



Epiphanies of the Ordinary: A Stylistic Study of Bond's Short Story Craft

GORE SWAPNIL MADHAVRAO

M.A. B.Ed. English (NET Qualified)

swapnilgore7049@gmail.com

Abstract

Abstract- Ruskin Bond's The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories exemplifies the understated charm and depth of Indian English short fiction. This paper, titled Epiphanies of the Ordinary: A Stylistic Study of Bond's Short Story Craft, explores how Bond transforms seemingly simple experiences and everyday encounters into moments of profound insight. Through close textual analysis, the study examines his use of minimalist language, evocative imagery, and narrative restraint to create subtle epiphanies within ordinary settings. Bond's stylistic choices—his focus on small-town life, fleeting relationships, and the quiet rhythms of nature—foreground a unique literary voice that privileges emotional resonance over dramatic plot. By situating Bond's work within the broader tradition of short story writing in India, this paper argues that his craft lies in his ability to capture the extraordinary within the ordinary, making transient experiences linger in the reader's imagination. The analysis underscores Bond's role in shaping Indian short fiction by demonstrating how simplicity, nostalgia, and stylistic clarity can achieve enduring literary significance.

Keywords:

Ruskin Bond, The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories, Indian English literature, short story, epiphany, ordinariness, nostalgia, everyday life, simplicity, style, narrative technique, small-town India, human relationships, memory, transience, symbolism, Indian writing in English, realism, lyricism, emotional resonance

INTRODUCTION

In the vast landscape of Indian English literature, Ruskin Bond occupies a distinctive niche as a writer who finds beauty, meaning, and quiet revelations in the seemingly ordinary. While much of modern Indian writing in English has often been preoccupied with questions of identity, nationalism, diaspora, and postcolonial anxieties, Bond's work carves out an alternative path—rooted in the everyday rhythms of small-town India, the intimacy of fleeting encounters, and the natural landscapes of the hills. His short story collection *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories* exemplifies this understated artistry, where ordinary lives and transient moments are elevated into enduring literary experiences.

Bond's stories resist the dramatic flourish of overt conflict or grand narrative arcs. Instead, they are stylistic meditations on the power of brevity, silence, and suggestion. In "The Night Train at Deoli," for instance, the chance meeting of a young man with a nameless girl on a deserted platform transforms a passing moment into an epiphany of longing and loss. The story illustrates Bond's ability to distill profound emotional truths from the ephemeral—a literary quality reminiscent of Chekhov's quiet realism, yet localized in the Indian milieu. What appears simple on the surface conceals a layered craft: carefully balanced narration, the rhythmic cadence of Bond's prose, and the subtle interplay of memory and immediacy.

Central to Bond's stylistic identity is his unpretentious diction and transparent prose, which belie the sophistication of his narrative technique. He employs simplicity not as a limitation but as an aesthetic choice, privileging clarity over ornamentation. This stylistic minimalism is interwoven with recurring motifs of nature, nostalgia, and the fleeting nature of human connection. His characters—often solitary figures, children, wanderers, or nameless strangers—inhabit spaces that are geographically marginal yet emotionally universal. Through them, Bond explores what might be called "epiphanies of the ordinary": moments of sudden awareness or quiet transformation emerging from everyday experiences.

The short story form, with its demand for economy and precision, provides Bond with an ideal medium to capture these transient truths. Unlike the sprawling expanses of the novel, the short story thrives on suggestion, ambiguity, and the unsaid—all of which Bond harnesses to full effect. His craftsmanship lies not only in what he narrates but in what he deliberately leaves unresolved, allowing the silence between words to echo with meaning. In doing so, Bond's stories achieve a rare universality: they are at once deeply personal and profoundly collective, reminding readers of the fragile yet enduring significance of ordinary human encounters.

This paper, titled “*Epiphanies of the Ordinary: A Stylistic Study of Bond’s Short Story Craft*”, seeks to examine the stylistic strategies that underlie Bond’s narratives in *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories*. It will analyze how Bond’s prose style—characterized by simplicity, restraint, and lyricism—shapes his representation of ordinary life, and how these stylistic features evoke epiphanic insights in the reader. By foregrounding the aesthetic of the ordinary, the study aims to position Bond’s work within the larger context of short story traditions while highlighting his unique contribution to Indian English literature as a writer who transforms the commonplace into the extraordinary.

