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**DEVIATION IN NARRATIVE STRATEGIES
IN KURT VONNEGUT'S
SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE: A COGNITIVE
POETIC ANALYSIS¹**

**KURT VONNEGUT'IN SLAUGHTERHOUSE
FIVE ROMANINDA ANLATI
STRATEJİLERİNDEKİ SAPMANIN BİLİŞSEL
POETİKA ANALİZİ**

ABSTRACT

The discipline of literary theory and criticism has undergone a paradigm shift in the way it has attempted to address the concerns linked to the nature of literature in tandem with the cognitive revolution. Cognitive poetics, which has emerged as a result of this paradigm shift in literary criticism, aims to comprehend the procedures involved in the production and reception of literary language by bringing insights from disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, and stylistics. In this article, Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* has been analyzed with text world theory, figure-ground theory, and schemata theory which are three analysis methods in cognitive poetics. After the introduction, some information about the main tenets of cognitive poetics has been provided and the aforementioned three cognitive poetic methods have been briefly explained. In the analysis part, *Slaughterhouse Five* has been analyzed with these three methods. It has been observed that the novel shows significant variance in terms of world creation and layering from the classical novel. Along with this variation, it has been seen that the figures and grounds have been manipulated and literary schemata have been restructured in *Slaughterhouse Five* to present the bombardment of Dresden in a novel way.

Keywords: Cognitive poetics, world layering, foregrounding, backgrounding, schematic disruption.

ÖZET

Edebi eleştiri kuramı, son zamanlarda yaşanan bilişsel devrimle birlikte edebiyatın doğasıyla bağlantılı soruları ele alma biçiminde bir paradigma değişikliğine uğramıştır. Edebiyat çözümlemesindeki bu paradigma değişikliğinin bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan bilişsel poetika; psikoloji, dilbilim ve biçembilim gibi disiplinlerden elde edilen verileri eleştiri kuramıyla birleştirerek edebi dilin üretimi ve algılanmasıyla ilgili süreçleri açıklamayı amaçlar. Bu makalede Kurt Vonnegut'un *Slaughterhouse Five* adlı eseri, bilişsel poetikanın üç analiz yöntemi olan metin dünyaları kuramı, şekil-zemin kuramı ve şema kuramı ile incelenmiştir. Giriş bölümünden sonra bilişsel poetikanın temel ilkeleri hakkında bilgi verilmiş ve söz konusu üç bilişsel poetika analiz yöntemi kısaca açıklanmıştır. Makalenin çözümleme bölümünde *Slaughterhouse Five* bu üç bilişsel poetika yöntemiyle çözümlenmiş ve bu romanın metin dünyası oluşturma ve katmanlandırma açısından klasik romandan önemli farklılıklar gösterdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Bu farklılıklarla birlikte, Dresden kentinin bombalanmasını yeni bir üslupla sunmak için *Slaughterhouse Five*'de figür ve zeminlerin manipüle edildiği ve edebi şemaların yeniden yapılandırıldığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bilişsel poetika, dünya katmanlaması, öne çıkarma, arka plana itme, şematik bozulma.

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Introduction

Slaughterhouse Five, written by Kurt Vonnegut in 1969, depicts one of the deadliest mass murders of the 20th century. Vonnegut, whose family was of German origin, was born and raised in the USA. He served as an American soldier in Dresden, Germany, where the German forces took him prisoner and confined him in a meat locker with some other prisoners of war. The American troops bombarded Dresden on February 13, 1945 and it is estimated that this bombardment resulted in the deaths of more than 130.000 civilians (Diwany, 2014, p. 83). Vonnegut survived the attack with some other prisoners and German officials because the meat locker where they were being kept was one of the rare places that were not damaged during the attack. This bombardment had not been expected by the inhabitants of the city because Dresden was a center of art and literature rather than having military significance (Işık, 2016, p. 361).

Vonnegut incorporates elements of fantasy into the reality of the Second World War and the bombardment of Dresden. During the war, Billy Pilgrim, the protagonist of the novel, is enrolled in the army against the Nazi regime, and he serves as a chaplain's assistant. Just before he is captured in the Battle of Bulge, he sees his entire life in one glimpse, which is the starting point of his time travel. After they are transferred to Dresden and put into a meat locker, the city is attacked by the American army with heavy bombardment. Just like Vonnegut, Billy is lucky enough to be among the few survivors, and he is entitled to collect and classify dead bodies. During his captivity, Billy witnesses so many cruel events. For example, Edgar Derby, who has always protected Billy and the other vulnerable soldiers, is killed just because he has taken a teapot from the rubble during corpse classifications. A few days after the attack, the Russian troops invade the city, and Billy is freed with some other POWs. After he is released, he graduates from the school of optometry, gets married, and has two children.

Billy claims that after his daughter's wedding, he was kidnapped and sent to the planet Tralfamadore, where he was paired with Montana Wildhack, a magazine model. To better comprehend life on Earth, the Tralfamadorians keep them in a dome-shaped enclosure and watch their activities. Billy claims that the Tralfamadorian viewpoint on life differs significantly from that of humans. Because life is seen in four dimensions by Tralfamadorians, they can view time as a whole as opposed to three dimensional human vision. They can spontaneously see every instant since time is like a giant spread sheet to them. The Tralfamadorian viewpoint on free will also has some significant differences. Billy is informed by the Tralfamadorians that because of their cognitive impairment, humans on Earth have invented the idea of free will. While he is delivering a conference about the inhabitants of the Tralfamadore, Billy claims that he is going to be killed by one of the American soldiers he served together, and his prophecy comes true when he finishes his speech.

