1.1 General

Stylistics is rhetoric’s most direct heir, and it is certainly not by chance that it was elaborated at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. But if the idea of stylistics is new, the notion of style is not, and the immediate origin of stylistics must be sought in mediations in this latter concept. Two approached on particular are of interest as for stylistics is concerned. First, as early as the eighteenth century the critique of style, or the art of writing, was pursued in collections of practical indications on the ways of writing well, indications often supported by examples drawn from classical works; such treaties, normative and didactic, continue to exist today. At the same time, a certain conception was being developed that we find summarized in Buffon’s celebrated formula, “The style is the man himself”, the conception of the author expressing himself in his work, marking it with his inimitable stamp, his individual specificity”. Oswald Ducrot and Tzvetan Todorov (1981).

As mentioned already stylistics is the direct heir of rhetoric and it has two approaches in particular. Style is meant by the perception of two main streams. Firstly on how style is understood as a concept or
an ideal, how style is an art of writing, and how style is pursued in collection of practical indications on the ways of writing well, which are supported by examples drawn from classical works. Secondly, the authentic ideal of reaffirming that, "The style is the man himself". In the personality, character, behaviour, way of expressions, emotions, feelings and reactions, in the linguistic attitude, methodology of dealing personal and external affairs, incurring and exhibition of wisdom, knowledge, philosophies of life, socio-cultural attitudes does remain somebody's style.

When style can be considered as a general concept, stylistics is nearly a specific linguistic concept. The perception and expression of man mainly depends on language use and this is the reason for considering stylistics as a specific linguistic concept.

Hence literature is reflection of life, originates in real life situations. So, a dramatic personae, a poetic concept or a fictional character is conceived in the mind of the author or a reader in which dwells style. In this stylistic approach overwhelms the natural thought process or story value expressed in a work of art.

In fictional narration and description there is ample chance for the expression of style and stylistics. It is obvious that in the novels of a diasporic multiple genius like Vikram Seth by producing a novel
'An Equal Music' explores the horizons of style, and presents before us the actuality of stylistics in a practical form.

This is a pioneering attempt on A Stylistic Study of Vikram Seth's novel 'An Equal Music'. It also elaborates what are descriptive and narrative styles and it is detailed about the characterization strategy of Seth and his language style.

1.1.1 Style

What is style? What does it mean in the way of life? How is it far effective in making life joyful or to have some sort of feeling of fulfillment? When describing someone's manner of writing, speaking, acting or performing any art, we may say 'she acts in a vigorous style' or 'she started off in fine style'. We talk about particular styles of architecture, painting, dress and furniture when describing the distinctive manner of an artist, a school, or a period. And when we say that people or places have style, we are expressing the opinion that they have fashionable elegance, smartness or a separate kind of superior manners. For example, 'They live in grand style' or 'Here one can eat in style'.

Style can be comprehended from anything and everywhere. And how can style be comprehended in language? The distinctive manner
of expression in writing speaking and gestures is style in language. Style in language can be defined as distinctive linguistic expression.

Linguistics is science of languages; linguistics is a systematic study of a language in all its aspects like phonology, morphology, syntax etc. Again phonology is a study of alliteration, assonance, consonance, internal, rhymes, repetition and onomatoepia. Thus the term phonology is concerned with the speech sounds in a language. Morphology is with words and rules of word formation and syntax is how these words are arranged in a string.

What is stylistics concerned with language? How is it discoursed? How can it be recognized and described? Is it a general feature of language? Or is it scientific speculation?

The term style in general is one which can be used so commonly in our day to day life in the conversations, discussions, orations, debate, lectures, oral and written communications. Gesture also come under this category. Style in Gestures occur so naturally and frequently that we are inclined to take it for granted without enquiring or probing just what we might mean by it.
In practices, to see how these definition works out, it is necessary to look at how different genres or types of text containing specific features of style create particular effects.

“It’s all about surviving in style”.

The Hindu, September 15, 2006

Karl Beckson and Arthur Ganz (1990) beautifully and bountifully narrate in their ‘Literary terms a Dictionary’ that:

“The word style is used in atleast two senses that should be discriminated. If we say of a writer, his thought is intelligent enough, but the poor fellow has no style, we are assuming that style is an immutable quality found in some writers and lacking in others. This is called platonic sense of style, which implies the perfect matching of the means with their end. Thus, the term style may be used as a general synonym for excellence or it may more specifically, suggest that a writer has found the unique verbal pattern that precisely express the meaning he wishes to convey”.

5
In a second sense, the Aristotelian style may classify rather than evaluate. Thus one speak of a satiric style, a miltonic style an italianate style, etc.

A unique way of dealing something is style. A special kind of viewing something is style. A mystic way of humanism is style. A humane way of loving someone is style. The sublime way of narration is style

Style is the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse- it is how a speaker or writer says whatever he says. The characteristic style of a work or a writer may be analyzed in terms of its diction, or characteristic choice of words; its sentences structure and syntax; the density and types of its figurative language; the patterns of its rhythm and its component sounds; and its rhetorical aims and devices. There is another style called paratactic style.

A paratactic style is one in which the members within a sentence, or else a sequence of complete sentence, are put one after the other without any expression of their connection or relations except the non committal connective. “and”. Hemingway’s style is characteristically paratactic style.
Each of the constituents in the sentence form ‘The Sun also rises’ are joined merely by “and”, where it continues to say that, “it was dim and dark and the pillars went high up, and there were people praying, and it smelt of incense, and there were some wonderful big buildings”- M.H. Abrahams (1993).

In traditional theories of rhetoric style, the doctrine of decorum requires that the level of style in a work should be appropriate to the speaker and to the occasion. Thus the literary genre is aptly adapted in this work.

