

Contact Analysis of Tariq Rahman’s “Deaf, Dark, Walls”: A Systemic Functional Linguistics Approach

Aneela Gul

BS Student, Department of English & Applied Linguistics, University of Science & Technology, Bannu, KP, Pakistan.

Muhammad Wasim Khan

Visiting Lecturer (MPhil Scholar), Department of English & Applied Linguistics, University of Science & Technology, Bannu, KP, Pakistan.

(Corresponding Author) wasimafriofficial@gmail.com

Dr Abdul Karim Khan

Assistant Professor, Department of English & Applied Linguistics, University of Science & Technology, Bannu, KP, Pakistan.

Abstract

The objective of this study is to find out the relations among the participants and their contacts by focusing on the language use and its interpersonal meanings in Tariq Rahman’s short story “Deaf, Dark, Walls.” The data is collected by mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative. This study attempts to analyze and interpret the selected statements through Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. The contact of the participant Javed is two times involved while Khaista Gul is eight times uninvolved in the selected twenty statements. It is recommended to conduct a study on the said short story from the lens of critical discourse analysis as the short story is replete with ideological words and excerpts.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Contact, Short Story, Tariq Rahman, Pakistani Literature in English

Introduction

Tariq Rahman's stories are written with such beauty that makes them interesting to the readers. There is complexity in his stories which is hardly understandable. His short stories deal with different themes like he expressed the brutal reality of society and hardships in lower or middle-class people's lives. On the other hand, his stories also highlight the themes of courage, bravery, determination, and patience to deal with life's social issues and hardships (Mahmood, 2022).

His short story “Bingo” is a fiction about the complex nature of friendship, duty, treason, and civil war. The main themes of this short story are the agony of the fragmentation of Pakistan, politics, a colonial attitude of West Pakistan, misuse of power, racism, and oppression. The short story “Babu” deals with the struggle to belong, identity crisis, cultural conflict, discrimination, and a sense of alienation. This story also highlights the themes of colonialism and imperialism. The short story “The Computer” deals with the side effects of using too much technology and the effect of using technology on the environment and the human mind (Mahmood, 2022). The story “Charity” talks about colonialism, the Mughal rule, and socialism, which all exist no more after the independence of Pakistan, even though our country lives with charity. This story talks about the reality of life in Pakistan and also points towards the psyche of today's world, where money is more important than everything. “The Toy” is about a poor boy. This short story is a peer pressure that shows the effect of poverty on the minds of children. “Crying Baby” is another short story by Tariq Rahman. It is about a woman who is looking for a domestic job to feed her child, and her husband is a drug addict. This story highlights the themes of domestic violence, poverty, social insecurity, helplessness, patience, and struggle.

The story “Deaf, Dark Walls” talks about the girl Saman, who plans to go out with her lover, and the boy Khaista Gul, who saves her family's honour. It deals with the themes of bravery, courage, and honour (Mahmood, 2022).

Batool et al. (2022) conducted research on Tariq Rahman's short story “Bingo” which focuses on how the structure of the text helps in achieving reality by applying Gerard Genette's “Narrative Discourse Model”. Another study was conducted by Batool et al. (2022) on Tariq Rahman's selected short stories “Bingo” and “The Dance of the Beards” by applying Halliday's Interpersonal Meta-function, which tries to explore the exchange of clauses among Tariq Rahman's characters.

Statement of the Problem

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) aims to find out the relations among the characters and the roles developed due to the language use, their correspondence, and their influence on one another by examining the language that is present in the form of a text. By applying Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) to the short story “Deaf, Dark, Walls” by Tariq Rahman, the study is conducted to identify and analyze the degree of involvement among the participants called contact.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate Tariq Rahman's “Deaf, Dark, Walls” on the level of contact through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory.
2. To analyze as to how contact suggests various layers of meanings through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory in Tariq Rahman's “Deaf, Dark, Walls.”

Research Questions

1. What are the linguistic tools utilized as contact in Tariq Rahman's “Deaf, Dark, Walls”?
2. How does contact suggest various layers of meanings through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory in Tariq Rahman's “Deaf, Dark, Walls”?

Literature Review

Khan et al. (2023) assert that Pakistani Literature in English, like other post-colonial works, shows society realistically. In the first twenty years, only a few writers were active, and their audience was quite limited. Fiction in Pakistan was still developing, while poetry started gaining attention in the 1960s. Pakistani English fiction explores various themes, including feelings of isolation, change, consumerism, and relativity (Khan et al., 2023). After working on long prose, Pakistani writers started writing short prose. If one looks at Pakistani literature, more specifically Pakistani short stories, and acknowledges its background, then the same society can be observed that existed before the separation of the Sub-continent. Pakistani Literature in English originated from British Literature because the British Empire colonized the Sub-continent. This influence led writers to use English to express their ideas, emotions, and feelings (Khan et al., 2024). Pakistani short stories that are written in different languages, like Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and Saraiki, are now translated into English to highlight the voices and experiences of its people. They made the main characters with desires and aspirations, fear and horror, pride, shame, helplessness, and a thousand other unnamed feelings to promote Pakistani culture (Hussain et al., n.d.).

