

An Analytical Study of Elements of Short Story in ‘Slabs of Stone Walls of Shaista Mahal’ from Mushtaq Banu’s “Heart Lamp” Selected Short Stories

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Abstract: *The short story contains the smaller size than novella and novel. It comprises of the elements of fiction or novel – plot, character, setting, theme, conflict etc. Like novel its plot is logically structured inculcating beginning, middle, and end. Apart from plot, the short story embeds characters such as individual or type, flat or round. The location, theme, and conflict are also essential parts of the story without which it remains incomplete. Banu Mushtaq shines as a star bagging Booker Prize 2025 for her renowned short story collection ‘Heart Lamp’. The present research paper selecting a short story named ‘Slabs of Stone from Shaista Mahal’ from ‘Heart Lamp’, seeks to probe into analytical study of elements of short story into it. The paper aims to examine how plot-construction takes place, what characters think, speak, act, and react, when and where the story happens, what major conflict or problem encounters them; what central issue or idea underlies in the short story. And how beautifully and skillfully the writer has entwined the fabrics of the short story. The qualitative research methodology is applied in it. The research methods such as: textual analysis and evaluative method have been exercised in it.*

Keywords: short story elements, Plot-construction, character portrayal, qualitative analysis, conflict, alienation, Mushtaq Banu.

1. Introduction

The short story refers to a concise realistic or fictitious narrative of limited size. The short story contains the smaller size than novella and novel. It comprises of the elements of fiction or novel –plot, character, setting, theme, conflict etc. Like novel its plot is logically structured inculcating beginning, middle, and end. Apart from plot, the short story embeds characters such as individual or type, flat or round. The location, theme, and conflict are also essential parts of the story without which it remains incomplete. The short story is divided into two streams by critics and its practitioners. The first one is claimed to be termed as a realistic short story. The second one is called as the impressionistic one. There is a third kind of short story that is objective one. The birth of the short story is assumed from oral tradition of mankind. Later, in nineteenth century it takes shape of literary form. Onwards, it gets flourished. The coterie of short story writers in every era all over the world, since nineteenth century, sought to write them in their own views. Edgar Allen Poe, Ernest Hemingway in America, Mausspassent in France have penned short stories and paved its way to bloom. In the series of short story-writers a new name: Banu Mushtaq shines as a star bagging Booker Prize 2025 for her renowned short story collection ‘Heart Lamp’. *Heart Lamp: Selected Stories* was widely praised. *The Hindu* called it a "serious read with a sprinkle of humour", highlighting its focus on Muslim women's lives and the translation's retention of regional linguistic elements. Moreover, Mint described it as a "textured exploration" of gender dynamics. The present research paper selecting a short story named ‘Slabs of Stone from Shaista Mahal’ from ‘Heart Lamp’, seeks to probe into analytical study of elements of short story into it. The paper aims to examine how plot-construction takes place, what characters think, speak, act, and

react, when and where the story happens, what major conflict or problem encounters them; what central issue or idea underlies in the short story. And how beautifully and skillfully the writer has entwined the fabric of the short story. The qualitative research methodology is applied in it. The research methods such as: textual analysis and evaluative method have been exercised in it.

Aims and Objectives

The present research paper aims to examine the elements of short story in ‘Slabs of Stone walls for Shaista Mahal’. Besides it, it scrutinizes how beautifully and dexterously Banu Mushtaq has weaved all the elements in a simple and dignified language. Additionally, it investigates and raises the issues of feminism and voices for female equality in Muslim community.

2. Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology is selected to be applied in this research paper. Also, the research paper applies textual analysis and examination of the short story – ‘Slabs of Stone walls of Shaista Mahal’. The primary source of information is selected in the shape of textual analysis. Besides of it, the secondary source of information such as online research paper and other data has been exercised to fulfill the needs of investigation.

