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## Fictional Discourse Analysis of Ramifications of the British Cultural Fragmentation in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*

Hilalah Dughayyim Aldhafeeri 

Department of English, University of Hafr Albatin, Hafr Albatin 31991, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

### ABSTRACT

This study attempts to explore the theme of cultural fragmentation through pursuing its postmodern traits in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. It illuminates the authorial description of socio-cultural changes in British society at the prime of world postmodernism through the novel's fictional discourse. The study's objective is to explore the theme of cultural fragmentation as a tangible clue to postmodern transition in British society. The novel is a literary manifestation of the British disengagement with the past as well as entering a new postmodern era characterized by various social ramifications limited to rejection of meta-narratives, incorporation plurality of identities, globalization, and the inevitability of change. The study's methodology will be an interpretation of cultural fragmentation through applying Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogic discourse. Therefore, three literary elements will be analyzed to explore the novel's portrayal of these ramifications, namely, setting, the characters' discourse and interpersonal social affairs, and the plot's fictional discourse. The interpretation of the novel's discourse depends on the narrative structure of the characters' speech, reflecting the author's implied voice in the text. The characters' language is the explicit expression of cultural fragmentation, which exemplifies Ishiguro's implicit voice about postmodern reality. The duality of the author's and characters' voices will be accentuated as a way of perceiving cultural fragmentation through the lens of discourse analysis. In so doing, the study highlights the contemporary postmodern cultural changes that affect people's lives and language as they communicate with each other on the grounds of social interactions.

#### \*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Hilalah Dughayyim Aldhafeeri, Department of English, University of Hafr Albatin, Hafr Albatin 31991, Saudi Arabia;  
Email: [dr.hilalah2030@gmail.com](mailto:dr.hilalah2030@gmail.com)

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## 1. Introduction

Postmodernism posits several overlapping thematic imbrications. It addresses a number of topics about different humane state of affairs. There are many subjects approached by postmodern thought, yet they are contradictory since they belong to a wide range of cultural matters. A specific topic, for instance, could be tackled through philosophical, ethical, social, and literary perspectives. However, postmodern literature offers common threads incorporating the diversity of themes approached by the core of fictional writings. These themes might be explored by examining the narrative techniques as well as other motifs combining authorial implications projected in the course of the literary texts because “postmodern literature began a significant departure from the literary legacy of modernism by rejecting or expanding upon many of modernism's tenets, such as the importance of meaning, the importance of disorder and fragmentation”<sup>[1]</sup>. In this sense, themes play crucial roles in identifying the authorial philosophy or view of any cultural issue in the wide scope of the textual demarcations. Critics have been dealing with postmodern themes for the sake of discovering the latent morals of literary works, and, therefore, they could infer a better understanding of the ongoing socio-cultural changes in postmodernism<sup>[2]</sup>. As such, postmodernism could be classified within the limits of literary disciplines as it has been offering fine literary authorial milestones that produce fine and supreme writings.

Cultural fragmentation is one of the most conspicuous themes of postmodern literature. Hence, postmodernism, as a literary approach, tackles the way by which literary genres could survive and how they could be better refined in order to provide the receptive audience with new looks at life vis-à-vis society. Consequently, authors have tried their hands to insert these looks into the nexus of narrative and fictional writings. Metafiction serves to comment on these facts by tracing the implicit and the explicit authorial voice in the fictional events. This narcissistic fictional quality renders postmodern writings exquisite styles that em-

ulate grand narratives previously written by great authors. In this way, writers' pedantic styles empower the feasibility of applying theoretical approaches to literary works, and these works could easily abound with themes appealing to readers and critics. Cultural fragmentation, therefore, is an integral thematic aspect of postmodern fictional writings since “postmodern literature is at one and the same time representational and an extension of reality”<sup>[3]</sup>. This is due to the fact that it may be both explicitly addressed by the authorial metafictional voice inserted in the text, or it may be implicitly expressed by the plot's literary dialogues. Cultural fragmentation refers to the social isolation whereby people lose the sense of belonging to each other as a result of many conditions. Such conditions are either inflicted upon them by the surrounding social changes or people's decisions to avoid being prone to perilous insecurity, and this insecurity is primarily social and cultural. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine fictional discourse to explore the theme of cultural fragmentation through pursuing the rejection of meta-narratives, the incorporation of plurality of identities, globalization, and the inevitability of change interspersed in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*<sup>[4]</sup>.

