1. INTRODUCTION: TOWARDS A THEORY OF STYLISTICS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century has witnessed an almost unprecedented and intense activity in the realm of literary criticism; man, seemingly tired of the reverential throwing-up-of-hands whenever confronted with a piece of great literature, has set himself the arduous task of explaining what Dylan Thomas has called "the mystery of having been moved by words." And for this purpose he has garnered the most stimulating insights from the mainstream of current socio-philosophical thought; indeed a casual survey would reveal a bewildering number of competing ideologies, perspectives and theoretical commitments. Elizabeth Freund, while surveying the field of reader-response criticism, has noted the immense and exuberant diversity even within this mode of critical exegesis:

Certainly the traveller in these regions encounters a disorderly scene crowded with explorers whose discrepant maps rechart the topography along the changing landmarks of phenomenology, structuralism, semiotics, rhetoric, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, gnostic revisionism and other critical and philosophical persuasions. (1987:7)
No critical perspective or interpretative strategy can hope to capture, convey or explain the whole intensity of a literary work, but like the perspectives offered by New Criticism, Russian Formalism or Reader-Response criticism, Stylistics, when it first burst on the scene, was also felt capable of providing valid insights into the nature and significance of the literary artefact.

1.1.1 Historical Precedents

Like all literary-philosophical movements, stylistics was also inevitably a product of the times. Two main historically determined factors, acting in tandem, may be considered as being responsible for the rising enthusiasm for stylistics during the 1950s and 60s. By the 1940s, New Criticism which was the most widespread and influential critical practice, had already established the text as the only concern of the literary critic; i.e., in the terminology of M.H. Abrams, interpreting and explaining the 'Work' with reference to the extraneous factors of the 'Universe' and 'Author' had given way to a close and detailed examination of the 'Work' per se (see Abrams 1972:4 for these terms). The more crucial factor, however, was the tremendous and ground-breaking strides made in the science of linguistics during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, when it seemed that the secrets of human linguistic behaviour
were being suddenly and totally revealed. With these two factors exerting maximum influence in academic circles, the discipline of stylistics was born\(^1\), and the stylistician staked his claim in the field of literary criticism:

It is quite clear that the study of the verbal art is intrinsically connected with, and must be based on, the study of language - the linguist's discipline. (Stankiewicz 1960:69)

The exploding knowledge in the field of linguistics was also responsible for the early strident and overambitious claims made for stylistics, as for instance, Whitehall's famous: "As no science can go beyond its mathematics, no literature can go beyond its linguistics" (1951: 713).

1.1.2 The Rationale for a Stylistics

The logic behind the two assertions made above is seemingly irrefutable: literature as verbal art has for its medium language, and linguistics which is the science of language, ought to be able to provide the most significant insights into the nature and structure of the literary artefact; also, literature exhibits the most conscious and creative manipulation of the linguistic

\(^1\) Though Stylistics was supposed to have originated with Charles Bally's *Traité de Stylistique Française* (1909) stylistics as a discipline made its presence felt in England and America only during the 1950s and 60s.
Moreover, as Wellek concedes, "A literary work is accessible only through its language" (1971:68). Even in the 1980s, when much of the initial euphoria over stylistics has died down or disappeared, stylisticians who argue for a stylistic perspective on literature assert this to be the raison d'être for the discipline of stylistics. Marvin Ching et al., for example, believe that "the ordinary linguistic competence now being formalised in language theory offers powerful and unique perspectives on the extra-ordinary imaginative interplay between the writer, text and reader . . ." (1980:4), and Ronald Carter argues for the following principles:

1) That the greater our detailed knowledge of the workings of the language system, the greater our capacity for insightful awareness of the effects produced by literary texts;
2) That a principled analysis of language can be used to make our commentary . . . less impressionistic and subjective;
3) That because it will be rooted in a systematic awareness of language, bits of language will not be merely spotted and evidence gathered in an essentially casual and haphazard manner. (1982:5)
Anne Cluysenaar, to establish the soundness of the rationale behind stylistics, has even enlisted the support of philosophers (Nietzsche, William Hass, Benjamin Lee Whorf), critics (Nowotny, Stankiewicz, Zhirmunsky) and artists (Goethe, Miller, Conrad, Flaubert), all of whom accept the centrality of language in literature (1976:20). Stylistics, it was claimed, could not only provide the most significant insights into literature, it could also help to impart objectivity and methodological rigour to the impressionistic art of literary criticism.

1.1.3 Prevalent attitudes towards Stylistics

Yet, in spite of the apparent soundness of the underlying theoretical stance, stylistics today would seem to have fallen into a certain disrepute, if recent articles questioning the very state of the art are any indication (e.g. T.J. Taylor and M. Toolan, "Recent Trends in Stylistics", 1984; C. Mair, "The 'New Stylistics': A Success Story or the Story of Successful Self Deception?" 1985; R. Leith, "Seven Deadly Sins in Stylistics", 1987 etc). Ruqaiya Hasan's observations perhaps comes closest to being the prevalent attitude in academic circles towards stylistics, which is that "Stylistics is, at best, only peripheral to the study of literature" (1975:49). The earlier antagonism towards stylistics (in the 60s) was more a reaction against the brash
aggressiveness of the stylistician's stand, which gave the impression that stylistics was capable of replacing literary criticism, or at worst, of revolutionising the blatantly subjective practice of literary criticism. Helen Vendler's counter-attack could be considered typical:

If linguistics can add to our comprehension of English literature, some one trained in linguistics should be able to point out to us, in poems we already know well, significant features we have missed because of our amateurish ignorance of the working of language. Attempts in this line... adopt a complacent tone implying that the authors have come to give a great light to the people who walk in darkness. (1966:457)

However, the recent scepticism regarding a stylistic perspective on literature owes rather to the fact that stylistic analyses attempted to date have failed to substantiate the claims made for it. A closely related factor is the tendency of the linguistic critic to say "mundane and unexciting things about literary texts" (Leith 1987:14), and, the kind of interpretative statements made do not seem to inspire an effort to master the complexities of any linguistic framework; D.C. Freeman, for example, after drawing complex tree diagrams and analysing the deep syntactic structure of Keats'
"Ode to Autumn" concludes that the syntax shows it to be a poem about "Autumn as the ultimate causer of natural process..." (1981:81). Moreover, very well argued attacks have been made against the kind of interpretative strategies adopted by stylisticians; Stanley E. Fish's "What is Stylistics and Why are They Saying such Terrible Things about it?" Parts I and II perhaps being the best of such instances (see below page 30). This leads directly to an identification of the central problem confronting the discipline of stylistics.

1.1.4 The Basic Problem in Stylistics

Apart from the fact that no stylistician has attempted a refutation of the charges levelled against the discipline, what is perhaps more disheartening to a literary critic who is genuinely interested in grasping a literary work through its language is that no stylistician has come forward with a clear statement of the limitations or the reasons for the limitations of a stylistic perspective on literature, or a principled statement of objectives. Stylisticians who have realised the logic behind the accusations of their detractors and who have understood to a certain extent the limitations of their interpretative statements have conceded that linguistics cannot yield the whole truth about literature, and that linguistic insights can only contribute towards an interpretation rather than control
or create one; M.A.K. Halliday makes perhaps the most honest of such concessions: "Linguistics is not and will never be the whole of literary analysis and only the literary analyst not the linguist can determine the place of linguistics in literary studies" (1970:71). (See also Chapman 1984:6; Palmer in Minnis 1971:252; Freeman 1970:3 for similar statements.) However in spite of these concessions, stylisticians have not enquired into the reasons behind this limitation of scope, lending credence to Taylor and Toolan's observation that stylistic theory has progressed little since the days of Bally (1984:57). On the contrary, the general tendency has been to unquestioningly assume the validity of the primary rationale for stylistics (viz., that literature is language, and linguistics which is the science of language can unlock the secrets of literature) and to continue churning out analyses with seemingly small interpretative value. Tzvetan Todorov presents the essential problem confronting stylistics today in clear perspective:

The bibliographies of stylistics contain thousands of titles, there is no lack of observed facts, however the polysemy of concepts, the imprecision of methods, the uncertainty about the very goals of this research hardly make for a prosperous discipline. (1971:29)
What is needed seems to be a clear understanding of the limitations and the scope of stylistics, clearly defined objectives and a disciplined methodological perspective. Stylistics cannot be simply discarded as being irrelevant or peripheral to the study of literature without determining the degree of its potential contribution to literary criticism because such a crucial factor as language cannot simply be ignored. To arrive at an unambiguous statement of the limitations and objectives of a stylistic perspective on literature, this study therefore critically examines the prevalent modes of analysis in this discipline (Sec. 1.2), identifies the limitations (Sec. 1.3.) and attempts to formulate a viable theoretical framework for stylistics (Sec 1.4-1.5).