3. Review of Literature

The short story has its roots back in ancient age either from Aesop’s fable or Panchtantra tales, Jatak Kathaye in different countries. They have been evolved from sketches, anecdotes and tales. In Middle Ages, Baccaccio’s Decameron’s tales,

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Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and *Pardner's Tales* are miniature of characterization paving way to the development of story. With the emergence of Novel in 18th century, the elements of short story have been evolved but not as an specific genre. The short story sees its heyday in 19th century simultaneously in Germany, the United State, France, and Russia. In Germany, nothing more than 'entertainment', a realistic type of short story is being written. The critics like Christopher Weiland and Friedrich Schlegel focused that short story concerns with events that actually happened or could happen. Like Edgar Allen Poe, Heinrich Von Kleist deals with human issues metaphysical and psychological both confronting with a fantastic and chaotic world in her short stories. Another shift comes from the pen of E. T. A. Hoffmann's short stories dealing with exotic places and supernatural phenomena. Besides, Ludwig Tieck, rejected realism and adopted a matter of intensity and ironic inversion in short story. He claims that 'the chain of consequences' is entirely in keeping with character and circumstances.

Like Germany, in the United States the short story evolved in two stories- the realistic story and the impressionistic story. On the one hand, the realistic story seeks objectively to deal with seemingly real places, events, persons. The regionalist stories of the second half of the 19th century are of its type. On the other hand, the impressionist story associates with the consciousness and psychological attitudes of the narrator. Focused on subjectivity, then short stories lack objectivity and outward realistic touch. Allen Poe's narrator's hallucinations provide such details of impressionistic approach. Washington Irving wrote both strains of short stories – realistic and impressionistic. The *Sketch Book* 1819-20 and *Rip Van Winkle* 1819 are realistic and impressionistic respectively. Apart from it, Nathaniel Hawthorne, began to write symbolic stories unlike Poe and Washington. Moreover, Henry James is a big gem in the strain of impressionist stories promoting 'the use of central intelligence' in description of personal account not of self but of somebody's else impression. He seeks to induce 'impersonal voice' in narrating the details of life of his characters.

Prosper Merimee was a short storywriter in France writing masterpiece of detached and dry observation dealing with the subject matter of emotionality. Another short story writer named Alphonse Daudet wrote stories reflecting the spectrum of interest and techniques of the entire century in '*Letters de mon Moulin*' in 1866 creating a romantic picturesque fantasy. Moreover, Guy de Maupassant, the greatest French storywriter, is a master of objective short story. He writes anecdotes that reveal moment in the lives of Middle Class citizens. The plot is contrived well in '*Boule de Suif*' (1880: "*Ball of Tallow*"). In '*Necklace*' 1881, plot is too contrived and irony is reversing too. His style captures the innocence and corruption of human behaviour.

Ivan Krylov wrote short stories borrowing heavily from Aesop in Russia in first two decades of 19th century. Nikolay Gogol is a prominent figure in short story writers from whose pen Russian short story emerged in the opinion of Fyodor

Dostoyvesky. He said that 'all Russian short story writers' emerged from Gogol's *Overcoat*. Gogol develops impressionist techniques in Russia like Poe in America simultaneously. Gogol's tales are full of hallucinations, confusing reality, and dream like those of Poe's. The single most influential story of Gogol is undoubtedly '*The Overcoat*' 1842. He blended realism with fantasy.

Ivan Turgenev '*A Sportman's Sketches*' uses simple language, his calm pace, qualities of people and places than in building elaborate plots. Fyodor Dostoyvesky's '*White Nights*' 1848, experimented the impressionist story like Poe and Gogol. His stories contain different techniques, psychological veracity, through objective narrators. Besides, the Russian master of objective story was Anton Chekhov who was not interested in telling the story and knitting the plot well. However, he reveals much more through his characters and the quality in their lives. Chekhov's '*The Grasshopper*' 1892, '*The Darling*' 1898, '*In the Ravine*' 1900, all keeps an eye on characters, his perception, his compassion, his subtle humor, and irony. While Maupassant focuses on event, Chekhov keeps his eye on character.

In the first half of the 20th century, the short story started growing in the hands of hundred writers. But later the short story became too difficult to write for not finding the form for short stories. They settled for novel. In the 20th century, Germany, France, Russia, and the U.S.A. lost what had once appeared to be their exclusive domination of the form. Sherwood Anderson observes that the common belief in early 20th century (in his day) was that stories had to be built around a plot and such a notion appeared to poison all storytelling. The main purpose of writer became to gain form not plot and even if the form was more elusive and difficult. Although popular writers of the century like O' Henry in the U.S and Paul Morand in France may have continued to write stories focusing in the line of plot-construction. The greater artists turned elsewhere for structure frequently eliciting the response from cursory readers that "nothing happens in these stories". Ernest Hemingway's "*A Clean Well Lighted Place*" 1933 describes no physical action but psychological conflict lacking structure. Likewise, D.H. Lawrence's and Katherine Mansfield's short stories deal with psychological underpinning except physical action. William Faulkner uses the traditional pattern of the Knight by quest for his story. He relied on a psychologically organic form to reveal the story of Sarty Snopes.