Northope Frze (Richard Bradtard) has introduced a variant of this ancient and long-persisting theory of stylistic levels in literature. He makes a basic differentiation between the descriptive style and the rhetoric. Frze introduced a norm for the use of language, rhythms and associations of ordinary speech. The Egyptian style which employs a variety of formal elaborations that separate the literary language from ordinary speech. Frze then distinguishes a high, middle and low level in each of these classes.

1.1.2 Style in Language

Style in a language can be defined as “specific linguistic expression”. A text is recognized recording to its particular and familiar genre.
Quite a few of these stylistic features do occur in the texts of the newspaper headline and the publisher's blurb. Indeed, the most important lesson one can learn from the comparative analysis of the styles of these two very different text types is the incontestable. There is no overlapping correspondence between style and language. Perhaps the best illustration of this overlapping of different styles is the advertisement. This overlapping is also found in political manifestos, slogans or graffiti.

1.1.3 Style in Methodology

A possible reason for this quick recognition may be due to the socialization, which may be described as a lesson in social life. Socialisation has trained immediately to perceive the purpose and intended effects.

Different manners of linguistic expressions are used for different social functions. Advertisement, the headline and the blurb of a text book are the different social functions. The purpose of advertisement is to promote business or sales. Few meaningful attractive words will serve the purpose. For example, “Buy one and take one free”. The headline in a magazine is to motivate the readers to continue their reading. These blurb of a text book is the brief sketch of the contents of the book. This will help the publisher to decide the number of copies to be printed.
These different styles adapted for different social functions are called the style in methodology.

1.1.4 **Stylistics as a Study of Style**

1. Beauty contests and fashion shows, explore, enrich various styles in various methodologies and angles. Foundation of any ‘Work of art’ is style. Style is unique while considering aesthetic sense and common sense.

   Without five senses, man is not man. Sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch are having their own unique features. While speaking in terms of grammar an adjective is a word which adds more meaning to the noun in this sentence “The rose is very beautiful”, the adjective ‘beautiful’ adds more meaning to the noun, ‘the rose’, in terms of the hi-fi feeling or sense of beauty or bounty of visionary taste.

2. In every good thing there is something enjoyable and unique. This is also a form of style. Every style points to a self-interpretation of man. Whatever the subject matter chosen by an artist, however strong or weak is the artistic form, he cannot help but betray by his style, his own ultimate concern, as well as his group and his period.
“Language is the medium in which we are conscious. The speechless beasts are aware, but they are not conscious. To be conscious is to ‘know with’ something, and a language of some sort is the device with which we “can” “know”. Richard Mitchell (1979).

1.1.5 New Dimensions of Style

A style is a way of doing something in a special manner. Thus one may speak of a Japanese style of ‘flower arrangement’, Mohammed Ali’s style of boxing or Shakespeare’s style of writing. It is some sort of distinction between ‘what’ is done and ‘how’ it is done:

As in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>How</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian Music</td>
<td>Classical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carnatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As sung by K.J. Jesudass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is to suggest that one may speak of style in decreasing order of terms from the general to the particular. There is strong association of the concept of style both with particular groups e.g. the English metaphysical poets and within any given group with its
outstanding representative individuals, Donne or Blake. The concept of style is the adaptation of the language for particular purposes, occasions and contents. An utterance brings in more functions than one. It may convey information e.g. water boils at 100 degree centigrade or it may invite action e.g. Do something about it., express personal feelings e.g., ‘my heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains’ etc.,

"The scheme suggested by Roman Jacobson (1985) regarding the functions of language is given here.

Informative

(Poetic)

Emotive Metalingual Directive

(Phatic)

These functions of language are related in Jacobson’s model to verbal communications.

“It is found as”

(Context)

(Informative)
An addresser will typically use the first person and sometimes the third person.

'I request you to come and meet me', is in first person.

'The president requests the pleasure of the company of you' is in the third person in a formal context.

'Come to ‘Daddy’, father calling a small child using the third person instead of the first.

An address is typically indicated by the second person, the name of the address, a title or sometimes the elements of the context, persons, animals or things. The address may be reflecting the third person.
The utterance that is spoken or a text that is written in a particular structure is an utterance in English for example, ‘well, how are you going to do that?’

Meta language is the method used to deal with the various phases of language, such as ‘sentence’, ‘noun’, ‘verb’, ‘sign’, etc., contact involves both, ‘a physical channel’, and ‘a psychological connection as found by Jacobson. The highest contact signals are ‘hey’, good morning’, ‘please’, etc., which are abundantly found in Vikram Seth’s ‘An Equal Music’ on which the present research is being done.

‘Noise’ in communication theory, refer any disturbance or defects in the systems which interfere with the faithful transmission of signals. The following examples will show how ‘familiar’ words are used to ‘defamiliarize’ and de-automatize the expectations of the reader.

“*The nymphs are departed,*

*Departed have left no addresses* [Ed.Rajendran 1981]

“*Let him Easter in us*” - Ibid

“*The just man justices*” - Ibid

Thus foregrounding too is found as the most stylistic feature.
1.2 Three Theories of Style

Most theories of style, ancient or modern, fall into three broad types namely 1) Textual theories 2) Psychologically oriented theories and 3) Organic theories.

1.2.1 Textual Theories

Textual theories focus exclusively on the 'material cause' of literature, the language; they are based on the 'dualistic assumption that language is a 'dress of thought' and for that reason, form and content are separable. Textual theories can be pragmatic or objective.

'Pragmatic' theories rest on the premise that style is persuasion. Classical work on rhetoric and 'poetics' stem from this premise. Swift's definition of style, as 'proper words in proper places', belongs here. Pragmatic theories of style constitute what might set of models of good style.

To quote Abrams;

"derived from the qualities of words whose success and long survival have proved their adaptation to human nature, or else being grounded directly on the psychological laws governing the responses of men in general". Abrams (1972)
Literary texts are to be analyzed in objective terms, ignoring consideration of the author, period or the other external evidences.