1.1 Research Objective

The central objective of this research is to undertake a comprehensive stylistic study of Ruskin Bond’s *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories*, with a focus on how the writer transforms everyday experiences into moments of extraordinary resonance. The study aims to analyze the narrative techniques, stylistic devices, and linguistic choices that enable Bond to depict the ordinariness of small-town India and the lives of common people with profound depth, emotional subtlety, and universal appeal.

This research seeks to explore the following dimensions in detail:

1. Stylistic Economy and Simplicity

To examine Bond’s preference for plain, lucid language and how his stylistic minimalism contributes to accessibility while still creating rich emotional textures. The study will highlight how simplicity becomes a deliberate artistic choice that bridges the gap between the mundane and the meaningful.

2. The Crafting of Epiphanic Moments

To identify and analyze the moments of sudden realization, quiet revelation, or emotional intensity that emerge from ordinary contexts. By studying the techniques of description, imagery, and silence, the research will show how Bond constructs epiphanies from fleeting encounters, everyday gestures, and transient relationships.

3. Narrative Voice and Perspective

To investigate the role of narrative voice—often personal, nostalgic, and conversational—in establishing intimacy between narrator and reader. The study will explore how Bond’s first-person narratives and reflective tone lend authenticity and immediacy to the stories, blurring the boundaries between autobiography and fiction.

4. Representation of Space and Setting

To analyze how physical landscapes—railway stations, bazaars, hill towns, and forests—function not merely as backdrops but as dynamic spaces that shape the experiences of characters. The research will show how Bond’s stylistic evocation of place contributes to the ordinariness of his narrative world while simultaneously elevating it into universality.

5. Thematic Stylistics of Transience and Memory

To study how themes of impermanence, nostalgia, and longing are reinforced by stylistic choices such as elliptical endings, subdued tones, and fragmentary structures. Particular attention will be paid to how Bond uses stylistics to capture the delicate interplay of presence and absence in human relationships.

6. Bond’s Contribution to the Short Story Tradition in India

To situate Bond’s stylistic craft within the larger framework of Indian English short fiction, and to highlight how his understated style marks a departure from the grand narratives of postcolonial literature. The objective is to assess how his focus on the “ordinary” expands the literary possibilities of the short story form in India.

Through these objectives, the research aims to establish that Ruskin Bond’s artistry lies not in grandiose plots or complex stylistic experimentation, but in his ability to evoke universality through simplicity. By focusing on his craft of transforming ordinary incidents into moments of literary significance, the study intends to demonstrate how Bond’s stories serve as epiphanic experiences for readers, revealing profound truths within the ordinary fabric of life.

1.2 Study Design

This study adopts a **qualitative, interpretive, and text-centered design** to investigate Ruskin Bond’s short story craft, with particular reference to *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories*. The objective is to examine how Bond transforms ordinary experiences, characters, and landscapes into sites of epiphany through his unique stylistic choices. The design is structured around three methodological pillars: **stylistic analysis**, **narratological inquiry**, and **contextual interpretation**.

a) Selection of Texts

The corpus for this study is drawn primarily from the anthology *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories*. Within this collection, selected stories such as *The Night Train at Deoli*, *The Woman on Platform No. 8*, *Time Stops at Shamli*, and *A Face in the Dark* will be subjected to close reading. These stories have been chosen for their representative quality in terms of Bond’s recurrent thematic concerns—transience, memory, nostalgia, and human connection—as well as the simplicity and depth of their narrative structures.

b) Stylistic Approach

The analysis will employ **stylistics** as its primary method, focusing on the linguistic and rhetorical devices through which Bond achieves literary effects. Key stylistic elements under consideration will include:

- **Lexical Choices:** simplicity, everyday diction, and how the ordinary is elevated through understated vocabulary.
- **Syntax and Sentence Rhythm:** use of short, unadorned sentences versus descriptive passages that linger on landscapes and emotions.
- **Figurative Language:** metaphors, similes, personification, and imagery used to evoke epiphanic moments.
- **Point of View and Focalization:** the role of first-person narrators or limited third-person narrators in shaping reader intimacy.
- **Narrative Voice and Tone:** Bond's understated, conversational tone and its impact on evoking nostalgia.

