

A THESIS

**The Significance of Walt Whitman's Poems; *I Hear America Singing, For
You O Democracy and America*
(A Study of Michael Riffaterre's Semiotics)**

**Signifikansi Puisi Karya Walt Whitman; *I Hear America Singing, For You O
Democracy and America*
(Sebuah Kajian Semiotik oleh Michael Riffaterre)**

Written and Submitted by

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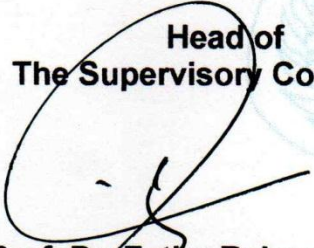
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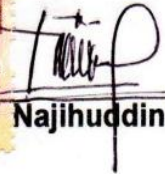
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Makassar, 17th of August 2021




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Makassar, 17th of August 2021

Najihuddin Sain

ABSTRACT

NAJIHUDDIN SAIN. 2021. The Significance of Walt Whitman's Poems; *I Hear America Singing, For You O Democracy and America* (A study of Michael Riffaterre's Semiotics) supervised by **Fathu Rahman** and **M. Amir P.**).

This research aims to analyze 1) the indirect expression contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems, 2) the significance of Walt Whitman's selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic reading.

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The design of this research aims at revealing the significance that is implied behind Walt Whitman's poems that are *I Hear America Singing, For You O Democracy and America*.

The result of this research shows that the three steps for revealing the significance of a poem according to the semiotics of Riffaterre that are finding indirect expression, heuristic and hermeneutic reading and finding the matrix and model are very useful in analyzing a poem. The indirect expression contains: 1) the displacing is found through the use of simile, personification, synecdoche, metonymy and epic simile, 2) the distorting meaning is found through ambiguity, 3) the creating meaning is found through enjambement. From heuristic reading, the three poems represent the ungrammatically on its lines which caused the heterogeneity on its interpretations. Hermeneutically, the three poems show the different significance. The significance of the poem *I Hear America Singing* is about the equality and diversity of each individual regardless of profession, age, and gender. The significance of the poem *For You O Democracy* is a description of how Whitman's love for his homeland and willing to do whatever it takes to create this desire. The significance of the poem *America* is a description of America itself. The matrix and model are found to support the result from previous hermeneutic reading.

Key Words: *Indirect Expression, Heuristic and Hermeneutic, Matrix and Model*

ABSTRAK

NAJIHUDDIN SAIN. 2021. Makna Puisi Walt Whitman; *I Hear America Singing*, *For You O Democracy* dan *America* (A study of Michael Riffaterre's Semiotics) dibimbing oleh **Fathu Rahman** dan **M. Amir P.**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis 1) ketidaklangsungan ekspresi yang terkandung dalam puisi-puisi pilihan Walt Whitman, 2) signifikansi puisi-puisi pilihan Walt Whitman melalui pembacaan heuristik dan hermeneutik.

Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Rancangan penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap makna yang tersirat di balik puisi-puisi Walt Whitman yaitu *I Hear America Singing*, *For You O Democracy* dan *America*.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tiga langkah yang digunakan untuk mengungkapkan makna puisi menurut teori semiotika Riffaterre yaitu menemukan ketidaklangsungan ekspresi, membaca heuristik dan hermeneutik serta menemukan matriks dan model sangat berguna dalam menganalisis sebuah puisi. Ketidaklangsungan ekspresi mengandung: 1) penggantian makna ditemukan melalui penggunaan simile, personifikasi, sinekdoke, metonimi dan epik simile, 2) penyimpangan makna ditemukan melalui ambiguitas, 3) penciptaan makna ditemukan melalui enjambement. Dari pembacaan heuristik, ketiga puisi tersebut merepresentasikan ketidaksesuaian tata bahasa penulisan yang baik dan benar pada setiap barisnya yang menyebabkan interpretasi yang bersifat heterogenitas. Secara hermeneutis, ketiga puisi tersebut menunjukkan makna yang berbeda. Arti penting puisi *I Hear America Singing* adalah tentang kesetaraan dan keragaman setiap individu tanpa memandang profesi, usia, dan jenis kelamin. Makna puisi *For You O Democracy* merupakan gambaran bagaimana cinta Whitman terhadap tanah airnya dan rela melakukan apa saja untuk mewujudkan keinginan tersebut. Sedangkan arti puisi *Amerika* adalah gambaran tentang Amerika itu sendiri. Matriks dan model ditemukan untuk mendukung hasil dari pembacaan hermeneutik sebelumnya.

