



Article

An Analysis into Joyce's Narrative Devices and the Realization of Epiphany in "The Dead"

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Abstract: "The Dead" is the last piece in James Joyce's Dubliners. Epiphany is the basis of his renowned stream of consciousness. It describes the sudden revelation which is the climax of people's psychological activities. The realization of the climax of Epiphany in his work not only relies on the characterization and symbolism, but also on the application of various narrative devices. The realization of Epiphany in "The Dead" is linear in protagonist's mental activity. Joyce mainly uses two narrative devices to promote the mental process of realizing Epiphany, one is the alternation of focalization, the other is the transformation of narrative movements. These two narrative devices are both closely connected with the realization of Epiphany. Studying the process of realization of climax of Epiphany in "The Dead" from the perspective of narratology is not only conducive to exploring its narrative strategy in depth, but also beneficial to exploring the literary value and novel art of "The Dead" in form of expression.

Keywords: James Joyce; "The Dead"; epiphany; narratology

1. Introduction

James Joyce's Epiphany conveys to us a kind of aesthetics which is deeply attached to the secular living life. Joyce proposes that even the commonest thing such as a vulgar speech, a memorable gesture, or a symbolic scene can radiate the light of wisdom, which leads us to meditate on all sides of our lives. Though Epiphany occurs in several seconds, which is short-lived, ephemeral, or it is better to call it "evanescent", long-lasting influences can be nurtured in this momentary phase of mind. Joyce claims it is the responsibility of artists to record these delicate and exquisite moments. In *The Dead*, Epiphany shines in a wasteland of paralysis. "The Dead" is the last piece in Joyce's *Dubliners*. It is noticed that Joyce has begun to turn his creative attention to the spiritual world of the characters in *Dubliners*. Although Joyce

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had not yet used stream of consciousness in this novel, he adopted a unique technique “Epiphany” to show the intricate thoughts and feelings of his characters. James Joyce devotes almost all his lifetime and energy to innovating writing techniques and making experiments of English language. No matter from the aspect of his innovating writing technique, or from the aspect of his contribution to modern literature, Epiphany is an important part to understand Joyce’s works. Initially, Epiphany is the basis of his renowned stream of consciousness. Besides, Epiphany describes the sudden revelation which is the climax of people’s psychological activities. It is an important part in Joyce’s literary proposition that modern literature should care about people’s mental world.

However, because of Joyce’s later works’ unprecedented significance, critics and researchers have devoted too much attention and energy to his masterpieces *Ulysses* and *Finnegan’s Wake*. “The Dead” has not received due public attention, so there is much space for exploration in this novel. Previous researches have touched the field of Epiphany theme, feminism, post-colonialism, symbolic significance and other aspects. Despite the academic accomplishments scholars have achieved, few have attempted to systematically analyze the narrative devices in “The Dead”. Besides, the relationship between the narrative devices and Epiphany is rarely discussed before. Thus, lack of studies in this field necessitates the research.

The research is necessary and significant in these aspects. To begin with, the realization of Epiphany in this novel is closely related to its alternation of focalization, narrative movements. Among them, absence of complete plot and the uncertainty of symbolic meaning the Epiphany brings are the characteristics of modern novel. Thus a systematic study of Epiphany can penetrate the role of narrative devices in realizing Epiphany. Besides, Epiphany is the basis of the renowned stream of consciousness, in this way Joycean study can be deepened and broadened. Last but not least, the study of the various narrative devices that constitute narrative discourse in “The Dead” is conducive to further exploring the ways of generating thematic meaning in Joyce’s novels, accumulating experience in the study of narrative strategies in Joyce’s novels, and helping readers to have a deeper understanding of Joyce’s aesthetic thoughts and novel art.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies Abroad of “The Dead”

In general, the study of *Dubliners* has undergone a period of more than 100 years, from the publication of *Dubliners* in 1914 up to now. It can be roughly divided into four periods, namely the beginning period, the development period, the booming period and the multi-cultivation period.

