ГУО “Гимназия № 22 г. Минска”

**Гендeрные персонификации**

**в сказках О. Уайльда**

**(Gender Personifications in O. Wilde’s Fairy Tales)**

**Секция:**

«Иностранная филология»

**Автор**: Месникович Виктория Сергеевна

ГУО “Гимназия № 22”, 10Б

Логойский тракт 34-1-41, 2813586

**Научный руководитель**: Смульская Татьяна Владиславовна

ГУО “Гимназия № 22”

Учитель английского языка

Минск, 2010

**Contents**

1. Introduction…………………………………………………………..4
2. Oscar Wilde and His Literary Work…………………………..7

3.1 Gender Personifications………………………………………..10

3.2 Gender and Similes……………………………………………..20

3.3 Gender and Epithets…………………………………………….25

3.4 Gender and Metaphors…………………………………………28

4. Conclusions…………………………………………………………32

5. References…………………………………………………………..35

6. Appendices………………………………………………………….36



**1. INTRODUCTION**

Gender studies are a field of interdisciplinary studies which analyzes the phenomenon of gender. Gender is an important area of study in many disciplines, such as literary theory, drama studies, film studies and etc. In our case, gender studies is connected with the style of an author and only in the text we can define gender of personifications, because they can’t exist without the context and personifications themselves are created by the author, his unique and unforgettable style.

The word "style" is derived from the Latin word "stylus" which means a short stick sharp at one end and flat at the other used by the Romans for writing on wax tablets. Now the word "style" has a very broad meaning. We speak of style in architecture, painting, clothes, behavior, literature, speech, etc. The style of any period is the result of a variety of complex and shifting pressures and influences. The way we think and speak modifies the way we write or the way others write and influences our thoughts and speech. There is a constant interaction between life and literature. Books reflect the shape of experience but the book we read also shapes our experience of life. In every age the major writers help to shape the thinking and feelings, and hence, the style of their contemporaries.

Raymond Chapman, the author of "A Short Way to Better English" says: "A good style of writing has three qualities, which may be described as accuracy, ease and grace".

There are always three influences that will exert their pressure on a writer's style. One is his own personality; his own way of thinking and feeling that determines his mode of expression. The second is the occasion on which he is writing, the particular purpose that directs his pen at the moment of writing, so that the same man may employ different styles on different occasions. The third is the influence of the age in which he lives. In other words, a writer's style is his individual and creative choice of the resources of a language. The limitations upon the choice are superimposed by the writer's period, his genre and his purpose since style is something ingrained in writing: it follows that a man's way of writing will be an expression of his personality and his way of looking at life. This explains the famous and much-quoted words about style given by Buffon, a French writer and naturalist of the 18th century. He wrote: "Le style, c'est l'homme meme" ("Style, it is the man himself").

Linguists pay considerable attention to the means of expressing emphasis. The object of stylistic analysis is the language in the process of its usage.

The approach to the language material and the subject of stylistics is of our concern in this paper.

As it is known, stylistics treats special means of the language that help us to have vivid and emotional speech.

It's the author's style that helps readers to differentiate authors. A keen reader can say apart the works of different authors according to their specific and unforgettable styles.

According to Hornby, "emphasis is a force or stress, laid on a word or words to make significance clear, or to show its importance".

Emphasis in literature is achieved by lexical and syntactical expressive means.

**The actuality of the work:** gender investigations are extremely developing nowadays and are one of the most investigated ones in the sphere of humanities. Each language reflects the peculiarities of a society where it has been formed. It shows all relations in this society including the gender ones. That’s why it is always clear when there some irregularities and deviations appear in patterns and stereotypes. All these irregularities and deviations are well seen in O.Wilde’s fairy tales. All personified characters in his fairy tales have vivid gender peculiarities of mind, the way of thinking and speaking.

O. Wilde’s fairy tales include two books “The Happy Prince and other Tales” and “The House of Pomegranates”. These books, in a very paradoxical way reflect the aesthetical ideas of Oscar Wilde and at the same time reject them sharply.

Each art has its own medium, i.e. its own material substance. Colours are the material substance of painting, sounds – the material substance of music. It’s the language that is the material substance of literature. But language consists of colours and sounds due to existence of expressive means and stylistic devices.

**The aim of my work** is to identify gender of personifications in O. Wilde’s fairy-tales and analyze the peculiarity of lexical and stylistic devices used by the characters.

**The tasks of the work** comprise the identification of the gender of personified characters; analysis and statistics of epithets, metaphors and similes used by the personified characters.

**The novelty of the research** is based on the stylistic and statistic analysis of metaphors, epithets and similes usage by personified characters of the fairy tales.

It’s worth mentioning that stylistic devices are more often used than expressive means in fairy tales.

**The experiment.** To prove the necessity of knowing the text for effective specifying the gender of personified characters, we conducted the experiment. 62 pupils of the 10th forms took part in the experiment (43 girls and 19 boys). They were proposed the survey (see the appendices) for the gender identification. They conducted the survey before and after reading 3 fairy tales of O. Wilde. The results of the survey have been statistically processed and shown in diagram 2 (see the appendices); the diagram tells that only the context makes it possible define the gender of personified nouns.

**Practically the results of the research** can be used at the lessons of English literature in optional courses.

While conducting the research we propose **the hypothesis** that female personified characters use lexical stylistic devices, such as metaphor, epithet and simile, more often that these of the masculine or neuter gender

**The subject of my investigation** is the two selections of O. Wilde’s fairy tales “The Happy Prince and Other Tales” and “A House of Pomegranates”.

**The methods used in the work** are descriptive, analytical, comparative, and statistic ones.

**The work contains** six chapters: the introduction, the information about O. Wilde and his literary career, the research of the personified characters and analysis of their speech, the conclusions, the references and the appendices.

**2. Oscar Wilde and His Work**

Oscar Wilde is one of the most famous writers of the nineteenth century. He is an author, playwright and great wit. He preaches the importance of style both in life and art; and he attacks Victorian narrow-mindedness and complacency. Most writers, whatever their professions, write with something of the emphasis and authority of the schoolmaster addressing his pupils. In spite of this common feature, Victorian writers are very different in their styles. They are individualists, and each has his own personality, which is strongly presented in his style.

Oscar Wilde is one of the aesthetes and tries to write the work that should be beautiful in its colour and cadence. His writing is highly wrought. Despite the fact that O. Wilde has probably been written about more than most nineteenth-century writers, his place and reputation continue to be uncertain.

Wilde's extraordinary personality and wit have so dominated the imaginations of the most biographers and critics that their estimates of his work have too often consisted of sympathetic tributes to a writer whose literary production was little more than a faint reflection of his brilliant talk or the manifestation of what a review for the "Time Literary Supplement" called his "lawlessness". Indeed, Wilde remarks that he turns his genius into his life and only his talent into his art.

A “London Parisian”, “missionary-literary decadent”, famous paradox-maker, the leader of decadent literary workers, a representative of “dendism”, brawler – these are the characteristics of O. Wilde given by his contemporaries.

Oscar Wilde was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1854. His full name was Oscar Fingal O’Flahertie Wills Wilde. Oscar, named in honour of his godfather, King Oscar I of Sweden – would eventually drop his three middle names. He said that a name, which was destined to be in everybody’s mouth, must not be long. He was going to be famous.

