The Analysis of Literal Meaning and Non-Literal Meaning in William Shakespeare's Poetry

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ABSTRACT

One of the best poetry is William Shakespeare's poetry. Poetry has a literal meaning and a non-literal meaning. This research aims to found what is the dominant non-literal meaning in Shakespeare's poetry and what is the literal meaning of each non-literal meaning in that poetry. The researcher used the descriptive method to describe the literal meaning and non-literal meanings in these William Shakespeare's poetry. This study found that the dominant type of non-literal meaning in this Shakespeare's poetry is metaphor.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Literature can provide all kinds of ideas and inspirations for fluent writers including the structure of a story, poem, or other kinds of writing; characterizations; setting; point of view; and literary devices, such as simile and metaphor. Sebastian (2020) stated that literature has an important role in language curricula where it learns the culture of a nation, its tradition, and custom. Moreover, Belal & Ouahmiche (2021) between language and literature represent the two same sides to reveal high-value messages and meanings. Good literature has to give a nice feeling to the reader in reading it and good or bad literature depends on the quality of the content, form, language, expression, and message of the literature itself. Kosasih (2004) There are four kinds of literature, they are prose, poetry, and drama. Whereas Nguyen (2020) said that teaching and learning how to read poetry is in education literacy because poetry can determine student achievement in society.

One of the best poetry is William Shakespeare's poetry. The poetry of Shakespeare is considered a classic poem, interesting, and also very popular in literature. His poetry was often used as teaching material to teach language and literature. Language learner can develop their vocabulary through reading poetry. Danes and Servat (2015) stated that the use of poetry as a type of teaching material to teach language can benefit learners. Similarly, Jabshes (2019) also stated Learning poetry has several benefits in linguistics and literature. Briand (2022) is a poetry capable to direct people to be wise and can be a basis to start a research of philosophical.

There are several types of research about poetry has done in different aspects. Bintz & Lisa (2021) poetry is one of the ways to collect data, analyze and represent it in qualitative research. Altuntas & Sever (2021) " A review on the use of figurative language in the poems in Turkish course book" found that the poetry used for 1st to 4th Grade has the simile as the most figurative language whereas metonyms and metaphors as the least of figurative language. It is different from the poetry in the 5th to 6th Grade found the trope and similes as the most type of figurative language whereas metonyms and metaphors as the least. This 7th to 8th-grade Turkish course books are the same as the figurative language in the 5th to the 6th-grade Turkish course book. Furthermore, another research by Barbel & Diaz (2021) in "Haiku Poetry: an innovative approach to contemporary music with primary school children and college students" found that poetry is crucial thing to help in learning

contemporary music which involves several values like cohesion of the group, collaboration, education of music. In addition, Hoglun & Sofia (2022) revealed that in the 21st century, the research of poetry in various aspects has more attention because there are several problems appeared in teaching poetry. Lin (2022) revealed in his research that English poetry is not easy to understand or interpret because of its structure related to a lot of ancient English in its words. Suma (2020) found in his research that various scores in an observation in which several students who have a high score are good in appreciation as the result they are good in expression when they read the title, line even the rhyme. Whereas, the students who got low scores are not good in their performance or expression to read the title, line, and rhymes.

Based on the previous research about poetry, this research is concerned to find out and describe the literal meaning and non-literal meanings dominant in William Shakespeare's poetry and also find out and describe the meaning of each non-literal meaning found in William Shakespeare's poetry. It is expected that this research helped English students who are interested in analyzing poetry and increase their knowledge about the literal meaning and non-literal meanings in English poetry. It is expected that the results of the research should also become a valuable input for those who like poetry whether just reading for enjoyment or looking for information. The questions of this research are formulated into the following questions :

1. What is the dominant non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's poetry?
2. What is the literal meaning of each non-literal meaning found in William Shakespeare's poetry?