Early studies of *Dubliners* include book reviews, general studies and thematic studies. During the continuous development of Joyce’s studies in the west, his only collection of short stories *Dubliners*, remained dormant for 40 years after its publication[1]. During the 1950s, Joycean study mainly focused on book reviews, general studies as well as thematic studies. James Fairhall, an American Joyce scholar, argued that the study of *Dubliners* was largely ignored

until 1956[5] when American scholars discovered that the collection of short stories had been selling poorly and had never received the attention it deserved[8]. In general, early studies of *Dubliners* were limited to book reviews. Critics generally agree on Joyce's talent, with reviews ranging from cynical to bland[4]. The study of *Dubliners* was for a long time neglected because of Joyce's later works' unprecedented significance, critics and researchers have devoted too much attention and energy to his masterpieces *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake*. However, by the mid-1950s, the collection of short stories began to attract the attention of scholars. The study of "The Dead" also developed. First of all, the James Joyce, written by Richard Ellmann[4], devoted one chapter to introducing the background of *The Dead*, which provided important documentary information and textual criticism for deepening the understanding of *Dubliners*. Besides, scholar Brendan O'Hehir published an academic paper on "The Dead" called "Structural Symbol in Joyce's 'The Dead'". Thus, in the first half of the 20th century, the contents of the research on *Dubliners* and "The Dead" were relatively scattered, and the research methods were simple, and the research results mainly consisted of papers, especially book reviews, which were limited in number.

In the development period, monographs on *Dubliners* began to appear, which can be divided into three categories: First, general studies, such as "Notes for Joyce: *Dubliners* and Portrait of a Young Man as the Artist[2]; The second kind is the collection of papers, such as James Joyce's *Dubliners: A Critical Handbook* ; The third category is thematic research, such as James Joyce's *Dubliners: Substance, Vision, and Art* written by Warren Beck(1969), which is devoted to the overall study of *Dubliners*, systematically analyzing and studying the themes and narrative techniques of *Dubliners*, especially *Epiphany* and other techniques[9]. During this period, the research object mainly focused on the texts of "the dead", "sisters" etc.[10], and the research methods mainly included social and historical criticism, mythological criticism and poetics research. The research content of this period mainly focused on the themes, myths and other aspects of the works. Thus, at the same time that studies of *Dubliners* began to develop, the study of "The Dead" also began to progress.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the study of *Dubliners* was flourishing, and narratology and language study became two research hotspots at that time. Later relevant studies gradually turned to post-structuralist text forms and themes, such as the study of the structure of traditional narrative and the opposition to interpretation. From the end of 20th century to the beginning of this century is a period of diversification of its research, and its research achievements are quite numerous. The study of *Dubliners* under the theoretical framework of feminism, Marxism and post-colonialism has become the mainstream. Therefore, relevant researches at this period presented a multi-cultivation trend. However, not much research has been done on "The Dead" [11].

2.2 Previous Domestic Studies of "The Dead"

In China, from the publication of *Dubliners* to the founding of new China, its related research has been limited to scattered introduction. Even in the first thirty years after 1949, there were too few specialists, with only partial translated researches. Until the 1990s, great progress

was made in the study of Joyce in China. Since the 1990s, a number of monographs have been published, including Li Weiping's *Joyce's Aesthetic Thought and the Art of Novel*, which not only analyzed and commented on Joyce's works, but also made comments on the relationship between Joyce's life and creation, and made a detailed analysis of the insight technique in "The Dead". In addition, representative academic papers related to spiritual Epiphany in "The Dead" in China include Li Weiping's "On Spiritual Epiphanies in Dubliners" published in 1996 and Jiang Hong's "'Spiritual Epiphanies' and 'Important Moments'----A Comparative Study of 'The Dead' and Woolf's Spots on the Wall" published in 2001. The former summarized and commented on the spiritual epiphanies in the short stories of Dubliners, including "The Dead". The latter compared and evaluated Joyce's spiritual Epiphany and Woolf's important moments from the perspective of narratology. In addition, Qu Mingmei innovatively analyzed Joyce's skills of construction of spatial structure and time in "Narrative Strategies of James Joyce's 'The Dead'" in 2015.