The short story is the most significant genre in Pakistani Literature in English. Short Story writing started from pre-partition. Pre-partition fiction is all about the brutal behaviour of the British, partition issues, Muslim and Hindu conflicts, and the caste system. The most

well-known writers at that time were Saadat Hasan Manto and Syed Waliullah. Saadat Hasan Manto was a world-renowned Pakistani playwright and author who wrote 233 short stories in Urdu. Some of his short stories are “Boo,” “Khali Shalwaar,” “Aankhen,” “Aurat Zaat,” “Anaar Kali,” “Vo Ladki,” “Baarish,” “Begoo,” “Aam,” “Aulaad,” “Yazeed,” “Ishq-e-Haqeeqi,” “Jaanki,” “Allah Datta,” “Burqe,” “Tamaasha,” “Goli,” “Darpok,” “Raju,” and more. Saadat Hasan Manto was known for his masterpieces like “Thanda Gosht,” “Khol Do,” and “Toba Tek Singh” (Rekhta, n.d.). Manto’s short stories are based on the violence and suffering of the people. This violence included rape, murder, abduction of women, violation of holy places, loss of life, kidnapping, and the distorted identity of a generation, emotions, and sufferings of the people. Manto portrayed the true picture of these situations. Manto was also considered as Socrates, who wrote about the truth and reality. He, in his writing, directly points out the evils of society, which were the reasons for disturbance in social life (Akram et al., 2019).

Syed Waliullah is considered the pioneer of existential analysis of the character's psyche in literature. He was also a great novelist, short story writer, and playwright. His first short story was “Hathat Alor Jhalkani”. In 1944, he published a volume of short stories by the name of Nayanthara. In 1965, he published another volume of short stories, “Dui Teer O Anyanya Galpa”. He wrote four novels named “Lalsalu” (1948), “Chander Amaboshay” (1963), “Kando Nadi Kando” (1966), and “The Ugly Asian” (1959). His dramas are *Bahipir* (1955), *Tarangabhanga* (1964), and *Sudanga* (1964) (Zaman, 2016). The main themes of his works are social reformation, awakening people about religion, and satire against corruption.

Another great Pakistani short story writer is Ahmed Ali. He is considered the pioneer of modern Urdu short story writing. He wrote novels, dramas, short stories, poems, and translations. His famous short stories are “When the Funeral Was Crossing the Bridge” (1929), “Mahavaton Ki Ek Rât” (1931), “Angarey” (1932), “Sholey” (1934), “Our Lane” (1936), “Hamari Gali” (1940), “Morning in Delhi” (1940), “Qaid-khana” (1942), “Maut se Pahle” (1945), and “The Prison-House” (1985). Ahmed Ali's short stories explore themes of identity, cultural clashes, societal norms, the human condition, love, loss, nostalgia, and the search for meaning are present in his stories. Complexities of human relationships, the impact of colonialism, and the struggle for individuality in the face of societal pressures are discussed in his short stories (Wikipedia, n.d.).

Khawaja Ahmed Abbas was also a famous pre-partition writer. He wrote two collections of short stories, a novelette, a drama, two novels, two travelogues, and one account of journalism. His famous short stories are “Tomorrow,” “Blood and Stones,” “The Umbrella,” “Flowers for Her Feet,” “Twelve Hours,” “Saffron Blossom,” and “Reflection in Mirror.” The major themes in his works are the theme of courtesan and prostitution, Hindu-Muslim controversies, and atrocities in the subcontinent (Azam, 2014).

Among post-partition short story writers, Zaib-un-Nisa Hamidullah was a prominent figure. She was a writer, a journalist, and a pioneer of feminism in Pakistan. She wrote some famous short stories like “Indian Bouquet (1941),” “Lotus Leaves (1946),” “Sixty Days in America (1956),” “The Young Wife (1958),” “The Flute of Memory (1964)” (Wikipedia, n.d.-a). Her collection of short stories comprises 15 short stories. These short stories can be divided based on their themes. The two short stories “The Young Wife” and “The Firstborn” are written about the disputes among the traditional values and customs in the rural areas of Pakistan and individualism. “The Peepul Trees” and “Fame” are written in ironical form, and “Motia Flower” and “Wonder Bloom” show supernatural things. The prominent themes of her works are patriarchal society, human desire, religion, and the social norms and traditions of Pakistan (Azam, 2014).

