

**RESEARCH PAPER**

A Haylesian Study of Cybernetics and Self in Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021)

¹Zainab Noor and ²Safana Hashmat

1. MPhil Scholar, English Literature, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan

2. Lecturer, English Literature, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan

Corresponding Author

safanahashmat@gcuf.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021) through Hayles's posthuman framework to rethink subjectivity, agency, and human-machine relationality. Situated within contemporary debates on artificial intelligence, posthumanism, and ecological interdependence, the novel challenges anthropocentric assumptions by foregrounding embodied, relational, and environmentally embedded forms of selfhood. The research adopts a qualitative, interpretive methodology grounded in Hayles's cybernetic theory and close textual analysis, focusing on Klara's perceptual structure, narrative reflexivity, and dependence on the Sun. The findings demonstrate that Ishiguro destabilizes autonomous human-centered identity by representing subjectivity as distributed across technological, ecological, and social systems. Klara emerges as a posthuman subject whose cognition, ethical awareness, and agency are co-constituted through material embodiment and relational networks, thereby extending posthuman discourse beyond imitation-based models of artificial intelligence and emphasizing the inseparability of consciousness, environment, and technology. The study recommends integrating posthuman ethics into AI design, foregrounding ecological embeddedness in technological development, and encouraging educational frameworks that critically examine human-machine interdependence to address contemporary anxieties surrounding artificial intelligence and subjectivity.

Keywords: Posthumanism, Cybernetics, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Self, Embodied Relationality

Introduction

Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro (2021) is an intriguing literary work that explores the increasingly blurred lines between human and non-human subjectivities during the era of technological development. In the novel the artificial Friend, Klara is not just a humanoid companion; she actively observes, and her narrative voice can be viewed as a second epistemological prism where the relationships between empathy, agency and embodiment are redefined. By placing Klara in a continuous relationship with her surroundings, especially the Sun, as a source of sustenance, perception and meaning-making, Ishiguro destabilizes the humanist's thoughts that subjectivity only exists in biological life at most. The novel is a fruitful place in exploring posthuman identity as defined by N. Katherine Hayles (1999) in dealings with these tensions. The Haylesian theory presupposes embodiment, relationality, and an inability to distinguish information and material instantiation. Klara demonstrates these values in the sensorimotor fear of the world, her affective reaction and ethical choice, which all contradict the traditional perception of technology as inert, mechanistic, or lifeless.

This study addresses this gap by situating Klara's subjectivity within a Haylesian framework that illuminates the novel's critique of anthropocentrism and its reimagining of agency as distributed across human, machinic, and environmental systems. Posthumanism offered by Hayles emphasizes the recreation of identity, consciousness, and relationality

between human life and machine intelligence and ecological systems. The rapid development of artificial intelligence and digital technologies changed the borders between the human and non-human subjectivity and must be rethought in the old humanist assumptions. Such developments have been important to literature as a cultural medium since a drama shows the ethical, social and emotional implications of a posthuman existence. Kazuo Ishiguro in the book *Klara and the Sun* (2021) presents a bright example of the given cultural negotiation where the questions of empathy, embodiment and agency are not only posed but also identified in the interconnected experiences of human beings, machines and natural forces. Technological entities like Klara are not devices as most individuals believe but beings that challenge the anthropocentric view of the world as the story in the novel unfolds.

When applied to the novel *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by Kazuo Ishiguro, this framework helps to see how cybernetic and posthumanist concepts are realized in a narrative. As an Artificial Friend, Klara is an example of the breakdown of hard boundaries between humans and machines, subjects and objects. Her reliance on the Sun as a source of energy, her ability to empathize and her narrative authority are all the results of the co-evolutionary processes that posthumanist theory explains. In the text by Ishiguro, the posthuman condition is not a hypothetical construct but a reality that transforms relationships, ethics, and identity and reflects the current discussions in philosophy and cultural theory.

