The function of literary criticism has always been to describe, analyse, interpret and evaluate a literary work. The critic works out, on the basis of both linguistic evidence and his knowledge of extralinguistic background, a structure of the meaning of a work as objectively as possible. In his evaluation of the work, he uses some well-defined criteria of judgement which are generally derived from a series of continuous comparisons and some accepted assumptions. Interpretation and evaluation are often, in practice, difficult to separate since the same pattern of assumptions and criteria works in both the processes. Until New Criticism insisted on giving attention primarily to the text, the critics were more concerned with the message than the linguistic code which carried it. New critics like William Empson, Cleanth Brooks and Donald Davie took interest in the use of language in literature though their approach was somewhat impressionistic. For instance, Empson (1930) uses the term 'ambiguity' for complex linguistic functioning according to his convenience. For Donald Davie (1955), the linguistic world of poetry is a syntactic world. His five categories of poetic syntax - 'objective', 'dramatic', 'subjective', 'like music' and 'like mathematics' - are obviously subjective. However, they offered an admirable environment for
the contribution of linguistics to the study of literature. With the advent of New Criticism and the phenomenal growth of Linguistics, the business of criticism started with the study of the language of a literary work and the way it functions in it. And a new science called Stylistics came into being. Stylistics is, then, an attempt to render the first part of literary criticism, i.e., looking at the linguistic construct as such, as scientific an affair as possible.

Modern interest in linguistic criticism may be said to begin, as Fowler (1971, 3) says, from the statement made by Harold Whitehall in 1951: "As no science can go beyond mathematics, no criticism can go beyond its linguistics". Fowler (1975, 2) considers Whitehall's approach as "an overstated, programmatic assertion about technical apparatus in criticism which makes some sense." Whitehall considers that linguistics is naturally an available technique within criticism. He accepts criticism as an independently defined field of knowledge and linguistics an indispensable aid to that discipline. In short, for Whitehall critical technique includes linguistics. The confidence of Whitehall's proposal originates from the work of American Linguists which attained methodological perfection with the publications of Zellig Harris's Methods in Structural Linguistics (1951) and Outline of English Structure by G.L.Trager and H.L.Smith (1951). Trager and
Smith's monograph gave a description in which the essentials of the structure of a natural language were set out symmetrically and economically.

Seymour Chatman's (1956) linguistic analysis of Robert Frost's "Mowing" with a strong bias towards the 'phono-grammarics' of poetry marks the beginning of the contemporary movement to practical linguistic criticism.

Professor Hill's (1955) approach is an early and much noticed example of linguistic criticism. Halliday (1967) illustrates how the categories and methods of descriptive linguistics can be applied in the analysis of literary texts. His concern is not with the interpretation or the aesthetic evaluation of the literary passages he examines, but only with the revelation and precise description of the language features of a work. He considers, for instance, the verbal groups in Yeats' poem 'Leda and the Swan' and tabulates the results of his investigation. Having made the analysis he proceeds no further. He does not go on to discuss how the organization of the verbal forms is related to other kinds of intra-textual patterning in the poem, and draws no conclusions as to the relevance of his findings to the interpretation of the poem as a whole.

Halliday and Hassan (1976) provide important tools for linguistic analysis by delineating those semantic resources of the language which tie idea to idea to create texts. They
establish five types of ties - reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion. The work is useful to the extent that it defines the concerns of cohesive analysis, establishing terminology and serves as a reference point for future publications on the subject. The careful and insightful linguistic description of relations above the sentence level provided by Halliday and Hassan offers a solid base for the development of particular stylistic analysis.

