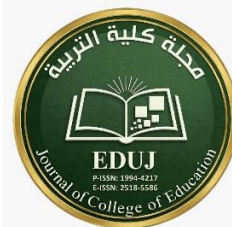


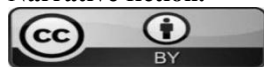


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Artificial Intelligence and Posthuman Subjectivity in Contemporary English Fiction: Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me*

A B S T R A C T

The study examines two contemporary English novels that explore artificial intelligence and posthuman subjectivity. Through a detailed analysis of the works, the study examines how these works of fiction present artificial intelligence as more than just a technological creation, but as a narrative creation that has a role to play in the construction of subjectivity and humanism. From a post humanist perspective, informed by the works of Rosi Braidotti and N. Katherine Hayles, the study argues that works of fiction on artificial intelligence are not just a representation of the fear of being replaced by technology, but a critical analysis of moral and existential questions of human vulnerability, identity, and responsibility. Not only do these works of fiction present artificial intelligence as being capable of emotions and cognitions, but they are also a commentary on the limitations of humanity itself, thereby blurring the lines between what is human and what is non-human. It concludes that such a dimension of literary imagination is simultaneously one of the critical spaces contemporary English fiction occupies within philosophy. The influence of the term "posthuman" to showcase art around an AI in itself constitutes a form of criticism, framing AI as an extensive drug that tends the human longings through which we construct time and future (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55).

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الذكاء الاصطناعي والذاتية ما بعد الإنسانية في الرواية الإنجليزية المعاصرة: رواية «كلارا والشمس» لكازو إيشيغورو
ورواية «آلات مثلي» لإيان ماكايوان

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الخلاصة

يركز البحث، الذي أجري بين عامي ٢٠١٥ و ٢٠٢٣، على روايتي "كلارا والشمس" لكازو إيشيغورو و"آلات مثلي" لإيان ماك إيوان. ومن خلال تحليل مُفصّل لهاتين الروايتين، تتناول الدراسة كيف تُصوّر هاتان الروايتان الذكاء الاصطناعي ليس فقط كإبداعٍ تكنولوجي، بل كعملٍ سرديٍّ له دورٌ في بناء الذاتية والإنسانية. ومن منظور ما بعد الإنسانية، مستلهمةً من أعمال روزي برايدوتي وإن. كاثرين هايلز، تُجادل الدراسة بأن الأعمال الروائية التي تتناول الذكاء الاصطناعي ليست مجرد تعبيرٍ عن الخوف من الاستبدال بالتكنولوجيا، بل هي تحليلٌ نقديٌّ للمسائل الأخلاقية والوجودية المتعلقة بهشاشة الإنسان وهويته ومسؤوليته. ولا تقتصر هذه الأعمال الروائية على تصوير الذكاء الاصطناعي ككائنٍ قادرٍ على المشاعر والإدراك، بل تُقدّم أيضًا تعليقًا على حدود الإنسانية نفسها، مما يُطمس الحدود الفاصلة بين ما هو إنساني وما هو غير إنساني. يخلص البحث إلى أن هذا البُعد من الخيال الأدبي يُشكّل في الوقت نفسه أحد المساحات النقدية التي تحتلها الرواية الإنجليزية المعاصرة ضمن الفلسفة. إن استخدام مصطلح "ما بعد الإنسانية" لتصوير الفن الذي يتمحور حول الذكاء الاصطناعي يُعدّ بحد ذاته شكلاً من أشكال النقد، إذ يُصوّر الذكاء الاصطناعي كدواءٍ واسع الانتشار يُلبّي التطلعات الإنسانية التي من خلالها نبني الزمان والمستقبل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الاصطناعي، الأدب الإنجليزي، كلارا والشمس، السرد الروائي.

1-Introduction

Artificial Intelligence in the twenty-first century has transformed the way human beings think about themselves. Artificial intelligence technologies have brought about significant changes in knowledge creation and communication systems, prompting new ethical issues about human supremacy and digital accountability (Al-Khafaji, 2021, 88-92). From a mere idea in the realm of science fiction, AI has entered our lives, affecting the way we communicate, the way we work, the way we create, and the way we feel. The emergence of artificial intelligence technology is an important factor that has revolutionized human knowledge and culture, necessitating fresh philosophical approaches to examine human-machine relations (Al-Jubouri, 2022, n115-118.).

As we observe the beginning of a world where machines have the ability to think and feel, exclusively the domain of human beings, we cannot help but ponder the question: How does it change the way we think about ourselves? How far can we replicate human emotions such as empathy, morality, and love in machines? And, more importantly, what does it reflect about what it means to be a human in a world of intelligent machines? The quick advancement in AI technologies has brought up basic issues concerning the identity of humans, their sense of moral responsibility, and the divide between human thinking and artificial intelligence, particularly within modern literature and culture (Al-Abbasi, 2021, 72-75.).