In conclusion, no matter the domestic or foreign studies, the research methods on the subject of insight in Joyce's *The Dead* are relatively simple. Since the early 21st century, the research on "The Dead" mainly includes the discussion on the meaning of life and death, the analysis of the protagonist's insight, and the symbolic image. Among them, the research on the theme of insight is repeated, and there is a lack of study on the narrative techniques in "The Dead". And the research on the relationship between Joyce's narrative device and realization of insight is even rarer. Therefore, the research gap in this field provides development space for this research.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Methods of Genette's Narratology

Narratology denotes both the theory and the study of narrative and narrative structure and the ways that these affect our perception. As a matter of fact, this word is an anglicisation of French word *narratologie*, coined by Tzvetan Todorov. Since the 1960s, the contemporary narrative theory has been rapidly developing towards maturity, in which French structuralist critic Gerard Genette plays a pivotal role. On the basis of absorbing the others' research results, he constructed his own narrative theory, whose origin mainly includes Saussure Linguistics, Structuralism, Russian Formalism, and New Criticism.

Accepting and absorbing the above-mentioned scholars' advantages and strengths, Genette published *Narrative Discourse* in 1972, which makes Marcel Proust's *In search of Lost Time* the research object and proposes his own unique narrative outlook. In the book, at first he indicates that narrative contains three distinct notions, namely, narrative, story and narrating, and further distinguishes them. Story means an event or a series of events told in narrative discourse, real or fictitious. Narrating is the act of someone recounting something. To analyzing narrative discourse is, essentially, to study the relationship between narrative and story, between narrative and narrating, and between story and narrating.

Genette systematically introduced his narrative theory into five parts: Order, Frequency, Duration, Mood, and Voice. Through analyzing the artistic techniques of *In search of Lost*

Time, he summarized and established a set of his own narratology. Genette incorporates French structuralist narrative theories, constructs rather comprehensive and systematic narrative theory, and thus lays a solid foundation for contemporary narratology. It is under the influence of his narrative discourse that many subsequent scholars and experts such as Mieke Bal, Gerald Prince, and Rimmon-Kenan further explore and deeply dig the narrative theories. These scholars speak highly of his narrative discourse, and in the meantime put forward some doubts and challenges, in view of which Genette also published *Nouveau discours du récit* (New Narrative Discourse) in 1983 as a response. In this new narrative discourse, he discusses such questions as the classification of person, the application of the present tense, the interrelation between mood and voice, and focalization, and consequently interprets and perfects his narrative theory.

Under the influence of Russian formalism, linguistics, new criticism, narratology and other theories, the formalistic aesthetically oriented text criticism has been formed since the mid-late 1980s. When analyzing a work, the idea of starting from the story structure itself can be said to be the most basic text value meaning of narratology. The research object of narratology is narrative fictional works, so any narrative fictional works can be interpreted and criticized with this theoretical tool. It is because of this theory that some literary genres with modern characteristics can be properly interpreted, and previous and even ancient literary works can also be reinterpreted with this tool. Secondly, the artistic techniques such as “stream of consciousness narration” and “absurdity” and the techniques of “meta-narrative” in modern novels need to be interpreted and interpreted by new theories.

In conclusion, narratology is a synchronic and systematic form study of narrative texts, whose scope is to explore the narrative mode, structural model and reading type of narrative texts. Its significance lies in providing a theoretical framework for scientific understanding of narrative texts.

3.2 The Reasons and Strengths for Adoption of Narratology

The greatest contribution of narratology lies in that it pays more attention to the artistic forms and expressive skills of novels, and pays more attention to the common features of novels themselves. By studying the theme of the novel through narrative theory, it is helpful for readers to have a deeper understanding of the unique beauty of the form in the novel, and to promote the understanding of the content through the analysis of the form of expression in the novel.

“The Dead” is a very successful work in which Joyce hides the characteristics of his modern novels. With a soothing tone, the author calmly and orderly narrated the story before and after the banquet, and finally gave the readers thoughts and feelings. On the surface, this is a work of symbolism and metaphor. In fact, Joyce’s untraceless narrative strategy is the core source of aesthetic experience. The realization of the climax of Epiphany in his work not only relies on the characterization and symbolism, but also on the application of various narrative devices. Therefore, studying the process of realization of climax by insight in “The Dead”

from the perspective of narratology is not only conducive to exploring its narrative strategy in depth, but also helpful to exploring the literary value and novel art of “The Dead”.