Practical criticism, new criticism and most sub-sects of stylistics are some of the theories that come under this category. Stylistics differ from practical criticism and new criticism not only in approach but also in scope. Practical criticism focuses on meaning as signified by sense, tone, feeling, intension, etc.

1.2.2 Psychologically Oriented Theories

Psychologically oriented theories of style are based on the assumption that certain habits of language can be associated with certain character traits; from this assumption stems Buffon’s definition that ‘the style is the man’, and languages are the best mirror of human mind. Style is regarded as a ‘characteristic manner of expression in prose or verse or epistemic choice’, a way of sorting out the phenomenon of experience choice suggestive of and determined by habitual patterns of thoughts and feelings. This view of style borders on ‘determinism’. The task of stylistic, then, appears to trace the habitual patterns of thought and feeling signified by the language of literature.
1.2.3 Organic Theories

'Organic' theories claim that literature is an organic ‘whole’, and therefore, form and context are inseparable. Form is ‘monistic’ premise which issues romantic postulates that the image conveys thought and emotion imaginatively, that metaphor is a result of a process of the mind, ‘a model apprehending reality’. The consequence is that literature is put beyond the scope of any stylistic investigation.

Style and stylistics have become important partners of literary works. It is a work of art, it points to self-interpretation of man. It has its dimension in literary and linguistic field as well.

Style is some kind of what is done and how it is done. Pragmatic theories rest on the premise that style is persuasion. Style is an elegant way of life, superior methods of founding a beautiful literature.

According to W.H.Hudson, “Style is composed of three elements, which he classified as intellectual, emotional and aesthetic’ (quoted in Prasad 1990) The intellectual elements consist of what may be called the science of writing; precision in the use of words; clarity of meaning when these words are combined to form a sentence. The emotional elements bring clarity for the suggestions made. The aesthetic element comprises of the artistic graces of style, which
give immediate pleasure than the first two, its musical quality, its picturesqueness, its polish, its perfection of forms by the combination of beauty and charm. The same is reinforced through the sound.

If the three elements mentioned above closely relate to the thought content, the style becomes perfect. Style is nothing more than the mode of expression of thought in the best possible way. Its characteristic feature is its complete identity with the thought it expresses. It should fit the author’s thought as his skin fits his body.

'A man’s style is closely connected with his personality and character. It is as individual as his voice or walk. Style is the image of the writer. His whole personality, mind, heart and soul are mirrored in it. Style is influenced by the age or period which the writer belongs to; an artistic expression that gives a quality and distinctive excellence to a creative writing consists in the appropriateness and choice of the elements selected by the writer. It gives distinction of structural quality. It may be investigated, both as deviations from a norm and also as coherent ways of doing things”

Stylistics is the study of literature from linguistic orientation. 'It is a scientific or methodical or the linguistic study of style. It describes what use is made of language’. Enkvist (1964) argues that:
'different people mean different things by the label 'style'. One man’s style may be another man’s register, even a third man’s poison'.

According to Roland Barthes (1971) style is 'a part of binary system'. He emphasis the dichotomy of the content and form. Their relationship is phenomenological. ‘Form and contents are the two concentric terms being in the other which has warranted relationship’.

“Stylistics is a branch of linguistics which studies the features of situational distinctive uses of language. Stylistics accounts for the particular choices made by individual and social groups in their use of language”. “Stylistics is the link between literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other “it is a means of linking the two” says Widdowson. (1975:3). Thus, stylistics show the working of language in literature and help in developing the confidence to work systematically towards literary texts.

Stylistics is a “dialogue between a literary reader and a linguistic observer because, while it gives due recognition to the significance of text, it also concentrates on the aesthetic purpose of every linguistic device the way it serves a totality” (Wellek, 1961:418)
Stylistics aims at extending the linguistics literary intuition and the critics’ linguistic observations and making their relationship explicit (Widdowson, 1975: 5-6).

It is for this reason that at a certain point, “Consideration of the linguistics features of a piece of literary discourse shades off into an intuitive sense of significance”. (Ibid 116.)

“Various notions and approaches to stylistics are in the current usage. Style is defined in terms of choices that an author has to make at different levels; grammar, semantics and pragmatics” (Koul, 1986: IV).

“It refers to those formal features of a text which enables us to distinguish not only the participants but also the situational, determined choices, which are made by the writer out of the closed-system or open-set choices possible in a language” (Ibid 1986:28)

Style is understood as an emphasis (expressive affective or aesthetic) added to the information conveyed by the linguistic structure, without alternation of meaning which is to say that language expresses and that styles stresses.
Style is equivalent to the registers of the language to its sub-codes. It refers to figurative style and emotive discourse. The stylistic description of an utterance is nothing but the description of all its verbal properties’ (Ducrot and Todrov, 1979:300). Murray says that style is the ‘personal idiosyncrasy of expression by which we recognize a writer’ (1964:10). Donald Freeman (1970) expresses that style in literature may be considered from three angles.

“Recent work in linguistics stylistics may be divided into three types’ viz., style as deviation from the norm, style as recurrence or convergence of textual pattern, and style as a particular exploitation of grammar of possibilities”.

According to Ullman (1973), stylistics is concerned with the expressive of evocative values of language. It has close connection with semantics and every major problem of semantics has stylistics implications. He adds, ‘emotive meaning is one of the central problems of stylistics’.

Enkvist’s (1964) essay ‘On defining style’ talks about the various aspects of style as follows:

*Style as a shell surrounding a pre-existing core of thought or expression*

*Style as a choice between alternate expressions*
Style as a deviation from a norm

Style as a set of collective characteristics

Style as a set of individual characteristics

Style as the relation among linguistic entities that are stable in the terms of wider span of texts than the sentence.

