Application of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar in Selected Short Stories by Oscar Wilde

تطبيق نظرية هاليداي للنحو الوظيفي على قصص مختارة من أدب أوسكار وأيلد

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الملخص:

تختص هذه الرسالة بدراسة وتحليل ثلاث قصص مختارة من أدب أوسكار وايلد في ضوء نظرية هاليداي للنحو الوظيفي. عينة الدراسة هي ثلاثة قصص من مجموعة القصص القصيرة "الأمير السعيد وقصص أخرى" لأوسكار وايلد. هذه القصص هي: "الأمير السعيد"، و "العندليب والوردة"، و" العملاق الأناني". تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى استخدام نظرية النحو الوظيفي (SFG) الخاصة بهاليدي لفحص المعاني الوصفية والشخصية والنصية للنصوص. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى طرح وتقديم فهم ثري لقصص وايلد القصيرة في ضوء نظرية النحو الوظيفي. يسعى البحث أيضا إلى تحديد أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين القصص، والإجابة على سؤال؛ كيف تعكس اللغة المختارة على لسان أبطال وشخصيات القصص الثلاث الموضوعات الرئيسية للقصص وهي الحب والتضحية والموت. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تهدف الدراسة إلى تبين تطبيق نظرية هاليداي على النصوص الأدبية خاصة الحكايات الخيالية. أخيرًا تسعى الدراسة إلى تحليل الطرق التي يفسر بها وايلد موضوعات الحب والتضحية والموت من وجهة نظره في ضوء نظرية هاليداي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أوسكار وايلد، الأدب الفيكتوري، قصص قصيرة، حكايات خيالية، الأمير السعيد، العندليب والوردة، العملاق الأناني، هاليداي، النحو الوظيفي، تحليل وظيفي

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyse three selected short stories by Oscar Wilde's according to Halliday's

Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). The data of this study consists of three short stories from Wilde's collection *The Happy Prince and other Tales.* These stories are: "*The Happy Prince*", "*The Nightingale and the Rose*", and *"The Selfish Giant".* The study applies Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) in order to identify the Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual meanings of the texts. The study seeks to provide an understanding of Wilde's short stories in terms of Halliday's SFG three lines of meaning. It seeks to answer the question of how the linguistic choices made by the protagonists of the three stories reflect the main themes of love, sacrifice and death. This study attempts to provide an in-depth linguistic analysis of Wilde's language in his short stories.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Grammar, Halliday, SFG, Ideational, Textual, Interpersonal, metafunction, lines of meaning, Oscar Wilde, short story, fairy tale, The happy prince, The nightingale and the rose, The selfish Giant.

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Introduction

1.1 Background of the Problem

In Wilde's essay "A Soul of a man under socialism," he argues that capitalism has put most people under pressure to be materialistic, which in return has forced them to consider life from a material perspective. As a result, emotions such as love, sacrifice and death became relatively futile and unworthy of attention to Victorian society. Wilde's tales do not maintain the materialistic perspective of love but rather give examples of it in his short stories. For instance, the Nightingale and the Rose reveals the shallow morals of the student and his sweetheart as the Nightingale's effort to gather them goes in vain. Furthermore, Wilde's main characters embody and manifest his perspective on themes of love, sacrifice and death.

According to Halliday (2014), language can be perceived on three levels of meaning; Experiential, Interpersonal and Textual. Despite the effort to investigate the scope of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar on short stories, a qualitative analysis of Wilde's short stories, in particular the main characters, was not provided in the academic domain. A deeper investigation of the application of SFG on Victorian fairy tales was also needed to provide a better understanding of that era and its literature.

1.2 Significance of The Study

This study contributes to knowledge about the short stories written by Oscar Wilde. First, it aims to add knowledge to better understand themes of love, sacrifice and death in Wilde's stories by using three SFG's analysis models; Transitivity, Mood, and Theme and Rheme. The study also investigates linguistics patterns in Wilde's short stories and identifies their significance on a functional language level. Second, the study aims at deciphering the main characters in the light of SFG.

This proposed study also intends to further the understanding of the applications of Halliday's Transitivity model regarding short stories. Halliday (2014) argued that "transitivity can show how speakers/writers encode in language their mental reflection of the world and how they account for their experience of the world around them". Thus, this study would give insights into Wilde's mental reflection of the world in which he lived and portray his image of love, sacrifice, and death.