In the 1960s, Pakistani Literature in English flourished by writers like Zulfiqar Ghose, Nasir Ahmed Farooqi, and H.K. Burki. At that time, Pakistan was facing many problems like political, ethnic discrimination, social, geographical, religious, and cultural issues, so writers tried to highlight these issues in their writings (Azam, 2014). The most significant short stories in Pakistani Literature in English were written at that time.

One of the most well-known Pakistani short story writers of the 1960s is Zulfiqar Ghose. His famous short stories are “The Zoo” and “A Pair of Jeans”. The short story “Zoo” deals with existential nihilism, and “A Pair of Jeans” was written about the importance of clothing in Pakistani society and how it determines one’s modesty. The short stories of Zulfiqar Ghose represent the problems of society and also serve as a means of teaching values (Azam, 2014). There are two major themes of his works “alienation” and “deracination” (Rahman, 1991).

Nasir Ahmed Farooqi was the shining star during the 1960s because he typically represented Pakistani society and its issues, and promoted liberalism. His short stories are “Younger than Spring Love,” “Ah! No my Love,” and “Money in the Bank.” His works contain realistic elements, and allegory is created through symbolism (Rahman, 1991). Moreover, H.K. Burki was another short story writer. In 1969, he published a collection of eight short stories under the title of “Saqipur Sacred.” In his short stories, the main character is always struggling against the social forces for the betterment of society. In his short story “Some Men and Brothers,” he talks about the Sikhs and how they are struggling against moral and opposing social forces in Pakistani society under unstable conditions. The main themes in his stories are struggles, conflicts, and social life (Azam, 2014).

Mehdi Ali Khan also belongs to the same era of the 1960s. He lived in Hyderabad, where he suffered a lot due to Hindus-Muslims clashes (Rahman, 1991). His work was also affected because he added his personal feelings to it. He wrote a collection of short stories, “Corpses”. The main theme of his short stories is the struggle of the protagonist against social evils, which is portrayed in “The Judge,” “The Father,” and “The Sinner” (Azam, 2014).

Aamir Hussein is a modern short story writer and a critic of the 20th century. He published five collections of his short stories “Mirror to the Sun” (1993), “The Other Salt” (1999), “Turquoise” (2002), “Cactus Town” (2003), “Insomnia” (2007), and “Another Gulmohar tree” (2009). He is also the editor of “Kahani: Short Stories by Women” (2005). His most recent work is the collection of short stories “Love and Its Seasons”, published in 2017 (Shamsie, 2017).

In contemporary times, there are seven famous female writers in Pakistan. They are Absar Fatima, Sarwat Najeeb, Sameera Naaz, Safia Shahid, Fatima Usman, Farheen Khalid, and Muafia Sheikh. Their stories touch on the issues faced by women in their everyday lives, ways of living, struggles, customs, and thoughtfulness. These experiences are different for each writer because they all belong to different communities, but they conclude with similar results. Most of their short stories are written in Urdu but are now translated into English (Parvez, 2022). Mohsin Hamid, Bapsi Sidhwa, Muhammad Hanif, Daniyal Mueenuddin, Tehmina Durrani, Kamila Shamsie, Nadeem Aslam, Khalid Muhammad, Moni Mohsin, Musharraf Ali Farooqi and Sabyn Javeri are also contemporary English short story writers and their works are liked and read on national as well as international levels (Kashaf, 2018).

Pakistani Literature in English is yet less discovered literature. Pakistani writers and their works are unique but are not given the deserved place in our society (Khan et al., 2023). So, scholars try to value their works by conducting research on them. The selected area is the short story “Deaf, Dark, Walls” by Tariq Rahman. The studies show that there has been no research conducted on this short story before on the level of contact, therefore, the researchers

attempt to apply Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) and analyze it from the linguistic point of view.

Methodology

The aim of the study is to examine and analyze Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" through M.A.K. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (1985) on the level of contact. By applying this theory, the researchers try to find the relations among the participants in the short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" by Tariq Rahman. In this study, a mixed method is used.

Theoretical Framework

Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) views that language has two characteristics, systemic and functional. It is functional because Systemic Functional Linguistics uses the theory of meaning as a choice by which language or any other semiotic system is interpreted as a network of interlocking options (Halliday, 1985). According to Eggins (1994), there are four main theoretical functions of language in Systemic Functional Linguistics theory. The first function is that language is functional. The second is to produce meanings, and the third is that meanings are influenced by the social and cultural contexts. Lastly, the fourth is the semiotic process which is the process of using language and making meanings by choice. The theory is concerned with three dimensions:

- a) "The field" focuses on activity or action or what is going on.
- b) "The tenor," which means the social roles and relationships between the participants.
- c) "The mode" investigates aspects of the channel of communication, e.g., spoken, written, visual, non-visual, verbal, and non-verbal (Information on Systemic Functional Linguistics).

