

Original Paper

Smelling Caddy: Olfactory Narrative in *the Sound and the Fury*

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Abstract

The Sound and the Fury, a long stream-of-consciousness novel written by American writer William Faulkner, mainly depicts a girl's gradual degradation. This degradation emblems the decline of the Compson family and the collapse of the old moral order of southern American society in the first half of the twentieth century. This paper aims to analyze the olfactory narrative from the perspective of unnatural narratology. Firstly, it interprets the cultural symbolic meanings of the most representative odors in Caddy's two different stages by employing unnatural narratology theory. Secondly, it explores the role of the olfactory narrative in the creation of Caddy's image throughout this novel. This paper argues that the olfactory narrative endows Caddy with implicit cultural implications, pushes the plot of Caddy's destiny forward, and enhances the narrative effect of this novel.

Keywords

The Sound and the Fury, unnatural narrative, odors, olfactory narrative

1. Introduction

1.1 An Introduction to William Faulkner and the *Sound and the Fury*

As an excellent novelist in both contemporary American literature and stream-of-consciousness literature. William Faulkner is also the soul figure of American Southern Literature. As the son of a distinguished but faded southern family, he was born in Oxford town on September 25, 1897, and was heavily influenced by the failure of the South in the Civil War. It was undoubtedly very painful for Faulkner, who deeply cherished his homeland, but he did not escape from reality. The majority of his publications are to illustrate the harsh reality of the industrial civilization invading the agricultural civilization, along with the pain suffered physically and mentally by the southern people in that rapidly changing era. Among these works, *The Sound and the Fury* is definitely one of his greatest accomplishments.

The Sound and the Fury, published in 1929, marked the maturity of William Faulkner's literary creation skills, winning him the Nobel Prize in 1949. This novel tells the fall of a Compson girl using

the voice of three Compson boys, and by doing so it reveals the degradation process of the mores of southern American society, mainly focusing on patriarchal ideas, traditional marriage values, and chastity views. It also expresses Faulkner's own covert emotional attitude towards the South's failure in Civil War.

1.2 An Introduction to Olfactory Narrative

Narratology, as an independent discipline, initially aimed to analyze the common elements and compositional principles of a specific category of narrative works. It argued that these commonalities transcended context and readership, emphasizing formalistic description and classification. This stage was referred to as classical narratology. However, narratologists later realized that this pursuit was unrealistic because stories cannot exist independently of context and text in practice. In the 1990s, these narratologists initiated the significant movement of the "Narrative Turn". During this phase, the narrative was regarded as a communicative act or process that occurs in specific contexts. This shift represented a close integration between narratology and context, with a focus on interpreting themes and evaluating ideological aspects. Now, as a result, narratology merges with various disciplines such as art, culture, and psychology, leading to interdisciplinary interpretations. This period of narratology is known as post-classical narratology.

Unnatural narratology has recently emerged as a prominent post-classical narratology school, alongside feminist narratology, rhetorical narratology, cognitive narratology, and others. Unnatural narratologists are interested in narratives that employ estrangement effects, surpassing the conventions of natural narrative. They are devoted to studying events and perspectives that defy the known rules and logic of the objective world. Through diverse interpretive strategies, they present these events as potentially occurring within a realist cognitive framework or as ideational concepts universally accepted in terms of logic. Unnatural narratology provides a new interpretive pathway for various narratives and texts, especially experimental texts.

The olfactory narrative is a research perspective of unnatural narratology school. It combines cultural studies with narratology, offering an interdisciplinary approach to literary research. Some foreign scholars found out that olfactory narrative clues in different novels can be used to sort out a vein of literary development on a macro level. Friedman (2016) debated that the expansion of the physical, mental, and cultural study of smell over the past few decades provides an excellent opportunity to track olfactory perception, olfactory imagination, and olfactory narrative in literature. Studying olfactory phenomenon and its cultural symbolism can be regarded as a new research perspective for British fiction history study. Other literary critics argued that olfactory narrative analyses can be combined with a variety of literary criticism theories. Babilon (2017) presented her view that the interaction between olfactory narrative techniques and criticism theories, such as eco-criticism, can help critics better analyze artistic effects and aesthetic values. Some Chinese literary critics attempted to interpret the odors' implications by analyzing the olfactory narrative in novels. Wang Weijun (2015) debated that the olfactory narration interprets the ethical and political metaphors contained in the novel *Perfume*

where scents are used as multiple signifiers. Other attempts are made to discover the connection between stream-of-consciousness novels and the narrative. Zhang Shijun (2012) believed that odor is one of the physiological inducements of the characters' psychological activities in stream-of-consciousness novels. The repeated description of odors, throughout the plot, forms the olfactory narrative of the novel in psychological time. The olfactory narrative contains the special ethical metaphor of smell, through which the writer makes his own moral judgment.