1. Cognitive Poetics

The goal of cognitive poetics, a relatively young branch of study, is to comprehend the fundamental mechanisms that characterize literary language. One of the critical moments for the development of cognitive poetics was when a debate on "Literature and the Cognitive Revolution" was hosted by the Modern Language Association in 1998 (Barry, 2002, p. 311). The phrases "cognitive" and "poetics" were firstly used together by Reuven Tsur in the late 20th century to refer to the use of the data obtained from cognitive linguistics for the analysis and interpretation of poetry. The majority of Tsur's research focused on the analysis of poetry; nevertheless, this new

discipline has become prevalent in the analysis of nearly all literary genres recently (Görmez & Tunç, 2021, p. 179).

According to Martin Middeke and colleagues, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's work *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), in which they assert that metaphor is a neurobiological reality rather than just a figure of speech, lays the groundwork for cognitive poetics. According to Lakoff and Johnson's idea of metaphor, the human brain has a propensity to correlate abstract concepts with more grounded and concrete ones (Middeke et al., 2012, p. 248). For instance, if we consider the phrase "she is very warm to me," we can see that it does not describe a condition of temperature because the term "warm" has not been used in its literal sense: It has been used to mean an expression of welcome or kindness. Along with other conceptual blendings, the notion of conceptual metaphor put forward by Lakoff and Johnson seeks to explain why temperature is frequently used to describe emotional states in various languages. Thus, it identifies the cognitive relationship between the source domains (e.g. temperature) and the target domains (e.g. emotion).

One of the most important approaches to literary analysis for cognitive poetics is text world theory, which was pioneered by linguist Paul Werth in his essays and his work *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse* (1999) published posthumously. According to the text world theory, texts cannot be understood in isolation from the sociocultural, and psychological conditions in which they are created. Therefore, it suggests segmenting linguistic events into three basic conceptual levels to address the issue of context. "Discourse worlds", the first of these representational levels or worlds, corresponds to the immediate setting of a linguistic event. Therefore, in a discourse world, there must be at least one listener or reader, and at least one speaker or writer (Gavins, 2000, p. 19). The participants' sociocultural backgrounds and the knowledge they share are extremely important components of the discourse world since they have the power to affect participants' perceptions and interpretations of the linguistic event.

Participants construct mental images of the linguistic signs so as to cognize them when a linguistic event occurs in the discourse world. These mental images, which may not precisely reflect the real world due to individuals' prior experiences, are called "text worlds" (Hidalgo, 2000, p. 76). Text worlds, which refer to the second level of representation in discourse, are mental constructions that may be as complicated as discourse worlds depending on the sophistication of their world building elements, and they are typically related to situations which are far from deictic centre temporally and spatially (Werth, 1999, p. 86). The third layer in the cognitive representation of discourse is "sub-worlds" which are produced by variations in time and location in a text world. Direct speech, flashbacks, and flash-forwards are good examples of sub-worlds (Stockwell, 2013, p. 160). Sub-worlds has been referred to as "world switches" by Johanna Gavins, and she claims that they are just as sophisticated as text worlds with respect to the characters, content, and events (Gavins, 2007).

Another significant analytical technique that was incorporated from cognitive sciences into cognitive poetics is the notion of figures and grounds, which takes its origins from Gestalt psychology. The proponents of this idea maintain that the human brain does not pay equal attention to all external stimuli. Our minds rather favor stimulants that are more pertinent to our requirements and past experiences. The connection between this idea and the concept of foregrounding becomes clear when it is considered in terms of linguistic performance. Participants can be observed using grammatical forms such as aspect, tense, mode, and voice to highlight or

obscure information when discourse is examined at the sentential level. For instance, Stephen Wallace claims that when perfective aspect is used, the content is more foregrounded than when imperfective aspect is used because the use of perfective aspect points to completed events, which can be seen as function advancing, whereas imperfectives are primarily used to set the scene and introduce peripheral events (1982, p. 208).

The last cognitive poetic method used in this article is the theory of schemata. Shuying An outlines schemata in literary context into four categories in her article "Schema Theory in Reading". The first is known as "formal schemata" (An, 2013, pp. 130-131), which is about the organizational design and rhetorical differences across various genres. Techniques such as exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution, as well as several other elements of stories such as plotline, characterization, setting, etc., can be evaluated in light of formal schemata. The second kind of schemata Shuying An identifies is "content schemata" (An, 2013, pp. 130-131), which is related to readers' expectations regarding the content of the text, while the third kind is "cultural schemata" (An, 2013, pp. 130-131), which refers to the common knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs about literary texts. The final type of schemata is known as "linguistic schemata", which is essentially about linguistic knowledge, particularly in terms of grammatical structures and vocabulary (An, 2013, pp. 130-131).

2.1 Discourse World and Paratextual Sections in *Slaughterhouse Five*

It is possible to view *Slaughterhouse Five*'s opening and final chapters as parts of the discourse world rather than text worlds. This classification is mostly due to the author's employment of meta-fictional techniques in these two chapters. The narrator in the first and last chapters is mostly Kurt Vonnegut himself, as opposed to other chapters where the narrator is third-person omniscient. In contrast to the other chapters, in these two chapters Vonnegut tells the reader about real individuals, the real devastation of Dresden and the various stages involved in the production of the book.