1.3 Objectives of The Study

The proposed study applies Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar to Wilde's short stories: *The Happy Prince*, *The Nightingale* and *The Rose*, and *The Selfish Giant*. The study attempts to:

1) Identify the significant style of Wilde in his short stories in accordance with SFG;

2) Provide a metafunctional analysis of the stories through Transitivity, Mood and Thematic Patterns.; and

3) Formulate the relationship between the protagonists of the stories and the main themes of the stories.

1.4 Research Questions

This study ties to answer three main questions:

a) How can Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar be applied to selected short stories by Oscar Wilde?

b) What can SFG decipher about the themes of love, sacrifice and death in the three selected stories?

c) How can SFG be applied to provide an analysis of the protagonists of the three stories?

1.6. Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde was an Irish poet and dramatist. Wilde moved to London after graduating and became involved in trendy cultural and social circles. He became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. Two of his professors, Walter Pater and John Ruskin, pioneered the growing theory of aestheticism, which he became associated with. Oscar Wild had frequently stated in his works that in art, content and authenticity are overpowered by style. (Pearson 2012)

1.7. Fairy Tales

1.7.1 The Audience of Fairy Tales

Children's literature has regarded fairy tales as targeted children (Grenby 2006). The primary function of fairy was to educate and allocate values and morals of a culture. However, according to Zipes (2012), fairy tales were refined thousands of years ago by "mature men and women" to stay united against the dangers of nature. Zipes further argues that the purpose of the modern fairy tale is to offer hope in a world on the verge of catastrophe. It is contradictory to what is found in Wilde's fairy tales, where there is little hope and outcomes appear to be pessimistic.

In the 18th-century, fairy tales were intended for both adults and children. However, fairy tales were satirical in function and different in style. Zipes observes that during the 18th century, the nature of children's literature was instructional and religious. An example of this is the Victorian fairy tale *The Revolt of the Fairies and Elves* (See Zipes, 1987). Fairy tales fostered the imagination and morality of children and adults (Snider, 2009)

Interest in fairy tales was revived by the 19th century. Authors used fairy tales to increase societal awareness of the effects of the industrial revolution that triggered the rise of various social classes and the concerns of the poor and unemployed. Zipes (2012) notes that a variety of 19th-century tales articulate individual and social rebellion against

"Utopian worlds presented in literature." By the turn of the 19th century, the fairy tale was not considered religious, instructive or suitable for young children because it was too appealing and amusing (Zipes, 2012).

Many argued that fairy tales were unsuitable for instructing children at that time. Martha Sherwood was among those who opposed fairy tales for children. Sherwood argued that fairy tales introduce Christian principles as motives of actions. Hence, according to Sherwood, fairy tales should be used cautiously. Nevertheless, both parents and educators discovered that fairy tales did not have to be malicious. In this context, the fairy tales of Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and Andersen gained considerable influence. They received a good response in Europe and America. Finally, fairy tales became an acceptable form of literature (Shillinglaw, 2006) that inspired poets and scholars (Opie, 2001).

Zipes comments that despite being categorized as children's literature, fairy tales writers used the genre to destabilize the governing dictates and structure of the 19th century's society. The end of the century marked the transfer of the fairy tale target audience, as authors began to favour innocence over experience and childhood over adulthood. In addition, Cott (1973) noted that fairy tale writing became a

valid literary activity by the late 19th century. This resulted in a "golden age of children's literature" (Wood, 2002).

While it might not be difficult for children to believe in mystic creatures and imaginative tales, adults perceive them differently. The unconscious part of the psyche is stimulated by the symbolism and images in a text, which enables complex massage perception (Snider, 2009). According to Jacobs (2001), adults and children view fairy tales based on the limitations of their experience and understanding of the world.

1.7.2 The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde wrote two volumes of fairy tales; however, Tattersall (1991) argues that Wilde rarely refers to his stories as "fairy tales." Primarily, he describes them as "stories," "fairy stories," or "prose studies," indicating that they are experimental. Moreover, this indicates that Wilde was uncertain whether the tales should be regarded as fairy tales.