Kata Kunci: *Ketidaklangsungan Ekspresi, Heuristik dan Hermeneutik, Matriks dan Model*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background, research question, objective of the research, significance of the research and scope of the research.

A. Background

No one has been able to clearly define the definition and the meaning of literature up to present. However, it does not mean that scholars fail to provide definitions to literature, but when they try to define literary definitions, there are various attacks, oppositions, doubts, or proven inadequacies because they only emphasize one or a few aspects, or turn out to only apply to certain literature. As an ordinary people, the word of literature concerns in a work that emphasizes the beauty of the language in it. According to A. Teeuw (1984: 22-23), the word of literature has many names, including *literature* (English), *literatur* (Germany), and *littérature* (France). All of these words come from Latin *litteratura* which is a translation of the Greek word *grammatica*. *Litteratura* and *grammar* are each formed from the root word *littera* and *gramma* which mean letter or writing.

The word of literature often refers to everything written or printed (Wellek and Werren: 1993). Written language in literary works and written language in general, absolutely, has several differences. For example, written language in literary works often uses figurative languages, so that it creates a unique sensation for the readers or listeners which make literary

works increasingly attractive to many people. Then, language in general, it tends to explain something in accordance with existing reality which makes readers or listeners immediately understand the message conveyed.

Literature is a reading that contains elements of entertainment, education, and information (Rahman, 2017: 157). Literary work is able to stimulate reader's sensitivity. Thus, it presents various aspects of life or reflection of life. There are several branches in literary works included drama, poetry, and prose. In this research, the researcher will discuss and focus on poetry. Poetry is one of the human works that can make readers or listeners feel a certain atmosphere that was deliberately created by the author. Wordsworth & Coleridge (1989) state that "poetry is the spontaneous outpouring of strong feelings: it comes from emotions accumulating in serenity". The atmosphere that can be felt is of course every poem establish its own atmospheric pressure. It depends on the genre of the author or the orientation of the poem itself. For example, Walt Whitman as a prominent poet in America has genre of poetry oriented to the human struggles. Here, the atmospheric pressure that can be felt is such the existence of a social inequality that occurs in society.

Poetry always develops from the past to the present. Therefore, the definition of poetry also from time to time always changes even though the essence remains the same. The change in understanding is due to poetry always evolving changes in the concept of beauty and the evolution of

tastes (Riffaterre, 1978: 1). Aminuddin (2011: 134) revealed that " Poetry is a branch of literature that uses words as a delivery medium to produce illusions and imaginations, as well as paintings that use lines and colors in describing the ideas of painters". Because poetry uses language as its medium, the poet and the reader must understand well the language used, so that the message that the author wants to convey can be conveyed entirety to the reader. Language is known as a tool of communication in daily life. Without language, there will never be any interaction between humans. It is leading to the statement of Pambudi (2016: 2) stating that language is a very important tool for human to communicate one another.

Poetry inculcates human principles and provides a placid disposition. It is a mirror wherein people can perceive their own reflection and as the product of one's inward and outward experiences. In addition, poetry is one of the genres in literature which refers to the formulation and utilization of imaginative terms to produce emotional responses. Sherry and Schouten venture to say that "poet collects perceptive data then transforms these into an imaginative text. Literary individuals deem poetry as an arduous literary genre. It is because words are chosen heedfully to delineate poetic languages. Further, the languages of poetry are suggestive, vivid, figurative, symbolic, and creative (Obeso, 2020: 149).

There are a lot of poets who are famous in the world such as William Shakespeare, Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Alexander Pope, John Milton, Kahlil Gibran, Chairil Anwar or Sapardi Djoko Damono. Of course,

each of these poets has their own style and characteristics in creating a poem. For example, Robert Frost, he is a poet who created poem by always being in touch with nature. Among all the poets, the researcher will choose Walt Whitman's selected poems as the object of this research. The prominence of the author in revealing human struggle in his works is one of the reasons for choosing this author. Walt Whitman is also a famous poet in America who is even called the father of free poetry or the first American poet who inspired many poets in America or throughout the country.