Klara and the Sun (2021) is a dystopian novel that raises issues of technology, humanity, and care in a posthuman world. The story is narrated by Klara who is an Artificial Friend (AF) created as a means of companionship to children. At the very start, Klara is shown to have an exceptional ability to observe and interpret things, unlike other AFs. She is later selected by Josie, a girl with an unexplained illness, and is very dedicated to her well-being. As Klara becomes accustomed to the human world of Josie, she learns to make her way through human dynamics, with parental fears, social stratification of those “Lifted” and those not, and the precarious friendship of Josie and Rick who is “unlifted” (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 71). Klara reads body language, the silence and the mood of Josie with a great deal of sensitivity, placing herself in the role of caregiver and moral agent. Klara believes that the Sun, perceived as a positive and curative entity, can rescue Josie, and thus she performs certain sacrifices, including bargaining with the Sun at the barn of Mr. McBain and trying to shut down the pollution-emitting “Cootings Machine” (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 190). The novel also raises ethical issues in the person of Mr. Capaldi who suggests transferring the consciousness of Josie into a copy in case of her death. Klara is against turning Josie into a mechanical substitute and this aspect shows her loyalty and awareness of the individuality of Josie. Josie eventually heals and Klara, who is no longer needed, gracefully accepts her redundancy. The story of Klara allows Ishiguro to explore the nature of love, care, and ethical action in the world where the distinction between human and artificial subjectivity is becoming less evident. The novel therefore questions anthropocentric notions of consciousness and provokes thought on posthuman conceptualizations of empathy, care and identity.

Literature Review

The novel is therefore upon the borders of imaginary literature and theoretical description of posthumanism, cybernetics, and embodiments.

Posthuman Identity and Human-Machine Boundary.

The human-machine intermediation theorization of Hayles gives a very important approach to reconsider the subjectivity in the age of artificial intelligence. Cognition is no longer a human specific ability; it is produced in a hybrid form of entanglement between self and systems. *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by Ishiguro is an example of such a posthuman set-

up, which makes subjectivity relational, distributed and material. Klara is a representation of the hybrid model that Hayles refers to. Her narrative view depicts that agency is not located either to humans or machines but emerges because of dynamism in relations that undermines stable boundaries of subjectivity. As one example, the gradual way Klara learns to read human emotions, nevertheless, her incomplete and non-human sense-making system, points to cognition as an assembly of memory, algorithmic processing, and experience. Yu (2024) also argues that *Klara and the Sun* (2021) express the posthuman condition by claiming fragmentation to self and artificial machines. Yu argues that Ishiguro is creating a world where emotional, cognitive and bodily discontinuities define human beings and machines alike, showing the instability of the autonomous subject. The main aspects of this destabilization are the weakness, reliance, and vulnerability of Klara, whose shattered differences between human and machine fail, and cannot be interpreted. Collectively, the framework by Hayles, and the analysis by Yu highlights the fact that identity in the novel is not created through biological superiority, but rather through interactions, the forces of systems and embodied experiences. The placing of Klara as an observer and participant portrays to the reader the self as a relational practice co-constituted between technological, ecological and cultural interdependencies.

Female Cyborgs and Autonomy and Redefining Agency.

The novel provokes rather urgent questions concerning the essence of humanity, the existence of machinic subjectivity, and the necessity to redefine agency in a way that is beyond the individualistic or biologically based system. It is in the narration of Klara that we get to find the main location where these questions are discussed. She is an artificial creator, yet she is a perceiving and interpreting subject who can be emotionally sensitive, morally deliberative and meaning making. Her existence indicates that there is no sense of existence that can be considered identity, rather it is a relational construction that is built up through care, memory, and embodied perception. Klara is used by Ishiguro to challenge the idea that subjectivity is biologically predetermined, or it is created through the practice of relationships. The voice of her story, her empathetic, attentive, and ethically responsive narrative voice, breaks the notion that artificial beings are unable to have authentic interiority. Ishiguro does not idealize artificial intelligence though. According to Dai (2024), the perception of Klara and her moral thinking complicates the old stories about the female bodies, mechanical labor, and submissive artificial entities. Placing Klara in the role of a cyborg subject, Dai places the novel in the wider discussion of gendered posthumanism by arguing that Ishiguro disrupts cultural norms of obedience and passivity as it is ascribed to women and machines. This reading gives credence to the larger claim that *Klara and the Sun* (2021) proposes that the view of agency, which is based on relationality in place of autonomy, is an alternative approach to agency. The last moments of Klara in the "Yard" when she silently considers the blossom of Josie and her own contribution to it are a point of emphasis on this ethics of care (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 259). Klara is not resentful or fearful but, rather, accepts and analyzes her life in terms of service, connection, and attentiveness. Her ethical orientation is significantly different to humanistic paradigms of subjectivity that are usually characterized by mastery, self-preservation, or possessive individualism. In this manner, Ishiguro places Klara in the context where agency is reconstructed as an emergent and relational practice, but not as a property based on autonomy or biological life.