Upon publication, *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* received acclamation for its entertainment interest and artistic quality (Beckson 1974). An anonymous note in *The Athenaeum,* a British literary magazine., in 1888 argued that the skill of writing fairy tales was uncommon. The note said that Oscar Wilde demonstrates a unique skill, favourably comparing him to Hans Christian Andersen, stating that they

could offer greater acclaim. Walter Pater, whom Wilde considered his mentor in aesthetics, described his language as "pure English" (Beckson, 1974).

Nevertheless, not all of the reviews were favourable to Wilde. Indeed, *Macmillan's Anonymous Reader* noted that the stories were clever indeed, yet they lacked any remarkable imaginative genius. It further added that despite being nice and decent, the stories would receive much attention from the general public. (Guy & Small, 2006)

In addition, in the introduction to Volume III of *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, Yeats (1923) wrote that the overall reviews were antagonistic because of Wilde's aesthetic views. He added that men of letters perceived Wilde's fairy tales as imitations of Wilton Pater and they seemed to be intentionally written for the smallest group of readers in an arbitrary style that attracted "a few fashion ladies" and their guests. Yeats further said that Wilde had no knowledge to offer, no cause to protect, no genuine interest and did not provide a sense of enjoyment. Yeats felt that beyond his words was the strength of his intellect, but the intellect had given itself to mere reflection. Nevertheless, Yeats did not agree with the criticism and acknowledged that *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* was delightful and humorous because Wilde was a good storyteller (Liang, 2019).

An Alexander Galt Ross review in 1888 questioned whether the collection of fairy tales was appropriate for children. He argued that Wilde chose the genre of fairy tales for a limited audience who could enjoy the "delicate humor" and aesthetic literary style for valid reasons. Ross argued that the public was not going to have children as participants. He added that children would never sympathize with the Happy Prince being melted down because "he is no longer beautiful, he is no longer useful." Ross argues that children have little interest in satire, which is dominant in Wilde's stories (Beckson, 1974).

On the other hand, contemporary criticism indicates more support for fairy tales. The credibility of Wilde has been re-established in recent years, undoubtedly helped by the legalization of homosexuality and the changed attitudes to sexuality that have been seen in recent decades. Wilde's publisher, Scottish literary scholar Isobel Murray, stated that while critics appeared to ignore Wilde's fairy tales, they have sold in the millions. The tales were converted into plays, movies for the cinema and television, adapted for radio, cartoons, children's opera, ballet and mime. She has argued that the public has never stopped seeking Wilde's fairy tales. (Kramer 1981)

According to Zipes (2012), *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* marked the beginning of the creative phase of

Wilde, and they are the best known of all Wilde's fairy tales. Moreover, Snider (2009) argued that the tales appeal to the "collective psyche of English-speaking people" and "have enjoyed a life of their own […] in translations." Richard Ellmann (1977) stated that the fairy tales include "Biblical pronouns" and portentous figures. He went on to say that Wilde portrays his stories as "sacraments" of a faith lost.

For critics and even Wilde himself, the intended audience of the fairy tales became the focus of controversy. Wilde had sent a letter to G. H. Kersley in June 1888 that *The Happy Prince and Other Tales* are intended in part for children and in part for those who have held the childlike senses of wonder and pleasure and who see a slight strangeness in simplicity (Ellmann & Espey, 1977). Nevertheless, in January 1889, Wilde penned a letter to the American writer Amelie Rives Chanler stating that the tales are subtle and "fanciful" and written, not for children, but for childlike people from eighteen to eighty!" (Wilde, 2000).

The child reader was omitted entirely in the last statement, and the tales are open to individuals over eighteen. Hence, it is evident from this that the subject matter was apprehensive to Wilde. Wilde's fairy tales receive less recognition from academics than his other works of prose, plays, essays, poems and novels (Bseiso, 2007). Tattersall (1991) suggested that this loss of enthusiasm had to do with

the fairy tale genre; that is, the tales belong to a particular field of concern, literature for children. It was not until recently that Wilde's works in general and his fairy tales, in particular, has gained interest from scholars and academics.

1.8 Data collection

The data analyzed in this research are three selected short stories by Oscar Wilde from his collection *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*. The version of the stories is published by Macmillan in 2017. Despite being originally published in 1888, little research was done on the short stories. However, scholarly interest in Wilde's short stories has increased, particularly linguistic research. The three short stories provide Wilde's perspective on Victorian society. Therefore, the stories were selected to analyse according to Halliday's SFL and represent the society of that time. The three short stories have a total of 7,452 words.

