



## Exploring Narrative Patterns in Zubair Ahmed's Waliullah is Lost Using Labov's Sociolinguistic Model

Israr Ahmed Tanoli<sup>1</sup>, Farrukh Nadeem<sup>2</sup> & Abdul Qadeer<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M. Phil Scholar, Department of English, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan  
Email: [isrartanoli118@gmail.com](mailto:isrartanoli118@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>M. Phil Scholar, Department of English, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received:	January	15,2024
Revised:	February	28,2024
Accepted:	March	26,2024
Available Online:	April	24,2024

#### Keywords:

Labov, Waliullah is Lost, Narrative Analysis, Sociolinguistic Model, Zubair Ahmed

### ABSTRACT

The present paper highlights the narrative patterns of a Punjabi short story, *Waliullah is lost*, by Zubair Ahmed, through the application of a sociolinguistic model of narrative analysis introduced by William Labov in 1972. Although the model was initially developed for analysing oral narrative analysis based on the everyday discourse practices of "real speakers in real social contexts" (Sheikh, Awan, & Sheikh, 2021, p. 1), linguists and narratologists have found it equally productive and effective for the stylistic analysis of short stories and fiction. After a rigorous analysis of a large corpus of natural narratives, Labov identified recurrent features or structural elements, which include (i) abstract, (ii) orientation, (iii) complicating action, (iv) evaluation, narrative clauses, (v) result and orientation followed by a (vi) coda. The application of Labov's six schemas enriches our comprehension of the story by providing insight into the author's linguistic and narrative techniques. The researchers used a qualitative method of analysis to conduct the current research. The data analysis section demonstrates how the six elements of Labov's model prove to be of productive value in understanding the narrative features in *Waliullah is Lost*.



© 2024 The Authors, Published by AIRSD. This is an Open Access Article under the Creative Common Attribution Non-Commercial 4.0

Corresponding Author's Email: [isrartanoli118@gmail.com](mailto:isrartanoli118@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Zubair Ahmad was born in Lahore in 1958. His ancestral background was from Indian Punjab. After completing high school, he was unsure of his future endeavours. He told it to Anne Murphy, a Canadian writer, and translator of his collection of short stories, *Grieving for Pigeons*. Ahmed speaks about himself: "A different kind of bird began to fly in me" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 7). *Sweater* is a short story from the collection where the narrator tells us that a restless bird led Ahmad westward to Italy. Several stories in the collection *Grieving for Pigeons*, while *Dead Man's Float*, in particular, recollects the narrator's experiences there, seeking a way to survive without documentation, living on the streets at times, among others

who were also rendered as outsiders. After a year in Italy, Ahmad returned to Lahore, influenced by fond memories and his attachment to the city. He pursued higher education at the University of Punjab, obtaining a master's degree in English literature, and commenced his teaching career at Islamia College Lahore, spanning several decades. These sequential movements—first to Italy and then into English literature—highlight the expansiveness of Ahmad's imagination. His literary works are deeply entrenched in Lahore's social and physical landscapes and the experiences of the Punjabi community across the Indo-Pak border. Ahmad's narratives actively engage in broader literary dialogues while intricately depicting Lahore's vivid neighborhoods, roads, cafes, landmarks, and historical narratives. The quoted passage below underscores Ahmad's focus on localities and childhood memories as central themes in his writing.

We thread our way through the narrow lanes of the old Anarkali market, thronged with people. We walk down the side of Mall Road, and we are introduced to Gol Bagh, a centrally located park (since renamed Nasir Bagh) and the site of important political protests and rallies. Above all, we return again and again to Krishan Nagar, the neighborhood of the narrator's (and author's) youth—the old Mohalla. It is revealed as a place of belonging but also of loss, of transition into adult life and the displacement of the familiar by something no longer recognisable. In much the same way, the city of Lahore emerges across the stories as a palimpsest, with contested layers of meaning overlaid on it by different times and peoples (Ahmad, 2022, p. ix).