4. Narrative Devices and the Realization of Epiphany

4.1 Typical Elements Triggering Epiphany

4.1.1 Progressive Encounters with Snow

Epiphany is of great importance to Joyce, whose religious connotations cater to Joyce’s artistic concepts. In *Dubliners*, Joyce uses spiritual epiphanies to show the intricate thoughts and feelings of his characters. At the end of almost every story, the hero suddenly sees his situation and realizes the essence of life. This critical moment of the character’s awakening is what Joyce calls a spiritual Epiphany, a sudden divine meeting of the mind. Epiphany originated from the Greek word for “manifestation”. In Christianity, it usually refers to January 6 (i.e., “the twelfth night”), the day of Jesus’ apparitions. In ancient Greek drama, it often refers to a scene in which God suddenly appears and dominates at a critical moment. The Typical elements triggering Epiphany in “The Dead” include nature and human being. “The Dead” is the ending story of *Dubliners*. It is both the synthesis and the climax of *Dubliners*. It is of high symbolic meaning that the party takes place on Epiphany Day. Usually, critics had put too much energy in interpreting the function of snow in triggering Gabriel’s final Epiphany. However, the occurrence of snow before the dinner should not be neglected. Actually, snow has given Gabriel sense of comfort when he feels uncomfortable at the party. Depressed by the conversations with Miss Ivors, he gets a chance to catch a sight of the outside snow. His “warm trembling fingers tapped the cold pane of the window” (Joyce 199). Instead of shrinking from the coldness, he feels “pleasant” to see the snow view. For Gabriel, staying with snow can be more pleasant than at the supper-table. Joyce foreshadows Gabriel’s intimate feelings to snow because snow can give him somber feelings and arouse his inner desires. The snow shields a shelter for Gabriel, besides, it makes it easy for readers to perceive the genuine feelings in Gabriel’s heart.

“Snow” is closely associated with the realization of the final insight. Joyce uses snow as a symbol of life and death throughout the story. The natural phenomenon of snow usually occurs at the end of the year, usually symbolizing the end of one cycle and the beginning of the next. Crystal clear snow often reminds people of cold and sad, and snow covering the land shows loneliness. However, as soon as the snow melts, it is the beginning of the rebirth of all things, and a sign of life. Therefore, it can be said that the frequent occurrence of “snow” in this short story indicates the process of Gabriel’s acquaintance with death, as well as Joyce’s deep thinking on life.

The image of snow in “The Dead” went through a gradual process of development, and its influence gradually expanded to cover the whole of Ireland. When Gabriel first arrived, the snow began to fall on his clothes, and it began to feel oppressive, which can be reflected by “He stood on the mat, scraping the snow from his giplshes”, “He continued scraping his feet vigorously while the three women went upstairs,...”^{[7]184}. Gabriel is a highly educated

intellectual, while Snow is indigenous. From the moment he entered, he began to clear the snow from his galoshes, a popular item in mainland Britain but not in the west of Ireland. This also explains that galoshes are a symbol of advanced civilization, while the snow in Ireland is a symbol of backwardness, which explains why Gabriel is so obsessed with clearing away the annoying “snow”. On the surface, he hated snow, but in fact he did not identify with Ireland and felt alienated from its native culture.

When the image of snow appeared again, it expanded in Gabriel’s mind, ---- “How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along by the river and then through the park!”^{[7]199}. Compared with all his perception with snow before, it is the first time that Gabriel “hears” the snow. And in the end, “His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead”^{[7]234}.