At 20, Wilde left Ireland to study at Oxford University where he had a brilliant career, where he took a first-class both in classical moderation and in literature, and also won” the New Prize for English verse for a poem” on “Ravenna”. Even before he left University in 1878 Wilde had become known as one of the most affected professors of the aesthetic movement, which advanced the new concept of “Art for Art’s Sake”.

Wilde was a man of great originality and power of mind. He quickly became a prominent personality in literature and social circles, but the period of achievement didn’t begin until he published “The Happy Prince and Other Tales” in 1888. In these tales and fables, O.Wilde found a literary form well suited to his tales. There are nine stories all together (originally published in two volumes – “The Happy Prince” – 1888 and “A House of Pomegranates” – 1891) – five in the first volume and four in the second. These stories are an uneasy blend of moral and fantastic.

Wilde’s only novel “The Picture of Dorian Gray” (1890) attracted much attention and his sayings past from month to month as those of one the professed wits of the age. This novel is about a youth features year after year retain the same youthful appearance of innocent beauty, while the shame of his hideous vices become mirrored year after year on the features of his portrait. This novel covers the whole range of human experience and imagination.

The career of Oscar Wilde was brief but from its beginning success smiled at him and he quickly achieved a triumph. Some of his works, his verses, his essays – “Intentions”, his fairy tales, poems in prose “A House of Pomegranates”, “The Picture of Dorian Gray” affirmed that he was a pure artist and a great writer, for certain; his pages are as beautiful as the most beautiful ones in English prose. But these works were only amusements for him; and versatile mind so brilliant, so delicately ironic, so paradoxical found a medium of expression, which perfectly suited his uncommon gifts.

The theatre played a very important role in Wilde’s life. English drama was reborn near the end of the Victorian age. From the late 1700-s to the late 1800-s almost no important dramas were produced in England. But by 1900-s a number of playwrights have revived the English theatre both with witty comedies and with realistic dramas about social problems of the time.

Many critics said that Wilde was perhaps less than a mature poet but a good critic and a splendid playwright.

Wilde’s first dramatic works appeared in the beginning of the eighties. His early tragedies are “Vera or the Nihilists” (1880) and “The Duchess of Padua” (1883). Then there were published his brilliant novel “The Picture of Dorian Gray” and the critical essays “The Intentions”. In these books the basic principles of Wilde’s aesthetics are reflected.

Oscar Wilde denies the traditional criteria of the bourgeois ethics. He thinks that the only moral value is the ideal of beauty in nature and in person. However, he says that beauty is not the reflection of realistic life in the people’s minds; but, contrary, is just the product of artist’s imagination. That is why he confirms that art is existing independent of life and is developing according to its own laws. He is known as a poet of graceful diction.

Oscar Wilde contributed his most important works to the theatre: “Lady Windermere’s Fan” (1892), “A Woman of No Importance” (1893), “An Ideal Husband” (1895) and “Salome” (1893).

O. Wilde travelled a lot. In 1882 he arrived in New York City and began a yearlong tour of North America. When a customs inspector asked him if he had anything to declare he replied, “Nothing but my genius”. At 28 he lectured in 70 American cities on arts and literature. His performances were as wildly popular as his audiences were varied: he spoke to Mormons in Salt Lake City, silver miners in Colorado, West Coast Literary in San Francisco, famers in Kansas, and swung through Ontario and Quebec.

When he returned from America he had been tired of being the Great Aesthete. He toured, wrote two unsuccessful plays and a well-received collection of children’s fairy tales; married, fathered two sons and took a position as editor of Woman’s World, a monthly magazine, for which he wrote literary criticism.

Two years later he tried journalism and journalists and returned to sparkling at parties and spending much of his time with friends and lovers, often stepping beyond the bounds of what was considered morality and socially proper for the time.

From 1890 to 1895 Oscar Wilde reached the peak of his career, both as poet-playwright and social gadfly. His novel “The Picture of Dorian Gray” raised a storm of indignation to thinly veiled allusions to the protagonist’s homosexuality. In the same year he came out with a well-received volume of children’s stories “A House of Pomegranates”.

In the summer of 1891 Oscar met Lord Alfred “Bosie” Douglas, the third son of the marquis of Queensberry. Bosie was well acquainted with Oscar’s novel “Dorian Gray” and was an undergraduate at Oxford. They soon became lovers and were inseparable until Wilde’s arrest four years later, when he was convicted and sentences to two years hard labor. Wilde’s wife, Constance, took the children to Switzerland and reverted to an old family name “Holland”.

Upon his release Oscar wrote “The Ballad of Reading Goal”, a response to the agony he experienced in prison. It was published shortly before Constance death in 1898. He and Bosie reunited but Oscar mostly spent the last three years of his life wandering Europe. His ballad, a poem of considerable but unequal power, gave the impression that he was again going to produce works worthy of his talents. But it was his swan song…

Ruined in health, finances and creative energy, but with his characteristic wit, he died in France in 1990. But the voices of Wilde’s brilliant works continue to be heard until well on in the present century.

**3.1 GENDER PERSONIFICATIONS IN O. WILDE’S FAIRY TALES**

Language is capable of transmitting practically any kind of information. It has names for all things, phenomena and relations of objective reality. It is so close to life that an illustration of their almost complete identity is created, for many lives, works and thinks in the medium of language. Man’s behavior finds an important means of expression primarily in language.

Lexical expressive means deal with a word. Thus, the denotation meaning is the major semantic characteristic of a word. The words in a context may acquire additional lexical meanings not fixed in dictionaries. What is known in linguistics as “transferred meaning” is particularly the interrelation between two types of lexical meaning: dictionary and contextual. When the deviation from the acknowledged meaning is carried to a degree that it causes an unexpected turn in the recognized logical meanings, we register a stylistic device.

**Personification** is a stylistic device when nonliving or abstract things have some qualities and peculiarities of living beings such as speech, abilities to think and feel. This stylistic device is peculiar for fairy tales in general and that’s why we can find examples of personification in each O.Wilde’s fairy tales.

**One of the most touching fairy-tale by O. Wilde is “The Happy Prince**”, the fairy-tale that teaches its readers nobleness, kindness, devotion, sacrificing and charity. In the fairy-tale there are two main characters – the happy Prince and the Swallow, which are personified as “he” and “he”. For sure, as in all tales there are a lot of other characters who are not so important in the narration but help outline and single out the main characters. Thus, the Swallow is greatly in love with “the most beautiful Reed” and this Reed is personified as “she”, the other swallows considered that “It is a ridiculous attachment; she has no money, and far too many relations.” The beautiful Reed can only move and in this way can show her feelings, but what is love without words? So, the Swallow behaves like a real man, he accuses her of having no conversation, he tries to sure himself that she is not a couple for him.

“I am afraid that she is a coquette, for she is always flirting with the wind”. And, certainly, whenever the wind blew, the Reed made the most graceful curtseys”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.28)

Then, as it usually happens to people and their relations, the Swallow thinks about other features of the Reed’s character, persuading himself that she is domestic, doesn’t like travelling, so attached to her home.

The Swallow is a real egoist; he thinks of himself and does everything to please himself. On his way to the Pyramids he is to make a stopover, meeting the Happy Prince. The Happy Prince is crying, he is a statue, which previously was a human with a human heart, but never knew sorrow. Being alive the Happy Prince never thought about other people, their misfortunes and needs, and only when he became a statue, erected high above the city he managed to recognize poverty, diseases, trouble and misery. He sacrifices his ruby from the sword-hilt, rare sapphires and fine gold to save the lives of other people but what is more important in his desire to help others he sacrifices the live of a brave and sensitive Swallow. Once the Mayor and the Councilors pay attention to a shabby appearance of the Happy Prince, he is no longer beautiful, sparkling and elegant, the Prince looks “little better than a beggar” and there is a dead bird at his feet.

