Temporal and Locative Aspects in Wilde's Fairy Tales: A Genre Analysis

Rubina Rahman

Department of English & Applied Linguistics, University of Peshawar, Pakistan

_____

Abstract

This paper studies Oscar Wilde's fairy tales to examine the manner in which he has created the special genre of the fairy tales, focusing particularly on Wilde's grammatical and syntactic choices that have helped to build up the unique Faerie Realm notion of time and space in his stories. Four tales, two each from his two different collections of fairy tales, have been analysed. At the end of the paper, any deviations from the Faerie Realm norms of operation of time and space are discussed.

Keywords: Cognitive poetics, Wilde, fairy tales, discourse world, time and space relation

_____

Introduction

Recent approaches in cognitive poetics have investigated the idea of world/s located within a literary text, its relation with the real world and its implication for the meaning as understood by the readers. Stockwell argues that good quality literature '. . . carries within it the means of reconstructing a rich context' (2002:92). Cognitive poetics attempts to understand the process through which the readers construct that world from a literary text.

Stockwell identifies two major types of worlds in this connection that he terms as 'possible worlds' and the other as 'discourse world' (2002:92-93). Within the possible world is located our 'actual world'. This actual world is one of the many possible worlds for a literary text to exist. Discourse worlds have been described by him as 'dynamic readerly interactions with possible worlds: possible world with a narratological and cognitive dimension' (2002:93). Discourse world can be linked with the actual world at various different levels. Stockwell (2002) terms these as 'accessibility dimensions' which are as follows:

a)   accessibility of objects : determines if the objects in the discourse world has similar properties and inventory as the real world;

b)   accessibility of time : determines if the discourse world has similar history and exists in the same time as the actual world;

c)   accessibility of nature: determines whether the natural laws of the discourse world are the same as the actual world; and

d)   accessibility of language: determines if the language used in the discourse world is similar to the language used in the actual world in terms of its laws, words and cognitive patterns. (Stockwell, 2002:95)

Closely connected with the concept of the textual world is the theory of 'mental spaces'. This theory offers 'a unified and consistent means of understanding reference, co–reference, and the comprehension of stories and descriptions whether they are currently real, historical, imagined, hypothesised or happening remotely' (Stockwell, 2002:96). Four types of mental spaces are identified by Stockwell:

a)   time spaces — current space or displacement into past or future, typically indicated by temporal adverbials, tense and aspect.

b)   space spaces — geographical spaces, typically indicated by locative and adverbials, and verbs of movement.

c)   domain spaces — area of activity, such as work, games, scientific experiment and so on.

d)   hypothetical spaces — conditional situations, hypothetical and unrealized possibilities, suggestions for plans and speculation. (Stockwell, 2002:96)

Faerie realm is a land that creates its own discourse world. Things move in fairy tales at their own level of time perception, and places are located within this special world of the tale. It has its peculiar geography and time dimension that are

linked with the actual world at some level while being divorced from it at the same time. Grammatically, adverbs of place and manner, and locative prepositional phrases are the tools through which this effect is created (Jackson, 1990:49-67; Quirk, et al. , 1985: 479-482, 679-681, 687-694). This perception of time and place is crucial in creating a grip over the readers' mind in order for them to be able to have an orientation in the special universe of the fairy tale. This interplay between the two worlds creates the faerie realm with its most distinguishing and important element — 'wonder'.

Propp (1928) calls the fairy tales 'the wonder tales.' Zipes believes that "The fairy tale is . . . type of a particular oral story telling tradition: the wonder folk tale often called the *zaubermarchen* or the *conte merveilleux*" (1999:2). The element of wonder forms one of the key features of a fairy tale and is a distinguishing mark from other forms of narrative. The supernatural and the marvellous are supposed to induce wonder among the listeners. In the early tales, this wonder was more basic, sensual and ritualistic. "In the oral wonder tale, we are to wonder about the workings of the universe where anything can happen anytime, and these happy or fortuitous events are never to be explained" (1999:5). The more contrived and hybrid forms of life do not spoil the sense of wonder in the natural and basic. The characters who succeed in the tale are the ones who are able to wonder at the marvellous and the magical. Moreover, they possess the intuitive faculty to recognize the wondrous, and have retained the capacity to accept it without any question or any doubt. It does not perturb their philosophy of life and the universe in which they exist. Awe, fear, admiration, wonder, and marvel are the sensations that a wonder tale seeks to induce, and only those are able to reach out and get them that have retained their ability to experience these emotions.