## 2. Literature Review

Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* has been tackled from different theoretical perspectives. In “Exploring Narrative Innovation: A Postmodern Analysis of Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*,” Anvee et al.<sup>[5]</sup> applied narrative theory to explore the novel's innovative narrative techniques. They argued that<sup>[5]</sup> Ishiguro uses narrative innovation in order to incorporate historical and fictional events in the course of the plot. The duality of historical and fictional narratives that interact with each other to produce a perfect piece of work. Furthermore, Ishiguro employs a first-person narrative point of view as a way of attributing the fictional elements to the historical incidents that really happened in the past; Anvee et al.<sup>[5]</sup> wrote: “The significance of revisiting the past is identified in the development of Stevens' narrative.

The way he reflects on overlooked events demonstrates how seemingly insignificant choices can have a profound impact on one's future. Ishiguro's inclusion of both real historical events and fictional elements adds depth to the novel by illustrating how the past<sup>[5]</sup>. The study finds that the literary intersection between history and fiction is cogent indication of Ishiguro's narrative dexterity. However, Anvee et al.'s<sup>[5]</sup> study partially tackles the thematic nuances of this narrative technique.

In "Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*: A Historiographical Approach," Maha Abdel Moneim Emara<sup>[6]</sup> also approaches the historical traits of the novel. Yet, Emara<sup>[6]</sup> applied historiography to analyze the use of the unreliable narrator rather than the relationship between history and fiction tackled in the course of the plot. Like Anvee et al.<sup>[5]</sup>, Emara<sup>[6]</sup> interpreted Stevens' first-person narrative point of view. Nonetheless, she emphasized that Stevens is an unreliable narrator who represents the author's real experience projected in the plot<sup>[6]</sup>. In other words, Ishiguro alludes to some of his biographical life in the plot, which serves as a way of harnessing history to comment on his past personal life. In this respect, Emara<sup>[6]</sup> discussed the historical events as other faces of Ishiguro's personal life told by the unreliable narrator: "Ishiguro uses to narrate historical events and dismantle objectivity mainly; backshadowing, intermixing of historical and personal incidents, and a first-person unreliable narrator. A great deal of Ishiguro's text depth and complexity arises from the unreliability of the narrator, whose narration presents several interpretive versions and controversial issues"<sup>[6]</sup>. Emara's<sup>[6]</sup> finding lies in the unraveling of history as a form of the author's subjective experience undergone by similar incidents dealing with real influences exerted upon his living conditions. The study tackles the thematic aspects of the author's personal life, but it rarely provides an in-depth analysis of how these events could be harnessed to explore diverse ramifications of literary themes related to the author's life.

Syam Prasad Reddy Thirumalareddy and Sharada Allamneni<sup>[7]</sup>, moreover, shed light on the novel's thematic and technical elements. They analyzed the novel as a subversive fictional piece that uses literary irony and juxtaposition as metafictional elements of temporal distortion of characters' building<sup>[7]</sup>. Being a postmodern novel, *The Remains of the Day* uses these experimental elements as opposed to

modernism's over-utilized literary elements. The novel's use of experimental style is the core essence of the "post-modern turn" that offers viable "transitions" and solutions to modernism's traditional narrative style through utilizing temporal disruption of the conventional narrative styles; Thirumalareddy and Allamneni's comment: "Ishiguro applies the memory-identity analogy according to which an individual is best defined by the sum of his recollections. The narrative is developed by presenting a minute and analytic exposition of the character's mental life. This is effected through a temporal disruption of the traditional narrative"<sup>[7]</sup>. This study concludes that Ishiguro's anti-traditional style is a postmodern rectification of modernism's reaped and overused literary techniques. Notwithstanding, it does not follow ample discussion of other literary elements, like the characters, plot, setting, narrative point of view, and so forth.