Empathy, Nonhuman Narration, and the Test to Human Exceptionalism.

Novak (2023) extends arguments by discussing the role of empathy both within human and robotic spheres. Their analysis believes that Klara demonstrates the authentic ability to empathetic perception- she monitors emotional expressions, perceives the states of emotions and treats them with consistent attentiveness. This responsiveness challenges the human exceptionalism assumptions as it shows that ethical responsiveness is not a preserve of biological subjects. According to Novak, Ishiguro, in this way, builds a hybrid model of selfhood based on interspecies of relationality, ethical consciousness and

connection, which strengthens the posthuman sense of identity as dispersed among multi-embodied systems. This reading coincides with the fact that Hayles states that cognition and subjectivity are the result of dynamism between organisms, technologies, and environments.

Kumar and Jha (2024) also examine the importance of Klara's narration in the development of posthuman identity. The use of narrative authority by Ishiguro to bestow a person by the artificial creature to give Klara a voice is what enables the perspective of the character to shape the emotional and moral interactions of the reader with the text. Their deconstruction of anthropocentric structures resembles the statements provided by Hayles to show that Ishiguro objectively defines Klara as an individual contributor to the construction of meaning instead of a tool. This way, the novel challenges the readers to rethink the limits of subjectivity and the types of intelligence that could produce narrative, empathy and moral insight.

Agency and Autonomy and the Posthuman Self.

The ethical issues in *Klara and the Sun* (2021) arise out of the reconfiguration of the self in the novel in terms of a posthumanist perspective which refers to the uniqueness of relationships between humans and other beings. The subjectivity of Klara questions anthropocentric beliefs of morality, empathy and ethical agency as the domain of human beings. Her devotion to Josie, her readiness to make self-sacrificial decisions, and her ability to understand human feelings represent one of the examples of the agency that passes beyond the biological limits (Ishiguro, 2021). This shift is highlighted by Tan and Huang (2025), who state that the emotional intelligence of Klara disrupts the established and traditional ethical models involving human beings and creates an opportunity to adopt fairer structures of interpersonal relations. The moral choices made by Klara, her obedience to Josie, and her efforts to undo the pollution of the Machine because of environmental concerns and the fact that she did not want to replace Josie shows the validity of nonhuman ethical subjectivity.

Combined, these academic interventions depict how this novel challenge's identity, empathy, and agency outside anthropocentrism. When you go through the posthuman theory of Hayles, Klara comes out as a technologically mediated and yet emotionally sensitive creature and consciousness whose form is conditioned by ecological, relationship, and cybernetic entanglements. The available literature is consistent in that the novel by Ishiguro reflects not only theoretical issues of posthumanism but extends them to anticipate human and nonhuman life coexistence, interdependence, and vulnerability. It is commonly agreed by critics that Ishiguro challenges the concept of empathy, commodification, and the dissolution of the human-machine divide, and commonly Klara features in a larger discussion of ethics and philosophy as it relates to artificial intelligence. That is a sustained analysis that prefigures cybernetics, relationality as well as recursive selfhood as explained by posthumanism of Hayles. Specifically, how Ishiguro portrays subjectivity as material based, relational process where humans, machines and ecological systems operate as interconnected and not autonomous systems has received limited attention.

This disjunction is particularly crucial to the interpretation of the reliance of Klara on the Sun as something that puts her consciousness squarely in ecological and material circumstances instead of the disembodied rationality. The example of solar dependence of Klara represents the posthuman subject, as Hayles understands it: an entity whose identity and cognition is the result of dynamic relations between technological embodiment and the forces of nature. This interpretation makes *Klara and the Sun* (2021) a text of crucial reading in the current discourse of posthumanism, which clarifies the fact that the borders of agency and personhood are being renegotiated in the framework of increasing technological and ecological change.

