

Tribhuvan University

Subversion of Human Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*

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Self-Declaration

I hereby, as the candidate of the degree for the Master of Arts in English, declare that this project titled "Subversion of Human Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*" submitted at Central Department of English, T.U. is an authentic and original record of my work carried out under the scholarly guidance of Asst. Prof. Bal Bahadur Thapa, Ph.D. I have not submitted the work elsewhere for any other degree. I have neither taken any assistance from Artificial Intelligence (AI) nor plagiarized any content to my knowledge. If the authorities find any breach in the ethical issues of this work, I shall be held fully responsible for the breach. My supervisor and the evaluation committee has guided me only through the academic and administrative process. I understand the meaning, academic and legal implications of this statement.



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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Dipak Singh has completed the thesis entitled “Subversion of Human Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*” under my supervision and guidance. I hereby recommend this thesis to be submitted for examination, viva voice, and approval as per regular procedure for the Master's Degree in English.



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Letter of Approval

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled "Subversion of Human Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Dipak Singh has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Subversion of Human Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*

Abstract

The study critically examines the subversion of human subjectivity in Kazuo Ishiguro's Klara and the Sun. The research investigates the relationship between artificial intelligence and human subjectivity. The novel displays the contemporary social reality created by artificial intelligence. The novel critiques the anthropocentrism. The study adopts qualitative research approach based on close reading and analytical interpretive method. The study traverses with critical discourse on transhumanism and posthumanism. It assumes that Klara's portrayal as a narrator and protagonist challenges human essence. The research discovers that Klara and the Sun critiques the social reality and draws attention to contemporary struggle, prospects and challenges of artificial intelligence on human beings. The paper concludes that the novel deconstructs grand narrative of human subjectivity in literature. The novel demonstrates the subversive relation between artificial intelligence and human subjectivity. Klara and the Sun displays techno colonization in human beings. The paper suggests that human beings should be alert about potential challenges of artificial intelligence. Ishiguro beautifully crafts the contemporary discourse, rapid changes and application of artificial intelligence and its consequences on human beings.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, artificial subjectivity, human subjectivity, genetic engineering, transhumanism, posthumanism, techno colonization.

The present research explores subversion of human subjectivity in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Klara and the Sun*. The study analyzes the relation between artificial intelligence (AI) and human subjectivity. The paper examines how the novel addresses the contemporary struggle between artificial intelligence and human intelligence. The study excavates the way AI challenges human subjectivity. The thesis focuses on the questions: What role does AI play in the novel? What is the relation between AI and human subjectivity? How does the novel address the contemporary struggle between AI and human intelligence? In an effort to answer these questions, the study claims that growing advancement in the field of AI challenges human subjectivity. The explosive advancement in science and technology inverts every domain of human beings. The advancement not only makes human life comfortable, but also invites challenges and hazardous impacts on human beings. In the novel, AI robot Klara problematizes human subjectivity performing the role of protagonist and narrator with extraordinary human subjective qualities.

Nobel Prize laureate Kazuo Ishiguro is a British novelist of Japanese origin. He was born in Nagasaki, Japan, in 1954. He moved to Great Britain in 1960 with his family. Ishiguro received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017. Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) is a dystopian introspective science novel published in 2021. The novel explores issues like artificial intelligence, subversion of human subjectivity, nature of intelligence, environmentalism, loneliness, and reunion. *Klara and the Sun* incorporates both human and robotic characters to present the relationship between human and artificial intelligence. Mainly, Josie, The Mother, and Rick belong to major human characters. The present research on this novel contributes to understanding technological challenges and potential crises in humankind in general. The study adds to a small segment of knowledge in academia regarding the relation

between AI and human subjectivity, the role of AI in the human world and its consequences on human beings.

Along with, Artificial Intelligence is a branch of computer science which deals with simulation of intelligence in machines that can perform tasks like human intelligence. Professor of Stanford University, John McCarthy defines AI as "The science and engineering of making intelligent machines" (McCarthy qtd. in Huo 118). According to him, AI refers the scientific and engineering process of making intelligent machine like humans. Similarly, Mrs. Vastsal Manjunath and Dr. Snehal define, "AI is a set of technologies that can work independently and also in union with each other to extend the capabilities of a machine to imitate human functioning" (Manjunath 30). Based on their opinion, AI relates technological system with human-like functioning capacities and abilities. Therefore, AI is not natural, but it challenges to human subjectivity and intelligence.

Primarily, Ishiguro's renowned masterpiece *Klara and the Sun* (2021) unlocks the avenue for criticisms and reviews. The several critics, scholars, researchers, and reviewers have examined multiple issues in Ishiguro's novel from different perspectives. The research makes critical interpretation of some of the relevant reviews and criticisms.

Regarding *Klara and the Sun*, Sharifa Akter and Niger Afroz Islam explore AI in human fantasy as a new subject blending nature and nurture. They examine artificial subjectivity in robotic Klara through a psychoanalysis perspective. They argue, "Ishiguro idealizes a new subjectivity when he introduces Klara, a non-human entity as a narrator" (11). The non-human narrator Klara forms the new artificial subjectivity and challenges human sentiments. Further, they claim, "The desired true human values are challenged through a new subjectivity emerging in the name of

Artificial Friend" (3). In this connection, true human values confront crises. The humanlike qualities in machines critique intrinsic human complexities of the future world. Akter and Islam explore AI as the new subject with several possibilities through psychoanalysis perspective. But the research explores challenges of AI in humanistic qualities through postmodernism.

Similarly, Oliver Li and Johan Eddebo, in "The Humanity of the Non-human- Themes of Artificial Subjectivity in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*," investigates the humanity in non-human robots as artificial subjectivity through transhuman insight. They explain, "The first-person narration focuses extensively upon the subjective experience and reflections of an artificial subject. . ." (2). In this sense, to assign Klara as narrator in the first person narrative technique forms humanity and subjectivity of non-human robots. Along with, they supervise robotic humanity and assert, "They are basically manufactured and marketed to satisfy consumer demand and human needs, but at the same time possess a full rational subjectivity and an inner emotional life" (2). The rationality and emotionality in robots presents humanity. Likewise, they explain, "Ishiguro's paradoxical framing of AI seems more human than ourselves" (5). This statement sheds light on upcoming challenges on humanity as a result of the rise of AI. In light of this, the mentioned paper surveys humanity of the non-human in enhancing the way to human through transhuman eye, in contrast the research surveys friendly consequences of non-human humanity on humans through posthumanism.