2. METHOD

The method used in this study is the descriptive method. This research used to describe as completely as possible the literal meaning and non-literal meaning and their effect on be meaning of English poetry by William Shakespeare. This research was only focused on literal meaning and non-literal meaning in English poetry by William Shakespeare. The researchers only analyzed five types of non-literal meaning, those are metaphor, metonymy, simile, synecdoche, and personification in three poems by William Shakespeare.

The data was collected from literature, the internet, references, or documents that are related to the research. In other words, the writer uses English poetry created by William Shakespeare as the research population. After gathering and collecting the data, then the investigation began with the following steps:

a. Reading poetry intensively
b. Looking at the theories that support analyzing the literal meaning and non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's poetry.
c. Analyzing and identifying literal meaning and non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's poetry based on the percentage formula.
d. Arranging the concept of analysis by using the percentage technique in Hetsberg (1983), that is:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Note: P = percentage
F = the total frequency of using each type of literal meaning or non-literal meaning
N = the total frequency of using all types of literal meaning or non-literal meaning

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers present result percentage of types of non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's poetry, and also discuss the literal meaning of each type of non-literal meaning is personification, metaphor, synecdoche, simile, and metonymy. From the result of this research, the non-literal meaning of William Shakespeare's poetry can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Type of non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's Poetry.

Research Sample	Type of non-literal meaning (figurative language)				
	personification	metaphor	Synecdoche	Simile	metonymy
Poetry 1	-	3	-	1	3
Poetry 2	1	2	1	1	-
Poetry 3	3	2	2	2	1
Total	**4 (21%)**	**7 (36, 9%)**	**3 (15,8%)**	**3 (15,8%)**	**4 (21%)**

Note: Poetry 1: Two Love I have
      Poetry 2: Who Is Silvia
      Poetry 3: Oh Mistress Mine

Table 1 describes the non-literal meaning employed by William Shakespeare through his poetries. Among those non-literal meanings, The most dominant in William Shakespeare's poetry was metaphor with a frequency of 36,9%. Then, in the second rank in William Shakespeare's poetry was personification and metonymy with the frequency was 21%. On the other hand, synecdoche took the third rank in William Shakespeare's poetry with a frequency was 15,8% And the last rank in William Shakespeare's poetry is simile with a frequency was 5,3%. The following are kinds of non-literal meanings employed in William Shakespeare's namely:

Table 2. Classification Table (Type of non-literal meaning in William Shakespeare's poetry)

No	Sentences	Type of figurative language

1
2
	The heaven such grace did lend her
	      (Who is Silvia)
	That can sing both high and low
	Present mirth hath and present laugter
	Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty
	      (Oh mistress mine)
		Personification

1
 	
2
 	
3
	Two loves I have of comfort and despair
	The better angel is a man right fair
	The worse spirit a woman colored ill
	      (Two love I have)
	Holly, fair, and wise is she
	That Silvia is excelling
	      (Who is Silvia)
	
	What is love?' is not hereafter
	What's to come is still unsure
	      (Oh mistress mine)
		Metaphor

1
2
	Then to Silvia let us sing
	      (Who is Silvia)
	Every wise man's son doth know
	Youth's a stuff will not endure
	      (Oh mistress mine)
		Synecdoche

1	*Two loves I have of comfort and despair* *Which like two spirits do suggest me still* *(Two love I have)*	Simile

1
 	
2
	The better angel is a man right fair
	And would corrupt my saint to be a devil
	Till my bad angel fire my good one out
	      (Two love I have)
	Oh, mistress mine! Where are you roaming
	      (Oh mistress mine)
		Metonymy

Personification

Personification compares the abstract or the inanimate with animals and human beings, suggesting that they have our own bodily form, our own behavior or emotion. The using of personification in Shakespeare's poetry is as follows:

    The heaven such grace did lend her
        (Who is Silvia)

In "Who is Silvia" the poet described a kind girl who is liked by many people. Through this personification, the poet expressed as if all kindness of the girl in this poem did lend from heaven.