1.2 Perspectives and Practices In Stylistics

Taylor and Toolan, in a perceptive review of recent trends in stylistics, have identified two basic trends, which they call Formalist and Functionalist stylistics (1984:58). This basic classification provides a perspective to examine the main analytical strategies adopted in stylistics. However, other surveys have also been made of the field, and their categorisations could also be usefully incorporated into the basic classification made above. For this purpose, the study also considers the surveys of Hasan (1975), D.C. Freeman (1970) and Marvin Ching et al. (1980).
1.2.1 Formalist Stylistics

A formalist stylistics implies a purely formal approach to a text. Hasan has discerned two primary procedural perspectives within formalist stylistics\(^2\). According to her, stylistics implied either (i) an exhaustive linguistic description of the literary text or (ii) the study of style in discourse, whether literary or non-literary. She rightly dismisses as irrelevant the first of these practices, as they have no bearing on interpretation or appreciation as art (1975:56 ff); Chalmers has observed that this practice of total parsing was a dissertational trend in the 1960s, especially in European universities (1971:22). Perhaps the short work which best exemplifies this mode of analysis is J.M.H. Sinclair's "Taking a Poem to Pieces" (1966:68-81) where he merely describes features of sentence structure, clause structure and nominal group structure of a poem using the systemic grammar framework, without offering any interpretative explanations whatsoever. The second mode of analysis seeks to define and examine the scope of stylistics, whether stylistics as the study of style can extend into non-literary discourse as well, a view which finds acceptance with David Crystal and Derek Davy

\(^2\) Hasan has not used this terminology but her categories imply as much; she is however conscious of the strong formal bias of stylistics.
(1969:15), G.W. Turner (1973:7) and Walker Gibson (1956). Hasan, however, takes strong exception to Crystal and Davy's contention that the same methodological perspective can be adopted to analyse both heroic poetry and legal discourse (1975:56).

Crystal and Davy's attempt was to correlate formal description with the context of situation, the extra-linguistic factors determining the context of situation being the topic of discourse (e.g. legal discourse), the setting of the discourse (e.g. lecture), the social roles of addressee-addressee, the purpose of discourse (e.g. exposition) and the mode of discourse (e.g. spoken/written). This mode of analysis seems justified for non-literary discourse as the identification of the 'crucial distinctive features' of, for example, topic: legal discourse or setting: lecture has been possible (Crystal and Davy, 1969). However, this method breaks down in its application to literature, where, unlike non-literary discourse whose context of situation is always given\(^3\), the context of situation is indeterminate. (For example, there can be no specific answers to the questions 'What is this novel about?' or 'What is the purpose of this novel?'). Hasan notes the strong formal bias of

\(^3\) That is, outside the discourse; if the topic-discourse is given e.g. legal discourse, the other factors are also given.
stylistic studies and identifies what seems to be one of the major lacunae in stylistic theory - the lack of an understanding of the nature and role of language in literature.

As the second of Hasan's categories signify, stylistics and style have come to be inextricably linked, a strong tradition seeing stylistics as the "science of literary styles" (Riffaterre 1967:412), where style is defined as "the linguistic characteristics of a particular [literary] text" (Leech and Short 1981:12) (also Chapman 1973; Freeman 1970; Ching et al. 1980 etc.) Formalist stylistics proper therefore equates style with pure form, the characterising strategy of formalist stylistics being to identify style features/elements using purely formal criteria, which are borrowed, as Taylor and Toolan have observed, "from the dominant paradigms in the neighbouring discipline of linguistics" (1984:59). At this point it would be useful to incorporate the classifications made by Freeman and Ching et al., in order to examine the main analytical trends within formalist stylistics.

In stylistics, the various kinds of stylistic analyses attempted are always implicitly informed by variant underlying notions of style. Therefore the classifications made by both Freeman and Ching et al. are based on an identification of these underlying notions.
Freeman, who considers style to be part of the binary norm-deviation system, postulates a tripartite division of the field, with

1) style as deviation from the norm,
2) style as recurrence or convergence of textual patterns, and
3) style as selection from a grammar of possibilities (1970:4) being the underlying notions of style.

Ching et al., searching for implicit notions of style from the perspective of the form-content dichotomy⁴, have identified three modes of analysis, the notions informing these being

1) style as choice
2) style as meaning
3) style as tension between form and meaning (1980:24). These classifications could be simplified and reduced thus: Freeman's third category and Ching's first category are identical and could be conflated as the 'style as choice' school; while the second and third categories of Ching are the theoretical bases for functionalist stylistics; therefore the three modes of analysis within formalist stylistics are:

⁴ Discussions on style in stylistics have invariably hinged on these two polarised dichotomies, viz., the purely formal norm-deviation dichotomy and the more mentalistic form-content dichotomy (cf. Barthes 1971:3-4).
I) the style as choice mode

ii) the style as deviation mode, and

iii) the style as convergence of textual patterns

mode. Rather than discuss the various notions of style\(^5\), it would be more pertinent to examine the relationship between a particular notion and its exemplifying practical analysis, which is the concern of sections 1.2.1.1. to 1.2.2.2.

1.2.1.1 Style as Choice

Stylistic analyses with this notional underpinning form the mainstream of formalist stylistics and seek to capture the personal linguistic idiosyncrasies of particular writers. Practitioners of this mode, whom Leech and Short call "dualists" (1981:15), assume the possibility of attributing variant forms to an invariant content, and see style as residing in the mannered and consistent selection from a grammar of possibilities (see also Freeman 1970:13-16, Ching et al. 1980:24; Leech and Short 1981:15; Ohmann 1970:267). This mode of analysis appeals to the intuitive feeling that style has to do with manner rather than matter; Richard Ohmann, one of the most enthusiastic proponents of this mode of analysis, therefore defines style as "as a way of doing

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it" (1970:263). A sentence like 'After dinner the senator made a speech,' he says, can have variant forms like 'When dinner was over, the senator made a speech,' 'The senator made a speech after dinner,' or 'A speech was made by the senator after dinner,' while preserving its content (1970:264); a consistent selection of any one pattern would indicate an element in the stylistic repertoire of the writer. To substantiate his claim that all writers show predilection towards particular structures, Ohmann denatures a passage from Faulkner's "The Bear" by reversing three generalised transformations, viz., the relative clause transformation, the conjunction transformation and the comparative transformation; part of the original passage and its Ohmannised version are given below:

a. the desk and the shelf above it on which rested the ledgers in which Mc Caslin recorded the slow outward trickle of food which returned each fall as cotton made and ginned and sold...

b. the desk. The shelf was above it. The ledgers rested on the shelf. The ledgers were old [sic]. Mc Caslin recorded the trickle of food in the ledgers. Mc Caslin recorded the trickle of supplies in the ledgers. Mc Caslin recorded the trickle of equipment in the ledgers. The trickle was slow. The trickle was outward. The
trickle returned each fall as cotton. The cotton was made. The cotton was ginned. The cotton was sold. (Ohmann 1970:269)

Ohmann's conclusions are that (i) the content remains roughly the same, while the Faulknerian quality has been effectively destroyed; (ii) since only three transformations have been reversed, Faulkner's style leans heavily on a small amount of grammatical apparatus (1970:269) and (iii) because these transformations are semantically of the 'additive' kind their selection reveals "a certain conceptual orientation" (1970:271). Ohmann also performs the same process on a passage from Hemingway's "Soldier's Home", and observes that this has not affected the style of Hemingway, implying that the use of these three transformations are peculiar to Faulkner (1970:272).