No single form provided the 20th century writer with the answer to structural problems. As the primary structuring agent, spectacular and suspenseful action was rather universally rejected around mid-century since motion pictures and television could present it much more vividly.

In the drought of short story writing not only in India but also world over, Banu Mushtaq emerges as a short story writer on the horizon of Indian short story writing in English. She has ended the drought of short story writing on the field of literature by bagging Booker Prize for her short story

collection entitled 'Heart Lamp' 2025. She has galvanized the short story writing to come up with hope to contribute for literary production.

There are various short story elements: such as plot, character, location, theme, tone, mood, rhetorical devices, and style by which the short story named 'Slabs of Stone for Shaista Mahal' must be under-scrutinized.

4. Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology is selected to be applied in this research paper. Also, the research paper applies textual analysis and examination of the short story – 'Slabs of Stone walls of Shaista Mahal'. The primary source of information is selected in the shape of textual analysis. Besides of it, the secondary source of information such as online research paper and other data has been exercised to fulfill the needs of investigation.

Data Collection:

Primary datum is gathered from the original text 'Heart lamp' collection of short stories in which a short story entitled 'Stone walls for Shaista Mahal' is extracted out. The secondary data are collected from articles, online research papers and books to make under-scrutinized work feasible.

Data Analysis:

The data are analyzed by testing them on the narrative elements in the short story. These elements are plot structure, characterization, location, theme, conflict, narrator, tone, mood, allusion, rhetorical devices: irony, humor, pathos, satire, flashback, flashforward, foreshadowing, simile metaphor; diction and style.

The above-mentioned short story is under-scrutinized above - said structure and rhetorical devices in the following way:

Plot-Construction:

The plot-construction of the short story is constructed logically as it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The exposition of the short story is revealed with the loneliness and boredom of the narrator who is bound to live among machine-like human beings and emotionless people in towering buildings. The alienation of the narrator is ended when the transfer of narrator's husband takes place where the narrator – Zeenat gets the chance to accompany with Shaista and her sons and daughters whenever the narrator gets the invitation from Shaista's family and sometimes Zeenat too invites them.

The plot develops as Zeenat comes to know through the talk of Shaista that she wants Asifa to study in college for higher education. Asifa is a brilliant student in studies and is passed out high school in a first attempt. However, the conflict or problem is that Shaista is pregnant and has six offerings- four sons and two daughters. Asifa takes care of their younger sisters and brothers. Her study is stopped by her family because she has to be engaged in domestic works which can't

be done by Asifa's mother- Shaista for she is pregnant already and going to deliver the baby soon.

One more problem is associated with Asifa is that her father- Iftikhar Ahmad wants her married in minor age. He is antio girl's education. The conflict of the plot is that Shaista wants Asifa to study but her pregnancy makes Asifa engaged in doing work. Shaista wants uterus to be operated next year after delivery so that Asifa would get education. The plot moves and reaches climax as Shaista dies of anemia after delivery leaving Asifa in suffering alone. The falling action and resolution happen. As the narrator comes to know that Iftikhar remarries to a new woman and Asifa is left bound to suffer taking care of younger bro and sises.

Suspense and surprise are key points that occur in the story enabling it to keep interest in it. Readers expect that what will happen to Asifa's dream of getting education? For readers' surprise, they are discouraged and left to be in interrogation as Iftikhar remarries to a new woman thanatizing Shaista' dream of getting Asifa educated after Shaista's death. The writer leaves readers to think of tears, isolation, bearing responsibilities of domestic jobs by Asifa. The resolution is accomplished surprisingly putting interrogation to think about the problem of females in the face of patriarchy.