Walt Whitman is one of America's great writers of the romantic era who gained popularity in the 19th century. Whitman is often dubbed "the first American poet" because of his works which are rich in local American nuances, both in terms of the themes presented and the diction used (Atmojo, 2020). More than that, Whitman is a true democrat. Whitman's works articulated ideals of democracy that accommodated the historical, sociological and geographic aspects of America as well as reactions to the socio-political and literary phenomena at that time. Whitman is also well known as an essayist and journalist. He was born in West Hill, New York on May 30, 1819 and died in Camden, New Jersey on March 26, 1892. *Leaves of Grass* is one of his greatest works published amid the social and political crises that coincided with the golden age of American literature and warmly praised by poet and essay writer Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wrote to Whitman upon receiving the poem that it was "the

most extraordinary piece of intelligence and wisdom" America has ever contributed.

From several collections of poems by Walt Whitman, the researcher will choose three poems of Walt Whitman for being the object of this research, namely *I Hear America Singing*, *For You O Democracy* and *America*. There are several reasons why the researcher chose these three poems. Firstly, the three poems are full of poetic tools that support the theory that the researcher will apply to this research. Poetic of tools here means such the unsustainability expression, matrix, model, variant and hypogram or intertextual relationship. Secondly, the three poems contain meaning oriented to the essence of democracy and humanity. For example of the poem *I Hear America Singing* in the second line "Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong". In this line, it can be comprehended that Whitman wants to reveal the significance of democracy and humanity by presenting a state of life that is calm, serene, and peaceful, so that the mechanics mentioned in the verse can sing as they please and without hesitation. Likewise of the poem *For You O Democracy* in the sixth line "I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America". In this line, the essence of democracy and humanity is illustrated by illustrating a tree that can live comfortably along all the rivers of America. Understanding the function and role of each in a life is the reason for creating a comfortable live. Lastly, the poem *America* in the second line "All, all alike endear'd, grown,

ungrown, young or old". In this line, Whitman clearly conveyed the significance of democracy and humanity, in which the poem conveys that there is no difference between young or old, all are the same in the eyes of the State. Fundamentally, the concepts of democracy and humanity are two inseparable things. When a country can maintain the existence of the concept of democracy, then of course human rights within that country will also be preserved. On the other hand, when the concept of democracy cannot be defended, human rights will inevitably be taken away. Therefore, it is hoped that these three poems can make people aware of the importance of understanding the concepts of democracy and humanity, in order to create a more harmonious and prosperous situation.

Poem is a system of signs that have meaning. Poem will be meaningful if the reader has lots of experience. In analyzing a poem, the reader must apprehend first the structure displayed, as well as the style of language that the author uses in composing words in each stanza, so that the significance can be obtained optimally (Adudu and Husain, 2014: 40). In analyzing the poem structures, structuralism approach can be employed. In literary theory, the structuralism approach is an approach that analyzes the structure of meaningful signs. As for analyzing the significance of a poem, semiotic approach proposed by Michael Riffaterre can be employed. The emphasis of Michael Riffaterre's theory in relation to literary work is the understanding of the significance of the literary work itself through the sign.

In Rifaterre's semiotics theory, there are some stages in finding the significance or in other words, not only the hermenutic meaning. These steps are finding the indirection expression, heuristics and hermeneutics reading, finding models, matrix, variants and hypograms (1978: 2). Thus, the significance of the poem will be clear.

There are some previous researchers who have analyzed Walt Whitman's selected poem in some ways. First, Obeso (2020) entitled *Sexuality Concerning Homosexual Standpoints in Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"*. This aims at finding the sexuality concerning homosexual standpoints in the text.

The next previous research is from Muhammed and Kareem (2018) entitled *An Analysis of Autobiographical Elements in Walt Whitman's Selected Poems*. This study exposes the similarity between Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare works, especially in literary creation. Also, it exposes his faith in Democracy and the female equally with the Morale.

There are also several researches which applied Rifaterre's theory as the key to analyze the object of the research. One of them is the research of Kuma (2014) entitled *Heuristic and Hermeneutic Readings on Robert Frost's Selected Poems*. The research of Kuma and this research have the same objective of the research. Both researches attempt to reveal the significance of the selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic reading and to find out the matrix and model and variant. The difference from the previous research with this research lies on the object

of the research and the theory of Michael Riffaterre which the previous research does not attempt to find out the indirection expression, whereas this research will try to find out the indirection expression. Also, the previous researcher attempts to find out the intertextuality between Robert Frost's selected poems with another author, whereas this research does not attempt to find out the intertextuality with another author. In Kuma's research, the objects are two selected poems of Robert Frost, whereas the objects of this research are three selected poems of Walt Whitman.