As Gabriel learns more about snow, so does his sense of self-awakening and national identity. At the last moment, the snow gives Gabriel a sense of what it means to be truly dead and truly living. It was also at the last moment that the snow awakened the souls of the Irish who had been paralyzed and bound for so long. The snow at the last moment represents the spiritual death of the Irish, but also the rebirth. Snow provides a sense of an essentially dialectical unity between life and death, in which the dead and the living are never separated. So snow is closely related to Gabriel’s realization of final Epiphany, and the first few descriptions of Gabriel’s encounter with snow in the story are all preparations for the final Epiphany.

4.1.2 Progressive Encounters with Three Women

“The Dead” focuses on the complex process of college professor Gabriel’s self-knowledge while attending a Christmas party, and his eventual spiritual Epiphany about the failure of his marriage and his sense of national identity. The story is made up of two parts. The first part takes place at the Christmas party of two aunts. The second part takes place at the hotel where Gabriel and his wife Greta stay after the party. As a university professor, Gabriel has a potential sense of superiority and self-confidence, but this Christmas party is hit by three women from far and close, which leads him step by step to spiritual enlightenment journey. Finally he realized that he should accept his fellow Irishman, identify with the Irish nation in his heart, and realize that spiritual death is the real death.

Gabriel’s conflict with Lily was the germ of his Epiphany. They had known each other for years, but Lily was the janitor’s daughter and he was a college professor. In terms of social class, the gap between them is too great. In a conversation with Lily, he learns that Lily no longer goes to school, he said gaily, “I suppose we’ll be going to your wedding one of these fine days with your young man, eh?”^{[7]185}. However, “The girl glanced back at him over her shoulder and said with bitterness: ‘The man that is only all palaver and what they can get out of you’ ”^{[7]185}. Then Gabriel coloured. The word indicates that Gabriel is extremely sensitive, but he also feels embarrassed and demeaning by Lily’s sarcastic remarks. After his encounter with Lily, Gabriel is rattled and his sense of spiritual superiority slowly begins to falter. The

reason for his discomfort was not the irony, but the realization that they were both Irish, but of different social classes, and that they were doing well for themselves, while his countrymen lived in poverty and unhappiness. He was aware of this estrangement between them, but he could do nothing about it. He could no longer feel comfortable showing his superiority to his countrymen.

Gabriel's encounter with Miss Ivors had further shaken his self-esteem and made him step by step on the road to self-reflection. He had spent more time with Miss Ivors than Lily had, and so it hit him harder. "She did not wear a low-cut bodice and the large brooch which was fixed in the front of her collar bore on it an Irish device and motto"(Joyce 195). From this short sentence, we can see that Miss Ivors is an extreme Irish nationalist. She despised Gabriel's behavior of advocating continental civilization while being an Irish intellectual, which can be reflected by "I have found out that you write for The Daily Express. Now, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" and "To say you'd write for a paper like that. I didn't think you were a West Briton"^{[7]195}. Here the conflict between Ivors and Gabriel have already existed. Then Ivors pressed, "And why do you go to France and Belgium...instead of visiting your own land?...And haven't you your language to keep in touch with--Irish?"^{[7]197}. As an Irish nationalist, Ivors could not stand the fact that Gabriel knew nothing about his compatriots, homeland and native land, so she called Gabriel "West Briton". This was the moment when the conflict between them came to a head. His sense of superiority is further shaken, prompting him to constantly reflect on himself, step by step to achieve his Epiphany.

The former two encounters just shackled Gabriel's superiority, while the love story Gabriel's wife Gretta leads to Gabriel's final breakdown. After the dinner, when Gabriel and Gretta return to the hotel, he is filled with unquenchable passion for Gretta, who is depressed by a ballad The Lass of Aughrim. The ballad reminds her of her first love, Michael Furey, which makes Gabriel jealous. But when Gabriel knew that "He is dead when he was only seventeen"^{[7]229}, he fell into a deep silent collapse. In the silence, he had an Epiphany that he was just a neurotic, sentimental sentimentalist. He realized that the gap between himself and Greta was rooted in his failure to truly identify with Irish culture. Gretta came from the west of Ireland, near the Ellen Islands, but Gabriel had never set foot there, thinking it primitive and ignorant. So he reinvented his wife in a very civilized continental way of life. The story of Gretta's first love led him to discover that his own stereotypes of the West had created a psychological divide between him and his wife. To bridge the gap, he had to get to know Gretta's hometown, the west of Ireland, and set out west.