The authorities of the city behave in the best of all known ways, they pull down the statue of the Happy Prince.

“As he is no longer beautiful he is no longer useful”, said the Art Professor at the University” (“The Happy Prince”, p.38)

The Happy Prince’s statue is melted and the only thing that doesn’t melt is the broken leaden heart of the Happy Prince. None of these respectable citizens ever find out about all sacrifices of the two noble hearts and their help to the poor, deprived and ill. But it wouldn’t be the fairy tale of O. Wilde unless the last lines of it.

“Bring me the two most precious things in the city,” said God to one of his Angels; and the Angel brought Him the leaden heart and the dead bird.” You have rightly chosen, said God, “for in my garden this little bird shall sing for evermore, and in my city of gold the Happy Prince shall praise me.”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.38)

The characters which are personified as men (the Happy Prince and the Swallow) behave in a really male way; they care for the weak, help the poor and give their lives for them.

**“The Nightingale and the Rose”** is a fairy- tale about unshared love of a poor student to a naughty but beautiful Professor’s daughter and the Nightingale’s devotion to “the mystery of Love”.

All the inhabitants of a little garden are greatly engaged in the student’s love story and like real people they show their attitude to such an event.

The most active character is the Nightingale, it is “she” in this tale, she is going to create a red rose in the most dangerous and painful way. The little creature will give her life to built it out of music by moonlight and stain it with her own heart’s blood. As a real woman of flash and blood, she is quite sure that “Love is better than Life, wiser than Philosophy, precious than emeralds and dearer than fine opals. Pearls and pomegranates cannot buy it, nor is it set forth in the market-place.” Other characters also take part in the discussion of a love affair and almost each of them has its own gender.

For example, a little Green Lizard is “he” and he is something of a cynic, he understands all this conversation about true love as rather ridiculous and can’t give Life for a red rose. A Butterfly is too busy with its own business fluttering about after a sunbeam; this character isn’t outlined at all and is of the neuter gender. A Daisy doesn’t want to share his opinion with the others, he is whispering in a soft, low voice. The Oak- tree is of the masculine gender and he is in love with the little Nightingale and feels sad and lonely, for he understands that the Nightingale will sacrifice her life for the sake of the Student’s love. All the rose-trees are of the neuter gender though they are perfectly described by the author and have different flowers “as white as the foam of the sea, as yellow as the hair of the mermaiden, as red as the feet of the dove”. Perfect in form they have no hearts only the pride of their marvelous flowers, they don’t feel sorry, they are not disappointed or pleased with the Nightingale’s sacrifice, they are flowers and nothing more. The Nightingale understands the price for a red rose, but she is in love with the Student and wants to make him happy, she cries, “Death is a great price to pay for a red rose, and Life is very dear to all.” Her wise words are,

“All that I ask of you in return is that you will be a true lover, for Love is wiser than Philosophy.”

(“The Nightingale and the Rose”, p.42)

The delicate marvelous red rose is created and the little Nightingale has gone away with the last burst of music. But the destiny of this unusual rose is rather sad, the Professor’s daughter likes jewels more than flowers, and the rose is thrown into the street and falls into the gutter, and a cartwheel goes over it. Here is the human gratitude. The moral of the story is sad. The Nightingale’s sacrifice is in vain, “a true lover” had just opposite point of view and very soon he forgets about his love.

“What a silly thing Love is!” said the Student as he walked away. “It is not half as useful as Logic, for it does not prove anything, and it is always telling one of things that are not going to happen, and making one believe things that are not true”.

(“The Nightingale and the Rose”, p.46)

The two worlds– the world of men full of logic, usefulness and practice and the world of women full of romance, devotion and miracle, symbolize the characters of the Nightingale, only a bird, and the Student, a rational and cool living being.

**The fairy –tale “The Selfish Giant”** stands apart from personification.

The Giant is a common personage for fairy-tales the only difference lies in the character of the Giant: Giants can be ugly, angry, man-eaters, destroyers and greedy but this one is selfish. Selfishness is a human quality. People are selfish, caring only about themselves and not about other people.

Trees, birds and flowers are personified but as the author speaks about them in the plural number and it is impossible to define their gender. But the reader sees wonderful examples of personification.

“And the trees were so glad… were waving their arms gently above the children’s heads. The birds were flying and twittering with delight, and the flowers were looking up through the green grass and laughing.”

(“The Selfish Giant, p.50)

The elements of nature have the masculine or feminine gender, it is not much written about them and their characters are not full. But the Snow is of a feminine gender, the North Wind is “he”, so is the Hail. All these personified characters serve the only purpose, they intensify the character of the Giant making him more and more human and sensitive, and at the end of the tale the Giant’s heart melts but “years went over and the Giant grew very old and feeble”.

**“The Devoted Friend”** starts with an amusing prologue; the Linnet is telling the fairy-tale to her friends, speaking about real friendship and proposing the moral to it.

Side by side with people animals and birds live, feel and think. So the old Water-rat is “a confirmed bachelor,” who has never been married and never intends to be. The Water-rat puts friendship higher than love and is sure that his devoted friend should be devoted to him and wait nothing from him in return. He is a real man due to his character. On the other hand, the Duck is full of” mother’s feelings “, she knows much about the best society where you must stand on your heads to be admitted to it.

As each caring mother, the Duck is busy all the time upbringing and educating her children, she eagerly participates in the conversation and puts forward her own points of view concerning friendship, life, mother’s duties and admittance to the best society, she is a real mother-woman. The little green Linnet is a perfect story-teller, she starts the story with “Once upon a time…” and finishes it with the moral and as a true story-teller she doesn’t care about her heroes when the story is finished.

**“The Remarkable Rocket**” is the fairy tale full of personifications. The tale can be divided into two independent fairy-tales: one is about the marriage of the king’s son and a Russian Princess and the other is a story of all the fireworks which are supposed to crown the wedding party. Namely these fireworks are personified and live, behave and communicate like real people. The central character of the fireworks is the Remarkable Rocket, he is of the masculine gender and presented like a respectable, self-esteemed person “ with good genealogy whose mother was the most celebrated Catherine Wheel and father was a Rocket,” who “made a most brilliant descent in a shower of golden rain.” The Remarkable Rocket tries to look as if he were an educated and noble person but he mixes words up, which makes his speech prominent but funny. He uses “pylotechnic” instead of “pyrotechnic” and hears “grand rocket” instead of “bad rocket. The Remarkable Rocket divides the world around him into ‘the lower orders” and “the higher orders”. According to his own words he is made “for public life”. As a real hypocrite he needs someone to listen to him and adore but he likes to do all talking himself” because “it serves time and prevents arguments”. The world moves round the Remarkable Rocket, he is quite sure that even the wedding is organized to celebrate his appearance in the society. He conceders the Duck “a decidedly middle-class mind” as the Duck goes “in for domesticity” because once she had thoughts of entering public life. The Catherine Wheel, who prides herself on her broken heart, accuses poets of killing love. All her thoughts and utterances are about love and romance but, unfortunately, they are rather tragic and sad.