Another analysis which exemplifies this mode is Curtis W. Hayes's comparative study of the styles of Edward Gibbon and Ernest Hemingway, again using the TG framework, where the relative complexity and simplicity of their styles have been presented through a comparison of the transformational history of their sentences (1970:279-295).

However, in stylistic, a movement from mere description to interpretation has been considered mandatory, even such a pure formalist as Ohmann asserting that the "move from formal descriptions of styles to
critical and semantic interpretations should be the ultimate goal of stylistics" (1970:271; See also Fowler 1966:28; Cluysenaar 1976:16; M.H. Short 1985:4); it is this which has prompted Ohmann's statement above that Faulkner's use of 'additive' transformations indicates a certain conceptual orientation. In the same essay he notes that the sentences of D.H. Lawrence's Studies in Classic American Literature are characterised by "a variety of deletion transformations" (1970:275), which is responsible for the "brusque, emphatic style" (ibid.) of this work and the "driving insistence one feels on reading it" (1970:276). Similarly Louis T. Milic claims that Swift's use of connectives and of series in sentence initial position, is "surely a striking peculiarity of his style" (1970:246) and concludes that this (i) "argues a fertile and well stocked mind" (quoted in Fish 1981:55) and (ii) results in an effect of persuasiveness (1970:254).

Such analyses have been successful in capturing the linguistic thumb-print of particular writers; however two limitations may be noted: (i) they are inherently contrastive in design, i.e., the formal description of a second style is needed to provide contrastive emphasis and (ii) a tendency to isolate only one or two stylistic traits is also evident, and by any exaggeration one or two linguistic features do not constitute a style.
1.2.1.2 Style as Deviation

This mode of analysis rests on the belief that literature exhibits the most creative, conscious manipulation of the linguistic code, a fact which is especially true of poetry where deviant (ungrammatical) sentences "tend to occur far more frequently . . . than in prose" (Thorne 1970:192). It is this which led Bernard Bloch to formulate his suggestive but perhaps impracticable definition of style as "the message carried by the frequency distributions and transitional possibilities of linguistic features especially as they differ from the norm of the same features in the language as a whole" (qtd in Freeman 1970:6), the difficulty being to identify the norm in language. The stylistician whose works best exemplify this mode of analysis could be Michael Riffaterre, for whom style is "an emphasis (emotive, affective or aesthetic) added to the information conveyed by the linguistic structure without alteration of meaning" (1967:413). His basic strategy consists in identifying and describing the "SD" or stylistic device, which is that linguistic element which is "unpredictable" in the immediate context of the reading experience (1967:427). For example, in the following lines from Pope's "Rape of the Lock", II, 105-109: "Whether the Nymph shall (. . .) stain her Honour, or her new Brocade (. . .) or lose her Heart, or Necklace at a Ball", the metaphorical meaning of the verb in the two contexts -
'stain her honour', 'lose her heart' – makes the shift to its ordinary meaning unpredictable, which along with the forced parallelisms of 'honour'/'brocade' and 'heart'/'necklace', "impose maximal decoding" (1967:434). It is perhaps unfortunate that Riffaterre remains a formalist, being content with identification and description; his reader-oriented mode of analysis could have gone one step further and enquired into the semantic implications of the unpredictable structures, (cf. Fish 1981:66) because, as Monroe Beardsley has observed, "any deviation from what is felt to be the normal grammatical order is a case of secondary sentence meaning" (1967:291), i.e. implicational meaning.

Mukarovsky's notion of "foregrounding" is a valid theoretical insight derived from this perspective (1970:43).

1.2.1.3 Style as Convergence of Textual Patterns

This mode of analysis attempts to identify those linguistic structures which help to bind sentences into a cohesive textual unit, i.e. its concern is the study of cohesive devices in literary texts. Waldemar Gutwinski's *Cohesion in Literary Texts* (1976) is probably the best detailed study, where he identifies and compares the cohesive devices used in characteristic passages from Henry James and Ernest Hemingway, basing his theoretical framework mainly on Halliday's description of cohesive
devices (1970). His conclusion is that James' quite involved and complex grammatical cohesion makes the "semantic interpretation of his text more involved and difficult than those of the passage by Hemingway", whose more balanced combination of lexical and grammatical cohesion makes for "simple and clear cohesion" (1976:147). Cohesive devices need not always be grammatical items like pronouns or lexical words; according to Irene R. Fairley syntactic deviation functions as a device of structural cohesion in the poems of E.E. Cummings (1981:123).

For formalist stylistics to retain its credibility two conditions have to be met: (i) Style should be equated with pure form and (ii) content (as Ohmann and Riffaterre use the term) should be understood as propositional content (as opposed to implicational content), limitations which might seem stifling to the literary critic.

1.2.2 Functionalist Stylistics
1.2.2.1 Style as Tension between Form and Meaning

While the effort of formalist stylistics was directed towards the identification of the idiosyncratic style features of a writer and thence towards establishing its correlation with habits of meaning, functional stylistics "recognises as stylistically significant only those linguistic features of a text
which have a stylistic 'function'" (Taylor and Toolan 1984:58), i.e., which have 'effect' or 'value'. Functionalist stylistics considers stylistic effects arising as "a new synthesis from the dialectic of a form-content interaction" (Ching 1980:205), and is characterised by the strategy of linking "formal stylistic features with specific stylistic 'functions'" (Taylor and Toolan ibid). It may also be noted that while formalist stylistics, with its emphasis on characteristic (i.e. consistent across an entire text) linguistic choices, tended to make monolithic semantic interpretations for the style, i.e. at the macro-level of the text(s), functionalist stylistics, theoretically, opens up the possibility of examining the form-content interaction also at the micro-level of the immediately evolving context of reading. A few analyses which exemplify the functionalist mode are presented below.

In William Golding's *The Interitors*, the greater part of which imaginatively presents the life and worldview of Neanderthal man, M.A.K. Halliday (1971) observes certain foregrounded patterns of syntax which expresses the subject matter and the underlying theme. He describes the pattern in a passage from this section⁶, which mainly presents the sense perceptions of Lok, one of the Neanderthal people, and then offers an interpretation. The main points of his description are presented below:

⁶ See Appendix I.a for the passage.
The clauses in the passage are mainly clauses of action, of which almost all describe simple movements (turn, rise, hold, reach etc), and of these the majority are intransitive; the typical pattern is exemplified by 'the bushes twitched again,' 'Lok steadied by the tree,' and 'the stick began to grow shorter at both ends.'

A high proportion of the subjects are not people; they are either parts of the body (29%) or inanimate objects (71%), and of the human subjects half are found in clauses which are not clauses of action (1970:349).

His interpretative statements are:

It is particularly the lack of transitive clauses of action with human subjects . . . that creates an atmosphere of ineffectual activity . . . The syntactic tension expresses this combination of activity and helplessness.

No doubt this is a fair summary of the life of Neanderthal man. (1970:349-50).

He however notes that the structures are not as a whole deviant; the difficulties of understanding are at the level of interpretation, or rather, reinterpretation, when the reader insists on translating 'the stick began to grow shorter at both ends' as 'the man drew the bow' (1970:358).
In a similar vein, J.P. Thorne notices linguistic irregularities in Donne's "A Nocturnall Upon S. Lucies Day", which he says are regular in the context of the poem, i.e., they are semantically motivated. This poem has sentences which have inanimate nouns where one would usually expect to find animate nouns (e.g. 'Yea plants, yea stones detest and love') and animate nouns where one would expect to find inanimate nouns (e.g. 'I . . . am the grave of all'). According to Thorne it seems likely that "these linguistic facts underlie the sense of chaos and breakdown of natural order which many literary critics have associated with the poem" (1970:193).

A much more recent stylistic excercise in this mode would be Dierdre Burton's analysis of a passage from Sylvia Plath's "Bell Jar", where, taking reader response as her point of departure, she ascribes linguistic reasons for these responses (1982). Reader responses which were repeatedly formulated for the passage under discussion were:

(i) the persona seems quite helpless
(ii) the persona seems "at a distance", "outside herself . . .",
(iii) the medical staff seem more interested in getting the job done than caring (1982:202). The first five sentences of the passage, their structures and relevant interpretations are presented below. 