In addition, Anupama Hosuri, in "*Klara and the Sun: A Fable of Humanity in a Posthuman World*," argues that modern Science and technology gives birth to modified humanity destabilizing existing concept of humanity. The humanity is neither artificial nor pure. It is a lifted humanity. Thus, Hosuri writes, "In *Klara and the Sun* humans do believe that with the help of modern science and technology

humans can do better themselves by modifying their genes to become academically advanced" (71). The statement claims that persons with technologically modified genes become intellectually better exposed than unmodified ones. Again, she affirms, "Only a technologically well-equipped human can possibly attain the next evolutionary stage i.e. the posthuman" (72). The statement justifies that the modified ones can compete in upcoming evolutionary stage. The stage gives no space for 'others'. Furthermore, Hosuri views "In *Klara and the Sun* the 'others' are the genetically unmodified kids and the robots" (71). Through the transhumanist lens, her opinion keeps genetically modified ones and robots at the center and real humans in periphery. The present study critiques claims like hers by questioning transhumanism.

Moreover, Jakob Stenseke scans machine morality from the perspectives of functionalism, behaviorism and social relation perspective. He inspects ethical issues related to AIs. He predicts, "Ishiguro's novel will act as the vehicle for driving the philosophical debate on moral status and agency in the context of artificial intelligence" (2). The novel initiates moral and ethical debates on AI and AI robots. He depicts that AI automaton machines showcase morality and sensibility. In addition, she claims, "Klara has the sort of moral and empathetic sensibilities needed to exercise moral judgment" (3). The robotic sensibility resembles human morality from a functional point of view. But only theoretical debate cannot address machine morality. The behavioral exercises justify it. Hence, Stenseke's study inspects the ethical issue of AI from functionalism, apart from this, the present study inspects the challenges on human through posthumanism.

Besides, Udaya Chandra Chapai carries out a critical research on relation between human beings and AI in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* through a transhuman standpoint. He asserts that the AI beings transcend anthropocentric human boundaries.

Chapai explicates, "Klara expresses unique human qualities like love and sympathy, learning and observation, nostalgia, sympathy and empathy, fear and anxiety, environmental awareness, love and compassion, spiritual yearning, etc." (12). The statement articulates the resemblance between humans and AI. Through Klara's emotional and subjective expression, the novel fills the gap between human and AI beings. Further Chapai claims, "In the novel, the 'lifted' child Josie performs higher intelligence in comparison to the 'unlifted' human, Rick" (9). The novel portrays the 'lifted' ones with AI at high rank than human. Eventually, Chapai investigates transcending boundaries between human and AI discussing few textual evidences, whereas the present research investigates how the novel presents subversion of human subjectivity with AI bringing in depth several textual analysis.

Likewise, Awasthy G Nath deeply studies human-machine boundaries in the world of technology through a posthuman lens. He asserts, "Here Ishiguro reveals the blurring of human and machine quality. It raises the idea that a machine can be a human with all consciousness and intelligence" (134). The statement articulates that biological and technological advancement gives birth to artificial humans which blurs the humanistic values. His paper valorizes artificial humans. Again, Nath claims: "Without technology, the existence of humans is impossible to imagine" (133). The statement highlights the significance of machines in human life. Notably, Nath's study valorizes technologies in human life, whereas the study does not devalue the benefits of technology, but deeply excavates adverse impact and possible crisis on human beings.

Correspondingly, in "The Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Nature in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*," K. Anusuya highlights that the fiction contemplates on the interrelation between 'artificial' and 'natural,' deconstructing the

notion of 'natural' from postmodern mindset. He elucidates, "The character of Klara . . . embodies a fusion of the artificial and the natural" (514). Klara projects the world as a fusion of nature and nurture. The fusion gives birth to new hybrid 'lifted' entity. Likewise, Anusuya claims, "Klara's character challenges the grand narratives often associated with artificial intelligence in mainstream discourse" (514). According to the statement, the rising discourse of AI, as mainstream discourse, destabilizes the grand narrative of humanness. The process blends the boundaries of 'natural' with 'artificial'. Consequently, Anusuya analyzes the intersection of AI and nature with a postmodern perspective, but the research analyzes the relation between AI and human subjectivity from transhumanism and posthumanism perspectives.

As a sequence, Om Prakash Sahu and Manali Karmakar excavate artificial human and technological saturated culture with posthuman affect in *Klara and the Sun*. They assert, "The programmed machine acts almost like a mind" (1349). AI functions like the human mind. Human rationality gets challenged in the post-human age. Further, they view, "Our perception of the social relationship with the humanoid is influenced by the culture in which we are embedded" (1352). The scientific and technological culture forms our perception towards humankind. Actually, disposable culture slowly makes humans 'others'. Similarly, their paper argues that "...the novel celebrates the posthumanist and transhumanist notions of intelligence, care, and empathy that are not confined solely to the human community" (1351). The statement manifests the notion that intelligence, care and empathy are found not only in humans but also in AI being in the time of this disposable culture. Thus, Sahu's and Karmakar's study inspects the social relation between technology and humans with disposable culture which observes humans as 'other', but the study inspects the subjective relation between AI and human.

Conversely, Pinar Sut Gungor addresses the violation of ethical standards of AI in *Klara and the Sun*. He comments that "this novel reflects the struggle of humans in the new age; on the other hand it sheds light on technological intervention in different layer of the community" (Gungor 1525). The technology intervenes human world. Thus, Gungor claims that technological advancement pushes the human society in division. Furthermore, Gungor makes comparative observation about the use of AI to create supreme race: "*Klara and the Sun* portrays a dystonic future world that allows the readers to pose questions about the effects of high technology on human kind... which focus is on gene modification that aims to create a superior race" (1532). So, Gungor concludes that there might be human discrimination based on genes in near future. Capitalists might hold higher positions in human society. Significantly, Gungor's paper examines human struggle in technological era and social discrimination between the rich and the poor with gene modification. But the present study examines deeply subjective challenges on human with AI.