Although the previously mentioned studies have a close relation to this study, it will look more into the thematic peculiarities of the novel, which is scarcely tackled by a complete thematic interpretation. It delves deep into Ishiguro's postmodern appropriation of cultural fragmentation and its pertinent effect on British society. Consequently, the theme of cultural fragmentation is going to be further elaborated by discussing the notions of rejection of meta-narratives, incorporation of plurality of identities, globalization, and the inevitability of change implicitly put forth in Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. Hence, the novel's spatial and temporal settings will be the focus of the textual analysis together with the main characters and the fictional discourse that are not properly examined in the existing scholarship on the novel. Consequently, the study follows a discourse analysis of the novel's language by applying Bakhtin's concept of dialogic discourse. The discussion of the characters' language will depend on how they have dialogic discourse communication initiated by Ishiguro's depiction of fictional events.

### 3. Conceptual Framework

This study applies Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the dialogic discourse. It relies on the nature of the characters' language that reflects both the authorial concern with reality outside the textual demarcation and the narrative description of this language. To some extent, the concept of the dialogic novel will be interchangeably used as the polyphonic since

it implies the dual nature of the novel's narrative language. Therefore, the application of Bakhtin's critical insights of the dialogic novel will be limited to two contiguous literary elements, namely, the characters' language and the literary description of this language. On the one hand, the characters' language will be explicated by pursuing their expressions in the course of their communication as they exchange facts about cultural fragmentation and how it relates to their everyday life.

On the other hand, the literary description of this language will be interpreted by polarizing Bakhtin's theoretical conceptualization of the polyphonic novel that accentuates the role of language in amalgamating the characters' and the authors' narrative voices. That is, the characters' voice is the explicit and direct utterance in the plot that reflects reality and its pertinent issues within the primary narrative framework. The author's voice, moreover, will be analyzed as the implicit or the indirect voice that motivates the characters' voices in order to offer a meticulous depiction of that reality. Consequently, these voices represent the typical nature of the dialogic discourse comprising two discrepant languages within one polyphonic plot. The study qualitatively sheds light on the characters' individual utterances and communicative relationship emanated from the author's implied presence in the text. In this regard, a close reading of the characters' speech will be scrutinized to reveal the selected novel's fictional discourse by virtue of Bakhtin's theoretical insights.

#### 4. Analysis and Discussion

Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* deals with cultural fragmentation by highlighting Stevens' experience. Being the chief protagonist of the novel, Stevens leads a very whimsical life as he undergoes personal experience at the loggerheads of the British changing society. This is evident in the beginning of the novel when he describes his job as a butler for the favor of Mr. Farraday's Ford: "It seems increasingly likely that I really will undertake the expedition that has been preoccupying my imagination now for some days. An expedition, I should say, which I will undertake alone, in the comfort of Mr. Farraday's Ford"<sup>[8]</sup>. In this case, Stevens begins to sense the radical change caused by the nature of his job. As he describes this job, he says that he will undertake a

new "expedition" that will change the view of his life since he works with new people whom he has not ever known: "an expedition which, as I foresee it, will take me through much of the finest countryside of England to the West Country, and may keep me away from Darlington Hall for as much as five or six days"<sup>[8]</sup>. Here, Stevens, foresees his new job in fine countryside. Yet, this statement holds paradoxical nuances reading his cultural circumferences because "discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corps of the word"<sup>[8]</sup>. Here, the language of Mr. Farraday's Ford reflects the novel's dialogic discourse that involves the author's view of cultural fragmentation via the character's speech.