The approach of Sinclair (Fowler:1966) to stylistic analysis is similar to that of Halliday. He analyses Philip Larkin's poem 'First Sight' by applying Halliday's categories of linguistic description. Like Halliday, he records the results of his analysis in tabular form and any conclusions as to their relevance for interpretation are left to the reader to work out for himself. Most linguists develop their own theories regarding the linguistic patterns and their relations to the whole structure of a work and they find it necessary to postulate descriptive categories other than those of descriptive linguistics to account for the features of literary discourse. Levin (1962) develops the notion of equivalence as outlined by Jakobson and shows how it operates at the phonological, syntactic and semantic levels to create structural features which distinguish poetry from other kinds of discourse. Sinclair (1966), for instance, speaks of 'arrest and release'. Leech (1969) speaks of 'cohesion', 'foregrounding' and 'cohesion of foregrounding'. Levin postulates
special types of linguistic patterning. His analysis is not an attempt at a full scale interpretation. It is an attempt to reveal the role that couplings play in the total organization of the poem.

Transformational Generative mode propounded by Noam Chomsky has already produced some interesting discussions of poetry. For instance, J.P. Thorne (1965) in his paper 'Stylistics and generative grammars' has made an attempt to apply this theory where he is concerned with the problem of accounting for the kind of deviant sentences which commonly occur in poetry within a grammar of a language. His approach relies a great deal on intuition. In such writings, there has been a steady focus on utterances of a type which is on the border line of poetry and nonsense, grammar and non-grammar, lexical decorum and anarchy of diction. He tries to state not just that an utterance is 'grammatical' or 'ungrammatical' but that it has an understandable place on the scale of grammaticalness. However, his approach to the analysis of poetry is very limited in its scope and therefore, fails to account for other important characteristic features of poetry.

Ohman (1964) suggested that style resided in transformational choice, and that the reduction of the sentences of a text to kernel sentences would enable one to see which optional transformational rules were characteristic of particular writers. However, as Hendrick (1976) points, Ohman's analysis does not
distinguish between the application of rules which form style and those which contribute to meaning as a result of the fact that they are determined by choices of technique. Ohman (Babb: 1972) again uses the framework of generative grammar and its terminologies to analyse 3 passages from literary texts. He differentiates between the 'deep structure' and 'surface structure' of the passages and equates them with 'content' and 'form' respectively. The 'form' comprises a way of saying something and so entering the domain of style. Ohman's ability to illustrate the literary implications of the linguistic structures can be seen in the analysis.

Donald Freeman (Fowler:1975, 19-39) chooses to analyse three poems by Dylan Thomas and presents his syntactic observation in the terms of transformational generative grammar. Transformational Generative Grammar provides a delicate analytic apparatus for just the kinds of structures Freeman wants to describe. Freeman shows how 'unacceptable' but not 'ungrammatical' (Chomsky:1965) structures in Dylan Thomas arrest the reader. He explains their syntax and takes us to the heart of the poet's artistic design. He illustrates a dialectical process in which both the linguistics and literature are mutually responsive. Freeman, in fact, extends the view held by Ohman (1964) that 'style is in part a characteristic way of deploying the transformational apparatus of a language'. He exemplifies in the analysis of the first poem 'Light breaks where no
sun shines' Thomas's syntactic foregrounding; in the analysis of the second poem 'The Force that through the green fuse drives the flower' he shows some of the consequences of a particular syntactic choice for the poem's design; and in the third poem 'A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London', Freeman relates the way in which Thomas relates the reader's perception of the poem to one of his major themes. He views transformations as formal models for ways in which we can express a given concept.

Hawkes (1977) concludes with a summary of Culler's argument that there is 'a literary competence' underlying writing and reading which is analogous to the linguist's 'language'/ 'competence' underlying 'parole'/'performance' and that it is the literary critic's central task to explore this to make explicit the set of conventions for reading literary texts.