“True love suffers, and is silent… Romance is a thing of the past... Romance is dead, Romance is dead”

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p.71)

On the other hand, a Cracker is something of a politician, he has always taken a prominent part in the local elections, so he knows the proper parliamentary expressions to use. The Cracker enjoys himself immensely; he has a light character and a good sense of humour.

When the fireworks are finished only the Remarkable Rocket is left in the garden because” it was so wet with tears that it was of no use”. The workmen throw him over the fence and the Remarkable Rocket turns out to appear in another society, the society of the pond inhabitants: the little green Frog, the mother of six beautiful daughters, who knows the manners of a good society, where everyone holds exactly the same point of view. She is amazed by “a delightful voice of the Rocket” but disapproves his intention to have arguments. The Dragon-fly , who has a sober mind and supposes that the Rocket is lecturing on Philosophy but the Rocket has no chance to improve the Dragon-fly’s mind though he is aware that he is a genius.

“Genius like mine is sure to be appreciated some day”

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p.79)

All little folk pay attention to the Rocket; a large White Duck is the last to speak to the Rocket, the Duck is personified as a feminine and she is of a very peaceful disposition and never quarrels with anyone. But she explains to the Rocket that she values anyone who is of a practical use, which arises a storm of contradictions in the Rocket.

“A person of my position is never useful. I have no sympathy myself with industry of any kind, at least of all with such industries as you seem to recommend. Indeed, I have always been of opinion that hard work is simply the refuge of people who have nothing whatever to do”.

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p. 81.)

And what is the end? The Rocket has his wonderful flight and explosion but no one sees his triumph.

The second book o**f tales “A House of Pomegranates” opens with the fairy-tale “The Young King”.** This tale is bright evidence of social conflicts in O. Wilde’s fairy-tales. In general, he doesn’t search the depth of social problems of his time but almost every tale shows the contradiction between poverty and wealth. In this tale this contradiction reaches its peak. This is a parable. To show all the misery of the world and the cost of all precious and elegant things, O. Wilde emerges the Young king into dreams, and this dreams show him the cost of all these beloved, fine things, which he uses to surround himself with. This is the only but one fairy-tale where there is no personification.

Elegant in style, reach in vocabulary and idioms, the fairy-tale of O. Wilde shows his attitude to beauty, nature and art. He tries to show that art is much higher than nature, but describing all wonders in his fairy-tales he uses nature to make comparisons and outline the perfection of his characters, their behaviour, appearances and their surroundings.

Some characters of the fairy- tales don’t have well-shaped features or intentions but, nevertheless, they speak and think as in **“The Birthday the Infanta”.**  As the poor little Dwarf has no real alive friends to speak to or share his emotions, the best company for him is flowers, birds and lizards. Unfortunately, they also can’t accept him into their circle but they listen to him, let him adore them and but can’t “restrain their feelings.” They react in different ways but none of these refine delicate creatures can deal with him. As in real life the ugly, clumsy Dwarf is rejected by every imaginary feature because “ if he had better taste, he had looked sad, or at least pensive, instead of jumping about merrily, and throwing himself into such grotesque and silly attitude.”

“The great scarlet Lilies grew quite hot and angry, even the Cactus screamed,” He is a perfect horror!” “He is far too ugly to be allowed to play in any place where we are,” cried the Tulips. Even the red geranium, who did not usually give themselves airs, and were known to have a great many poor relations themselves, curled up in disgust when the saw him and when the Violets meekly remarked that though he was certainly extremely plain, still he could not help it, they retorted with a good deal of justice that that was his chief defect, and there was no reason why one should admire a person because he was incurable.”

(“The Birthday of the Infanta”, p. 120)

While speaking about the birds, they like him. They don’t mind his being ugly a bit. He is kind to them he feeds them during that terrible bitter winter and divides with them his little lunch of black bread and whatever poor breakfast he has.

The Lizards also takes immense fancy of him, they play and romp all over him and try to amuse him in the best way they can.

So, we can see that personifications of such wonderful creations as flowers show that the most beautiful creatures are not always the kindest or the most sympathetic. The ugly little Dwarf has clear and emotional soul, which can’t be seen under his awful appearance. And O. Wilde’s personifications of flowers, birds and lizards only emphasize human attitude to ugliness of the world. Maybe it’s the author’s point of view, which proves his understanding of this world, its beauty and kindness, ugliness and evil. His creatures in this tale don’t move gracefully but their speech is very vivid and remarkably individual, even the Old Sundial is a real aristocrat and “had told the time of day to no less a person than the Emperor Charles V himself, he was so taken aback by the little Dwarf’s appearance, that he almost forgot to mark two whole minutes with his long shadowy finger, and could not help saying to the great milk-white Peacock, who was sunning herself on the balustrade…”

(“The Birthday of the Infanta”, p 122)

In this fairy tale we can’t see the gender of the flowers, birds or lizards because the author calls them “they”, only the White Rose-Tree is “she» but the Tulips, the Cactus, the red Geranium are “they”, on the other hand such a usual thing as a sundial is a real person, it’s “he”, very proud, strict, with a philosophical point of view on what is what.

The end of the tale is sad; no one is upset or sorry for the little Dwarf’s death, the last words in the tale are the words of the Infanta “who curled her dainty rose-leaf lips in pretty disdain, “For the future let those who come to play with me have no hearts.”

One more tale deals with our religious understanding of the soul. As all Christians we believe in souls that we have; they live with us all our lives and leave us only after our death. In the fairy tale “**The Fisherman and** **His Soul”** we bump into the conflict when the soul lives separately, gets experiences, enriches it with knowledge but, on the other hand, can’t exist without body. Love makes the young fisherman lose the dearest of all human qualities, his soul. In this fairy tale we meet the little Mermaid, the Tritons, the Sirens and the King. All these Sea-folk have common for them appearance and behavour, only their descriptions due to O. Wilde’s style are extremely bright and full of precious stones and metals.

For example the palace of the King “is all of amber, with a roof of clear emerald and a pavement of bright pearl; and the gardens of the sea where the great filigrane fans of coral wave all day long and fish dart like silver birds…”

(“The Fisherman and his Soul”, p.135)

The Witch is a common character for fairy tales, and in this one we see not an ugly old witch but a superb beauty who asks the fisherman for a dance in moonbeams. All witches are powerful creatures and this one “can turn autumn leaves into gold and weave the pale moonbeams into silver” and she will show all her magic only for a dance with the fisherman and mainly for his immortal soul.

(“The Fisherman and his Soul”, p.142)

Describing the Witch O. Wilde doesn’t skimp in words, brilliant metaphors and epithets to show us the young Witch in all her beauty “ grass-green eyes, red hair streaming in the wind and a dress of gold tissue embroidered with peacocks’ eyes and a little cap of green velvet”.

It’s difficult to speak about the personification of the soul; though all human beings have souls and, only because of souls, they are human beings.

Nevertheless we can take this personification as an example in our analysis. The soul is afraid to go into the cruel world without the heart.

In this case O. Wilde speaks about the Soul as “it” or “he”, which depends on the narration. Firstly, the Soul is it “its voice was low and flute-like, and its lips hardly move while it spoke”, in his travels-pilgrimages the Soul turns into” he” gaining knowledge, experiences and human qualities. What attracts the Soul? Firstly, it is the East, because “from the East cometh everything that is wise”, secondly, it is the South, because “from the South cometh everything that is precious”, the third and the last story about the Soul’s journeys seduces the Fisherman because the Soul describes the dances of a graceful young girl whose “face was veiled with a veil of gauze, but her feet were naked. Naked were her feet, and they moved over the carpet like little white pigeons. Now when the young Fisherman heard the words of his Soul, he remembered that the little mermaid had no feet and could not dance.” Human feelings and not high desires lead the Fisherman away from the sea in search of a marvelous dancer and her white quick feet. And his immortal Soul not only learns wisdom and knowledge of the world but also its vice and evil. But what can the Soul without the heart do? It can betray, kill, seduce and deceive.