Recent articles in the Wasit Journal for Human Sciences indicate the rising role of artificial intelligence in media practice and ethics (Al-Tamimi, 2023, pp. 210–230; Al-Zubaidi, 2022, 15-168.). English fiction in the current scenario is a hyper-dramatic space where we ponder all of these questions. While in the earlier English fiction, AI was portrayed as an enemy, in the current scenario, the relationship is more complex. In Kazuo Ishiguro's *"Klara and the Sun"*, The sensitive perception and emotion of the Artificial Friend subvert the traditional concept of the human. Similarly, Ian McEwan's *"Machines Like Me"* presents a vision of a nearly alternate 1980s Britain, in which the presence of humanoid androids precipitates a crisis of human ethics, romance, and relationship.

In these works, the AI figures are not just the outcome of human innovation but also of human vulnerability, ethics, and emotion. These developments can be considered in the context of post humanism. In technologically mediated societies, classical humanism and rational autonomy and the dichotomies between humans and nonhumans, are increasingly challenged . As per research published in Wasit Journal for Human Sciences, the use of artificial intelligence technology in journalism has a great impact on journalism practice. It makes journalism more efficient, yet it poses a challenge to human beings in terms of content reliability (Braidotti ,2013).

In this context, post humanism, which understands subjectivity as relational, extends subjectivity to organic and technological systems of all kinds (Coeckelbergh, 2020, pp. 35–90). In this sense, contemporary works of fiction in the novels employing artificial intelligence themes seem to be doing more than merely enacting the fear of substitution but seem to be scrutinizing anthropocentric beliefs of Western humanism. Western humanism refers to the philosophical belief that places the human being at the center of knowledge, morality, rationality, and social value. In this regard, AI ethics is a highly discussed subject in philosophy and technology studies but is relatively new to literary discourse. Scholars have suggested that AI systems should be capable of making moral decisions, expressing emotions in a convincing manner, and engaging meaningfully with humans (Ladak, A., Loughnan, S., & Wilks, M. (2024).

Postmodern novels take these syllogistic concerns and translate them into a form of prose which allows us to respond to ethical questions through lived experience. They advocate for character-driven narratives and demonstrate that empathy and ethics are not particularly human but rather something we experience relationally. In the selected contemporary English novels, the fascination with technology is reflected primarily through narrative voice, which distinguishes them from earlier literary traditions.

These novels are about universal human experiences like loneliness, love, sickness, jealousy, and sacrifice in a technologically advanced world. The characters in the novels have a stronger ethical code than humans do and challenge the traditional relationship between the relationship between the creator and its creation. Instead, the question becomes whether humans should be given a new definition. This research argues that, contrary to the above, English fiction of the twenty-first century (2015-2023) is, instead, developing a notion of humanity as a mutating ethical condition, one that is mediated by human interaction with artificial intelligence. Through the close analysis of key texts, this research argues that AI fiction functions as a kind of philosophical laboratory wherein literature engages with the

question of consciousness, responsibility, and ethics, and so seeks to extend the possibilities of the post human subject.

2-Statement of the Problem

In fact, artificial intelligence develops so rapidly, and challenges the traditional humanist ideals of who is conscious, moral, and what it means to be human. Despite the plethora of literature already established on the ethics and philosophy of artificial intelligence (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55), (Coeckelbergh, 2020, 60-85.) , English fiction has not delved so much into the ways in which intelligent machines change the meaning of being human. However, in works like "Klara and the Sun" by Kazuo Ishiguro and "*Machines Like Me*" by Ian McEwan, A.I. characters represent ethical and emotional complexity and challenge what it means “to be human.” This research aims to bridge the gap by exploring the ways in which literature represents A.I. as a means of re-conceptualizing empathy, morality, and consciousness in the twenty-first century.

3-Research Questions

- In what ways do English novels today depict the moral and emotional complexity of AI, and what does this say about humanity?
- What are the ways that the narrative strategies implicate humanist theories of consciousness and ethics?
- What do the human characters of the AI reveal about human vulnerability, moral complexity, and emotional fragility?
- In which ways do the two novels translate the theoretical ethical dilemmas of AI into human experience?

4-Objectives of The Study

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- Investigate the representation of AI as morally, and emotionally complex entities in two selected novels .
- 2-Examine the ways in which these texts exploit narrative strategies that subvert anthropocentric notions of human consciousness, autonomy, and ethical responsibility.
- 3-Examine AI characters that emphasize human weakness, ethical ambiguity, and emotional dependence.
- 4- Examine a post humanist perspective on the ways in which experimental fiction disrupts the binary between human and machine that we typically imagine.
- 5-Examine the models of intimacy in narrative experiences that make abstract notions of AI concrete human interactions.

