

Reproduction in the film *the remains of the day* of Stevens as unreliable narrator depicted in the novel
:Focusing on his relationship with Miss Kenton

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1. Abstract

- Background
 - *The Remains of the Day* (1989) by Kazuo Ishiguro, was adapted into film in 1993.
 - Though both receiving high acclaim, there are few prior researches on the film.
- Theme

The reproducibility in the film, of the unreliable narrator used in the novel *The Remains of the Day*

- Objective

To clarify how the narrative techniques used in the novel are reproduced in the film

★ The unreliable narration is the key to creating ambiguity regarding the Stevens' romantic feelings for Miss Kenton

- Research method

based on previous research such as literary materials and film materials.

2. What is unreliable narrator?

★ **A narrator who deliberately or unconsciously conceals or distorts facts that he or she does not want to accept.**

The Remains of the Day ... Stevens

- A literary technique and one of the representative features of Kazuo Ishiguro's works
- Characters who are always part of the stories they narrate themselves (Lodge, 1997)
- Sensing the dangerous areas of their own emotions and memories, and manipulating their narration

3. Main characters and synopsis

- **Stevens** The protagonist, a butler working at Darlington Hall
- **Miss Kenton** She worked at Darlington Hall as a housekeeper. But she got married and left the Hall. Now she lives with her husband.

- Synopsis

Stevens who works at Darlington Hall as a butler got a letter from Miss Kenton, and he went on a journey by car to meet her. During the journey, he recalls the various events that happened at Darlington Hall in the past and looks back at his life.

★ This story is told through Stevens' first-person narration.

★ This story shifts back and forth between the present journey and past memories

4. Personality of Stevens and Miss Kenton

STEVENS

He pursues the dignity as a butler

Dignity: As a butler, suppressing true feelings in any situation



He suppresses true feelings and emotions and fears to build relationships with others.

MISS KENTON

Emotionally expressive

She tells her true feelings and make decisions on her own.

She values relationships with others.

★ Their personalities are contrasting.

4. Structure of story

NOVEL

★ Past events are told as **reminiscences**

1. The past events is very important for Stevens
2. Stevens sticks to the past
3. The journey is a time to confront his past for Stevens



FILM

★ The past scenes in the film is his reminiscences

1. Dissolve
2. A letter from Miss Kenton
3. Driving
4. Relatedness of event
5. Scenes in which Stevens does not appear
= Scenes in which Stevens appear are based on his memories

4. Relationship between Stevens and Miss Kenton

- Past

★ Stevens and Miss Kenton had romantic feeling for each other

Stevens : Suppressed his emotions and pretended not to notice her affection.

Miss Kenton : Though indirectly, expressed her feelings for him.

- Now

Stevens : Still has feelings for her

Miss Kenton : no longer has feelings for Stevens and loves her current husband

5. Comparison of novel and film (1)

★ Can it be said that the intention to return to Darlington Hall mentioned in Miss Kenton's letter is merely Stevens' assumption?

- Novel : Stevens gradually loses his confidence that Miss Kenton wants to back the Hall

- Film

1. The voice narrating the content of Miss Kenton's letter is **the voice of her in Stevens' memory.**
2. The text of the letter is not shown on screen, so **the actual content is unclear.**
3. The sentence "These days, I feel the desire to be of some use," in her letter
The scene before his journey : read
The scene just before the reunion : not read
4. There are scenes suggesting that **Miss Kenton loves her husband.**

5. Comparison of novel and film (2)

★ Can it be interpreted that Stevens' suppressed his upset feelings and regret on the day Miss Kenton told her marriage?

(Stevens briefly responded to Miss Kenton's announcement of her marriage and talked about work to her while she was crying in her room.)

- Novel : Stevens confused the day of Miss Kenton's aunt's passing with the day she told him about her marriage to avoid facing his regret.

- Film

1. **Stevens dropping the wine bottle** → to illustrate Stevens' upset feelings
2. **Stevens' face is not shown** when Miss Kenton is crying → His emotions are hidden regarding this day
3. Stevens remember this immediately before he meet Miss Kenton again
→ Stevens regrets this day most deeply

5. Comparison of novel and film (3)

★ Is it shown that Stevens' true feelings for Miss Kenton kept hidden until the very end of the story?

(In Weymouth, Stevens reflects on the day he reunited with Miss Kenton and sheds tears)

- Novel : Stevens is asked by a stranger the reason for his tears and lies in response.

- Film

1. Before and after the reunion scene he **is riding car** → The reunion scene is depicted as **Stevens' reminiscence**
2. Stevens' face while sitting in the car is blurred by rain, and the headlights are shown in close up, **his facial expression cannot be seen.**
3. **Miss Kenton says, "The evening is the best time of the day,"** suggesting that she is an important person in Stevens' life.



6. Conclusion

□ Conclusion

The ambiguity of Stevens' memories and the suppression of his emotions regarding Miss Kenton, expressed through the “unreliable narrator,” in the novel is also reproduced in the film.

□ Significance

By conducting an analysis of the film, which has limited prior research, I demonstrated the view that the effects created by the unreliable narrator in the novel can also be effectively expressed through visual media.