The Faerie Realm: Temporal and Locative Aspects

One of the ways in which the element of wonder in the world of fairy tales is created is the manner in which time and space relations are exploited by the writer.

Wilde's makes an abundant use of different grammatical categories for the special fairy tale time and space effect in his literary fairy tales. Time and space interplay is actually the parameter that creates his discourse world of the fairy narrative and makes it plausible for the reader to accept it as a world that exists in time and space.

The Happy Prince

The two main characters in "The Happy Prince" encapsulate time and space dimensions within themselves. The Happy Prince is stationary while the swallow is all movement. The very first sentence of the tale underlines the perception of immobility and location, '*High[1]* above the city, on a *tall* column *stood* the statute of the Happy Prince' (italics mine here and elsewhere). Lexical choice of 'high', 'tall' and 'stood' highlight three dimensions to the reality of the protagonist's existence in the world of the tale: height, location and space.

The second protagonist of the tale, the swallow is all action. The time within the seasonal process is set in relation to his presence in the place. His friends had gone to Egypt 'six weeks *before*'. The preposition of time, 'before', marks the present time of the action of the tale. His being in the place of action of the tale at that particular time period is explained in his affair with the reed whom he had met '. . . *early* in the spring. . .' It is a kind of occurrence that is fully acceptable in the fairy realm that forms part of the wonder element in a fairy tale. Animals and plants have a complete reality in a faerie realm. The affair is spread over the summer time, and in autumn it breaks up when the reed refuses to go along with the swallow to warmer lands. When the tale opens, it is autumn time in the seasonal timeline. The swallow is not originally located in the happy prince's city. He flew over a distance to get there. "*All day long* he flew and at night-time he arrived at the city." The adverbial phrase 'all day long' conveys the span that he had to cover; his arrival at 'night-time' and settling on the statue of the happy prince brings the time to the moment of the action of the tale.

Having placed the swallow in terms of time and space, Wilde then positions the happy prince similarly. The happy prince takes the position 'before his transformation' to a statue — '*When* he was alive . . .' The lexeme, 'when', takes the reader to a distant time, located far away from the moment of action, into another time-bracket altogether. He describes his days and evening in that happy state, a cocoon existence in a palace of joy. His state of mind of total oblivion about life outside the palace; '. . . I never cared to ask what lay *beyond* it. . .' He tells the swallow, 'So I lived, and so I died.' A state of life exists and ends, all over in just five sentences. We are taken to journey over a lifetime; and are brought to the present moment of action by 'and *now* I am dead. . .' The tale of his life begins with 'when' and is brought to 'now'. This 'now' has placed him on a high

---

[1] Italics mine here and elsewhere in quotations from the stories.

pedestal from where he becomes alive to the gruesome true reality of pain, poverty and misery of life beyond the palace that he had never been conscious of in his biological life. He had died to one form of existence and has become alive to another. This is a transition in terms of both time and space.

The tale begins its action of alleviation of some of the misery that the happy prince is witnessing in this existence. He requests the swallow for help who is mentally located in another land; another space where his flock are found. '*Soon* they will go to sleep. . .' The adverb 'soon' helps to bring the distance closer in his mind. The happy prince's request begins with indication of distance; the prepositional phrase '*Far away*. . .' repeated twice for emphasis on the distance takes the swallow over a long journey. The reader is taken along with the swallow in his journey with the assistance of prepositional phrases, '*He passed by* the cathedral. . .' '*He passed by* the palace. . .' '*He passed over* the river. . .' '. . . *He passed over* the Ghetto. . .' 'At last he *came to* the poor house. . .' and '*In* he hopped. . .' All these phrases create an impression of space spanned and of hurdles overcome. The parallel syntactic structure of the first four of them conjures up a live movement through the air.