In contrast, every change has pros and cons in human society. Thus, Li Hui and Yan Ping, in "Analysis of *Klara and the Sun* from the Perspective of Defamiliarization," scrutinize the dilemma and crisis of human existence. They note, "Kazuo Ishiguro shows his deep concerns about the negative effects of the rapid development of science and technology on mankind and their future living conditions" (42). The novel envisages the more complex future of human in the more advanced technological era with adverse impacts. They comment ". . . the novel displays the dilemma of human beings, the uniqueness and fragility of human nature, which leads to the reflection about the human existence and potential crisis of human society" (42). The argument alarms the future challenges and crisis to the human beings in many ways due to development of artificial intelligence. Apart from Hui and

Ping, the present study focuses on challenges and crisis of human subjectivity with AI through posthumanism perspective.

By the same token, Dalia Mahamed Mustafa Mabrouk accentuates the digital age has disrupted human emotion and humanness with reference to *Klara and the Sun*. Mabrouk indicates, "Being lifted has its dangers: Josie's older sister died as a result of her operation, and now Josie herself is very ill" (457). The statement alludes genetic modification is harmful to human although it provides advance AI intellectuality. Mabrouk illustrates, "There are hints that AI-driven processes have replaced humans: Josie's father, skilled engineer, has been 'substituted'" (457). The statement professes that the AI process substitutes human beings in a functional way. Similarly, Mabrouk explains that "society can, and do became emotionally intertwined with robots. If humans transform into more electric than biological beings, we may ultimately lose the humanness in us" (Mabrouk 462). Hence, the age of artificial intelligence is a blessing as well as a curse to human beings. In essence, Mabrouk's study examines disturbance of digitalization in human feeling with the object relation psychoanalysis perspective, whereas the present study examines subversion of human subjectivity with AI through posthumanism lens.

Collectively, Gowri Shankari and Manali Karmakar explore ethics of compassion, empathy and trust in AI-robots from a posthuman eye. They argue that ". . . the healthcare sector where carebots/social robots are now being used for nursing patients with chronic illnesses" (168). The statement demonstrates that AI- robots serve humans in many ways, but "machines cannot serve as a substitute for human beings" (173). The statement claims the machine can not replace human very intrinsic values. They further assert, "Klara is a devoted robotic caretaker created to forge an emotional attachment with clients . . . her authenticity is highly questionable to all

those who surround her" (Shankari and Karmakar 169). Here, the statement reflects the social flows of the robots. They can become a part of human life, but they do not have the authenticity of emotional attachment like humans. Clearly, Shankari and Karmakar's paper questions the ethics of posthuman care, whereas the present research questions the ethics of artificial subjectivity.

In contrast, Guanghai Shang, in "Robotic Narrative, Mindreading and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*," forwards a different view. Shang excavates human-machine intersubjectivity through the theory of mindreading. Analyzing the robotic narrative and Klara's attempts to mindreading, Shang claims:

By examining the characters' interactions, perceptions, and comprehension . . . that machines are ultimately incapable of reading human minds or serving as suitable human substitutes Klara cannot fully grasp human minds due to their complexity and variability. A mind encompasses not only an individual's intricate thoughts and emotions but also others' diverse feelings about this individual This suggests a combination of human anthropocentrism and robotic limitations as barriers to true human-nonhuman intersubjectivity. Ishiguro's robotic narrative illustrates machines' incapability to possess minds as human essence, and the uniqueness of human minds that machines cannot replicate or transfer. (4)

In this respect, the excerpt effectively exhibits that the complexity of human minds and emotions limits machines' ability to simulate and replicate the uniqueness of the human mind. Therefore, Shang argues that AI-machines cannot replace humans.

Overall, several critics, scholars, and researchers have explored several issues like artificial intelligence in human fantasy, humanity of non-human, modified humanity, machine morality, transcending boundaries between human and AI,

interrelation between 'artificial' and 'natural', artificial human and disposable culture, violation of ethical standards of AI, dilemma and crisis of human existence, digital age as disruption for human emotion, ethics of compassion, empathy and trust in AI, and robotic narrative in *Klara and the Sun*. The critics and reviewers have analyzed these issues from different theoretical perspectives: psychoanalysis, transhumanism, posthumanism, postmodern, functionalism, behaviorism, social relation, postmodernism, disposability, defamiliarization, object relation, posthuman care, and mindreading. However, after with deep contemplation on literature reviews, the study has ensured that the subversion of human subjectivity in *Klara and the Sun* is still left to be examined in depth. Conducting an in-depth research on this issue from a posthumanist standpoint fulfills the research gap and enhances readers' understanding on subversion of human subjectivity due to emergence of AI. The study assumes that representation of Klara (AI) with profound subjective qualities subverts human subjectivity and represents social reality being unfolded in recent times.

To examine the subversion of human subjectivity, this study follows qualitative research design based on close reading and analytical interpretation of Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. The novel highlights AI and portrays the subversion of human subjectivity. The Nobel Prize winner Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* presents the challenges to human subjectivity due to advancement of AI technologies. Therefore, the study selects the novel as a primary text to explore subversion of human subjectivity. It accesses data from primary and secondary sources. Regarding the data collection for the research, the primary text, the relevant studies on the primary text and theoretical studies on transhumanism and posthumanism supply the required data for critical analysis and discussion on the research for selected issue.

Regarding theoretical map, the study adopts transhumanism and posthumanism to develop an operational theoretical framework for text analysis. While both perspectives share some similarities, they differ in their views on technology and human subjectivity. Based on works of Julian Huxley, Nick Bostrom, and Joel Thompson, transhumanism emphasizes enhancing human subjectivity through AI and technology. Whereas posthumanism, based on works of Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, and N.Katherine Hayles, challenges human subjectivity. Though ideas from both perspectives have been used to analyze the primary text, the study primarily uses posthumanism to critique transhumanism's assumptions.