4.2 Narrative Devices for Epiphany

4.2.1 Presenting Epiphany with Alternation of Focalization

At the beginning of the story, Joyce uses a zero focalization, which is not complete omniscient in "The Dead". Through this perspective, the narrator can calmly grasp the appearance, family, words and deeds of all kinds of characters, and can also make the characters observe each other with the help of the free movement of the focus. From the

second paragraph, readers can know that Kate and Julia are Mary's aunt, Lily is the daughter of the looter, and their life background. The second paragraph describes the relationship between the characters in the story and the living environment of each character, and all of this is derived from the use of zero focalization. The perspective of the narrative shifts from the moment when Gabriel becomes unsettled by Lily's words. "He was still discomposed by the girl's bitter and sudden retort"^{[7]186}. Then the zero focalization becomes the internal focalization, showing Gabriel's inner activity from his point of view. Soon, the internal focalization changes again to the external focalization. The first change of focalization occurred after Gabriel's encounter with Lily. Through this third-person internal focalization, Gabriel's mental activities were described, laying the foundation for realizing Epiphany.

The narrator then strictly describes Aunt Kate's conversation with Conroy and his wife from the outside. Mr. Brown and Mr. Freddie followed, and the ball began, and Miss Mary began to play the piano. The narrator only provides the action, appearance and objective environment of the characters, but does not tell the motives, thoughts and feelings of the characters. Through reading, we can see that the bustle of the party is only the appearance of Dublin life, and beneath the bustle is people's mental paralysis. The narrator gives a very detailed description of the appearance of the characters, as well as the reactions of the others when Mary plays the piano, without making any comments. This way of gathering is like a camera, keeping the narrator at a distance from the story, and the characters in the story often seem mysterious and hazy.

As Mary played the piano, the perspective changed again. The external focalization is approaching the internal focalization. Gabriel begins to wander, from questioning the piano music Mary is playing to seeing the wall above the piano, from the color of the painting on the wall to the fact that his mother once made him a vest, and then to remembering his mother's negative attitude toward his wife. Gretta is a representative of the western culture of Ireland. The description of Gabriel's memories from the perspective of third-person inner focus here also suggests that he began to reflect on his attitude towards Gretta's identity, which is the foundation of his final epiphany.

In the later narrative, the visual field varies between wide and narrow. Until Gabriel and his wife are in the carriage home, Joyce uses almost all the zero focalization, the camera has a brief pause on each character, but always keeps a distance from the character. Gabriel's mental activity is also recorded as the camera focuses on him. The progress of the whole shot is slow and rhythmic, and there is no obvious watershed in the middle of the camera switch, the transition is very natural.

It can be concluded that several changes of perspective from outer focus to inner focus occurred respectively after Gabriel's three encounters with Lily, Ivors and Gretta, which almost coincided with the process of Gabriel's Epiphany. So the back and forth of point of view is an important factor in the protagonist's realization of Epiphany.

4.2.2 Presenting Epiphany with the Change of Narrative Movements

In “The Dead”, there appear different forms of narrative movement, constituting a variety of narrative rhythm, including ellipsis, pause and scene. The first is Joyce’s use of pause, which means that the narrative time is much longer than the story time, often used to describe the scenery or people’s mentality. When the focalization gradually shifts from the omniscient point of view to Gabriel, Gabriel’s thoughts in a certain moment are presented, including his unease after the conversation with Lily, his worry about the speech, his memory of his mother, his inner defense of his comments for *The Daily Express*, his care and anxiety about Miss Ivors’s words. And the flow of passion in the face of his wife, and the psychological activity that comes with knowing that Michael died for her. In addition, it can be found that Gabriel’s Epiphany was gradually achieved through several separate reflections. These mental activities are all demonstrated by the narrative movement of pause, which is used to show the reader Gabriel’s inner monologue. Obviously, the outcome of the story is linear, and the protagonist’s Epiphany is the inevitable product of the story unfolding. This narrative movement makes the plot seem sluggish and heavy, but because of the cross-use of other narrative movements, the whole article has a level of abstraction.

