bim and the reader is established through the narrator. We have glimpses of the
inner reality of Tara, Bakul and Baba too, but they are reflected through the major character, Bim. We feel that here not only the narrator provides the reader with the information of the mental make-up of these characters but also helps in slanting the reader's attitude towards these persons as well. What we learn about Tara, Baba or Bakul is only what we are shown through the coloured lens of Bim's mind.

The only character whose inside mind is revealed not only in detail, but also from a close angle is Baba. Bim and Baba have lived together for a long time and it is Baba who attracts Bim's mind most of the time. Therefore, the reader also gets fairly close view of Baba's inner self. The mental landscape of Tara and Bakul are expressed only to the extent they are related to Bim's mind view.

What gives rise to the psychological conflict here, is the feeling of guilt that troubles Bim about her bad behaviour with mute Baba. Her disappointments, frustrations and unexpected behaviour and demands of others too intensify her mental tension to some extent. During these moments of mental rovings, she feels hurt, wounded and badly upset. But the aftermath of attack, her inner courage and confidence, the advent of the feeling of her deep-rooted and ever-present love, all combine and gradually the tension recedes. Bim
emerges successfully out of all these psychic tortures and tribulations. Now we meet Bim whose mental perspective has completely changed from what it was in the beginning of the passage.
Chart-1

Nominals and Modifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract Nouns</th>
<th>Concrete Nouns</th>
<th>Modifiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rage</td>
<td>Peak</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Wave</td>
<td>Empty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Sand</td>
<td>Still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Wounds</td>
<td>Soggy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sight</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>Cold</td>
</tr>
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<td>Spirit</td>
<td>Gramophone</td>
<td>Broken</td>
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<td>Anger</td>
<td>Room</td>
<td>Old</td>
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<td>Disappointment</td>
<td>Door</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence</td>
<td>Walls</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
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<td>Love</td>
<td>Parts</td>
<td>Strident</td>
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<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>Blatant</td>
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<td>Ears</td>
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<td>Otherworldliness</td>
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<td>Full</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>Eyelids</td>
<td>Wide</td>
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<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Tears</td>
<td>Inseparable</td>
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<td>Keen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaws</td>
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<td>Acute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequacies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 2

Groups of Nominal/Modifiers Based on Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Items</th>
<th>Contrasted Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Rage</td>
<td>(7) Acme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>(8) Peak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Disappointment</td>
<td>House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>Door</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hurts</td>
<td>Walls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>Yearning</td>
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<td>Tears</td>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Forgiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>(10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Empty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyelids</td>
<td>Still</td>
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<td>(4) Silence</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken</td>
<td>(11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old</td>
<td>Flaws</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) Inadequacies</td>
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<td>Deep</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Full</td>
<td>Keen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide</td>
<td>Acute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Silence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otherworldiness</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart-3

Examples of Elegant Variation in the Collocation

Love → [Deep
   Full
   Wide]

Answers → [So open
   So strident
   So blatant]

Afternoon → [So quiet
   So empty]

To vent → [Her Hurt
   Pain
   Frustration]

Break open → Silence

Ransack → Reserve

Rob → Otherworldiness

...
### Chart-4

**Verbs and Adverbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Form</th>
<th>II/ed Form</th>
<th>-ing Form</th>
<th>Adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press</td>
<td>Spent</td>
<td>Glittering</td>
<td>Around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeed</td>
<td>Reached</td>
<td>Lying</td>
<td>Through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vent</td>
<td>Hovered</td>
<td>Casting</td>
<td>Against</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pretend</td>
<td>Collapsed</td>
<td>Dashing</td>
<td>Easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain</td>
<td>Fell</td>
<td>Pouring</td>
<td>Readily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break open</td>
<td>Seeped</td>
<td>Crawling</td>
<td>Completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Roared</td>
<td>Smashing</td>
<td>Instinctively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mend</td>
<td>Thundered</td>
<td>Ceasing</td>
<td>Instantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgive</td>
<td>Drowned</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cling</td>
<td>Attacked</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yielded</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shaded</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Loved</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diminished</td>
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</table>
Chart-5

Groups of Verbs/Adverbs Based on Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related Items</th>
<th>Contrasted Items</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Diminished</td>
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<td>Ceased</td>
<td>Succeed</td>
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<td>Collapsed</td>
<td>(6) Crawling</td>
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<td>Cling</td>
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<td>(7) Readily</td>
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<td>Drowned</td>
<td>Instantly</td>
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<td>Instinctively</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(8) Flawed</td>
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<td>Damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Roared</td>
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<td>Thundered</td>
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<td>(4) Mend</td>
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<td>Forgive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loved</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yielding</td>
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...
6.3.2 Major Lexical Items in the Passage: An Analysis