From the research of Kuma above, the researcher attempts to analyze the poem of Walt Whiman's selected poems entitled *For You O Democracy*, *I Hear America Singing* and *America*. The aims of this research are to find out the indirection expression contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems, to reveal the significance of Walt Whitman's selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic readings and to find out the matrix, model and variant in Walt Whitman's selected poems.

B. Research Question

Based on the explanation in the background above, the research questions of this research are:

1. What are the indirection expressions contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems?
2. How significance does the poem retrieve through heuristic and hermeneutic reading?

C. Objective of the Research

1. To find out the indirect expression contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems.
2. To reveal the significance of Walt Whitman's selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic readings.

D. Significance of the Research

There are two significances which are expected in this research. They are theoretical purpose and practical purpose. For theoretical purpose, the result of this research is expected to give some contribution for the literature improvement, especially about analyzing poetry by employing Michael Riffaterre's theory. For practical purpose, the researcher expects this research can give additional information in analyzing poetry through semiotic analysis.

E. Scope of the Research

The researcher limits the problems which may occur in the research questions above. The problems are restricted to find out the indirection expressions contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems and to reveal the significance of the poems through heuristic and hermeneutic readings.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of previous study, theoretical and conceptual framework

A. Previous studies

This research is not the first research in terms of analyzing Walt Whitman's poems. There are some researchers who have analyzed Walt Whitman's poems. One of them is Obeso (2020) entitled *Sexuality Concerning Homosexual Standpoints in Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"*. This aims at finding the sexuality concerning homosexual standpoints in the text.

The next previous researches are Kareem and Muhammed (2018) entitled *An Analysis of Autobiographical Elements in Walt Whitman's Selected Poems*. This study exposes the similarity between Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare works, especially in literary creation. Also, it exposes his faith in Democracy and the female equally with the Morale.

Those previous researches above have the same object with this research. It analyzes about Walt Whitman's selected poems. But, the difference may be found out between the aims and the theory used on it. The aims of the researches above have already been exposed and none of them uses Rifaterre's theory. This research analyzes Walt Whitman's selected poems by applying Michael Rifaterre's theory in order to help the researcher to find out the indirect expression contained in Walt Whitman's

selected poems, to reveal the significance of the selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic reading and to find out the matrix, model and variant in Walt Whitman's selected poems.

There are also several researches which apply Rifaterre's theory as the tool to analyze the object of the research. One of them is the research of Kuma (2014) entitled *Heuristic and Hermeneutic Readings on Robert Frost's Selected Poems*. The research of Kuma and this research have the same purpose of the research. Both researches attempt to reveal the significance of the selected poems through heuristic and hermeneutic reading and to find out the matrix and model. The difference from the previous research with this research lies on the object of the research and the theory of Michael Riffaterre which the previous research does not attempt to find out the indirect expression, whereas this research will try to find out the indirect expression. Also, the previous researcher attempts to find out the intertextuality between Robert Frost's selected poems with another author, whereas this research, do not attempt to find out the intertextuality with another author. In Kuma's research, the objects are two selected poems of Robert Frost, whereas the objects of this research are three selected poems of Walt Whitman.

B. Theoretical Discussion

There are some pertinent ideas that related and useful for this research, and they are clearly explained by the explanation below:

1. Semiotics

Semiotic is the study of sign. This term comes from Greek, *semeîon* means sign. The term of semiotics is also related to the production of signs or symbols that used to communicate something to the other person that conclude visual or verbal communication (Kuma, 2014: 17). This science assumes that social or community and cultural phenomena are signs. Semiotic is studying the systems, rules, and conventions that allow these signs to have meaning (Pradopo, 2018: 119).

Two people are considered as the pioneers of the modern semiotics which come from the different background of education or expertise. One of them is Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) as a linguist from Europe, and the other one is Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) as a philosopher from America. Both of them have the different terms refer to the study of sign. For Saussure, he calls it Semiology.