The style of a text is a function of the aggregate of the relations between the frequency of its phonological, grammatical items and frequency of the corresponding items in a contextually related norm. Style is the result of more than one linguistic item and the study of style must not be restricted to phonological or lexical or syntactical observations. The observation should at various levels enrich a stylistic study. According to him style makers are those linguistic items that only appear most or least frequent in one group of context. Thus style refers to a selection of language habits, occasional linguistic idiosyncrasies which characterizes an individual uniqueness. Bernord Block refers style as the message carried out by frequency distribution and transitional probabilities.

Style of a person is as unique as his finger prints. Ullman quotes Buffon to whom style is the man himself. He refers to Schopenbatter, Haubert and Proust who regard style as
“the physiognomy of the mind as a unique and highly personal mode of vision” (Ullaman, 1973:64)

All the aforesaid definitions of style points out that, a writer’s style may be treated as his idiolect, his individual and unique way of putting things into words.

1.2.4 Three Principles of Stylistics

The three principles of stylistics namely dualism, monism and pluralism have different opinions to offer about stylistics.

1.2.4.1 Dualism

It describes ‘style’ as a manner of expression’, and as the dress of thought. It distinguishes what the writer views style as some kind of adornment or covering of thought or meaning. Scholars advocating dualism believe that style covers the semantic articulation of content just like a table cloth covers a table. The dualists assume that there are several ways of expressing one and the same content. The writer can manipulate the events in different ways and through different arguments. Linguist’s like Leech and Short, Roland Barthes and Ullmann belongs to this group.
1.2.4.2 Monism

Monism rejects the policy of dualism and suggests that form and content, cannot be separated. People following 'monistic view' feel that different forms cannot be given to one content. Thus, the monist says that content and form are like body and soul. They cannot be separated.

Pluralism views that language performs a number of different functions in any piece of language, which is likely to be the result of choices made on different functional levels. Hence, 'the pluralists are not contented with the dualists division between 'expression' and 'content'. They want to distinguish between various strands of meaning according to various functions'.

"M.A.K. Halliday (1974) a pluralist, holds the view that all linguist's choices are meaningful and all linguistic choices are stylistics. Definitely there is a link between the craftsmanship of an author and the meaning he wants to convey. The choices of syntax are less important that the choices of subject matter". (Leech, Geoffrey, (1981)).
1.2.4.3 Pluralism

Pluralism is a more sophisticated version of monism. A pluralist is able to show the inter-relationship between choices of language and the network of these choices. He considers text as a 'system of systems' and 'relation of relation'.

He can show the relations of contrast and dependence between one choice and another. This shows that the pluralist, has a theory of language whereas the monist does not pluralism is more comprehensive than monism and dualism. Every writer has infinite possibilities and every style is a creation. A pluralist can manipulate the events in different ways and through different arguments.

Therefore, any attempt of the comprehension of the discourse, means an effort to understand the process of how the writer has designed or organized the creations at the level of 'significance' as well as 'expressions'.

The field of pragmatics and semantics are closely connected with significance and expression. which represent content and form.

Semantics means a systematic and methodical study of meaning.
It is the study of code-based significance. Meaning occupies a significant place in linguistics and once meaning has been admitted to a central place in language, it is notoriously difficult to exclude the way meaning varies from context to context and so semantics spills over into pragmatics. Within the linguistic theory, the study of language use can be called as pragmatics. It deals with the relationship between signs and their human users. It is the study of code-based signification.

1.3 Pragmatics

Pragmatics can be defined as 'the study of how utterances have meaning in situations'. Meaning in pragmatics is defined in relation to a speaker or user of the language'. It is the context which decides the significance of form. Meaning changes from situation to situation and the real meaning emerges at the level of pragmatics. So 'pragmatics, accentuates, or polarizes the dialectics of 'signification'.

Pragmatics is concerned with the parameters of culture, history and usage. A pragmatic study shows that, meaning will assume different connotations according to the changes in any of these. Meaning lies not in syntax alone or in semantics alone. It lies in the relationships. Meaning cannot be understood in the context of usages. In support of this, Iqbaul Kaur (1990) says 'everything is held together and a totality does not consist of things but of relationships'. It is therefore essential to study the network of relationships.
Pragmatic approach is similar to the mind style approach of Leech, Short, Roger and Fowlar. Leech and Short analyzed that every discourse reflects the 'world view' or the 'mind - style' of an author.

Mind style is a term coined by Roger Fowlar. He observes

“Cumulatively, consistent structural options, a greeting cutting the present world into one pattern or another, give rise to an impression of a world-view” Fowlar R.(1974). It refers to the view that the style of an author signifies how he experiences and interprets the world. Mind style, according to Leech and Short, is a realization of narrative point of view.

1.4 Other Approaches to Style

‘Stylistics’ as the study of the relation between linguistic form and literary function cannot be reduced to mechanical objectivity. In both the literary and the linguistic spheres much rests on the intuitions and personal judgment of the reader, for which a system, however good, is an aid rather than a substitute.

There is a cyclic motion whereby linguistic observation stimulates or modifies literary insight in its turn stimulates further linguistic observation.
A linguistic study at an established level clears insights into literary appreciations. It leads to a better understanding of the semantics of novels and poems. It helps in widening and deepening of the aesthetic taste. It is part of the aim of linguistic studies to improve both literary perception and the techniques of describing what is perceived, but the linguist-critic cannot replace the literary critic. The literary critic can make use of his intuition to linguistic analysis. The linguist aims to ensure that the total range of linguistic feature bearing on the interpretation of a text can be made explicit. A linguistic critic highlights the distinctive features in a text and the literary critic can get the benefit from it. So in linguistics, ‘stylistics help the literary critic to locate ‘literature as a patterned, valued product’.

The very concept of structure presupposes the concept of mediation.

“The structure presupposes the concept of mediation. The structural method is based on the assumption that ‘the whole is in the whole’ and the isolated features derive their significance only with reference to the whole, whose parts they are”. Iqbal Kaur (1990).