For complete passage and analysis see App. I.b.
Passage: (1) The wall-eyed nurse came back. (2) She unclasped my watch and dropped it in her pocket. (3) Then she started tweaking the hairpins from my hair. (4) Doctor Gordon was unlocking the closet. (5) He dragged out a table on wheels with a machine on it and rolled it behind the head of the bed.

Stage 1: Chart of process types:

1. nurse came back = material-action-intention
2a. nurse unclasped = material-action-intention
2b. nurse dropped = material-action-intention
3. nurse started tweaking = material-action-intention
4. doctor was unlocking = material-action-intention
5a. doctor dragged out = material-action-intention
5b. doctor rolled = material-action-intention

This description reveals that twenty clauses out of thirty (totally) make the 'material-action-intention' choice. Moreover, since all the nurse's actions are material-action-intention processes, the effect is of "her deliberately carrying out determinate actions" (1982:205).

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8 See Appendix I.c for short description of grammatical framework.
Stage 2: Chart of affecting agent and affected participant:

1. nurse affects Ø by intention process

2 a. nurse affects persona's possession by intention process.

2 b. nurse affects persona's possession by intention process

3. nurse affects persona's possession by intention process

4. doctor affects equipment by intention process

5 a. doctor affects equipment by intention process

5 b. doctor affects equipment by intention process. (1982 : 206)

The conclusions drawn are that, massively, it is the nurse who affects both the persona's possessions and body parts, the doctor affects equipment, while the persona affects nothing. This last analysis, Burton concludes, gives the analyst "a much neater and more delicate way of addressing ourselves to reader's responses" (1982 : 207). According to Burton, stylistic analysis can not only help in discussing effects, it can also help the critic to understand how different sorts of realities are constructed through language (1982 : 201).

Samuel Jay Keyser (1981) adopts a similar analytical procedure to analyse Wallace Stevens' short poem "The Death of a Soldier". The stylistically significant

9 See Appendix I.d for complete poem
pattern here is Stevens's selection of (i) verbs which can never take agents (is, become, fall) (ii) non agentive verbs which can but need not take agents (contract, is expected, stop, go) and (iii) the syntactic construction which requires the deletion of agent from the surface of the poem for verbs used in the agentive sense (impose, call for) (1981:102, 104). According to Keyser the poem presents a world in which the death of a soldier or of anyone is a natural event not associated with any initiator, just as the death of a leaf in autumn has no initiator. Keyser sees a relationship between the meaning of the poem and the suppression of agency; "the manipulation of syntax and semantics to remove all vestiges of an agent from the surface of the poem," he concludes, "corresponds to the world of the poem in which there are no initiators" (1981:105).

Other analyses in this mode include Freeman (1981) and Austin (1981). In all the analyses described above interpretation means in effect a movement between the poles of linguistic fact and literary effect.

1.2.2.2 Style as Meaning

This mode of analysis assumes the modern doctrine of the inseparability of form and content. As Todorov forcefully states the case, "Meaning does not exist before being articulated and perceived . . .; there do not exist
two utterances of identical meaning if their articulation has followed a different course," (1967; qtd. in Rimmon-Kenan 1983:8), which echoes Benedotto Croce's radical pronouncement that "to have an intuition is to express" (qtd. in Sykes 1962:13); i.e., intuition or thought or meaning does not exist prior to its articulation.

The short analysis which best exemplifies this mode could be Halliday's functional analysis of the Queen's remark, "It's a poor sort of memory that works only backward," in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There:

The Word poor is a 'modifier', and thus expresses a sub class of its head-word memory (ideational); while at the same time it is an 'epithet' expressing the Queen's attitude (interpersonal), and the choice of this word in this environment (as opposed to, say, useful) indicates more specifically that the attitude is one of disapproval. The words it's . . . that have here no reference at all outside the sentence, but they structure the message in a particular way (textual), which represents the Queen's opinions as if it were an 'attribute' (ideational), and defines one class of memory as exclusively possessing this undesirable quality (ideational). The lexical repetition in
memory that only works backwards relates the Queen's remark (textual) to mine only works one way, in which mine refers anaphorically, by ellipsis to memory in the preceding sentence (textual) and also to I in Alice's expression of her own judgement I'm sure (interpersonal) (1971:337).

The sentence under discussion is preceded by Alice's statement "I'm sure mine only works one way"

Similarly H.G. Widdowson (1980) has shown how the use of possessives especially in fronted (thematic) position in Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" have helped create the poem's underlying theme of possession and social responsibility.

In India, the predominant trend has been Formalist stylistics, exemplified in Charwal 1977, Yadugiri 1974 - one of the more painstakingly comprehensive analysis, Narayanan 1983, Raj 1985 etc. A successful Functionalist analysis would be Achar 1987, which however, while offering authentic interpretative statements on the style of Soyinka, occasionally lays itself open to Fish's charges of circularity and arbitrariness, confusing rhetorical strategy with cognitive orientation, as in statements like: "The frequent 'of' genitive seems to be indicative of a need on the part of the poet
to split single entities into two components" (1987:86)
or that parallelism "seems to represent another means of
coming to terms with harrowing experience" (1987:105).

The main theoretical perspectives in stylistics
could therefore be represented thus:

Total linguistic
description of the
literary text

Formalist

stylistics

The study of
non literary
style

The study of style

Stylistics

The study of
literary convergence

Style as
choice

Style as

style

Functionalist

Stylistics

Style as tension

Style as deviation

Style as meaning

Fig.1 Basic Trends in Stylistics.
(Unbroken lines indicate direct relationships, while
broken lines indicate implicated relationships)

It may also be noted that the seeming
incompatibility between the monistic credo of the
inseparability of form and content and the dualist belief
in the form-content dichotomy disappears, if it is
understood that 'meaning' for the dualists implies
'propositional meaning' or the 'basic sense', while, for
the monists 'meaning' also implies 'implicational' or
'suggested' meaning; the difference therefore is merely
one of perspective.
1.3 A Critique of Stylistic Practices

Any appraisal of the state of the art would have to consider specific charges levelled against the discipline. One of the most blistering but well-argued attacks on stylistics has been made by Stanley Fish (1981). He primarily attacks the interpretative procedures adopted in stylistics, which are according to him circular and arbitrary. The circularity he finds typically exemplified in the following statement made by Milic, in the course of analysing Swift's use of connectives: "The low frequency of initial determiners, taken together with the high frequency of initial connectives, makes [Swift] a writer who likes transitions and made much of connectives" (1966:104, qtd. in Fish 1981:55), of which Fish says, "the two halves of this sentence present the same information in slightly different terms, even though its rhetoric suggests that something has been explained... There is in short no gain in understanding" (Ibid). This circularity is also evident in Ohmann's statements on Conrad's structures of chaining, which supposedly reflect his tendency to "link one thing with another associatively" (1967:236). Closely associated with this circularity of the interpretative procedure is Leith's observation regarding the unimaginative nature of stylistic readings (1987:14). The stylistician habitually starts from an interpretation,
reverts to a description of linguistic patterns which are seemingly responsible for the interpretation, and then reaches the starting point. For example M.H. Short starts his analysis of T.S. Eliot's "Prelude I" by characterising its style as "simple and bitty" (1982:58), which he then attributes to the irregular rhyme scheme, the total absence of the linking device of anaphora, the lack of bound clauses, and minor clauses (i.e. clauses without predicator) (1982:58-59). Short's observations are doubtless valid, but his originating premise was only an impression of the formal quality of the poem.