The story combines two plots –main plot and sub-plot. The main plot centers around Iftikhar's family: Shaista, Asifa, and Iftikhar himself. The sub-plot encircles the life of narrator: Zeenat and her husband Mujahid. Both plots encounter and sub-plot gets updated about the occurrences of the main plot: Iftikhar's fake love to Shaista, carelessness of the guardianship of Iftikhar to his offsprings, Shaista's care to Asifa, her repentance for destroying Asifa's study, death of Shaista, and remarriage of Iftikhar to a new woman. The loneliness, isolation, and depression of Zeenat in sub-plot turn to be togetherness, happy company and sharing of ideas as She meets with Shaista, and Asifa in main plot.

Characterization:

In the present short story, there are various characters. There are two families depicted in the story. The one family is of narrator- Zeenat and her husband Mujahid. The both are a newly married couple. The other family described in the story is of Iftikhar Ahmad, his wife- Shaista, and his daughter -Asifa and young kids. There are two male characters – Mujahid and Iftikhar and three female characters: Zeenat, Shaista, Asifa, and a newly wife (name not mentioned in the story) of Iftikhar after the death of Shaista. The characters depicted in the story are both flat and round one. Iftikhar, Zeenat, Shaista are round characters. On the other hand, Mujahid and Asifa are flat characters. Iftikhar proves to be around character because he gets changed in showing the love sentiment to a new woman after the death of his wife Shaista whom he brags to love more than Mumtaz. Zeenat is also a round character for she initially remains depressed in the beginning of the story, as she accompanies the family of Iftikhar particularly Shaista and Asifa. She starts keeping a special room in his heart to both Shaista and Asifa. Both the death of Shaista and remarrying of

Iftikhar to a new woman shocks Zeenat too much that she keeps on empathizing with the victim – Asifa. Shaista is shown as a victim and sufferer and bearer of offsprings and ultimately died of lack of blood. She is progressive in thought by being serious of daughter Asifa's future to get her educated for higher education. She can be termed as round character. At the same time, Mujahid is a flat character who shows the features of a working class always engaged in the work till the end of story. Moreover, Asifa is represented as a girl domestic worker, caretaker of younger brothers and sisters from beginning to the end of story sacrificing her dream of getting higher education.

Theme:

The central theme of the short story focuses on the female's longings, desire and wishes trapped and suppressed under the Muslim societal patriarchy. The females like Shaista and Asifa suffer because of the traditional mindset of the Muslim family in the hands of patriarchal head like Iftikhar. At the same time, a modern family like Mujahid and Zeenat is displayed. Mujahid is a modern guy working in an office and like Zeenat who wears modern outfits. However, he doesn't give time to his wife, Zeenat, who feels alone and lonely.

The story embeds the various subthemes – female's love for Nature, female's love for offsprings, lack of parenting to sons and daughters in Muslim uneducated family, male's perspective to the way of life, male's passion for woman, unfulfilled dream of daughter, girl as a victim and sufferer in the family, females as victim and sufferer, care of a mother to daughter, and requirement of someone to share human emotions and ideas in human beings. The educated female suffers loneliness and depression because better-half doesn't spend enough time to share her feelings and ideas. On the hands, the uneducated females are victimized in the shackled old traditions. The central theme entwined with the subthemes develops to its climax and ultimately to its resolution.

Conflict:

A conflict is a backbone of the story or any plot. The conflict is in between exposition and climax in the plot-construction. It keeps the story moving and depicts either character's inner potentiality while they are engaged in outward forces or their mental or psychological dilemma when they encounter as they are in inner conflict. The conflict refers to clash or fight within characters' mind or sometime against external forces such as family, Nature, society and country. The short story 'The Stonewalls of Shaista mahal' is engaged in conflict in the very beginning as the narrator is not fixed to call her husband by which term 'she can't call him 'pati' because she does not make her husband 'a god', nor she wants to consider a servant to remain always in service to her owner. Besides, she doesn't call herself a lady of office because she is a working newly married wife. Moreover, the real conflict of the short story lies in Shaista's being pregnant which is barring Asifa's education because Asifa spending all the time in doing domestic works and taking care of younger brothers and sisters Shaista plans to get uterus operated after her delivery so that she would be free to take care of kids and provide time for Asifa's

education. The main reason of the conflict covertly remains in the negligence of Iftikhar's domestic responsibility and ignoring the nourishment of his own sons and daughters. He is only engaged in love making with his wife Shaista whom he loves more than Mumtaj. The conflict reaches its climax at the death of Shaista leaving Asifa alone with unfulfilled dream of gaining higher education. The conflict gets resolved with the remarriage of Asifa's father to a new woman interrogating the issue of Asifa taking care of young kids and the dream dreamed by Shaista for Asifa's education ends in smoke.