> *That can sing both high and low*
> *Present mirth hath and present laugter*
> *Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty*
>
> <div align="center">(Oh mistress mine)</div>

Likewise, in "Oh mistress mine", the poet told about someone who had fallen in love. The poet described that love could sing and present happiness at every time, as the poet described in the quotations; "that can sing both height and low" and "present mirth hath and present laughter".

Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that omits the comparative term and implies that one thing is another. A metaphor can serve as a vehicle for understanding a concept only by its experiential basis. The metaphor was employed in Shakespeare's poetry, for example:

> *Two loves I have of comfort and despair*
> *The better angel is a man right fair*
> *The worse spirit a woman colored ill*
>
> <div align="center">(Two love I have)</div>

In this poem, the poet is describing someone's life who has two big problems; comfort and despair. In this case, he is feeling two big power that spirits him, so he got difficulty determining his choice while he lives in doubt. The poet wants to say that religion is important in this life. Here are two metaphors in this poem and for each of them a comparison is implied. In this first metaphor, comfort and despair are being compared with two big powerful spirits so that he is confused to determine which one good choice. In the second metaphor, a man right fair is being compared to the better angel, and in the last, a woman is being compared to the worse spirit.

> *Holly, fair, and wise is she*
> *That Silvia is excelling*
>
> <div align="center">(Who is Silvia)</div>

This poem told about a kind girl so many people like her. Her kindness makes her admired. Exactly, the poet wants to say that kindness will make someone admired in their life. In expressing his feeling about the girl, the poet uses two metaphors to present both the qualities and the man's feelings for her. The figures of speech enable a poet to say precisely and concretely what he means because it communicate feelings. As we can see in the metaphor above. The poet employed these metaphors in this poem because he liked to use poetic words in expressing the characters of the girl.

> *What is love?' is not hereafter*
> *What's to come is still unsure*
>
> <div align="center">(Oh mistress mine)</div>

This poem describes a journey that ends in a lover meeting – that is, moments when we feel that love is the only proper reward for our labor and these moments are fused with awareness of the brevity of life. Through this poem, the poet wants to express that true love is coming for all people. In this poem, metaphor is employed because the poet wants to express his mind about love more poetically so that the poetry seems more beautiful and interesting as we can see in "love is not hereafter", but present mirth hath and present laughter. "What's to come is still unsure", through this metaphor, the poet can describe that love is unique. Love comes for all people, whenever, and wherever.

Synecdoche

In the synecdoche, the whole is replaced by the part or the part. The synecdoche employed in Shakespeare's poetry is as follows:

> *Then to Silvia let us sing*
>
> <div align="center">(Who is Silvia)</div>

In "Who is Silvia", the poet used the name Silvia to describe the figure of all kinds of girls.

> *Every wise man's son doth know*
> *Youth's a stuff will not endure*
> (Oh mistress mine)

In "Oh mistress mine", is this poem told about only anyone's youth which means the poet wants to describe the youth of people.

Simile

The simile is figurative language used to compare the items from different classes explicitly by connective such as like, as, than, or by a verb such as appears or seems. The simile which is employed in Shakespeare's poetry can be seen in the following example :

> *Two loves I have of comfort and despair*
> *Which like two spirits do suggest me still*
> (Two love I have)

In "Two Loves I Have ", the poet has a purpose in using the simile in the second line of the poem. In this way he prepares the reader know for his statement about human life in general, where they have two problems in their life; comfort and despair. They are like two spirits in their life. This quotation suggests something vibrant and startling about human life which got difficult in determining their choice because they live in doubt. Here, the poet expressed human desire like two spirits.

Metonymy

Metonymy is the figure by which a thing is designated, not by its name, but by the name of something that resembles or suggests it. Metonymy was employed in Shakespeare's poetry in the following:

> *The better angel is a man right fair*
> *And would corrupt my saint to be a devil*
> *Till my bad angel fire my good one out*
> (Two love I have)

> *Oh, mistress mine! Where are you roaming*
> (Oh mistress mine)

As we can see in In "Two Loves I Have", that is "the better…." To describe a person who likes to doubt one another. Finally, in "……mistress…", this word is the symbol of someone who always loved every time.