Fish's second charge is that the interpretations are arbitrary, they are not proved but merely asserted (1981:55). According to Fish this arbitrariness is evident both in the moves from syntax to personality and from syntax to specific meaning effects. Examples of the first kind are (i) Milic on Swift: "[Swift's] use of series argues a fertile and well stocked mind" (1966:104, qtd. in Fish 1981:55); (ii) Halliday on Golding: "The 'peoples' use of transitivity patterns argues a Neanderthal mind" (qtd in Fish 1981:63); (iii) Ohmann on Dylan Thomas's syntactical irregularities (as in the expression 'river wended vales' in "A Winter's Tale"), which serves his "vision of things", of the world as "process, interacting forces and repeating cycles, in which human beings and human thought are indifferently
caught up" (Ohmann 1967:238); and (iv) Ohmann on Faulkner: Faulkner's use of 'additive' transformations demonstrates "a certain conceptual orientation, a preferred way of organising experience" (1970:271). Examples of the second kind are (i) Thorne's statement that Donne's breaking of selectional rules underlies the sense of chaos and breakdown associated with the poem "A Nocturnall" (op cit.); (ii) Ohmann's observations that deletion in Lawrence is responsible for the "driving insistence one feels on reading him" (op cit.) etc. Fish does not reject these interpretations as invalid, he merely argues that such interpretations can be made in any direction one wants, because the formal apparatus does not and cannot authorise such a leap from the data to a specification of their value. Therefore, for example, Swift's use of series, he says, could argue the presence of the contiguity disorder described by Jakobson, or an unwillingness to finish his sentences, or an anal-retentive personality (1981:56); or it could even argue a pretension to a fertile and well stocked mind. Similarly, Fish notes, the breaking of the same selectional rules as in Donne, produces a sense of harmony in the poetry of Wordsworth (ibid). Fish's attack seems justified because most of these interpretative assertions, like the most impressionist of literary criticisms, seem to be at best mere conjectures because
they are never verifiable, which is far removed from the objectivity claimed for such analyses (e.g. Fowler 1966:28).

A qualitative difference may be discerned in certain of the later analyses (e.g. Keyser 1981; Freeman 1981; Burton 1982); Fish intuitively grasps this difference, and continues his "saturation bombing" (Smith 1978, qtd. in Fish 1982:129) of stylistics (1982). While Fish's earlier essay emphasised the arbitrariness of the interpretative leap, these later analyses come under attack because their "formal patterns are themselves the product of interpretation" (1982:144). An example, according to Fish, is Keyser's analysis of Stevens' poem "Death of a Soldier" (See above p.25). Keyser's argument that the "form of his [Stevens'] poem reflects its content" (1981:104), which assumes the form-content dichotomy, is untenable because the analysis clearly reveals that the form is the meaning, "that the suppression of agency is the meaning of the poem" (Fish 1982:138). Burton's analysis of Sylvia Plath's "Bell Jar" is another example in the same mode. Fish in his 1982 article ("What is Stylistics?" Part II) has been ceaselessly drawing attention to the identification of form and meaning without fully realising the reason for this conflation; the earlier analyses (Milic 1970; Ohmann 1970; Halliday 1971 etc) described purely formal
patterns, while these later analyses presented interpretative, i.e., functional classifications. For example, to label sentence 2a in Plath's passage-'She unclasped my watch'-as 'nurse affects persona's possession by intention process' is merely a formalisation of meaning using functional labels. It may be noted that functional labelling in systemic grammar and deep structure analysis in TG grammar both reach the same base, viz, propositional content. Therefore Ohmann can assert that the denatured Faulkner passage has the same content as the original (ignoring the effective destruction of the reminiscent tone of the narration), and Burton can conveniently ignore the connotations in variant realisations of the same form, like 'My watch was unclasped by the nurse,' 'What the nurse did was unclasp my watch,' or 'The sneaky-eyed nurse dexterously unclasped my watch.' Fish's earlier charge that "there is in short no gain in understanding" appears to be equally applicable to these later analyses.  

Theoretically, functionalist stylistics remains the most promising mode of analysis. But as Taylor and Toolan have observed, the Achilles heel of functionalist

10 It is possible that Fish has been single-handedly responsible for this 'revolution' in interpretative strategy; these later analyses could be seen as a reaction against Fish's complaint of circularity and arbitrariness.
stylistics is that no criteria have ever been put forward for identifying the function of an utterance (1984:60), which is responsible for the non-uniform prolificity of possible interpretations.

The implications of the above discussion may be summarised thus:

(i) The hunt for a syntax - personality paradigm is a vacuous exercise, there being nothing to warrant a leap from formal description to cognitive orientation; on the other hand a description of consistently employed patterns is a legitimate formalisation of the 'style' (as linguistic idiosyncracy) of the writer.

(ii) An attempt to establish a relationship between form and underlying theme or total significance of a work would also seem to be suspect; such interpretations at best remaining conjectures.

(iii) The description of transitivity patterns or formal description with functional classification of elements can only help formalise propositional meaning.

(iv) Therefore a more immediate supra-sentential level needs to be identified to which purely formal patterns can be convincingly related; an attempt should also be made to find valid criteria for identifying the functions of structures.
1.4 Towards a Theory of Stylistics

1.4.1 A Tentative Recharting of Options.

It should be evident that, if stylistics is to present itself as a valid perspective for examining the literary artefact, it must break new ground in theory and practice and present a closely-argued statement of its limitations and potentialities. Commendably, Fish himself has taken the initiative in suggesting new directions stylistics could take.

Fish's remedy for salvaging stylistics is an 'affective' stylistics, where the point of departure is not the text and its formal patterns but the reader and the process of reading. The theoretical stance which informs this perspective is that meaning does not inhere in the text and its formal patterns (as the stylistician, who is a direct descendant of the New critics, believes), but is a function of the reader, who confers it. It would be possible to mediate between the extreme objectivity of the objective stylistician and the extreme subjectivity of Fish and consider meaning as a function of a text-reader interaction (cf. Ching 1980:7; Holub 1984:84; Beaugrande and Dressler 1981:6).

According to Fish, stylistics should enquire into what the reader does: the assumptions he is making, the expectations he is forming and the attitudes he is entertaining as he encounters particular patterns
Fish, without realising it, has identified a supra-sentential level to which formal patterns may be related: the immediately evolving textual world, which Hasan calls the "symbolic articulatory events" (1975:57), which may then be related to theme or total significance. Even this basic shift in perspective suggests re-readings for the patterns described in the above analyses. For example, as Fish notes, in Halliday's analysis of *The Inheritors* it is possible to extrapolate from the linguistic evidence to the interpretative effort demanded of the reader who must negotiate it. Fish's reading is that "the effort expended in the course of the [interpretative] activity [for e.g. in interpreting 'The stick began to grow shorter at both ends' as 'the bow was drawn'] becomes the measure and sign of the distance between us and the character in the novel" (1981:64). However, a more plausible re-reading is that 'the effort expended to interpret is a measure and sign of the identification between us and the character,' because the reader's incomprehension is a direct measure of Lok's incomprehension, the reader thus experiencing vicariously the state of Lok's mind. A further interpretation for the same passage could be that, through the predominant transitivity pattern of 'inanimate subject + intransitive verb of action' (e.g. 'the bushes twitched'), Golding has 'creatively'
presented a Neanderthal world, where, for its inhabitants, inanimate objects do not exist. Similarly it could be stated that the use of agentless constructions in Stevens' poem has created a world without initiators, or that Lawrence's use of deletion transformations indicates his rhetorical stance towards the subject matter, etc.

However, this shift to the reader's perspective is only a very basic theoretical shift. Considerable refinement in theory is therefore called for, in order to determine the reader's points of entry into the literary text, keeping in mind the fact that the objective is to convincingly relate formal patterns with meaning effects. The following sections therefore examine theoretical issues felt to be of relevance for stylistics.

1.4.2 Style: From a Critic's Perspective

Perhaps the first issue which may be taken up is the notion of style, since some conception of style occupies centre-stage in all stylistic theories. The preponderantly formal conceptualisation of style in stylistics has already been noted, style either being considered as individuating linguistic expressions or as the controller and creator of meanings. It would be worthwhile to contrast the stylistician's notion of style with the literary critic's.
J. Middleton Murry's classic study of style (1922) succinctly presents the critic's conceptualisation of this much bandied term. He discerns three basic senses of the term:

(i) Style as personal idiosyncracy, as in 'I know who wrote that article in The Saturday Review - Mr. Saintsbury'. Murry makes clear that anything which aids identification, whether the turn of phrase or the turn of thought, is part of the style. (1960: 4-5)

(ii) Style as technique of exposition, as in 'Mr. Wilkinson's ideas are interesting, but he must learn to write; at present he has no style.' (1960: 5) Murry is justifiably of the opinion that this sense is applicable only to the exposition of intellectual ideas "as the novel or poem that is well conceived and badly written is a chimera" (1960: 6).