Every literary text is made up of a number of ‘systems; (lexical, metrical, graphical, phonological and so on), and gains its effects through constant clashes and tensions between these systems.
The literary work continually enriches and transforms mere dictionary meaning generating new significance by the clash and condensation, of its various 'levels'. Each word in the text is linked by whole set of formal structures to several other words, and its meaning is always 'over determined', always the result of several different determinants acting together.

An individual word may relate to another word through assonance, to another through syntactical equivalence, to yet another through morphological parallelism and so on. Each, sign thus participates in several different paradigmatic patterns or systems simultaneously. This complexity is greatly compounded by the 'syntactic' chains of association, the lateral rather than a vertical structures in which signs are placed.

The structural principle which leads to existential psycho analysis is another dimension of the stylistic analysis. No adequate literature is possible without psycho analysis. Existential psycho analysis forms part of the base for the study of significance.

Jean Paul Sartre (1963), suggests that

"Psycho analysis alone allows us to discover the whole man in the adult, that is, not only his present determination but also the weight of his history. He adds further, the principle of psycho-
analysis is that man is a totality and not a collection. Consequently he express himself as a whole even in his most insignificant and most superficial behaviors. In other words there is not a taste, a mannerism, or a human act which is not revealing”.

1.4.1 Existential Psycho Analysis of Style

Existential psycho analysis is based on the assumption that each individual has a unique psychic structure and he is defined in terms of his own structure. So an effort is made to analyze the complexity and the uniqueness of the given object in its relational oppositions and combinations and show how an individual is consciously or unconsciously interacting with all the elements around him. It tends to show that the interaction of one thing with another leads to the emergence of a new whole.

The psycho analytical view supports the reader response theorists who argue in the following manner;

"A literary text does not have a single ‘correct’ meaning. The meaning of the text does not lie within them like wisdom within a gum, waiting patiently to be extracted. The reader, has some active role in the process” Terry Egleton (1983).
As Iqbaul Kaur suggests, the method followed here is both inductive and deductive and not merely taxonomic. It is both analytical and synthetic. The isolation of major themes is based on the study of the entire texts.

The analysis tries to decipher the revelatory value of the seemingly most insignificant of manifestations, to interpret the indications continued in a gesture, a work, a sign. The artistic value of the architectonics of the texts is analyzed with pragmatic aspects and dimensions.

The major concern is based on the working of literary texts which serves as a dictionary and as a context for interpretation of the words used. The analysis follows the suggestions of Rowland Barthes (1971).

"The stylistic system is an interweaving of several codes such as linguistic code or a symbolic code or a psychological code or a mythological code etc. A full understanding of a literary text requires much more than a prosperous interpretation of its linguistic code. A good reader of a literary work brings to the text much more than his linguistic competence. Information from every aspect of shared human experience (sociological, mythological, psychological etc.) can be interwoven into the linguistic code, depending on the intent and artistic ability of the author. A good reader must be able to extrapolate these
additional codes with the help of the signals which the author has built into the linguistic code”.

The totality of style can never be captured any of these code is viewed in isolation disregarding its interaction with other codes.

1.4.2 The Style of Setting Flash Back

The style of flash-back setting is a highly respectable and charged method which implies the manipulation of narrative in such a way that the last temporal sequence follows its hard ruthless logic. The result is sequential disorientation of the Genealogical imperatives. But here the disorientation does not amount to disorder, although it may appear so. It forgoes an order a concord within a complex structure, complexity which is inheriting the aesthetic factors on account of this disorientation. This method, therefore disregards cause-consequences, displaces cause and settles itself there for a starter. Since the plot develops within a temporal framework, the shift in sequence of events compels the logic of the plot to take a different route, which it does by permanently emphasizing the brooding presence of perspective order particulars of details. This relation of perspective to particulars of structure- Karl Krober (1979) enlists as ‘Words in fiction’, ‘Forms of characteristics’, ‘Point of view’, ‘Style and change’, and ‘image as metaphor’. 
1.4.3 Descriptive Style

According to Webstar’s Third New International Dictionary (Unabridged) (Konemann); Description means, the act or an instance of describing. Reading a description of a murderer and looking at this picture both enable one to say “So that’s what he’s like”. It is a composition intended primarily to present to the mind or imagination graphically and in detail a unit of objective or subjective experience (as a sense, person, sensation, emotion) used in text books in distinguishing a separate literary genre.

Descriptive style is that which expresses some story value. The art of story telling ability of an author can be known as descriptive style. In every fiction some story would be expressed in the author’s unique way, which is his style of art of story telling.

1.4.4 Introduction to Narrative Style

Narration means the act of telling the particulars of an act, occurrence, or course of events e.g. the narration of the course of battle, the narration of a fairy story, something that is narrated: story, narrative. It is the recitation of successive events.
Narrative means; of or relating to narration e.g. a good narrative technique. It also means; having the forms of a story e.g. a narrative treatment of an historical event.

Narrative style is that a story being told by someone or narrated by some one. Fictions are written in many styles. And the narrative style is very important. The present analysis is much concerned with the narrative style of Vikram Seth found in his ‘An Equal Music’.

The author’s narrative style is unique and he handles the techniques in a supreme way. He is narrating the story in a very simple method and by the same time without letting lose the standards of Linguistic and stylistic values. In the strait dialogues the story is narrated in the First person, Second and Third person narration is tried within a grand successful manner without hindering the communicative value of the story.

Especially when the characters Julia and Helan are pictured, the narrative style of ‘Vikram Seth’ in his ‘An Equal Music’ is found nice, grand, unique and specially great. He enlivens through this characters in the art of narration.
1.4.5 Introduction to Characterization Strategy

A fictional character is any person, persona, identity or entity whose existence originally form a fictional work or performance, such existence is presumed by those participating in the performance as audience, readers or through other indirect means. In addition to people, characters can be aliens, animals, gods, an artificial intelligence or occasionally, inanimate objects.