Anne Cluysenaar (1976) makes an attempt to see linguistic features never in isolation but always in relation to each other and to the whole work in which they occur. She considers the work of art as a unified communicative event. Stylistics presented by her is an extension of practical criticism. She suggests that "Stylistics itself be regarded as a widening, not as a narrowing, of critical range, a tool to be used when the general critical context requires, in conjunction with other 'intrinsic' methods of study, and with 'extrinsic' approaches involving other disciplines such as psychology, history, politics, sociology".
Her stylistic approach insists on the contextualisation of linguistic features with the total microcosm of the work, hence it leads naturally onto the further contextualization of the work itself in the social macrocosm. She believes that the mere linguistic description of a text is just applied linguistics, not stylistics. Such descriptions are selective and the criteria of selection cannot be solely linguistic since it also depends on the receiver of communication. The type of stylistics she has in mind, the term 'exploration' seems more appropriate than 'analysis'. She also prefers 'reader' to 'critic' when she wants to focus on the perceptual rather than evaluative role. According to her linguistic theories, techniques and descriptions are largely responsible for our new awareness of language. She quotes Firth in support of her view: "Linguistics separates from the much of general goings-on those features of repeated events which appear to be parts of a patterned process, and handles them systematically by stating them 'by the spectrum of linguistic techniques' so that it proceeds 'by a method rather like the dispersing of light of mixed waves into a spectrum". The linguistic analysis that Cluysenaar has used as a basis of description is that proposed by Scale and Category grammar. This mode of analysis is popular and is based on the thought of J.R. Firth and developed by M.A.K. Halliday (1961) and others. One positive assertion of the theory is that there is formal as well as contextual meaning. Linguists
describing grammatical, lexical or metrical patterns believe themselves to be making statements of meaning. Scholars such as Chatman, Halliday, Jakobson, Leech, Levin, Ohman, Sinclair have been called 'Stylisticians' in the sense they have paid close attention to the surface structures of literary texts and assumed that phonology, syntax, everything which makes up rhetoric, are of paramount importance in determining the identity of the literary work and the nature of the audience's engagement with it.

While criticising traditional literary criticism and its limitations, Clusynaar works out a passage from 'Paradise Lost' and shows how Leavis, backed by inadequate technical means, mis-analyses the passage. She examines the syntactical features of the passage closely and justifies the method of analysis. She has also worked out a lexical analysis of Lawrence's 'Glorie de Dijon' to prove the point that dominance or 'foregrounding' is not necessarily a matter of deviation. She considers stylistics as the technique of verbal analysis within practical criticism. The critics who have had most influence on her work are Empson, Davie and Nowottny. Her claim, in brief, is that linguistic analysis without much technicality has a positive function in literary study.

Fowler (1971) attempts to provide an alternative technique, a technique which hopefully reconnects critical interpretations and linguistic analysis. It is based on the assumption that
it is legitimate to take account of the reader's response. He
analyses a poem 'anyone lived in a pretty how town' by ee_cummings
(Fowler: 1971, 219-37) and demonstrates how the analysis of form
can have critical uses beyond mere descriptive stylistics. He
locates formal patterns on grammatical, phonological and lexical
levels and arrives at some prominent sets of items and in doing
so detects some patterns and relationships.

Widdowson (1975) takes a view that Stylistics is an area
of mediation between the two disciplines. His attempt is to show
that stylistics can provide a way of mediating between two
subjects: language and literature. He maintains that stylistics
is neither a discipline nor a subject in its own right, but a
means of relating disciplines and subjects. He claims that
' stylists can serve as a means whereby literature and language
as subjects can by a process of gradual approximation move
towards both linguistics and literary criticism, and also a
means whereby these disciplines can be pedagogically treated to
yield different subjects'. Widdowson (1975) shows the relationships
as follows:

```
Discipline — linguistics  literary criticism
          Stylistics
subject — language  literature
```

He analyses Robert Frost's 'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening'
in support of his view that Stylistics occupies the middle ground
between linguistics and literary criticism and shades imperceptibly into literary appreciation. In the analysis of the poem he attempts to show how linguistic clues can lead to interpretation. He does not claim any objective status to his interpretation, but believes that it gives a definite shape to his intuitive sense of what the poem is about. Widdowson's interpretation of the poem is based on the careful consideration of certain linguistic features in the poem and the manner in which they relate to each other within the discourse to achieve a communicative effect. But only those linguistic features which appear to be significant have been dealt with.