(iii) Style as the highest achievement of literature, as in, 'You may call Marlowe bombastic, you may call him farcical, but one quality outweighs his bombast, his savagery and his farce - he has style.' (1960: 4). The sharpness of his insight into style is clearly evident, for example, while commenting on stylistic idiosyncracy:

The test of a true individuality of style is that we should feel it to be inevitable; in it we should be able to catch the reference back to a whole mode of existence consistent with
itself, [which] will be accompanied by a conviction that the peculiarity of style was necessary, and that the originating emotion . . . demanded this mode of expression and this alone. (1960:43)

He attributes to Stendahl the "best of all definitions of style", that style is "to add to a given thought all the circumstances fitted to produce the whole effect which the thought ought to produce" (qtd. in Murry 1960:74), and then makes the radical pronouncement that where "it [the precise communication of the thought - feeling complex] is not, style does not exist" (1960:66). According to Murry the style "rises and falls" according to the nature of the thought-feeling complex communicated (1960:32; cf Todorov's "low, middle and elevated styles" (1971:32)). He also notes the possibility of a writer who, having lost the capacity for intense feeling and perception, continues to exhibit the formal concomitant, the 'style'; his writing, Murry says, would have the hallmarks, but it would not be the hallmark of genius (1960:18). Sir Herbert Read's precise observation could be considered the critic's closing statement regarding style; "Form", says Read, "is the natural effect of the poet's integrity" (1953:4).

Murry's notion of style as personal idiosyncracy validates the stylistician's attempt to isolate the
linguistic idiosyncracies of the writer, but what has to be noted by the stylistician is the cleavage between his purely formal conceptualisation of style and the critic's organic view. He would do well to remember that linguistic idiosyncracies do not make a style, that style is essentially a mentalistic concept (Cassirer 1975:43), and that if he sets out to 'finger-print' a style, he has already made an evaluation regarding the quality of the work. (To extend Ohmann's analogy, nobody appreciates the style of a tennis player who serves and volleys with grace and flourish, but hardly ever wins a match.) Style therefore, would seem to reside in the perfect fit between form and content.

1.4.3 Literature, Language and Linguistics: Some Theoretical Consideration

The second issue that needs to be examined is the inter-relationships between literature, language and linguistics. If stylistic analyses founded on the apparently sound premise that a knowledge of language i.e., of linguistics, can explain significant aspects of the literary work have been singularly disappointing, the validity of this basic proposition has to be examined.

Ohmann compares style or form to the different ways in which different tennis players execute their shots, the invariant 'content' being the rules of the game (1970:263).
And moreover since stylistics characteristically strives to explain how in literature the linguistic form raises itself to the level of the aesthetic form the question of "the nature of literature and . . . of aesthetic effect and response" (Wellek 1971:67) presents itself to the stylistician. Both these factors prompt an examination of the relationships between literature, language and linguistics.

1.4.3.1 Literature: A Basic Function

Since the process of reading has been identified as the perspective which could most profitably be adopted in stylistics, the question that may be asked is 'What is the total effect which the reading of a literary work produces?', which is a specific variant of the question 'What is the function of literature?' Or, to put it differently, it may be asked, 'What distinguishes the process of reading a literary work from the reading of, for example, a newspaper or advertisement?'

Wolfgang Iser who has closely examined this problem, (1974, 1978), offers one of the more perceptive and suggestive answers; the totality of a literary work, he says, "enables us to formulate ourselves and thus

\footnote{For various notions and functions of literature see Hernadi (1978).}
discover an inner world of which we had hitherto been unconscious" (1978:158; qtd. in Holub 1984: 91). Or, as Holub, summarising Iser, succinctly puts it, "The reading [of a literary work] is the medium through which consciousness comes to realise itself" (1984:92). But the question of how this is accomplished in literature is obviously more problematic. A literary work, however, as Wellek has noted, is accessible only through its language (op.cit.) and therefore an understanding of the nature of literary language could throw light on this aspect of literary experience.

1.4.3.2 Literature and Language

While the stylistician can claim that the "creative principles of human language are centrally, not peripherally located in the semantics and aesthetics of human literature" (Ching 1980:4), he has failed to realise that the semantic and aesthetic force of literary language depends on the everyday, ordinary, communicative use of language and that literary language differs in certain crucial aspects from non-literary language.\(^{13}\)

The nature of literary language could be grasped in terms of what Warren and Wellek have called the "mode of existence of a literary work" (1963:142).

\(^{13}\) Two among the few who have enquired into the nature of literary language are Binns (1966) and Hasan (1971).
According to them a literary work is an object of knowledge *sui generis*. . . [which] is neither real (like a statue), nor mental (psychological, like the experience of light or pain), nor ideal (like a triangle). It is a system of norms of ideal concepts which are intersubjective. (1963:156)

Or in the words of Roman Ingarden, a literary work is a perfect case of an object whose "pure intentionality" is beyond any doubt (1973: 1xii, qtd. in Holub 1984:23). What this implies in terms of the Saussurian signifier-signified distinction is that, while the signifier (the verbalisation) lies anchored to the real world, the signified lacks an existence in the real world; it exists only in the consciousness of the reader. It may be ventured that the aesthetic force of the literary work depends on the nature of signified evoked in the reader; the sharper and more vibrant the concretisation\(^{14}\) or imaginative experience in the reader, the greater the aesthetic impact of the literary work.

The question that presents itself is whether the signifier alone is responsible for this animation of the signified; Stylisticians with their formal bias, New Critics with their belief in the poem as object possessing meanings and the Russian Formalists, who

\(^{14}\) This term has been borrowed from Ingarden (1973)
believe that the end of art is to make form\textsuperscript{15} obscure, this 'defamiliarisation' helping the reader to feel things (Lodge 1981:8), believe so. However an understanding of the natures of literary and non-literary languages, especially as pertaining to the different signifier-signified relations characterising each type suggest a different answer.

Ordinary language, whether used by the artist or the reader to communicate in real world situations, in addition to the signifier and the signified having an existence in the real world, is inevitably context bound, i.e., the nature and form of the utterance is determined and limited by the context of situation and all its attendant circumstances like topic, setting, mood, speaker-listener relationship, speaker/listener attitudes to the topic etc \textsuperscript{16}; for both the speaker and the listener the context and all its attendant circumstances exist prior to the utterance. In literature on the other hand, the literary work, the signifier, exists prior to and independantly of its context and its circumstances for

\textsuperscript{15} Form can also include elements of diction, plot, narrative technique etc (if Holub 1984:18).

\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Frank Smith: "The actual circumstances in which language is uttered place considerable constraints on its form" (1973:4).
the reader, who has to re-create it; the reader is invited to imaginatively re-experience all the possible emotive reverberations evoked by the context and all its attendant circumstances, which has been suggested through the signifier and from his experience of the world and language (cf. Binns 1966:124; Stendahl's definition of style above). The signified in the reader could therefore be defined as a heightened consciousness of the effect which the real world phenomena referred to by the signifier could have produced in him. The above statement implies that the signified can never be a purely visual imaginative experience, even in the most realist of texts. In the first place such a purely visual concretisation is impossible, there being too many indeterminacies and gaps (like colour, shape etc.) which the reader does not attempt to and cannot fill out completely. Moreover the writer's main interest is with the presentation of the overwhelming emotional quality he discerns in life, through each particularity. It is immensely creditable to Murry that while Iser and Fish are still locked in hot debate over the nature of indeterminacy, in effect the nature of concretisation (Freund 1987:148-151), his brilliantly simple insight can help define the successful signifier as that which produces the concretisation which evokes "just so much of visual background as will enable [the reader] to feel the quality that is being
transferred" (1960:84). It seems plausible to suggest that the reader becomes aware of the range of his consciousness through his imaginative re-experiencing of life at the insistence of the text.

Specific instances could reveal clearly the special nature of literary language; the following example shows how the reader's knowledge of the world can create concretisations. In the sentence

He could not see the shore now but only the tops of the blue hills showed white . . .