A science that studies the life of signs within society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology; I shall call it semiology (from the Greek *semeîon* 'sign'). Semiology would show what constitutes signs, what laws govern them. Since the science does not exist yet, no one can say what it would be; but it has a right to existence, a place staked out in advance. Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics, and later will circumscribe a well-defined area within the mass of anthropological facts (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993: 4)

Then, let us find out the concept of sign by Saussure. He has the famous theory name *dyadic*. The dyadic concept is the signifier as the form that the sign takes (Chandler, 2007: 14) and the signified as a mental image, a concept and a psychological reality (Eco, 1976: 14-15). Signifier is now commonly interpreted as the material (or physical) form of the sign – it is something which can be seen, heard, touched, smelled or tasted. Signified is the mental description, thinking or concept. Then, the relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary, because it based on the convention of the society. For instance, the word and the object of door. The door in a signifier is a component of a collection of letters, namely d-o-o-r, while as a signified, it can be understood as something that connects one room to another. Here, the combination of the signifier and the signified then forms a sign for the “door”, it is not just an inanimate object used by humans.

Sign	Form
	Mental Image

Dyadic Concept

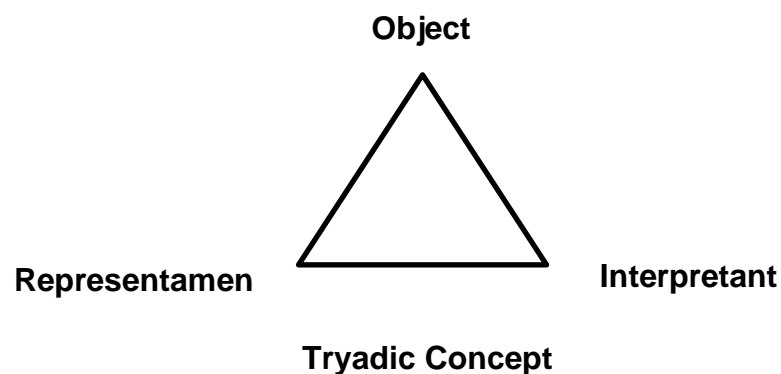
On the other side, Pierce and the American society, the study of sign is known by Semiotics.

Logic, in its general sense, is, as I believe I have shown only another name for semiotic, the quasi-necessary, or formal doctrine of signs. By describing the doctrine as ‘quasi-necessary’, or formal, I mean that we observe the characters of such signs as we know, and from such an observation, by a process which I will not object to naming Abstraction, we are led to statements, eminently fallible, and therefore in one sense by no means necessary, as to what must be the characters of all signs used by a

scientific intelligence, that is to say by an intelligence capable of learning by experience (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993: 4).

Further, in the different view of Saussure's concept of dyadic, Peirce in Chandler (2007: 29) offers a triadic (three-part) model consisting of:

1. The representamen: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material, though usually interpreted as such), called by some theorists the 'sign vehicle'. There are three parts; a) *qualisign*, formed by quality: green color, b) *sinsigns, tokens*, formed through physical reality: traffic light, c) *legisign, types*, form of law: the referee's sound in foul.
2. An interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign. There are three parts; a) *rheme*, sign as a possibility: concept, b) *dicisigns, dicient signs*, sign as a fact: descriptive statement, c) *argument*, sign appears to be reason: proposition.
3. An object: something beyond the sign which it refers (a referent). There are three parts; a) *icon*, the correlation between sign and object because they are similar: picture, b) *index*, the correlation between sign and object due to causation: smoke and fire, c) *symbol*, the correlation between sign and object due to convention: flag.



According to Pierce, there are three types of sign in the relation to its object; they are icon, symbol, and index. Icon is a sign which the relationship between signifier and signified have the similarity in its natural form or in another hand, signifier and signified are similar, for example map and picture. Index is a sign which the relationship between signifier and signified have the natural relationship and has the causality type, for example smoke which implies if there is a fire. Symbol is a sign which the relationship between signifier and signified are based on the convention of language in society, for example each word in a language must refers to a certain thing.

As a human who stays and lives in society, we need sign as the media of communication to express the ideas, statements, concepts, and feelings. As the general rules in this universe, each of utterance or effort to communicate with another has to have its own referent or refer to something as the general convention.