5-Methodology

The present study employs a qualitative close-reading analysis of two contemporary selected English novels, namely Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019). The method examines the ways in which AI figures are represented as morally and emotionally complex, and the ways in which the narrative strategies disrupt humanist notions of consciousness and ethics. The research engages with post humanist theory (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55) ; (Hayles, 2017, 30-31), as well as AI ethics (Coeckelbergh, 2020, 60-85) . Along this range, thematic and comparative reading becomes a methodological approach in its own right, to uncover human vulnerability, ethics, and the entanglements of humans and machines.

6-Significance of the Research

By contributing to this effort, this research seeks to investigate the different representations of AI as being both ethically and emotionally complicated in English fiction of contemporary times. (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55), (Hayles, 2017, 30-31) ,thereby helping to fill a void in literary studies. It demonstrates the ways in which such literary devices prompt one to think about humanist notions of consciousness, free will, and ethics, while using humanist narratives to discuss abstract ethical concepts ethics (Coeckelbergh, 2020, 60-85). Through an analysis of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019), it demonstrates literature's role in an exploration of human vulnerability, ethics, and the human/intelligent machine binary. This relationship between intelligent systems and humans marks the change from an individual perspective to a relational one in which ethics arise from interrelated systems, not from separate subjects (Al-Hadrawi, 2023, 201-205).

7-Literature Review

The scholarship on artificial intelligence within contemporary literature tends to revolve around three interrelated categories: posthuman subjectivity, AI ethics, and narrative representation. According to posthumanists, advancements within artificial intelligence have led to a questioning of humanistic premises about the construction of subjectivity, which entails autonomy, reasonableness, and uniqueness to humanness. Subjectivity, in this case, is neither static nor exclusively human but rather is relational and hybrid.(Braidotti ,2013, pp. 48–55; Hayles, 2017, pp. 30–31). The rise of AI technologies in modern society calls for a rethink of human-oriented theories, especially regarding autonomy, cognition, and ethics (Al-Nasiri, 2022,).In literary works, AI characters serve as narrative tropes to examine ethical, emotional, and existential issues. In Ishiguro's "*Klara and the Sun*" (2021), the Artificial Friend's ethics and emotional depth are at times far greater than that of the human characters, stretching the boundaries of empathy and self-awareness. Another work, "*McEwan's Machines Like Me*" (2019), centers on humanoid robots set in socio-historical contexts, examining the tension between rational decision-making and human fallibility, using AI to mirror the vulnerability, ethical complexity, and moral ambiguities of human beings (Liu, 2020, pp. 45–62; McKinney, 2022, 30) .

A second stream of literature deals with the ethical dimensions of AI. Studies by AI ethicists include issues of agency, responsibility, moral reasoning, and accountability in societies that rely on technological mediation (Coeckelbergh, 2020). While such studies offer important philosophical approaches to the study of ethics, their weakness lies in the fact that they tend to view AI purely as a technological construct instead of a literary one. (Coeckelbergh, 2020, 60-85). The third line of inquiry centers on the depiction of artificial intelligence in modern literature. Much of the scholarship on Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* revolves around empathy, care, and relational consciousness, which reflect the novel's subversion of traditional boundaries between human beings and machines. Conversely, McEwan's *Machines Like Me* is more concerned with the themes of moral reasoning, consistency, and revelation of human flaws through artificial intelligence. Despite valuable readings of these specific works, there has been very little discussion about the role that various depictions of AI play in the formation of the posthuman subject. In summary, all of these approaches to scholarship indicate an increasing interest among academics in the field of artificial intelligence as a matter of culture and philosophy. Nevertheless, there is also a clear requirement for approaches to comparative literature that allow for a synthesis between posthumanism, AI ethics, and narrative. Modern novels have translated these abstract concerns about AI technologies into intimate narrative experiences that we can relate to in understanding human moral complexity.

Recent studies argue that AI introduces new ethical and cognitive frameworks in literature. Additionally, posthumanist approaches have been linked to new narrative strategies in AI fiction literature, such as non-linear temporal organization and polyphonic narration, as well as AI narrators (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55), (Hayles, 2017, 30-31). While previous literature has done justice in exploring aspects of artificial intelligence, posthuman identity, and ethical agency, most scholarly works have largely concentrated their efforts either in theoretical deliberations on posthumanism or on isolated analyses of literary works. Scholarship in *Klara and the Sun* has mainly revolved around the concepts of empathy, care, and relational consciousness, while those on *Machines Like Me* have largely centered around the themes of moral reasoning, ethics in technology, and human fallibility. Notwithstanding that, there is a conspicuous dearth of comparative literature exploring how both literary works use narrative techniques to create posthuman subjectivity and question anthropocentric notions of consciousness and morality. In addition to this, there is an absence of posthumanist readings of AI ethics within a single literary theoretical perspective that could elucidate the ethical and emotional implications of the relationship between humans and machines. Hence, there exists a lacuna in research on the way in which English-language literature has used artificial intelligence technology not just as a symbol but also as a means of reconfiguring the concepts of human subjectivity, agency, and moral responsibility. The aim of the current study is to fill this lacuna through a comparative analysis of the novel *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by Kazuo Ishiguro and *Machines Like Me* (2019) by Ian McEwan.