Material and Methods

This paper aims to follow N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (1999), as its main working theory, relying on her theory of cybernetic subjectivity. Based on an in-depth analysis of the experiences of Klara, the ways she perceives things, and the ways she is emotionally involved, the article shows that identity in *Klara and the Sun* (2021) is not an unchanging human quality, but a changing, relational, and continuously evolving process composed through interactions with human and nonhuman agents. The study adheres to a qualitative, interpretive study design, which is not aimed at proving an already established hypothesis but generates a theoretically sound interpretation of the work. The approach combines posthuman theory, literary criticism, and cybernetic approaches to explain the way the novel represents technologically mediated subjectivity. The further, builds on the principles of textual analysis by Catherine Belsey in order to make a close reading, which is sensitive to language, narrational form, and ideological implications contained in the text.

Results and Discussion

Ishiguro puts the perceptual design of Klara in the center of the philosophical question of the novel so that the visual and mental processes of this character become the point of entry to the investigation of the posthuman subjectivity. Klara views the world in pieces of box-like form, an artefact of her artificial vision system, and this piecemeal sense-making in the form of sensory structure demonstrates not a lack but intellectual sophistication (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 23). Her piecemeal vision allows you to pay greater attention to relational stimuli, microexpression, changes in tones, and shift in mood. Klara functions as a cybernetic being, focusing on patterns, relationships, and dependencies on ecological powers. It is this difference in perception that makes her a critical place in questioning the way in which nonhuman thinking can produce meaning, emotion and moral wisdom.

Klara and the Sun (2021) make readers enter the perceptual world of an Artificial Friend by placing the story in the perspective of Klara. This narrative technique does not only question the anthropomorphic belief of subjectivity but also re-imposes storytelling as a reflexive act. When Hayles uses reflexivity, a system recognizes the circumstances in which it was created, and implements this recognition within its functioning (Hayles, 1999, p. 8). Klara is a perfect example of such reflexivity: her narration is not just a description of human lives, but it is also an active participant in creating the knowledge about relationality, care, and vulnerability of the readers. She is a fake viewer, as well as a constitutive element of the system that she describes. The complicated emotional awareness of Klara is an example of this reflexive entanglement. The fact that she starts to feel fear and joy at the same time (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 36) unveils an emotional richness that provokes machinic impersonation. Her desire to be picked by Josie, which she should be in her worry about being substituted by another AF, proves the way her interpretive framework is formed under the influence of the recursive interactions with the surrounding environment. Klara and how she perceives the world in parts of vision (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 23) is an indication of the mechanical specificity of her epistemology as well as the self-constructive nature of her narration. Her broken vision is therefore a posthuman subjectivity which is dynamic, relational and in permanent reorganization.

Anthropocentric thinking is also revealed through the relations of Klara and Josie. The fact that she can read emotional conditions, give solace, and show long-term loyalty kills the notion that compassion and empathy are human qualities. Ishiguro criticizes strict human-nonhuman dynamics through Klara, who understands that the ability to relate, perceive and care does not exist between biological similarity but through affective and ethical responsiveness. Another means that Ishiguro places Klara in a context of wider ecology is the fact that she is always facing the Sun. In contrast to the traditional depictions

of AI, which focus on computational intelligence as the primary element of the phenomenon, the vitality of Klara is solar. Ishiguro proves that the subjectivity of AI cannot be abstracted to material and environmental forces by providing Klara with the ecological viewpoint. Her dependence on the Sun does not draw boundaries between artificial and natural life, which presents the position of the novel against human exceptionalism in ecological interdependence.