2. Literature Review

The Sound and the Fury, William Faulkner's pride, attracted great attention from foreign critics for its complex structure and enigmatic content years after its publication and became an object of extensive research from various angles. For instance, in terms of the idiot narration. Roggenbuck (2005) debated the nature of Benjy's mental retardation which forms a dream-like spine for the novel. Pryse (2009) held that the trauma that Benjy experiences in the novel, the chronology in the novel, and spatial representation were better presented by the mean of idiot narration. In the aspect of ethical relations, Moore (2000) presented an analysis of the other-fixation complex in Jason Compson. Oh (2001) debated the fact that incest is committed within the family as hereditary. In the aspect of character analysis, Fox (2013) discussed the role of Quentin's ability to control language in his narrative and feelings of inadequacy, the development of Quentin's identity based on an artificial construct, and Quentin's view of death. In terms of feminism, Te (2014) discussed the different spatial experiences of three women under patriarchy and also examined the relationships between gender, space, and self in the novel. The author believed that the plot concerning two couples of mothers and daughters is the focus of this novel. Waldron (1993) studied the disembodiment of the principle of femininity in this novel, joining feminine archetypes and actuality in the characterization of Caddy. He also paid attention to social limitations to the idealization of women and woman's lack of consciousness regarding their gender and body.

And Chinese academic research on *The Sound and the Fury* began in the 1980s. The early research focused on the stream-of-consciousness writing technique, such as Fu Jun (1988) who believed that Benjy's stream-of-consciousness was a miracle in novel writing techniques and one of the most famous innovations in contemporary literature. Jiang Meilin (1987) believed that Faulkner created his unique mixed art form—a blend of “stream of consciousness” and realism, skillfully compensating for the inherent defects of “stream of consciousness” literature which is lacking objective reality with the realistic method, and making the entire work based on a relatively macroscopic perspective, presenting its broad social and historical background, and revealing some essential features of the era. In the 1990s, literary critics began to focus on the polyphonic structure in *The Sound and the Fury*, such as, Liu Bo (1998) who believed that the novel's polyphony made it no longer flat, but multi-level and multi-dimensional. Ye Xian (1990) believed that Faulkner boldly innovated in the novel's form, using the polyphonic structure and counterpoint technique borrowed from music, blending grand themes with

exquisite form, and achieving a highly unified content and form, opening up a new world for modern literary works. In the first decade of 21st century, the studies on *The Sound and the Fury* present a scene of prosperity, and the usage of mythological prototypes in this novel became the new focus for the scholars. For instance, Li Jing (2008) explored the decisive role of the Bible in the process of creating *The Sound and the Fury*. Xu Chao (2008) believed that William Faulkner employed numerous mythological prototypes that had a profound influence on human history in his masterpiece *The Sound and the Fury*. The author's purpose was to use these mythological prototypes as a reference to give the work a unique value and meaning in the parallel structure. In the last decade, Chinese scholars started to analyze *The Sound and the Fury* in terms of feminist criticism. For example, Ji Linlin (2011) pointed out that William Faulkner affirmed women's rebellion, recognized the importance of protecting nature, and noticed the close connection between women and nature. Qian Yaping (2013) believed that Faulkner expressed sympathy and care for nature and women, criticized the patriarchal society that centered on men, and recognized the inherent and obscure connection between the persecution of females by males and the persecution of nature by human beings.

This paper aims to analyze the fate of Caddy, the daughter of the Compsons, from the perspective of olfactory narrative, because recurring odors in this novel construct an unnatural and covert olfactory world. The author tries to figure out the emergence timings and implications of different odors which are sensed by male offspring of this family, as well as the important role that the olfactory play in both the creation of Caddy's image and the narrative effect of this novel.