This study tries to analyze Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory (1985), which aims to find out the relations among the participants and the interpersonal meaning among the participants. In Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), tenor concerns the relationships between those who are taking part in communication. Tenor is further divided into three parts, i.e., contact, status, and affect. Contact is the second part of the tenor, which deals with the degree of involvement among the participants in a text. Thus, the study is conducted to investigate and analyze Tariq Rahman's short story "Deaf, Dark, Walls" through Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory.

Contact

Contact is the second part of the tenor, which deals with the involvement among the participants in the text. The participants are involved and uninvolved depending upon different factors that influence the familiarity of the participants with each other. The involvement of the characters is classified into two dimensions. The first is the involvement in social activities which is oriented to family work or recreation. The second is the involvement which is oriented to whether the social activity is occasional or regular (Martin, 1992). The language used by the participants in the text shows the degree of involvement among the characters. It helps to know how the participants know one another and how much they are close to each other.

Data Analysis

The contact among the participants is shown by the language they use. The contact is mostly involved in the short story "Deaf, Dark Walls" by Tariq Rahman. The sentence "**But**

that is no concern of ours,” he had added “for there are girls who like to be teased” (Rahman, 2024, p. 677, para. 2) is said by the old guard who is handing over the duty of protecting the village to the character Khaista Gul. Here, he warns him not to interfere in the matters of boys and girls because it is none of the guard’s business. This sentence consists of two clauses. The first clause “**But that is no concern of ours,**” is an independent clause, serious in tone, and standard language is used. In this clause, there are no ellipsis and contraction used. The second clause, “**for there are girls who like to be teased.**” is a relative clause. The guard says to the participant Khaista Gul that in this village, different people are living; some girls are allowed to go out anytime while others are not allowed to go out of their homes even in daylight. So, you should have no concern with them. According to Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985), it is stated that the contact of the participants is known by the language they use. The contact is involved when vocative language, ellipsis, or contraction are used. So, it shows that the contact between the participants Khaista Gul and the guard in the mentioned statement is uninvolved because vocative language, ellipsis, and contraction are not used.

Khaista Gul was not paying attention to the guard’s words that some boys come to the village to flirt with girls, but we should not be concerned with them because we have to look after the town at night. It suggests that the guard has been doing this job for many years, and he knows that this group of boys is hazardous as they have pistols with them. That is why he is advising Khaista Gul not to interfere in their matters. This is still present in Pakistani society as many people carry pistols and guns with them to make people scared of them, like Shahid and Javed in the story. They show themselves as powerful to others, and many of them carry pistols with them for robbery, snatching, and killing. Another bad side of our society is that the young generation does not listen to the elder’s advice, and they do whatever they want. They feel no concerns about the bad consequences of their actions. In the story, the guard is advising Khaista Gul, but he is not taking it seriously and starts smiling. From the mentioned statement it is also shown that people are more interested in other's matters than their own business. They do not take their jobs seriously and always try to interfere in other’s matters, like Khaista Gul in the story, who tries to interfere in the issues of girls and boys, which is why he got killed.

This direct statement, “**This new guard is a bloody nuisance**” (Rahman, 2024, p. 677, para. 3) is said by Javed to Shahid, and they are discussing Khaista Gul, who was not present there. This is an independent clause that conveys complete meaning. In this sentence, the slang word “**bloody nuisance**” is used, which means that there is no gap between Javed and Shahid, and their contact is uninvolved because Javed is explaining everything to Shahid as he meets him after a long time. In this sentence, vocative language is not used, and contraction and ellipsis are also absent. Javed used the slang word “**bloody nuisance**” for Khaista Gul because he knows that Khaista Gul is a person who interfered in all matters happening in the village and does not like him. After all, Khaista Gul acts like a breaker in their plan. It also shows that Khaista Gul is a brave man because the other participants, Javed and Shahid, are discussing him as the only person who can interfere and stop them from taking Saman with them. According to Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985), it is stated that the contact of the participants is known by the language they use. The contact is involved when vocative language, ellipsis, and contraction are used. Therefore, it shows that the contact between the participant Javed and Shahid in the mentioned statement is uninvolved because vocative language is not used while ellipsis and contraction, are also absent.

The words like “bloody,” “nuisance,” and “idiot” are used by people who are unmannered, illiterate, and rude. This shows the family background of a person from where the person belongs and how they are taught to talk. It can be asserted that if a person hates

someone for a reason, then he uses bad words to call them like in the story that Javed uses the words bloody and nuisance for Khaista Gul.