Stevens likes to be in the countryside, and he is relatively content with his job. However, he does not feel at ease with it as it introduces him to new people of different walks of life. He exemplifies Ishiguro's perception of cultural fragmentation through a capitalist lens. He serves as a butler for upper-class people, which makes him alienated, and he authentically undergoes cultural fragmentation, which is a conspicuous token of postmodern societies. In this regard, Hans Bertens<sup>[9]</sup> argues that postmodern societies have people of contradictory and opposing cultural backgrounds. These people rarely have a common ground combining their cultural backgrounds, though they might come from the same society. Bertens<sup>[9]</sup> claims that some postmodern critics look at postmodernism as a plain and simple amalgamation of people from all walks of life, while others see postmodernism, both as a complex of artistic strategies and as a loosely coherent set of theoretical assumptions, as a sign of the times, as emblematic of a cultural shift of epistemic proportions. That new "cultural logic" (Fredric Jameson's term) may then in turn be seen as a corollary of the changed nature of western capitalism<sup>[9]</sup>. In this sense, Bertens<sup>[9]</sup> accentuates Capitalism as a decisive motivation of cultural fragmentation because postmodernism had resulted in new conflicting social classes at its very beginning. Stevens, therefore, exemplifies the novel's appropriation of dialogic discourse since he is strictly confined to the narrative language that unravels the author's obsession with reality outside the text.

As argued in the aforementioned sections, postmodernism is an era characterized by various social ramifications limited to the rejection of meta-narratives. Fictional dis-

course, therefore, encompasses the incorporation of plurality of identities, globalization, and the inevitability of change because “the reality of language lay not in the abstract norms of theoretical linguistics but out there, in the endless multiplicity and richness of actual speech”<sup>[10]</sup>. As for the rejection of meta-narratives, Ishiguro sustains his narrator’s first-person narrative point of view through the novel’s narrative point of view. He uses Stevens as a narrative point of view instead of his authorial grand meta-narrative point of view. Stevens uses the personal pronoun “I” to deliver a fictional discourse about the reality of cultural fragmentation appropriated in the plot. He relates his strange look at his new job to the capitalist nature of his duty, though he feels comfortable when he does his tasks. Again, he symbolically describes his job as a “journey” that leads him to social interlocations with new people: “I should point out, from a most kind suggestion put to me by Mr. Farraday himself one afternoon almost a fortnight ago, when I had been dusting the portraits in the library. In fact, as I recall, I was up on the step-ladder dusting the portrait of Viscount Wetherby when my employer had entered carrying a few volumes which he presumably wished returned to the shelves” (p.4). Hence, the character’s discourse is employed to comment on this reality since fictional discourse “is not only a static invariant of linguistic life, but also what insures its dynamics: stratification and heteroglossia widen and deepen as long as language is alive and developing”<sup>[11]</sup>. Such language embodies Ishiguro’s utilization of the language of discourse in a dialogic way. Therefore, the dialogic language represents the way by which cultural fragmentation is approached by means of linguistic components that represent “textual intentionality as multidirectional”<sup>[12]</sup>. In this sense, Mr. Farraday’s speech exemplifies Ishiguro’s implicit perception of reality via the narrative language, which is a vehicle for authorial view of facts outside the literary text.

In this way, Ishiguro’s utilization of Stevens’s first narrative point of view incarnates the novel’s implied rejection of meta-narrative style through the use of the characters’ fictional discourse. This is because it mainly focuses on the thematic attributes of cultural fragmentation perceived by Stevens’s fictional discourse. Therefore, postmodern fiction, to some extent, addresses the issue of rejecting meta-narratives since they refer to the author’s implied presence in the novel and it dissolves in its textual fabric. Miaomiao

Wang and Chengqi Liu<sup>[13]</sup> maintain that postmodern meta-narratives could be employed “to subvert traditional narrative modes” and “meta-narratives are also used in the text to dissolve the authority of the omniscient and omnipotent narrator. By questioning and criticizing the traditional narrative conventions”, Wang and Liu<sup>[13]</sup> pinpoint the innovative quality of meta-narratives that reject the repetitive traditional ones.