Theoretical Framework

The research applies the theory of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) by M.L.k. Halliday.

Systemic Functional Grammar

Systemic Functional linguistics (SFL) is created as an applicable theory in linguistics. Halliday (2014) argues that language is "purposeful behavior" and creating meaning in contexts is the function of language. According to Halliday

and Matthiessen (2014) language contrues meaning instead of representing meaning. According to Halliday, there are three major types of meaning in language: experiential, textual and interpersonal. Thus when language is produced, there are three simultaneous meanings made. The Experiential meaning represents experience, the textual meaning represents meanings related to the organization of texts, and the interpersonal meaning is related to relations between entities.

Three lines of meaning in the clause

| Metafunction	Clause as ...	System	Structure
textual	message	THEME	Theme ^ Rheme
interpersonal	exchange	MOOD	Mood [Subject + Finite] + Residue [Predicator (+ Complement) (+ Adjunct)]
experiential	representation	TRANSITIVITY	process + participant(s) (+ circumstances), e.g. Process + Actor + Goal

Interpersonal Meaning

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the clause is read from the interpersonal perspective using the concept of "meaning as an exchange". An exchange, semantically, can be divided into two sub–

|	Goods-and-services	Information
Giving	Offer ('Shall I look for the cat?')	Statement ('I'm looking for the cat.')
Demanding	Command ('Look for the cat.')	Question ('What are you looking for?')

categories: **the direction of the exchange and what is being exchanged**. **In other words**, **a communicator can either supply (e.g., 'the dog is over there') or request something**.

Mood System
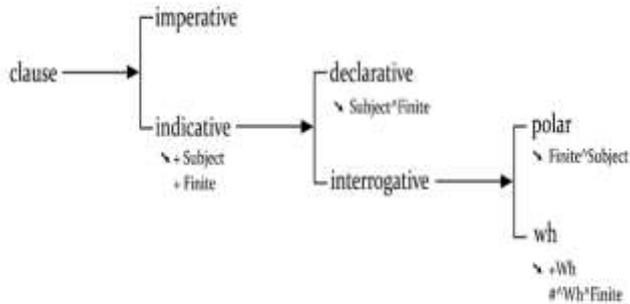
According to van Gelderen (2013), each language has different means of expressing mood; yet, this expression is not optional. As a result, the MOOD system is believed to be a cross-linguistic element. It is also important to realize that, though MOOD is an essential aspect of interpersonal metafunction, it is not the sole factor to consider. The

interpersonal metafunction is related to the tenor in the context of circumstance. As a result, several ways exist for how a phrase represents and interprets the role relationships established by the interactants participating in a given context (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). Mood can be realized through declarative clauses, interrogative clauses and imperative clauses.
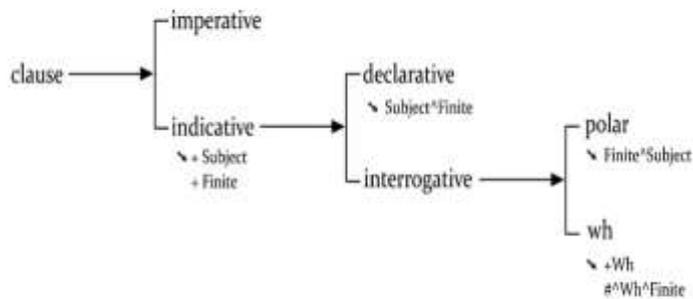
       Declarative clauses are statements that offer information. They are the most "unmarked: constructions in terms of typology (Velupillai, 2012). The other function is carried out by two different forms of interrogative clauses: wh– interrogatives and polar interrogatives. Polar interrogatives don't need to know something new or unknowable (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). According to Matthiessen, a yes/no interrogative is typically distinguished from other MOOD types by a rising tone (2004). The wh– interrogatives require information, a

circumstance, or a participant selected by a wh– element such as; who, why, what, where, …etc. When the communicator acts on the recipient to get something done, using language as a method to accomplish it, the imperative is utilised (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). It is a call to action and is generally expressed in a more "direct" manner. Despite the absence of the Subject, it is indicated or retrieved from the context (Matthiessen, 2004).