The Soul, like a real person, makes the Fisherman steal, kill and betray his love.

“And ever did his Soul tempt him with evil, and whisper of terrible things. Yet did it not prevail against him, so great was the power of his love”.

(“The Fisherman and his Soul”, p.172)

“Lo! Now I have tempered thee with evil, and I have tempered thee with good, and thy love is stronger than I am. Wherefore will I enter thee no longer, but I pray thee to suffer me to enter thy heart, that I may be one with thee even as before”…”Surely thou mayest enter”, said the young Fisherman, “for in the days when with no heart thou didst go through the world thou must have much suffered”.

(“The Fisherman and his Soul”, p.173)

After a long struggle the Fisherman loses his battle because he is too much a man even without his Soul and as a result he loses his love which finishes in the death of a little Mermaid.

“…and lying at his feet the young Fisherman saw the body of the little Mermaid. Dead at his feet it was lying”.

(“The Fisherman and his Soul”, p.174)

The last but not the least fairy-tale of O. Wilde is **“The Star Child”.** All examples of personification we can find at the beginning of the fairy-tale.

The wonders start when the two woodcutters pass the Mountain-Torrent, it is “she,” and she is hanging motionless in air, for the Ice-king kissed her. Then all the wild animals and birds in the forest discuss the “perfectly monstrous weather”. The wolf, that is personified in a masculine gender has a thoroughly practical mind and is never at a loss for a good argument, he is an educated gentleman but accuses the Government in all the faults. His opponent, the Woodpecker, is a born philosopher, but doesn’t care an atomic theory for explanations. The little Linnets, the Rabbits and the little Squirrels are spoken about in plural, that’s why it is impossible to speak about their gender. But they behave in a rather human way, and the author calls them “people”. As the weather is very cold, the mood of the characters is different. The Linnets are very pessimistic, they are sure that “the old Earth is dead, and they have laid her out in her white shroud”, the Turtle-doves take “a romantic view of the situation”, “ the Earth is going to be married, and this is her bridal dress”.

The elements of nature are also personified, for example, the Snow is a cruel lady, cruel to those who sleep in her arms.

The Star- child is described as a perfect beauty but cruel, selfish and proud.

“He was white and delicate as sawn ivory, and his curls, also were like the rings of the daffodil. His Lips, also, were like the petals of a red flower, and his eyes were like violets by a river of pure water, and his body like the narcissus of a field where the mower comes not.

Yet did his beauty work him evil. For he grew proud, and cruel, and selfish…No pity had he for the poor, or for those who were blind or maimed or in any way afflicted, but would cast stones at them…”

(“The Star-Child”, p. 184)

The boy is to ask for help while looking for his mother, but the wild animals can’t help him. The Mole has been blinded by the Star-child; the Linnet has lost the wings for his pleasure and the Squirrel’s mother has been slain. But the animals speak to him and explain their attitude to an ugly creature with “the face of a toad and body like an adder”. Again the author shows to us that living beings are more noble and honest than human beings. Who helps him find pieces of white gold, then of yellow gold and the third one which is red? – The Hare.

**3.2 GENDER AND SIMILES**

**Simile** is a lexical stylistic device when a meaning or phenomenon is explained by comparing it with another meaning or phenomenon .Simile is very close to comparison when two objects belonging to one class of things are compared with the purpose to establish the degree of their sameness or difference. To use a simile is to characterize one object by bringing it into contact with another object belonging to an entirely different class of things. Comparison takes into consideration all properties of the two objects, stressing the one that is compared. Simile includes all the properties of the two objects except one, which is common to them. Simile has formal elements in their structure:

1. a pair of objects
2. connective words such as: like, such, such as, as if, as though, seem, etc.

Oscar Wilde’s similes are the perfect work of imagination. Everybody uses similes in his everyday speech, but literary similes gain an especially wonderful character. They make our speech more expressive and our words more striking.

In our research we divide all the similes into groups according to their gender and add one more group for the characters whose gender is impossible to indentify.

The Swallow in the fairy-tale “The Happy Prince” describes Egypt to the Happy Prince in such a way:

“At noon the yellow lions come down to the water’s edge to drink. *They* *have eyes like green beryls, and their roar is louder than the roar of the* *cataract*. “

(“The Happy Prince”, p.33)

And the Swallow promises the Prince *“The ruby shall be redder than a* *red rose, and the sapphire shall be as blue as the great sea”,*

The Swallow tells the blind Prince stories of what he has seen in strange lands, about “*the Sphinx, who is as old as the world itself. The King of* *the Mountains of the Moon, who is as black as ebony…”*

(“The Happy Prince”, p. 35-36)

And the Prince explains to the bird that “*There is no Mystery* so *great as Misery.”*

(“The Happy Prince”, p.36)

Another male personage in the fairy-tale “The Devoted friend” is the green Linnet, who narrates the story of Little Hans and the Miller, describes his main heroes in such words, “…*nothing gave him greater* *pleasure than to listen to all wonderful things the Miller used to say about* *unselfishness of true friendship.”*

(“The Devoted Friend”, p.55)

The Water –rat in the same fairy-tale behaves like the critic and in the situations he doesn’t know what to say and utters “Pooh.”

The tale “The Remarkable Rocket” gives its male characters to use similes in its full might. The most prominent personage is the Remarkable Rocket.

*“Here you are laughing and making merry just as if the Prince and Princess had not just been married.”*

The most prominent personage of the masculine gender in fairy-tale “The Remarkable Rocket” is the Rocket. His speech is extremely sophisticated as the hero wants to be acknowledgeable, noble and important. While other characters are murmuring, whispering and stumbling he speaks as if “he was dictating his memoirs” and in general he has “a most distinguished manner” of speaking and behaving. About his sensitive soul he says,

*“No one in the whole world is so sensitive as I am”*

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p.72)

Speaking about the wedding the Rocket gives much importance to his “person” and role in the event. He foresees the future of the Prince and Princes and compares their son to the Prince.

*“… a little fair-haired boy with violet eyes like the Prince himself…”*

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p.74)

Touched by his own story, the Rocket burst into real tears “*which* *flowed down his stick like rain-drops”* and this puts the end to a brilliant carrier of the Rocket, who is quite sure in his importance and extraordinarily “*Genius like mine is sure to be appreciated some day.”*

In the fairy-tale “The Fisherman and his soul” the Soul is of two genders:

When it is with the Fisherman it is of the neuter gender and when it travels around the world it is a man. Only in his wandering the Soul uses similes describing his journeys.

“*The people went to and fro over the plain like flies crawling upon a of polished copper disk”*

(The Fisherman and His Soul”, p.149)

“*Suffer me to enter into thee, and none will be as wise as thou”*

“*Love is better than Wisdom”*

*“Nay, there is nothing better than Wisdom”*

*“The wine of Schiraz, which is as sweet as honey”*

(“The Fisherman and His Soul”, p. 157-159)

In his second journey the Soul sees even more wonders and describes them as vividly as it is possible to seduce the Fisherman with everything that is precious, with everything that is wise, with everything that can seduce the Fisherman– a woman who is very pale *“I had never seen any one so pale,” “like a slim reed of crystal a fountain hung in the dusky air” and “the cypress trees were like burnt-out torches”* here arethe riches which the Soul proposes to the Fisherman.

