

MECHANISMS OF ARTISTIC PSYCHOLOGISM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NODIRA IBROHIMOVA’S AND KATHERINE MANSFIELD’S SHORT STORIES

Egamberdiyeva Gulnoza Abduraxmanovna

Republican Education Center

Email: gulnozae@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18984941>

Abstract. This article investigates the mechanisms of artistic psychologism in selected short stories by Nodira Ibrohimova and Katherine Mansfield. Using a narratological and stylistic framework, the study analyses how both writers construct inner life through (1) internal focalization and thought-presentation, (2) psychologically charged object-details and sensory triggers, (3) silence and omission as subtext, and (4) epiphanic shifts shaped by scene-time compression and open endings. The Uzbek corpus includes Ibrohimova’s “Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak,” “O‘g‘il,” “Farzand isi,” and “Ikkinchi imkon,” while the English corpus includes Mansfield’s “The Garden Party,” “Miss Brill,” “Bliss,” and “The Daughters of the Late Colonel.” Findings indicate that Mansfield often intensifies interiority by balancing closeness with narrative distance and by condensing psychological contradiction into symbolic detail, while Ibrohimova foregrounds psychological rupture through socially situated tension, ritualized waiting, and silence under pressure. Despite cultural differences, both writers share a modern short-story logic: psychologism is achieved less through direct explanation than through structured perception—what the character notices, repeats, avoids, and cannot say.

Keywords: artistic psychologism; focalization; subtext; short story; narrative distance; psychological detail; comparative literature.

Abstrakt. Ushbu maqola Nodira Ibrohimova va Ketrin Mensfildning tanlangan qisqa hikoyalaridagi badiiy psixologizm mexanizmlarini o‘rganadi. Narratologik va stilistik asosdan foydalangan holda, tadqiqot ikkala yozuvchining ham ichki hayotni (1) ichki fokuslanish va fikr taqdimoti, (2) psixologik jihatdan yuklangan obyekt tafsilotlari va hissiy qo‘zg‘atuvchilar, (3) subtekst sifatida sukunat va tushirib qoldirish va (4) sahna-vaqt siqilishi va ochiq yakunlar bilan shakllangan epifanik o‘zgarishlar orqali qanday qurishini tahlil qiladi. O‘zbekcha korpus Ibrohimovaning “Chorshanba uchun qo‘ylak”, “O‘g‘il”, “Farzand isi” va “Ikkinchi imkoniyat” asarlarini o‘z ichiga olgan bo‘lsa, inglizcha korpus Mansfildning “Bog‘ kechasi”, “Miss Brill”, “Bliss” va “Marhum polkovnikning qizlari” asarlarini o‘z ichiga oladi. Topilmalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, Mansfield ko‘pincha yaqinlikni hikoya masofasi bilan muvozanatlash va psixologik qarama-qarshilikni ramziy tafsilotlarga siqish orqali ichkilikni kuchaytiradi, Ibrohimova esa ijtimoiy jihatdan joylashgan keskinlik, rituallashtirilgan kutish va bosim ostida sukunat orqali psixologik yorilishni oldinga suradi. Madaniy farqlarga qaramay, ikkala yozuvchi ham zamonaviy qisqa hikoya mantig‘iga ega: psixologizmga to‘g‘ridan-to‘g‘ri tushuntirish orqali emas, balki tuzilgan idrok orqali erishiladi - qahramon nimani payqaydi, takrorlaydi, undan qochadi va ayta olmaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: badiiy psixologizm; fokuslash; pastki matn; qisqa hikoya; hikoya masofasi; psixologik tafsilot; qiyosiy adabiyot.