### **Literary Works:**

Ahmad has authored three collections of short stories – *Meenh Boohay te Barrian* (Rain, Doors, and Windows), *Kabootar Banarey Te Galian* (Pigeons, Parapet Wall, and Streets) and *Panni Di Kandh* (The Wall of Water). He has not limited himself to fiction and has showcased his creative talents by writing a book of poetry, *Dumm Yaad Na Keeta*, along with a book of literary criticism, *Sahitak Alochana Vichar Lekh*. The Khardarposh Trust recognized *Kabootar Banarey Te Galian* as the best work of Punjabi fiction, published in Pakistan in 2014. The same work was awarded the first-ever Dhahan Prize in Shahmukhi. 'Grieving for Pigeons' is an English translation of the *Kabootar Banarey Te Galian* by Canadian translator and writer Anne Murphy in 2022.

### **Waliullah is Lost**

The story under discussion has been taken from the collection of short stories *Grieving for Pigeons*, translated by Canadian Professor Anne Murphy in 2022. The thematic contents of Ahmad's stories are based on his bygone experiences intermingled with the uprising issues of his time. The textual universe of Ahmad's stories is a fictional projection of all the possible sights and sounds that make the stories' themes diverse, complex, and exciting. Despite being fictional, specific dystopian layers make the sub-textual narrative patterns intriguingly meaningful. Similarly, his stories have apprehensions of 'settling' for those uprooted and dislocated (against their will) from their age-old cultural settings. This textual domain is inherently intertwined with the enduring ramifications of the 1947 partition of the Indian subcontinent, a historical event that resulted in the stark division of the Punjab region into East and West Punjab. The narratives oscillate between the aspirations of a young protagonist poised at life's threshold and the introspections of an older character grappling with the weight of his personal history. This perpetual flux between past and present serves as a poignant reminder of time's fluidity, transcending the artificial constructs of human divisions imposed by geopolitical boundaries and societal stratifications. Despite the intimate first-person narration employed throughout the stories, the use of the personal pronoun reflects a

broader collective consciousness, as the shared social experiences resonate with a universal chord among the masses.

With multiple themes and issues, the story *Waliullah is lost* marks the beginning of his collection of short stories named *Grieving for Pigeons*. The very first and open-ended sentence—it was a dull morning, without a hint of sun- appears to be a narrative riddle proclaiming a tell-tale fusion of surprise and shock in the story. This location information describes the routine of fellow students on the narrator's street. We ran as swiftly as possible, shivering from the cold, with our school bags carefully hung at our waists. The development of the plot reflects, dialectically, the narrative link between past and present experiences of the narrator's life. In a traditional discourse, the story under discussion opens with the narrator's childhood experiences in his cultural setting. Juxtaposing the narrative techniques of *telling* and *showing* together, the narrator recounts his school days passing along with his class fellows with a central emphasis on the character of Waliullah for being the gravitational pull of the plot. At school, the readers observe some realistic sketches of his childhood days with the life-like description of the locale and cold weather. The autobiographical layer of the story gives an impression of being creative nonfiction, which artistically culminates into a harmonious blend of facts and fiction.

As the story proceeds, the narrator, through a coming-of-age narrative, recollects his daily routine at school along with the description of his teacher, Mr. Altaf. Mr Altaf has a unique way of teaching Urdu as a subject that makes him famous in the school. Seldom haughty in his temperament, Mr. Altaf leaves deep impressions on the narrator's mind. Mr. Altaf happens to beat a fellow student named Waliullah mindlessly. Accustomed to mischievous activities, the students of this class invite the wrath of this teacher that would ultimately result not only in the severe punishment of the student but sometimes in the tragic end of his school-going intentions. Shockingly, disillusionments of students with their teaching-learning activities are typically ignored and accepted in the dictatorial cultural contexts of Pakistan. Like any monarch of his unquestioned dynasty, the teacher, Mr. Altaf, would appear unconvinced by any supplication by any school individual. The normalization of such instances of implacability has a long history in the subcontinent that often causes frustration for characters like Waliullah. However, there is a striking equilibrium between description and narration in the entire narrative discourse of the story. The physical features of Mr. Altaf are described in a manner that gives an impression of satire mixed with amusement. Mr. Altaf's nose is shown to be as long as that of a parrot, and, on his bald head, he always wore a filthy cap.

Afterward, the narrator is immersed in memories of school life. At this phase in the story, the narrator moves to the city with his family. Waliullah, the disillusioned student, has joined his father's bookshop. Here, the narrator connects with his socio-political contexts and describes the country's political situation. Having incorporated the tumultuous cultural conditions, he describes Waliullah's physical features again as he turns grey, weak, and old. After narrating Waliullah, the narrator describes his meeting with Waliullah. In their meeting, the Narrator and Waliullah discussed their past life memories, and their class fellow narrator explained that this was their last meeting. At the end of the story, the narrator goes to meet Waliullah but cannot find his shop. He asked Bashir Hamam (hairdresser) about him. The latter tells him Waliullah lost the case at his house and shifted to town. At this point, the story ends with a note that Waliullah is lost.