Characters are widely considered an essential element of fictional works. Especially novels and plays. Nevertheless, some works have attempted to portray a story without the use of characters (James Joyce’s ‘Finnegans wake’, is one of the most famous examples). Even in works that do not expressly convey the existence of characters, such as in poetry, they ate presumed in the form of a narrator or an imaged listener.

In various forms of theater, performance arts and cinema fictional characters are portrayed by actors, dancers and singers. In animations and puppetry, they are portrayed by various means, sometimes with different aspects separately rendered in a wide range of varying modules. In animation, for example, voices are rendered by voice actors. In machinima, voices are sometimes rendered using speech synthesis.
The process of creating and developing in a work of fiction is called characterization. The opposite of a fictional character is non-fictional character.

1.4.6 Introduction to Style in Language

While considering language use in a fiction it should be noted how capitalization is established, and how the citations are introduced, and it should be noted whether gender language is used by the author.

Using parts of speech in a stylistic manner is a unique thing about language use in a fiction. The punctuations and spelling makes things worth readable in any work of fine literature. These are certain style guides regarding language use.

Indian English has attained as a force of great impulse and a fort of imaginative and also realistic literature. Vikram Seth being an Indian writer in English has certain purpose and perspective on a number of contemporary Indian writing, with a wealth of detailed evidence as how the contemporary Indian writing holds immense possibility of expansion and diversification in the new millennium.
Manohar Malgonkar’s (1970), “The Princes”, has all the elements that make the melodramatic. The King Hiroji believes in the illusion of permanence.

“There will always be a Begward, and there will always be a Bedar ruling it”.

Malgonkar’s attachments to the ruling families are perhaps rooted in his family background and his personal experience. Vikram Seth too is doing so in his novels. Very particularly in his novel ‘An Equal Music’.

There is a situation at the end of ‘An Equal music’ of Vikram Seth when Michael returns to his swimming pool losing his heroin Julia once for all. The strange case of Billy Biswas; A journey into Darkness, referring the following, Seeing her in person, Billy recognizes in her the strange women, who beeps crossing his dreams the women he has written in ‘An Equal Music’ of ‘Vikram Seth’ when Michael meets Julia after ten years a similar situation is created.

So Vikram Seth is like the crown among Indian writers in English regarding his style, and his ‘An Equal Music’ is like a diamond adorning it.
1.5 An Outline of An Equal Music

1.5.1 Background

“It was a bird of Paradise,
Over the roofs he flew,
All the children’s, in a twice,
Clapped their hands and cried,
“How nice! Look-his wings are blue!”

His body was a ruby red,

His eyes were burning gold,

All the grown-up people said,” (Robert Harrick 1972)

What a high order of style proclaims the above stanza? What a rhyming? How in a simple and also in a grand manner it is described and a good narration is gone through? How the bird has been strategically characterized by the author? How the handling-up of the language is wonder fully done?

The same wonderful manner and style is installed in the novel ‘An Equal Music’. It is a story about love; the love of a women lost and found and lost again. A chance sighting on a London bus, a letter that never have been read, a pianist with a secret that touches the heart
of her music: from a multiplicity of details, Vikram Seth Creates, once again, a living, breathing world that enchants and grips the reader.

This is also a book about music and about how the wave of music can run like a passionate theme through a life. Above all, it is a book to savor and re-read.

The title was suitably selected from the verses of ‘John Donne’.

“No noise silence but one equal’ music’. Seth (1959)


“Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter”.

The unheard melodies of Julia are described and narrated in a sweeter manner by Seth than her heard melodies. It is a different world of stylistics in the field of music. Considering ‘An Equal Music’ as a work of art one can be assured by saying that it is a master-piece.
The Novel is presented in eight parts in the same volume of Three hundred and eighty one pages. In Part one there are Seventeen Chapters. In Part two there are Twenty Four Chapters. In Part Three there are Twenty chapters. In Part Four there are Twenty Seven Chapters. In Part Five there are sixteen chapters in Part Six there are Eighteen Chapters. In Part Seven there are Twenty chapters in Part Eight there are Seventy Seven Chapters. In total three are eight parts containing one hundred and seventy seven chapters, full of vigor, velour, style and all para-meters expected of an eminent piece.

1.5.2 The Story

In Vienna Michael and Julia were class-mates learning music. They were unconsciously in love with each other. Mistaking the affection of the music teacher towards Julia, Michael left to London for two months, when he returned he could not find Julia. Her father denied to reveal her Whereabouts, Michael questions himself, “Where are you, Julia, and am I not forgiven?

For ten years he lives in her thoughts and remained unmarried. He is teaching music to Virginia a young girl with whom he had illegitimate relationship.
He joined the Maggiore quartet with Billy, Piers, and Helen. Michael is native of Rochdale a northern village in England. He likes swimming. He had some friends there too.

Zsa - zsa was his dad’s cat. His dad was a butcher. Against his wishes he becomes a Quarter Player. Michael is living in an old apartment in London.

While traveling, in the next bus he sees Julia. He calls her in vein, he chases her and could not catch. In this he loses his CD in the taxi and weeps.

He was going north to Rochdale for Christmas. There he meets his parents. He met Mrs. Formby his aunt and Patron, who had no children, and who loved Michael as her son. Once in a year, during Christmas Michael Takes Mrs. Formby around Manchester in a car.

He returned to London and continued in the Maggoire quarter as a Second Violinist He meets Julia in a concert in which he played the second violin. They talked to each other. They decided to meet again.
The next day she comes with her son Luke on the way to his school. Luke was affectionate towards Michael. Luke revealed Michael that his mother Julia is growing deaf. Michael receives a letter from Julia. In that she says, that she cannot live two lives for they were in love with each other years ago.

Michael decided to learn about the world of deafness and wanted to find how he could be of some help to her in this way.