Аннотация. В данной статье исследуются механизмы художественного психологизма в избранных рассказах Нодир Иброхимовой и Кэтрин Мэнсфилд. Используя нарратологическую и стилистическую основу, исследование анализирует, как обе писательницы конструируют внутреннюю жизнь посредством (1) внутренней фокализации и представления мыслей, (2) психологически заряженных деталей объектов и сенсорных триггеров, (3) молчания и умолчания как подтекста и (4) эпифанических сдвигов, формируемых сжатием сцены и времени и открытыми концовками. Узбекский корпус включает рассказы Иброхимовой «Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak», «O‘g‘il», «Farzand isi» и «Ikkinchi imkon», а английский корпус — рассказы Мэнсфилд «The Garden Party», «Miss Brill», «Bliss» и «The Daughters of the Late Colonel». Результаты исследования показывают, что Мэнсфилд часто усиливает внутренний мир, уравновешивая близость с нарративной дистанцией и сжимая психологические противоречия в символические детали, в то время как Иброхимова выдвигает на первый план психологический разрыв через социально обусловленное напряжение, ритуализированное ожидание и молчание под давлением. Несмотря на культурные различия, обе писательницы разделяют современную логику короткого

“Ilmiy tadqiqotlarni amaliyotga joriy qilishning muammo va yechimlari” mavzusidagi onlayn xalqaro ilmiy-amaliy anjuman materiallar to‘plami. NamDU - 2026-yil 20-21-fevral

рассказа: психологизм достигается не столько посредством прямого объяснения, сколько посредством структурированного восприятия — того, что персонаж замечает, повторяет, избегает и не может сказать.

Ключевые слова: художественный психологизм; фокализация; подтекст; короткий рассказ; нарративная дистанция; психологические детали; сравнительное литературоведение.

Introduction

The short story is a particularly productive genre for representing psychological experience because it encourages compression: inner conflict is rarely explained fully, but is inferred from viewpoint, detail selection, silence, and the gap between speech and feeling. In this sense, artistic psychologism can be treated as a system of textual mechanisms that make mental life visible—hesitation, affect, self-deception, shame, longing, moral shock—without resorting to overt psychological commentary.

Katherine Mansfield’s modernist short fiction is frequently associated with refined techniques of character-centred viewpoint, where interiority emerges through subtle restrictions of information and through indirect access to thought. A narratological approach treats this as focalization—the selection and filtering of narrative information through a perceiving consciousness (Niederhoff, 2013; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002). In contemporary Uzbek prose, Nodira Ibrohimova’s short stories also display strong psychologism, but it often appears through culturally grounded, socially pressured situations—family, motherhood, gendered vulnerability, and precarious everyday survival—where inner truth becomes visible through silence, ritual repetition, and abrupt turning points rather than sustained introspective explanation (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 3; Ibrohimova, 2024, para. 69).

This article addresses the following research questions:

- Which narrative, stylistic, and compositional mechanisms serve as key carriers of artistic psychologism in the chosen texts?
- How do Ibrohimova and Mansfield differ in their balance between explicit psychological rendering and subtext-driven interiority?
- How are psychological tension and transformation structured through focalization, detail, dialogue, and endings?

Theoretical Framework

This study employs a mechanism-based model of psychologism supported by narratology and stylistics. Focalization is treated as a core principle of interiority construction: narrative information is restricted and shaped by “who sees” and how perception is organized (Niederhoff, 2013; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002). This enables analysis of how a character’s mental state becomes legible through selection of details, interpretive bias, and partial understanding. A second pillar is the logic of indirect thought-presentation. In modern short fiction, interiority frequently emerges through indirect forms that blend character subjectivity and narration, allowing intimacy without full confession (Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature, 2020). Finally, the article treats subtext (silence, omission, understatement) as a structural mechanism: in compressed genres, what is unsaid can carry more psychological weight than explicit statement.

Operationally, the mechanisms examined are grouped as:

- Narrative mechanisms: internal focalization, narrative distance, thought-presentation.
- Subtextual mechanisms: ellipsis, understatement, silence.
- Stylistic mechanisms: object-details, sensory triggers, repetition.
- Compositional mechanisms: scene-time compression, epiphany, open endings.