**Labov's narrative model:** The tradition of writing and narrating is as old as humanity. In every period, there was a certain way to record the notable issues and concerns of

contemporary times. Literary narratives are recorded differently at different times. In primitive ages, narratives are usually orally narrated from generation to generation. While delimiting our attention to the domain of English literature, we can observe that *Beowulf* was the first epic recorded in the Anglo-Saxon period. Over time, the writing process had become sophisticated, especially with the invention of the printing press. The public had access to written material, whereas once, the written material was limited to the Clerks and the wealthy in society. With the rapid publication and the public's reach out to published material, different ways to analyse written documents have emerged. Initially, the texts were judged on their thematic concerns, while at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, various lenses and methods to analyse the literary texts emerged. Especially with literary theories like Russian formalism, Structuralism, and post-structuralism, many new angles to read and interpret a text came on the screen. In the tradition of structuralist literary criticism, the main aim of the theorist was to analyse a literary text in terms of its content.

The words on the page or screen are important to them rather than the socio-economic conditions under the influence of which the narrative is developed. They are in search of arts and crafts in the text. They measure the worth of text in terms of the literariness of the text. Narratologists have developed many models over the years to analyse the narratives. Vladimir Prop developed his model of interpreting folklore in 1968. He came up with the conclusion that Russian folklore has 31 functions and eight actions. He analysed more than one thousand folk narratives. Many other narrative models followed Prop's model. These were Labov's, GreiMass, and Chatsman's narrative models. The present study is centered on Labov's narrative model.

Before explaining the model, we will look at a narrative. Literary Term defines narrative as "narrative is a story" (<https://literaryterms.net/narrative/>, 2015). "The phrase may be used as an adjective or a noun. It is a description of the facts, experiences, and particulars. It also alludes to the recounting of stories. It indicates the format or manner in which the story is conveyed as an adjective." (<https://literaryterms.net/narrative/>, 2015). In academic discourse, Bruner's assertion regarding narrative structure underscores its fundamental characteristic as inherently sequential. Narratives are delineated by a distinctive progression of events, mental conditions, and occurrences, typically featuring human individuals as central characters or agents (Burner, 1993). According to Labov, "the narrative is a method of recapitulating experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that occurred" (Labov, 1972, pp. 359-360).

In the year 1967, William Labov and Walzekty formulated a narrative structure comprising three fundamental elements: orientation, complicating action, and evaluation. Subsequently, in 2013, Labov revived this framework by introducing additional components: abstract, resolution, and coda. Each clause within a narrative is allocated to one of these structural elements. While not all elements are obligatory in every narrative, the original three remain sufficient, as delineated by Labov and Walzekty. Labov's model encompasses the following components: (i). Abstract, (ii). Orientation, (iii). Complicating Action, (iv). Evaluation, (v). Resolution, and (vi). Coda. The subsequent paragraphs provide an in-depth exploration of these elements.

**Abstract: What Was This About?** The abstract of the narrative serves as a succinct summary encapsulating the central events and themes of the story, often found at the outset of the narrative. It acts as a precursor to the story, offering a glimpse into its essence. Following Labov's model, the abstract functions to address the fundamental question of "what," providing an overview of the narrative's content. It may serve to bridge the gap between

inquiry and response, functioning as a summary to aid comprehension. Thus, Labov's abstract serves the purpose of summarization within the narrative structure.

**Orientation: Who, When, What, Where?** Orientation is the second element of Labov's narrative model. It answers WH questions. In the story's structure, an orientation section usually follows the abstract. The orientation of a narrative contains propositions that provide the setting or context of a narrative. In Labov's words, the abstract "serve to orient the listener in respect to person, place, time and behavioral situation" (Labov & Waletzky, 1967, p. 32). The overall view of the narrative shows that the orientation section is a structural feature of a narrative structure. The orientation of the narrative tells about the time, the persons involved in the story, the place, and the background information.