It’s impossible to mention similes in the fairy-tale “The Star-Child”.

Here we can’t speak about the speech of the personified characters but we can avoid the similes used in the description of the child. Ivory, daffodils, violets and the narcissus are used in the depiction of the child: flowers and jewellery are aimed to finish the image of the child.

“*And every year he became more beautiful to look at, so that all those who dwelt in the village were filled with wonder, for, while they were swarthy and black-haired. He was white and delicate as sawn ivory, and his curls were like rings of the daffodil. His lips, also, were like the petals of a red flower, and his eyes were like violets by a river of pure water, and his body like the narcissus of a field where the mower comes not.”*

(“The Star-Child”, p.183)

In our research we have come to the conclusion that all the genders in O. Wilde’s fairy-tales use similes, but as the masculine gender is represented by a greater amount of characters, the usage of simile by them is more often. Some characters of the feminine gender are not gifted with the speech, so only in their description similes are used.

The Nightingale in the fairy-tale “The Nightingale and the Rose” is a character of the feminine gender. Her speech is appealing; she dreams of love, is in love and scarifies her life for the sake of love. Her picture of the student is full of similes.

“…*His hair is dark as the hyacinth-blossom, and his lips are red as the rose of his desire; bur passion has his face like pale ivory, and sorrow has* *set her seal upon his brow”.*

(The Nightingale and the Rose”, p. 40)

And here comes the bunch of similes when the Nightingale declares her own understanding of a true lover, who she sees in the student.

*“Surely love is a wonderful thing. It is more precious than emeralds and* *dearer than fine opals”*

*“She passed through the grove like a shadow and like a shadow she sailed across the garden.”*

*“Love is wiser than Philosophy, and mightier that Power”*

(“The Nightingale and the Rose”, p.40)

The gender of plural nouns can’t be identified in this fairy-tale. The rose-trees are used in plural and we organized them in our research in a separate group while making a statistical analysis of simile usage.

*“My roses are white, as white as the foam of the sea, and whiter than the snow upon the mountain… My rose is yellow, as yellow as the hair of the mermaiden who sits upon an amber throne, and yellower than the daffodil that blooms in* *meadow before the mower comes with his scythe…My roses are red, as red as the feet of the dove, and redder than the great fans th*e *of coral that wave in the ocean cavern.”*

(The Nightingale and the Rose”, p.42)

Another female character in the fairy-tale “The Remarkable Rocket” is the Roman Candle who is also discussing the questions of love and romance utters:

“*Romance never dies. It is like the moon, and lives for ever”*

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p. 71)

The fairy-tale “The Birthday of Infanta” contains many personified creatures: they are not only animals and birds but also flowers and insects. Some of them use similes in their speech. For example, the Lizards consider themselves to be the most beautiful and graceful creatures in the world.

*“Every one cannot be as beautiful as a lizard”*

(“The Remarkable Rocket”, p.122)

**3.3 GENDER AND EPITHETS**

**Epithet** is a lexical stylistic device, an attributive characterization of a person, thing or phenomenon. It is, as a rule, simple in form. In majority of cases it consists of one word: an adjective or adverb, modifying respectively nouns or verbs.

Epithet on the whole shows purely individual emotional attitude of the speaker towards the object spoken of. It describes the object as it appears to the speaker. Epithet expresses a characteristic of an object both existing and imaginary. Its basic features are its emotiveness and subjectivity: the characteristic attached to the object a quality. It is always chosen by the speaker himself.

“… and his hands are like *withered* leaves”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.31)

“This broken *lead* heart will not melt in the furnace.”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.38)

According to these examples we can say that epithet is a word or word combination, which in its attributive use discloses the individual emotionally coloured attitude of the writer to the object he describes. It is a form of subjective evaluation. It is a description, brief and compact, which singles out the thing described.

“A *horrible* odour filled the place”

“He saw the great *honey-coloured* moon hanging in the *dusky* air”

(“The Young King”, p.96)

Epithet has remained over the centuries the most widely used stylistic device, which is understandable; it offers the opportunities of qualifying every object from the author’s partial and subjective viewpoint.

Epithets make the speech more colourful, vivid and glamorous. Oscar Wilde uses a great amount of epithets in his fairy tales. His epithets are based on different sources, such as nature, art, history, literature, man, etc. And all of them are brilliant. They reflect Wilde’s opinions and viewpoints on deviating things. They give emphasis and rhythm to the text. That is why O. Wilde may be called a master of bright and striking epithets.

In our research we analyze the usage of epithets by the personified characters of different genders and come to the conclusion that there is no gender influence on the usage of epithets.

“How cool I feel! said the boy… and he sank into a *delicious* slumber.”

“The Swallow really had a *good* heart”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.33)

“I am doing to the House of death. Death is the *brother of Sleep,* is he not?”

(“The Happy Prince”, p. 38)

These epithets belong to the male characters but those which belong to the female are also poetic and touching. The Nightingale builds a red rose

*“out of music by moonlight* and her heart’s blood”. The rose created by the little Nightingale firstly is *silver* as the *wings of the dawn*, and then the rose has a *delicate flush of pink* like *the flush in the face of the* *bridegroom”* and when the rose is finished the *white Moon* heard one last burst of music.

In the fairy tale “The Selfish Giant” nature elements are elegantly described: here the Snow has her *great white cloak*, the trees are *painted* *silver* and the North Wind is *wrapped in furs.* *The branches* of the trees are *golden* and *silver fruit* hang down from them only because *the most* *beautiful flowers* of all are *children*.

“The devoted Friend” gives us more examples of epithets. Little Hans has a *kind heart*; the *primroses* open their *pale yellow stars*; *friendship* has *theory and practice*; *the rain* falls in *torrents* – all these epithets give music and rhythm to the story.

In the fairy tale “The Remarkable Rocket*” the pensive Catherine Wheel* prides herself on her *broken heart*, the Rocket himself is a tall, *supercilious-looking*, and the Cracker *exploded with laughter,* all fireworks are *wonderful golden flowers with blossoms of fire*; a little frog has *bright jeweled eyes*, *croaking is the most musical sound in the world*, the Dragon-fly spreads *a pair of lovely gauze wings.*

In “The Birthday of Infanta” there are lots of epithets when the author pictures the court, the Infanta, a marvelous bull-fight, the whole performance and the little Dwarf. The personified characters are flowers, animals and birds in this fairy tale. The old Sundial has *a long shadowy* finger, the lizards are *extremely philosophical by nature*, the Hare has *delicate footprints.*

* 1. **GENDER AND METAPHORS**

**Metaphor** is a lexical stylistic device based on analogy, on traceable similarity, on transference of names. This transference is based on the associated likeness between two objects. A metaphor becomes a stylistic device when two different phenomenal things, events, ideas, actions are simultaneously brought to mind by the imposition of some or all of the inherent properties of one object on the other, which by nature is deprived of these properties.

Any metaphor can exist only within a context. Metaphors play an important role in the development of language. Words acquire new meanings by transference.

Metaphors take one of the most honourable places in Wilde’s art; they show his unlimited power of imagination and give certain charm and musical perception through the plain language combinations.