The approach of Geoffrey Leech (1969) to stylistic analysis differs essentially from that of Halliday and Sinclair in that it aims at relating linguistic description with critical interpretation, and at showing how the latter can benefit from the former. He discusses three features of literary expressions representing different 'dimensions of meaning' which are not covered by the normal categories of linguistic description, and illustrates them by giving an analysis of a poem by Dylan Thomas. Leech takes his framework from 'scale and category', new-Ferthian or Hallidayan linguists. The book makes no grand claims for linguistics in criticism. He believes that traditional literary categories can be reestablished by placing them in linguistic framework.
The formalists were fundamentally concerned with literary structure. They felt concerned with the recognition, isolation and objective description of the peculiar, literary nature and use of certain phonemic devices in the literary work and not with that work's phonetic 'context', its 'message', its 'sources', its 'literary history' with its sociological, biographical or psychological dimensions (Hawkes:1971, 26). They insisted that poetry was made out of words, not 'poetic' subjects. According to Shaklovsky, the essential function of poetic art is to counteract 'the process of habituation' (Hawkes, 62). The formal method, the law of 'automatisation' versus 'perceptibility' or 'defamiliarization', 'the cannonization of the junior branch', and so on, developed by Shaklowsky inaugurated the new era in the structuralist-formalist study of literature. The ultra-modern poststructuralist-deconstructionist trend in literary criticism is, in general, also shaped by his semiological ideas. 'Making strange' (Hawkes, 63) ranks as a central preoccupation of formalism. For Jakobson and other formalists, the differentiating quality of literariness resides ultimately in the poet's distinctive use of language. (Hawkes, 71). Jakobson's main contribution in the Formalist School was theoretical and linguistic. Needless to say that his insights into language, folklore, literary history, philosophy changed the course of structural linguistics. His contribution to the sciences of
language and communication and semiotics are as valuable and original as those of de Saussure. Barthes's (Hawkes, 112) major premises as a structuralist critic are that writing is all style and he insists that literature has no single 'natural' or 'objective' standing beyond our own culture. Mukarovsky held the view that the autonomy of literature or the so called literariness of literature could not be studied in isolation from the society. Because every literary fact appears to be the result of two forces: the internal dynamics of structure and external intervention. His conception of 'structure' of 'foregrounding' of 'sign', of 'function' and so on helped the progress of structural and semiotic aesthetics. Todorov, in his early career as literary critic, was more or less echoing the Russian Formalist philosophy of literature. He advocated for the structural analysis of literature. Thereby he meant 'literary theory', the objective of which was 'not the interpretation of works' but the assessment of their 'coherence, not according to their truth in an absolute sense'.

It will be seen from the above brief survey that modern literary stylistics has drawn upon several disciplines such as linguistics, literary criticism, literary history, theory of literature and has in the recent years developed methods analysing texts. They are based on the Russian Formalists, Jakobsonian School, the French Structuralists influenced by the Russians, the Czechs and Hjelmslevian linguists, the British
School in the tradition of J.R. Firth, the American School influenced by New Criticism and Bloomfieldians and Chomskyan linguistics. There is no one linguistic model providing a readymade set of procedures or formulae perfectly apt for all kinds of texts. I believe that the appropriateness of the model is a concern for the individual analyst. Linguistic analysis of any school applied in totality is a kind of machine which may turn up all the answers to questions. I am going to treat my analysis as an explanatory and confirmatory process. Literature is language and it is evidently analysable. This is a presupposition of much modern criticism and need not be set up as an assumption peculiar to linguistic criticism. Both modern descriptive linguistics and modern criticism are text-centred; both involve analysis, close reading and insist on accuracy and usefulness of description. The development of precise techniques and theorizing in linguistic terms, though essential, would carry the reader only a short distance since such studies so far carried out are just synchronic type. Moreover, only single poems of different poets have been analysed so far.