Experiential Meaning

The experiential use of language concerns how aspects of the environment around us and within us might be conveyed. It is connected to the construing of experience. It categorises and organises experience occurrences into wholes and their constituent parts (Matthiessen, 1995). For example, if I tell a friend about the latest trip, I could say, "Last week, I visited my uncle in Cairo." Based on the concatenation of the Subject and the Finite, this English clause is seen interpersonally as a declarative. From an experiential aspect, however, this clause includes a process, two participants and two circumstances, as shown in a head;

Transitivity System

A transitivity system manifests the experiential function, which argues that human life experiences consist of
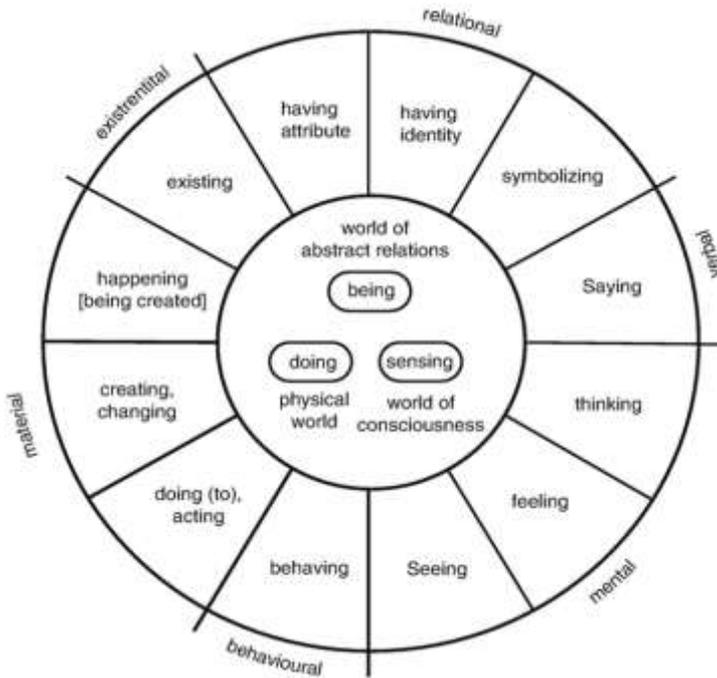
being, sensing, becoming, happening, doing and meaning (Eggins 1994). Clauses, therein, create language that people use to communicate and establish their experiences (Msuya, 2014).

Textual Meaning

According to Halliday, various meanings might be encoded in a language. This includes the textual metafunction. The textual metafunction can be considered a foundation for the interpersonal and experiential metafunctions to act on. According to Halliday (1978), the textual metafunction has an "enabling" function compared to

the other two. The experiential and interpersonal aspects of meaning can only become functional in an environment by encoding semiotic exchanges in text. As a result, the textual metafunction helps connect interpersonal and experiential meanings by guiding the speaker/listener through the expanding text to interpret the information (Caffarel, 2006). Furthermore, Matthiessen (2004) observes a distinct difference between the interpersonal and experiential metafunctions construct and the textual metafunction constructs. The former metafunctions, in particular, are directed towards worlds that exist beyond language. On the other hand, the textual metafunction is directed toward the domain of semiosis itself. Thus, the textual metafunction is focused on how a text evolves over time, or the text's "logogenesis" (Matthiessen, 1995).

Thematic System

The Thematic system consists of Theme and Rheme. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) defined theme as the element that serves as the message's departure point, which detects and aligns the clause inside its own context. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the Theme can be understood both in terms of its location (i.e. 'the point of departure' at the beginning of the phrase) and in terms of its meaning (i.e. the Theme provides a local context for the clause to elaborate on.).

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) define Rheme as the clause in which the theme is expanded further. Or the rest of the clause that isn't classified as the Theme. It could span anywhere from the entirety of the immediate clause to numerous subsequent dependent clauses, depending on the complexity of the utterance. Furthermore, determining where the Theme ends and the Rheme starts is accomplished by referring to the clause's experiential elements of the process, participant, and circumstance; Theme includes only one of these experiential elements.