Along with providing information about place and time, it answers an important question: Who? It reveals and contains the information about the characters of the story. Characters are the movers of the narrative; they build up the narrative. So, the orientation of Labov's model engages two crucial pillars of the narrative, i.e. setting and characters. An example of orientation is found in Jacob Schissel's story, "When I let go his arm, there was a knife on the table, is given towards the end of the narrative, just before the Schissel is stabbed with the knife" (Labov, 2013, p. 32). In this example, the phrase "there was a knife on the table" reveals the setting, while "Schissel" is a name that stands out for the characters.

**Complicating Action: Then What Happened?** Complicating Action is the third element of Labov's narrative model. According to Labov and Waletzky, "the main body of narrative clauses usually comprises a series of events that may be termed the complication or complicating action" (Labov & Waletzky, 1967, p. 32). In other words, it is the main body of the story. This section of the story relates the sequence of clauses to the events. Labov notes, "They provide the backbone of the story and are the most reportable event" (Labov, 2013, p. 414). Complicating Action evokes emotion among the readers. During this phase of the narrative, a conflict develops. It is the most unpredictable section of the narrative. Complicating Action of the narrative tackles the queries like, then what happened? Complicating action is the main section of the narrative, as the tension is going on among the characters. So, this section takes more space than other sections of the narrative. It acts as a bridge between orientation and evaluation. The result or resolution is naturally based on it.

**Evaluation: So, What?** Evaluation is an essential element of Labov's model. Labov and Waletzky define it as "that part of the narrative that reveals the attitude of the narrator towards the narrative by emphasizing the relative importance of some narrative units as compared to others" (1972, p. 366). In this manner, analysis devoid of evaluation appears inconsequential. Evaluation, within narrative discourse, distinctly delineates the narrative's intent and elucidates its significance and distinctiveness. Put differently, evaluation serves the purpose of addressing the question, What implications does this hold? Evaluation functions akin to a calibration tool, facilitating readers in comprehending the text through a discerning lens. It provides a platform for the readers to think about the narrative in an ordinary manner, meaning to interpret the text from various angles and methods. So, evaluation is a critical inquiry of the narrative from different angles.

**Resolution or Denouement: What Finally Happened?** Resolution is the second last element of Labov's narrative model. It is the section where the narrative's conflict reaches a point where the solution to the conflict seems probable. This section of the narrative is usually short and occurs at the narrative. Labov and Waletzk assert that the resolution of a narrative occurs subsequent to the evaluation segment within the narrative sequence. Conversely, Afsar posits "the Resolution of a story is normally reported in the final clause(s)

of the complicating action" (Afsar, 2006, p. 509). Within this framework, the complication phase culminates in a climactic apex, succeeded by a clause elucidating the ultimate outcome.

**Coda: Precludes Further Questions:** Labov and Waletzky asserts that "the coda is a functional device for returning the verbal perspective to the present moment" (1967, p. 39). The coda signals the end of the story by bringing the listener back to the present. In Labovian logic, "the coda prevents any further questions about what happened and why it was significant. The story's significance is typically based on underlying moral lessons" (Muhammad, 2019, p. 116).

### Research Objectives

1. To analyze Ahmad's short story *Waliullah is Lost* alignment with Labov's narrative model, specifically by identifying abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda elements within the narrative.
2. To explore the thematic contents and narrative structure of *Waliullah is Lost* through the lens of Labov's narrative model.

### Research Questions

1. How does Ahmad's short story *Waliullah is Lost* exemplify Labov's narrative model, particularly in terms of the abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda elements?
2. What insights can be gained from applying Labov's narrative model to analyze the thematic contents and narrative structure of *Waliullah is Lost*?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Many literary scholars and researchers have used the Labovian model of narratives as a framework to analyse narratives. Afsar, studied the Quranic and biblical narrative by applying Labov's model. He has discussed many Western scholars' misconceptions about Quranic interpretation that it does not follow a narrative pattern. In his study, he analysed biblical and Quranic verses through the framework of the Labovian narrative model. While Commenting on Labov's model, he asserts, "One reason for its popularity is that it enables rigorous comparisons to be drawn between literary narrative and the social stories told in everyday interaction. Its structure of six components tends to make it best suited to literary narratives that are short" (Afsar, 2006, p. 494).