Then there is the use of ellipsis. Ellipsis plays an important role in the text. It is reflected in Gabriel’s conversation with Miss Ivors. The narrator avoids talking about why Gabriel hates the Irish language and his own country, which is actually a paralipsis, and the purpose is to provide the reader with the opportunity to think and create by creating breaks and gaps in the narrative. Cleverly, the ellipsis is deliberately arranged by Joyce. While describing Gabriel’s mental activities, Joyce deliberately avoids directly explaining to the reader the causes of Gabriel’s Epiphany, and these mental activities gradually promote Gabriel’s Epiphany. It has the effect of silence over sound. The reader can’t think about the reason until Gabriel decides to set off to the west. The name of the short story is “The Dead”. The first half of the story is about everyday life, happy parties, which is a scene of excitement and peace. The second half of the novel starts from the description of Gabriel’s wife listening to music, and the novel changes into another situation, from the previous lively description of the outside to the quiet inside, accompanied by the outdoor scenery of heaven and earth, the characters begin to daydream and meditate. After Gabriel’s wife talks about the deceased Furey, the ending of the novel is enveloped in the atmosphere of the deceased. The novel suddenly shifts from lively life scenes to metaphysical scenes related to the universe, life and death. This sudden turn of events is incomprehensible in terms of plot. From a deep level, the contradiction or lack of causality in the plot of the novel is actually caused by the rupture of the narrative logic. Joyce repeatedly creates sub-narratives with broken logical meanings, which lack the suspense and climax of the main narrative, and the various dramatic problems common in classical narratives. The main body of this novel follows the narrative structure of traditional novels. According to certain rules, the characters in specific environments are narrated, and their stories are described in chronological order. However, under the usual rules, the author intentionally breaks the established rules.

On the surface, the plot of this novel does not have the climax and ending of traditional novels, but the author’s intention is buried in the narrative means. Only by mulling over the narrative structure of the novel can readers understand the Joyce's intention. Joyce’s aim was to call

people to awakening, to get the Irish out of a state of mental paralysis, so his novel didn't need unity, didn't need the climax and ending of the traditional novel, he needed a powerful art form to represent his suffering people. So he wanted to show the real life of Ireland, the despair and hope of the Irish people. It is difficult to express the Irish nation through traditional novel writing techniques such as the completeness of the story and the inevitability of logical development. The history of the Irish nation is long and complicated, including the conflicts between colonies and suzerainty, the conflicts between Catholicism and suzerainty, and so on. The story with a single, closed ending is difficult to show the real Irish nation. Therefore, that's why the plot of "The Dead" lacks integrity. Firstly, the ellipsis of the story plot is a projection of disruption of Irish national consciousness and culture; secondly, the moderate ellipsis of the story plot can give readers the sense of suddenly tumbling after reviewing and integrating the somewhat abrupt plot. Only through repeated consideration of these plots can they resonate with Gabriel and understand his final Epiphany.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, the realization of Epiphany in "The Dead" is linear in Gabriel's mental activity. Joyce mainly uses two narrative devices to promote the process of insight of characters, one is the alternation of focalization, the other is the transformation of narrative movements. Gabriel's three encounters with Lily, Ivors and Gretta facilitate Gabriel's Epiphany at the end. And the narrative of these three particular encounters is very clever and significant. First of all, the use of third-person internal focalization provides a "camera" for Gabriel's mental activity performance. Every time the camera focuses on Gabriel, it is the process of Gabriel's self-reflection. Secondly, the switching back and forth of the two narrative movements of Pause and Ellipsis delayed the rhythm of Gabriel's realization of Epiphany. The pause was used to show the flow of consciousness of Gabriel's Epiphany to provide space for the reading close to Gabriel's heart, while the Ellipsis was used to reflect the real separate state of the sense of Irish national identity and the "paralysis" state. Besides, the ellipsis of certain plots replaced the long interpretation. It accumulates strength gradually for Gabriel's final Epiphany, which serves as an enlightening reminder for Irishman at the end of the story.

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