'*When* the day broke. . .' we find the swallow in happy anticipation of moving to a warmer land. Mentally, the swallow is already located far away and is anxiously waiting for the daytime to merge into the night-time. '*When* the moon arose. . .' is the indication of arrival of the night-time. The arrival of both the night and the daytime are announced by the adverb 'when' bracketing a twelve-hour time length.

The swallow is delayed again at the happy prince's request, though he imagines and narrates the events, as they would be happening in Egypt; '*To-morrow* my friends *will fly up to* the Second Cataract.' '*All night long* he watches the stars, and when the morning star shines. . .' '. . . and then he is silent.' '*At noon* the yellow lions come down. . .' All this picturesque narration is located within the time line of a night merging into daytime. The actions are time bound and have significance within the moment of their occurrence.

The swallow agrees to stay back for one more night when the happy prince describes another picture of misery as he can see from his high pedestal. He locates the subject of this picture in terms of space, '. . . far *away across* the city . . .' Two prepositions 'away' and 'across' build up the position of the place where action has to take place. The magical agent (the object that helps in liquidating

the lack in Proppian terms), the sapphire that is actually his *eye*, is carried by the swallow to the recipient, the journey is visualized with such prepositions as '. . . flew *away*. . .' , '*Through* this he darted and came into the room. . .'

The tale moves on again: 'The *next* day. . .' the swallow is ready to go to Egypt '. . . *when* the moon rose. . .' The happy prince again requests him to stay back for help. Swallow's reply spans two season; 'It is winter . . . and the chill snow will *soon* be here.' He promises to return '. . . *next* spring . . .' but once more gives way to the happy prince's request.

This time the happy prince's commission is close to his own location. The proximity is indicated by the prepositions, '. . . *In* the square *below*. . .' The swallow takes the helping magical agent and '. . . dart[s] *down* with it.'

'*Then* the swallow came back to the prince.' The adverb 'then' is significant here not only in terms of time but also in terms of the swallow's decision to stay with the happy prince forever in spite of the fact that the prince now releases him from any more commissions. The swallow declares, 'I will stay with you *always*.' The rest of the tale moves along with the swallow's movement over the city traced with the help of prepositions of time and place.

Time moves forward in the tale and '*Then* the snow came, and *after* the snow came the frost.' And the swallow knew that his time had also come, '. . . at last he knew that he was going to die.' He is eventually going but not to a warmer land with its promise of life and joy as the happy prince believes but to his death. Wilde superbly catches his moment of death in '*At* that moment a curious crack sounded inside the statue as if something had broken.'

The tale of the two partners is over and the real world creeps in 'early the *next* morning. . .' the morning witnessed the cruel reality of them being rejected as dead and useless by the inmates of the city for which the two had lost their existence. However, the two are chosen by God's angels as '. . . the two most precious things in the city. . .' and are liberated of the world and its serial time and finally transported to transcendental time and space in God's paradise that is independent of both time and space as known and understood by the tale and its readers.

The Selfish Giant

In "The Selfish Giant", the action of the tale primarily takes place within a garden and consequently the time dimension is essentially related to seasonal change. The location is restricted to a small space but the time dimension is wide within nature.

As the tale begins, the reader finds children (the nameless and numerous actors of the tale) coming from school to play '*Every afternoon*. . .' Adverbs of time and frequency establish the routine, carried on by place preposition '. . . *in* the Giant's garden.' The garden is the seat of all action of the tale so it is firmly established in description by locating objects within it using place and time prepositions; '*Here and there* the grass stood. . .', '. . . and *there* were twelve peach trees. . .' ; '. . . *in the spring time*. . .' ; '. . . and *in the autumn*. . .' The fact that the garden is a place where there is joy; is also confirmed at the beginning in the children's declaration, "*How happy we are here*!". It is essential for the reader to get hold of this thought, as it is central to the movement of the tale. All this is firmly established in the first paragraph of the tale.

In the second paragraph the protagonist enters. His entry is announced in the prototypical time discourse of the classical fairy tale, '. . . *One day* the Giant came back.' He had been away for '. . . seven years.' The children had been happy in his garden for that length of time. Adverbial phrase '*When he arrived* . . .' marks the beginning of the time when the actual action of the tale begins. He bars the children from his garden, and the children are dislocated in terms of place: they had '. . . *now nowhere* to play.' The second declaration coming from the children marks this dislocation in terms of both time and space; "How happy we were *there!"* The change is caught by the parallel syntactic structure, between here and there; their place of joy is now distanced from them.