6.3.2.1 Nominals and their Modifiers

A thorough study of the content of the passage reveals that the maximum number of nominals used here belong to the abstract concepts. They consist of ideas and emotions which are expressive of love, disappointment, anxiety, anger, etc. Another important factor that we realize is that the arena set for struggle here is nothing outside but the inner self of Bim, which is raging noisily. Bim's rage first has the ascending order and when it reaches the 'peak', 'its acme'; it has no other choice but to descend down, and it does crumble to dust finally. What is left behind is merely a set of questions, their well known answers and ultimately it all gives way to silence. But the silence in this context is not the shutting up of the mind within, but is roaring, raging and also enlightening. It is the silence of Baba that makes Bim realize the basic truth of human relationships and their meaningfulness. The chart of nominals consists of positive qualities of love, yearning alongwith unhappy pricking of hurts, gashes, wounds, rents, tears, etc. Above all, we also have the divine virtue of forgiveness which forms the wholeness of love and weaves into perfection the complicated pattern of human relationships.
In this instance the most sharply focused abstract nominals are: 'silence' and 'love'. These abstract concepts are not only inseparable features of Bim's personality but they have also been foregrounded in the overall pattern of Desai's fictional canvas. The reader too becomes conscious not only of their immanent existence but also of the power and influence that these human feelings carry with them.

The 'silence' in this particular text prevails at two levels: (1) at the level of physical surroundings and (2) at the level of the mind. The physical world around is quiet and so is Baba, who had been hit hard by Bim with a question: "Are you willing to go and live with Raja in Hyderabad?" The shock was too sudden to say anything. Therefore, Baba became quiet.

Soon after, this physical 'silence' gains demonic dimensions and it no longer remains a synonym of peace or quietness. It is 'roaring' and 'thundering'. Then it is the sound of silence which is heard without being noticed. Its roaring grows so frightening that Bim is forced to press her hands against her ears. Silently again so many questions thunder in her mind one after the other, making her realize her mistake of hurting Baba and leaving others, who could retaliate upon her...
In her moments of despair, Bim had hurt Baba but the latter's 'reserve' and 'otherworldiness' are difficult to bear. She could tolerate any retaliation from Baba but the 'silence' on his part becomes unbearable, which has locked him completely within itself. It is this silence, Bim tries to 'ransack' and 'rob'. But this very 'silence' awakens her conscience and invades her mind with the realization: "she loved him, loved Kaja and Tara and all of them who had lived in this house with her." (p.165) Thus we see that with the lexical collocation of silence along with its different variants, the writer has succeeded not only in portraying the inner reality of Bim but also in creating the desired impact.

Another prominent abstract nominal, 'love' along with its counterparts of 'rage' and 'anger' too has been foregrounded in a very significant position. The item 'love' has been used 10 times, twice as a verb and 8 times as a nominal. Each time it is used, it has different attributives conveying its different aspects, as in the following instances:

'Love... more deep/full/wide'

'Love... started so far back in time and had so much time in which to grow and spread'

'the wholeness of that love'

'Love... Imperfect... did not encompass... did not extend to all equally'
'Love... for Raja had had too much of a battering'

'Love... for Baba was too inarticulate, too unthinking'

'The knife of love'

'The arrow of love'

All the possible dimensions of love, time-wise and depth-wise, have been explored fully. Bim tries her best but she fails to understand why her love could not encompass all of them. Finally, she concludes that it was her own imperfection somewhere that resulted in her disappointment. She feels that they may not be able to outlive her, as it would be impossible for her to survive their final departure.

It is the wholeness of her love which encircles within its circumference all their shortcomings. She further concludes that it was due to her own fault that she was estranged from them, though temporarily. Even her anger and depression were expressive of her deep love and concern for them. The expression 'knife of hatred' is quite usual but 'knife of love' and 'arrow of love' are not so common collocations. Both are examples of revealing significance through defamiliarization.

6.3.2.2 Verbs and their Modifiers

This instance of psychological conflict fully
portrays the inner landscape of Bim with the help of stative verbs. The mental conflict of the protagonist passes through three stages of intensity.

The very first sentence of the passage reveals that the 'rage' of Bim—after reaching its peak, 'hovering' over everyone—has now collapsed. The physical 'rage' is over but the struggle that it has brought with its calming effect is more fierce. Bim is trying hard to 'ransack' and 'rob' Baba's 'reserve', 'silence' and 'otherworldliness', but in vain. This failure of Bim brings more frustration and depression in its wake.

Bim finds this silence of Baba stretched outside the house as well as inside his mind. It is roaring and thundering. She wants to drown this 'sound of silence', if it could be drowned. The questions inside her mind also thunder fiercely. She fails to understand why she had made Baba the target of her attack and not anyone else, who could retaliate upon her easily. It could have been Raja, Tara or Bakul instead.