3. Olfactory Narrative in the Creation of Caddy's Image

Narratology research should be closely integrated with other narrative elements such as characters and time, and avoid an isolated study tendency because these multi-dimensional, massive relational networks that constitute the entire narrative system. In *The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner develops his story, a tale of losing innocence, on the basis of the streams of consciousness of male offsprings of the Compson's. However, they are never the leading characters. The protagonist is definitely Candace, the daughter of the Compsons, who is silent during the whole novel but everyone is talking about her, her appearance, her personality, her love, her struggle, and her pain. Faulkner has a special emotional connection with this silent female protagonist Caddy. "She was too beautiful and too unsimple to be commended to the world's mercy. She was a symbol of the beautiful uncreated doomed womanhood" (Day et al., 1988, p. 1). Odors are also silent, just like Candice, hidden in the memories of the three brothers. In this case, their thoughts are ideal to be analyzed as a narrative technique, outlining the changes in identity in Caddy's two different stages of life. Therefore, it is of high operability and research significance to take the representative unnatural odors of Caddy's two life stages as the research object of the olfactory narrative.

The first stage is Caddy's girlhood during which Caddy is full of vitality, freely expressing her nature, bravely expressing her thoughts, never bound by traditional concepts, like a star shining in this dark

and oppressive family. The second is her adulthood. It is the time that Caddy shows full charm and attracts several dandies. And later on, she is pregnant and the baby's father refuses to take responsibility. In order to maintain the image of Caddy as a Southern lady, the Compson family marries her to an old man, but it does not succeed for her secret is found out. After delivering her love child, she is driven out by Mrs. Compson from her original family, and eventually, she becomes a Nazi general's mistress.

3.1 A Newborn Angel: A Nature Elf and a Maiden Rebel

Caddy's girlhood is mainly presented to readers through Benjy's whimsical narration, leaving an impression that Caddy possesses every quality a newborn angel has, for instance, kindness, bravery, and sincerity. During this period of time, Caddy is like a nature elf, a little lively animal growing in the wild. Even though the environment she grows up in is very dangerous, dark, and full of thorns, it does not change Caddy's true nature. It is she who adds a touch of brightness to this novel which originally is full of pain and suffocation, allowing readers to breathe a sigh of relief. At the same time, she begins to show dissatisfaction with the male-dominated and female-subordinate concept of American southern society, and her desire for gender equality is constantly preparing her to erupt her maiden rebellion. However, it ends up a failure, which is due to two reasons: the deeply rooted patriarchal culture and her tenderness towards Benjy.

3.1.1 Caddy's Girlhood Odor and Its Cultural Implications

In America South society in the last stage of the nineteenth century and the early days of the twentieth century, patriarchal culture is in a dominant position. White women are ruled by their fathers and brothers from a young age. Most of them dare not to express their true feelings or make decisions, becoming completely dependent on their fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, like Mrs. Compson. Others who defy authority, express themselves boldly, oppose the oppression of men, pursue love, and exhibit sexuality, like Caddy, suffer from the frenzy of the social environment.

In this novel, Caddy's identity remains unchanged from birth until her loss of virginity. She develops a feminist consciousness and makes initial attempts to pursue gender equality at a young age. Her first revolt against Quentin, the eldest son of the Compson family, a political, economic, and spiritual triple-declining aristocratic family, took place when she turned seven. He slapped her for she took off the water-soaked dress, causing her to slip and fall into the water. After standing up straight, she at once splashed water over him. When Quentin warned her of punishment, Caddy did not show any obedience or compromise, nor did she show any fear. Instead, she swore to her brother that she would escape from this family and never come back. It is not difficult to deduce that Quentin is the guardian of the old order. His treatment of Caddy is harsh and unsympathetic, but this does not make Caddy retreat even a little bit in her pursuit of self-discovery. Caddy never stops revolting against this suffocative family. In the conflict between Caddy and Mrs. Compson, a woman who fulfills every expectation of that morbid society at that time and strictly adheres to all the doctrines of a "Southern lady", Caddy never refutes these behavior codes to Mrs. Compson's face, but she breaks all these rules with real actions. In addition, Caddy revolts against Jason, a sour pragmatist by restoring the justice of the family. Once he

bullied his intellectually disabled brother and destroyed his belongings. Caddy did not hesitate to retaliate the very moment she found out about Jason's malicious behaviors.