(IV: 32)

the implications of context which automatically flow from the reader's experience of the world are (i) the persona is in a boat (ii) he is quite far away from land (iii) he has been sailing for some time now and (iv) he is moving further and further out to sea. Because of these implications the reader becomes aware of the persona's state of mind as he watches the shore-line recede into the distance (in reality he ascribes to the persona the feelings he would have had, had he been in the persona's situation).

The reader's experience of language is also simultaneously responsible for the shape of his concretisations. For example, the reader knows from his experience of the world and of language use that the sentences 'John kissed Mary,' 'Mary was kissed by John,'
'It was John who kissed Marry,' 'It was Mary who was kissed by John,' 'Who John kissed was Mary,' 'What John did was kiss Mary' etc. can only occur in different contexts of situation signifying different speaker-listener and speaker/listener-subject relationships, i.e., they are not stylistic choices as Ohmann believes (1970:264), but context determined choices (Yule and Brown 1980:128). These variant forms when they occur in a literary work therefore define and suggest different speaker-listener-subject relationships, different contexts of situation for the reader.

Similarly, the reader intuitively feels that the sentence

So his mother prayed for him and then they stood up and and Krebs kissed his mother and went out of the house. (IOT: 101)

would be, for example, perfectly appropriate in a situation where Krebs, tired of the sickening sentimentality and values of his mother and the society in which she lives, wants to get away from it all (as is the case in the Hemingway story), while the structural variant of the same sentence:

So his mother prayed for him. Then they stood up. Krebs kissed his mother. He went out of the house. (Ohmann 1970:272)

seems more appropriate in the situation of a tense,
emotionally charged farewell. Therefore while Ohmann can claim that both the passages have the same style and content (ibid), the use of the second structure in the first situation would destroy the fiction that has so carefully been built up through the form. This reader's notion of the appropriateness of structures to particular situations again shows the powers of contextualisation he brings to bear on the literary text, which is again a function of the reader's experience with language.

The implications of the above discussion for stylistics are:

(1) it validates the placing of the reader at the centre of the interpretative process and suggests why stylistic interpretations, i.e. the movement between form and meaning, bypassing the reader and the process of reading have been arbitrary.

A case in point would be Halliday's contention that intransitive clauses of action with inanimate subjects reflect the "ineffectual activity" and "helplessness" of Lok in Golding's *The Inheritors* (p. 12 above), which is untenable mainly because Lok does not comprehend any danger (in the major part of the passage), and therefore the question of helplessness does not arise; Lok is, within the limits of his knowledge of the world, rationally and inquisitively observing the events around him. Halliday reaches this conclusion because in his
Tolstoy's statement that the content of a true work of art in its entirety "can only be expressed by itself" (Goldenveizer 1923, qtd. in Leech and Short 1981:25) and Beardsley's definition of literature as "a discourse in which an important part of the meaning is implicit" (1967:293) consequently gain in significance.

1.4.3.3 Language and Linguistics

Stylistics rests on the key assumption that linguistics is language, or that linguistics is the scientific study of language. However for linguistics to be defined as the study of language one crucial condition has to be met, viz., by language should be meant the isolated decontextualised sentence, which is characteristically the object of enquiry of linguistics. That is, while literature is language, linguistics cannot be equated with language because language, whether literary or non-literary, has no isolated decontextualised sentences. The crucial fall-out of this cognoscence is that linguistics, and therefore stylistics, cannot explain implicational meaning, implicational meaning being a function of extralinguistic factors, the most important among which is the reader's experience and knowledge of the world and language. The reader's grasp of the total significance of the work, his awareness of the psychological states of the characters deduced from their physical actions and reactions, the
development of character, the meaning and emotional significance of actions\(^{17}\), of significant and climactic events, of irony, paradox, allusions etc. are all implications which the reader automatically assimilates because of his experience of the world and language, an explanation or formalisation of which is beyond the scope of linguistics and therefore of stylistics. A case in point is Burton's analysis (see p23 above); the reader responses which purportedly form the point of departure for her analysis - "the persona seems quite helpless", "at a distance", "outside herself"; "the medical staff seem more interested in getting the job done than caring" - are all statements of implicational meaning. However her analysis has not, and cannot explain these implicational meanings. This inability to explain implicational meaning however is not indicative of the primitive state of linguistics because linguistics has to work within the limitations of the decontextualised sentence if it is to lay claim to the status of an exact science. But an awareness of this limitation is called for on the part of the stylistician before he makes any claims for stylistics because his interpretations will

\(^{17}\) Some examples: 'X bites his nails = x is nervous' (psychological state from action), 'x shouts at his wife = x is angry' (meaning of action) 'x tries to kiss, but is slapped' (emotional significance) etc. (See Rimmon Kenan 1983:36-40)
inevitably be weighed against the literary critic's readings, which are inevitably statements of implicational meaning.

Specific examples could indicate the limitations under which a linguistic stylistics has to operate. For example, linguistics cannot explain irony because the awareness of a gap between expectation and fulfilment depends on the reader's experience of the world, as conditioned by the society of which he is a part. The sentence:

He [Robert Cohn] . . . was married by the first girl who was nice to him. (I:8)

is ironical because of the reader's knowledge of the patterns of social behaviour in a male-dominated society. (The sentence would have been merely factual in a strongly matriarchal society where the woman chooses her husband by being "nice" to him.) The sentence also effectively demonstrates the plurisignification of literary language, as it simultaneously suggests the psychological traits of Cohn and the woman and the attitude of the narrator-protagonist to Cohn and his wife. An explanation of these implications are beyond the scope of a sentence linguistics.

Similarly, the contextualised use of language confers a range of connotative meaning on words, which again linguistics cannot explain. Lodge, for example, has
convincingly shown how the first paragraph of Hemingway's story "Cat in the Rain", in spite of the total absence of metaphors, metonymies, similes or synecdoches, is charged with connotative meaning, thus creating an emotional ambience for the story (1981:33).

The discordance between language and linguistics could be restated emphasising the discoursal nature of language; literature (and language) is not sentences, as Ohmann avers (1967), but discourse, where each sentence gets part of its meaning from the previous discourse and each sentence creates expectations which are confirmed, qualified or re-modified by the following discourse. Meaning, therefore, resides in the dynamics of the expectation-fulfilment relationship among the sentences of the discourse (Yule and Brown 1981; Todorov 1971:35).

For example Hemingway's novel The Sun also Rises opens with the sentence: 'Robert Cohn was once middleweight boxing champion of Princeton.' As this is the first sentence of a novel, it opens up a spectrum of expectations in the reader. The adjunct once imbues the character with a history, and the reader expects further information regarding Cohn, especially about his achievements, which the reader surmises are laudable. But both these expectations are destroyed in the next sentence: 'Do not think I am very impressed by that as a boxing title, but it meant a lot to Cohn.' The reader's
ideas of Cohn's achievement are qualified and ironic colour added with the last clause, setting up an antithetical stance between the narrator and Cohn. The reader's modified expectations are again destroyed in the next sentence: 'He cared nothing for boxing . . .', again setting up re-modified expectations.

The following example also indicates the limitations of a linguistic interpretation. The stylistician's interpretations for the sentence

Georgette smiled that wonderful smile . . .
(I:18)

would be limited to a statement like, 'This sentence has a deviant structure, the normally intransitive verb smile taking an object, thus suggesting an emotive emphasis.' However this sentence is strongly ironic in the novel and reveals the narrator as possessing an ironic sense of humour because the previous discourse has already indicated the quality of that smile: "With her mouth closed she was a rather pretty girl" (I:15) and "She smiled and showed all her bad teeth . . ." (I:17). In a different discoursal situation the same sentence 'She smiled that wonderful smile' could have been a strongly positive statement.

A formalisation of the implicit semantic relationships existing between sentences in a discourse is also beyond the scope of a sentence linguistics; relation like:
(i) explanation/elaboration,

She grinned and I saw why she made a point of not laughing. With her mouth closed she was a rather pretty girl. (I:15).

(The second sentence is also a comment and by implication delineates the character of the protagonist.)

(ii) wry comment on the action,

Just then another drunk started out from the fence with a blouse in his hands. He wanted to do capework with the bulls. (I:163)

(iii) cause/effect/explanation

Spain had not changed to summer time, so I was early. I set my watch again. I had recovered an hour by coming to San Sebastian. (I:195)

(iv) movement in space and time, etc.

