

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are five sub chapters to discuss in this chapter. Those are background of the study, statement of the research problems, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scopes and limitations of the study. Those sub chapters are required to inform this scientific study.

1.1 Background of the study

Everyone has a different way to express his/her feeling and mind against the reality of life and what we find. Literary works are often used to express the thoughts and the feeling of heart. To express them in literary works, language is used as the aesthetic expression. In literary work, the author tries to get the effect of the usage of language and form impression and wondered to the readers. In addition, the readers can catch the certain values from the literary work itself.

Literary works have always received a response and diverse meanings of the reader and are not always appropriate to the intended meaning of the authors of literature itself. This is due to differences in age, experience, ability, understanding, and the situation of the readers. In other words, the meaning of the difference was due to different readers' horizon expectations, causing a variety of interpretations of literary texts.

Structuralism and semiotics actually correlate each other as semiotics is continued working through structuralism. Accordingly, It cannot be omitted both

structuralism and semiotics for the analysis, especially in the review of the literature in which it is explained first about the structuralism and then the semiotics. Semiotics is science about sign. According to Zerst the sign is classified into three kinds, one of them is symbol.

Symbol is something used for, or regarded as, representing something else. More specifically, a symbol is a word, phrase, or other expression having a complex of associated meanings; in this sense, a symbol is viewed as having values different from those of whatever is being symbolized. A symbol is a person, place, thing, quality or relationship that is used to stand for something other than itself. Symbol it can be found in literary work, such as poetry.

Poetry as one of literary works is very interesting for the combinations of the words that use. This makes poetry distinguished from prose or other literary works in how to understand the meaning or message of it. Literary works such as prose can be easier to understand than poetry, because prose uses a kind of common language which is grammatically right. Yet, when talking about poetry, the language used by the speaker or writer to compose it is often strange, ungrammatical, and even nonsense, so the meaning or message of it is not easily able to be interpreted. This is because poetry is as an expression of the speaker, so it depends on the speaker's expression how she/he will make out her/his feeling. For this case, it is mean that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of the feeling (Aminuddin, 1987). Therefore, to know poetry's meaning the writer need a method or theory to help.

Poetry is one of literature works which has many meanings and theories that analyze the meaning. Poetry is the result of human creativity which produced through various words which has meaning. The poem is also composed in various elements. These elements are the form of words, shapes, patterns of rhyme, ideas, meaning and the problem is obtained by the poet in life. The life which is conveyed to the reader, listener, through specific techniques and aspects. The elements that build poems are including the imagination, emotion and a distinctive shape. Sayuti (1985: 14) says that the character of poetry emphasizes more on intuition, imagination and synthesis. It is different from prose that prefers the mind, construction and analysis. It cause, there are words in the poem are denser than prose. Therefore, the meaning embodied in a poem is more extensive and requires high imagination in a revealing, while prose meaning is more directed to things that have been listed in the literature.

In general, poetry is a way of saying and the language of feelings. It is designed to convey experiences, ideas, or emotions in a vivid and imaginative way. Ollila and Jantas explain that poetry is any kind of “verbal or written language that is structured rhythmically and is meant to tell a story, or express any kind of emotion, idea, or state of being” (Ollila and Jantas, 2006: 1).

Riffaterre adds that poetry will always change from time to time caused by several artistic modes. Meanwhile, there is “a constant essence of poetry”. It expresses something by other meanings or carries the meaning in indirect processes (Riffaterre, 1978: 1). Hence, poetry not only entertains the audiences. This literary genre can also share inspirations, motivations, educations, or

criticisms. Matthew Arnold notes, “Poetry is, at bottom, a criticism of life” (http://www.poetsgraves.co.uk/poets_on_poetry.htm).

Poetry is always changeable based on the evolution of taste and a change for its aesthetic concept. Eventhough, people will not be able to understand the poem entirely without knowing and realizing that the poem is a masterpiece aesthetically which has meaningful and not something empty. It means that the poem is a literary work which has a lot of meanings. Everyone can interpret the poem, but only a few people can understand and realize that poetry is a literary work that has meaning aesthetically, and it is not something which is empty and cannot be interpreted. The poem expresses a lot of meaning when we can capture the value of the message in the poem.

Maya Angelou is a Black-American poet, novelist, educator, actor, producer, filmmaker, dancer, civil rights activist, and one of the most recognized voices in the United States. She is noted to write poems about segregation and discrimination toward Black-American in the United States. Beside, the issues of racism, some of her poems also talk about women and are related to her own experiences in life. Maya Angelou is best known for addressing the world through the medium of her own life. Her works are a reflection of the social issues that were prevalent in the second half of the 20th century. “Phenomenal Woman” by Maya Angelou celebrates feminist and highlights the traits necessary for a woman to become ‘phenomenal.’ She believes that it is not the outer beauty of a person but the inner one which makes each woman phenomenal. (<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/maya-angelou>).

Maya Angelou's "Phenomenal Woman" is a poem that every woman can relate to. Women now put themselves down because they do not think about their inner beauty they only listen to what other people may say about them. Women never get to be the first position. Culture system in any part of the world also perpetuate this system, the stigma is finally generally accepted as the truth. Awareness of the cultivated appearance of the female brain has obscured the true meaning of the fact of its presence in the world, because poetry is created as a critique of the ladies. This poem really explains how to have confidence in our self no matter how we look. In each stanza her confidence is shown by her inner strength through symbolism, tone, and imagery. (Angelou, 2006: 774-775).

Because of this poem has many symbols, it makes some people cannot understand deeply the meaning from that poem. So, this is the reason the writer to uses the approach of semiotics structuralism to analyze this poem. The writer studies in Maya Angelou's "Phenomenal woman" to revealing symbols—especially about woman symbols— by using a Rifaterre's semiotic study.

In addition, there are some writers that use same theory and poetry. One of them is Ashika Prajnya Paramita (2012) who analyzed about some poems from Maya Angelou entitled "Woman me", "Phenomenal Woman", and "Seven Women's Blessed Assurance" that present a topic of woman's captivating and overwhelming sexuality and beauty that draw men toward her. Then, the study from Uniawati's thesis (2007) with the title *Mantra Melaut Suku Bajo: Interpretasi Semiotic Rifaterre*. This study purpose to answer three problems, they are hermeneutic and heuristic, model and matrix, and intertextual.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background of study above, the problems in this study can be formulated as follows:

1. What symbols that appear in the poem?
2. How are women symbolized in the poem?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study describes the answer of question in the statement of the research problems. The objectives of the study are:

1. To know the symbols that appear in the poem.
2. To explain the symbolization of women in the poem.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be able to provide the theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the result of the study supports the theory of semiotics and structuralism especially semiotics from Riffaterre that is descriptive and accumulation system. Meanwhile, practically the result of the study hopefully can give inspire for all woman to be a woman's strength in their own womanhood and should love themselves for who they are. Every woman should be filled with joy, confidence and wisdom in her as well to challenge the stereotypes of what makes a phenomenal woman. Besides, it will help the readers to expand their knowledge concerning symbolization based on semiotics according to Riffaterre studies as a guidance for the next studies.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is using the combination between structural and semiotic approaches. Then, limitation in this study is limited to words, phrases, or lines that are relevant with this study.