When this tension of mind softens down a bit, Bim becomes fully aware of her situation. She knows why she did not attack anyone else with her questions. Because she knew their readymade answers, and she despised hearing them again and again. Moreover, she admits that there was a motive
behind her attack on mute and invalid Baba. She was finding it hard to bear his silence, she wanted him to give vent to his feelings and emotions so that he could relax and feel more comfortable. Then the very silence which was unbearable earlier, becomes enlightening and brings a new cheerful dawn in the life of Bim. Mending, sacrifice, forgiveness, follow it. Her heart is bubbling with love for all her inseparable parts (her brothers and sister). The agony of mind gives way to a new awakening of her inner self. She cannot survive after them, nor can they live without her. All of them together form a whole of love, its perfection. In that mood of loving and forgiving everyone, from the core of her heart, she becomes a new person. She is ready to make any sacrifice, even: "Somehow, she would have to forgive Raja that unforgivable letter " (p. 165) through which he had changed his role from a brother to a landlord. She herself would have to request Baba to forgive her unmindful behaviour. With this awakening of Bim's conscience, the clouds of despair, disappointment, frustration and inner conflict are rent. Everything around seems to be bright. The use of selected verbs along with nominal collocations helps in unfolding the inner reality of Bim and Baba in a realistic manner.

6.3.3 The Pattern of Syntax: An Analysis

This passage contains 40 sentences in all. Out of
these, thirteen sentences have the simple form (including four interrogatives) and the rest are all complex sentences. The sentence length in this Passage varies between 5 words to 77 words and we have no incomplete sentence as in the preceding instance. The meaning of the text is fully conveyed through the structure of the sentences. We have a series of questions:

Example-1

Sentence No. 8:

Why had she chosen Baba to vent her hurt and pain and frustration on?

Example-2

Sentence No. 9:

Why had she not written a letter to Raja, pouring out all she had to say to him over the years?

Example-3

Sentence No. 10:

Or attacked Tara instead since she could never be driven quite away, but always came back crawling to cling out of the habit of affection and her own insecurity?
Example - 4

Sentence No. 11:

Or Bakul, smashing his complacence into satisfying smithereens with one judicious blow for he would only pretend nothing had happened, remain certain no one could do this to him?

These four interrogatives in succession (two wh-questions and two beginning with the conjunction Or) emphasize one fact clearly, i.e., Bim is not only fully conscious of her own mistake of hurting Baba but also of the other possibilities. In a moment of frustration she had hurt Baba, but his utter silence forced Bim to realize her mistake. She knew very well that to satisfy her feeling of despair and anger, she could have attacked others (Raja, Tara or even Bakul), but she did not.

Interpretation:

Here we see that the conversational approach of question/answer is followed but with a difference. The content of these interrogatives leads to the apprehension that the interrogator herself (Bim) is fully aware of the answers to these questions as well. Bim is also conscious of the fact that the ready answers with their exact words and nuances
would never satisfy her inquisitive self. Therefore, she tried to ransack fully the tightly sealed self of Baba. This series of interrogatives in a row, standing sharply deviant against the background of the affirmatives and negatives in the text of the passage, not only reinforces the continuity and progression of thought but also draws the reader's attention towards its significance.

The following complex sentence also needs close attention.

Example-5

Sentence No. 14:

Structural Analysis

It was Baba's silence and reserve and otherworldliness that she had wanted to break open and ransack and rob,

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<th>(1) The Anticipatory Elements</th>
<th>(2) The Main Verb Clause</th>
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<td>(NP + and + N + and +N)</td>
<td>Rel. Cl. that (Pn + VP + to + VP + and + V + and + V)</td>
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</table>
| (containing three verbs from the same semantic field) | }
like the hunter who, moved by the white bird's grace as it hovers in the air above him, raises his crossbow and shoots to claim it for his own - his treasure, his loot - and brings it hurtling down to his feet - no white spirit or symbol of grace but only a dead albatross, a cold package of death.

This longest complex sentence of the passage conveys the complexity of the mind of Bim, who at the same moment is thinking of so many diverse things. The structure of the sentence clearly expresses that though Bim is the active agent of the sentence, this fact is not so important. More important is the action that is desired. It also explains the motive behind Bim's attack on Baba. She did it intentionally. The 'silence' further emphasized with the content words 'reserve' and 'otherworldiness', on the part of Baba had become unbearable. Through lexical repetition, Bim strengthens one particular aspect of Baba's personality. It was this 'silence' that she wanted to break open, ransack,
rob (again the near synonyms in the slot of verbs) are further expressive of the keen desire of the agent subject. In the trailing construction of the sentence, she compares herself to that hunter who (just looking at the outside grace and serenity of the bird) shoots it down with his arrow only to realize his mistake and repent afterwards.