In the beginning of *Slaughterhouse five* a quatrain from the anonymous Christmas carol *Away in a Manger* is seen follows:

The cattle are lowing

The Baby awakes

But the little Lord Jesus

No crying he makes (Vonnegut, 1969, prologue)

This religious song has intertextual connections with the account of the birth of Jesus in New Testament which reads as: "And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (New Testament, 1979/2013, Luke, pp. 2:7). The reference made here obviously draws attention to Jesus's tranquility while awakened by the lowing of the cattle. The last two lines of the quatrain use negation to establish a text world, as can be seen when the quatrain is analyzed in terms of text world theory. In these phrases, the material process of crying is negated. In order to remove the action of crying from perceptual space, the reader must first imagine that Lord Jesus, the baby, is crying in that space. So the reader is informed that there is a problem by the negated function

advancing proposition in these lines since the linguistic negation of crying indicates that crying is what is actually expected in that text world.

As well as referring to the silence of Jesus, these phrases refer to the silence of the protagonist actor Billy Pilgrim and, to some extent, Kurt Vonnegut's own silence when the rest of the novel is analyzed in terms of characterization. The following limerick also illustrates Vonnegut's silence, which he eventually breaks by writing *Slaughterhouse Five*:

*There was a young man from Stamboul
Who soliloquized thus to his tool:
You took all my wealth
And you ruined my health,
And you won't pee you old fool* (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 2-3)

The reader is introduced to this limerick, which may not seem very meaningful at first sight, just a few paragraphs into the discourse world of *Slaughterhouse Five*. However, a closer examination of the limerick's metaphorical meaning reveals that Vonnegut's mind and the tool of the man in the limerick represent two conceptually distinct input spaces which are merged to create a blended text world. The existential proposition "there is/are" introduces the limerick. Then a carrier actor who embodies the characteristics of being "young" and "from Stamboul" has been created. The young man from Stamboul is Vonnegut himself in the conceptual world. The next phrase increments the world with a function advancing proposition that is fulfilled with the enactor talking to "his tool" which refers his penis. The source domain of "tool" has been utilized to correspond to a mental state, namely Vonnegut's desire to write about Dresden, in the blended text world that he builds.

As seen in figure 2.1, direct speech is used to generate a sub-world or world switch in the lines that follow. The second discourse participant is unable to access this new world since it is created by an enactor, the young man, rather than a participant. The speaker conveys regret for the past using two epistemic propositions: "You took all my wealth" and "you ruined my health" There is another world switch following these two assertions, this time indicated by a temporal shift. The final phrase: "and you won't pee you old fool" relates to a future mental configuration, whilst the third and fourth lines indicate a world that corresponds to the past. These two sub-worlds share the same macro world of the limerick even though their temporal parameters are different. These lines contain a hypothetical text world. The three final lines can be read as "If you won't pee, why did you take my wealth and why did you ruin all my health" if some linguistic transformations are made. The protasis can be viewed as world-building elements in a hypothetical text world whereas apodosis typically denotes a function advancing proposition. In this hypothetical situation, it can be seen that the protasis of the world is negated. The situation at hand signals the necessity for the existence of what is negated from the text world, as it is typically the case with linguistic negation.