Although the both transhumanism and posthumanism share some similar components, they express different viewpoints regarding the relation between technological advancement and human subjectivity. As Francesca Ferrando explains, "Transhumanism offers a very rich debate on the impact of technological and scientific developments in the evolution of the human species. . . whose aim is to elevate the human condition" (Ferrando 32), whereas posthumanism ". . . focuses on de-centering the human from the primary focus of the discourse. . . . Posthumanism keeps a critical and deconstructive standpoint. . ." (Ferrando 32). The transhumanism focuses on enhancement of human subjectivity and condition through technologies including AI, but the posthumanism focuses decentering the human.

Hence, transhumanism is an intellectual and cultural concept that advocates for advancement and improvement of human subjective qualities, physical condition, and cognitive abilities through use of technological processes like genetic engineering, AI, nanotechnology, biotechnology and mind uploading. In this connection, Nick Bostrom argues, "It promotes an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and evaluating the opportunities for enhancing the human condition

and the human organism opened by the technology" (Bostrom 1). Here, Bostrom claims that technologies provide opportunities to enhance human condition. So, he views technology as a friend to human beings. Likewise, Julian Huxley, one of the pioneers of transhumanism, claims, "The scientific and technical explorations have given the Common Man all over the world a notion of physical possibilities" (Huxley 14). Huxley explains that transhumanism has brought a new concept of the Common Man. In his opinion, the technology enhances physical possibilities commonly to all human beings which establishes the concept of the Common Man.

The same way, transhumanists believe that technological and scientific advancement liberates and makes humans more advanced enhancing subjective, emotional and physical capabilities. Joel Thompson articulates, "Transhumanists envision a world where the use of biotechnology leads to extended life and health spans, enhanced physical, intellectual and emotional capacities and reduced suffering" (Thompson 1). The argument elucidates that the use of technology improves health and expands life span reducing suffering and diseases, and promotes intellectual capacities. In this sense, Thompson considers that technology upgrades and advances the intrinsic qualities of humans.

On the other hand, posthumanism is a broad and multifaceted perspective that critiques the centrality of humans. Posthumanism explores the evolving nature of humanity in the context of advanced technologies, globalization and ecological concern. The posthumanism transcends the boundaries between human and machine through genetic engineering, mind uploading, cyborg, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and gene editing.

Similarly, posthumanism challenges human centric subjectivity. Rosi Braidotti argues that ". . . the concept of the human has exploded under the double

pressure of contemporary scientific advances and global economic concerns" (Braidotti 1). Braidotti points out that technologies challenge human supremacy. So, as per Braidotti, technological development surpasses humanness. Similarly, Braidotti claims that ". . . the posthuman condition introduces a qualitative shift in our thinking about what is the basic unit of common reference for our species" (Braidotti 2). She affirms that the posthuman concept brings this shift in thinking and rationality due to scientific and technological advancement. It urges us to think critically and creatively.

Additionally, posthumanism is a hybrid concept of cybernetic organism: cyborg, which critiques traditional notion of gender, race, identity and technology as well. Donna Haraway, in "A Cyborg Manifesto," argues, "A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as creature of fiction" (Haraway 5). In this statement, Haraway illustrates that cyborg is a metaphor of social reality. If so, the hybrid cyborg symbolizes the crisis in the grand narrative of human subjectivity. Furthermore, Haraway asserts, "Late twentieth-century machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial, mind and body, self-developing and externally designed" (11). The statement presents that machines have created ambiguity blurring the distinction between machine and human, artificial and natural, and mind and body. Therefore, it signifies a challenging condition for human beings.

Furthermore, posthumanism predicts technological singularity. The singularity signals the future where AI and technologies surpass human intelligence that creates an unpredictable change in society. In this connection, Ray Kurzweil predicts, "Singularity will be a change with our technology in the nature of our ability to understand. We will become vastly smarter as we merge with our technology" (Kurzweil 37). The statement claims that rapid development in the field of technology

merges human intelligence with technological artificial intelligence. Likewise, Kurzweil considers, "By the end of this century, it will be trillions of trillions of times more powerful than human intelligence" (Kurzweil 40). Through this statement, Kurzweil strongly articulates that artificial intelligence emerges as more powerful than human intelligence. It directly challenges human rationality and intellectuality. Regarding theoretical perspectives, transhumanism focuses on enhancement of human subjectivity through AI and technologies. In contrast, posthumanism focuses on challenges to human subjectivity. Though ideas from both the schools of thought have been used to analyze the primary text, the ideas from posthumanism have been derived to critique some assumptions of transhumanism.

In relation to the text, Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* is set in an unspecified dystopian setting with a vague timeline due to futuristic assumptions. The novel adopts the first person singular robotic narrative point of view. An AI robot, Klara is the protagonist and narrator in the novel. An AI robot, Klara is the protagonist and narrator in the novel. *Klara and the Sun* explores nature of intelligence, subversion of human, interrelation between human and technology, ethical consideration of AI, environmentalism, loneliness, reunion, cost of progress, love and technological domination as the major themes and issues. The novel portrays the exclusive advancement of AI technologies and its impact on human subjectivity and whole life. *Klara and the Sun* incorporates both human and robotic characters to present the relationship between human and artificial intelligence. Mainly, Josie, The Mother, Rick belong to major human characters, whereas Klara, Rosa, Rex belong to major artificial characters.