4.1 Findings

According to the data analysis carried out in Chapter Three the findings are as follows:

- **Research Question 1 Findings**

  The analysis of the data indicates the viability of applying SFG to the shorts stories of Wilde. The data was analysed on three levels of meaning in accordance to SFG. The three levels of meaning are ideational, represented in the transitivity model, Interpersonal, represented in Mood system and finally textual represented in thematic pattern (theme and Rheme)

- **Research Question 2 and 3 Findings**

The three stories suggest a futility of love, death, and sacrifice. However, upon a deeper analysis of these themes it was found that Wilde's characters never die in vain. Their love becomes their stirring force to perform actions. It is vividly shown in the transitivity analysis of the protagonists clauses.
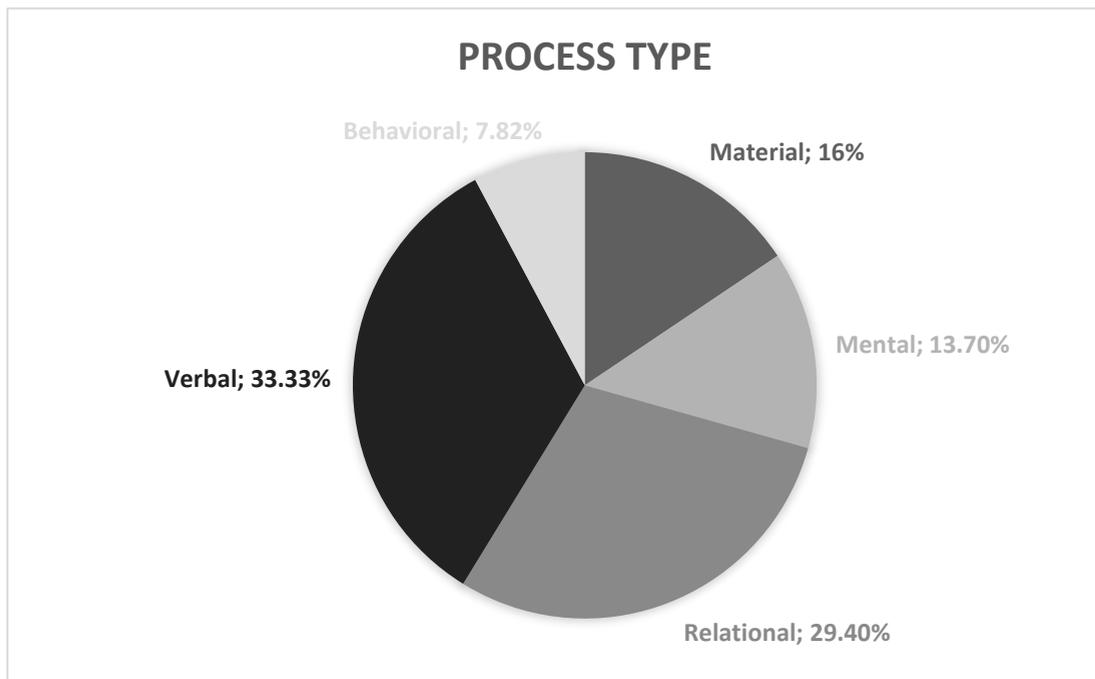
Table 20. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Swallow*

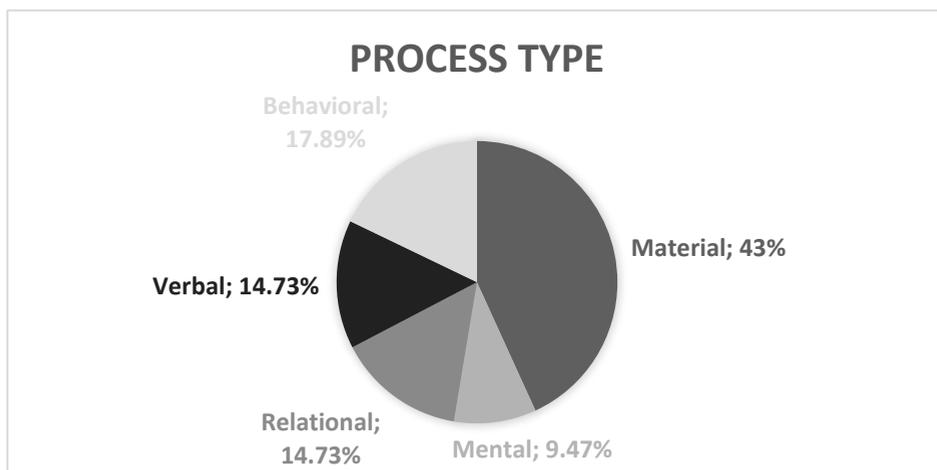| Process type	Frequency	Percentage
Material	74	49.0%
Verbal	34	22.5%
Mental	15	9.93%
Relational	14	9.20%
Behavioral	14	9.20%
Existential	0	0%
Total	**151**	**100%**