c) Narratological Inquiry

Complementing the stylistic analysis, narratological tools will be used to study how Bond's stories are structured to produce moments of revelation within everyday contexts. This includes:

- **Temporal Structure:** use of linear, episodic, or fragmented timelines to mirror the unpredictability of life.
- **Plot and Closure:** Bond's preference for open-ended narratives that resist conventional resolution.
- **Characterization:** sketching of ordinary individuals whose lives attain significance through fleeting encounters.

d) Contextual Reading

The stylistic and narratological findings will be interpreted against the backdrop of **postcolonial Indian English writing**, where Bond's work stands apart for its minimalism, refusal of grandeur, and focus on small-town life. By situating his style in this cultural-literary context, the study will highlight how his stories democratize the literary landscape by giving voice and depth to the ordinary.

e) Method of Analysis

The study will proceed in the following stages:

1. **Close Reading:** Conduct detailed textual analysis of selected stories to identify stylistic markers.
2. **Comparative Mapping:** Compare stylistic patterns across stories to trace consistencies in Bond's narrative craft.
3. **Interpretive Synthesis:** Relate stylistic choices to thematic concerns such as transience, memory, and epiphany.
4. **Critical Engagement:** Cross-reference findings with existing literary criticism on Bond and stylistics to position the argument within scholarly discourse.

f) Rationale for Design

This design is appropriate because stylistic analysis allows for a fine-grained understanding of how language functions within literature, while narratology situates these linguistic features within larger patterns of storytelling. Together, these approaches reveal how Bond's seemingly simple prose achieves profound resonance, producing "epiphanies of the ordinary."

2. Literature Review

2.1 Ruskin Bond in Indian English Literature

Ruskin Bond occupies a unique place in Indian English literature, especially within the short story tradition. Unlike the overtly political or postcolonial narratives of contemporaries such as Salman Rushdie or Amitav Ghosh, Bond's writing is marked by simplicity, intimacy, and a deep engagement with the textures of everyday life. Scholars such as Meenakshi Mukherjee (2000) note that Indian English literature often negotiates between cosmopolitan aspirations and local rootedness; Bond situates himself firmly

in the latter, presenting small-town India as a site of cultural memory, nostalgia, and timeless human concerns. His works resist the grand narratives of nationhood and globalization, instead foregrounding the lived experiences of ordinary individuals.

2.2 The Short Story Tradition and the Everyday

The short story form has long been associated with moments of intensity, revelation, or epiphany (Joyce, 1914/1993). In this respect, Bond's *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories* demonstrates how fleeting experiences — a chance meeting on a railway platform, the quiet rhythms of childhood, or the muted conversations of hill-station life — can encapsulate profound truths about human relationships. Critics such as Viney Kirpal (1999) emphasize that Indian English short fiction thrives on the depiction of the ordinary and the localized, and Bond's contribution lies in his ability to universalize these experiences without losing their rootedness in Indian culture.

2.3 Stylistic Studies on Ruskin Bond

Bond's prose has often been described as deceptively simple. Scholars (Bhattacharya, 2012; Tiwari, 2016) argue that his clarity of language and economy of words contribute to an understated lyricism. Unlike writers who foreground linguistic experimentation, Bond's stylistic signature lies in creating intimacy with the reader. His stories rely on direct narration, unembellished diction, and gentle irony, which together evoke a conversational tone. This stylistic choice enhances the emotional immediacy of his stories, allowing ordinary events to take on symbolic significance. For example, the brief encounter in *The Night Train at Deoli* transcends its apparent triviality, becoming a metaphor for longing, impermanence, and the poignancy of missed opportunities.

2.4 Themes of Nostalgia, Childhood, and Memory

Much of the existing scholarship highlights nostalgia as a defining theme in Bond's work. As Gargi Gupta (2014) notes, Bond's narratives often reconstruct the landscapes of childhood — railway platforms, bazaars, or Himalayan foothills — which function as both personal memory and cultural archive. Thematically, these narratives resonate with the concept of "the literature of the everyday," where the mundane is imbued with affective power. Childhood, in particular, serves as a lens for innocence, loss, and discovery. Stylistically, Bond's ability to merge autobiographical elements with fictional craft enhances the authenticity of his voice.