When the conscious self of Bim is fully awakened to the deep-rooted and ever-present love for her brothers and sister, we have a series of 10 sentences (19-28) which portray the gradual diffusion of Bim's mental crisis through various syntactic devices. These are:

(19) There could be no love more deep and full and wide than this one, she knew. (16 W)

(20) No other love had started so far back in time and had had so much time in which to grow and spread. (22 W)

(21) They were really all parts of her, inseparable, so many aspects of her as she was of them, so that the anger or the disappointment she felt in them was only the anger and disappointment she felt at herself. (39 W)

(22) Whatever hurt they felt, she felt. (6 W)

(23) Whatever diminished them, diminished her. (5 W)

(24) What attacked them, attacked her. (5 W)
Nor was there anyone else on earth whom she was willing to forgive more readily or completely, or defend more instinctively and instantly. (23 W)

She could hardly believe, at that moment, that she would live on after they did or they would continue after she had ended. (23 W)

If such an unimaginable phenomenon could take place, then surely they would remain flawed, damaged for life. (17 W)

The wholeness of the pattern, its perfection, would be gone. (10 W)

(Emphasis mine)

Interpretation:

In all these sentences only one thing is emphasized and that is one or the other aspect of her love for her brothers and sister. The conscious self of Bim is seriously contemplating her relationship with them, who are her inseparable parts. The first two sentences signify her deep and close association, the third one describes her undying attachment and affection. The same thought is continued further in the next three sentences revealing their still closer relationship. In sentence No. 25, Bim talks in superlative terms, beginning with the conjunction (nor)
negating any other possible comparison of her love for her brothers and sister. All the three adverbs: readily, instinctively and instantly, belonging to the same semantic field, further signify her desire not only of forgiveness but also of defending them willingly. Sentence No. 26 marks the beginning of the soothing effect of all this brooding which points towards the slow process of the diffusion of Bim's mental conflict and also the moral catharsis.

With the help of the progression of thought, lexical repetition (as underlined), synonymy, repeated expressions and similarity of sentence pattern (22, 23, 24), not only the inner self of Bim is revealed clearly but also the gradation of her psychological conflict and its gradual release to some extent, has been effectively conveyed. In a complicated pattern, Bim has been able to paint the picture of love with its wholeness of perfection. She is sure, no one can ever make rents in this single identity of love which binds all of them together.

For a moment, Bim becomes still, tense with the fear that this wholeness of the pattern of love may not be blemished even by her single breath.

The following sentences in a sequence at the end of the passage:

(35) Somehow she would have to forgive Raja that
unforgivable letter. (10 W)

(36) Somehow she would have to wrest forgiveness from Baba for herself. (11 W)

(37) There were great rents torn in the net that the knife of love had made. (15 W)

(38) Stains of blood that the arrow of love had left. (10 W)

(39) Stains that darkened the light that afternoon. (7 W)

(40) She laid her hands across her eyes again. (8 W)

are further reflective of Bim's awareness of the course of action to be taken in order to dissolve her mental crisis. They also portray the gradual release of her tension and its replacement with the feeling of joy and happiness. The last of these sentences is clearly expressive of the relaxed condition of Bim's conscience. The happy thought of their undivided love and faith cheers her up. This realization with the relaxed mind leads to another truth and this time she reflects on her own person. She admits, it must be her own fault that she did not encompass them fully in her embrace of love. She recalls her shortcomings at different points: she did not have much understanding of her dead parents, nor did she ever try to know about them; she did not give much thought to Baba, and her anger for Raja was a kind of revenge for his
unforgivable letter. All this introspection leads to purgation of her emotions and brings final release of her mental conflict by understanding the way of final reconciliation with her brothers and sister - to forgive and wrest forgiveness that proves the panacea of all her mental agonies.

The inter-sentential and intra-sentential cohesion in the passage is brought out with the following devices:

At the semantic level, it is the continuity of thought that helps cementing the passage throughout: The rage of the protagonist is over, the aftermath that it brings, leaves silence all around. Then this silence becomes unbearable, it thunders and roars loudly, a few questions arise with the roaring of silence, the answers to these questions are pondered over and then the protagonist feels relaxed, the new realization invades her mind and spreads joy and happiness around.

The lexical repetition and the words from the same semantic field further bring cohesion in the text of the passage. The expressions such as:
peak, acme;
collapsed, fell on the sand;
seeped away, leaving nothing;
silence, so quiet, so empty, as still;
silence roared... thundered through;
press her hand, pressed her hands;
hurt, pain, frustration;
silence, reserve, otherworldiness;
ransack, rob, break-open, etc.,

are just a few examples, out of so many in the passage, of the same device.