As an illustration of O. Wilde’s skill in using every nuance of the language to serve some special stylistic purpose we can’t but mention his usage of metaphors by different personified personages. The frequency of their usage doesn’t vary much when male or female characters are speaking

In “The Happy Prince” the swallow is “so attached by her (the Reed) waist that he stopped to talk to her” and “the Reed made the most graceful curtseys” but nevertheless “she was so attached to her house”. When the Swallow meets the Happy Prince, he was greatly impressed by him.

“The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden checks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little Swallow was filled with pity”

(“The Happy Prince”, p.29)

The little Swallow comes of “a family famous for its agility”, while the Happy Prince is very static and symbolizes the prosperity and richness of the city’s noble people and when all the golden leaves are removed from the Happy Prince, he “looked quite dull and grey”.

“The Nightingale and the Rose” gives us more examples of metaphors, the Nightingale “soared into the air and passed through the grove like a shadow and like a shadow she sailed across the garden.” The Rose Tree is afraid to announce the price for a red rose because even from its point of view it’s very high.”

“You must build it out of music by moonlight, and stain it with your own heart’s blood. You must sing with your breast against a thorn. All night you must sing to me, and the thorn must pierce your heart, and your life blood must flow into my veins and become mine”

(“The Nightingale and the Rose”, p.42)

And when the rose is ready the poor little swallow can’t enjoy it *“…then she* *gave one last burst of music”* and “Echo bore it to her purple cavern in the hills”.

In “The Selfish Giant” elements of nature are personified, they are speechless but the author describes them using a wide range of lexical stylistic devices including metaphors. The North Wind utters several phrases but they are worth remembering.

“This is a delightful spot, we must ask the Hail on a visit” So the hail came. Every day for three hours he rattled on the roof of the castle till he broke most of the states, and then he ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dress in grey, and his breath was like ice.”

(“The Selfish Giant”, p. 49)

In the fairy tale “The Young King” all his dreams are metaphoric as they show the price of all the beauty he surrounds himself with. The personified characters are Death, Avarice, Ague, and Plaque.

“And Death laughed, and took a cup, and dipped it into a pool of water, and out of the cup rose Ague. She passed through the great multitude, and a third of they lay dead. A cold mist followed her, and the water-snakes ran by her side”

(“The Young King”, p.99)

The fairy tale “The Fisherman and His Soul” is metaphoric itself. In a way it answers the question what a person can do if he has no soul. For the Fisherman it is difficult to get rid of his soul but his love to the little mermaid is so passionate and strong that he easily sends his soul away.

Describing his journey the Soul turns into a male personage and speaks marvelously and seducing about all wonders he sees in faraway countries.

“And his Soul that was within him called out to him and said, ”Lo! I have dwelt with thee for all these years, and have been thy servant. Send me not away from thee now, for what evil have I done thee?”

“And the young fisherman laughed. “Thou hast done me no evil, but I have no need of thee.”

(“The Fisherman and His Soul”, p. 147)

For three long years the Soul seduces the Fisherman with wisdom, riches and manages to seduce only by the dancer’s legs.

“When I left thee I turned my face to the East and journeyed. From the East cometh everything that is wise.”

(The Fisherman and His Soul”, p. 149)

“And the Soul said to him, “When I left thee, I turned my face to the South and journeyed. From the South cometh everything that is precious.”

(“The Fisherman and His Soul”, p.156)

The end of this fairy tale is rather sad: the little mermaid is dead, the Fisherman’s heart breaks and only then the Soul finds an entrance and enters the body of the Fisherman.

“The black sea came nearer, and the white foam moaned like a leper. With white claws of foam the sea grabbled at the shore… And his Soul besought him to depart, but he would not, so great was his love. And the sea came nearer, and sought to cover him with its waves, and when he knew that the end was at hand he kissed with mad lips the cold lips of the Mermaid, and the heart that was within him brake. And as through the fullness of his love his heart did break, the Soul found an entrance and entered in, and was one with him even as before. And the sea covered the young Fisherman with its waves.”

(“The Fisherman and His Soul”, p.173)

We analyze the usage of only three lexical stylistic devices by personified characters in O. Wilde’s fairy tales, and we can make a conclusion that they play an important role in creating the personified personages and influencing their speech. O. Wilde is a talented writer who can make us feel the way he wants us to do. The coexistence is built up so subtly, that the reader remains unaware of the process. It is even stronger when the aesthetic function begins to manifest itself clearly and unequivocally through gradual increase in intensity, in the foregrounding of certain features.

One can find more examples of the mentioned stylistic devices in the fairy tales, but our aim is not to find all the examples of similes, epithets and metaphors but to show their usage in the speech of the personified charters of different genders.

The research of the clear-cut and elegant style of O. Wilde can be endless, but even if one doesn’t investigate the fairy tales and reads them simply for pleasure, he will appreciate rhythmical and musical value of the author’s language because O.Wilde’s writing is skilful, playing and understandable to everybody. It has a great charm and brilliancy of the author’s personality.

1. **CONCLUSIONS**

Gender investigations are extremely developing nowadays and are one of the most efficient ones in the sphere of humanities. Each language reflects the peculiarities of a society where it has been formed. It shows all relations in this society including the gender ones. That’s why it is always clear when there appear some irregularities and deviations in patterns and stereotypes. All these irregularities and deviations are well seen in O.Wilde’s fairy tales. All personified characters in his fairy tales have vivid gender peculiarities of their mind, the way of thinking and speaking.

O. Wilde’s fairy tales include two books “The Happy Prince and other Tales” and “A House of Pomegranates”. These books, in a very paradox way, reflect the aesthetical ideas of Oscar Wilde and at the same time reject them sharply.

O. Wilde’s fairy tales present a very unusual phenomenon from many points of view. The scientific researchers admit a different literary and vivid scenic influence on plots, dialogues and style of these works. The plot and stylistic similarity of O. Wilde’s fairy tales are very obvious but many critics admit that his fairy tales have their own, peculiar and original odour.

Personification is a major lexical stylistic device specific for fairy tales. It is impossible to define the gender of the characters out of the context. To prove this fact we have conducted an experiment while doing our research. The students of the 10th forms were questioned twice to identify the gender of the characters of the fairy tale: the first time before reading the fairy tales and the second time after reading three fairy tales. The results of the experiment are given in the Appendices.

While doing the research we have found out that all the personified characters can be divided into four groups: masculine character -32%, feminine – 29%, neuter- 16% and one more group when it is impossible to define the gender as the nouns are used in the plural number – 23%.