Since every member of the Compson family is entrenched in a set of ethical standards of that patriarchal society and places the importance of maintaining the family's reputation above all else, they refuse to accept the brave, individualistic, and freedom-loving Caddy. Caddy is like a canary in a cage, wanting freedom and occasionally allowed to fly for a moment, but ultimately locked back into a dark, dusty, and dilapidated antique birdcage. De Beauvoir (2010, p. 793) has a famous saying—"A woman is shut up in a kitchen or a boudoir, and one is surprised her horizon is limited; her wings are cut, and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly. Let a future be open to her and she will no longer be obliged to settle in the present" which can best represent Faulkner's thought.

The task of olfactory narrative analysis is to "delineate in detail how strange narratives can be reproduced through the texture of realism, and how strange events can be interpreted by relying on the cognitive framework of realism, during which cultural context must be considered" (Fludernik, 2012, p. 362). Therefore, the unnatural narrative analysis of the olfactory narrative in Caddy's girlhood should be naturalization—reordering events according to the chronological order and figural interpretation with real-world concepts, thereby maintaining the logical integrity of the fictional world.

In Caddy's girlhood, the main olfactory narrator is Benjy, whose intellectual capacity remains at the level of a child's and who is gifted in perceiving olfactory signals. Everyone in the family dislikes him, and Mrs. Compson even prevents Caddy from taking care of him. For him, Caddy is his only source of emotional support and her smell is a precious memory of his childhood experience, especially when she is still with him. His stream of consciousness instantly transports his mind back to childhood whenever he perceives someone or something from his youth, among which the most frequent trigger is the scent of his sister—the odor of trees. Benjy's description of Caddy's tree-like odor can be classified into four stages:

Firstly, when Caddy is close to Benjy and touches him, he can smell the odor of trees which is emanating from her body. At this time, Caddy retains her innocence and is a little girl full of love and vitality. Secondly, as Caddy gradually grows up, like many girls, she yearns for love and wants to quickly grow up into a charming adult woman. So, she sprays perfume on herself and kisses boys she likes, which brings fear of losing her to Benjy who depends on her completely. The author uses the dramatic disappearance of the odor to express Caddy's physical and psychological growth. Then, when Benjy senses Caddy's physical and emotional changes through his extraordinary and unexplainable olfactory sense, he reacts intensely, as seen in the line "I began to cry. It went loud" (p. 52). He urges Caddy to clean the tainted areas with water, which symbolizes the cleansing of sins in Christianity. This primitive and instinctive response from a mentally disabled person reflects the deep influence of religion in the old southern society of America. Caddy always complies with Benjy's requests and "took the kitchen soap and washed her mouth at the sink, hard" (p. 36), showing that she also has moments of hesitation and is not completely free from concerns while chasing freedom. Finally, the

scent of trees can no longer be detected by Caddy, symbolizing the complete loss of her chastity and her becoming someone else's wife. This loss is irreversible, cannot be washed away with water, and marks the beginning of the separation between Benjy and Caddy, as well as the end of Caddy's girlhood.

Through his acute olfactory sense, Benjy perceives every change in Caddy and divides his narration of Caddy's girlhood into four stages. Caddy's smell changes from the odor of trees when she hugs Benjy, to the absence of the scent due to wearing perfume and kissing boys, to the smell of trees again after washing herself with soap and water, and finally to the complete absence of the tree's odor due to losing her virginity and getting married. Based on Benjy's reactions, we can see that the olfactory narrative of this stage can be analyzed by two narrative clues, one bright and the other dark. The bright one is Caddy's continuous growth, while the dark one is Caddy's gradual revelation of her desire. Benjy's unstable psychological state and manic behavior, when he can no longer smell the tree's fragrance, are not so much about trying to prevent Caddy from "falling", but rather about his fear of losing the only family member who loves him. To Benjy, Caddy is like a gentle, all-encompassing tree, calming the chaos in his mind caused by his mismatched physical and mental age. Therefore, when Caddy wants to grow up, Benjy will do everything in his power to stop her and keep her forever in her virginity.

Trees have many symbolic meanings in different cultural contexts. In this novel, given Caddy's character and the love and praise that the Southerners have towards ancient Greece and Rome, the association with the forest goddess Diana of Roman mythology, a guardian and fertility goddess of plant and animal life in nature is quite obvious. Diana is portrayed as a beautiful and youthful girl with an innocent face, often wearing a corseted short skirt and hunting boots, a crescent moon crown, holding a bow and arrow, accompanied by sacred deer and hunting dogs, playing hunting games with other female companions in the forest and the mountains (Denova, 2018). Diana remained a virgin for life and is against marriage between men and women. Hence, Faulkner subtly imbues Benjy's reluctance to lose his sister and his fear of her having sexual relations with other men with the odor of trees.