Watson (1973), an adherent of Labov's model, asserts that Labov and Waletzky's proposed framework is formally and functionally sound. While many narrative analysis schemes have been traditionally employed in examining literary forms such as myths, folktales, epics, and novels, Watson emphasizes the indispensability of establishing a contextual link to their social milieu for a comprehensive understanding of their structure and functions. Khalil applied the model in the short story *My Mom Had Only One Eye*. She analysed the story and found that elements of Labov's model are very much observable. She found that the story's title served as an abstract of the story (Khalil, 2017).

A Labovian study of *The Lottery*, by Shirley Jackson found that all the elements, abstract, orientation, conflicting action, evaluation, resolution, and coda, are part of Shirley Jackson's story *The Lottery* (Sheikh, Awan, & Sheikh, 2021). Muhammad undertakes a meticulous examination of the linguistic aspects inherent in the Azizi-i-Misr episode—a subordinate narrative within the broader tale of Yusuf, as presented in the Holy Quran. Central to this

analysis is the application of Labov's Model of Narrative Analysis, a framework designed to deconstruct narratives into six constituent parts: Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Action, Result or Resolution, Evaluation, and Coda. Despite the model's original intent for scrutinizing personal experience narratives, Muhammad convincingly illustrates its seamless applicability to the Quranic narrative, specifically within the Azizi-Misr episode. The study affirms the comprehensive presence of all components articulated by Labov's model within the structure of the Azizi-Misr episode. Noteworthy is the discernible alignment between the Quranic narrative and Labov's narrative analysis, providing credence to the assertion that Quranic narratives share notable affinities with conventional human storytelling techniques. This alignment not only underscores the structural integrity of the Azizi-Misr episode but also contributes to the broader understanding of Quranic narratives as inherently resonant with human modes of storytelling. The significance of this research lies in its establishment of a profound and symbiotic relationship between human narratives and Quranic stories. By successfully applying Labov's Model of Narrative Analysis to the religious text, Muhammad opens new avenues for scholarly inquiry. This innovative approach beckons researchers to interpret Quranic narratives through the analytical lens developed within folktales, thereby enriching the discourse surrounding the interpretation of religious texts. This scholarly endeavour marks a seminal contribution, illuminating the congruence between human narrative structures and the profound stories enshrined in the Quran (Muhammad, 2019).

Wang, analysed the Hannah Gadsby narrative *Nanette*. His study revealed that the six narrative elements are observable in Gadsby's oral narrative. By uniting the elements of the narrative, Gadsby describes her desperation regarding women's position in the humorous stories. One of the most crucial types of discourse is the analysis of the narrative structure (Wang, 2020). JUNQUEIRA comprehensively examined narrative analysis within the context of oral personal experiences, juxtaposing the linguistic and cultural nuances between Brazilian Portuguese and American English. Employing Labov's model, the study sought to discern the applicability and universality of Labov's narrative framework to diverse cultural and linguistic settings. He asserts the universal resonance of Labov's model, positing its efficacy in elucidating oral narratives across disparate cultures and linguistic landscapes. His investigation revealed that Labov's model possesses a transcendent quality, demonstrating its adaptability and relevance to the rich tapestry of folk and oral narratives worldwide. By applying Labov's model to the oral experiences of distinct cultures and communities, the research aimed to discern commonalities and divergences in narrative structures across Brazilian Portuguese and American English. The findings underscored the universal appeal of Labov's model in delineating the inherent structural components of oral narratives, transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries (JUNQUEIRA, 2010).

In light of the limited scholarly discourse on applying Labov's model to concise fictional narratives, the researchers are compelled by the absence of extant research to embark on an investigation. The primary objective of this research initiative is to conduct a narrative analysis of a brief fictional narrative entitled *Waliullah is Lost*. The theoretical framework guiding this inquiry is the Labovian approach, which is hitherto underexplored within the context of condensed fictional compositions. This scholarly endeavour is motivated by the aspiration to contribute substantively to the existing academic corpus and to fill the void in scholarly investigations concerning using Labov's model in analysing succinct fictional narratives. Through this undertaking, the researchers aim to augment the intellectual understanding of narrative structures within the realm of brief fictional compositions and, concurrently, to enhance the theoretical foundations of Labov's model by extending its application to a genre heretofore underrepresented in academic inquiry.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method of analysis is used to conduct the current study. The basis of qualitative analysis is the philosophy method. It summarizes the sorts of things, grasps the laws of things, and uses reasoning to assess the similarities and differences between things. "The process contains the following steps: "What is the problem? What is the definition of the concept? What are the facts? What is the reason? What is the conclusion of the study?" (Lin, 2009, p. 179). The researcher follows the same approach in the completion of the current research. Within the domain of qualitative analysis, the researchers applied the results and functional analysis to accomplish the current study. The researchers have selected the Ahmed's short story *Waliullah is lost* as a primary text for analysis. The rationale behind the selection of the story was to introduce the local folk literature to global audience, along with it to make this point clear that literature written and published in local languages is very grand and eloquent. The researchers have used the Labovian model of narrative as a theoretical framework for current research. The Labovian model is discussed in greater detail in the introduction.