Following this, the plot of the novel basically revolves around Klara, Josie, and The Mother. Where, Klara is one of the artificial friends (AFs). She (Klara) is a

protagonist and narrator. She has been kept at the store for sale. She is an observant, intelligent, understanding and perfect artificial friend for children. One day Josie and her mother visit the store and purchase Klara for Josie's companion. In the home, Klara gives very good companion, love, care and emotional support to lifted Josie. Particularly, Josie is a lifted girl for her sound academic career and better future. Josie is a fourteen years college student suffered from chronic illness. The Mother assigns Klara to spend the more time with Josie observing minutely her every aspect. The Mother and Klara give their best to Josie. Unlike earlier, Josie gets gradual improvement. Klara addresses Josie's subjectivity. One day the mother plans to visit the Morgan Falls. The Mother and Klara visit the fall, but Josie could not join them due to her illness. In the Morgan Falls, Klara performs imitations of Josie to make the mother happy. Hence, the gene modification seems to be one of the causes for Josie's chronic illness. Here, it reflects that gene modification adversely affects human. In this way, Klara physically, emotionally and subjectively bonds with Josie and her mother. She presents herself with an intellectual manner. Importantly, Klara exposes observation, understanding, love, emotional support and creativity throughout the novel. She demonstrates her artificial robotic subjectivity to give a perfect companion for Josie.

Notably, the advancement of technological artificial beings challenges human observation and understanding capacity. In *Klara and the Sun*, Klara demonstrates the unique way of human-like observational and understanding. The manager reports to Josie, "Klara has so many unique qualities . . . well, it would have to be her appetite for observing and learning. Her ability to absorb and blend everything she sees around her is quite amazing. As a result, she now has the most sophisticated understanding of any AF in this store" (Ishiguro 49). The excerpt valorizes Klara's ability to observe

and understand minutely feeling, situation and events. In the store, she observes the customers' movements and intentions to sell AFs as their choice. Furthermore, Klara presents herself as a very qualified observant. She notes, "the phase of the visits that I began to gather together their various remarks about it into a coherent observation. I came to understand that the plan wasn't anything they'd built carefully, but more a vague wish connected to their future. I realized the significance of this plan for my own aims" (Ishiguro 137). Here, in observing the 'plan' made for Jose's wellbeing, Klara applies her very efficient and analytical skill in observing the plan and understanding its weakness and significance. In this regard, Joel Thompson argues, "I am not arguing that human enhancement is inherently unethical. Enhancements to our human nature are a feature of modern life" (Thompson 2). Here, Thomson intends that human enhancement through technology and AI is a crucial aspect in changing the scenario of human life. But, Rosi Braidotti has a different view on it. She claims, "This contemporary interdisciplinary field raises crucial ethical and conceptual questions about the status of the human" (Braidotti 39). In this way, Braidotti considers that human advancement and AI and technologies devalue the distinct status of humans. So, as mentioned, observational skills in machines (Klara) undermine human observation and understanding qualities.

Similarly, Klara frequently presents her accurate human-like estimation of the age of persons, events and circumstances throughout the novel. For illustration, Klara estimates the accurate age of Josie: "I estimated her age as fourteen and a half" (Ishiguro 12). Likewise, Klara, seeing a figure, estimates the age of a stranger girl: "I was interested to see the third figure at the table, a girl who I estimated as eleven years old" (99). The evidence shows Klara's authentic ability for evaluation and

estimation. In a critical way, the humanlike judgment of AI challenges human subjectivity.

Chiefly, the human mind and heart are signature components to shape subjectivity and rationality that establish human as supreme creature in the world, but advanced technologies and AI challenge the human mind and heart. In *Klara and the Sun*, representation of mind in Klara itself challenges the human being. Klara narrates, "So I began forming wounds inside my mind" (300). Klara's portrayal with mind critiques human mind. It signifies that robots are able to function like the human mind. Furthermore, in the novel, a character Mr Capaldi (AF) doubts the existence of the human heart. He asked Klara, "Do you believe in the human heart ?" (Ishiguro 242). The question connects very harsh technological domination in human subjectivity. In addition, Josie considers Klara is not a robot, she is human. Josie comments about Klara to Rick, "Anyway Klara's not any AF" (Ishiguro 70). In Josie's opinion, she does not consider Klara to be an AI being. Klara's intellectuality, sentiments, subjectivity and emotion resemble her human. In this regard, Francesca Ferrando claims, "the posthuman focuses on de-centering the human from the primary focus of the discourse" (Ferrando 32). The novel demonstrates AI at the center of human decentering.

In particular, the immense changes in the field of science and technology undermine human intelligence introducing the more rational and advanced artificial super-intelligence. In the novel, Rick highlights Klara's intelligence, "Look, Klara. You're supposed to be super-intelligent" (Ishiguro 159). Rick's complement of Klara valorizes AI's superiority over humans in terms of intelligence. Similarly, Nick Bostrom, in *Superintelligence*, claims, "The ultimate potential of machine intelligence is, of course, vastly greater than of organic intelligence" (Bostrom 44). In his opinion,

machine intelligence performs better than human intelligence and enhances human intelligence. In contrast, Ray Kurzweil argues, "future machines will be human, even if they are not biological" (Kurzweil 40). Kurzweil claims that high-pace advancement in technologies and AI carries out the human essence and ultimately machines the human in near future. Thus, the machine domination in the human intellectual aspect is not a sign of enhancement; it is a sign of destruction of subjectivity.

Transparently, thinking and contemplating acquires knowledge, concept, understanding, critical and creative perspective, problem solving and decision making skills. It is a mental process. In *Klara and the Sun*, Klara poses human-like thinking capacity. Klara, as a narrator contemplates, "But I went on thinking about what Rosa had said" (Ishiguro 18). Here, Klara contemplates on Rosa's complaint about her responsibilities in the store. Her thinking on it makes her the more efficient. From another perspective, the artificial thinking capacity of robot raises doubts on human rationality. In this relation, Braidotti asserts, "The posthuman condition urges us to think critically and creatively about who and what we are actually in the process of becoming" (Braidotti 12). Braidotti argues that human should not enjoy artificial robotic thinking capability like Klara. Human beings should think critically and creatively on challenges and consequences invited by AI and how to face them in near future. So, the assimilation of thinking and contemplation in a robot destabilizes human mental process of thinking and contemplating.