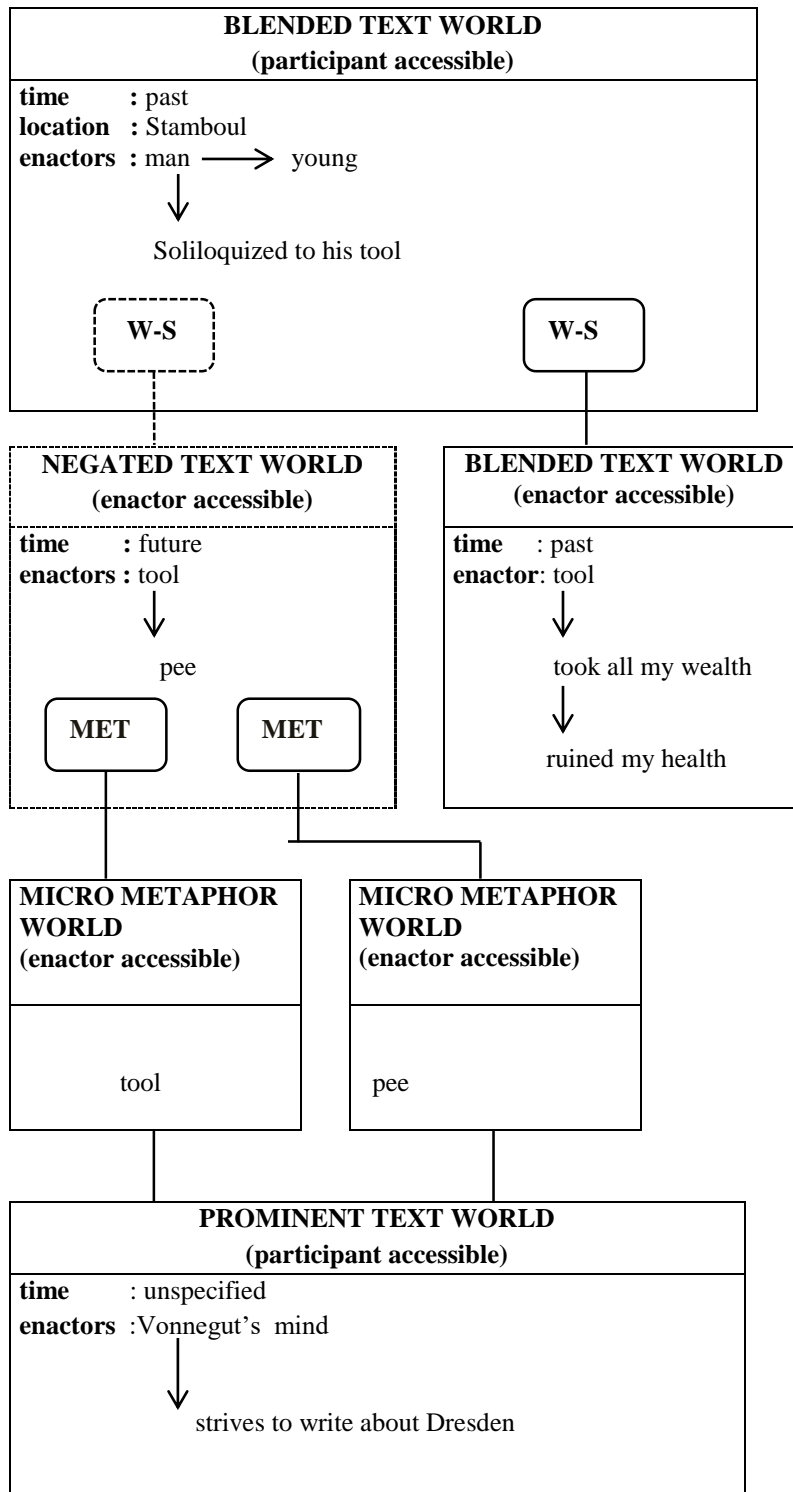


Figure 2.1. Text worlds of the limerick

We may now go on with examining the limerick's conceptual reflections or the connection between this limerick, and Vonnegut's mental condition about the bombing of Dresden and his silence. Vonnegut frequently indicates in the discourse world that the process of writing a novel about the bombing of Dresden has not been as straightforward as he had been anticipating. As a result, in the blended text world, the man from Stamboul (Istanbul) stands in for Vonnegut in the conceptual space while his tool stands in for Vonnegut's memory. The aerial bombardment of Dresden must have had a profound psychological impact on the author. Vonnegut saw the bombing in 1945, but he did not write *Slaughterhouse Five* until approximately 20 years later. Despite his

best efforts, he was unable to write about it because, in his own words, “there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre” (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 19). Therefore, for almost 20 years, his mind would not “pee” this massacre into words.

2. 2 Three Matrix Text Worlds in *Slaughterhouse Five*

There are hundreds of text worlds that are intricately connected in *Slaughterhouse Five*. Due to space constraints, it is impossible to fully analyse and explain each of these worlds. Therefore, three matrix text worlds that combine to form the mega-matrix world of *Slaughterhouse Five* will be examined in this article. The German city of Dresden is the first of these matrix text worlds. In *Slaughterhouse Five*, Dresden has been represented at two conceptual levels: The first level, which refers to the first and the last chapters, is the discourse world level where a discourse participant has described and commentated on the devastation of the city of Dresden. At this level, Kurt Vonnegut, who saw Dresden being bombarded in real life, serves as the narrator. As a result, the storytelling in these two chapters is homodiegetic and accessible to participants. On the other hand, the second level which is presented from the second chapter on is the text world level where the fictional story is told by an omniscient third-person narrator who is not present in the narrative. Thus, Dresden at textual level is heterodiegetic and enactor-accessible. The narration at this level exhibits variation between external and internal focalization, and the narrator typically uses the focalization of Billy Pilgrim.

Billy Pilgrim overhears an English soldier describing Dresden as follows before the American war prisoners are transferred there:

“You lads are leaving this afternoon for Dresden- a beautiful city. I am told. You won’t be cooped up like us. You will be out where the life is, and the food is certain to be more plentiful than here. If I may inject a personal note: It has been five years now since I have seen a tree or a flower or a woman or a child-or a dog or a cat or a place of entertainment, or a human being doing useful work of any kind.”

“You needn’t worry about bombs, by the way. Dresden is an open city. It is undefended and contains no war industries or troop concentrations of any importance.” (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 146)

Dresden has been portrayed with favourable qualities throughout this enactor-accessible text world. After Dresden is described as a beautiful city, a text world is formed by negating the behaviour of cooping, in it as it is shown in Figure 2.2. The dotted lines serve as the visual representations of the textual worlds produced by negation. Then, a different world is constructed by altering the world-building components such as time, place, and actors. The English soldier makes a comparison between Dresden and their current location by pointing to the last five years of his life in which animate entities and useful deeds are negated. The sentence “You needn't worry about bombs, by the way” (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 146) in the second paragraph establishes a deontic model world that is then enhanced with the negation of specific traits. The knowledge frames of the actors in this world are based on the assumption that the allied forces simply bomb the cities with military importance, and because Dresden is not one of those cities, it will not be attacked. Although neither in the discourse world nor in the text world it is anticipated that the allied forces will assault Dresden, they bombard the city killing thousands of people.