Moreover, Faulkner had a profound insight into the territorial character of the South, arguing that the South was the only truly local region of the United States because there is still a strong connection between man and his environment. Faulkner's choice of the tree's fragrance may also be closely related to the traditional values inherent in the cultural traditions and ideological consciousness of the Southern United States. Trees are closely linked to nature, calmness, and eternity. The fact that Caddy's chastity is violated by dandies symbolizes that the pure and natural world is violated by capitalist industrial civilization, which destroys the eternal faith and feelings of American Southerners in nature at that time, and also makes Benjy's chaotic world of thought completely collapse. Faulkner links the odor of the tree with Caddy's image in Benjy's mind, implicitly expressing his dissatisfaction with the invasion of the plantation economy of the South by capitalist industrial civilization.

In conclusion, as a recurring olfactory symbol, the appearance and disappearance of the odor of trees symbolize the four changes in Caddy's girlhood stage, better presenting this silent character to readers in the chaotic narrative. At the same time, the cultural implications of trees are very rich. Since trees are the smell of a young girl, the odor of trees can be associated with the freedom and bravery of the forest goddess Diana. In addition, because this story takes place in the South of the United States after the Civil War, the smell of trees can also be associated with the traditional values of the South of America that trees represent peace and calmness. The absence of the tree odor not only represents the loss of virginity but also represents the industrial civilization's invasion of Old South's plantation. These cultural symbols secretly depict Caddy's innate close connection with nature when she was a girl. She dares to break free and she is full of vitality. At the same time, she is calm and peaceful and can tolerate everything.

3.1.2 Olfactory Narrative and Its Effects

The transformation of the odor of the tree is narrated logically, driving the plot development forward and leading to the turning point of Caddy's fate. The odor of the tree mainly plays its role in two aspects of the olfactory narrative.

Firstly, in Benji's section, the odor of the tree changes with his vague sense of time, endowing this chaotic section with a strong narrative rhythm. It starts from "Caddy smelled like leaves" (p. 5), then changes to "I couldn't smell trees any more" (p. 30), and then to "Caddy smelled like trees" (p. 36) again until the smell of the tree on Caddy disappeared forever. Through the narration rhythm of Benji's olfactory sense, the tension and relaxation of the article's structure can be seen. When Benji can still smell the smell of trees, the frequency of tree smell is relatively low. In the later stage, because of Caddy's intermittent relationship with the dandies, her smell of trees comes and goes, which is the climax of Benji's chapter. The smell of trees is repeatedly mentioned until finally the smell of trees disappears completely.

Secondly, the handling of the transformation of the smell of the tree in the text is high-skilled, creating an overwhelming artistic effect of simplicity and conflict. According to statistics, the phrase "the smell of the tree" appears 12 times in this novel's Benji section, and only one of them states that the smell of the tree cannot be smelled at all—the scent completely disappeared when Caddy got married on April 25, 1910. In all other circumstances, the smell of trees is always present. Even if it becomes absent, such a state will only last for a short period of time. The content is simplified for emotional richness, and the heavy emotions are concentrated in one place, showing the art of simplicity. A fierce contrast is formed by reasonably arranging the appearance and disappearance of odors. If the disappearance of the smell of the tree happened frequently in the text, the plot development would lose rationality and become dull, failing to achieve the effect of ups and downs.

In conclusion, Faulkner uses the odor of trees as an olfactory narrative clue, depicting the process of Caddy's growth and the release of her desires in psychological time, greatly enriching her character. The perfect combination of the olfactory narration technique and the stream-of-consciousness

technique creates an effect that the rhythm of the plot is tensed and relaxed to the point. It also implies a fierce conflict between maintaining and losing innocence.