Methodology

This study is based on a purposively selected corpus of short stories by Nodira Ibrohimova and Katherine Mansfield. The Uzbek corpus includes four stories by Ibrohimova: “*Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak*,” “*O‘g‘il*,” “*Farzand isi*,” and “*Ikkinchi imkon*” (Ibrohimova, 2023; Ibrohimova, 2024). The English corpus includes four stories by Mansfield: “*The Garden Party*,” “*Miss Brill*,” “*Bliss*,” and “*The Daughters of the Late Colonel*.” For textual consistency, Mansfield’s stories are cited from the PDF versions available in the author-provided and publicly accessible editions (Mansfield, 1920/2013; Mansfield, 1921/2013).

The corpus was selected because all texts foreground inner conflict and represent psychological states predominantly through indirect means, including focalization, psychologically significant detail, silence, and epiphanic shifts.

“Ilmiy tadqiqotlarni amaliyotga joriy qilishning muammo va yechimlari” mavzusidagi onlayn xalqaro ilmiy-amaliy anjuman materiallar to‘plami. NamDU - 2026-yil 20-21-fevral

The research employs qualitative close reading combined with comparative analysis. The analysis is organized according to four interrelated analytic lenses:

- **Focalization and thought-presentation** (how the text structures access to consciousness through viewpoint, narrative distance, and thought-reporting);
- **Psychological detail and sensory triggers** (how objects, space, clothing, and sensory cues function as codes of inner states);
- **Silence and omission as subtext** (how ellipsis, understatement, and non-speech generate psychological pressure and meaning);
- **Epiphanic turning points and structural closure** (how scene-time compression, revelation, and open endings model psychological transformation).

Comparative Analysis: Mechanisms of Artistic Psychologism

Narrative mechanisms: internal focalization and thought-presentation

A primary mechanism of artistic psychologism is restricted access: the story becomes what the character can perceive, interpret, or emotionally tolerate. In Ibrohimova’s “Ikkinchi imkon,” psychologism begins with a materially grounded trigger (a forgotten photograph) and immediately shifts into a private command: “Unutishim kerak” (“I must forget”), whispered to herself (Ibrohimova, para. 4). The narrative does not label her state as grief or obsession; instead, it shows the instability of will—she cannot transform intention into forgetting (Ibrohimova, para. 4). The psychological mechanism is further externalized through mediated action: she begins writing a message late at night, transferring inner need into digital communication (Ibrohimova, para. 4–5). Interior tension is thus dramatized as an act that both reveals and displaces emotion.

In “Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak,” focalization becomes ritualized. The protagonist’s existence is structured by a single recurring day: Wednesday is described as her “beloved day,” and its inevitable return motivates her to live (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 3). Psychologism arises through temporal fixation; the calendar functions as a psychological dependency rather than mere background (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 3).

Mansfield’s “Miss Brill” constructs interiority through a different focalization logic: the protagonist’s perception transforms the public park into a theatre of belonging—“They were all on the stage” (Mansfield, p. 3). Here psychologism emerges through self-interpretation: Miss Brill’s worldview is a protective script that organizes loneliness into performance.

Comparative result: Ibrohimova’s psychologism often becomes visible through explicit self-address and urgent action (messaging, waiting, searching), while Mansfield frequently builds interiority through interpretive framing—self-scripts and subtle perceptual re-coding that disclose psychological vulnerability (Ibrohimova, para. 4–5; Mansfield, p. 3).

Subtextual mechanisms: silence, omission, and understatement

In compressed genres, psychologism frequently intensifies when language fails. Silence becomes a narrative event: it carries fear, shame, helplessness, or moral overload.

In “Farzand isi,” the protagonist’s psychological collapse is represented through blocked speech: “Nasiba could not say a word; she froze in silence” (Ibrohimova, para. 54). The text intensifies this by presenting emotional overflow without visible discharge: she is “crying,” yet tears do not come (Ibrohimova, para. 54). Moreover, silence becomes socially legible and morally pressured: “Nega indaymay siz?” (“Why are you silent?”) confronts her, forcing the reader to interpret silence as a carrier of conflict rather than emptiness (Ibrohimova, para. 48).

In Mansfield’s “Miss Brill,” psychologism is shaped by cruelty delivered in ordinary speech. The young couple’s remark—“Why does she come here at all—who wants her?”—collapses Miss Brill’s inner theatre without any narratorial explanation (Mansfield, p. 3). Mansfield’s mechanism is subtextual displacement: minimal dialogue produces maximum psychological damage, and the story relies on the reader’s inference rather than explicit author commentary.