In postmodern fiction, however, they could be complexly ignored for the sake of empowering the narrator’s fictional discourse via “digressive narrative depiction”<sup>[14]</sup>. This discourse is the core of the author’s implied presence within his/her literary demarcations since fictional discourse embodies “what happens in literary semiotics is but one version of a general situation which is gradually coming to be recognized as an inescapable feature of our ways of thinking about texts and signification”<sup>[15]</sup>. Hence, discourse entails the latent nature of the characters’ language and speech within the scope of the entire literary work’s linguistic aspects. In Ishiguro’s *The Remains of the Day*, Stevens is the essential narrator who holds this presence. Yet, such presence is created by his fictional discourse when he elaborates the description of cultural fragmentation between him and the capitalist upper social class. Cultural fragmentation appears in the lack of communication with his employer, Mr. Farraday: “for all that, I could not for some days quite bring myself to raise the matter again with Mr. Farraday. There were, in any case, various aspects to the matter I felt I needed to clarify to myself before proceeding further. There was, for instance, the question of cost”<sup>[4]</sup>. Stevens seems unable to reach his employer due to the social and cultural gap between them. He is only assigned to do his job as a butler. This means that lack of communication arises between him and his employer; and it intensifies their cultural fragmentation i.e., the core thematic aspect of the novel. The thematic aspects, however, are sustained by the authorial use of the characters’ dialogues as a medium of the novel’s narrative dialogic discourse. The language of the characters’ discourse is considered the linguistic conveyance of themes to the reader.

Stevens’s fictional discourse implied Ishiguro’s literary rejection of meta-narrative. Such discourse is the integral channel of the novel’s depiction of cultural fragmentation. Nonetheless, lack of communication, which is the thematic premise of cultural fragmentation, entails incorporation of plurality of identities polarized in the plot through which lit-

erary discourse “stands to the other genres as the textuality of incarnation to the textuality of transcendence”<sup>[16]</sup>. As a rule of thumb, the postmodern ramifications of the plurality of identities relate to the structure of social communities more than the geographical terrains of national territories, and they are described by Ishiguro’s use of fictional discourse. Plurality of identities, furthermore, involves the creation of new cultural divisions in these terrains because they receive several people from different social backgrounds in the newly established postmodern communities; Moritz Baumgärtel and Sara Miellet write: “postmodern identity construction is bottom-up, chosen, curated; it produces strong continuities, but ones that are geographically discontinuous across the national terrain. These newer identities and cultures do have a loose geography . . . , they form a recursive pattern across national territory that tracks housing density”<sup>[17]</sup>.

Ishiguro eruditely depicts the postmodern incorporation of the plurality of identities through the characters that undergo cultural fragmentation experience. On the one hand, Stevens and his working staff represent the lower-class identity working for the luxury of the upper class. On the other hand, his employer, Mr. Farraday, exemplifies the upper-class identity. In this sense, both classes embody the plurality of identities created by cultural fragmentation. As such, the theme of cultural fragmentation emanates from these characters’ plurality of identities tackled in the course of the fictional events about the postmodern British society through fictional discourse that inherently “becomes an object for the other; this interaction provides no support for the viewer who would objectify an entire event according to some ordinary monologic category (thematically, lyrically or cognitively) - and this consequently makes the viewer also a participant”<sup>[18]</sup>. The cognitive aspects of Bakhtin’s dialogic discourse fall in the category of the narrative voices projected by the author within the broad context of the fictional plot. As such, the discourse cognitively provides the reader with viable interpretive tools to delve into the profound meaning of the text. The novel carries out this discourse-oriented feature as it parades fictional characters that resemble real postmodern people, whereby drastic changes have taken place. As such, Ishiguro’s use of fictional discourse appropriates the thematic peculiarities of cultural fragmentation during postmodernism and how they affect people’s lifestyles.