3.2 *A Fallen Angel: A Glamorous Eve and A Wandering Ghost*

Caddy's adulthood is mainly presented to readers through the lunatic narration of Quentin who is already on the verge of a mental breakdown. During this period of time, the beautiful Caddy is like Eve who tasted the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, eventually being expelled from the barren Eden of the Compson family and falling further into depravity by selling her body as a mistress to earn money for her daughter's alimony. Unfortunately, all the money she earns by selling her soul is cheated away by her brother Jason, and her daughter Quentin suffers endless mental and physical torment in the Compson family. In the end, her appearance resembles that of a wandering ghost who is restricted to the mortal world by unfulfilled wishes and is unable to do anything about what is happening around it. It is reasonable to compare her to a fallen angel for her indulgence in desire and the constraints of the social and historical environment.

3.2.1 Caddy's Adulthood Odors and Their Cultural Implications

According to the psychology of the old southern society, white people always had the fear of black contamination of their racial purity, hence putting a strong emphasis on men protecting women and women preserving their chastity. In other words, the constraints on women at that time were a historical inevitability, and Caddy's tragedy, as a social practice, could not transcend the historical background of that time. Caddy's rebellion against that social code is through the indulgence of her physical desires, which is the way that men fear the most, and therefore, men label it as a sin and punish her with their utmost cruelty.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, Caddy's identity changed greatly after her loss of virginity. She is like a flower in full bloom, giving out an erotogenic fragrance but facing a doomed fall and death. The traces of such fragrances are ubiquitous. The strongest reactions to them are from Quentin. He has an incestuous obsession with Caddy, so he is concerned not only about her chastity but also about whether her sexual affairs were forced upon her and how many people she had sexual relations with. Caddy's bloom is like a toxic drug continuously driving him crazy. Caddy's fall starts immediately after she loses her virginity—marrying a stranger, being kicked out of the house, becoming a mistress, being separated from her daughter, and her beloved Benjy being treated inhumanely. In short, Caddy's adulthood is a complete tragedy. She seems to have experienced all the sufferings in the world, so her soul fades away and loses its vitality. Under old customs, women can only choose between remaining single and chaste or getting married. According to the values of that time, Caddy is pursuing love and showing her beauty while having her chastity. However, after losing her virginity, she crosses an invisible threshold and enters another world--hell, becoming an object of male judgment and desire.

The olfactory narrative phenomena in this novel include psychological representations and narrative behaviors that cannot be reconstructed in storytelling situations in the real world (Alber et al., 2012).

However, they can be interpreted as reliable, possibly through some unnatural narrative interpretation strategies—“figural interpretation” and “foregrounding the thematic”.

In Caddy’s adulthood, the main olfactory narrator is Quentin. Because Quentin committed suicide on June 2nd, 1910, he can only see the present and the past and his thoughts repeatedly jump between those with smells permeating throughout. The most noticeable smells are smells of rose, apple, and honeysuckle.

In terms of Caddy’s wedding, Quentin narrates it twice—one is Caddy’s real wedding with an old man and the other is the imaginary wedding with him. When Quentin recalls Caddy’s wedding day on April 25, 1910, the most significant smell is that of roses. “She ran right out of the mirror, out of the banked scent. Rose. Rose. Mr. and Mrs. Jason Richmond Compson announce the marriage of. Roses. Not virgins like dogwood, milkweed” (p. 59). Quentin indicates that Caddy smells unlike a virgin anymore by giving the odor of rose to Caddy and her wedding.

Rose is often associated with love and romance. In Greek mythology, roses embody both beauty and love as they are said to be the incarnation of the goddess of beauty and infused with the blood of the god of love. Similarly, Caddy possesses captivating beauty and overflowing passion. Additionally, the inherent characteristics of roses, such as their beauty, fragrance, thorns, and tendency to wither, are used by the author to depict Caddy’s beauty as forlorn and sorrowful when she is forced to marry a stranger to maintain the family’s reputation.

As for the imaginary wedding, Quentin uses the odor of apple to implicitly express his incestuous fantasy. On June 2nd, when Quentin is feverishly hallucinating, he imagines that wedding music playing in the sky above the Garden of Eden. “The curtains leaning in on the twilight upon the odor of the apple tree her head against the twilight her arms behind her head kimono-winged the voice that breathed o’er eden clothes upon the bed by the nose seen above the apple” (p. 81). Caddy is his bride, embodying the dual relationship of Adam and Eve as both siblings and spouses, which is both innocent and sinful.