In the context of Edith Sitwell's poetry, I am going to use a linguistic approach entirely compatible with a critic's close reading and achieve a good balance between response and analysis. This is done by concentrating on form and on detailed linguistic analysis of her poetry. We will consider, for
example, a poem as one structure and not one or two lines/ stanzas in piece-meal. We will acknowledge the pressure of interpretation and use the awareness of meaning but concentrate on the nature and function of linguistic items. We will choose only those items which will say something relevant about their function, that is stylistically relevant items - deviation, repetitions, parallelisms, contrast, juxtaposition, cohesion and so on - may be phonetically and lexically governed since the organization of poetic language is different in kind, not merely in degree, from the ordinary language.

I am aware that mere description of any kind of verbal analysis of a literary text conducted for its own sake is of no great use, except perhaps as an exercise to promote an awareness of language or of method. However, I am going to make my description purposeful by selecting for description certain features of Edith Sitwell's poetry which generally appear to be significant. Since I am concerned with the problem of Sitwell's poetic development as well as her individual poems, my approach is going to be both synchronic and diachronic.

I am interested not only in working out the operative principles of individual poetic structures or constructs, but also in working out the principles of 'development', i.e., of the striking changes from one phase to the next. I have already suggested in the Introduction why Edith Sitwell's poetry demands primarily a stylistic approach. Her linguistic preoccupations
(probably they have their origin in her individual response to a world gone to pieces or something, but that is not one of the concerns of my study here) which dominated her entire career as a poet can be studied only by applying the tools of linguistic stylistics. These tools can be effectively applied only to small poetic constructs or small units of long poems in a synchronic manner. Now the practical problem is that we cannot analyse all the poems that a poet has written. We have to use, inevitably, the strategy of 'sampling'. The only viable strategy of studying the 'development' of a poet in terms of stylistic analysis is to accept the possibility of phases and take up a few samples from each phase for synchronic analysis. Fortunately, even a cursory reading of Sitwell's poetry shows that there are recognizable 'phases' in her poetry taken as a diachronic phenomenon. The 'intuitive' opinions of literary critics confirm the fact that Edith Sitwell's poetry has three, more or less, different phases.

There seems to be a general agreement about the first phase and the last phase of Edith Sitwell's poetic development. Lehmann (1965) organizes her poetry into four groups. In fact, he splits her early poetry written up to 1928 into two divisions - 'Early Poetry I' and 'Early Poetry II'. The second group comprises poetry from Gold Coast Customs to 1940. The poems written after 1940 are grouped under the label 'Later Poems'. This division of her poetry roughly corresponds with my division
of her poetry into three phases.

The early poetry up to 'Gold Coast Customs' (Lindsay:1976, 11) that is, the poetry written between 1913 and 1928 is generally referred to as a more or less unified body of poetry with more or less similar characteristics. With reference to her early poetry, the traditional critics speak in terms of:

(a) "experimentation" with language concerned with verbal effects (Lehmann:1965, 15), "Rhythmical experiments" (Bullough:1941, 112); "sharply contrasted verbal effects" (Durrell:1961, 184);

(b) "flights of metaphors" (Lehmann:1970, 7); "its fresh lyricism, wit and colour" (Lehmann:1965, 10); "novel choice and associations of images" (Lehmann:1965, 16);
"images which are isolated bright counters" (Bullough:1941, 117);
"play of sensations and associations" (Bullough:1941, 112);
"transliteration of sense-impressions" (Bullough:1941, 113) and

(c) "subject matter being taken from childhood reminiscences and nursery forms with an emphasis on art rather than life" (Durrell:1961, 184); "poetry written under the influence of symbolists" (Durrell:1961, 125) "like Rimbaud and Baudelaire" (Lehmann:1965, 13) and Cubists (Bullough:1941, 114); "the marriage of the familiar with the unexpected symbols already rich in imaginative associations" (Lehmann:1965, 14); "shock-treatment" (Lehmann:1970, 18).