The plurality of identities, furthermore, indicates the

diversity of ethnic nationalities because the literary attribute of narrative works “is a reality of discourse precariously suspended between twin impossibilities: an experience of one as two which, if realized, would bring us back to one again by reducing two to a mechanical sum of two units”<sup>[19]</sup>. In this way, discourse serves as a linking point between the characters and their pragmatic intention regarding their judgment of reality. Their speech, accordingly, is the most viable device employed by authors to deal with such intricate language issues in the literary texts. It involves people from different social backgrounds. The concept of cultural fragmentation implies some problems concerning the contradictory views among world’s nationalities, and postmodernism attempts to put parallels among them to mitigate the ethnic aversion caused by social and cultural changes, since “postmodernism and its cultural problems show an interdependent situation”. There is no such thing as the postmodernism cultures in some countries are high and those in other countries are low in Europe and America and the third world, but an overlapping or parallel situation is presented”<sup>[20]</sup>. Ishiguro depicts this cultural parallel by polarizing characters from different nations in the world. Stevens comes from English society, and Mr. Farraday is an American employer. They get along with each other on the grounds of Stevens’ job, but they do not come to terms regarding their relationship in the employer’s mansion. They develop an uncomfortable relationship as they do not easily accept their ethnic origins. Stevens comments on this relationship in the following lines: “I do not mean to imply anything derogatory about Mr. Farraday; he is, after all, an American gentleman and his ways are often very different. There is no question at all that he meant any harm, but you will no doubt appreciate how uncomfortable a situation this was for me”<sup>[4]</sup>. Ishiguro appropriates this ethnic intersection between Stevens and Mr. Farraday via the incorporation of plurality of the characters’ identities to expose the postmodern sequences of cultural fragmentation. This postmodern quality is perceived through the fictional discourse that represents Ishiguro’s utilization of the novel’s multi-voicedness in order to create a sense of dialogic language. Strikingly, the characters’ discourse comprises this multi-voicedness via coping with the requirements of life.

The characters’ discourse concerning plurality of identities, additionally, is sustained by globalization and the inevitability of change addressed by “the authorial intervention

within the narrative structure which accentuates his viewpoint on the ongoing events”<sup>[21]</sup>. Ishiguro perceives these thematic matters through the novel’s setting to highlight the cultural fragmentation approached in the text’s fictional events. As for globalization, it also has a concomitant affinity with postmodernism and its inclusion of the flux of socio-cultural change. In the main, globalization incarnates the peculiarities of ethnic identities because a postmodern literary text “points to a significant clue regarding the identity of postmodern subjects”<sup>[22]</sup>. Consequently, the postmodern features of globalization encompasses all kinds of cultural changes in relation to what all “divergent considerations mean with regard to the issue of identity in the contemporary world – whether one has reason to believe that identity has evaporated in the flux of postmodern life, or if some of the theoretical perspectives invoked here enable one to affirm the continued legitimacy of talking about identity today”<sup>[22]</sup>. In this regard, Ishiguro relates globalization to the characters’ interpersonal social affairs and the inevitability of change by means of the setting and the characters’ discourse. In this way, fictional discourse represents “the multiplicity of voices” which “is always inherent in it, both the voices of listeners and the voices of prior speaking persons, voices that answer or otherwise respond to rhetorical discourse and voices that rhetorical discourse itself transmits and so also inevitably reaccentuates”<sup>[23]</sup>. The readers are the recipients of this discourse, while the author initiates through the characters’ linguistic communication.

The novel’s setting takes place in London, a place of postmodern change characterized by cultural fragmentation. Stevens meticulously notices the inevitability of change by observing the other characters’ interpersonal affairs. He describes M. Dupont’s changing temper. At the beginning, M. Dupont was balanced and accustomed to life in London. However, he changes and becomes a bad-tempered man: “M. Dupont had not arrived in a good temper; I cannot recall now all the various things that had upset him since his arrival in England a few days previously, but in particular he had obtained some painful sores on his feet while sight-seeing around London and these, he feared, were growing septic”<sup>[4]</sup>. In fact, Stevens recounts the story of postmodern inevitable social change in London, which is the main spatial setting of the novel. Postmodernism, on the other hand, is the temporal setting because it refers to the time of

this change that affected people’s life and their relationships via “the stylistic treatment of objectified discourse, that is, of a character’s discourse, is subject- as if to a higher and ultimate authority- to the stylistic task of the author’s context”<sup>[18]</sup>. Bakhtin’s perception of the stylistic capacity of dialogic discourse embodies the literary interplay between the text and the reader. Consequently, language plays a significant role in shaping the nature of fictional discourse in relation to cultural fragmentation since fictional “discourse pretends merely to transmit already written materials.... We cannot avoid the implication that somebody has done the transcription, but the convention ignores the act and assumes that the expression is a pure mimesis”<sup>[24]</sup>.