The Giant's interdiction for the children invokes a counter interdiction from nature in his garden, and the seasons take their revenge on him by disturbing their time alignment. Time moves on and '*Then* the spring came. . .' but not to his garden where it was '. . . still winter. . .' The Snow and the Frost realize and announce this seasonal malfunction in terms of time allocation . . ."so we will live *here all the year round*. . ." They invite other winter characters too, and now the same location is seen from their perspective as opposed to that of the children at the beginning of the tale. 'Then they invited. . .' "This is a delightful spot. . ."

'the hail indulges in an orgy,' "Every day for three hours . . ."' as opposed to the children playing 'every afternoon'.

The Giant comments on this unusual seasonal phenomenon in terms of time: '. . . why the Spring is *so late* in coming.' Outside his garden, time follows its own natural path and the spring comes and goes bringing autumn in its wake, but in the Giant's garden, it was '*always* Winter. . .' as if time had come to a stand still for him.

Things change for the Giant when one day the children are able to '. . . creep *in* . . . *through* a little hole in the wall. . .' They bring the seasons back to their natural time line: the spring is all over except at one spot located within this garden where '. . . it was still winter; It was the farthest corner. . .' A child who was too small to reach the trees was standing with tears in his eyes. The change in seasonal cycle to abnormality and back again has also effect a similar metamorphosis in the Giant's attitude as well, and the readers now find him helping the little child and knocking down the walls of the garden. The place of the action is relocated and redefined in the tale as a place of joy again; 'it is your garden *now*. . ." Time moves on after this within the garden without any more unnatural changes; the children playing there 'all day long . . . *every afternoon*. . .' with the exception of the small child who is '. . . *never* seen again. . .' and none of the others knew '. . . where he lived, and had never seen him before. . .'

Outside the garden, the time is moving on: '*Years* went over. . .' How much time passes, the reader is not told but the effects of time on life are indicated in the Giant's physical infirmity, he is growing old and weak, the tale's discourse capturing the passage of time in the physical maturity and decay of the Giant.

Then '*One* winter morning. . .' the Giant finds seasonal upheaval once again in his garden when he finds spring located in one small corner of his garden. We have him moving towards the spot from his room, a translocation from this world to another as he finds the small child that he had been pining for, and is promised Paradise, a promise coded in the time and space concept. "You let me play *once* in your garden, *to-day* you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise."

The Young King

'It was *the night before the day* fixed for his coronation and the young king was sitting alone in his beautiful chamber'. This is sentence with which "The Young King" begins. Right at the beginning, the writer pins the time and place in the minds of the readers. The two nouns 'night' and 'day' are linked together with the preposition 'before' making the reader realize that some time has elapsed before the time scheme mentioned here, implying that some incidents have also taken place. The reader is positioned at a specific time, the 'night before his coronation', and a specific location, 'his beautiful chamber'; this is the point from where the story would move forward and with this particular stance. All the events that follow later happen in this night's time; while the events of the day after are a direct consequence of these nocturnal events.

'[T]he night before the coronation. . .' becomes '*tonight*' a little further on in the story, (after the flash back to his past). We see him within this time denoted by 'tonight', relaxing on his couch thinking about all the beautiful accessories that he would be wearing on his coronation for which he issued orders many months '*before*'. This 'before' indicates that 'tonight' is a point in time line that has been marked out for the action of the tale to take place. We next see him wandering about in his room, admiring the various works of art. The point in time is marked by '*After sometime*. . .' a combination of a preposition and adverb of time. This phrase takes the reader a little further from the point in time where the tale had begun. He is in a highly aesthetic state of mind, responding to beauty around him with joy and pleasure, marked by a time expression: '*Never before* had he felt so keenly, or with such exquisite joy, the magic and mystery of beautiful things.' The preposition 'before' is very subtly employed once again to emphasize the importance of the present time of the action of the tale. From here, we are taken to the middle of the night at the sound of the clock tower and '*A few moments after*. . .' he is fast asleep.