Figure 6. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Swallow*
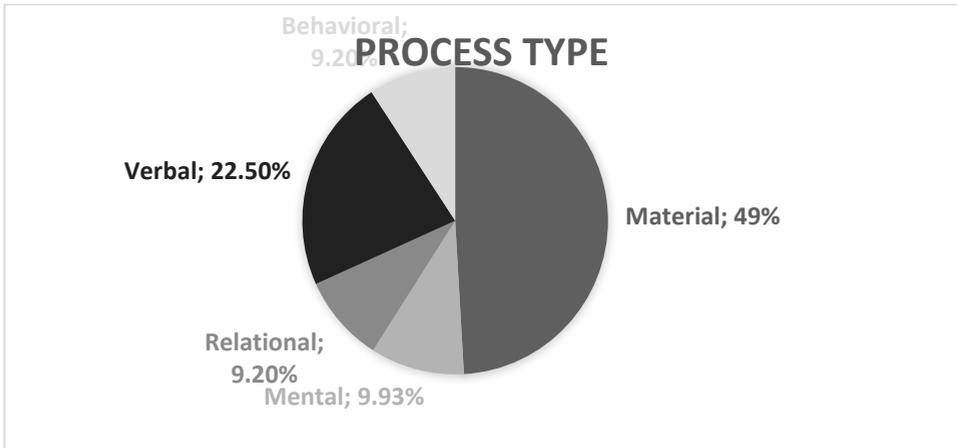
Table 21. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Prince*

Process type	Frequency	Percentage
Verbal	17	33.3%
Relational	15	29.4%
Material	8	15.6%
Mental	7	13.7%
Behavioral	4	7.8%
Existential	0	0%
Total	**51**	**100%**

Figure 7. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Prince*

Table 22. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Nightingale*

Process type	Frequency	Percentage
Material	41	43.157%
Behavioral	17	17.89%
Relational	14	14.73%
Verbal	14	14.73%
Mental	9	9.47%
Existential	0	0%
Total	**95**	**100%**

Figure 8. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Nightingale*

Table 23. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Giant*

Process type	Frequency	Percentage
Material	34	36.55%
Mental	18	19.35%
Relational	15	16.12%
Verbal	15	16.12%
Behavioral	11	11.8%
Existential	0	0%
Total	**93**	**100%**

Figure 9. *Transitivity Analysis Results– The Giant*
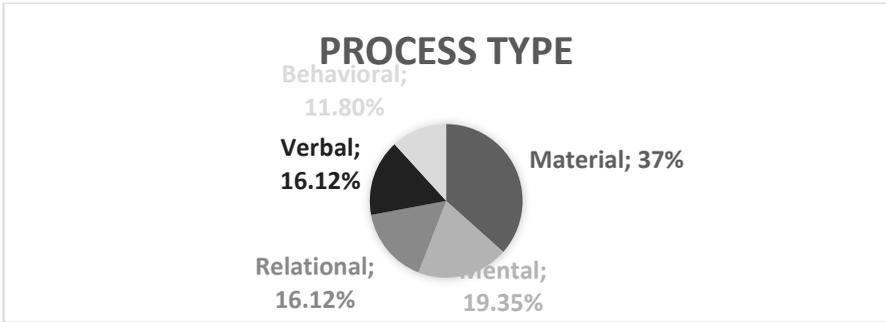
Material process type is the most dominant process type for three main characters; the swallow, the nightingale and the giant. This suggests that the stories' protagonists are active doers and participants of actions. It can also suggest that sentiments such as love require the participants to be doers instead of perceivers. This is particularly accurate in the case of the Swallow and the Nightingale, who were both the main participants of most of the material clauses. On the other hand, The Prince's dominant process type is verbal, suggesting the prince's inability to perform any action due to his state as a statue.

Relational Processes are second in dominance among the Prince's clauses, and relational processes relate participants to their descriptions and identities. The relational clauses in the

Prince's clauses were dominantly attributive, suggesting that Wilde uses Relational clauses to ascribe attributes to entities.