Point of View:

The short story is narrated by the narrator Zeenat who is a character in it. Banu employs the first-person narrator in the beginning of the story while describing Zeenat's mental agony living in Metropolitan city. Where people are careless, faithless, machine-like, and no love among them. Nothing beautiful to see nearby is noticeable that area. The narrator feels boredom and alienation because she accompanies none to share her emotion and ideas even if she is newly married. For her husband is a working guy in an office and give less time to her. The narrator says: "Arey, I forget. I should tell you all about Mujahid, no? Mujahid is my home person." Page no. (08)

The story takes a twist and the writer uses the second person point of view by taking into confidence to the reader that what she is going to narrate the story, the reader must know and believe because the terms 'Pati', 'Devas', 'Kumbkaran', are already well known to readers. Since Zeenat, the narrator, is a character, other characters come into playing or speaking their roles and dialogues to keep the story on.

Tone:

The tone refers to the attitude of the writer or narrator which he or she tries to cast in the story by the usage of diction. The story 'Stonewalls for Shaista Mahal' exercises the disappointing or gloomy phraseology in the beginning of the story. The phrases like 'towering building', 'machinelike people', and 'No love and care for one another', throws the light that the beginning of the story is sardonic or gloomy. As the story goes forward, the tone gets changed from gloominess to happiness because Zeenat gets the opportunity to meet people like Shaista and Iftikhar to whom she can share her feelings and enjoys a lot in Iftikhar's garden where various fruits trees have been planted by him. Jasmine flowers and talking of love diminishes the tone of melancholy and creates the attitude of happiness. Simultaneously, the seriousness of the issue of Asifa's getting education and her marriage in childhood overshadows with graveness. However, the tone becomes tragic and serious, and melancholic at the death of Shaista, remarriage of Iftikhar and unfulfilled dreams of Asifa's education, and tears in Asifa's eyes. The tone is satirical as well.

Mood

The mood denotes the atmosphere created in the story and the effect of it readers get. The readers get the effect of the short story from the very beginning: the lonely and melancholic

atmosphere of newly married couple Zeenat with Mujahid because of her husband being busy in office works. With the sharing of the views of Zeenat with Shaista, the pleasant atmosphere is created but very soon Shaista's dream of sending Asifa into college remains unfulfilled before getting her uterus operated after the present delivery to enable herself to do domestic work, Shaista died and left her daughter to be a caretaker of younger kids because Iftikhar, the father of Asifa, remarries with another woman in the name giving shelter to his sons and daughters. Therefore, the mood of the short story remains serious, tragic, thought-provoking, and pathetic.

Location

The story is located in the Post-independence India, Mysuru town and urban life where characters enjoy their life in South India. The story commences with the metropolitan city. The scene is changed to the natural surroundings of South India where every family is accustomed to take care of a garden in which fruits-plants and flowers-plants are planted. The specific customs are followed by the character as they belong to Muslim community. Modern Muslims break the certain codes and conduct off to follow, whereas older ones still follow to be adhered to revive their specific culture and religion. They like to take tea and females like to have flowers in their heads.

Allusion

The short story writer uses allusion in the story to render it a deep meaning and culturally constructed story. Mustaq Banu employs the terms such as 'Ganda', 'Gandataru', 'Pati', 'Devaru', 'Taj Mahal', 'Allah', 'Kumbkaran', etc. in the story to make it loaded with complex meaning. She has chosen the terms from Hindu culture like – Pati, Yazamana; Kumbkarana to provide a new context to them in the short story. Besides, the words like Devaru, Ganda, and Gandataru from Tamil culture extend the complexity of meaning. Moreover, the Islam culture's terms such as Taj Mahal, Anab-e shahi, and Allah are also added in it. The references of these terms enable the short story more meaningful.