Poetry is one of the literary works that is made with beautiful language. Syed & Yazid (2020) claimed that poetry is one of the effective ways to teach language especially to develop learners' language proficiency and also as human expression. Moreover, Altuntas & Sever (2021) poetry is important because it is effective to express someone's emotions, thoughts, and also dreams. Many great authors in In Europe like Robbert Browning and William Shakespeare created many famous poems. Surely, when we read their poetry we will be amazed by their language in poetry. Usually in poetry, there are two kinds of meaning, that is literal meaning and non-literal meaning. Many people do not know what are the literal meaning and non-literal meanings, especially in poetry.

Literal means based on the real meaning of the utterance. We can find this meaning in the dictionary. We all know the meaning of the two sentences above are clear to understand and we do not think longer to understand the meaning. Those meanings are called literal meanings. And when the speaker speaks non-literally or means something different from what the words mean, it is called non-literal meaning. It has two types that are figurative language and idiom.

Based on the explanation, we can know the differences between literal and non-literal meanings. Then, when we read poetry we can understand the literal and non-literal meaning in poetry and we can analyze how many cases in the poetry that use non-literal meaning.

Poetry is imaginative writing in which language, images, sound, and rhythm combine to create vivid pictures and stir particular feelings in the reader. The style used by the poets where the poets use their special language in expressing the mind choosing special diction makes the poets strong and meaningful. Based on the explanation above, we can see that poetry used beautiful language and described inspirations simply, but more expressible. Linares & Zhi (2021) poetry is one of the beauties and impressive things that will able to express life through image, sentiment and thought. Zachary (2015) said that the writer of poetry created a visual effect in poetry through words. In addition, Acim (2021) claimed that poetry can connect intercultural dialogue and textual awareness and also create a way the appreciation and enjoyment to explore in a language.

In addition, William Shakespeare's poetry above could describe clearly how those poets used the non-literal meaning and influence those poets. He inserted the use of non-literal meaning in his poetry dominantly which means his poetry has a beautiful language style. It is in line with Altuntas & sever (2021) who stated in their research that the use of figurative language skill in the poem of Turkish Course books depend on the elements of the figurative language and it created the expressive power of the Turkish language. It is also in line with Sherry's (2018) statement that Language plays an important role in expressing beliefs and consistently upholds language as the fundamental symbol and cornerstone of artistic expression. In the selection of words and phrases carefully, the depth and complexity of his verses will encourage the readers to contemplate the profound implications embedded within his poetry. Another researcher such as Marcos (2010) claimed that other work such as William Blake's poetry is the symbol-laden qualities of enigmatic work with figurative language, employing vivid depictions, symbolism, and metaphorical expressions to convey profound and significant concepts. Similarly, Wiliam Shakesepeare's poetry has a profound meaning of human existence, the essence of divinity, and the intricate interaction between mankind and God. William Shakespeare drew all of those and the use of language elements through the usage of non-literal meaning in his work.

3. CONCLUSION

William is one of the famous English poets and playwrights, and dramatists and is also known as England's national poet. William Shakespeare has several surviving works such as 38 plays,154 sonnets two long narrative poems, and some other poems. He varied his poetic style, especially in the more emotional passage of the strategy, and showed a lot of narrative sides to the audience. poetry is one of the most impressive, beautiful, and widely effective modes of expression, capable of bringing to life an overflow of images, sentiments, and thoughts.

From the findings, It can be seen that types of non-literal meaning in the poetry were found in Shakespeare's poetry, namely; 21% personification, 36,9% metaphor, 15,8% synecdoche, 5,3% simile, and 21% metonymy. Based on the percentage above, the researcher can be concluded that in William Shakespeare's poetry, the most dominant one was a metaphor. So, studying literal meaning and non-literal meanings can increase students' knowledge, especially in English literature, and also it can be used as a material resource in the literature subject, especially in literature appreciation activities. This study is also claimed to be a perfect and complete one.

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