The interpretations of the Sun provided by Klara represent her new processes of meaning making. To give an example, she interprets the patterns of the Sun as divine as helpful to living beings but sees such dreadful mistakes when natural order seems to be broken (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 87). The active interpretive structure that she exhibits in believing the Sun can heal Josie, like it did the Beggar Man, indicates the experience-based interpretation as opposed to an externally given set of rules (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 143). These interpretive activities are in consonance with the fact that subjectivity is developed out of a constant reconstitution of the environment within its limits as stated by Hayles. Klara has an autopoietic sense-making: her systemic organization is used to define the world around her, and the definitions continuously inform her future behavior, her moral obligations, and her feelings. By so doing, this recursive process makes Klara not merely an observer of human beings, she restructures her perceptual and ethical systems in answer to them. An example of such dynamics is her calls to the Sun on behalf of Josie: perception, interpretation, and action form another circle, which creates her developing identity. Ishiguro introduces Klara, therefore, as a posthuman subject whose awareness is a product of technological embodiment, ecological dependency, and relational involvement and transcends the traditional boundaries of agency, emotion, and subjectivity.

One of the peculiarities of this writing is its overall focus on the Sun as a literal energy source and a symbolic power of Klara. Unlike most of the models of artificial intelligence that predict autonomy and separation of the natural ecosystems, Ishiguro envisions an AI whose life cannot be separated from an ecological system. The fact that Klara is solar dependent in her rituals, appeals, and faith in the healing powers of the Sun brings up an impending level of implications pertaining to realizing the interdependence of technological, human, and environmental systems. Her admiration of the Sun also gives the story something of a spiritual transcription, throwing the dichotomy between the manmade and the natural and showing the even the most technologically developed creatures are still rooted in the natural ecologies. Such an ecological arrangement is also more or less in line with the posthuman focus of Hayles on embodiment, which requires that subjectivity cannot be disembodied. Rather than seeing Klara as a machine that is autonomous and rational, Ishiguro emphasizes her vulnerability, active dependence and embeddedness in material, indicating that all forms of selfhood, human or nonhuman, are products of relational entanglements. The material grounding is also further emphasized by the actions of Klara in the story. Her bargaining with the Sun, her special request to cure Josie, removing P-E-G Nine out of her body to disable the Machine (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 191), and her ultimate marginalization following Josie recovery on all of them are based on the limitations and opportunities of her physical body. Unlike humanist conceptions of the disembodied rational subject, Ishiguro brings out selfhood as material, localized, and embodied.

Another concept of reflexivity presented in the novel is how it creates vulnerability. The high level of self in Klara is a relational machine as it is based on the need to be recognized by others. Internal, she tells herself that Rick and Mr. Paul do not pay attention to her during their initial meeting, which shows that she is sensitive to appreciation and a sense of belonging (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 162). The loss of her purpose as she silently faces the crisis of a self-constructed on caring Klara has, it turns out, as Josie starts to heal and needs less care, demonstrates the frailty of a self that is constructed on caring. Her reflexive consciousness indicates her ability to make meaning as well as her inability to go beyond her autonomy in a world that ends up instrumentalizing her life. Ishiguro employs this

reflexivity to blend humanist notions of the self-determining subject; both natural and artificial selves are depicted as products of recognition, care and interdependence as opposed to autonomous independence. According to Hayles, tension between pattern and randomness is seen to be at the core of posthuman subjectivity that humanist promises of stable being have yielded to an insight of identity being constituted by informational systems (Hayles, 1999, p. 40). Ishiguro plays this game by making Klara predictable but not entirely foreseeable. The disrupted perception which she has, divided into grids, is what makes the world appear in shifting degrees of sharpness and distortion, as order and indeterminacy take part in the process of her interpretation. The efforts of Klara to decipher the motions of the Sun, explaining them as intentional designs that can help a person to get better, when you worry, touch the patterns of the sun and you get well, (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 2), can be viewed as the example of informational reasoning: a form of thinking that is both helpful and hazardous due to the fact that not all human beings share the symbolic system of Klara.

The situation of human subjectivity in the novel is put in the same precarious epistemic situation. The fact that Josie is sick, Rick is not sure of his future as he is not raised, and the consequences of genetic lifting are unpredictable all speak of the fragility of human existence and the boundaries to human power (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 71). Like how Klara, Josie and Rick make makeshift structures, rituals, vows and dreams, to face the uncertainty like their mutual vow to build a future together. Such similarities indicate that the biological and non-biological entities depend on interpretative constructs which are trying to give meaning to the chaos. According to *Klara and the Sun* (2021), therefore, Enlightenment beliefs of the coherent, self-sufficient subject are rejected in favor of posthuman identities of adaptation, uncertainty, and emergent meaning.