Humor

Humor is found in the short story. As the story unravels that Shaista has six children and seventh one is yet to be delivered. All five children are monkeys without tails produces humor. One more example is noticeable regarding the usage of humor in the short story is that as Mujahid is sleeping till late morning. He is compared with Kumbkaran. It provides humor to readers. Moreover, the humor is produced as Mujahid states Shaista to steal her new born baby, she is hospitalized during delivery. Shaista says to Mujahid, "What kind of a man are you to steal someone's baby and run? Get your own army ready, then we will see." Page no. (19)

The satirical humor is marked to notice as newly mothers have to spend forty days in special confinement by following a specific scheduled in the village to make their body fit after delivery. They had to be in a distance from their husbands. The narrator describes "When my brother or brother-in-law spent too much time with their wives during confinement, Amma

would grumble. 'What is this shamelessness! If I let the husband and wife spend some time with each other... they want to take advantage.'" Page no. (21)

Irony

Irony is scattered in the story. Skillfully, the writer has made its usage. While Iftikhar makes a statement about his love for his wife Shaista that 'If he were an emperor, he would have built a Shaista Mahal like Taj Mahal for his wife' page no. (13). This statement is ironical in the sense that he remarries again even after few days of Shaista's death. His deep love for Shaista vanishes very soon. Zeenat reminds him of his deep love for Shaista in the following words:

"But don't repeat the declarations of love you made to Shaista with her. It is Ok if you do not get a Shaista Mahal built... If... she were to wake up and come back, you will be in trouble." Page no. (24)

Besides, irony of character is noticeable in Iftikhar's character. The verbal irony is visible in the statement of Iftikhar as he says that he is strong enough to take care of all his offsprings but really, he doesn't.

Pathos

The short story is filled with pathos. The pathos is evoked in the story in the beginning because the city life-aloneness to Zeenat, who has lost interest in life because of not sharing his emotion to none available to her, makes her depressed even though she is newly married. Moreover, pathos is discernible in the life of Shaista who is anxious about the spoiling the education of Asifa for not rendering her enough time for study for being busy in carrying out domestic business. Shaista pathetically says:

"Oh! Is it enough to have sufficient earnings? My sweet Asifa has had to say goodbye to her studies because of me. Do you know how much that pains me?" page no. (11)

Besides, Shaista's life is filled with pathetic conditions. She has already six offsprings and seventh one is yet to come in this world. She has been the machine of bearing children. She does not want Asifa to lead life in future like her. And hence, she wants her to study in college. Shaista object to the opinion of Iftikhar of child marriage of Asifa. She expresses her pain in her objection:

"I have become a mother of six children over the last seventeen years. If you get my daughter married off this early." Page no. (12)

Moreover, the pathos is abundant as Shaista dies and leaves Asifa alone stating about her, she is not her daughter but she is literally her mother. The reader gets surprised in pathos as Iftikhar remarries and leaves Shaista's dream of Asifa's getting education unfulfilled.

Satire

The satire is replete in the story. The writer satirizes that newly wedded couple should spend enough time for growing better relationship otherwise the relationship might be broken off anytime. If the male partner is an office-goer, always and ever the female one suffers from loneliness and depression. This is applicable in the story regarding Zeenat's and Mujahid's marital life. The office-goer-partner must not be workaholic, otherwise opposite partner at home gets frustrated for not sharing his or her emotion. The traditional family is also satirized by the writer because it is not accepting the change but bearing children and not offering responsibility to rearing children become the very cause of not providing proper education to them and not developing sound mentality. The traditional mindset towards girls' education is visible in the following statement of Iftikhar:

"It is not like that. I made her stop studying because girls do not need much education. A High School certificate is enough. There is no need for her to roam around in Mysuru for college. We can get her married off next year." Page no. (11)

Additionally, the patriarchy doesn't promote females to go forward but wants to bid goodbye to them by getting them married. No matter, how they would live and lead their life better. Therefore, the writer satirizes both the modern set-up of family and orthodox one for not correcting the faults in which sufferings are only in females' part not males.