At the structural level too, the cohesive elements like pronominal substitution, the reinforcement of similar structures and ellipsis or zero substitution are frequently used. The frequent use of ellipsis keeps the reader's mind alert enough, not to miss any point or string of the message, however minute it may be. A few examples of ellipsis, where the words are missing but in no way they remain un-understood, are cited below:

... as the one (afternoon)... one dark wave (of questions) succeeding another... Or (why had she not) attacked Tara instead... Or (why had she not attacked) Bakul... Filth (of the smashed egg/broken neck of the bird) to be cleaned up... The sight (filth), etc.

This device of ellipsis works at two levels: (i) it avoids unnecessary repetition, and (ii) at the same time, it draws attention of the reader towards some significant new information.
Moreover, the cohesive device of pronominal substitution, like:

- Rage...it...its...that
- afternoon...one
- She...her...her...her
- sound...it
- She...her...her
- Raja...him
- Bakul...his
- She...She...She...etc.

further helps in making the text one single unit of complete thought.

6.4 PASSAGE 3

6.4.1 The Immediate Narrative Context of the Passage:

The present instance of psychological conflict has been selected from the last pages of the book. The novel begins with the arrival of Tara and her family to her parental house in Delhi, and it ends with her departure and its after effects that lend meaning to the novel. In this instance, the reader is invited to participate and fully involve himself in the inner reality of the three protagonists of the novels Bim, Tara and Baba. Some indirect references are also made about other characters.
The preceding events inform the reader that Tara is getting ready to go (to attend her niece's marriage) to Hyderabad. Before her final departure and reconciliation with Bim, Tara experiences some deep introspective moments which she desires to share with her elder sister. But the matter-of-fact attitude of Bim, her hardness and her shattered inside put off Tara completely. Tara realizes that it was not right on her part to have shunned all the family responsibilities. The whole burden had fallen on Bim's shoulders all together. Tara further recalls that even as a child she had not helped Bim from the 'swarm of bees' which had attacked her, when they had gone for a picnic. Being the younger daughter Tara had always enjoyed the maximum care, indulgence and protection not only from Bim and Raja but also from Mira masi. And it was Tara who had cared the least instead to enquire about Mira after her marriage. She had not even come to attend her funeral.

Presently the consciousness of Tara feels burdened with the guilt of so many lapses of duty on her part. She wants to confess everything and thus regain her peace of mind. She is very keen to 'plaster the episode', to 'medicate' it. She expects something of Bim, a punishment or at least a reprimand. That is why when Bim rebukes her not to be silly and stop crying: "it was so long ago, and was over." (p.174)
Tara immediately, gaining some hope of compromise retorts sharply: "but it's never over. Nothing's over ever." (p.174) The words are expressive of their closeness and attachment and they touch the very bottom of Bim's heart. Bim too agrees: "Nothing's over...Ever..." (p.174), and Tara heaves a sigh of relief and thus happiness returns. At last they have agreed to the continuation of their relationship. Now, Tara is eagerly looking forward more about coming back to this cosy nest of Bim rather than going away to the wedding itself.

On the other side, Bim is also emotionally disturbed and mentally tense. Tara's confessions shake the inner self of Bim. Her wailing cry: "I didn't even come to the funeral... but it is never over, nothing's over ever." (p.174), highlights her boldness and courage of accepting her faults and Bim also acknowledges the same and she replies positively. When Bim also repeats: "yes, nothing's over...Ever," (p.174), Tara becomes calm and light hearted. Bim also believes that the frustration of Tara is reflective of her own disappointment. After all they have all lived and grown up together. She further acknowledges that they are not so unlike her.

The content of the present instance reveals that when everything is said and understood in the right perspective, though the atmosphere still remains tense, it brings
considerable mental relief. It is in this mood that Tara and Bim are portrayed in the beginning of this passage.

An incomplete sentence from Tara (Shall I Tell Raja...? p.175), which had been bottled up in her mind since long and even now is uttered very hesitantly, proves effective enough to extract forth a chain of short, incomplete sentences from Bim, in her voice flying buoyant. There are so many dashes in between which are clearly expressive of Bim's desire to say everything quickly, which had been held up in her mind since long. And when the clouds of darkness, doubt and misunderstanding are torn apart, the bright light of hope and happiness showers and soaks them from all sides. Very aptly the narrator expresses these moments of joy thus:

They might be floating in the light - it was as vast as the ocean, but clear, without colour or substance or form. It was the lightest and most pervasive of all elements and they floated in it. (p.177)

The last message of hope and cheerful acceptance of life after a temporary interlude of alienation and withdrawal from life, lends meaning and significance to the title of the novel.