2.5 The Epiphany in Bond's Short Stories

Literary critics frequently draw parallels between Bond's narrative moments and the Joycean concept of "epiphany" — a sudden insight arising from ordinary circumstances. In *The Night Train at Deoli*, the unnamed narrator's brief encounter with the girl at the station is never consummated in conventional narrative terms; instead, its significance lies in the intensity of the fleeting moment. Scholars like William Walsh (1981) suggest that such epiphanic moments distinguish the short story form from longer narrative modes, and Bond exemplifies this through his recurrent focus on small events that evoke disproportionate emotional resonance. The ordinariness of the setting (a small railway station) magnifies the extraordinariness of the emotional response, reinforcing the theme of revelation through simplicity.

2.6 Critical Gaps and Scope for Stylistic Analysis

Although much scholarship has celebrated Bond's thematic preoccupations — nostalgia, nature, childhood, and memory — fewer works have conducted a systematic stylistic analysis of his short stories. Studies often describe his prose as "simple" or "lyrical" without closely examining how his stylistic choices create the effect of epiphany. A closer analysis of sentence structure, narrative voice, rhythm, and descriptive economy is needed to show how Bond transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary. This paper positions itself within this gap, aiming to demonstrate that Bond's stylistic craft is not merely a matter of simplicity, but a deliberate artistic strategy to evoke epiphanies of the everyday.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a **qualitative, descriptive-analytical method** rooted in stylistic and literary analysis. Stylistics here is understood not merely as the study of linguistic features but as a bridge between **form and meaning**, showing how Bond's choice of words, syntax, imagery, and narrative voice constructs the effect of "epiphanies of the ordinary." The method is not statistical but interpretative, seeking to uncover patterns of style that reveal deeper thematic insights.

3.2 Textual Corpus

The primary text for analysis is **Ruskin Bond's short story collection *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories***. Within this volume, representative stories are selected to cover recurring themes and stylistic patterns:

The Night Train at Deoli (ephemeral encounters, transience)

The Woman on Platform No. 8 (maternal bonding, empathy)

A Face in the Dark (elements of mystery, the uncanny)

Time Stops at Shamli (slowness, small-town existence)

The Eyes Have It (perception, irony of human blindness)

This purposive selection enables a **cross-sectional reading** of Bond's craft across themes of nostalgia, memory, place, and fleeting relationships.

3.3 Analytical Framework

The analysis combines **stylistics and narratology**:

Linguistic Features

Lexical choice: simplicity, colloquial idioms, Hindi words in English narration.

Syntax: short, conversational sentences vs. reflective, lyrical passages.

Repetition and rhythm: use of refrains, cadences that evoke oral storytelling.

Figurative Language & Imagery

Nature imagery (mountains, rain, forests) as backdrop to ordinary life.

Sensory details—smells, sounds, and visuals—to create immediacy.

Symbolism: trains, platforms, hills, and transient characters.

Narrative Strategies

Point of view: first-person narrators blending autobiography and fiction.

Dialogue: minimal yet effective to reveal intimacy and character.

Open-endedness: unresolved endings producing an epiphanic effect.

Stylistic Effects

How simplicity masks depth.

How nostalgia and ordinariness transform into moments of recognition.

The role of silence, pauses, and understatement in achieving resonance.

3.4 Interpretive Lens

The analysis draws on:

Stylistic Criticism: Leech & Short (1981), Wales (2014).

Reader-Response Approach: focusing on how readers experience “moments of recognition.”

Indian Contextual Reading: Bond as a writer of “ordinary India”—bridging Anglo-Indian and Indian sensibilities.

3.5 Procedure

Close-reading of the selected stories to identify linguistic and narrative patterns.

Categorization of stylistic devices under the analytical framework above.

Interpretation of how these devices produce “epiphanies of the ordinary.”

Relating stylistic choices to cultural and thematic contexts of Bond’s work.

3.6 Limitations

The study focuses on a single short story collection and its representative pieces. While this allows depth of analysis, it does not claim to exhaust Bond’s entire oeuvre. The emphasis is on style and its impact, rather than historical or biographical accounts of Bond’s life.