Julia turns to Michael's apartment, he was bathing. She prepared coffee for him.

Julia joins the Quartet on a Musical Concert tour program.

There they fall a prey to infatuation.

Michael goes to Julia's house meets James her husband and Luke her son. Her house was well planned with a beautiful garden and a piano.
Julia accompanied Michael with the Maggoire Quartet to Vienna. They made a personal tour performance.

Julia decides to stop playing music in a group because of her struggling failure in their musical tour performance.

They return to London, welcomed by Eric Friend of Julia and Michael. Michael visited Julia at her house and asked her to show her music room. There she affirmed thereafter she will only play alone.

James invited Michael over phone to Julia’s Birthday party. Michael agreed. Had been there and left shaking hands with James after the party.

He turned to Rochdale Mrs. Formby says her books, her furniture her savings of £4000 were for Michael after her death.

Julia writes to Michael that there is no use to either, in saying their love. She lost her peace of mind, and don’t want to see him again. Michael loses peace of mind reading this letter. When they met again Michael says, “You’ll” cope without me, Julia, I won’t without you.”
“I love James Luke wants a brother, Otherwise he will be selfish like me,

I was stupid, self indulgent, so reckless.

I can’t cope you now Michael. Later Michael was thinking “the love of my life has left me” hour following hour listening to nothing, waiting for nothing. Mrs. Formby Died. Michael got money. He spent it on wenches and at theaters. He bade farewell forever to his Tononi. (his Violin)

Michael attended, The Art of fugue piano concert’ singly played by Julia as an audience. He thought it was a gift of musical piece. He returned to the swimming pool again.

1.6 The Function and Development of Indian English Writings

The present Indo-Anglican works of fiction had its real birth independent India. Though English was the chief medium of communication of the educated Indians during the colonial days, the Indo-Anglican novel established itself as an important genre after the independence of India. There is no denying the fact that the western education through English language was also responsible for the growth and development of Indo-Anglican novels during the colonial
period. Indians in their encounter with the race conscious British, the British civilization and culture, felt the need for asserting themselves, giving vent to their thoughts and ideas. Indian writers saw a meaning in writing in English — the language of the rulers and of the administrators. It seems that there are two reasons behind this choice, first by writing in English an Indian author got readers all over India as well as in other parts of the world. India’s multi-lingual culture is a symphony of various tunes. The customs, habits and rituals, of different provinces may vary but there is a basic identity. The Indo-Anglican literature fulfils this function, being written in English, which is a link language for the subcontinent.

Second, by writing in English, Indian writers could have communion with the British themselves. It was quite natural that the Indian writers who were imbued with the spirit of nationalism during the nineteenth century wanted to express their view points not only to Indians, but also to the British and to others. The other reason why Indian writers chose to write in English was that there were many more for whom English was the main source of knowledge and information and was natural medium of expression of their thoughts and ideas though it was not their mother tongue. In this way, Indo-Anglican fiction began to bloom during the colonial period.
In his essay "Indo English", Bagwat S.Goyal (1930) observes:

“It is ironical that Indo-English literature has its real birth not in the colonial India, but in the independent India”. Though stray works had been written by Indians in English during the 1930’s and even earlier, it assumed a viable shape and size only after independence.

1.7 Statement of the Problem

In this research, A Stylistic Study of Vikram Seth’s novel ‘An Equal Music’ (1999), the unique features of style employed by him are studied from a linguistic perspective in an elaborate manner. It is especially concerned with Vikram Seth’s style of western story in Indian English.

Varieties of style are adopted by Seth in his novel ‘An Equal Music’. They are vividly elaborated and well established. Though he describes the events in bits there is coherence in the flow of thought of the writer and in the story. Thus his is a unique stylistic feature.

How Seth introduces his characters and how he builds up his characters in an interwoven methodology to fabricate the story serves as evidence for analyzing his stylistic features and characterization strategies.
How the characters like Michael and Julia fall apart and together and how they fall together and fall apart, are highly strategic in the style of characterization by Seth.

Seth’s language style is simple but with all grandeur in its attractiveness. He uses all simple sentences, question tags and short answers. In his conversational style he has expounded his wonderful, narrative, descriptive, unique and highly stylistic strategies.

Four major aspects as established by Vikram Seth in his novel under study such as descriptive style, narrative style, art of characterization strategies and language use are taken as problems of the study.

1.8 Methodology Adopted

According to Concise Oxford English Dictionary, edited by Judy Pearshall, the word ‘method’ means a particular procedure for accomplishing something and an orderliness of thought or behaviour. According to the same dictionary the word ‘methodology’ means a system or method used in a particular field.

A unique way of dealing with something is style. A special kind of viewing something is style. The sublime way of narration is style.
1.8.1 Descriptive Methodology

The narrative style, characterization strategy, plotting technique and so on, so forth employed by Seth are described linguistically drawing from the methodology evolved by descriptive linguistics.

1.8.2 Analytical or Logical Reasoning Method

Other than the descriptive method, analytical method is also used in this dissertation from a linguistic perspective.

Using logical reasoning, specimens depicting the characteristics features of Seth from the novel ‘An Equal Music’, are identified carefully and thus processed for analysis. The stylistic features of Seth are examined methodologically and procedurally. For example, how Seth is describing the ‘pink beauty’ of the apartment of Virginia is analysed with a linguistic (descriptive) perspective. How he is narrating the love story of Michael and Julia with the background of the Magoire quartet is also analysed. The psycho-analysis of the vagabond nature of Michael is beautifully dealt by Vikram Seth in this novel. The growing deafness of Julia and the wavering love of Michael toward Julia and his revealing his illegal contact with Virginia to Julia are vivid examples for the manifestation of Seth’s style and they serve as data for the analysis of Vikram Seth’s characterization strategies.
1.9 Review of Literature

In attempting to study about the style of Vikram Seth’s novel ‘An Equal Music’, it is required to have the review of related works on style in general and on Vikram Seth’s work in particular. Given below are some of the important views on style and on Seth’s style.