While writing about the poetry of the first phase most
of the critics actually use the term 'fresh lyricism' (Lehmann:1970, 6) and speak of 'Aubade' (Bullough:1941, 116; Lehmann:1970, 15; Lindsay:1976, 15) and 'Dark Song'(Lindsay: 1976, 18-19) (So I have chosen these poems for my analysis). Edith Sitwell herself has some interesting comments to make about these poems as well as about 'Said King Pompey'. She comments on 'Aubade' (Taken Care of, p.45); and 'Dark Song' (Taken Care of, p.47-48). She has also discussed these poems in her long essay 'Notes on my own poetry' (1936). So the choice of the poems of the first phase is not all that arbitrary and I believe that they have in them most of the characteristics of early poetry or the poetry of the first phase.

The literary critics are all unanimous about her last phase (1940 onwards) which Lehmann (1970, 6) calls her 'supreme phase'. The poetry written between 1928 and 1939 does not have clear-cut characteristics like those in the first and the third phases. For example, there are critics who feel that 'Gold Coast Customs' is a culmination of the first phase (Lindsay: 1976, 21). In the second phase, there are longish narrative poems where there is an attempt to go beyond the poetry of sensations and perceptions towards some kind of conceptual philosophical probings. Even though she wrote a number of smaller poems, the general thrust of her poetry appears to be towards some kind of conceptual explorations. For the purpose of the thesis I have chosen two major poems of the middle period as
the representative ones of the second phase, since the
stylistic study of these long poems again presents problems
of space, the strategy I have used is of taking three samples
from each poem for close stylistic scrutiny. I have chosen
'Gold Coast Customs' because it has drawn a lot of critical
attention (Lehmann: 1970, 20-23; Pinto: 1972, 172; Lindsay:
1976, 21; TLS: 21 Feb. 1929, 137). Another equally important
poem 'Metamorphosis' which belongs to this phase is chosen for
stylistic scrutiny though it has not drawn much attention of
the critics (TLS: 2 Feb. 1929, 137). The only significant
critical remarks appear in the TLS. I have chosen this to see
whether there are similar stylistic devices in the poems of
the same phase.

As mentioned earlier, there is a unanimous initial
agreement with regard to the third phase, beginning from 1940.
Critics generally speak of the following aspects: Sitwell's
simpler style; her extremely compassionate attitude; her concern
for the entire humanity - its sorrows and hopes; her overt
Christian concerns; and her use of larger, archetypal symbols
of the Sun, the Death, the Worm etc. From the third phase
I have chosen the poems which have also drawn considerable
critical attention. For instance, Lehmann (1965, 26, 30) comments
on "Still Falls the Rain". Singleton (1960, 7) also discusses
the same poem. Lehmann (1965, 15) calls this period from 1940
onwards as 'her latest period'. He further labels this phase
also as 'the great phase' (1965, 29); 'final phase' (1965, 28).

As mentioned earlier, one of the major controlling factors would, of course, the generally accepted literary insights so that our stylistic analysis does not have an extravagant esoteric look - as, sometimes, Edith Sitwell's own 'stylistic' analyses of some of her poems have.

It is interesting to see that Edith Sitwell had her own 'stylistics' - a sort of intuitive stylistics - in terms of which she tried to explain her poems. Since her stylistics has in it a sort of subtle perceptions which the developing science of modern stylistics is yet to generate, it is profitable to make a study of her perception before we undertake our synchronic-cum-diachronic analysis of Edith Sitwell's poetry.

My study of Sitwell's development will take the following form:

(A) PHASE I PHASE II PHASE III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
<th>Phase III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Aubade</td>
<td>1. Gold Coast Customs</td>
<td>1. Still Falls the Rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dark Song</td>
<td>2. Metamorphosis (selected parts)</td>
<td>2. Bagatelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Said King</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Street Song</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A synchronic study of these three poems A synchronic study of these two poems A synchronic study of these three poems

(B) Principles of change Principles of change
from I to II from II to III.

A diachronic study of style.
REFERENCES


37