### Data/Content Analysis:

In this section, the researchers have analysed the story *Waliullah is lost* through the lens of Labov's narrative. Labov's narrative comprises six elements: Abstract, Orientation, Conflicting Issue, Evaluation, Resolution, and Coda. So, the researchers aim to find the markers of Labov's narrative in the select text.

**Abstract:** The abstract serves as a narrative introduction, typically depicting the most salient event for reporting purposes. In the short story *Waliullah is Lost*, it is evident from the title that this story is about the displacement or loss of the character Waliullah. It is apparent from these extracts of the story. "Waliullah was gone... Oh, Waliullah! Breath. Give me your blessing!" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 15). So, the abstract of the story is a catchphrase. Waliullah is lost, which is the title of the story.

**Orientation:** Orientation is the second element of Labov's model of narrative. Orientation includes the setting and the character of the story. In this step of the narrative model, the narrator or writer narrates details about the characters of the narrative, the setting, and other indices of the story. At the start of the narrative, Ahmad clarified the setting of the narrative to the readers. The following excerpt demonstrates that the season in which the narrative is being written or told was cold, as the text shows. "It was a dull morning, without a hint of the sun" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 3). As the narrative moves further, the author clarifies the readers about the narrative's setting in a more vivid way by mentioning the time and place where the narrative was being recorded. In the following text excerpt, it becomes clear that the narrative is set in Punjab during the Indo-Pak Partition of 1947. The text goes, "Our fathers used to gather every evening in Tufail's tailor business after Punjab was divided in 1947. I recall a large, low wooden table with a sewing machine and an iron on one side. The coals used to heat the iron were sometimes used to prepare the hookah, and sometimes, they were used to heat the iron. In this way, they exchanged smoke" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 9). Towards the end of the narrative, the setting changes, as seen in the following excerpt. The text goes, "In the Daultana years, just after Partition, people would gather there in the evening after work for news of Amritsar and Gurdaspur on the Indian side; this continued through the Ayub regime, Bhashani's leadership in East Pakistan, and then Bhutto's time at the helm" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 10). The narrative covers some significant historic-political incidents from 1947 to 1970.



In the orientation of the narrative, the second important element is the characters. Characters are mouthpieces of the writer. Usually, the writer speaks through the character. So, in any narrative, characters are of paramount importance. Ahmed's narratives are loaded with lovely and interesting characters. He usually depicts the picture of the entire life of the main character. As in the case of the story under discussion, Waliullah is the narrative's main character. Ahmad skillfully drew the picture of all the personals in Waliullah's life. In the following excerpts of the text, the writer portrays the narrative's characters. The text goes, "As we passed the stores, we engaged in back-and-forth conversation with the sweet seller, the elderly woman selling ink pots, and the man selling sonf, or anise seed. Pheeqa, Kala the Black, Waliullah, and I were there. We had a crew. (Ahmad, 2022, p. 3).

After the introduction of some primary characters, the character of Mr. Altaf is introduced. The text goes, "It was time for lesson with Mr. Altaf, the Urdu instructor. Mr. Altaf spoke Urdu as his mother tongue, unlike the rest of us" (2022, p. 4). Toward the middle of the narrative, the narrator enlists several of his and Waliullah's childhood friends about their localities and current possessions. The text goes;

Fareeda returned home one year ago. She appeared one day with her three kids. I replied that I had no idea where you were when she inquired about you. Lali relocated to Defence, a new neighborhood, after selling his home. There was a large home there, so we heard. It appears that Lali's father was involved in a variety of endeavours. Kala still runs a printing press and probably will for the rest of his life. Pheeqa's wife is a teacher, and he recently started a hardware store. He is never left alone by her. However, he had never been able to speak much before. Sukky gave in to the drug. Pakaure, he used to adore munching on such salty snacks, was imprisoned for two months after stabbing the goldsmith's kid. The fish shop owned by Naifey, the family's oldest member, is doing quite well. Dullah has yet to find a place to call home. Although he has given up his life of crime, he is still without a reliable work. He was speculating about possibly starting a poultry business. Senior bank officer Aftikar Allahi rose through the ranks (2022, p. 13).