An important feature of the present instance is that here the minds of three major characters of the novel are revealed. Besides, a few references are also made directly
and indirectly to the other characters. Bim and Tara's minds are turned fully upside down and the reader gets glimpses of their inner landscape. Some time directly and at other times indirectly, Baba's inner mind too is revealed through Bim and Tara. This time it is the inner courage and strength of Bim herself that accepts the outside harsh reality of life. Gradually the tension of her mind subsides giving way to joy and hilarity.

Another important feature of the closing part of the passage is the recurring metaphorical use of the items: light, float and ocean. The similes seem to be perfectly matching the situation and the mood of the characters.

Bim and Baba are sitting in the deep and vast ocean of cloudless, clear, bright light of day enjoying the ocean of silence. The silence here becomes expressive of complete awareness and understanding of their deep-rooted love and mutual understanding. In this ocean of silence and light, they are floating and bathing like a boat because after the diffusion of tension they feel free, weightless and also experience the happy moments of family reunion.
### Nominals and Modifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete Nouns</th>
<th>Abstract Nouns</th>
<th>Modifiers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
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Chart-2

Groups of Nominals/Modifiers Based on Meaning

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<th>Contrasted Items</th>
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Chart-3

Verbs and Adverbs

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<th>-ing Form</th>
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## Groups of Verbs/Adverbs Based on Meaning

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<thead>
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<th>Contrasted Items</th>
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<td>Shook</td>
<td>Aloud Vs. Wordlessly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frightened</td>
<td>Ordered Vs. Murmured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frowning</td>
<td>Frightened Vs. Urged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Shattered</td>
<td>Fretted Vs. Recede</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crumbling</td>
<td>Stood Vs. Sitting</td>
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<td>Rattling</td>
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<td>Sank</td>
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<td>Recede</td>
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<td>(6) Squealed</td>
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<td>Nodded</td>
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<td>Wobbled</td>
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<td>(7) Wholly</td>
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<td>Finally</td>
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<td>(3) Wordlessly</td>
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<td>Expressionlessly</td>
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<td>(4) Stiffly</td>
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<td>Stubbornly</td>
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6.4.2 Major Lexical Items in the Passages: An Analysis

6.4.2.1 Nominals and their Modifiers

The list of nominals shows that in this passage a greater number of abstract nouns are used comparatively. Through the selected choice of lexis, the narrator has revealed clearly the three stages of mental conflict that Bim passes through at the moment.

Presently Tara has gone inside to bring Baba out and take him to Hyderabad. The time Tara is inside the room, Bim is extremely tense and she is keen to know whether Baba comes out or not. Earlier, in a moment of despair she had asked Baba to go to Hyderabad but actually she had never meant it so. Bim is feeling restless physically and mentally too she is quite upset. 'Tense', 'impatient', 'staring', 'fear', 'fretted', 'shifting from one foot to the other,' all these content words belonging to the same semantic field fully represent and reinforce the mental tension of Bim.

When Tara comes out 'alone', the tension of Bim recedes, she feels light and so goes limp. For the time being Bim's consciousness is numbed and she stands still. Now it was Tara's turn to be tense and impatient. Baba had NOT come out, the sense of unfulfilment was writ large on the sad face of Tara.
Tara's confessions and pleadings for exerting a promise from Bim, of the continuation of their relationship and everything cleared and understood in the right perspective, we have a series of expressions which are fully symbolic of the lightness of head and hearts.

her words floated, effervescently into the orange air...
basking in the clear light of day...
relief blowing her words...
urged...
laughing...
tension recede ...
brushing aside, etc.

Simultaneously Bim's fury over Raja's arrogant behaviour and his unforgivable letter too melts away and with a cheerful mind she urges Tara to convey her message to Raja, she wants to see all of them. In an unbroken chain of short utterances, she sends messages to Raja. And, thus, her rage and fury give way to love and affection.

Tara is frightened at this sudden crumbling self of Bim which had earlier appeared to be as concrete as a 'dam' of stone, but this too is a momentary experience. Soon, Tara's family departs along with all the noise of coming and going, leaving behind everything stand still, to a halt. The
The closing part of the passage gives us a message through the depiction of this still and silent atmosphere. No barrier, no shadow and no misunderstanding lingers in the hearts of Bim and Baba. Instead, only the light of love, knowledge, understanding, accommodation and acceptance invades their buoyant spirits, and their hearts float in that happy bright light of awakened consciousness. There remains no need to say anything and therefore, the silence prevails. In the present instance, the most prominent lexical items are: block, emptiness, stillness and quietness. The word 'block' is used four times, once as a verb and thrice as a noun. All the four times it explain a new kind of mental and emotional atmosphere. The first time its usage is as a verb.