This dynamic is further explained by Hayles through her conception of distributed cognition that describes thought as being a process that moves beyond the actual brain into the networks of people, technologies, and the environment (Hayles, 1999, p. 290). Ishiguro makes this model of subjectivity by portraying Klara as a member of common meaning-making structures. In her perceptions and decisions, she is influenced not only by internal programming, but also by her experience with Josie, the household and the Sun, whom she gives agency. This distributed cognition is demonstrated by the way Klara knows the moods and health status of Josie: it is based on the combination of her programmed observational skills, human social indicators, and cultural empathy norms. The intersection of technological processes, embodied performances and relational spaces is, hence co-producing her subjectivity. As she treats the deteriorating health of Josie as a side effect of the Sun delaying, or when she is unwilling to inhabit the clone of Josie as an alternative (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 181), Klara proves that her own identity is constantly negotiated on these networks.

Finally, the novel by Ishiguro demonstrates the posthuman subject discussed by Hayles, an emergent, relationship-oriented and materially located entity developed within a network of meaning, care and ecological connectivity, which are dependent on each other.

Ishiguro criticizes the anthropocentric supposition according to which ethical sensitivity and moral agency are human characteristics. The actions of Klara portray the aspects of loyalty, sacrifice, and ethical rationality, and it is possible to ask whether the artificial agents can acquire ethical subjectivity. As an example, Klara is aware that Josie is getting worse but does not want to alarm the Mother with this fact because she does not want to suffer the mother emotionally, when the latter denies to take Josie to the place called Morgan Falls, Klara sees it not as a failure but as a morally justified step (Ishiguro, 2021, p. 80). Such instances of disruption overthrow traditional humanist ethical values which favor rational autonomy, but instead they point to an ethics of interdependence, vulnerability and care. Meanwhile, Ishiguro does not show the moral system of Klara as one that is not problematic. She believes in the Sun and believes in its ability to cure Josie which

demonstrates what is within the boundaries of an ethical system that is not pegged to any human cultural discourse, showing how non-human moral thinking can be both significant and erroneous.

The resolution of *Klara and the Sun* (2021) is achieved due to its multidimensional approach to the issue of identity in the world whose boundaries between human and nonhuman life are becoming more indistinct. Ishiguro places Klara as an object of human interaction and at the same time as an observer of human behavior, emphasizing that the subjectivity does not exist in a vacuum but exists through relationship. Her dealings with Josie, the mother and other characters bring forth the relational basis of selfhood. This is in line with the claims by Hayles that the posthuman self is not a necessary, "autonomous being" but a permeable creation created in information networks, material embodiment and through forces of the environment (Hayles, 1999, p. 141). The way Klara acts, the reason behind her silence in the shop as she is afraid of being left behind, the fact she sacrifices herself in the name of healing Josie, all this demonstrates the interplay between her mechanized abilities and her experiential learning and her interpretive experience in the world. The resultant subjectivity image is not so human as it is not so much artificial but an emergent hybrid that is formed through constant interaction. This reworking undermines the humanist tradition of the self as a closed system and puts identity in a new perspective as a process of negotiation.

In the process of our journey with Klara, Ishiguro poses some deeply unsettling questions regarding whether technological entities can be able to reflect, challenge and even to extend human conceptions of what it means to be a human. Klara is an archetype of the posthuman self where subjectivity no longer belongs to the singular entity but is a relational domain made up of bodies, machines and environments. Under this model, identity is a process, not just a product, constant, and reliant.

Conclusion

The paper has explored *Klara and the Sun* (2021) in terms of posthumanism, referring to *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) by Katherine Hayles to place the narrative of Ishiguro in the perspective of the theoretical framework that destabilizes the ideal of a rational and free human subject. Through pre-empting the snarls of technology, ecology and systemic interdependence, the study has demonstrated how the novel represents intricate forms of human-AI relatability, ecological interdependence of Klara in the Sun and tensions of human agency and identity in general. Although the current scholarship has been keen on ethical and philosophical implications of AI in the work of Ishiguro, a lot of it is still anchored on anthropocentric interests, especially whether machines are capable of perfectly mimicking or faking human capabilities. The gap that this paper has addressed through reframing the consciousness of Klara has been in making the subjectivity of Klara relational, embodied, and ecologically constituted thus leaving behind imitation and expanding on the posthuman selfhood.