Moreover, the advancement of AI, science and technology deconstructs the subjective, cognitive, intellectual and biological nature of human beings through genetic engineering, biotechnology, lifted process, mind uploading, and gene-editing. In the novel, Josie belongs to a lifted [genetically engineered] girl. She seems to be

academically and intellectually sound than other characters. Klara comments on Josie in these words: "But you're smarter than any of the other unlisted trying to get in" (Ishiguro 145). Comparatively, the novel demonstrates that the lifted characters seem to be more intellectually smarter than other. In this regard, transhumanist Nick Bostrom argues, "A more radical kind of upgrade might be possible if we suppose a computational view of the mind. It may then be possible to upload a human mind to a computer" (Bostrom 4). His argument considers that robots act like human beings uploading the mind. Critically, opposing the mentioned argument, Ray Kurzweil claims, "future machines will be human, even if they are not biological" (Kurzweil 40). According to him, technological advancement not only enhances our capabilities, but also constructs technology singularly. Further, Donna Horaway claims, "biotechnology are the crucial tools recrafting our bodies" (Horaway 33). The recrafting of bodies emerges as the cyborg which forms hybrid subjectivity deconstructing real human subjectivity. In the novel, Rick belongs to the unlifted. Being unlifted, he feels self alienated. He utters, "I don't belong here. This is a meeting for lifted kinds" (Ishiguro 93). Rick feels academically inferior. This portrayal depicts that lifted persons subvert intellectually unlifted persons. Therefore, on the one hand, genetic engineering enhances human intellectual and academic capabilities. On the other hand, it has many risks like health issues and division between lifted and unlifted. So, the lifted process challenges human intellectual capabilities.

Significantly, AI technology executes high surveillance capacities. In the novel, considered an intellectual character, Mr Vance compliments the drones, "Even so, I'm getting the impression your drones have high surveillance capabilities" (Ishiguro 275). The compliment argues that AI operates with higher supervision than

humans. It brings transparency in happenings. But, Ray Kurzweil articulates, "an ultraintelligent machine be defined as a machine that can far surpass all the intellectual activities of any man however clever" (Kurzweil 35). Kurzweil argues that despite supporting the human being with high intellectual surveillance, AI surpasses all human intellectual abilities and capacities. Although AI technologies contribute in many sectors with high monitoring, ultimately it undermines the human inspection quality.

Undoubtedly, sentiment, emotion and empathy are very subjective qualities of living beings, but rapid changes in artificial beings subvert the qualities. In *Klara and the Sun*, to prove Mother human-like sentiments, Klara utters, "I believe I have many feelings. The more I observe the more feelings become available to me" (Ishiguro 111). Klara proves Mother herself a sensitive and empathetic human-like being. In the novel, when Mother recalls her passed daughter Sal, Klara expresses her sympathy and tries to console her: "I was very sad to hear Sal passed away" (Ishiguro 116). Klara internalizes other's pain and suffering. In this connection, Nick Bostrom, in his article "Transhumanist Value," argues, "Transhumanism advocates the well-being of all sentience, whether in artificial intellects, humans, and non-human animals" (Bostrom 10). In this sense, transhumanism advocates for enhancement of artificial sentiment and intelligence. But, the enhancement of technological sentiments undermines the human sentimental qualities. The presentation of sentiments in Klara emerges as a critique to human sentiments.

In the same way, memory mechanism posits the human being distinct from other beings, but AI challenges this quality generating human-like memory mechanism in machines. In *Klara and the Sun*, at the time of getting together, Klara recalls the past memories: "I remembered the day we'd gone to Morgan's Falls"

(Ishiguro 228). Klara connects her memory with a past visit to Morgan Falls. She displays her intrinsic quality of recalling. Similarly Klara narrates, "I can always distinguish one memory from another, and place each one back in its true context" (Ishiguro 333). Klara reveals her capacity to contextualize memories in a curious way. Critically, to generate very intrinsic subjective qualities in the robot degrades them in humans. Therefore, the advanced recalling mechanism in the robot devalues human memory mechanism.

In addition, imitation greatly contributes to the development of subjective qualities of human beings. The human being learns many things through imitation. In *Klara and the Sun*, Klara imitates and internalizes Josie to make the Mother happy while the Mother and Klara visit Morgan Falls leaving Josie at home due to her sickness. Klara narrates, "I smiled in the way Josie would, setting into a slouching informal posture" (Ishiguro 118). Klara performs better imitation of Josie like; smiling, communication, moving and sitting posture to remove the Mother's feeling of alienation from Josie. The mother comments, "Nothing about what you were doing up there. Imitating her" (121). The comment ensures that Klara performs wonderful imitation like human being. But, to perform human subjective qualities like; imitation blurs the thin line between machine subjectivity and human subjectivity.

Moreover, in the novel, Klara depicts her curiosity to know new things. Klara narrates that "the more I watched, the more I wanted to learn . . . I realized that if I didn't understand at least some of these mysterious things . . . I'd never be able to help my child as well as I should" (Ishiguro 20-21). The excerpt depicts a very curious insight of Klara. From a critical eye, curiosity is one of key subjective assets to research, analyze the changes and expand human's horizon of knowledge to shape

human destiny. Along with few merits, human-like artificial curiously in machine questions the essence of subjectivity.

Furthermore, the explosive rise of AI challenges human creativity. The creativity is one of the unique aspects of human subjectivity. In *Klara and the Sun*, a long-armed girl asks Klara, "Klara, will you please sing for me the harmonic minor scale?" (Ishiguro 87). Her request sheds light on the robotic creativity of Klara. In this sense, copying and imitation is a kind of creativity. Furthermore, Klara claims, "In fact now I know her better, and have seen her in more situations, I'll be able to give a more sophisticated imitation" (117). In this regard, only the efficient creative skill makes it possible to make sophisticated imitations. So, Klara exhibits her creativity. Klara's creativity emerges as the challenge to human creativity. In this connection, Jiayu Huo argues that "the advancement of AI has cast doubts upon creativity and autonomy, values held dear by humanism" (Hui 122). Huo claims that AI surpasses human creativity. Therefore, Ishiguro through Klara depicts the challenge of human creativity.