“Why? What’s wrong with the idiot?” (Rahman, 2024, p. 677, para. 4) said Shahid to Javed. It is an interrogative clause because the question is asked twice times. The question is asked in the text to get information from another participant and also to inform the reader about the situation. This also shows that the person who asks questions is not common but of high rank, as common people in a society cannot ask questions even for their rights. If they raise questions, they are not given any proper answers. Thus, this direct statement shows that Shahid belongs to the upper class in society, which is why he is asking questions from Javed. Further, the slang word **“idiot”** is also used by Shahid, which shows a close relation between Shahid and Javed, which is why they are using informal language. In this statement, there is no ellipsis and vocation used except contraction, which is used for a single time as **“what’s.”** Some aspects show that the contact between Shahid and Javed is uninvolved, and sometimes it is involved, which is shown by the contraction used in the statement. According to the Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) by Halliday, the language used by the participants in the text shows how much their contact is involved so, in the mentioned statement, the contact between Shahid and Javed is uninvolved because Shahid is asking questions from Javed as they meet after a long time. In this statement, vocation and ellipsis are not used, but a single contraction, **“what’s”** is present. It can be said that the tone of Shahid is very bad and serious towards Khaista Gul, which depicts today’s society in which the behaviour of rich people toward poor people is rude. Further, in contemporary society, rich people cannot sustain themselves if any poor person interferes in their matters or questions them.

“He pokes his nose in everybody’s affairs, said Javed respectfully, “but he’s gone and she will come out soon,” (Rahman, 2024, p. 677, para. 5) said Javed to Shahid. This is a long sentence consisting of two clauses connected by coordinating conjunction. The first clause is independent, and it is an idiomatic expression said by Javed about Khaista Gul, which means that he interferes in everyone’s matters. In this statement, Javed and Shahid are discussing Khaista Gul, who is not present there. The second part of the sentence is a coordinate-independent clause as it starts from the coordinate conjunction, and it shows that the participant Khaista Gul is playing the role of a breaker in the bridge between Saman and the group of Shahid because they are waiting for Khaista Gul to leave. It can be said that Khaista Gul is feeling free and not focusing on his duty. That is why, he is interfering in other’s matters. Besides, he also considers himself something special, like the owner of the village, and he wants to know everything happening in the village. It may be possible that it is his habit to interfere in other’s affairs. In this statement, vocation and ellipsis are absent, but contraction as **“everybody’s, he’s”** is used twice as through language, the writer demonstrated the relationship between the participants Javed and Shahid. According to Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), the language used by the participants in the text shows how much their contact is involved, so, in the mentioned statement, some aspects show that the contact between Shahid and Javed is involved.

The direct statement **“Have a drink everybody,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 677, para. 6) is given by the fourth friend of Shahid, who is anonymous in the story. He is offering drinks to Shahid and other friends. This shows that they are habitual drinkers and killed Khaista Gul because they were drunk. That is why they do not even think about Khaista Gul's life and his family. From the language used by the fourth boy, the close relationship between the participants is shown. By applying Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985) to the statement, the contact between the anonymous participant and his friends is uninvolved because he is formally offering the drink. Further, they were close friends which is shown

through the bad activities they were doing together and supporting one another. None of them felt bad for their action of teasing girls and taking them out at night. It shows their family backgrounds that they do not belong to a good and honorable family.

The sentence, **“The car is at the end of the street. Let us go”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 678, para. 2), is said by Javed to Saman, who is going to elope. Here, Javed informs her about the car he brought, which will help them to succeed in the elopement. This sentence contains two clauses. The first clause, **“The car is at the end of the street,”** is an independent clause and provides information about the car's location. In addition to this, the writer Tariq Rahman, here, made use of standard language to convey the thoughts of the participants to the readers. Generally, **“let us”** is written in the form of a contraction; however, here, the writer has made no use of any contraction, so it can be extracted that the writer has shown continuity in thoughts through the use of simple language. Moreover, the **“car”** which stands **“at the end of the street”** shows the honour and respect of their family on the verge of death. If she eloped with the boys, their family honour and respect would be thrown into the trash.

Moreover, **“Let us go”** said Javed to Saman. It is an imperative clause that shows command. The participant Javad, along with other boys, wants to elope with a girl, Saman, who is also ready to go with them. This sentence may suggest the honor on the verge of death and it may show hastiness and can be said that the participants are in a situation of nervousness. According to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is stated that contact is involved if there is a use of vocative language. However, in this sentence, there is no use of contraction, ellipses, or vocation. Thus, the contact between the characters Javid and Saman is uninvolved.

In present societies, some people let their daughters meet with strangers, even if they are boys or girls. They trust their daughters and sons that they would not take any kind of action that would put their honour in jeopardy. Moreover, some people are always looking for opportunities to use girls and take advantage of them, which is highly immoral. Therefore, in the short story, the participant, Khaista Gul, does not let Javed and Saman go. He was forced to stay away from their businesses by giving something “for a cup of tea” however, he did not accept it. Eventually, it led him to his death.

