Eveline

Eveline is a short story written by James Joyce and published in “The Dubliners”. Eveline is both the name of the story and the protagonist. The Dubliners is arranged into different sections: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. Eveline is an adolescent, she belongs to the working class. All other characters have a secondary position in the story. Eveline is not characterize from the physical point of view and from the narrator the reader knows only her feelings and memories of the past. Eveline meets Frank, a sailor; she likes him but she doesn’t seem to love him. He seems to be a means of escape from her life which is hard: her mother died and she lives with her violent father who drinks too much. At the end of the story her filial love prevent her from leaving home. She has promise her mother she would look after her father. Eveline’s passive attitude has always kept her at home. This attitude triumphs over her desire to escape. She is unable to make any choice thus reveling the atmosphere of stagnation. Eveline has no consciousness, she is paralyze: she is not aware of the real reason that prevent her to make any different choice.

The story is told from two point of view: from the narrator’s point of view and from Eveline’s point of view. The syntactic structure is “used to”, past perfect, would do, was going to. The present moment in the short story is represented by the simple past. The story may be divided in two different sections: the first part sets in a house; the second part takes place in the station at the North Wall. In the first section there is Eveline’s interior monologue. The reader is given access to the character’s inner feelings and as a result the reader can also follow Eveline’s associative chains of thoughts. The setting is also important; it contributes to the mood of the narrative. There are three settings: an internal setting (Eveline’s poor home), an external setting (frightening and unacceptable for her) and a mental setting (her memories). The narrator’s real interest in Eveline is generally the way in which a character changes his/her perceptions of a situation. Eveline has been condemn to her difficult existence because of her lack of the point of view. The protagonist pathos and paralysis is conveyed by the paralysis of thought, of speech of action. The reader has to be able to distinguish the simple colloquial voice of Eveline from the voice of a skillfull narrator.