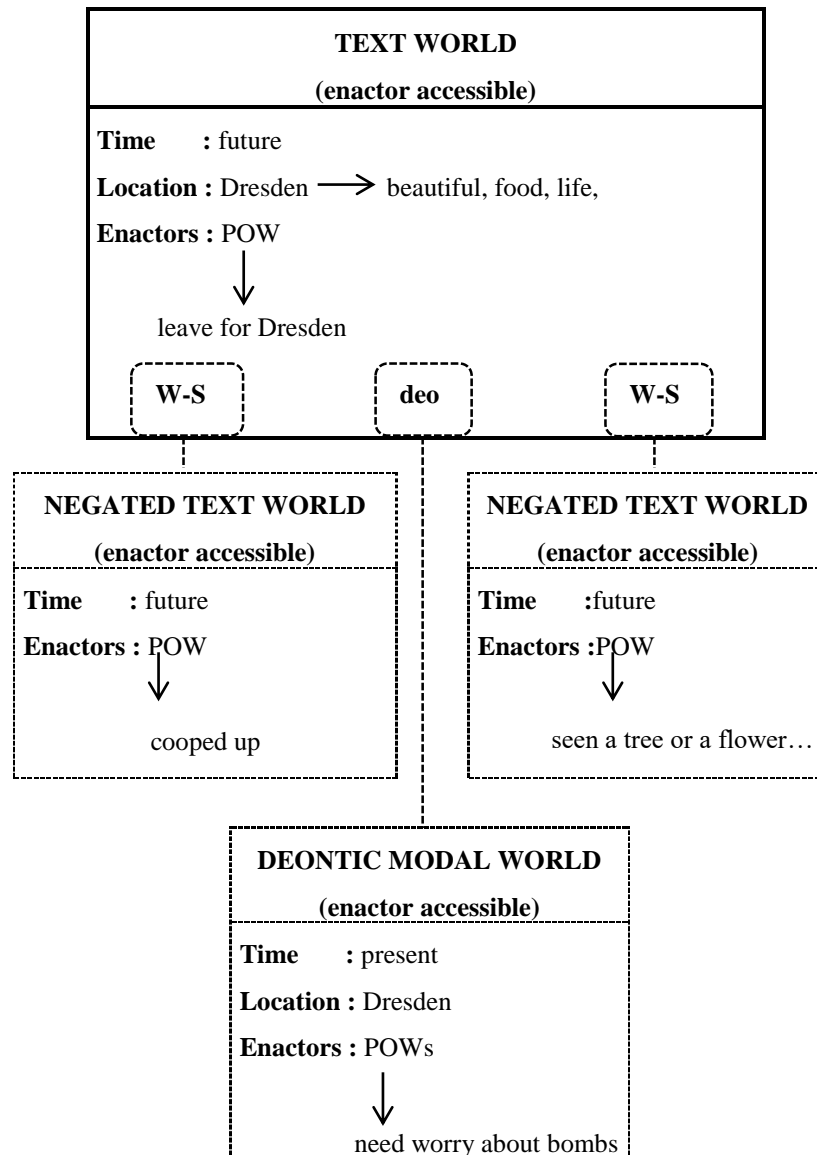


Figure 2.2 Sample text worlds from the matrix text world of Dresden

The second matrix text world is the fictional planet “Tralfamadore” where strange creatures change Billy Pilgrim's perspective on life. On the day of his daughter's wedding, Billy Pilgrim is taken prisoner by the Tralfamadorians for observing human behavior. Tralfamadorians refer to people as “earthlings” and they say that human earthlings cannot comprehend the realities of nature because of their impaired vision. Billy Pilgrim claims to have gained a great deal of knowledge on Tralfamadore, and he writes letters to news organizations to inform people about what he has learned from the inhabitants of this planet. Billy describes Tralfamadorians in a letter as:

...they were two feet high, and green, and like the plumber's friend. Their suction cups were on the ground, and their shafts, which were extremely flexible, usually pointed to the sky. At the top of each shaft was a little hand with a green eye in its palm (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 26).

When a possible world is mentioned, the discourse participants typically assume that this possible world resembles to their actual world unless the discourse agent who creates this possible world provides information proving the contrary. This is referred to as the “principle of minimal departure” in text world theory. It is clearly seen that the description made by Billy Pilgrim urges

the reader to restructure their preconceptions about these fantastical creatures. The reader is consciously demanded to leave the principle of minimal departure and form a conceptual representation of these creatures which have been explained in terms of the plumber's friend.

An important deviation concerning the Tralfamadorians is about their vision which has been expressed with different conceptual metaphors. This deviation may be clearly seen in the following description:

The Tralfamadorians can look at all the different moments just the way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance.... It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever..

...Now when I myself hear that somebody is dead, I simply shrug and say what the Tralfamadorians say about the dead people, which is "So it goes" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 26-27).