The apple here represents the forbidden fruit from the myth of the Garden of Eden, which could distinguish good from evil. It hints at Quentin’s budding sexual awareness towards Caddy and it reflects the themes of incest and sexual taboos. In addition, from Caddy’s perspective, the smell of the apple could also refer to the scent she emits after breaking God’s commandment and tasting the forbidden fruit, which represents a sense of corruption and sin.

In terms of Caddy’s loss of virginity, Quentin narrates it in the sequence of three stages—the first is acknowledging it, the second is giving full attention to it and the last is being tormented by it. After hearing his father’s statement that honeysuckle represents a woman’s chastity and once it is mixed with something else, it loses its purity, he starts to believe that there is a strong connection between loss of virginity and the odor of honeysuckle. Every appearance of this smell symbolizes Quentin’s great distress and agitation caused by Caddy’s loss of virginity. For instance, “Liquid putrefaction like drowned things floating like pale rubber flabbily filled getting the odor of honeysuckle all mixed up” (p.

99) and “Coming and coming especially in the dusk when it rained, getting honeysuckle all mixed up in it as though it were not enough without that, not unbearable enough” (pp. 102-103).

In the first stage, Quentin recalls the conversation he had with Caddy on the night she lost her virginity. The novel portrays Quentin’s anguish at the possibility of Caddy’s being defiled by subtly suggesting that the places where she may have been touched are saturated with the scent of honeysuckle. “...her knees her face looking at the sky the smell of honeysuckle upon her face and throat” (p. 113).

In the second stage, the strong scent of honeysuckle has become so intense that it seems to meld with Caddy’s flesh and blood, and with every breath Quentin takes, he can only inhale the honeysuckle scent. To this point, the odor of honeysuckle has almost become tangible and cannot be ignored. “I stood on the bank I could smell the honeysuckle on the water gap the air seemed to drizzle with honeysuckle and with the rasping of crickets a substance you could feel on the flesh” (p. 115).

In the last stage, Quentin is tormented by the strong scent of honeysuckle to the extent that he loses the ability to sleep. In many ways, Quentin has developed a mental illness because of it. “Sometimes I could put myself to sleep saying that over and over until after the honeysuckle got all mixed up in it the whole thing came to symbolize night and unrest I seemed to be lying neither asleep nor awake” (p. 131).

It is not difficult to tell that the odor of honeysuckle has invaded Quentin’s life both mentally and physically. In Quentin’s stream of consciousness, the recurring odor of honeysuckle is always “grey” (p. 120) and exudes a deep sadness between the lines. In addition, the odor of honeysuckle is a metaphor for Quentin’s suppressed desires. He would rather have a sexual relationship with Caddy and attempt to destroy themselves in extreme sin in order to escape the pain of reality. Caddy is aware of all these and when Quentin wants to kill her and then commit suicide, she is not afraid at all and even sees it as a redemption for her own original sin.

In short, Faulkner makes the choices of Caddy’s adulthood odors based on southern plant images. Although the South was defeated, its roots still needed time to rot. Faulkner seizes this historical moment and uses the odor of plants to show readers the image of Caddy who is glamorous on the surface but has already begun to rot from the roots. The odors of various plants bring a twisted and obscure romance to the novel just like Caddy’s sin and love in adulthood are closely intertwined, achieving an unprecedented harmony. At the same time, these odors greatly increase the tragic meaning of this character’s fate.

3.2.2 Olfactory Narrative and Its Effects

Among Caddy’s adulthood odors, the description of the odor of honeysuckle plays a crucial role in developing the plot and the fate of Caddy in the Quentin section. Specifically, this can be seen from the following two perspectives.

First, the odor of honeysuckle retains the subtle effect of the stream-of-consciousness that Faulkner intends to have on readers. The main events in the Quentin section are the series of consequences resulting from Caddy’s loss of virginity. The odor of honeysuckle symbolizes it and is repeatedly

mentioned throughout the novel. Caddy herself has no voice in the story, so her loss of virginity is also voiceless. If it were spoken out loud, the subtlety of the stream of consciousness would be greatly reduced, and the desired effect of the author would not be achieved. Using the odor of honeysuckle to represent Caddy's loss of virginity not only makes the abstract event become tangible and specific but also enhances the aesthetic level of this novel.