Figurative language

The figurative language is the embellishment of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs persuading audience in its beauty. The short story writer has employed the various types of figures of speech to enrich the language and embellish it. With the use of simile, metaphor, paradox, personification, the language is tinged with the color of literariness. Moreover, metonymy and rhetorical questions enhance the depth and beauty of language. The various examples of different figures of speech are given below:

"I left Iftikhar right there and rushed to Mujahid, the sleeping Kumbakaran. (metaphor)

"The baby was really very cute, soft and pink like a rose." (simile)

"She is not my daughter; she is my mother." (paradox)

"Twenty-five graves waiting open-mouthed for Shaista." (metonymy and prolepsis)

"Do you Know how much that pains me?" (rhetorical question)

Imagery

The writer exercises the various beautiful imageries in the short story. The imageries incorporated in the text, are visual, audible, gustatory, tactile, thermal, olfactory, and kinesthetic. 'The smoke-spewing, horn blowing vehicle' in the city evokes audio-visual imagery in the audience. Additionally, 'the jasmine buds' induces the olfactory imagery in the audience. Moreover, 'the movement was the only goal in their life'

mentions the imagery of kinesthesia. Besides, 'the building like match box' evokes the imagery of visuality. Plus, 'A cool breeze is tickling my body and mind' depicts the thermal imagery in them. Therefore, the writer has deftly and meticulously used the language incorporating the several types of imageries so that the impact or effect of the story might be deeper and deeper touching all the senses in audiences. Besides, it displays the mastery of writer in the application of rhetorics in language. Furthermore, the gustatory imagery is observed in the following lines:

"Ammam would make her get up, wipe away the bad water... and give her mutton heart or mutton leg soup." Page no (20)

Symbols

The writer embeds the symbols in the text. She does so to suffice the deeper meaning to the words and theme as well. She has mentioned the symbols like 'Taj Mahal', 'Jasmine', 'Aneesh u-sahin', 'Kumbkaran', 'Devas', and 'Pati' to provide multi-layered meanings the story. It is noteworthy that usages of symbols are skillfully entailed in the story to embed connotative meaning to it.

Flashback and Flashforward techniques

The writer has skillfully embedded the techniques of flashback and flashforward to keep suspense and give futuristic thoughts to the audience in the short story. Shaista's grand mother tells her past life and the audience come to know it through narrator. Furthermore, the story goes back when Shaista also discloses her idea to Zeenat about her past life. Shaista says, "I got married when I was twenty years old." (page no.12)

The flashforward technique is used in the short story to render opinion in near future. Shaista is worried about the future of her daughter. She wants the bright future of her offspring. However, Shaista's husband – Iftikhar's statement about his daughter possesses the tool flashforward used in the short story when he utters, "We can get her married off next year." (page no. 12)

Style

The figurative language is the embellishment of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs persuading audience in its beauty. The figures of speech like similes, metaphors, personifications are aptly employed by the writer to bring the story home to the audience. The simple and easy figures of speech make language comprehensible and understandable to the readers to enjoy its raciness and pace.

The diction used in the short story is formal, informal, colloquial and vernacular. The choice of words is well selected for conveying the ideas speculated by characters and emotions sprung from characters. The selection of words also suits not only to the characters but also in what circumstances they are expressed. The formal and literary diction such as 'God', 'Kumbkaran', 'Yazmana', 'Pati', 'Devta', 'Taj Mahal', 'Anab-e-Shahi', 'Gonda', 'Devaru', and 'Fatiha' is used by the short story writer. Besides, the informal words are exercised to give localized and grounded touch. The colloquial diction like

'monkey', 'Thoo', 'Arey', 'Samosa' have described in it. The diction too becomes figurative and literary.

The writer has employed a style in which she has practiced the sentence structures like simple, compound and complex which suit to the dialogues in the story. The sentences are informative, rational, and emotive. The style is formal, informal, literary and colloquial.

5. Conclusion and Findings

The present paper focused on the narrative elements in the short story seeks to find out the plot-construction, characterization, location, tone, mood, point of view, theme, conflict, pathos, humor, irony, satire, symbols, rhetorical and literary devices, diction, and style in details. The short story incorporates exposition, suspense, surprise, climax, falling action and resolution. Additionally, it inculcates flashback, foreshadowing techniques. Moreover, the language is both informative and emotive. The writer has skillfully entwined the fabric of irony, humor, pathos, satire and figures of speech such as similes, metaphors, personifications, and imageries in a single story. The style consists of the elements of formality, informality, colloquialism and literariness. Thus, Mustaq Banu has skillfully entwined all the narrative elements of short story to make it successful. Both the theme-wise and style-wise the under-scrutinized short story is appealing and attention-capturing to the readers.

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