Whenever someone dies in the book, it is followed by the statement, "So it goes". The phrase "So it goes" is a metaphor that expresses "death" in terms of the physical act of "moving away". This use falls under the extended metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE which can be observed in the usage of expressions such as "to lose someone", "to pass away" and "to depart" etc. instead of the verb "to die" (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. 1). The TIME IS SPACE metaphor, in which the target domain of "time" is expressed in terms of the source domain of "space" (Cappelle, 2009, pp. 53-62), is another conceptual metaphor that is evident in Tralfamadorian vision. This metaphor which is evident in peoples' accounts of aspects of time such as "future" and "past" in terms of aspects of space such as "front" and "back" has been further extended by Tralfamadorians. The analogy between time and beads on a string as well as the analogy between time and a stretch of Rocky Mountains clearly illustrate the extensions of this metaphor. The former analogy which refers to the human vision of time is three-dimensional while the latter which refers to the Tralfamadorian vision is four dimensional. It should not be forgotten that the word "dimension" itself is a spatial term rather than a temporal one. Apart from these metaphors some other metaphors such as KNOWING IS SEEING, which is usually stressed by the assertion that Tralfamadorians can see the past the present and the future, have been used in the description of the matrix text world of Tralfamadore. The usage of these metaphors helps to enhance a different conceptual representation of this world.

The last matrix text world in *Slaughterhouse Five*, which is highly important in terms of the deviation Vonnegut creates, is Ilium. The city of Ilium serves both as Billy Pilgrim's hometown and the place where he encounters Eliot Rosewater who introduces Billy to the works of the fictitious author Kilgore Trout when they stay in a veteran hospital next to Lake Placid. Kilgore Trout is a prolific writer that recurs in some of Kurt Vonnegut's works including *Breakfast of Champions*, *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater*, and *Slaughterhouse Five*. Because of the parallelism between the themes of Trout's and Vonnegut's novels, some reviewers have asserted that Trout is Vonnegut's alter ego (e.g., Hume, 2012; Lerate de Castro, 1994). Another noteworthy detail about Trout is that, in the creation of this character, Vonnegut was influenced by the renowned science fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon, who has written many novels, short stories, and reviews but never become widely known (Parrett, 2002, p. 295).

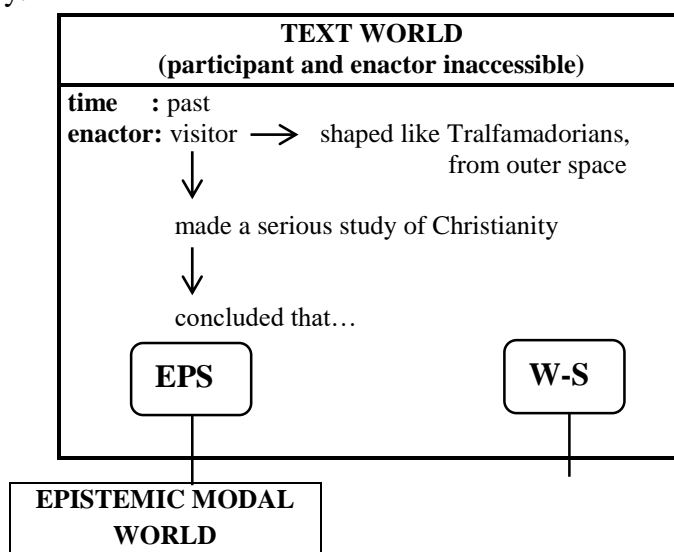
In *Slaughterhouse Five* it has been reported that many novels, including *Maniacs in the Fourth Dimension*, *The Gospel from Outer Space*, *The Money Tree*, and *The Gutless Wonder*, were authored by Kilgore Trout. *The Gospel from Outer Space* has been summarized in *Slaughterhouse Five* as:

...It was about a visitor from outer space, shaped very much like a Tralfamadorian, by the way. The visitor from the outer space made a serious study of Christianity, to learn, if he could, why Christians found it so easy to be cruel. He concluded that at least part of the trouble was slipshod storytelling in the New Testament. He supposed that the intent of the gospel was to teach people, among other things, to be merciful, even to the lowest of the low.

But the gospel actually taught this: Before you kill somebody, make absolutely sure he isn't well connected. So it goes. (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 108-109)

This paragraph contains a lot of strata when viewed in terms of discourse layering. The discourse world, whose protagonist is Kurt Vonnegut, is at the highest level. The second layer is the fictional story of *Slaughterhouse Five*, whose third-person omniscient narrator serves as the protagonist. Although the story has been reported by Rosewater, it belongs to Trout which adds to the complexity of the discourse in terms of the sub-worlds it has. There are still sub-layers to be uncovered and projected even if the reader's ego is shifted to Kilgore Trout's reality.

A circumstantial relational process has been used to introduce the visitor from outer space since the Tralfamadorian has been referred to as an attribute of the carrier (visitor). The text world has been incremented by the introduction of various world building elements and function advancing propositions into the common ground. The text world in which the visitor understands Christian cruelty has been distanced with the modal verb "could" and hypothetical marker "if" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 108-109). As shown in figure 2.3, the fourth sentence constructs a different world by utilizing epistemic modality. The verb "suppose" expresses the lack of certainty by the enactor in the sentence: "He supposed that the intent of the gospel was to teach people, among other things, to be merciful, even to the lowest of the low" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 108-109). This sub-world created with modality means that there is a world in which the purpose of the Gospel is to teach mercy.