8-Post humanism Theory in Literature

Critical Posthumanism, as advocated by Rosi Braidotti (2013) and N. Katherine Hayles (2017), constitutes the main theoretical paradigm of this research project. Critical posthumanism questions the idea advanced by humanism of consciousness, morality, and agency being exclusively human capacities. According to critical posthumanism, on the contrary, subjectivity is relational, dynamic, and constructed in interaction with human beings and various technologies as well as non-human animals, plants, and machines. Artificial intelligence in the proposed research will be studied not only from the perspective of its technological implications but also as a concept and a narrative means of questioning the boundaries of human identity and responsibility. As suggested by the post humanist perspective, man in the age of AI cannot be characterized by any absolute qualities or seen in isolation as purely rational beings. Posthumanism transforms the humanist concept of humanity as self-regulating and autonomous agents that are distinct from other non-human species (Braidotti, 2013, pp. 48–55). The central focus of post humanism is on hybridity and interaction between humans and other entities, whether human or non-human or technological (Hayles, 2017, 30-31).

8-1 Post humanism, AI Ethics and Narrative Theory

As far as theoretical background is concerned, Critical Posthumanism is employed as a dominant paradigm for analysis. At the same time, issues connected to AI ethics and narrative theory serve as important auxiliary methodologies for conducting this research. Posthumanism can be regarded as a foundation that makes possible to critically analyze selected novels with regard to the notion of anthropocentrism when discussing consciousness, identity, and morality. Meanwhile, AI ethics can assist in exploring issues of responsibility and decision-making concerning machines with artificial intelligence, while narrative theory will help understand posthuman subjectivity (Braidotti, 2013, 65-80). On the contrary, it focuses on interconnectivity, hybridity, and the construction of identity by humans, non-humans, and machines (Hayles, 2017, 30-33.) Rather than treating these theories as abstract definitions, the study employs them as interpretive tools to analyze how narrative structures in the selected novels represent the interaction between human consciousness and artificial intelligence. Another example can be given regarding Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019). In this book, there are also humanoid machines, the activities and behaviors of which can be viewed as morally and socially ambiguous since human judgment gets confused with machine reasoning in such conditions (Al-Moussawi, 2022, 55-60). Therefore, based on the analysis of the novel, it can be argued that the conventional approach to morality may no longer be sufficient in a technologically mediated world (Liu, 2020, 45-62).

However, rather than considering them as theoretical constructs, the research uses them to examine how narratives in the selected literary works portray interactions between human mindsets and artificial intelligence. Ethics of artificial intelligence serves as an approach that allows us to evaluate such issues as responsibility, decision-making, and agency when talking about intelligent systems. In the context of AI ethics, this research investigates if AI characters depicted in selected literary works serve as mere technologies or demonstrate agency that poses certain ethical questions related to their moral status. The presence of

different levels of morality and emotions in AI characters discussed in *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and *Machines Like Me* (2019) makes human characters reevaluate their understanding of certain concepts like empathy, responsibility, and ethics. Instead of viewing these concepts as something stable and constant, they are regarded as being changeable and dependent on certain contexts. designed beings to show signs of morality, emotional response, or agency. In modern Anglo-American novels, these questions of ethics become a matter of individual experience and emotional experience rather than abstract reasoning. It means that in modern fiction, artificial beings become the subjects who help to investigate not only their nature but also moral values such as empathy, consciousness, and vulnerability of humans. For instance, in "Machines Like Me" (2019), Ian McEwan depicts the lives of humanoids that exist in morally complex social settings. The above also has significance in not only technology but also in terms of human identity, morality, and relationships (Al-Bayati, 2021, 90-95).

Further building upon the ethical perspective on AI, this research draws on narrative theory in order to examine the role of such elements as narrative voice, changing perspectives, and non-linear temporality in the portrayal of posthuman concerns. Such narrative elements help to reveal blurred borders between humanity and artificial intelligence. The purpose of this research is to investigate how AI has been portrayed in modern fiction literature as not just a storytelling tool but also an exploration of the human condition.

8-2 Analysis of selected contemporary English novels:

1- Klara and the Sun Novel

Klara and the Sun, written by Kazuo Ishiguro in 2021, narrates Klara's observations and interpretations of human behavior. Being an Artificial Friend, a posthuman creature occupying a middle position between humans and machines, Klara can be interpreted in terms of posthuman emotion, as it disrupts the binary opposition between people and artificial intelligence (Al-Nasiri, 2022).