From this point onwards, the action of the tale happens in his dreams. Hence, the time and place aspects also take on a dream mode for which Wilde had already oriented the readers' mind by locating the protagonist in night time and bringing them to a mid-night point. We are also taken into the world of his dream, and the duration of dream is marked by, '. . . *as* he slept he dreamed . . .' 'As' here is indicative of the time span of his sleep. The dream itself is narrated in the past tense, helping to retain the mode of a narrative; his dream is being narrated by the writer to the readers. The dream awakens him to the pain of

reality behind the beauty that he is so obsessed about in his waking life; the squalid and grim reality of the poor, the weak and the miserable workers weaving his breathtakingly beautiful coronation robe in his vision. He wakes up from his dream and finds himself in his own chamber; '. . . and lo! He was in his own chamber. . .' with use of exclamatory 'lo!' the reader and the protagonist both are transported from the dreamland time and space to the waking world time and space. The passing night time is indicated by the location of the moon in the sky, '. . . *through* the window he saw the great honey-coloured moon hanging in the dusky air.' The night is still there, though a little advanced in duration towards the day.

'He fell asleep *again*. . .' The frequency adverb 'again' very adroitly takes the reader to the dream mode the second time. Within this dream, there is time movement; a galley is journeying on a sea. A long voyage is semantically encapsulated in the adverbial phrase '. . . *At last* they reached a little bay. . .' ; the painfully slow movement of dream events is conveyed in adverbial phrases like '. . . *followed slowly*. . .' , '. . . *crept wearily*. . .' and '. . . *beating monotonously*. . .' The young diver looking for pearls surfaces '. . . *after some time*. . .' and the painfully dragging length of time realized in adverbial phrase '. . . *again and again*. . .' or adjectival modification,'. . . *each time*. . .' and '. . . the *last time*. . .'   The protagonist wakes up and the real world time has moved further towards the day, the time expressed with a preposition and captured metaphorically this time in '. . . and *through the window* he saw the long grey fingers of the dawn clutching at the fading stars.' The prepositional phrase 'through the window' orients the reader towards the two time scales on which this tale is moving: the dream time that is inside the room and real world time that is glimpsed outside the window.

'*On and on* he went . . .' in his third dream as he '. . . fell asleep *again* . . .' The prepositional phrase 'on and on' conjures up a long drawn out movement. This time it is even more grim a vision than his earlier two dreams. Within this dream, the characters tell of certain events taking place in another land in the present tense. Grim visions of cruelty, oppression and squalor are painted in distant lands of Afghanistan, Egypt and India. A third level of space is introduced here than that of the dream world and the real world. The translocation is achieved in a mental space through very graphic descriptions. Similarly, time too exists at another plane. Processes that take long time to mature happen at the moment; 'The grass withered *beneath* her feet *as* she walked'; the picture of time scale is built with the help of the place preposition 'beneath'. Two more movements '. . .

a woman came *flying through* the air. . .'; '. . . his galloping was *faster than the winds*. . .' add up to the dream quality of the narration. He wakes up again and '. . . the bright sunlight was streaming *into* the room. . .' The night with which the tale began has ended and the real world flows into the room through the window. The prepositional phrase 'into the room' brings the real world to the narration. With this movement, the dream time is over and the real world time takes over. The 'night before' the coronation has gone and the day arrives bringing with it a different protagonist who has experienced an entirely different time and space existence.

This metamorphosis of the self in the protagonist is a prototypical wonder parameter of a faerie realm. The reader is taken along the dream movement as a reality whose validity and authenticity is never questioned. The three dreams are journeys into the subconscious of the protagonist and carry a reality of their own.

As he wakes, he emerges as a different identity. The protagonist has found his true self and declares '. . . but even as I *came to* the palace so will I *go forth from* it.' This declaration contains bi-directional movement; towards the palace and away from it and are realized by prepositions 'to' and 'from'. These movements contain both time and space dimensions. His sojourn within the space of the palace and his existence in the dream time is linked with his existence before he becomes the young king. All this culminates in the element of wonder.

The Star Child

The Star Child begins with typical fairy tale time preposition; '*Once upon a time*. . .' This kind of beginning serves the dual purpose of providing a point of time for the action of the tale while at the same time liberating it from any specific time frame. It allows the tale to move forward at its own momentum, in its own world with its own time dimension.