The results of the lexical stylistic analysis of the fairy tales (only the usage of similes, metaphors and epithets have been analyzed) show that all the personified characters use the named lexical stylistic devices approximately equally. The statistics of their usage show the following results.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | Masculine  (% per 20 pages) | Feminine  (% per 20 pages) | Neuter  (% per 20 pages) |
| Metaphor | 35 | 35 | 30 |
| Epithet | 31 | 30 | 37 |
| Simile | 34 | 35 | 33 |

In O. Wilde’s fairy tales as in fairy tale in general animals, birds, plants and even a statue and a sundial are personified, thus in the fairy tale “The Happy Prince” The Prince and the Swallow are of the masculine gender and the author gifts them with such male qualities as nobleness, bravery and compassion to the poor and disabled. The Reed, in the same fairy tale, is a personage of a feminine gender, speechless but a coquette and attached to her family. One more character in the fairy tale “The Star-Child”, the Water Rat, is a convinced bachelor, hating children but pretending to be a literary critic. The Sundial in the fairy tale “The Birthday of Infanta” is, as it is peculiar to clocks, a very punctual, stiffed gentleman with good manners and acquaintance with the king. The Nightingale in the fairy tale “The Nightingale and The Rose” is a character of the feminine gender, which believes in true love and sacrifices her life for its sake. The Remarkable Rocket, in the fairy tale of the same name, is a personage of the masculine gender, who is sure of the fact that the world is created for him, he has his philosophical vision of this world, and a rich vocabulary where many words are confused. There are masculine characters in the fairy tale (32%), but the feminine ones obtain the same brilliant characters, appearances and speech. Doing the research we propose the hypothesis that the female characters have more expressive and vivid speech, using more similes, epithets and metaphors. The stylistic analysis and statistics refuse our hypothesis but we explain this fact by the peculiarities of O. Wilde’s style which reflect the rules and regulations of his time concerning the women’s behavour.

Thus, in the result of our research we can come to the following conclusions:

* In O. Wilde’s fairy tales there are more male gender characters than female ones (see the Appendices, Table 1 and Diagram 1).
* The characters of all the genders in personifications use similes, epithets and metaphors in the same way (see the Appendices).
* Similes are more often used by the personified characters than the other indicated lexical stylistic devices.

1. **REFERENCES**
2. Galperin I. R. An essay in stylistic analysis / by I. R.Galperin Moscow, 1976. – p.325
3. Galperin I. R. Stylistics / by I. R. Galperin. – Moscow : Higher School, 1997. – p.451
4. Kukharenko V. A. Seminars in Style / by V. A. Kukharenko. – Moscow, 1971. – p. 270
5. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary / compiled by A. Hornby. – Oxford ; London, 2005. – p.1949
6. T. A. Sebcok . Style in language / by T. A. Sebcok. – Cambridge (Massachusetts), 1960. – p. 215
7. Wilde O. Fairy Tales / O. Wilde. – Moscow : Progress Publishers, 1970. – p.210
8. Чуковский К. И. “Люди и книги / К. И Чуковский. – Москва, 1960. – c.321

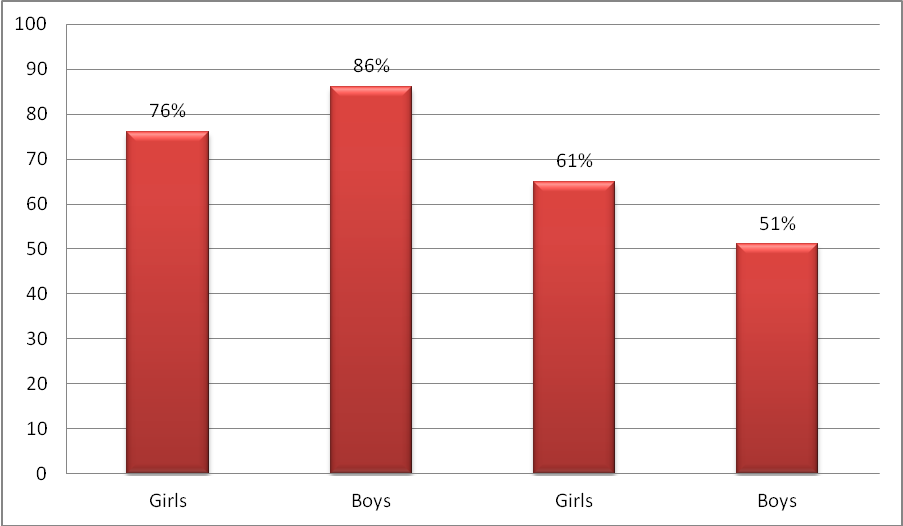
# 

1. **APPENDICES**

**Table 1: Gender Personifications**

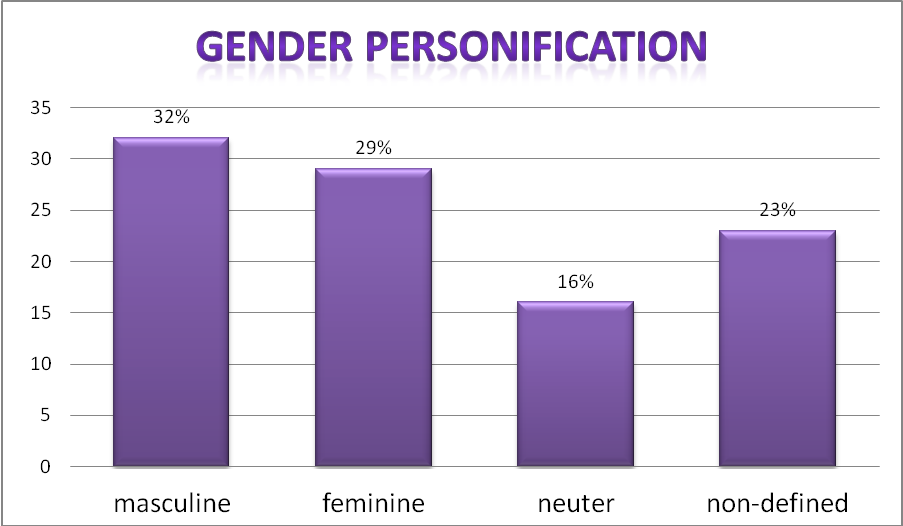
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Characters | | he | she | | | it |
| 1 | Prince |  |  | |  | |
| 2 | Swallow |  |  | |  | |
| 3 | Nightingale |  |  | |  | |
| 4 | Rose |  |  | |  | |
| 5 | Oak-tree |  |  | |  | |
| 6 | Remarkable Rocket |  |  | |  | |
| 7 | A Little Frog |  |  | |  | |
| 8 | The Star-Child |  |  | |  | |
| 9 | The soul |  |  |  | | |
| 10 | Death |  |  |  | | |

**Diagram 2: Statistical Analysis of the Survey Performed by the pupils.**

****

Before reading After reading

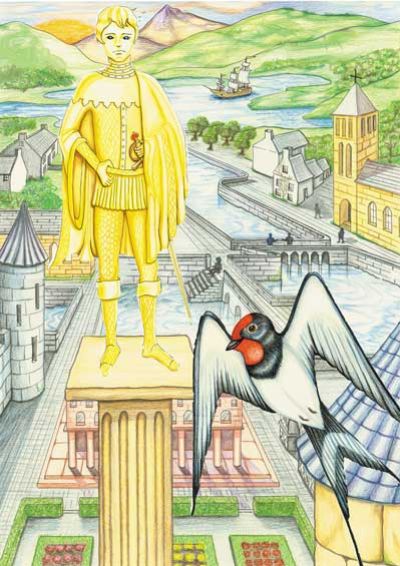
**Diagram 1: Gender Personifications**

****

**Table 2: Metaphors, Epithets, Similes Used by Personified Characters**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Stylistic Device | Masculine  (% per 20 pages) | Feminine  (% per 20 pages) | Neuter  (% per 20 pages) |
| Similes | 34 | 35 | 33 |
| Epithets | 31 | 30 | 37 |
| Metaphors | 35 | 35 | 30 |

1. **ILLUSTRATIONS**



“The Happy Prince and The Swallow”



“The Fisherman and His Soul”



“The Birthday of Infanta”



“The Remarkable Rocket”



“The Selfish Giant”



“The Star Child”