When Tara comes out of the room of Baba alone, Bim wants to send her immediately -fearing, Baba may not change his mind again. But Tara is hesitant to move without getting a promise of the continuation of their relationship, an assurance, so she puts her hand to 'block' the door (of the car) and would 'not go in'. The second time this same word is used as a noun. Bim trying to send Tara quickly and the latter unwilling to move, because this time it was the 'block'
of so many unasked and unanswered questions that was
halting Tara to move forward and she tries to force her
voice past that 'block'. Here this block refers to that
very box of questions and very meekly she makes an attempt
to ask Bim:

'Shall I tell Raja...?'

and this incomplete hint is enough to open the flood-gate of
Bim's sealed up emotions and desires. She immediately
retorts positively. So many words, messages, explanations,
invitations are released in succession. It appears as if
silently, Bim too had been waiting and expecting this hint
from Tara. Tara is rather frightened to see this crumbling
down of Bim's innermost self. This time the nominal 'block'
which is in a stumbling position, carrying along the attribu-
tives of strength, solidity, 'stone' and 'concrete' becomes
symbolic of Bim's inner self. Bim's self was as 'strong' and
'solid' as a block of stone and concrete, but now it is in a
falling position. The mental tension till now had proved a
great strength for Bim, but when it is released, Bim feels
very light and her inner strength also weakens to some extent.

The abstract concepts of emptiness, stillness and
quietness too lend important meaning to the passage. The
emptiness results in stillness and therefore, the quietness
prevails. This stillness and emptiness is realized at two
levels: in the physical atmosphere as well as in the mental landscape of the involved characters. After the departure of Tara and her family, all becomes quiet. Baba is even shocked and blinks to be really sure that everything around is so silent and quiet. Along with Tara the hustle and bustle of coming and going, of worry and anxiety, also move out of the house. No more waiting, no more concerns and worries remain behind.

The mind of Bim too, which was earlier tense with so many doubts, disappointments, anxieties, has become empty now. All becomes bright and clear, the disappointments have been shed and no clouds of misunderstanding reside in her mind. Instead, joy and cheerfulness invade the minds of Bim and Baba leaving them wordless and expressionless.

6.4.2.2 Verbs and their Modifiers

On analysing the verbal element of this instance we get a long list of verbs but their attributives are very few comparatively. The maximum meaning of the text of this passage can be interpreted by examining this verbal element closely.

In the beginning of the passage the presence of the verbs like: shuttered, staring, fretted, shifting, fumed forcefully, along with their lexical collocation signify the
mental tension of Bim. The adverb 'alone' in the form of one complete sentence presents a total change of the scene. Tara's coming 'alone' out of Baba's room lightens Bim's mind and the tension gradually subsides.

The verbal collocation (like; brushing aside, propel, block the door, nodded, urged, waiting, etc.) also represents not only the downward course of tension due to a vital change in the mental perspective of Bim but it also provides the reader with a fresh insight into the interior landscape of the protagonist.

This receding of tension is further highlighted through the expressions: laughed, squealed, glided, effervescently, etc. An important verb in the passage 'float' is used three times in its various reflexive forms (float/floated/floating). The simile of floating has been attributed to the characters, who have become very light now, because the burden of tension and the clouds of misunderstanding have been rent apart. Happily they float in the vast ocean of light. The ocean that is symbolic of depth and vastness in a way, here in the context it represents the vastness of silence and light - the light of knowledge, understanding, accommodation and acceptance. In this vast ocean of light, Bim and Baba both are floating without any need to utter any word or wear any expression.
6.4.3 The Pattern of Syntax: An Analysis

The passage under reference is comprised of 69 sentences. Most of these sentences are simple sentences. The sentence length varies from one word to 60 words. Most of the narration is in Free Indirect speech in the third person form with brief interludes of direct narration in the first person form. Through this direct narration the reader is invited to participate and involve himself closely in the inner landscape of the character without any change in the mental or emotional attitude.

The narrator leads the reader into the inner world of Bim, who at times is as firm as a stone. But when her inner strength crumbles down we have short simple sentences with many gaps in between. Some of the important sentences are analysed below:

Example-1

Sentence No. 27, 28:

'Tell him we couldn't come -
but he should come. Bring him back with you,
Tara and tell him to come in the winter; etc.

At such moments it is not the logic of mind but the intensity of emotion that speaks through Bim. Tara's earnest pleadings,
Baba's silence and Bim's own awareness of the situation all help Bim to accept boldly the outside reality. Everything becomes so obvious that there remains no need to say anything at all. The silence here becomes not only more evocative than speech but it also proves more influential. With the newly awakened consciousness everything grows wider and deeper in its perspective and all is set for a happy finale to the temporary alienation of their relationship.

As the moments of mental reverie are very few in this passage, we don't have very long sentences here. When Bim's mind is extremely tense, we have a chain of short sentences one following the other. And when the tension is diffused even then the utterances fall rapidly one succeeding the other.

