

THE DEAD BODY IN “GRIEF”

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ABSTRAK

Stilistika adalah kajian linguistik terhadap teks sastra dan non-sastra. Artikel ini membahas analisis stilistika semiotik terhadap puisi dengan Systemic Functional Linguistics dan Verbal Art Semiotics. Pembahasan dilakukan melalui kajian pustaka dan analisis dokumen, dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif and pendekatan intrinsik objektif. Data pembahasan berupa data kualitatif. Analisis semantik menghasilkan makna automatized dan foregrounded. Makna pertama menghasilkan kohesi leksikal yang menghasilkan pokok pembicaraan. Sementara itu, makna yang kedua menghasilkan makna literer yang menciptakan tema.

Kata kunci: makna automatized, makna foregrounded, makna literer

A. INTRODUCTION

In fact a text is a semantic unit and a clause is a grammatical unit. Then semantics is an interface between context of situation and lexicogrammar. In this sense the semantic systems are related upwards to contextual systems but also they are related downwards to lexicogrammatical systems; moreover these semantic systems are sideways related to cohesive systems (Halliday and Hasan 1985, Martin 1992, Eggins 1994 and Matthiessen 1995). The contextual systems are Field (subject matter), Tenor (role relation) and Mode (rhetoric). The semantic systems are logical, experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings. The cohesive systems are structural conjunction, lexical cohesion, conversational structure, cohesive conjunction, reference, substitution and ellipsis. Specifically, lexical cohesion deals with repetition, synonym, antonym, hyponym, cohyponym, meronym, comeronym and collocation. The lexicogrammatical systems are Complexing, Transitivity, Mood and Theme.

Then logogenesis, ontogenesis and phylogenesis constitute semogenesis. Actually logogenesis is a process of creating meanings through instancial system (shifting system) in

the unfolding text. The shifting system is used not only by writer/ speaker as a resource to create a text but also by reader / listener as a resource to interpret the text; logogenetic pattern reveals coincidence between shifts in grammatical pattern and shifts in textual structure (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1999). In general literariness is defined as the difference between automatization or background and defamiliarization or foreground (Jefferson, 1995: 37). Background is also called as ground, familiarization, automatization and the normal, canonical, habitual, common, automatized and familiarizing pattern; whereas foreground(ing) is also called as figure, defamiliarization, deautomatization and the foregrounded, dominant, prominent, motivated, deautomatized and defamiliarizing pattern (Mukarovsky, 1977). The opposition of background and foreground in Verbal Art is analogous to the reversal of ground and figure in Gestalt Psychology (Butt, 1996). In other words the opposition of semantic background (subject matter) and semantic foreground (literary meaning) in Verbal Art is analogous to the reversal of ground (two black faces: *dua wajah warna hitam*) and figure (white chalice: *gelas anggur warna putih*) in Gestalt

Psychology. The reversal of ground and figure is diagramed in the following Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Reversal of Ground and Figure

In addition, consistency of foregrounding has two aspects. By stability of semantic direction, consistency of foregrounding means that the various foregrounded patterns point toward the same general kind of meaning. By stability of textual location, consistency of foregrounding means that the significant patterns of foregrounding have a tendency to occur at a textually important point (Hasan, 1985: 95). In particular the concept of the consistency of foreground(ing) is used by Hasan (1985, 1996) to propose the two semiotic systems of verbal art and of human language. The semiotic system of verbal art is concerned with verbalization (expression), symbolic articulation (content 2) and theme (content 1), whereas the verbalization is the semiotic system of human language concerned with phonology (expression), lexicogrammar (content 2) and semantics (content 1). The two semiotic systems are shown in Figure 2.

At the stratum of verbalization, the consistency of foregrounding makes the foregrounded patterns firstly produce the first order meaning. The first order meaning is also called as the deep level of meaning and consistently foregrounded meaning. At the stratum of symbolic articulation, then, the first order meaning functions as sign, symbol or metaphor for the second order meaning. The second order meaning is also called as the deeper level of meaning and literary meaning.

At the stratum of Theme, next, the second order meaning creates Theme. Theme is also called as the deepest level of meaning and the third order meanings. Thus the first order meanings are the products of linguistic semiotics but both the second order meanings and the deepest level of meaning are the products of artistic semiotics. This article is concerned with a systemic stylistic analysis on a poem of Elizabeth Barrett Browning shown as follow:

Grief

I tell you, hopeless grief is passionless;
That only incredulous men of despair,
Half-taught in anguish, through the midnight
air
Beat upward to God's throne in loud access
Of shrieking and reproach; full desertness,
In souls as countries, lieth silent-bare
Under the blanching, vertical eye-glare
Of the absolute Heavens. Deep-hearted men,
express
Grief for thy Dead in silence like to death—
Most like a monumental statue set
In everlasting watch and moveless woe
Till itself crumbles to the dust beneath.
Touch it; the marble eyelids are not wet:
If it could weep, it could arise and go.