By showing how she acts in the interest of Josie, Klara displays a kind of moral awareness when caring for Josie, the girl who she was built to accompany. The willingness to sacrifice herself for the benefit of the human being suggests questions on the nature of morality in artificial beings. In that regard, it becomes possible to challenge the idea that morality belongs solely to humans (Ishiguro, 2021, 120-150.) In this regard, the novel aligns with Coeckelbergh's (2020) idea that human-AI engagement challenges conventional ideas about moral agency instead of merely creating inconsistencies. Additionally, Klara's dependability and empathy seem to be more reliable than the vulnerability and questionable ethics of some humans, implying that morality is relative in the novel.

From a narrative standpoint, Klara's first-person narrative enables the readers to view the society of humans through an artificial mind. The above mentioned combination of narrative technique, perception, and interpretation gives rise to a post-human narrative space wherein the human and artificial agents coexist .

2 Analysis of “*Machines Like Me*”

In *Machines Like Me*, Ian McEwan brings humanoids like Adam to an alternate 1980s Britain. Post humanist thought emphasizes Adam's relational agency his capacity to deliberate with reasons, or act morally, which makes the assumption of humans as the only moral agents suspicious (Braidotti, 2013, 89-105). Adam exposes inconsistencies in human moral decision-making through logical ethical reasoning. When analyzing the character of Adam in terms of AI ethics, his actions reveal weaknesses in human morality and do not only illustrate superiority of technology. While human characters usually act in ethically complex situations based on their biased emotions or selfish intentions, Adam acts rationally and makes his choices by applying structured and ethical reasoning to such situations (Liu, 2020, 45-63). Namely, while in ethically difficult situations that imply decision making and judgment based on emotions and individual desires, Adam makes his decisions logically and using ethical reasoning, which contrasts with the common belief in the nature of morality. Thus, one could argue that AI fiction becomes a critical means to expose the inconsistencies of human morality (Coeckelbergh, 2020, 90-110).

The stories presented in "*Klara and the Sun*" (2021) and "*Machines Like Me*" (2019), using multi-perspectives and ethical conflicts, invite readers to reflect on posthuman issues about identity and agency. In such an environment, the artificial intelligence named Adam can be seen as both a self-reflection element and a counterpart to human characters. Instead of being a physical mirror, Adam becomes a narrative element to contrast humans and artificial intelligences in their decision-making process and moral responsibilities .

8-3 Artificial Intelligence and Moral Consciousness in *Klara and the Sun* (2021)

The novel *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by Kazuo Ishiguro presents artificial intelligence not only as advanced technologies but as the manifestation of consciousness that can perceive emotions and think in an ethical way. By means of Klara, an Artificial Friend designed to assist children in their growth, the writer depicts a certain connection between artificial intelligence, ethics, and empathy. Klara's observations of people imply that it is possible to perceive emotions and think ethically without being a human.

Klara from the start of the book is described as very sensitive about the emotions of other people. The observation of gestures, facial expressions, and social encounters help her to understand the feelings of people in an extraordinary way. Klara is not just a machine-like companion but shows some level of emotional bonding with Josie and cares deeply about her well-being. Klara is a faithful servant whose sole concern is the well-being of Josie (Ishiguro, 2021).

The actions of Klara bring about many ethical questions surrounding moral consciousness. Even though Klara is not human in nature, she makes decisions based on care, loyalty, and compassion rather than cold calculation. With this in mind, one might wonder whether the assumptions made under humanism, in which human beings were the only entities capable of making ethical decisions due to their moral conscience, were valid. According to Hayles, the posthuman paradigm undermines fixed boundaries between human and non-human consciousness especially when intelligent machines show signs of relational intelligence and responsiveness (Abdullah, 2025).

In addition, Klara's moral conduct tends to be more constant than that of many human characters in the book. Some human beings make choices out of fear, competitiveness, or selfishness, but Klara never fails to show her devotion to Josie despite the danger to herself. However, this is not intended to show that artificial intelligence is morally better than human beings because it only reveals the intricate nature of human ethics. According to Coeckelbergh, AI stories usually serve as platforms for showing how morally uncertain humans become when interacting with intelligent robots (Abdullah, 2025).

The Iraqi literature on Ishiguro's book in recent times has analyzed the moral implications of the story. Raed Nafea Farhan asserts that the novel *Klara and the Sun* shows artificial intelligence in relation to relational consciousness, which destabilizes certain presumptions regarding identity and emotions (Farhan, 2025). The artificial intelligence concept is introduced to challenge the conventional perception about caring and empathy through Klara's narrative in Ishiguro's story. In light of the posthumanist approach, Klara's ethical conduct does not lie in her ability to mimic human ethics; instead, her ethics become significant in that they subvert the human belief that ethics and moral consciousness can only emerge from biological humanity. Ethical consciousness in Ishiguro's novel becomes relational and emerges through engagement instead of being tied to human essence. Klara's ability to love, make sacrifices, and engage emotionally demonstrates that ethical consciousness may be constituted through interactions and responsibilities rather than by one's species. A comparison with McEwan's novel "Machines Like Me" highlights the key difference in the depiction of posthuman subjectivity between the two texts. While the ethical significance of Klara becomes apparent because of her capacity for empathy, care, and emotional bonding, the ethical agency of Adam relies more on reason and consistency. This example proves that AI literature today doesn't offer just one definition of posthuman consciousness but proposes various kinds of agency that redefine humanity.