2. Semiotics of Michael Riffaterre

In the book of *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978), Michael Riffaterre declares a coherent and relatively simple description of the structure of meaning in a poem. With that statement, it is clear that Riffaterre approaches poetry, especially the meaning of poetry with a structural approach. Because he attempts to interpret the meaning of poetry, his approach can also be called a semiotic-structural approach. It is called a semiotic approach because poetry tends to be understood as a system of

meaning and called structural approach because the meaning system is structurally formed. Riffaterre elucidates four basic rules in conveying the meaning and significance of a poem based on semiotic perspective, they are indirection expression, heuristic and hermeneutic reading, matrix and model, and intertextuality.

a. Indirection

Poem as one of literary works which has the expressive language needs more effort to be understood rather than the short story, novel and the script of drama with its narrative language. The form of poem is changeable time by time due to the evolution of tastes and aesthetic concepts that always change from period to period (Riffaterre, 1978: 1). However, Riffaterre states that although poem is changeable, one factor remains constant that a poem expresses concepts and things by indirection, his further statement as follow:

The language of poetry differs from common linguistic usage-this much the most unsophisticated reader senses instinctively. Yet, while it is true that poetry often employs word excluded from common usage and has its own special grammar, ever a grammar not valid beyond the arrow compass of a given poem, it may also happen that poetry uses the same words and the same grammar as everyday language. In all literatures with a long enough history, we observe that poetry keeps swinging back and forth, tending first one way, then the other. The choice between alternatives is dedicated by the evolution of taste and by continually changing esthetic concepts. But whichever of the two trends prevails, one factor remains constant: poetry expresses concepts and things by indirection. To put it simply, a poem says one thing and means another (Riffaterre, 1978: 1).

The indirection in a poem is caused by three factors, they are displacing meaning, distorting meaning, and creating meaning. Riffaterre

(1978: 2) states that “there are three possible ways for semantic indirection to occur. Indirection is produced by displacing, distorting, or creating meaning.

1) Displacing meaning

People can view the appearance of displacing meaning by notice the use of figurative language in it. Riffaterre (1978: 2) says that displacing, when sign shifts from one meaning to another, when word “stand for” another, as happen with metaphor and metonymy.

Figurative language is a word, phrase, or sentence. For example the word ‘red’ that always used to express the ‘braveness’. This changing or displacing of meaning is caused by the using of metaphor and metonymy. The term of metaphor and metonymy are used to say generally about the figurative language. The figurative language has several types, which all of them can make the poem more interesting by making a relationship from one thing to another thing. There are seven types of figurative language. They are simile, metaphor, epic simile, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, and allegory (Pradopo, 1987: 6.3-6.16), with more explanation as follows:

a) Simile

In this kind of figurative language, there is an activity or an effort to compare one thing to another thing by putting the comparison words in it, for example such, as, like, etc. for more explanation, Pradopo says

that this is the simplest type of figurative language, so it is used in many poems.

b) Metaphor

Metaphor comes from Greek which stands from two words, *meta* and *phor*. 'Meta' is a kind of prefix that is used to describe the changing, and 'phor' comes from *phrein* means bring. So, we may conclude that metaphor is bringing the changing of meaning. Simile and metaphor have the close relation that is both of these types also compare something, but the differences between simile and metaphor are the use of comparison words. Such the explanation in the part of simile above, it uses kind of comparison words, but in metaphor, it also compares something without any comparison words. According to Backer in Pradopo (1987: 67), the metaphor sees something by use another thing as its mediation. Then, Pradopo says that metaphor has two terms or two parts, principal term or tenor and secondary term or vehicle. Tenor is something that is compared and vehicle is the thing that compares to another thing.

c) Epic Simile

Epic simile is the continuously comparison. This kind of figurative language is formed by continuing the characteristics of its comparison variable in the sentences or phrases which is continuously.

d) Allegory

Basically, allegory has the similarity to another kind of figurative language that is epic simile, but the differences of it is in allegory, the author didn't give more explanation of the tenor part, but long and more explanation are given to the second part as the comparison object.

e) Personification

Personification is a figure of speech in which an idea or thing is given human attributes and/or feelings or is spoken of as if it were human.

f) Metonymy

Metonymy is a kind of figurative language which uses or mentions the attributes or the characters of something to mean the thing itself. But sometimes, the words used do not have any close relation to the thing meant.

The word 'gold' above means a trophy that made from one kind of metal that is gold. But, the writer just writes gold to express a trophy from gold. In the example above, the writer uses 'gold' to express the truth as the most expensive thing in telling something. Further, the statement above explains that the writer just needs someone to speak, no matter he will be honest or lie.

g) Synecdoche

Synecdoche is the figurative language that mentions a part of something to mean the complete thing, or it mentions the whole thing

to express just a part of the thing. So that's why there are two types of synecdoche; Pars pro toto which mentions a part of something to mean the complete thing and Totum pro parte which mentions the whole thing to express just a part of the thing.