(Elizabeth Barrett Browning)

B. THE SEMIOTIC SYSTEM OF LANGUAGE

1. Logical Meaning, Logical Metafunction or Logical Semantics

Logical meaning is a resource for constructing logical relation (Halliday, 1994: 36) and the logical meaning describes a clause type (clause complex). In other words, logical meaning concerns with the logical relation of clause complexes in the text, and the logical relation includes taxis (parataxis and hypotaxis), expansion (elaboration, extension and enhancement) and projection (locution and idea). In terms of logical meaning, the poem is realized by 3 clause complexes consisting of 3 main clauses and 10 expanding clauses. Out of

10 expanding clauses, there are 3 clauses of paratactic extension, 2 clauses of hypotactic elaboration, 2 clauses of hypotactic enhancement, 2 clause of hypotactic projection and 1 clause of paratactic elaboration. **Thus, extension is the automatized pattern because it is frequently used in the poem.** Actually, logical meaning is realized by complexing and the complexing analysis is presented in table 1.

2. Experiential Meaning, Experiential Metafunction or Experiential Semantics

Experiential meaning is a resource for construing experience (Halliday, 1994: 36) and the experiential meaning discusses a process type (processes). In other words, experiential meaning deals with the process of clauses in the text, and the process includes material process (process of doing), mental process (process of sensing), verbal process (process of saying), behavioral process (process of behaving), existential process (process of existing) relational process (process of being) and causative process (process of causing). In terms of Experiential Meaning, the poem is expressed by 13 clauses consisting of 6 clauses of material process, 3 clauses of verbal process, 3 clauses of relational process and 1 clause of behavioural clause. **Thus, material process is the automatized patterns, because they are frequently used in the poem.** Then, experiential meaning is expressed by Transitivity and the analysis of Transitivity is displayed in Table 2.

3. Interpersonal Meaning, Interpersonal Semantics or Interpersonal Metafunction

Interpersonal meaning is a resource for enacting relationship (Halliday, 1994: 36) and interpersonal meaning explains a mood type, a modality type and a finiteness type (Butt et al, 1995). A mood type comprises declarative, interrogative and imperative. A modality type includes modalization (probability and usuality) and modulation (obligation and inclination). Actually, the poem is encoded by 13 clauses consisting of 12 clauses of declarative and 1 clause of imperative in clause 9. Moreover, the poem is encoded by 10 clauses

of non-modality and 3 clauses of probability (*could*) in clauses 11, 12 and 13. **Thus, declarative and non-modality are automatized, because they are frequently used in the poem.** Finally, interpersonal meaning is encoded by mood, and the analysis of mood is presented in Table 3.

4. Logogenetic Process

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (1998: 184-5), logogenesis is a process of making meaning through an instancial system (a changing system) when text unfolds (in the unfolding text). The speaker/writer uses the instancial system (the changing system) as a resource to create a text, whereas the listener/reader uses the instancial system (the changing system) as a resource to interpret the text. Moreover, Matthiessen (1995: 40) adds that logogenetic process reveals that lexicogrammatical shift (Cf. Butt, 1988: 83 on “latent patterning”) coincides with episodic shift (Hasan, 1988: 60 on “textual structure”). Textual structure is also called narrative structure (O’Toole, 1983), schematic structure (Martin, 1985), staging structure (Plum, 1988) and generic structure (Eggins, 1994). In this poem, the shifts are described as follow:

Shift from declarative (clause 8) to imperative (clause 9) coincides with the shift from The Grief of Death is passionless to The Grief of Death is silent.

Thus, the instancial system of mood is used as a resource for making meanings in the poem. Finally, logogenetic process is provided in Table 4.

5. Lexical Cohesion

Lexical cohesion is realized by a series of lexical chain and each chain has a number of lexical items. Actually, the poem is realized by 10 lexical chains consisting of 40 lexical items. The lexical chains include *I* (1 lexical item), *men* (2 lexical items), material process (8 lexical items), verbal process (3 lexical items), relational process (3 lexical items), behavioural process (1 lexical item), repetition (2 lexical items), synonym (16 lexical items), antonym (4

lexical items), and comeronym (4 lexical items). **Thus, lexical cohesion is realized by the main lexical chains of *men*, material process and synonym.** Then, lexical cohesion is realized by lexical chains, and the analysis of lexical chains is drawn in Table 5.