“Where are you going?” (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 1) Khaista Gul questioned the group of boys. The writer here has not made use of contractions, ellipses, or slang words. So, it becomes a formal language. Through the use of such language, it can be seen that the contact is uninvolved. Thus, they have no common interest. Here, it can be extracted that Khaista Gul considers himself as a dominant character of the society who has control over everything, and it is only he who is responsible for all the activities occurring in that society. It also shows his aggressiveness, as he stops the group of boys from what they are doing. It may give the meaning that Khaista Gul wants to ask about the purpose of the way they have adopted. Thus, he becomes a barrier in their way which eventually leads him to his death. So, it can be concluded that considering oneself responsible for everything will eventually bring unfavourable consequences. According to Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), the contact between participants is shown by the language they use so, in the mentioned statement, the contact between the participant Khaista Gul and Javed's group is uninvolved because there is no use of vocative language.

“Don't shout,” hissed Javed, **“and you can have can have something for a cup of tea.”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 2). This sentence is told by Javed when Khaista Gul challenged them while they were going to elope with Saman. Here, Javed tries to normalize the situation and sneak out of the area by giving him something as a bribe. This sentence contains two clauses. The clause **“Don't shout”** is an imperative clause that shows the order

and anger of Javed. Thus, it is serious in tone, and the language that the writer has used here is not standard because of the contraction. The clause **“and you can have can have something for a cup of tea”** is a coordinating clause because of **“and,”** which connects it to the first clause. Javed offers a bribe to the participant Khaista Gul to let them go. He tries to grease his palms so that they do not face any difficulty while eloping. In this clause, there are no ellipsis and contractions, but in the first clause, there is a contraction. Thus, according to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is stated that when there is a use of vocative language, contraction, and ellipsis then it shows the involvement of the participants. Thus, according to Halliday, the contact between the characters Khaista Gul and Javed is uninvolved because the language he uses shows that he does not know Khaista Gul properly as he is not a person who attempts a bribe. The way Khaista Gul is offered the bribe by Javed to let them do illegal business. Similarly, people of the time are dealing with the same troubles. Whenever someone tries to do something illegal, they try to stop the officials by offering them a bribe. Some accept it, others do not. Those who do not let them do the illegal business face death like Khaista Gul in this short story.

The sentence **“Kho mara get out”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 4) is said by Khaista Gul when he was offered a bribe. He was threatening the boys so that they may leave the girl and go away. This sentence is an imperative clause that shows an order given by the participant, Khaista Gul. Moreover, in this clause, there is no use of ellipses and contraction. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is stated that if there is no use of vocative language, contraction, and ellipsis, then the contact between the participants is uninvolved. Thus, here, the contact between the participants, Khaista Gul and the boys in the mentioned sentence is uninvolved.

The sentence **“Oe Khan! Oe! Oe! don’t be a fool,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 5) is told by one of the boys of the group to the participant, Khaista Gul. The boys challenge the character Khaista Gul, and the hirsute youth says, **“Oe Khan! Oe! Oe! Don’t be a fool”** so that he does not make any trouble for them, but otherwise happens. This sentence is serious in its tone, and here, the writer used non-standard language as he mixed two languages: Panjabi and English. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is stated that if vocation, contraction, and ellipsis are not used, then the contact between the participants is uninvolved. However, in the above statement, vocation is used. Thus, in this sentence, the contact between the participant Khaista Gul and the other participant is involved. In modern communities, there are many examples of such people who consider themselves as superior being. Such people cannot understand what is right and wrong. Eventually, they are stuck in a horrible situation like murdering or killing others, which leads to never-ending disappointment.

“Mind your own business you idiot” (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 6) is said by Shahid, whose fingers are near the pistol, and he has the intention to kill Khaista Gul as he stops and challenges Shahid and others, he would not let them go along with the girl. Therefore, the situation escalates, and Shahid puts his fingers on his pistol, but the participant, Khaista Gul, is not afraid of them and is still standing there. Its tone is serious, and the writer has used standard language. There is no use of vocation, ellipsis, or contraction, but slang is used. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), if there is a vocative language, contraction, and ellipsis used in the text, contact between the participants is involved. Thus, the contact between the participants in the mentioned statement is uninvolved. Currently, despite such advancements in the scientific field and education, some people kill and fight for minor issues. Those who have guns want to use them, considering it as fun, though it is not. In comparison, others want to control the authority. To gain respect in society, they even kill

others so that they restore their honour and have influence over the entire community. Thus, such people are not only the killers of other persons but also the killers of humanity and religion.