Importantly, in *Klara and the Sun*, Klara performs a very responsible companion, especially to Josie physically and emotionally. Klara shares her deep rooted bond with Josie. She expresses happiness being an AF of Josie: "I'm very happy here. I have no wish other than to be Josie's AF" (Ishiguro 152). As an AI being, Klara demonstrates human love, care, pleasure, and dedication to Josie, the Mother as well as other characters. About the bond between Klara and Josie, she highlights, "But Josie seemed happy about my presence. I even thought she took comfort from it" (132). As Kara, she presents her as a source of happiness for Josie. Furthermore, the manager notes, "For the right child, Rex will make a perfect companion. In particular, I feel he'll encourage a conscientious and studious attitude

in a young person" (6). The Manager's compliment on B2 AF Rex advocates that the AI robots provide not only perfect companions for children, but also encourage the positive attitudes and subjectivity in them. Critically, the technological companion signifies a kind of intervention in natural human bonding. Like Rosi Braidotti asserts, "Technological intervention upon all living matter creates a negative unity and mutual dependence among humans and other species" (Braidotti 40). The technological companion has a negative impact on human to human relation and creates mutual dependency among human and other artificial beings. In spite of surface facilitating humans in several ways, the human and technological companion replaces the human love, care and companion and value.

Further, human beings, by nature, are generally driven by kindness, love and care. They are fundamental aspects of humanity. In *Klara and the Sun*, a robot, Klara demonstrates human-like nature expressing very deep loving, caring, and kindness nature for Josie. While visiting the Morgan's Falls, in the absence of Josie on the trip, Klara reiterates, "When Josie was unable to come with us now, I felt sadness" (Ishiguro 111). Klara expresses her kindness and love for Josie. She feels loneliness due to Jose's absence in the visit. In addition, Klara claims, "It's important for me to observe Josie in many situations" (92). Klara provides Josie minutely caring with love, kind, and priority. Her nature as mentioned undermines human aspects of kindness, loving, and caring. Ultimately, transhumanists take it positively, and claim that AI robots support us as human beings. But possession of human subjective nature by robots is not good sign for long; it values humans with material status.

In addition, fear is related to human emotions. In the novel, Klara gets fear and fright in various unfavorable situations. At an interaction meeting with Josie's lifted friends, Klara admits, "I feared the interaction meeting might place shadows over our

friendship" (Ishiguro 95). Here, Klara gets scared, seeing it as a challenge to rebuild friendship with Josie because Josie has witnessed her failure to respond to the questions asked by a long-armed girl at the meeting. Likewise, One day, Klara gets scared while going to Rick's house alone. She articulates the situation of fright, "The grass came up to my shoulders, and a fear entered my mind that I would lose my bearings" (Ishiguro 153). Klara expresses human-like quality of fear. It ensures that AI can pose human-like experiences and emotions. These moments highlight how AI beings experience fear and fright just like common human being. So, the possession of human-like emotions and experiences in machines signifies challenge to human subjectivity.

Moreover, *Klara and the Sun* counters subjective domination of human in the field of fiction writing designating robotic first person narrative point of view in the novel. Ishiguro appoints robot Klara as a protagonist and narrator with first person singular narrative technique "I" in *Klara and the Sun*. The first person narrative technique allows pondering narrator's subjectivity. In this regard, Oliver Li and Johan Eddebo, commenting narrative technique in the novel, claims, "The first-person narration focuses extensively upon the subjective experience and reflections of an artificial subject" (Li 2). Here, they argue that the first person narrator, Klara shares human-like subjective experiences, feelings, intentions, memories, personal thoughts, and empathy. In the novel, the robotic subjectivity emerges as 'otherness'. Rosi Braidotti claims, "Subjectivity is equated with consciousness, universal rationality, and self-regulating ethical behavior, whereas Otherness is defined as its negative and secular counterpart" (Braidotti 15). In this theoretical view, the emergence of robotic subjectivity depicts the negative counterpart to human subjectivity. Thus, in *Klara and the Sun*, Ishiguro's appointment of robotic narrator represents that the explosive advancement AI alters human subjective domination in the field of fiction.

It should be noted, in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*, AI plays a pivotal role through Klara, an artificial female robot. AI challenges the anthropocentric mindset. Ishiguro's appointment of the AI robotic narrator and protagonist deconstructs human centric grand narrative in Literature. In this regard, Guanghui Shang argues, "In the story, the AI character-narrator Klara exhibits human like comprehension . . ." (Shang 2). Shang articulates that as an AI female narrator Klara presents human-like subjectivity. In this connection, Klara, as a female AI narrator and protagonist dismantles dominated male centric concept of hero (protagonist). Likewise, AI performs very loyal and trustworthy companion for a sick girl, Josie. Klara expresses, "my mind had become filled once more with Josie worries" (Ishiguro 129). Klara's worry about Josie represents that AI technologies serve very mutual, responsible and dedicated companion and friendship. Likewise, AI contributes in job replacement. In this concern, Dalia Mohamad Mostafa Mabrouk claims, "There are hints that AI- driven processes have replaced humans: Josie's father, skilled engineer, has been substituted" (Mabrouk 45). Here, the job replacement of Josie's father signifies that AI technologies substitute employees. It widens the gap between the poor and the rich.

In additional, the domination of AI sets new understanding of the universe in the novel. Like, Julian Huxley argues on science and technological development that, "It has defined man's responsibility and destiny" (Huxley 1). In this regard, the rapid change in science and technology changes the human roles and lifestyle. The human needs to contemplate and step forward accordingly to adjust in the era of science and technology. Furthermore, AI being, Klara critiques to human heart and mind asking the question to Josie, "Do you believe in human heart?" (Ishiguro 242). The question counters to signature asset of human. In addition, Klara possesses memory, sense,

emotion, observation, judgment and capacity to study the psyche of human beings. Ultimately, demonstration of AI with human-like qualities in the Nobel emerges as a critique to human subjectivity.

Importantly, Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* represents the subversive relation between AI and human subjectivity. In the novel, Rick compliments Klara, "You're super-intelligent and I'm an idiot kid who hasn't even been lifted" (Ishiguro 160). Rick's compliment on AI positions artificial intelligence in higher rank, whereas human intelligence in low rank. It showcases intellectual differences between AI and human intelligence. Likewise, as a character, Mr Capaldi expresses his perspective on AFs that, "I believe AFs have so much more to give us than we currently appreciate . . . We should learn from them. AFs have so much to teach us" (Ishiguro 221). Mr Capaldi presents AI as possessing much more capacity, abilities, and qualities physically and subjectively than human beings. The presentation claims that human beings need to learn many things from AI.