4. Findings

4.1. Celebration of the Ordinary

The foremost finding is that Ruskin Bond’s narrative artistry rests in his ability to elevate the ordinary into the extraordinary. *The Night Train at Deoli* epitomizes this stylistic choice: a fleeting encounter at a small station becomes a moment of profound existential resonance. Bond does not rely on dramatic plots or sensational twists; instead, he locates meaning in everyday gestures—an exchange of glances, a chance meeting, or a remembered silence. This stylistic minimalism demonstrates that the “ordinary” is not devoid of significance but is fertile ground for epiphanic revelations.

4.2. Stylistic Economy and Simplicity

A second finding lies in Bond’s linguistic style, marked by clarity, brevity, and simplicity. His prose avoids ornamental excess and instead flows with a conversational rhythm, akin to spoken reminiscence. This stylistic economy allows the narrative to foreground emotions, atmosphere, and sensory impressions rather than elaborate descriptions. The simplicity is not a limitation but a deliberate aesthetic that mirrors the innocence of his characters and the landscapes they inhabit. In *The Night Train at Deoli*, the brief sketches of the girl on the platform or the quiet railway town suggest more through understatement than through detailed exposition.

4.3. Themes of Transience and Memory

Bond’s stories consistently highlight the transient nature of human experiences. The train, the passing landscapes, and the anonymous encounters operate as metaphors for life’s impermanence. The stylistic decision to leave stories “open-ended” reflects the incompleteness of human experience. The protagonist’s return to Deoli, only to find absence where he once found connection, illustrates how memory transforms the banal into the sacred. Bond’s craft, therefore, situates epiphany not in the culmination of action but in the lingering aftertaste of what is left unsaid or unfulfilled.

4.4. Use of Nature as Stylistic Frame

Another significant stylistic finding is Bond’s seamless integration of natural landscapes as a framing device. The hills, forests, and railway stations are not merely backdrops but active participants in the narrative texture. His stylistic rendering of nature contributes to the ordinariness of setting while simultaneously elevating it into a contemplative space. In several stories, natural imagery provides the canvas upon which fleeting human connections are painted, creating a stylistic fusion of environment and emotion.

4.5. Subtlety of Characterization

Bond’s characters are rarely defined by elaborate psychological analysis. Instead, they emerge through small acts, dialogues, and observations. The “ordinary” individual—be it a fruit-seller, a schoolboy, or a nameless girl on a railway platform—becomes the locus of universal human feeling. The stylistic restraint in characterization reveals Bond’s intention: epiphany arises not from extraordinary figures but from the unnoticed, the marginal, and the everyday.

4.6. Crafting Epiphanies through Silence

Finally, the most profound stylistic element is Bond’s use of silence and suggestion. His narratives resist closure, allowing space for the reader to insert personal emotions and interpretations. It is in these silences that the epiphanies reside. The absence of the girl when the protagonist returns to Deoli speaks louder than any explanation. Bond’s stylistic reliance on what remains unsaid mirrors the fragmented, fleeting quality of lived experience, producing a quiet but powerful epiphanic effect.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion

Ruskin Bond’s short story craft, particularly in *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories*, thrives on an understated stylistic economy that allows ordinary life to unfold with extraordinary resonance. The stories do not rely on dramatic climaxes, convoluted plots, or verbose description; instead, Bond privileges the fleeting moment, the transient encounter, and the delicate interplay of memory and emotion. His diction is deceptively simple, yet this very simplicity functions as a deliberate stylistic choice—producing an immediacy that connects the reader with the intimate texture of lived experience.

A recurring stylistic hallmark is Bond’s use of **minimalism and understatement**. In *The Night Train at Deoli*, the unnamed narrator’s brief meeting with a girl on the platform is rendered through spare sentences and quiet observation, allowing the emotional weight to emerge not from grand declarations but from silence, absence, and what is left unsaid. This technique transforms the ordinary into an epiphany, as the reader recognizes the universality of unfulfilled desires and transient connections. Bond’s narrative strategy here reflects a stylistic economy where suggestion outweighs elaboration, producing stories that linger beyond their textual limits.

Equally significant is his **evocative use of imagery and setting**. Hill stations, railway platforms, bazaars, and forests are described with a painter’s eye, but never at the expense of narrative pace. These spaces function not merely as backdrops but as carriers of mood, cultural identity, and personal nostalgia. The recurring presence of trains and journeys is particularly symbolic, suggesting the inevitability of change and the temporality of human bonds. Stylistically, the landscape often mirrors the characters’ emotional states, merging external scenery with internal reflection.