“You are badmashes (hoodlums, bas characters, roughs)” (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 7) shouted Khaista Gul when the group of boys was ready to fight him. It is an independent clause, and its tone is serious. Here the writer used non-standard language as he added the Urdu language word **“badmashes”**. There is no use of ellipsis and contraction in this sentence. Khaista Gul does so, because the boys are not ready to listen to him, and instead, they are insulting him. He wanted to save the girl’s honour, and therefore, he scolded them, leading to a forceful fight. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is stated that if there is no use of vocative language, ellipsis, and contraction then the contact between the characters is uninvolved. Thus, here, in this sentence, the contact between the participants, Khaista Gul and the boys, is uninvolved. There are many societies where people often exchange insulting words with one another. This is because of their ignorance and illiteracy that they jump into flight, which causes dreadful consequences like Khaista Gul indulging in the boy’s business and ending up in his death.

The sentence **“What?”, shouted the boy who had the bottle of brandy “are you mad?”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 679, para. 8) is told by one of the boys who is anonymous in the whole story. He was wrestling with Khaista Gul. This sentence includes two clauses and both are interrogative clauses. The first clause is **“What?”** which shows a question. The second clause, **“Are you mad?”** is also interrogative. The writer has used standard language. The writer has not used any vocation, contraction, or ellipsis in this sentence. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), it is asserted that if there is no use of contraction, vocation, and ellipsis, then the contact between the participants is uninvolved. Therefore, in this sentence, the contact between the third boy and Khaista Gul is uninvolved because vocative language, contraction, and ellipsis are absent.

The direct statement **“Ya Allah! (Oh God!).” he shouted, “I’m killed! The cruel ones have slayed me!”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 680, para. 3) is said by Khaista Gul when the group of boys shot him, and he was extremely in pain. He was covered by blood and was shouting for help in the street, but no one came out of the house to take him to a hospital. Here, Khaista Gul is calling **“Ya Allah! (Oh God!).”** he knows that no one in the whole village will help him, so he is calling God for help. It is every Muslim faith that they call God in every tough situation. Further, in this sentence, simple and formal language is used. Vocation and ellipsis are not present in the statement. A single contraction, **“I’m,”** is used in this statement, which shows that the contact between Khaista Gul and God is involved.

The sentence **“Let’s kill the rascal,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 680, para. 5) is told by Javed to Khaista Gul. This is an imperative clause. In this sentence, the slang word **“rascal”** is used for the participant Khaista Gul because he was a beaker in their plan to take Saman with them, which is why they shot him. No vocation and ellipsis are used in this sentence, but the contraction **“Let’s”** is used in the above statement. Besides, standard language and harsh tone are used in the sentence. According to Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), the contact between the participants can be known by the language they use, and if vocation, contraction, and ellipsis are present in the sentence, then it shows that the contact between participants is involved so, in the above statement, contraction is present, but there is no use of vocative language so, the contact between Khaista Gul and Javed is uninvolved.

The statement **“O you Muslims come out! Come out I am dying!”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 680, para. 8) is an imperative clause in which formal language is used. It utters the sound of pain. In this sentence, there no contraction and an ellipsis are used, but vocation is present **“O you Muslims.”** Here, contraction is possible to use in **“I am,”** but it shows the writer suggests

simple language. Further, Khaista Gul called the villagers **“O you Muslims”** because the religion Islam teaches Muslims to help each other that is why he is giving the link of Islam. According to Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985), if there is vocation, ellipsis, and contraction are present, then contact is involved. The mentioned statement, vocation **“O you Muslims,”** is present, which shows the involvement of the contact between Khaista Gul and the villagers. From the above statement, it is clear that the title of the story, **“Deaf, Dark Walls,”** represents the society in which Khaista Gul is living. The people of that village were not even playing the role of humans and watching Khaista Gul dying in that painful situation.

The statement **“For God’s sake,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 681, para. 2) is a dependent clause. Formal language is used in the sentence, and its tone is soft but painful. This sentence is used by Mrs. Sarmad. She was crying for her husband not to step outside the home to interfere in the matter of Khaista Gul and the group of boys. In this sentence, no ellipsis and vocation are used, but contraction is used once **“God’s sake”**. The language she used shows that contact is involved between Mr Sarmad and his Mrs. The theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985) states that the involvement of contact between participants is known by the language they use. In the mentioned statement, the contact between the participants is uninvolved, which is why Mrs. Sarmad is trying to stop Mr. Sarmad by telling him, **“For God’s sake”**. In contemporary society, people use **“For God’s sake”** when someone is in pain, anger, or requesting someone.