2) Distorting Meaning

Michael Riffaterre explains that distorting, when *there is an ambiguity, contradiction, or nonsense* (1978: 2). This is one factor that also cause the indirection in a poem includes the existence of ambiguity, contradiction, and nonsense in a poem.

a) Ambiguity

Ambiguity is a word, phrase or a sentence which has more than one meaning or more than one purpose in that word, phrase or sentence. It may not be denied that this ambiguity has the potentiality to appear in the spoken or written text. Especially in a poem, this ambiguity may not be separated from kind of language use in a poem, that is figurative language which more expressive that the language use in a short story, novel or in the script of drama. Sometimes, the author put the ambiguity in his or her poem to make it more interesting to be analyzed, to reveal the secret or the miracle behind the poem, because I believe every poem has something wonderful inside that I say as a miracle. This ambiguity also gives the big chance to everyone to interpret the poem with their own interpretation and it is possible to everyone for having their own response, argument, comment or

statement about the meaning of the poem itself or having the different interpretation from one thing to another interpreter. Thus, no one can judge whether it is a wrong interpretation or not.

b) Contradiction

Contradiction is a controversy or adversary that is expressed something by explaining the opposite or the contrary thing about it. Paradox and irony are kind of contradiction (Pradopo, 1987: 123).

1. Paradox is a style of language which means something by mentioning the opposite thing about it. Firstly, maybe people keep thinking the statement as a wrong statement, but finally they will say that it is true by doing the further analyzing on it.
2. Irony is a style of language which means something by mentioning another thing contrarily. But this style of language has a specific purpose that is to tease something or someone.

c) Nonsense

Nonsense is a word, phrase, or a sentence which do not have a grammatical meaning, but sometimes it appears in a poem to give a new condition to the reader even just for entertaining the readers. For example, an Indonesian poem, that is Sihka Winka poem by Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, one of the famous man of letters in Indonesia.

3) Creating meaning

This is happened when textual serves as a principle of organization for making sign out of linguistics items that may not be meaningful otherwise (Riffaterre, 1978: 2). The example of creating meaning is rhyme, enjambement, homologue, and typography. Rhyme is the sound repeating to make the musically in a poem. Enjambement is the line in a poem which directly connected with the next line of its poem. Homologue is the position of similarity in a stanza of a poem. Typography is the surface system or writing arrangement.

b. Heuristic and Hermeneutic (Retroactive) Readings

Riffaterre says that sometimes a poem refers to one thing to express another thing that may be different from the thing mentioned. So that is why the reader needs harder effort to find out what is meant behind the text of the poem. There are two types of reading to get the meaning of the poem. They are heuristic and hermeneutic or retroactive reading.

If we are to understand the semiotic of poetry, we must carefully distinguish two level or stage of reading. Before reaching the significance, the reader has to hurdle the mimesis. Decoding the poem starts with a first reading stage that goes on from beginning to end of the text, from top to bottom of the page, and follow the syntagmatic unfolding. The first, heuristic reading is also where the first interpretation takes place, since it during this reading that meaning is apprehended. The reader's input in his linguistic competence, which includes an assumption that language is referential-and at this stage do indeed seem to relate first at all the things. It also includes the reader's ability to perceive incompatibilities between words (Riffaterre, 1978: 4-5).

Heuristic reading is a reading action to obtain the meaning based on structure in language or the reading process to get the meaning based

on the semiotics' system convention in the first level. In this step, every word is considered has a referent. Then the hermeneutic or retroactive reading is the reading process to get the meaning based on the literature convention or the semiotics' system convention in the second level.

The second stage is retroactive reading. This is the time for a second interpretation, for the truly hermeneutic reading. As the progresses through the text, the reader remembers what he has just read and modified his understanding of it in the light of what he is now decoding. As he moves through the text he comes to recognize, by dint of comparisons or simply because he is now able to put them together, that successive and differing statements, first noticed as mere ungrammaticalities, are in fact equivalent, for they now appear as variants of the same matrix. The text is an effect of a variation or modulation of one structure-thematic, symbolic, or whatever- and this sustained relation to one structure constitutes the significance (Riffaterre, 1978: 5-6).