In *The Happy Prince*, material processes come 3rd among the total clause count of the prince's clauses, followed by mental processes, then finally behavioural clauses. The prince's clauses analysis reveals that he is a passive character. He can only express his emotions through words. He represents sacrifice in its pure form as he gave away all he has; the gems, his gold cover and most importantly, his eyes.

On the contrary, the Swallow is an active doer and a speaker whose actions and words represent his feelings of love and sacrifice. That is manifested through the analysis as it reflects that material and verbal processes are the highest among the swallow's clauses. Mental processes follow them with the repetition of the process "see" depicting perception. And finally, Relational and Behavioral processes are equally ranked 4th.

The analysis of the Nightingale's clauses reveals the dominance of the material clauses. Like the Swallow, the Nightingale is an active character whose actions are motivated by love. She takes on a journey to pursue a red rose that can serve the love between the student and his lover. Eventually, she sacrifices her life for that purpose. Death for the Nightingale is a cheap price to pay for the sake of true love. Yet that death goes in vain. Despite being a

sentimental character, Wilde draws the Nightingale's character through her actions (material process) and her manifestation of feelings (behavioural processes). Mental processes related to the nightingale are the least among total clauses. It is noted that Relational and verbal clauses represent the same percentage among the total clause count.

The Giant is a character of actions and the Swallow and the Nightingale. However, unlike them, the Giant is perceptive of his surroundings and expresses emotions such as love and anger. That is reflected by the dominance of material then mental processes on the total clauses associated with the giant. Like the Nightingale's, the Relational and verbal clauses represent the same percentage among the total clause count.

Love changes from one state to another for the swallow. He gave up his plans to travel to Egypt with his peers, and the Prince gave up his sight, which is his only aid to live as a motionless statue in the city. As for the Giant, love has changed him from a selfish, cold-hearted character into a compassionate, generous character who happily enjoys the sounds of children playing in his garden.

On an interpersonal meaning analysis, it was found that:

1) Declarative Clauses are the most dominant among the three stories. This can be understood given the narrative nature of the texts.

2) Interrogative Clauses in the texts are dominantly rhetorical, suggesting that the characters do not necessarily seek answers to their questions but rather express astonishment and thought process.

3) In *The Happy Prince,* the 11 imperative clauses are all associated with the Prince's character. This finding suggests the Prince's dominance and crucial influence over the Swallow. However, the Prince gives the Swallow orders and commands in a relatively gentle manner rather than demanding one.

4) Among the imperative clauses of *The Nightingale and the Rose*, only 4 of 10 clauses are associated with the Nightingale, and almost none are associated with the student. The 4 clauses, however, occur when the Nightingale asks for a red rose. This suggests that the Nightingale uses demands to achieve her goal of finding a red rose to revive the student's love.

5) The *Selfish Giant* only had two imperative clauses, and only one of them is associated with the Giant.

On the Analysis of the Textual Meaning:

1) It is noted that the dominant Themes in the three stories are Unmarked Topical Themes. This suggests that Wilde employs the ideational nature of the Themes in the text to provide a clear image of the characters' experiences.

2) Among the most unmarked Themes in *The Happy Prince*, first personal pronouns are utilised as themes. On the other hand, in *The Nightingale* and the *Rose*, the 1st person pronoun I and the 2nd person pronoun you are utilized as unmarked topical themes in the text. While among the most unmarked type in *The Selfish Giant*, the third personal pronouns are utilised as Themes, and the Themes are the story's primary protagonists, notably the Giant, the children, and the young boy.

3) Among the three stories, Marked Themes are mostly circumstances that convey the chronological order of events.

4.3 Concluding Remarks

This study has tried to answer three main questions; a) How can Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar be applied to selected short stories by Oscar Wilde? B) What can SFG decipher about the themes of love, sacrifice and death in the three selected stories? And c) How can SFG be applied to

provide a qualitative analysis of the protagonists of the three stories?

SFG can provide a deeper understanding of the main themes and the main characters of the selected stories. Moreover, SFG provides an analysis of certain common linguistic patterns in Wilde's short stories, in particular the stories that share the themes of love, sacrifice and death. The analysis suggests that the protagonists of the stories are motivated by love. Love becomes their stirring force that can lead them to either sacrifice their lives to attain it or to die while maintain it. The protagonists also undergo a transformation of mind sets, particularly The swallow and The giant. They both become less egocentric and begin to seek and provide love.

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