Herbert Read (1955) in his work English Prose Style brings to light that the rhythm of prose is not regular. He studied Berkly, Swift, Stern, Southey W.H. Auden and Bernard Shaw.

John McRae and Urzula Clark (2004) in ‘A Hand-book of Applied Linguistics’ say that stylistics has always caused controversy; there are those who accept it as an essential branch of applied linguistics. It covers as an umbrella term, covering the range of different stylistic approaches to the study of the texts.

Recent studies on Vikram Seth are found to be very intrinsic and subtle. S.Usharani (2005) in her work entitled, “Search for an Indian Identity, A study of Vikram Seth’s ‘A Suitable Boy’,” has dealt with how an Indian identity is searched by Seth in this novel.

makes us to understand that 'An Equal Music' explores the fertile meeting ground between the East and the West.

In the present dissertation an attempt has been made to analyse the descriptive, narrative and characterization strategies are revealed through language use are studied from a linguistic perspective. It is a pioneering attempt and the researcher had made sincere efforts to bring out the stylistic features of Seth.

1.10 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to bring forth the unique features of style as employed by Seth in his novel ‘An Equal Music’. This novel has been chosen for the study because it abounds with exuberance, creativity, originally and bountiful descriptions.

The specific objectives of this study are presented below:

To cull out the descriptive style of Seth.

To elucidate the narrative techniques exploited by Seth.

To analyse the characterization strategies employed by the novelist and

To study the ‘language use’ of Seth from a socio linguistic perspective.
Linguistic and literary evidences to study the above features of style have been gleaned from Seth’s ‘An Equal Music’ by a careful and thorough study of the work several times and they were subjected to rigorous analysis employing the tools and methodologies provided by linguistics.

1.11 The Significance of the Study

Style is like breathe for humans in the modern era because each one wants to be different from the rest. It has attained the foremost and most modern genre in literature, life and other works of art.

Therefore, studying about style is the most relevant attempt. It enables to improve the quality of life and its bountiful joys and beatitudes. In the mechanized world style gives life to our lives.

Literature is the reflection of life. It has become the trend of the modern era because of the elaboration of press with modern technologies. Media also plays its utmost part in upholding the values of a stylistic life. Thus it is seen that creative and stylistic literature is welcomed and widely read all over the world. Seth writes in a grand unique and sublime style. His novel ‘A Golden Gate’ is written in verse, a nine hundred pages of sonnets. He began his carrier as a writer with his poem ‘Mappings’. He is a poet. His travelogue ‘From Heavens Lake’ is very famous. His ‘Three Chinese Poets’ is a
wonderful translation. His ‘Arion and the Dolphin’ is a ‘Libertto’. His recent novel ‘A Suitable Boy’, ‘An Equal Music’, and ‘Two Lives’ are exemplary. Thus he is poet, novelist libertto author, short story writer, travelogue writer, and so on and hence an all round genius.

To do research on a living author who is an all round genius and a man of all waters is very significant. He has vast experience in history, geography, culture, politics, literature, art, economics and travel. And it will ever have its value, impact and influence in his writings. ‘An Equal Music’ is written by him with personal experience of learning music and sign languages. Thus it is very significant to make such a research in this area.

The present study is a pioneering attempt on Vikram Seth’s stylistics with reference to his significant novel ‘An Equal Music’. No sufficient criticism is available on the work as well as on the author, and so it is a challenging effort undertaken by the researcher. Attempting a research on a stylistic study on a diasporic author is difficult. Similarly to make a study on his work with the background of the western culture made the task more difficult and curious. Efforts are made to evolve clear ideas on the point of research.
1.12 Plan of Presentation of the Dissertation

To limit the scope of the study, and to go in detail with the title the researcher has chosen only four major stylistic features present in the work viz. descriptive style, narrative style, characterization strategies and language use. It also helps to make the study a whole and complete one in itself.

Then it was planned to have six chapters having in an average of fifteen sub chapters in each of them so that this work becomes a complete whole in itself.

The chapter headings were designed as:

Introduction, Descriptive Style, Narrative Style, Characterization Strategies, Language Use and Conclusion.

In the first chapter, introduction about style and stylistics and its various methodologies, schools and principles, introduction to the four main chapters viz. descriptive style, narrative style, characterization strategies and languages use are given. An introductory reference about Indian writing in English, significance, methodology and the format, biographical notes about Vikram Seth and a briefing about the work ‘An Equal Music’ are also given.
The second chapter Descriptive Style deals with detailed elaboration about descriptive style and at the end quotes, examples and explanations, about how and to what depth descriptive style is dealt with by Seth.

The third chapter ‘Narrative Style’ deals with the different events, and description about varied actions, places, time and performance, present in the story. How one can easily understand the story with coherence is explained well. The abundant grandeur of the style of Vikram Seth in his novel, ‘An Equal Music’ is described in this chapter. A melancholic narrative description is attempted vividly.

The fourth chapter Characterization Strategies brings forth the characters of varied temperament, physical, psychological, geographical and romantic backgrounds to build up the story as a wholesome one. Various types of characterization strategies handled by Seth are brought to the light.

The fifth chapter Language Use deals with the linguistic perspectives and the supreme conversational style adopted by Seth in this novel. How question tags and short answers, simple sentences are used by the novelist has been studied. Other aspects of language use such as phonological, lexical, syntactical and semantic features of style as found in Seth’s novel ‘An Equal Music’.
The last and the sixth chapter is conclusion. In this chapter, conclusions on descriptive style, narrative style, characterization strategies and language use of Seth are consolidated and explained.

Possibilities of further studies in this field and about Vikram Seth and his novel ‘An Equal Music’ are included in this section.

A bibliography is appended towards the end of the dissertation.