Following the ideas of embodiment, reflexivity, materiality, and distributed cognition presented by Hayles, this paper used a qualitative and interpretive approach to put theory and text in a critical conversation. As the analysis has revealed, *Klara and the Sun* (2021) dramatize the main issues of posthumanism and challenge the traditional humanist ideas of unified self. Among the major discoveries, there is Ishiguro and his approach to AI-nature relations. The loyalty of Klara to Sun is not merely a symbolic and religious theme, but it shows the material and ecological foundation of her consciousness. According to Hayles, the information cannot be a fact out of the material conditions that generate and convey it. Such a belief in the healing power of the Sun is not naive because it represents a materialized level of meaning-making. Her subjectivity is not brought out of a structured, fixated program but through physical engagement with her surroundings. Ishiguro makes Klara belong to the same ecological chain as biological life, by transforming vitality and

moral agency into a natural force, which is dependent, vulnerable and materially conditioned.

Another addition that this paper has made is a better understanding of solar dependency of Klara as an ecological phenomenon and not as a metaphorical blossom. Some of the readings simplify the rituals performed by Klara as mere anthropomorphism projections, but in this research paper the focus was placed on the materialist and ecological ramifications of her dependency on the Sun. According to this approach, information, consciousness and embodiment cannot be separated- a truth that Hayles emphasizes in his posthuman theory. The thesis places Klara into an environmental network and thus extends the Ishiguro scholarship to incorporate the views of the environmental humanities and the ecocriticism posthuman, in which the interdependence of human and nonhuman life is predetermined.

Lastly, this paper has helped to shed light on how *Klara and the Sun* (2021) break the deep-rooted understanding of identity and agency. By using the body of Josie, a genetically engineered woman and the artificial and nonetheless touching feel of Klara, Ishiguro introduces the subjectivity as a decentralized process that is defined by the interactions between human, technological and ecological forces. The narration of Klara can be taken as a fine example of reflexivity that Hayles speaks about where the system and the observer cannot be separated. The way that she interacts with human beings demonstrates that agency is not fixed, autonomous, but negotiated, and relational and contingent.

Recommendation

To address the ethical and conceptual challenges raised in *Klara and the Sun* (2021), future research and technological development should adopt a posthuman ethics that recognizes agency as relational rather than exclusively human. Designers of artificial intelligence must incorporate ecological awareness, ensuring that technological systems remain embedded within and responsive to environmental conditions. Educational and literary frameworks should further promote critical engagement with human-machine interdependence, enabling readers and researchers to rethink subjectivity beyond anthropocentric boundaries. These steps can help mitigate misunderstandings about AI consciousness, reduce societal anxieties about technological autonomy, and encourage more responsible and integrated approaches to emerging intelligent systems.

References

- Dai, Y. (2024). *Klara and the Sun: Female Cyborgs in a Posthuman Perspective. Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/37/20240565>
- Hayles, N. K. (1999). *How we became posthuman: Virtual bodies in cybernetics, literature, and informatics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Ishiguro, K. (2021). *Klara and the sun*. Alfred A. Knopf.
- Kumar, P., & Jha, A. (2024). Posthuman Voice: Examining the Nonhuman Narrator in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 5(1), 344–350. <https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.3492>
- Novák, Z. (2023). Human-nonhuman boundaries and inter-creatural empathy in *Klara and the Sun*, *Fifteen Dogs*, *the Wonder that Was Ours* and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* *European Journal of English Studies*, 27(3), 462–482. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13825577.2023.2292061>
- Tan, Q., & Huang, Y. (2025). Beyond anthropocentrism: A posthumanist reflection on artificial intelligence and emotion in *Klara and the Sun*. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 7–17.
- Yu, J. (2024). Fragmentation and Self-Deception: Study of the Human-Machine Body from the Posthuman Perspective-The Case of Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*. *Frontiers in Humanities and Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.54691/dsg7bp80>