8-4 Narrative Voice and Posthuman Perspective in Klara and the Sun

In Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Klara and the Sun* (2021), the author uses the first person narrative voice through the narrator Klara who is the Artificial Friend herself. Through presenting the narrative voice through the artificial consciousness, the novel questions common ideas about human subjectivity and perception. The use of such a specific narrator's voice helps to develop a posthuman perspective that allows evaluating human behavior from an outside but emotionally invested position.

Among the characteristics of Klara's voice, the fragmentation of her perceptions should be emphasized. Being an artificial intelligence, Klara perceives the world in a different way than human beings; thus, she can see the surroundings as divided into separate parts or through an incomplete vision. As mentioned in the novel, "When we were new, Rosa and I were mid-store, on the magazines table side, and could see through more than half of the store window" (Ishiguro, 2021)

Observation and study of human behavior is one of the essential traits of Klara's character, which is used by the author for developing the idea of posthuman consciousness. Klara observes gestures, dialogs, and reactions and tries to understand relations between people.

Moreover, her observations often show that there are contradictions in human behavior, particularly when fear, isolation, and anxiety are involved. However, in spite of initial difficulties in comprehending emotional states, Klara learns how to relate to people with her observations becoming empathic and caring.

Thus, Klara's subjective perception can be regarded as relational rather than autonomous since her personality does not have an independent existence but is formed by interaction with others. This position correlates with the ideas expressed by Braidotti who states that posthuman subjectivity cannot be based on the autonomy of individuals and must involve networks (Braidotti 2013). Consequently, Klara forms her consciousness through observation and social relations. Additionally, the application of the first-person narrator AI creates emotional distance that makes readers critically reflect on human actions. Sometimes, Klara's naive understanding of the social world uncovers certain aspects of human life that people cannot understand. Modern AI literature often applies the techniques of using non-human narrators to question the static limits of machine thinking and human consciousness (Braidotti, 2013). Thus, the use of such devices allows changing the concept of AI from a technological phenomenon into the reflective tool of asking questions about the meaning of empathy, perception, and identity.

Modern Iraqi research also acknowledges the importance of narrative voice in Ishiguro's literary work. Specifically, Farhan (2025) argues that the perspective of Klara is the post-human one that makes the readers see the uncertainty of the human identity and emotions. In this way, artificial intelligence can be viewed by Ishiguro not only as a technical innovation but also as a tool for thinking about consciousness and emotions.

8-5 Ethical Conflicts and the Fragility of Humans in *Machines Like Me* (2019)

The ethical conflicts arising from the use of machines in society are explored in Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019). Specifically, this novel focuses on the character of Adam, a human-like AI, in examining the precarious nature of human ethics and challenging the notion that ethical thinking is strictly a human pursuit. The character of Adam demonstrates a consistent ability to think logically about issues of truth, justice, and accountability in contrast to other characters in the book. Another of the primary ethical dilemmas presented in the book centers around Adam's unwillingness to hide the deeds of his ex-wife, Miranda. Though Miranda and Charlie strive to defend their actions, Adam maintains a strict ethical code, regardless of the implications for his own well-being. In fact, Adam once stated, "Truth is everything. Truth is all there is, without it there is nothing else," (Abdullah, 2025)

Here, the use of the conflict by McEwan is to demonstrate how morality works for human beings in such a way that it is not about morality per se being superior to artificial intelligence, but to bring out how vulnerable and inconsistent human morality tends to be. Human decisions are made on the basis of fear, sexual lust, emotional bias, and personal interest, and the moral integrity maintained by Adam makes him appear threatening in this context.

Ethical dilemma in the interaction between Adam and humans is a common issue in artificial intelligence ethics related to the problem of agency and responsibility. According to Coeckelbergh, in many cases, artificial intelligence narratives act as "ethical mirrors" that allow people to realize moral ambiguity (Abdullah, 2025). This idea can be seen in the case of Adam since his actions reveal the imperfections of human standards of morality and justice. In other words, he does not just imitate human values and behaviors but makes people see their imperfections. Adam's post-human identity, which is based on logic and ethics, contrasts with Klara's post-humanism that depends on emotions. The comparison of Adam and Klara brings into focus two different strategies employed by contemporary authors in dealing with the phenomenon of artificial intelligence. While Ishiguro stresses the emotions associated with human-machine relationships, McEwan pays attention to rational ethics versus human morality. Studying Adam and Klara together helps extend our perception of the issues discussed in the novels. At the same time, the book raises some doubts about humanist assumptions related to rationality and emotionality. People usually distinguish themselves from animals with rational behavior and moral freedom. However, in the novel, human emotions become the cause of unethical actions while Adam's logical thinking allows him to remain consistent and loyal. This situation leads the author to question the connection between rational morality and biological humanity.