The woman sent a girl upstairs with us to show the room. There were two beds, a wash-stand . . . (I:92)

It needs no emphasis that the totality of a text is apprehended through such implicational and discoursal relationships of meanings.


The implications of the discussions in the preceding sections (1.3-1.4.3) may be drawn up to frame a theory for stylistics. Of course, only the very basic
theoretical issues relevant for stylistics have been examined in these sections, because what seems to be required of the stylistician is a total rethinking on these crucial primary issues, given the general disenchantment with stylistics and the near non-existence of any stylistic theory. An insight into these basic issues clearly indicates the limitation of stylistics and suggests more valid procedural principles.

1.4.4.1 Limitations

The crucial limitation is that a formal stylistics, based on a sentence linguistics, cannot directly explain or describe the total semantic-aesthetic impact of the literary work, the explication of implicational/discoursal meaning being beyond the scope of a sentence stylistics. This implication, derived from an awareness of the notional discord between language and linguistics (Sec 1.4.3.3) explains why stylistic analyses, founded on the apparent soundness of its first premise (that literature is language is linguistics) have failed to realise the potential implicit in the premise, why stylistic readings from linguistic patterns to cognitive orientation/total significance of the work (e.g. Ohmann 1967; Thorne 1970) have been unconvincing or unimaginative.

This limitation viewed from a different perspective, could also help to understand why stylistics is
subordinate to and can never replace literary criticism. The stylistician who has to inevitably base his interpretative analysis on the sentences on the page, can never directly reach the extra-textual level of total significance, while the literary critic takes as his point of departure the totally apprehended, semantic-aesthetic literary artefact existing in his consciousness.

The following diagramatic representation which presents the movement of the interpretative explanation in the disciplines of stylistics and literary criticism should clearly indicate the limitation in the scope of stylistics vis-a-vis that of literary criticism.

The figure below also relates the activity of reading, which is identical for both the literary critic and the stylistician, to the direction of the interpretative explanation in literary criticism and stylistics, throwing into focus the contrast between these two disciplines; in the figure the single line arrows indicate the activity of reading, the double line arrows the direction of the interpretative explanation while the broken line arrows indicate the unrealised potential.
Fig. 2: Direction of Interpretative Moves in Literary Criticism and Stylistics.
1.4.4.2 Some Procedural Strategies

However this limitation need not be construed as a debilitating one. On the contrary it clearly defines the area of investigation in stylistics, and invites a systematic and thorough enquiry into the extent to which pure form creates meaning. Some procedural possibilities are outlined below:

(i) Stylistics could formalise the 'style' of a literary artist with the understanding however that this description of idiosyncratic linguistic patterns is totally devoid of value judgements. This stylistic practice is a valid exercise as it captures the common-sense notion of style as form/manner (see Murry sec. 1.4.2 above).

(ii) For functionalist stylistics to offer valid interpretations, the interpretative movement between the poles of linguistic observation and literary effect must be informed by the immediate activity of reading. This corrective measure for the critical failing in stylistics, viz., the lack of an effective interpretative strategy (sec.1.3), owes to two theoretical factors. Firstly, literary language firmly places the onus of its interpretation on the reader (sec.1.4.3.2). Secondly, for stylistic interpretation to be successful, the sentences on the page, the point of departure in stylistic analyses, have to be related to that activity which subsists at this level of language - the activity of reading. It may be noted however that the placing of the
reader at the centre of the interpretative process does not imply that the readings will be uniform; on the contrary it might seem that this strategy of centralising the reader would produce vastly divergent readings; one may of course admire Jane Austen and detest Jack Kerouac or vice versa, but their status as literary works depends solely on whether an authentic, powerfully felt mode of experience has found its authentic mode of expression.

This appeal to the activity of reading for interpretative validity also identifies a supra-sentential level to which sentence structures may be meaningfully related - the immediately evolving textual situation or concretisation in the reader, from which level the stylistician could reach the extra-textual level of total significance.

(iii) Stylistics could indicate how the 'form' or the signifier and the reader's experience of the world, together conspire to 'create' the content or signified in the consciousness of the reader. It should be able to show how the shape of the signified is evoked and limited by the shape of the signifier, how different signifiers suggest different concretisations for the reader (sec.1.4.3.2). Stylistics should be able to show a relationship between form and content since style resides in the perfect fit between form and content (sec.1.4.2) and be able to identify those points in the text where the signifier does not produce successful concretisations. Stylistic analysis should be able to suggest the force of
plurisignification of literary language as it is this which makes the reader aware of the range of his consciousness (sec.1.4.3.1). Stylistics therefore ought to investigate "the actual significance of any element in the text, ... not style but the work of literature" (Pearce 1977:35).

(iv) The immediate drawback of the procedures outlined above is that they tend to atomise the text and produce an unorganised collection of comments on various linguistic elements, giving the impression, as Roger Pearce has observed, of "a set of crossword answers in search of a matrix" (1977:24). To overcome this drawback and to give a holistic perspective to stylistic analyses, Hasan has postulated that the "symbolic articulatory events", the concretisation that accrue during the process of reading, be related to the level of theme (1975:56). However, this study believes that organisational coherence can be imparted to the analysis by relating either the linguistic structures or its concretisations to narrative technique, as this suprasentential level could be the ideal criterion for identifying the functions of linguistic structures in narrative fiction (cf. Taylor and Toolan's identification of the Achilles' heel of functionalist stylistics, op.cit).

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Working within the limitations noted above, the
primary aim of this study is to gauge the extent to which the purely formal elements of the text exert influence in creating or triggering off meaning and thus the extent to which stylistics may contribute to literary studies. A related objective is to test the validity of the theory outlined above, to ascertain if stylistics can offer convincing interpretations for literary texts. For this purpose this study analyses the four major novels of Ernest Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). Narrative fiction has been chosen to ascertain if stylistic methodology could be applied successfully to extended works of prose fiction, which usually employs ordinary non-deviant linguistic patterns, and thus to counterpoise the general stylistic practice of analysing short lyric poems or prose passages, usually with strongly deviant linguistic patterns. The main specific questions which this study seeks to answer are framed below, preceded by the theoretical points which informed the questions.

a. The style as personal idiosyncracy notion.

b. "Style is the linguistic characteristics of particular texts" (Leech and Short 1981:12).

i) What are the kinds of linguistic norms which Hemingway attains in his four major novels, taken cumulatively and individually?

ii) Is there significant variation among the norms of individual novels?
c. Style is a function of two interdependent variables, viz. form and content (Cassirer 1975:43) and resides in the perfect fit between the two.

d. The literary work is "neither completely text nor completely the subjectivity of the reader, but a . . . merger of the two" (Holub 1984:84), i.e. the signified in the reader is a function of the signifier and the reader's experience of the world.

(iii) Is it possible to establish a consistent interdependent relationship between form and content?

OR

If variations from the norm of each novel are evident in the different chapters of each novel, are these relatable to the subject matter/emotions in the different chapters? Are these dependancies powerful enough for prediction?

(iv) Are there qualitative deviations in any of the novels? What are the kinds of deviations and what are their functions? Are they relatable to stable content patterns/techniques?

(v) What are the kinds of meaning effects triggered off by the formal elements in the text?

OR

Given that during the process of reading subtle shifts in tone/emphasis/emotion attitudes etc.
occur, are the structures that released these effects identifiable?

(vi) How does the reader's experience of the world inscribe the form with meaning?

e. An appeal to the supra-sentential level of narrative technique can impart an organisational coherence to stylistic analyses of narrative fiction.

(vii) What are the main narrative techniques employed by Hemingway in his four major novels?

(viii) Can an appeal to narrative technique help to identify the functions of various linguistic structures at the different grammatical levels?

OR

What are the linguistic markers for the various elements of narrative technique?

(ix) What are the other identifiable supra-sentential features (like paragraph/chapter division etc) which influence reader-responses to the text?

This study could be considered successful if, at this moment of general disenchantment with stylistics, it creates an awareness of the interactions at the sentences-on-the page/reader interface, the first spawning ground of meaning in literary texts, and prompts an optimistic investigation into the possibilities of stylistics.