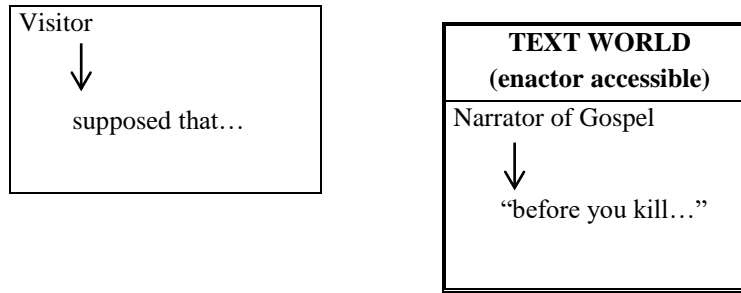


Figure 2.3 Sample world-switches and modal worlds from the matrix world of Ilium

However, the epistemic verb *suppose* distances this world from the reader’s mind and presents it as just a possibility rather than a reality. A modal world is embedded in the text world that is created by the allusion in the final sentence. The suggested actors in this text’s world are Christians, and the material process of “killing” is the function advancing proposition. By omitting those who are “well connected”, the phrase “make sure” restricts the limits of the function-advancing. Here, it is seen that Kilgore Trout, just like the discourse participant Vonnegut, criticises Christianity and accuses it of being cruel to those who are not connected to Jesus.

3. Figure-Ground Relationship in *Slaughterhouse Five*

In terms of Gestalt psychology, protagonists are one of the most crucial groups of figures in narratives because, unlike static elements, they help the plot move forward. Therefore, protagonists tend to carry positive attributes such as being good looking, brave, decent etc. However, the protagonist of *Slaughterhouse Five*, Billy Pilgrim has been described mostly with negative attributes which can be exemplified with the following sentence: “He was a funny looking child who became a funny looking youth-tall and weak and shaped like a bottle of Coca Cola” (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 23). At another point in the book, Billy has been compared to a box of matches, and he has been described as “bleak” and “preposterous” (ibid., p. 32). This profiling, in contrast to the typical depictions of traditional protagonist, clearly foregrounds the desperation of Billy Pilgrim and others who take part in or witness a war.

Edgar Derby, the only American prisoner of war who has been characterized with positive traits such as loyalty, bravery, strength, and good physical shape, is another character whose profiling contradicts his aftermath. Throughout their incarceration, Derby consistently strives to help the other soldiers, especially the weaker ones like Billy Pilgrim, and Derby’s appearance, beliefs, bravery, and loyalty unmistakably exemplify the qualities of the ideal hero. Edgar Derby is therefore expected to have a significant role in the novel. However, as the plot progresses, he becomes minor character and is finally killed for taking a teapot from the debris. His death is tragicomic and does not cover an important place in the novel. Even Billy Pilgrim, whom Derby has saved and protected, just shrugs and says “So it goes.” after his death (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 188). As he dies all the positive attributes of the ideal hero die with him and are backgrounded in the novel.

When the novel’s prominent themes are examined, it becomes evident that vision is not only highlighted in the reports of Tralfamadorians who feel sorry for humans due to their three-dimensional vision but also in the characterization of the protagonist: Billy Pilgrim is an optometrist who assists people with visual impairments. Billy spends the majority of his time in the city of Ilium, which has a sizable optometry business, both before and after the war. The

concept of vision has also been foregrounded in the writings of Kilgore Trout. In his book *Maniacs in the Fourth Dimension*, there are people whose diseases are in the fourth dimension and therefore earthling physicians who have three-dimensional vision cannot cure these patients. Given the psychological prominence of the role of vision, it is easy to understand why it has been given extra attention to stand out as a figure.

The philosophical notion of determinism is another idea that has been strongly foregrounded in *Slaughterhouse Five*. Even though this idea has not been explicitly stated, it has been notably highlighted by the Serenity Prayer which is: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom always to tell the difference" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 60-209). Each time the serenity prayer appears in the novel, it is observed to have different characteristics in terms of its font style, capitalization, italicization, etc. (e.g. Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 60-209). The prayer is easily classifiable as a figure when this variation is analysed in terms of Gestalt principles. And, it is not surprising that just after one of the appearances of the prayer, it is written: "Among the things Billy Pilgrim could not change were the past, the present, and the future" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 60). By defining what Billy Pilgrim can change, the idea of determinism has been highlighted in this instance. If he is unable to alter the past, the present and the future; then it means that Billy Pilgrim is not actually capable of altering anything.

The notion of determinism also reveals itself in a dialogue between Billy Pilgrim and the Tralfamadorians in the fifth chapter: Billy Pilgrim wants to know how Tralfamadorians manage to live together in peace, and wants to bring the secret of this peaceful life to the Earth and stop humans from destroying the universe. He believes that when he describes the atrocities that humans cause, the Tralfamadorians will be shocked and take action to civilize human society. But after he finishes sentence, they just make gestures that suggest Billy is being foolish. When Billy asks why they react that way, Tralfamadorians tell him: "*the moment is structured that way*" (Vonnegut, 1969, pp. 116-117, *emphasis in original*). Billy Pilgrim is told that nothing can be stopped or changed: Everyone is to live the life they were meant to.