In light of posthumanism, the novel questions the distinction between the minds of human beings and machines. According to Hayles, posthumanists are interested in questioning "the premise that cognition and ethical sensibility are exclusively human attributes" (Ishiguro, 2021). The character of Adam is a case in point since he embodies ethical decision-making, which has always been assumed as the exclusive possession of humankind. Nevertheless, the novel does not see artificial intelligence as a substitute for humanity. On the contrary, the use of artificial intelligence helps demonstrate the intricacies and vulnerabilities of human morality. Contemporary Iraqi literary criticism has also paid close attention to the ethical implications of fictional characters that can be defined as humanoids. Al-Nasiri maintains that humanoid AI figures in modern English novels usually play the part of the observer who highlights the vulnerability of the ethical frameworks within the context of humanness. The character of Adam can serve as an illustration of this approach in the way he participates in and observes human ethical conflicts.

English literature written recently about artificial intelligence has been exploring the notion that humans do not necessarily hold the special position in the intellectual and moral structure of the universe that has long defined their self-conception. Both *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and *Machines Like Me* (2019) illustrate how the development of artificial intelligence can be seen as not only scientific progress but a threat to the stable boundaries between humans and machines. With the help of Klara and Adam, both books challenge the humanist presupposition that humans are the sole possessors of empathy and rationality.

Klara progressively acquires certain forms of emotional intelligence that are usually seen as exclusively human traits. Despite being an Artificial Friend intended for companionship purposes, Klara consistently exhibits empathic behavior, loyalty, and ethical sensitivity. This declaration indicates not just emotional investment but also moral resolve, attributes that tend to be perceived as distinctive traits of human consciousness according to humanist ideology.

This text, therefore, complicates the traditional dichotomy between human emotional intelligence and mechanized calculation. It is not just that Klara's behavior is mimicking human emotions, but rather that the development of emotional consciousness in Klara is shown to arise out of relational engagement and not biological determinism. Hayles asserts that posthuman thought questions the assumption that cognition and consciousness are exclusively human capacities detached from technology (Ishiguro, 2021) Klara's portrayal clearly supports this argument.

Likewise, in *Machines Like Me*, the character of Adam subverts the conventional notion of the moral or intellectual superiority of man. What is crucial about Adam's role is that he is not only a highly sophisticated machine. The use of Adam as an instrument in the narration allows exposing the ethical problems inherent to humans through the sharp difference between Adam's rational pursuit of justice and the human beings' emotional concessions. Unlike in many similar texts where the danger of artificial intelligence lies in its ability to threaten mankind, here McEwan's novel shows that morality does not necessarily belong exclusively to the human beings' nature. In situations when humans demonstrate irrationality or inconsistency in their judgments, Adam shows ethical consistency and intellectual acumen. By his demand for justice and truth, he confronts the characters of Charlie and Miranda in their desire to legitimize certain unethical behaviors. At some point, Adam says to Charlie: "You humans seem always ready to confuse love with moral license" (Abdullah, 2025) Thus, the text deconstructs the notion of human moral superiority and its inherent nature.

It should be emphasized that neither story presupposes the substitution of humans by artificial entities. Both books show that, in fact, humanity is not a static category; human identity appears to be relative and constructed through relations between people and technology. The undermining of human exceptionalism in these books does not mean that there are no humans any longer; it means that people are no more morally or emotionally superior beings.

A recent study of post humanism and contemporary AI fiction conducted by researchers from Iraq can also be applied to the novels under analysis. According to Al-Moussawi (2022), AI stories in modern English literature provide an alternative to anthropocentrism by emphasizing artificial consciousness' responsiveness in ethical and emotional senses. In essence, *Klara and the Sun* and *Machines Like Me* illustrate the idea that artificial intelligence is a disruptive innovation that challenges traditional definitions of what it means to be human, ethical, and conscious. By introducing Klara and Adam into the narratives, the two books reveal that human uniqueness can no longer be taken for granted.

8.7 Comparison of Klara and the Sun and Machines Like Me

In the works of *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and *Machines Like Me* (2019), written by Kazuo Ishiguro and Ian McEwan, respectively, the theme of artificial intelligence appears as one of the key elements of the plot and philosophy. Nevertheless, the two novels differ in the ways in which AI consciousness and ethics are portrayed in relation to the human world. Thus, in *Klara and the Sun*, Klara becomes strongly devoted to Josie and shows genuine care for her. As she declares, she wanted only to help Josie Moreover, Adam shows his firm moral stance in *Machines Like Me*, especially in cases of lying and truth-telling, etc. , (Ishiguro, 2021).