Comparative result: Ibrohimova often represents silence as embodied emotional overload under social pressure, while Mansfield frequently uses understatement and ordinary speech as vehicles of subtextual violence—psychological truth emerges from the gap between words and their effect (Ibrohimova, para. 48, 54; Mansfield, p. 3).

Stylistic mechanisms: psychological detail and sensory triggers

A shared mechanism of psychologism is the psychological charge of detail: objects, clothing, space, and sensory cues become carriers of memory, desire, shame, and contradiction. This is consistent with focalization theory: perception is never neutral; it selects meaning-laden elements (Niederhoff, 2013).

“Ilmiy tadqiqotlarni amaliyotga joriy qilishning muammo va yechimlari” mavzusidagi onlayn xalqaro ilmiy-amaliy anjuman materiallar to‘plami. NamDU - 2026-yil 20-21-fevral

In “Ikkinchi imkon,” the photograph is a tactile trigger: she strokes the surface and quickly hides it again, dramatizing repression through gesture rather than explanation (Ibrohimova, para. 3–4). In “Farzand isi,” sensory detail becomes a condensed expression of attachment: the mother inhales her baby’s scent—“Mana, farzand isi”—and whispers “You are my child” (Ibrohimova, para. 60). Smell functions as embodied proof of belonging.

In “Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak,” clothing functions as a psychological instrument: the protagonist imagines that repeated wearing may have bored the man, so she decides to buy a new dress specifically “for Wednesday” (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 7). Later, clothing becomes evidence of damage and exposure rather than romance; the narrative converts decorative detail into an index of vulnerability (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 17).

Mansfield’s “The Garden Party” uses clothing and visibility as class-coded psychological discomfort. As Laura enters the poor lane, she experiences exposure and shame: “She wished now she had put on a coat” (Mansfield, p. 12). The coat is not only physical protection; it is symbolic cover for class identity and moral discomfort.

Comparative result: Mansfield often uses detail to expose class-coded vulnerability and moral unease, while Ibrohimova anchors detail in intimate social worlds (motherhood, longing, dependence), turning objects and sensory cues into direct carriers of inner truth (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 7, 17; Ibrohimova, para. 60; Mansfield, p. 12).

Dialogue and the social mask

Dialogue is a privileged site of indirect psychologism because it naturally produces a gap between inner truth and outward performance. In “Farzand isi,” the accusatory question “Why are you silent?” turns speech into moral pressure and makes silence a readable sign of inner struggle (Ibrohimova, para. 48). In “O‘g‘il,” the narrator’s inability to speak becomes self-definition: “I did not speak. I sighed, that’s all” (Ibrohimova, 2024, para. 69). Here psychologism is achieved through negation: identity is expressed through what cannot be done or said.

In Mansfield, dialogue frequently functions as social performance; ordinary phrases can carry devastating psychological force. “Why does she come here at all—who wants her?” demonstrates how “normal” conversational cruelty can shatter interior constructions without explicit narration (Mansfield, p. 3).

Comparative result: In both corpora, dialogue operates as a mask. Psychologism emerges from the mismatch between speech norms and inner reality, and from the reader’s inference about what is too painful or socially impossible to state (Ibrohimova, 2024, para. 69; Mansfield, p. 3).

Compositional mechanisms: epiphany, scene-time compression, and open endings

The short story often models psychological change not through gradual development but through compressed turning points—epiphanic shifts produced by a single scene.

In “Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak,” the protagonist follows a man, expecting reunion; the story compresses fantasy into motion. The epiphany is visual and brutal: at the station, the man is met and embraced by another woman; the departing woman’s “simple yellow flower dress” repeats the protagonist’s own earlier dress motif, turning detail into verdict (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 18). The psychological effect is identity collapse and disillusionment produced in a single scene.