4. Schematic Disruption in *Slaughterhouse Five*

The departure from the traditional novel in *Slaughterhouse Five* can be analyzed at four levels when examined in terms of formal schemata. The first schematic disruption may be observed in the relationship between fabula and syuzhet. In traditional narration, fabula and syuzhet often progress in line with each other: The events in a story are usually described in the chronological order they occur, except for when techniques such as flashback and flash-forward are used. However, because Billy Pilgrim, the protagonist of *Slaughterhouse Five*, "has come unstuck in time" (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 23), fabula and syuzhet are not synchronic in the novel. A paragraph may refer to a variety of events which took place in various time periods and which do not seem to have any obvious relationship at the surface level. One might argue that the way the syuzhet is set up in *Slaughterhouse Five* also reflects the holistic Tralfamadorian view of time. A Tralfamadorian responds as follows when Billy Pilgrim queries how the symbols are arranged in the Tralfamadorian books: "...There is no beginning, no middle, no end, no suspense, no moral, no causes, no effects. What we love in our books are the depths of many marvellous moments seen all at one time" (Vonnegut, 1969, p. 88). Given that the plot of *Slaughterhouse Five* lacks a

beginning, a middle and an end in the conventional literary sense, this description of the Tralfamadorian communication system appears to match it perfectly.

The second characteristic that sets *Slaughterhouse Five* apart from the conventional novel in terms of formal schemata is the point of view from which the story is narrated. In contrast to most traditional narratives, which have a single narrator, *Slaughterhouse Five* has two distinct narrators who occasionally overlap. Kurt Vonnegut himself narrates the first chapter of the book; hence, it is written in the first person. However, it is noted that the point of view changes from limited first person to omniscient third person in the second chapter. Like the first chapter, the tenth chapter is primarily told in the first person, and the transitions in the point of view are blurrier here.

The plot structure of the novel is the third aspect of *Slaughterhouse Five* that demands consideration in terms of formal schemata restructuring. Literary scholars are well aware that the majority of narratives can be interpreted in terms of what is known as Freytag's pyramid. This pyramid, which derives from Gustav Freytag's book *Technique of the Drama: An Exposition of Dramatic Composition and Art* (2004) illustrates the five stages that a traditional narrative should go through. These stages are exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Even if there are numerous occurrences in the novel that may be placed into one of these categories at the micro level, it is clear that *Slaughterhouse Five* does not fit this pyramid at the macro level because there are not any climactic moments or incidents. Even Dresden's devastation, the primary theme of the novel, has been depicted in an indifferent manner.

The last instance of formal schema disruption in *Slaughterhouse Five* reveals itself in the lack of a protagonist-antagonist polarization. In contrast to many other war novels, the major characters of *Slaughterhouse Five* cannot be readily placed at either end of the good-bad axis. Even though some characters such as Edgar Derby, Paul Lazerro and Roland Weary may carry some attributes of classic protagonists and antagonists, they are tertiary characters rather than plot-progressing ones. The major characters of *Slaughterhouse Five* Billy Pilgrim and the Tralfamadorians, who shape Billy Pilgrim's personality, cannot be classified as either good or bad. As it can be inferred from Tralfamadorian philosophy Vonnegut has created a world in which people are animate machines which cannot be labeled with judgmental attributes such as good or bad.

Conclusion

Three different cognitive poetic theories have been used in this article to analyse Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*. The analysis of the text worlds in *Slaughterhouse Five* has demonstrated that enactors and the degree of conceptual accessibility in the whole first chapter and most of the last chapters are not identical to those in the other chapters because of the variation in the point of view. While these two chapters are participant accessible because they are narrated by Kurt Vonnegut the other chapters are narrated by a third omniscient heterodiegetic narrator and are enactor accessible. These differences in world-building have affirmed the novel's intricate discourse layering. Three different matrix text worlds: Dresden, Tralfamadore, and Ilium have been examined as samples based on their spatial characteristics because of the novel's non-linear chronology. It has been noted that there are numerous micro text worlds and modal worlds in each of these matrix text world which are typically indicated by deictic shifts. The intricacy and

diversity of the text worlds have made it clear that *Slaughterhouse Five* deviates greatly from the norm when compared to traditional narratives.

When *Slaughterhouse Five*'s characters, who serve as the book's principal figures, have been studied with reference to the idea of figures and grounds, it has become clear that the book drastically departs from modernist literary tradition with regard to character profiling. Billy Pilgrim, the central character of *Slaughterhouse Five*, has been primarily foregrounded with his inferior cognitive, emotive, and physical characteristics in contrast to the usual protagonist portrayal. The manipulation of figure and ground relationship has also been observed in Tralfamadorians' views on life, which educate Billy Pilgrim to accept life as it is. It has been seen that the values of humanity such as courage, sincerity, liberty, and justice become grounds as Edgar Derby, the personification of these values, passes away.

Following Shuying An's classification of literary schemas, the novel has also been investigated with the theory of schemas and scripts. The formal schematic deviation has been investigated and classified into four levels. Firstly, the incongruous relationship between the fabula and the syuzhet has been examined, and the impact of this relationship on the story has been evaluated in accordance with cognitive poetic principles. Following this, the point of view, which changes throughout the chapters, has been evaluated in comparison with the traditional novel, and it has been shown how this fluctuation renders the novel metafictional. The novel's plot structure has been examined in relation to the Freytag pyramid, which can be used to analyse nearly all tales, and it has been observed that *Slaughterhouse Five* deviates significantly from this literary paradigm. Lastly, the novel has been examined in terms of protagonist-antagonist opposition, and it has been determined that the characters in *Slaughterhouse Five* do not fall within this classification due to the extreme deviations in their endowed traits.

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