The sentence **“Please Abboo (father), so you want to kill mother? She already has heart disease,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 681, para. 2) is said by the daughter of Sarmad while she was requesting her father not to interfere in the matters of Khaista Gul and Javed. In this sentence, standard language is used. Ellipsis and contraction are not present in this statement, but vocation **“Abboo”** is present. The second part of the sentence, **“She already has heart disease,”** is an independent clause said by the daughter of Sarmad Shah. In this sentence, there is no contraction, vocation or ellipsis used in the statement. The vocation **“Abboo”** shows the involvement of the contact between Sarmad and his daughter. By applying Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), the contact between Sarmad Shah and his daughter is involved.

The sentence **“I’ll faint if you move one step ahead,”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 681, para. 3) is said by Mrs. Sarmad when she requests Sarmad not to take a step out of the home or to help Khaista Gul. In this sentence, there is no ellipsis and vocation used, but contraction is used once, that is, **“I’ll”**. She was telling this because Javed and his other members were drinkers, so they could also shoot Mr. Sarmad. According to Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (1985), if there is contraction, vocation, and ellipsis present in the sentence, then the contact between the participants is involved. In the above statement, there is no vocation used, but the contraction **“I’ll”** is used, which shows that the contact between Mr. Sarmad and his wife is involved.

This sentence, **“I am dying, bleeding, Muslims! Oh, you people of the dark walls speak...”** (Rahman, 2024, p. 681, para. 4) is said by Khaista Gul. In the above statement, standard language is used, and its tone is serious and painful. It also shows that the participant Khaista Gul is going to die soon, which is why he is calling the villagers, **“Oh, you people of the dark walls speak...”**. Further, the phrase **“people of the dark walls”** is used, which shows the death of humanity because the villagers acted deaf and dumb and did not even come to see Khaista Gul. In this sentence, there is no contraction used. The vocation **“Muslims”** is used for the villagers, and an ellipsis is also present in the statement. The use of ellipsis shows that the message is not completely conveyed and that there is something hidden. Here, the writer uses simple and standard language and makes it easier for the reader to understand. By applying

Halliday's theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985), the contact between Khaista Gul and the villagers is involved because Khaista Gul used vocative language in the mentioned statement.

Findings and Conclusion

The contact is the degree of involvement among participants in the text. The contact of the participant Khaista Gul is eight times uninvolved, and Javed's contact is two times involved in the selected twenty statements. In the first statement, the contact between participants, the guard, and Khaista Gul was uninvolved because ellipsis, vocation, and contractions are not used. In the second statement, the contact between Shahid and Javid was uninvolved because there was no use of ellipsis, vocation, and contractions. The third statement showed that the contact between Shahid and Javid was uninvolved because Shahid questioned Javid as if they had not met for a long time. In the fourth statement, the contact between Shahid and Javid is involved, as the contraction form was used twice, which showed the closeness between the participants.

In the fifth statement, the contact between anonymous participant Javid and his friends is uninvolved because he was using formal language to offer a drink even though they are friends. In the sixth statement, the contact between Javid and Saman is uninvolved, as no ellipsis, vocation, or contractions are used. The seventh statement represented that the contact between Khaista Gul and Javid's group is uninvolved, because of no vocative language, ellipsis, and contraction. The eighth statement shows that the contact between Khaista Gull and Javid was uninvolved as the language he used showed that he did not know the nature of Khaista Gul and whether he takes bribes or not.

Moreover, in the ninth statement, the contact between Khaista Gul and the boys was uninvolved, as there was no use of ellipsis, vocation, or contractions. In the tenth statement, the contact between Khaista Gul and other participants was uninvolved because he used vocative language to address him. In the eleventh statement, the contact between Shahid and Khaista Gul was uninvolved because ellipsis, vocation, and contractions were not used. In the twelfth statement, the contact between Khaista Gul and the other participants was uninvolved, as ellipsis, vocation, and contractions were not used. In the thirteenth statement, the contact between the anonymous participant and Khaista Gul was uninvolved because ellipsis, contraction, or vocation were not used.

In the fourteenth statement, the contact between the participant Khaista Gul and God was involved because contraction was used. In the fifteenth statement, the contact between Javed and Khaista Gul was involved because the contraction was used. The sixteenth statement showed that the contact between Khaista Gul and the villagers was involved because he used vocation to call villagers. In the seventeenth statement, the contact between Sarmad Shah and Mrs Sarmad was uninvolved, which was shown by the language she used.

The eighteenth statement shows that the contact between the participant, Sarmad Shah, and his daughter was involved because vocative language was used by his daughter. In the nineteenth statement, the contact between Sarmad Shah and Mrs Sarmad was involved because the contraction was used in the mentioned sentence. The twentieth statement showed the involvement of the contact between the villagers and Khaista Gul because the vocative language was used.

Recommendation

It is recommended to conduct a study on the short story from the lens of critical discourse analysis as the short story is replete with ideological words and excerpts.

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