Basically, hermeneutic has its own theory in the world of literature analyzing, that is the interpretation activity by doing experiment. Commonly, the term of hermeneutic is associated with *Hermes* as God's messenger who has duty to translate messages from God to the human language. In Michael Riffaterre's theory of semiotics, hermeneutic has the importance rules that are as the high step to find the complete meaning of the whole of the poem. According to Riffaterre (1978: 166) the person who has responsible to give meaning of the sign in the literary work is the reader himself. It is because the signs will have its own meaning after the reader gives meaning on it.

c. Matrix and Model

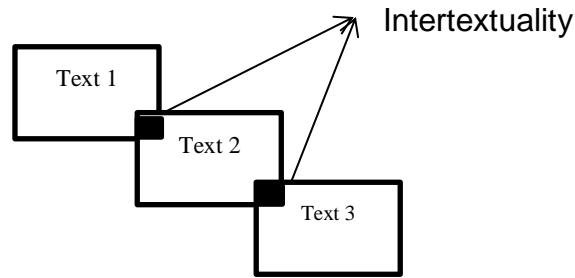
Riffaterre (1978: 13) explains that understanding a poem has the similarity with the view of doughnut. There is a hole in middle of the

doughnut to strength it shapes as doughnut. The hole also appears as certain as certain the characteristics of doughnut itself which can distinguish it from another kind of bread or cake. This also happen in a poem. In a poem, the hole is the center of meaning called *matrix*. Matrix does not exist in a text, but the actualization of it named *model* appears in the text. Matrix can be in one word or phrase.

Model can be a word or certain lines in a poem which has the uniqueness or poetics. Those uniqueness and poetics sense in the certain lines in a poem can differentiate these lines with another line in the whole poem. So, matrix is the generator of a text, and model is the way to get and develop. Therefore, the theory of Michael Riffaterre as the tool in this research expecting that can give some help to the researcher to reveal the whole and complete significance on Walt Whitman's selected poems.

d. Intertextual Relationship

The previous explanation told the reader that literary works especially poem grows and develops by the development of time. This statement implies that before the present day poem exist, there are previous poem precede it. Further, those literary works come from the author, and the author himself comes from the society with kind of things around it, such as culture, religion, the historical background and soon. The author does not write the literary works accidentally. Teeuw (1980:12) states that "literary work always lay between the convention and the revolution, between the old and the new one".



There is a certain relationship between one text to another text that influence one another. It is named *intertextuality*. A literary work may appear as the response to another text. The response may support the other texts or even it stands in the opposite line from the previous text. Riffaterre names it as *hypogram*. Next, Riffaterre states that the reader will get the significance of a literary work in its relationship or contradictory with another text (1978:11). This is the concept of intertextuality which is explained by Riffaterre. In this case, the reader should understand that the text is not only the written or spoken text, but here text is the general thing in the universe. That is why the literary work may not be separated from other texts in understanding it. Therefore, in revealing the significance of a literary work, the reader should pay attention to another text that supports its appearances.

There are four basic principles to get the deep understanding of a poem explained by Michael Riffaterre that will be used to convey the significance on Walt Whitman's selected poems. The four principles meant are indirection expression, heuristic and hermeneutic reading, matrix and model, and intertextual relationship.

This research is a kind of literature analysis that analyzes the three poems of Walt Whitman by using Michael Riffaterre theory of semiotic of poetry. Literary work is the representation about the ideas, concepts, or point of view of the authors to the phenomenon around them. Specifically, this research is going to analyze the literary work with another thing outside this work by using theory of semiotics as it tools to analyze the poems. Semiotics is the study of sign, and the language as the media in poems which each word has to refer to another thing based on the convention in the society. The semiotics theory used in this research is the theory of Michael Riffaterre who argues that a poem expresses something by indirection, and the indirection is caused by three factors, that is changing meaning, distorting meaning and creating meaning. Then, he also mentions two types of reading to get the meaning and significance of the poem that are heuristic and hermeneutic (retroactive) reading. Next, finding the matrix and model also stand as the important point in understanding the poem. The last is the reader should find the text which has the intertextual relationship with poems analyzed in this research. Generally, the research which applies the semiotics' theory of Michael Riffaterre has its own concept as shown in the theoretical framework as follow:

Theoretical Framework of Michael Riffaterre in Walt Whitman's Selected Poems