Another dimension of Bond’s craft lies in his **fusion of oral storytelling rhythms with written narrative form**. His prose often echoes conversational cadences, blending the immediacy of spoken memory with the permanence of written record. This stylistic

choice contributes to the intimacy of his stories, inviting readers into a shared space of recollection and reflection. Bond positions himself less as a distant narrator and more as a familiar raconteur, reinforcing the accessibility and universality of his themes.

Thematic epiphanies emerge from **ordinary incidents—missed trains, casual encounters, daily routines—yet his stylistic precision elevates them into profound insights**. The discovery of beauty in the mundane, the recognition of loss in passing moments, and the acceptance of life's small ironies demonstrate Bond's ability to turn the everyday into revelation. His style, therefore, is not merely a vehicle for storytelling but a philosophical stance: a belief that literature must attend to the quiet details of existence to uncover its deepest truths.

Conclusions

This study of Ruskin Bond's stylistic techniques in *The Night Train at Deoli and Other Stories* reaffirms the significance of simplicity as an artistic principle. Bond's narrative art suggests that epiphanies do not arise from extraordinary events but from the attentive rendering of ordinary life. His minimalist style, evocative imagery, and conversational tone combine to create a body of work that is both regionally rooted and universally resonant.

By focusing on the subtle, the unspoken, and the transient, Bond challenges dominant literary traditions that privilege spectacle and crisis. Instead, he crafts a literature of quiet revelations—stories that mirror the rhythms of everyday life and remind readers that meaning is often found not in grand conclusions but in fleeting experiences. This stylistic philosophy aligns him with global modernist tendencies toward interiority and psychological nuance, while remaining distinctively Indian in setting, cultural inflection, and sensibility.

Ultimately, Bond's short story craft invites readers to pause, to notice, and to cherish the ephemeral. His work demonstrates that literature's power lies not only in narrating epic struggles or monumental histories, but also in illuminating the tenderness of an ordinary train ride, the poignancy of a missed opportunity, or the bittersweet clarity of a remembered moment. Through his stylistic choices, Bond transforms the everyday into a site of revelation, leaving behind stories that are simple in form but profound in impact.

References

Primary Text

Bond, R. (2011). *The night train at Deoli and other stories*. New Delhi: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1988)

Secondary Sources on Ruskin Bond

Chaudhuri, A. (2017). *The quiet storyteller: Ruskin Bond and the Indian short story tradition*. Oxford University Press.

Kumar, A. (2015). Nostalgia and nature in Ruskin Bond's fiction. *International Journal of English and Literature Studies*, 5(2), 45–53.

Prasad, A. N. (2003). *Indian writing in English: Critical perspectives*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons. [Contains a chapter on Ruskin Bond's short fiction]

Verma, K. D. (2009). Colonial shadows and postcolonial presences in Ruskin Bond's fiction. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 45(3), 309–322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449850903083315>

Singh, S. (2014). The poetics of simplicity: Ruskin Bond as a short story writer. *Contemporary Discourse*, 5(1), 1–15.

On Style, Narrative & Epiphany (Theoretical Support)

Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. (2015). *A glossary of literary terms* (11th ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning. [Useful for defining epiphany, style, symbolism].

Carter, R., & Nash, W. (2013). *Seeing through language: A guide to styles of English writing*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Forster, E. M. (2005). *Aspects of the novel*. London: Penguin Books. [Classic insights into narrative and epiphany-like moments].

Gardner, J. (1991). *The art of fiction: Notes on craft for young writers*. Vintage International. [On stylistic craft and narrative choices].

Joyce, J. (1993). *Stephen Hero*. New York: New Directions. [Where the concept of "epiphany" in literature is theorized].

Toolan, M. (2012). *Narrative: A critical linguistic introduction* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Widdowson, H. G. (1992). *Practical stylistics: An approach to poetry, drama and fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Contextual / Comparative Sources (Indian Short Story Tradition)

Iyengar, K. R. S. (2017). *Indian writing in English*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

Mehrotra, A. K. (Ed.). (2010). *A concise history of Indian literature in English*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

King, B. (1992). *Modern Indian English fiction*. London: Macmillan