**Complicating Action:** In complicating action, a conflict or an issue in the narrative usually arises. At this stage in the narrative, tension or amazement is developed among the readers. Complicating action plays a vital role in the development of the narrative. Complicating action is to narrative as the backbone of the human body. In this section, the conflict between characters usually arises, which is resolved at the resolution stage. The complicating issue of the story under discussion, *Waliullah is lost*, can be traced with the help of the following excerpt from the text. The text goes;

Waliullah extended his hands, and Mr. Altaf raised his stick. The beating started, and it went on. We sat there motionless. Boys from other classes peered in secret from the door. Just over the threshold, Waliullah was defeated. God alone knows what transpired with Mr. Altaf. He hit in a wrath and anger that eventually caused Waliullah's hands to hang limply. His eyes started to cry. However, brave Waliullah! He did not sob or scream. After the hundred and second strike, the stick broke. The school was completely silent. By break, everyone was aware. "Waliullah has suffered a defeat!" His name was stretched out and loudly uttered by everyone. He left school in silence. (2022, p. 7)

This excerpt shows that the life-changing event occurred in the life of Waliullah when Mr. Altaf beat him brutally, and it had a lasting impact on the life of Waliullah as he quit his education. Another incident that can be counted regarding conflicting issues is when Waliullah lost the case on his house and left his childhood house and property. The text goes;

"His father had lived in the upper floor of the house as a refugee from the now- Indian side of Punjab after Partition. Its lower part was taken up by someone else. Since then, the legal dispute over the true owner has been ongoing. Waliullah fretted a lot about it. There were additional issues with the shop as well: under the pressure of the new cash economy, items and locations that had previously been protected by long-standing personal ties were being destroyed. (2022, p. 12)

These two conflicts happened in the life of Waliullah, the story's main character. The first issue that he faced was the brutal beating from his Urdu teacher, Mr. Altaf, due to which he left the school. The second conflict was more demanding and challenging for Waliullah, as he had lost the case of his house and had to move with his family to the town unwillingly.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is the paramount element within Labov's narrative analysis model. In this context, Labov and Waletzky characterise it as the narrative segment that elucidates the narrator's stance by accentuating the comparative significance of certain narrative units over others. In this section, the narrator clearly defines the need to tell the story and how it is more essential and uncommon. Let's examine the evaluation of the story *Waliullah is lost*. The text goes, "His eyes filled with tears. But brave Waliullah! He neither wept nor cried out" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 7). In this excerpt, the narrator brings his perspective and evaluates Waliullah's condition after Mr. Altaf has punished him. After the incident of the beating of Waliullah, the narrator considers the incident and its impacts on the binary of victim and victimizer. The victim left the school while, the text suggests that the wife of the victimizer (Mr. Altaf) died soon after this incident. The text goes, "Then the expected happened. We reached the school the next morning and found that it was closed. Mr. Altaf's wife had died. Now everyone repeated Waliullah's name with awe" (Ahmad, 2022, p. 9). At the end of the story, the narrator evaluates the Waliullah fathers' indecision not to buy the land when it was cheap enough to buy but could not due to his not buying the land his son is displaced from the house where they have lived for fifty years.

I have lived here for fifty years, and it came to nothing." Bashir began to lash out, "I have grown old," he said. How can I help? I could hardly have saved this property by myself. They pursued it as well. God alone knows where they obtain their fake documents. The terrain is just like gold, Bairy. He continued to speak, addressing me by my given name as a child (Ahmad, 2022, p. 12).

**Resolution:** According to Labov's model, resolution is the second last element of the narrative. In the resolution, the problem that arises in the conflicting action goes towards its settlement. The resolution of the story under discussion is depicted in the following excerpt. The text goes, "He lost the court case over his house, and those people threw his things out into the street" (2022, p. 14). At the end of the story, it is evident that Waliullah had lost the case, and he had left his 50-year-old house unwillingly and moved to a new place.