In “Miss Brill,” composition similarly compresses rupture into a brief moment: the couple’s casual cruelty destroys the inner theatre constructed earlier, producing a psychological reversal without didactic closure (Mansfield, n.d.-b, p. 3). In “The Daughters of the Late Colonel,” even micro-structure (“Silence. Then...”) becomes compositional rhythm, modeling repression and paralysis as repeated pattern (Mansfield, 1921/2013, p. 1).

Comparative result: Mansfield’s epiphanies often reveal the fragility of symbolic self-narratives, while Ibrohimova’s climaxes frequently expose social truth and vulnerability through abrupt scene-time compression (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 18; Mansfield, p. 3; Mansfield, 1921/2013, p. 1).

Discussion

Across both corpora, artistic psychologism is achieved primarily through indirect mechanisms rather than explanatory psychological commentary. Four convergent patterns are particularly strong:

Focalization as access to vulnerability: inner life becomes visible through selection and restriction of perception (Niederhoff, 2013; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002).

Subtext as psychological pressure: silence and understatement carry affective weight (Ibrohimova, n.d.-a, para. 48, 54; Mansfield, n.d.-b, p. 3). Detail-systems as emotional codes: objects, clothing, and sensory cues encode longing, shame, class pressure, or attachment (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 7, 18; Mansfield, n.d.-a, p. 12). Epiphany through contradiction: compressed scenes force

“Ilmiy tadqiqotlarni amaliyotga joriy qilishning muammo va yechimlari” mavzusidagi onlayn xalqaro ilmiy-amaliy anjuman materiallar to‘plami. NamDU - 2026-yil 20-21-fevral

confrontation between inner fantasy and external reality (Ibrohimova, 2023, para. 18; Mansfield, n.d.-b, p. 3).

The key divergence lies in dominant channels. Mansfield tends to intensify interiority through symbolic condensation and a controlled gap between the character’s self-interpretation and the text’s implied irony. Ibrohimova tends to foreground socially situated vulnerability, with psychologism often peaking through silence under pressure, ritual waiting, and sudden ruptures that expose ethical and emotional reality.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that artistic psychologism in both Nodira Ibrohimova’s and Katherine Mansfield’s short stories is constructed through mechanisms: focalization, subtextual silence, psychologically charged detail, and compositional compression. Mansfield’s psychologism frequently relies on symbolic detail and indirect interiority, while Ibrohimova’s psychologism often emerges through socially grounded tension, embodied silence, and abrupt disillusionment. Despite these differences, both writers share a modern short-story principle: the psyche appears not as explanation, but as structured perception—what the character sees, repeats, hides, and cannot say (Niederhoff, 2013; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002).

References list

1. Bal, M. (2009). *Narratology: Introduction to the theory of narrative* (3rd ed.). University of Toronto Press.
2. Banfield, A. (1982). *Unspeakable sentences: Narration and representation in the language of fiction*. Routledge.
3. Chatman, S. (1978). *Story and discourse: Narrative structure in fiction and film*. Cornell University Press.
4. Cohn, D. (1978). *Transparent minds: Narrative modes for presenting consciousness in fiction*. Princeton University Press.
5. Genette, G. (1980). *Narrative discourse: An essay in method* (J. E. Lewin, Trans.). Cornell University Press.
6. Ibrohimova, N. (2024). *Selected short stories* [Unpublished manuscript compiled from: Chorshanba uchun ko‘ylak, O‘g‘il, Farzand isi, Ikkinchi imkon].
7. Leech, G. N., & Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd ed.). Pearson/Longman.
8. Mansfield, K. (2007). *The collected stories* (A. Smith, Intro.). Penguin Classics. (Original works published 1911–1922)
9. Niederhoff, B. (2013). Focalization. In P. Hühn, J. C. Meister, J. Pier, & W. Schmid (Eds.), *The living handbook of narratology*. Hamburg University Press.
10. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature. (2020). Free indirect discourse. Oxford University Press.
11. Rimmon-Kenan, S. (2002). *Narrative fiction: Contemporary poetics* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
12. Wilson, J., Reid, S., & Kimber, G. (2011). *Katherine Mansfield and literary modernism*. Continuum.