Second, the odor of honeysuckle adds tension to the story, creating a sense of urgency for readers. The scent is mentioned 23 times throughout the Quentin section. In the first place, it starts as "the smell of honeysuckle upon her face and throat" (p. 113) and progresses to "a substance you could feel on the flesh" (p. 116). Eventually, the scent becomes so thick that Quentin feels as though she is "lying neither asleep nor awake" (p. 131). The gradual progress of the olfactory intensity creates a sense of madness and disorientation, forcing the reader to seek a breath of fresh air from this oppressive odor of honeysuckle.

In conclusion, Faulkner achieves a balance between the subtlety and lethality of losing virginity by using the olfactory narrative technique. In addition, this technique also moves the plot from exposition to complication, and then to climax, and finally makes it fall into resolution. In doing so it succeeds in intensifying the dire consequences that Caddy's lust and sin bring to Compson Family and the whole Southern moral standards.

4. Discussion

The Sound and the Fury by William Faulkner is an experimental stream-of-consciousness novel, which is considered a pinnacle of modernist stream-of-consciousness works. Despite its seemingly complex structure and numerous voices, the novel revolves around only one central character, Caddy. Faulkner stated, "To me, she was the beautiful one. She still is. I have never been able to describe her completely. I have never been able to encompass her" (Day et al., 1988, p. 6). Through this novel, Faulkner depicts the gradual collapse of a family due to the loss of Caddy's virginity. Her loss of virginity leads to a series of events: Quentin's suicide, her father's alcoholism, Jason losing his job at the bank, Benjy losing his only loved one, and Caddy herself becoming a Nazi general's mistress. Faulkner reveals the tragic circumstances that women faced in that era, particularly due to the ideology of patriarchy and chastity. He vividly and successfully creates the protagonist Caddy who initially embodies an optimistic and rebellious spirit but ultimately becomes powerless to resist the historical and social background and falls into despair.

The result of the unnatural narrative interpretation of the olfactory narrative phenomena in this paper can be summarized as follows. For one thing, all the odors that other Compson children perceive from Caddy belong to plants from the American Southern area, which connotes that Caddy is a symbol of Southern women and embodies traditional Southern values to a certain degree. No matter how fierce her revolt appears to be on the surface, she cannot efface the influence that her time and homeland have on her. For another, the odors of Caddy are in most cases imagined and related to religious faith and

mythology. Considering that this novel is based on Faulkner's homeland where almost everyone believes in God, the usage of odors of religious significance not only gives this novel more local color but also implicitly explains the reasons why Caddy's love and lust are regarded as a great sin.

Faulkner's success in the creation of Caddy's image is largely due to his unique olfactory narrative technique and its effects can be listed as follows. Firstly, silent odors and silent Caddy bring out the best in each other. The silence of Caddy is a representation of women's loss of voice during that time. The silence of odors leaves the readers with the other Compsons' imagination of Caddy without saying it out loud and interrupting the flow of consciousness. Secondly, in this tale told by an idiot, the repeated appearance of the same scent helps the reader to better understand Caddy's character despite the chaotic streams of consciousness of the narrators. Lastly, dramatic and exaggerated olfactory perceptions propel the plot forward, indirectly reflecting the psychological desire of Benjy and Quentin to protect Caddy's virginity and prevent her from growing up. At the same time, it adds a sense of destiny to the tragic fate of Southern Belles represented by Caddy.

Generally speaking, *The Sound and the Fury* depicts Caddy's gradual degradation which emblems the decline of the Compson family and the collapse of old Southern American moral standards. William Faulkner uses olfactory narrative writing techniques to enrich Caddy's image, endowing Caddy with implicit cultural implications. He also uses it to compensate for the deficit of chaotic streams of consciousness while maintaining its artistic effect, pushing the process of Caddy's degradation forward and enhancing the narrative effect of this novel.

Currently, unnatural narratology is in a period of rapid development. This paper conforms to this research trend and boldly analyzes the olfactory narrative phenomena in *The Sound and the Fury* and William Faulkner's olfactory narrative techniques from the perspective of unnatural narratology. Unnatural narratology has "pluralistic" and "mixed" characteristics because it is an integration of multiple perspectives and methods, leading to a lack of a fixed theoretical framework and interpretation approach. This is the place where unnatural narratology has yet to be perfected and the reason for its vitality. The author believes that in the future, with the continuous expansion of the range of unnatural narrative techniques, narrative categories, and narrative perspectives, narrative research under unnatural contexts will achieve more fruitful results.

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