**Coda:** In narrative discourse, codas represent independent clauses that emerge at the conclusion of a story, serving the purpose of signaling the narrative's closure. They function as a device for reintegrating the storyteller's perspective into the temporal continuum of the narrative. The coda of the narrative under consideration, *Waliullah is the lost* that can be traced by examining the discussion between the Narrator and Bashir Hamam about Waliullah. Bashir Hamam tells the Narrator that Waliullah is no longer living in this place. The text of the narratives goes, "It doesn't mean anything, but sometimes when I am going to work on a cold winter morning, I imagine Waliullah before me. I place my grey head in his hands and say, "Oh, Waliullah! Breathe. Give me your blessing!" (2022, p. 15). The above-quoted extract reveals the coda of the story because it connects the story's end to the start of

the story. It also shows how rapidly time goes. It links the time of the present to the time that now becomes the past, and the narrator of the narrative yearns for the time of his childhood, which he had spent with Waliullah. So, this is the coda of the story, which brings the memories of the past and present to the same page, along with the story's conclusion.

## CONCLUSION

The structural analysis of Ahmad's *Waliullah is lost* through the application of Labov's sociolinguistic model of narrative analysis, enhances our understanding of the text by highlighting the author's linguistic and narrative techniques. The story under discussion has an abstract is followed by a detailed orientation, providing us with detailed information about the setting of the story, highlighting its shifting of time and places alternatively. Along with the setting in orientation, major and minor characters are revealed. After detailed orientation, the complicated action starts when Mr. Altaf beats Waliullah in the first half of the story, while in the second half of the story, Waliullah is fighting a case on land in the court. After conflicting actions, the evaluation of the story came. In evaluation, the narrator evaluates events like Waliullah's beating and Waliullah losing his case in court. Evaluation is followed by the resolution and coda in which we find that Waliullah lost his case in court and moved to a new town. The Labovian study make it easier for the readers to understand the things in a chunk. Labovian anylsis of the narrative is a structured, time saving and comprehensive method to study the any narrative. The narrative under discussion *Waliullah is lost* has all the elements of Labov,s model in it.

## REFERENCES:

- Afsar, A. (2006). A Discourse and Linguistic Approach to Biblical and Qur'ānic Narrative. *Islamic studies*, 45(4), 493-517.
- Ahmad, Z. (2022). *Grieving For Pigeons*. (A. Murphy, Trans.) AU Press, Athabasca University. doi:10.15215
- Bruner, J. (1991). The Narrative Construction of Reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18, 21. Retrieved from <https://about.jstor.org/terms>
- Burner, J. (1993). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.  
<https://literaryterms.net/narrative/>. (2015, june 1). Retrieved november 19, 2022, from Literary Terms.
- Junqueira, L. D. (2010). Narrative Analysis of Oral Personal Experience Across Two Languages and Cultures: Brazilian Portuguese and American English.
- Khalil, U. (2017). Applying Labov's Narrative Structure to My Mom had only one Eye : Effective Narrative. *The Discourse*, 1(2), 10.
- Labov, W. (1972). The Transformation of Reality in Narrative Syntax. *Language in the Innercity*, 345-396.
- Labov, W. (2013). The Language of Life and Death: The Transformation of Experience in Oral Narrative. *Language in Society*, 44(5), 239. doi:10.1017/500474045150000640
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative Analysis: Essay on the Verbal and Visual Arts. (J. Helm(ed), Ed.) 12-44.
- Lin, G. (2009). Higher Education Research Methodology-Literature Method. *International Education Studies*, 2(4), 179-181. Retrieved from [www.ccsenet.org/journal.html](http://www.ccsenet.org/journal.html)

- Muhammad, S. (2019). The Quronic Version of the Story of Yusuf (joseph): Labovian Analysis. *Hamdard Islamicus*, XLII(1,2), 107-122.
- Sheikh, A. R., Awan, N. A., & Sheikh, F. R. (2021, Dec). The Application of Labov's Sociolinguistic Model of Narrative Analysis to a Short Story the Lottery by Shirley Jackson. *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language (PJSEL)*, 8(1).
- Wang, Y. (2020, Sep). Narrative Structure Analysis: A Story from Hannah Gadsby: Nanette. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 11(5), 682-687. doi:DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1105.03>