In the novel, in the same way, globalization, consequently, is the nexus of the inevitability of change involving the characters’ interpersonal social affairs. Globalization represents cultural fragmentation by dint of world nationalism, whereby identity unfolds and typifies different world communities by fictional discourse that “is virtually synonymous with ‘dialogic’”<sup>[25]</sup>. Such communities have a universal identity created by the cultural norms of postmodernism; Adeshina Afolayan writes: “postmodernism and nationalism pose for the understanding of the identity of not only the self, but also of the relationship between the self and the other. Universalist norms and principles, while significant, remain empty without their iterative mediation within the self-understanding of local bounded communities”<sup>[26]</sup>. At the end of the novel, Ishiguro portrays the inevitability of changes though Stevens, who is moved by life in London. His disappointment by this change is caused by his cultural fragmentation developed out of his interpersonal affairs with other people from different backgrounds: “I suppose I was something of a sorry disappointment. Perhaps it is indeed time I began to look at this whole matter of bantering more enthusiastically. After all, when one thinks about it, it is not such a foolish thing to indulge in, particularly if it is the case that in bantering lies the key to human warmth”<sup>[4]</sup>. Hence, Ishiguro perceives globalization and the inevitability of change on the grounds of postmodern life in British places, especially London. This place is revealed in the novel’s setting where postmodern cultural fragmentation does affect the characters’ interpersonal social affairs. In this sense, Bakhtin’s concept of dialogic discourse incarnates Ishiguro’s depiction of cultural fragmentation by dint of fictional dis-

course that heavily relies on language rather than themes. In the long run, fictional discourse is a linguistic vehicle combining the author's implicit and abstract conception of cultural fragmentation conveyed through the characters' dialogic discourse.

## 5. Conclusions

This study explored the theme of cultural fragmentation through pursuing its postmodern traits in Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. The discussion focused on the fictional events and the authorial descriptions of cultural fragmentation imprinting postmodern life by applying Bakhtin's concept of dialogic discourse. The analysis of the cultural fragmentation revealed Ishiguro's obsession with the drastic changes in British society and its postmodern lifestyle. In essence, cultural fragmentation was interpreted by discussing the characters and the setting of the novel, which truly offer a vivid picture of the British social radical changes. Being so, the theme of cultural fragmentation was not only limited to culture, but also to the characters' emotions, life, society, and interpersonal affairs. The discussion relied mainly on these thematic insights in relation to the plot's events that convey to the reader a realistic view of British postmodern life in all its complexities.

The study has three interrelated findings. First, it accentuated the postmodern thematic aspects of Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. That is, postmodern literature abounds with many themes that could be explored differently by researchers. This means that postmodern themes exceptionally offer unprecedented themes within specific cultural scopes. These themes do not exist in any other literary periods; and the rarity of them lies in their presence in postmodern literature, especially the fictional writings. The analysis of such themes might unravel the selected novel's implications of other themes that would be proper topics for future research. In this way, the study contributes to the experimental discussion of postmodern themes because they tackle different layers of life and society, which is rarely tackled in previous studies on the selected novel.

Second, the study solely highlighted the theme of cultural fragmentation that is hardly found in any other study written on the selected novel. The significance of analyzing this theme lies in its discovery of cultural fragmentation in

British society. Though this fragmentation might be found in any other culture around the world, it is limited to British society. Furthermore, the discussion of cultural fragmentation was ascribed to the postmodern changes storming in the world's nations, including England. The analysis of cultural fragmentation was not elaborated on via its negative meanings. It was supported by a textual analysis of how the inevitable changes of life could occur anywhere, and how it gradually changes people's emotions that control their mentality and demeanors. Third, the authorial perception of life and society is another integral finding of the study. It uncovered the postmodern cultural fragmentation as a logical sequence of the authorial observations of the British society's continuous change. This is merely achieved through the characters' fictional voices and the plot's setting, which is hardly found in the existing scholarship written on the selected novel.

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All data collected in this research were obtained from research websites, especially Google Scholar, ReserachGate, and Academia.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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