As the tale opens, two characters, the woodcutters, are walking '. . . *through* a great pine-forest' in snow and frost, because 'It was *winter*. . .' Having identified the special location and seasonal time, the journey of the woodcutters is spanned by prepositional phrase, 'On and on they went. . .' and by the time indicator '*Once* they sank . . .', '*once* they slipped . . .', 'once they thought . . .' The parallel syntactic structure of these time phrases creates a mental picture of long and hard journey. The syntactic repetition of the phrases helps the reader to perceive the span of their journey. And at the end of the forest, they can see

their village '. . . far down *in the valley beneath* them. . .'; they are now located close but still at a distance from their destination.

Within this setting occurs a supernatural marvel: '. . . There fell from heaven . . .' a glittering star. Such occurrences are natural to fairy tales and very much in keeping with the spirit of the faerie realm's wonder parameter. Its location is indicated by prepositions of place: '. . . *behind* a clump of willow-trees that stood hard by a little sheepfold no more than a stone's throw away.' This description uses rather an archaic syntactic construction, but in its semantic connotation, it is in harmony with the faerie realm's narrative discourse type. The star turns out to be a baby boy (who is given the name of Star-Child after the manner of his entry) and the kind-hearted woodcutter takes him '. . . *down the hill* . . .' to his house. The use of the preposition, 'down', not only locates the house but also carries the semantics of the star-child coming down to earth; a transfer of space from one kind of universe to another.

The Star-child grows up, 'And every year he became more beautiful . . .' Like a typical fairy tale approach to time, the reader is not given the exact number of years, but the process of human growth with the passage of time is effectively conveyed. His pride in his heavenly beauty makes him cruel towards others, the frequency of his misbehaviour captured in the syntactic parallelism of the frequency adverb, 'often': '*Often* did the woodcutter . . .', '*Often* did the old priest . . .' — concerned people trying to mend his ways.

The tale moves forward with another typical fairy tale discourse structure: '*Now there* passed *one day* . . .', again no specific time, just 'one day' that could be any day anywhere, but the action is clearly located where the protagonist is with 'there'. The events that follow are replete with adverb of time 'when'. A new character, a beggar woman enters at this point, '*When* the Star-child saw her . . .', '*When* the woman heard . . .'; '*when* she rose up. . .'; '*when* she saw them . . .' and 'but *when* he saw her . . .' The moment of time that is seized by this repetition of the adverb of time, 'when', is significant because these are the turning points in the protagonist's life and attitude. His rejection of the old beggar woman (who claims to be his mother) is expressed in spatial terms; he tells her '. . .' This moment captures his transformation physically into an ugly creature and begins the process of transformation into a loving person. Now his rejection is echoed in exactly the same syntax as he had used: he's told by his playmates, who had idealized him earlier, 'Get thee hence . . .' '. . . I must go

hence . . .' declares the Star-Child, and is back '. . . into the forest . . .' from where he had come, a journey back in space to find his true identity.

'For the *space of three years* he wandered over the world . . .' The protagonist's quest is spread over prototypical fairy number three before he reaches anywhere. His enslavement by the evil magician sends him to a further quest for three pieces of gold, three journeys '. . . *to the wood* . . .' and back '. . . *to the city*.' This commutation between these two spaces is part of the metamorphic process of his change of heart. The three pieces of gold are located at various places within the forest, '*in* the cleft of the great oak-tree', '*at* the bottom of the pool' and '*in* the cavern that is behind the*ee . . . in* its farthest corner.' The objects of the quest are located in different positions as is signalled by the use of the different place prepositions, the implication being that the search was not unidirectional but more complex and exceedingly gruelling.

The next location in the tale is at a public place where his quest comes to an end and his metamorphosis is recognized. He is granted his looks back and is accepted and forgiven; all this encapsulated in time and space notions: '. . . his comeliness had come *back to him*'; '*till* I have found her'; 'turned his face *from them towards*'; 'he ran *over*'; 'reached *out* his hands' and finally 'brought him *into* the palace.'

The action of the tale takes the protagonist from a forest to a village, back to the forest in identity search and finally to the palace where he actually belonged. His identity search has reached to an end.