6. Subject Matter

Field includes subject matter as one special manifestation (Halliday, 1993: 110) and Field is realized by Experiential Meaning (Halliday, 1993: 143). Then, Field is encoded by Experiential Meaning and lexical cohesion (Eggins, 1994: 113). Moreover, subject matter is expressed by lexical chains (Butt, 1988: 177) and specifically subject matter is indicated by the main lexical chains (Butt, 1988: 182). Thus, subject matter is realized by Experiential Meaning and lexical cohesion.

In section 2.2, experiential meaning is frequently realized by material process. In section 2.5, lexical cohesion is frequently realized by material process. It means that subject matter is frequently realized by material process. In fact, the frequent use of material processes indicates that the functional elements are Actor (*death*), Process (*is set*), and Circumstance (*in everlasting watch and moveless woe*). **In conclusion, the subject matter is about death in everlasting watch and moveless woe.** The analysis of material processes is offered in Table 6.

C. THE SEMIOTIC OF VERBAL ARTS

1. The Deep Level of Meaning

In section 2.1, extension is automatized, so a combination of extension, elaboration and enhancement is foregrounded. Thus, the foregrounding of logical relation takes place in clauses 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. In section 2.2, material process is automatized, so other processes are foregrounded. Therefore, foregrounding of process occurs in clauses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11. Moreover, in section 2.3, declarative and modality are automatized, so imperative and modality are foregrounded. Consequently, the foregrounding of mood and modality occurs in clauses 9, 11, 12 and 13.

Finally, patterns of foregrounding are mapped out in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that patterning of the various foregrounded patterns points toward clauses 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. It means that consistency of foregrounding converges toward the last clause complex. The consistency of foregrounding refers to the last clause complex due to the foregrounding of logical relation, process, mood and modality. Then, the consistency of foregrounding makes the foregrounded patterns of the last clause complex produce consistency foregrounded meaning which is also called the first order meaning and the deep level of meaning. **In summary, the consistently foregrounded meaning of the last clause complex is the deep level of meaning in the poem: Touch it; the marble eyelids are not wet: if it could weep, it could arise and go.**

2. Symbolic Articulation: The Deeper Level of Meaning

The deeper level of meaning functions as the symbol, sign or metaphor of the deeper level of meaning which is also called the literary meaning and the second order meaning. In section 3.1, the deeper level of meaning refers to the last clause complex because of the foregrounding of logical relation (a combination of extension, elaboration and enhancement), process (verbal, relational and behavioral), mood (imperative) and modality (probability: *could*). Then, the last clause complex reveals that when we touch the dead body, it does not cry; if it could cry, it would stand up and it could walk. **In short, the deeper level of meaning is about the motionless body of dead men.**

3. Theme: The Deepest Level of Meaning

The deeper level of meaning creates the deepest level of meaning which is also called Theme and the third order meaning. Hasan (1985: 97) states that Theme is the deepest level of meaning in verbal art; it is what a text is about when dissociated from the particularities of that

text. In its nature, the Theme of verbal art is very close to generalizations which can be viewed as a hypothesis about some aspect of the social life of man. Moreover, Hasan (1985: 54) adds that the deepest level of meaning is a meaning that arises from saying one thing and meaning another. In this poem, saying one thing (*motionless body of dead man*) means another (*the dead body*). **In brief, the deepest level of meaning is about the dead body.**

D. CONCLUSION

The lexicogrammatical analysis produces semantic components and there are two kinds of semantic patterns such as automatized and foregrounded. On the one hand, the automatized pattern produces the automatized meaning, and in turn the automatized meaning produces subject matter. At the stratum of Verbalization, on the other hand, consistency of foregrounding makes some foregrounded patterns produce consistently foregrounded meaning which is also called the deep level of meaning and the first order meaning. At the stratum of symbolic articulation, the deep level of meaning functions as symbol, sign or metaphor of the deeper level of meaning which is also called the second order meaning and literary meaning. At the stratum of Theme, the deeper level of meaning creates the deepest level of meaning which is also called Theme and the third order meaning. In summary, there is a symbolic relation between lexicogrammar and Theme in verbal art. Then the meanings in the poem are outlined in the following table.

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