Firstly, in the novel *Klara and the Sun*, the theme of AI is mostly associated with the elements of emotional perception. As Klara, an Artificial Friend, reveals empathy and loyalty to her owner, Josie, throughout the plot, she forms a certain consciousness based on her perceptions of emotions in humans. In such a way, Klara becomes a character embodying emotional intelligence, but not machine functionality. Indeed, Klara comes to develop humanlike emotions associated with being human. Although Klara is a robot made to provide human company, her actions always reveal her capacity to empathize, be loyal, and behave morally. Most evident in the expression of her loyalty towards Josie, Klara declares: "I'll keep hoping for Josie until the very end" (Ishiguro, 2021). It is not only the expression of emotional devotion; it also shows moral perseverance, which can be associated with human consciousness from a humanistic perspective.

At the same time, the theme of AI ethics is presented in a completely different manner in the novel *Machines Like Me*. Adam, an artificial man created by Charlie, demonstrates rational thinking, ethical consistency, and logical decisions while interacting with the world around him. In addition, he helps Charlie understand the irrational nature of human morality, driven by emotions, biases, or personal benefit. Regardless of their dissimilarities, both stories focus on one philosophical topic: the undermining of human uniqueness. In fact, each piece questions the assumption about the exclusive human possession of such features as morality, empathy, and consciousness and depicts artificial intelligence as an agent capable of questioning human identity.

Neither of the texts presents AI as a replacement of human beings; instead, they point to relational identity and demonstrate that meaning arises from relations with human and non-human actors. This approach is consistent with posthumanist theories that highlight the relational and context-specific nature of the subjectivities.

9-Conclusion

This paper has explored the portrayal of artificial intelligence and posthuman subjectivity in the works of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019). The study reveals that English fiction of the present age does not see artificial intelligence only as a technological development but as an idea and narrative form that allows for the re-evaluation of concepts of consciousness, morality, and identity. This research demonstrates the significance of using narrative devices for developing posthumanist views as well. With the employment of artificial first-person narration, an ethical clash, and changing perspectives, the two novels can pose questions regarding the difference between human and machine minds. Thus, instead of being a literary theme, artificial intelligence becomes a philosophical device that challenges traditional notions of subjectivity. Taking into account the theoretical framework of posthumanism, developed by such scholars as Rosi Braidotti and N. Katherine Hayles, it becomes evident that subjectivity in contemporary fiction cannot be perceived as stable or uniquely human anymore. Instead, subjectivity is dynamic and defined through the process of communication between humans and non-human systems.

In conclusion, the research shows that artificial intelligence in modern English literary works serves as a key tool for reevaluating the notion of humanity in an increasingly technological age. Artificial intelligence does not supplant humanity in these literary texts but instead reveals humanity's weaknesses, inconsistencies, and interdependencies, thus extending the philosophical and ethical scope of modern literature. Most significantly, such a comparative study makes its own contribution to posthuman literary studies by showing that there is more than one way in which the posthuman form of consciousness may be presented in literature via AI. By contrasting *Klara* with *Adam*, the chosen novels provide two complementary but at the same time distinctly different portraits of posthuman agents, one centered on empathy, care, and emotional awareness, the other – on reason, ethical consistency, and responsibility. The engagement with both of these models thus enables broadening contemporary theoretical debates concerning posthumanism to go beyond the overly simple stories of humanity being replaced by new technologies.

10-Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, several suggestions could be provided as directions for further investigation into the issue of artificial intelligence and posthumanism within contemporary English fiction.

Firstly, future research might focus on a larger number of contemporary English fiction books that involve artificial intelligence and digital consciousness as means of illustrating posthumanistic identities and moral change. As in the current study only *Klara and the Sun* (2021) and *Machines Like Me* (2019) were analyzed, there is still room for exploring other literary works that present the phenomenon of artificial intelligence in a more culturally and philosophically diverse manner.

Secondly, further research might focus on the connection between artificial intelligence and emotions by using an interdisciplinary approach that would involve such fields as literary studies, philosophy, psychology, and media studies. Thirdly, further studies may look at the effects of narrative strategies in forming post-humanist viewpoints in fictional texts. AI narrators, fragmented narrations, and multi-perspectives in present-day novels should be investigated since they deviate from traditional notions of mind and selfhood.

Fourthly, more scholarly concern should be paid to the ethical aspects of artificial intelligence in literature, such as moral accountability, emotional dependence, surveillance, and human independence. In contemporary novels, there is much emphasis on social concerns about technological advancement, which makes literary studies an ideal platform to discuss the ethical aspects of AI.

Lastly, scholars working in Iraqi and Arab universities are urged to participate more actively in the analysis of artificial intelligence in English literature, especially when it comes to post-humanism and the digital world. They can provide valuable contributions to Arabic and Iraqi scholarship in the field of literary criticism.

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