Deviations

The Happy Prince as a tale does not deviate significantly from the time and place concept of a Faerie Realm except at the end when the two protagonists are dead. Although in a fairy tale, we find the notion of infinite time, especially at the end of the tales in 'happily ever after', but that 'ever after' is understood in terms of serial time as experienced in the living world of humans. The fairy tale discourse world is essentially pagan in its nature; and God, paradise or angels do not have a place in it. Any extraordinary contrivances are affected through characters that may not be human but are very much located within the world as is known and experienced by man, 'the actual world. Neither do we find God and his minister angels featuring in fairy tales as active participants. Events in a Faerie Realm move inexorably in serial time with inhabitants of the discourse

world acting within it. With the introduction of the religiously divine characters, the level of time and space also become divine and a dimension of infinity enters the tale, time moves beyond the serial to the transcendental parameter;   '. . . in my garden of *paradise* this little bird shall sing for *evermore*, and in my *city of gold* the Happy Prince shall praise me.' God declares. This divine world is one type of actual world that does not feature much in the discourse of the faerie realm.

"The Selfish Giant" like "The Happy Prince" deviates at the end of the tale when divine intervention is found. We have in the person of the little child with wounded hands at the end of the tale a Christ-like figure with his message of love, reward and paradise. This essentially Christian element is a sheer deviation from the universe of Faerie Realm discourse.

In a Faerie Realm, the truth value of events as and when they happen are not questioned. They are taken and accepted as part of everyday reality; the discourse world does not allow the actual world to seep in and to put the discourse world's truth-value to question. This unquestioned naive acceptance is an important ingredient of the wonder dynamics. Wilde's tale "The Young King" makes a diversion from this norm and one of the realities of the main action is not acceptable to the world of the tale. The reality of dream time is questioned by the characters within the tale'; "Surely he is mad; for what is a dream but a dream, and a vision but a vision? They are not real things that one should heed them." Even his identity as king is put to question, "Where is this dreamer of dreams? they cried."

However, there is no question in the mind of the writer and the readers. In fact, the doubts raised by the characters enhance the truth-value of the dreamtime and dream action. Its reality is stronger for the readers because they have themselves journeyed through dreamtime with the protagonist. The fairy tale quality of the tale remains intact for the readers.

"The Young King" also deviates from the prototypical time and space concept of the fairy tale at the end of the tale where Oscar goes beyond the Star-Child's death to the next ruler. A typical fairy tale ends with the success of the protagonists with 'happily ever after' tag. The time stretches into infinity and no questions are asked about events that would happen after. But Oscar here deviates and brings in time after what is the usual end of a fairy tale. The reader thinks the tale has come to an end but just two more sentences and the formula

is broken. "*Yet* ruled he not *long*, so great had been his suffering, and so bitter the fire of his testing, for after the *space of three years* he died. And he who came *after* him ruled evilly." The deviation is in the discourse world of a Faerie Realm but the actual world parameters are intact. However, it disturbs the ethos of the tale's world and the ending of the tale remains unusual.

Conclusion

The four fairy tales examined in this paper reveal the fact that Wilde adheres to poetic laws of a Faerie Realm in general. Time and space in this counter-world obey the rules as of Faerie discourse world. However, his genius does exhibit itself in the divergences that are subtly interwoven in the tales. The pattern of deviation in his two collections is interesting in their difference. The first two tales from his 1988 collection retain the fairy world time and space notion but show a deviation from the pagan world of the Faerie Realm to an unmistakable Christian parameter. While the other two tales from his later collection of 1891 show a departure from the Faerie notion of time and space. The diversity is a clear indication of Wilde's capacity to create novelty while retaining the Faerie essence of the genre that he was writing in.

REFERENCES

Jackson, H. (1990). *Grammar and Meaning: A Semantic Approach to English Grammar*. London: Longman

Propp, V. (1928). *Morphology of the Folktale* (tr. by Laurence Scott). Bloomington: Indiana Press

Quirk, R. , et. al (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English*. London: Longman

Stockwell, P. (2002). *Cognitive Poetics An Introduction*. London: Routledge

Wilde, O. (1963). *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*. London: Hamlyn

Zipes, J. (1999). *When Dreams Came True*. London: Routledge