Likewise, *Klara and the Sun* demonstrates an adverse relation between AI and human subjectivity. Dalia Mohamed Mostafa Mabrouk argues, "Being lifted has its dangers: Josie's older sister died as a result of her operation, and now Josie herself is very ill" (Mabrouk 457). Mabrouk claims that human attraction to AI ruins humanness. Like genetic engineering, gene editing, biotechnology emerge as the signs of danger for human beings. About the relationship between artificial and natural, Donna Haraway argues, "machines have made thoroughly ambiguous the difference between natural and artificial" (Haraway 11). He argues the technologies blur the human-machine boundary. Additionally, Udaya Chandra Chapai, in his article, asserts, "Her [Klara] emotional and subjective expression transcends boundaries set up by an anthropocentric mindset" (Chapai 12). He makes sense that AI deconstructs

the existing understanding of humanness. AI generates new technological subjectivity advanced than humans. Therefore, the superior presentation of AI being in the novel subverts human subjectivity. The mentioned instances exhibit challenging relations between AI and human subjectivity. AI seems to be dangerous for human beings. It deconstructs human subjective qualities.

Obviously, Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* demonstrates the contemporary struggle, discourse, ongoing explosive changes and application of AI and its consequences and challenges on human being. The meticulous textual analysis in the preceding sections of the study apparently addresses these issues. In addition, K. Anusuya, in his article, claims, "The novel thus contributes significantly to the ongoing discourse on the ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence, prompting readers to consider the potential consequences of our increasing reliance on technology" (Anusuya 517). In accordance with Anusuya, *Klara and the Sun* explores ongoing discussion about the ethical aspects of AI, encouraging readers to understand the possible consequences of growing human dependence on technology.

Particularly, the novel draws deeper attention on the implication of AI and scientific technologies in contemporary society. In this connection, N. Katherine Hayles argues, "contemporary debates swirling around an emerging discipline known as 'artificial life'" (Hayles 6). His argument claims that contemporary debate and struggle about AI and human intelligence centers cybernetic artificial life. Likewise, a scholar Aswathy G Nath, regarding *Klara and the Sun*, claims, "The novel raises several questions about the existence of human beings in the world of machines and machines in the world of humans" (Nath 133). Nath argues that *Klara and the Sun* interrogate the co-existence of human and machine in the world of techno-human. The human-machine struggle invites further challenges on the existence of human

subjectivity (intelligence). Furthermore, Liu Hui and Yan ping claim, "In his novel *Klara and the Sun*, Kazuo Ishiguro shows his deep concerns about the negative effects of the rapid development of science and technology on mankind and their future living conditions. . . the novel displays the dilemma of the human beings . . . and the potential crisis of human society" (Hui 42). According to them, the novel sheds light on the negative impact of AI on the human world. Hence, the novel centers on challenges of AI and its consequences as well as potential future crises on human intelligence. Ishiguro presents the contemporary tension between AI and human subjectivity.

The study discovers that the explosive advancement of AI and scientific technologies challenges human subjectivity on the ground of Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. AI being, Klara exhibits so many unique qualities like observation, judgment, rationality, surveillance, companion, sympathy, empathy, and understanding. Likewise, Klara provides Josie, a sick girl, a perfect companion with responsible care, love, and emotional attachment. In addition, the study sheds light on Klara's robotic intelligence and cognitive qualities. Klara observes different situations, things, the psyche of people.

Similarly, the research uncovers humanly artificial subjectivity through female robot Klara. Klara demonstrates artificial sentiments, memory, creativity, emotion, imitation, curiosity, love, kind, and cure. Those artificial sentiments and subjective qualities resemble human sentiments and subjectivity. Along with these, the study observes a female as a protagonist and narrator in the novel. Ishiguro appoints Klara as the narrator with first person narrative technique. The study finds Klara's role as a prominent, superior and active character with human-like subjectivity throughout the novel. Furthermore, the research detects the challenges of AI and human characters'

dependency on artificial intelligence to be academically sound, for instance, Josie gets lifted for that which causes chronic illness. Finally, the study discovers that Klara and the Sun critiques social reality. He draws attention of the readers towards the contemporary discourse, prospects and challenges brought by human beings.

To conclude, in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*, artificial intelligence subverts human subjectivity. AI being Klara's extraordinary human-like performances challenge the human qualities. Ishiguro projects deep attention to the adverse effects of the explosive advancement of AI, science and technology on human beings. Klara deconstructs human characteristics like observation, understanding, love, care, sympathy, creativity, emotion, feeling, sentiment, intelligence, memory, compassion, fear, and awareness. Those subjective qualities and abilities in robots break down anthropocentric boundaries.

The novel deconstructs humancentric grand narrative in literature. *Klara and the Sun* dismantles the Aristotelian concept of hero. The novel presents Klara with all human signature characters as a substitute for human being. Ishiguro reflects on the techno-colonization of humanness. The AI subordinates human beings. The novel depicts that AI poses much more capacities and qualities and abilities physically and subjectively than human. The presentation of AI destabilizes human subjectivity. So, human should be alert about challenges of AI. *Klara and the Sun* interrogates the co-existence of human and machine in the world of techno-human. The contemporary debate and struggle between AI and human intelligence centers on the formation of cyborgs in the future. The novel explores the contemporary discourse about ethical aspects of AI, encouraging readers to understand possible consequences of growing human dependence on technology.

Ultimately, the study significantly explores the issue of AI and its impact on human subjectivity. The research contributes to the understanding of technological challenges on humankind in general. The study alarms about the subversion of human subjectivity with AI and technologies. The study facilitates students, academicians and researchers who want to gain general knowledge on the role of AI in individual, domestic and academic domains. The study adds a small segment of knowledge in academia about relation between AI and human subjectivity, role of AI in human world and its consequences on human beings.

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