Some of these sentences are joined by little hyphens and others are left incomplete, because in these moments the experience of feeling (that Bim is involved in) and the silence around count more in realizing the inner condition of Bim's mind. Nearing the end of the passage when the clouds of confusion and misunderstanding are pierced through, there remains no need to utter anything - therefore, the silence reigns over the place.

The passage contains a few single word sentences. One such sentence is explained below with all its signi-
Example-2

Sentence No. 9: Alone.

Interpretation:

This one word sentence, without any anticipatory or trailing constructions, against the background of longer sentences preceding it and following it, stands sharply deviant not only in form but in meaning as well. By removing all the aura of meaningless words, the structural form not only draws reader's attention, but it also expresses a very significant situation.

Content wise, this sentence presents a transitional attitude of the major protagonists. Earlier in an angry mood, Bim had asked Baba to go and live with Raja, though she had never meant it seriously. Baba had not answered her at that time. Now, when Tara is leaving the place, Bim is afraid that Baba may not accompany Tara and leave her. Therefore, she becomes very tense and impatient. But when Tara actually comes out 'alone' of the room of Baba, the tension of Bim is suddenly released and she also goes physically limp. It is now Tara, who feels frustrated and the sense of unfulfilment is writ large on her face. A great change is perceptible in the mental landscape of both Bim and Tara. Tara, who was
earlier leaving the place happily, is now unwilling to move at all. With the lightened heart and soul, Bim becomes the master of the situation and she informs Tara:

Let him (Baba) be...

He feels frightened by all this... this coming and going.

You know he's not used to it.

She shows greater interest in Tara's journey and desires her immediate removal from the scene, lest Baba may change his mind again. In the attempt she almost throws Tara into the car and with a great relief says: "Let him be..." (p.175)

A few important sentences in a question/answer sequence, which unfold the inner reality of the characters are interpreted below:

Example-3

Sentence No. 23: 'Shall I tell Raja...?'

Example-4

Sentence No. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32:

"Tell him how we're not used to it - Baba and I. Tell him we never travel anymore. Tell him we couldn't come - but he should come. Bring him back with you, Tara or tell him to come in the winter. All of them. And he can see Sharma about the firm..."
Tell him I'm - I'm waiting for him-I want him to come - I want to see him."

(Emphasis mine)

Interpretation:

This question answer sequence becomes very significant within the context and it also unfolds the inner reality of Bim's mind. When Tara gets an assurance from Bim for the continuation of their relationship, she does not want to offend Bim even slightly. Therefore, to avoid asking direct question, she merely prompts Bim to say something. But this tentative provocation about Raja (Shall I tell Raja...?) proves very beneficial, and it appears that Bim herself was eagerly waiting for this opportunity. And quickly comes forth a flood of sealed up desires, messages and pleadings for Raja. The underlined expressions in the sentences:

tell him
tell him
Bring him
tell him
he can see
I want him
I want to see him

further signify that the responsibility of communication,
conveying the message has been shifted to Tara. The very form of the imperatives declares that Bim wants Tara to do so many things on her behalf.

The first person narration of the protagonist herself invites the reader to have a close view of her inner reality and also of her real strength. Another important fact that we realize is that the speed of speaking and thinking seems to be clashing here. The heart of Bim which is full of emotions and desires cannot find the apt words with the same speed as she wants to utter. The contracted form (I'm - I'm) too expresses Bim's breathlessness. Her mind too appears to be tense but empty, resulting in frequent repetition not only of the words and structures but also of the content. Her consciousness too has become numb by thinking too much about the same thing again and again.

Although the agent speaker here is Bim, but the first in rank position is enjoyed by Raja, even though he is physically absent. The presence of these expressions:

he should come
bring him back
tell him to come
I'm waiting for him
I want him to come
I want to see him, etc.
is further expressive of two things: (a) Bim is very keen to meet Raja, and (b) Raja is once again becoming the favourite hero of Bim—of her childhood days. Another important fact is also revealed here. We learn that Bim's anger for Raja was not real. Rather, she had been greatly missing him all the time. The frequent use of ellipsis, along with the progression of theme through the sentences brings continuity of thought and cohesion within the text.

Afterwards we have a series of matter of fact simple sentences. All the noise of coming and going has come to a halt. Baba comes out of his room: "...he stood blinking as if he could not quite believe that the veranda was so empty, so quiet." (p.176)

And in equally assuring tone Bim informs him that they have all left. Finally, the narrator informs the reader that Bim and Baba sat together silently bathing under the vast clear bright light of their newly awakened consciousness. Enough had been acknowledged and accepted, and now they were just enjoying the moment 'wordlessly' and 'expressionlessly'. Thus with the help of various devices of structure, salience, sequence, foregrounding, lexical repetition and synonymy, the inner reality of Bim, Tara and Baba is portrayed very realistically.