

CHAPTER I

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1.1. Background of the Study

Roberts and Jacobs (1989:1-2) states that literature, broadly defined, could refer to just about everything written, from a grocery list to a Shakespearean sonnet. According to Robert and Jacobs, imaginative literature refers to written (and also spoken) compositions designed to tell stories, dramatize situation, and reveal thoughts, and emotions, and also importantly, to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden and ennoble readers. Literature helps the readers to grow both personally and intellectually. It provides an objective base for the readers' knowledge and understanding. It connects them to the broader cultural, philosophic and religious world of which they a part. It also let the readers to recognize human dreams and struggles in different places and times that they would never otherwise know.

Based on the above statement that literature expresses a general attitude toward life, the writer is interested to explore and study literature. By studying literature, the writer hopes that literature is able to open a new dimension of thoughts on human problems for her.

Here, poetry as one of the literary works is chosen to be studied, as poetry appeals to the mind and arouses feeling. Poetry may state facts, more important, it makes imaginative statement that human may value even if its facts are incorrect

(Kennedy; 1983: 397). In lines with Kennedy, Roberts and Jacobs (1989:519) says that some poems may make the readers think, give them new and unexpected insights, and generally instruct them, while other poems may arouse their emotions, surprise them, amuse and inspire them. Ideally, reading and understanding poetry should prompt the readers to reexamine reinforce and reshape their ideas, attitudes, feelings and lives.

The second argument why the writer decided to investigate poetry is that the poetry is not only a spontaneous work of poet's feeling. Moreover, the art of words in poetry is able to communicate the readers with its basic problems.

Here, the words carry the idea and the emotions of the poems. For this reason, each poet seeks the perfect and indispensable word, the word that looks right, sound right, and conveys all the compressed meanings, overtone and emotions that the poems requires (Roberts and Jacobs; 1989:576). In order to recapture the experience of the poem, the readers need to understand the language, ideas, attitudes, and frames that make the poems alive (Kennedy; 1983:520). It means that to be able to understand the poem well, a reader needs to study the figurative language. As it is the main force of expression in poetry and religion, where concrete images, symbols, parables and so on, convey so much more than what can be conveyed by the corresponding abstract statement (Little; 1963:206).

Considering that figurative language is very important aspect in understanding a poem, Kahlil Gibran as one of the world's most famous writer, writes easily and openly for everyone to read. He writes without jargon, but with great meaning and

conviction, and often with penetrating insight (Waterfield; 1995:xv). By the reason of the simplicity of his language in his poems, the writer is interested to explore Kahlil Gibran's works.

The Prophet is one of Kahlil Gibran's works. It is his masterpiece religious inspiration and its great companion. This book is called 'a poem novel', because poems are devoted to a single character, Almustafa. He did not intend to write poems, rather expressed his thoughts. However, he tried to make the rhyme and the words to be one of element that can't be separated anymore. And when the readers read his poems, they will find his ideas and thoughts (Kahlil Gibran: 1969).

The language used in 'The Prophet' is a kind of spoken language, and it uses short and direct expressions. So, it is very interesting to study the figurative language of the poems in 'The Prophet', because the use of parables is meant to tell the essence of the problems which actually are very complex.

As so many poems are presented in the book 'The Prophet', the writer limits the discussions into four poems. They are "Love", "Death", "Freedom" and "Religion". The election of these poems is based on Unger's classification. The discussion of human's problem in the poems is classified into the following category. The first is the problem of fate which includes the relation of freedom and necessity, spirit and nature, the religious problem including the interpretation of Christ, the attitude towards sin and salvation. The second is the problem of nature which includes the questions as the feeling for nature, myth and magic. The third is the problem of man. It concerns questions of the concept of man, but also of man's

relation to death, man's concept of love. Finally there is a group of problems of society, family and state.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The study of figurative language in Kahlil Gibran's poems on Love, Death, Freedom and Religion questions two problems, which are:

1. What figurative language does Kahlil Gibran use to represent the view of Love, Death, Freedom and Religion?
2. What are Kahlil Gibran's views on Love, Death, Freedom and Religion as expressed through the use of figurative language?

1.3. Objective of the Study

By answering the above questions, this study is intended to:

1. Find out the figurative language Kahlil Gibran uses to represent the view of "Love", "Death", "Freedom" and "Religion".
2. Find out Kahlil Gibran's views on "Love", "Death", "Freedom" and "Religion" as expressed through the use of figurative language.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give contribution to the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholik University students who are interested in studying literary works. The analysis on the use of figurative language in Kahlil Gibran's poems

expressing the meanings of his poems is intended to help the students understand the literary theory and literary criticism and the discourse analysis. Moreover, this study result is expected to enrich the students' view in learning the literary works, especially the works of Kahlil Gibran, one of the greatest poet in the world whose poems explore the range of emotions.

1.5. Scope and Limitations of the study

The writer limits the study on literature by focusing on Kahlil Gibran's poems in 'The Prophet'. Since there is a number of poems in this book, the writer chose some poems to analyze, they are "Love", "Death", "Freedom" and "Religion". The focus of this study is the use of figurative language on Gibran's poems, which express the creation of meaning.

1.6. Definition of Key Term

There are some key words used relatively often in this study. To avoid misunderstanding of their use, the key words need to be defined as follows.

Poetry is defined as an imaginative statement expressed in words that are used with the utmost with economy and resonance (Roberts and Jacobs 1989:460).

Figurative language is a kind of language used to describe expression that conforms to a particular pattern of form, and this pattern, each of which has a special name, has become the tools of rhetoric and poetry (Roberts and Jacobs; 1989:590).

The *theme* of a work of literature is the fundamental idea the author is seeking to convey to the reader's mind. It is the basic subject, message, or moral that so occupies his mind that he feels impelled to write (Little; 1963:8).

Meaning is the combination of the poems central idea (theme) with its emotional impact and the experience creates for the readers (Roberts and Jacobs; 1989:840).

1.7. Theoretical Framework

In line with the title and the domain of this study, there are three major theories on which the writer based her analysis. The two major theories are figurative language and content analysis.

The figurative language used consciously to give an effect on the meaning of the poems. They provide the writer multiple opportunities to be original, and invite the reader to extend his horizons through new combinations of words and ideas (Jordan; 1965:177). Moreover Robert and Jacobs states that poems are constructed of words. The words in poetry define the speaker, the other characters, the setting, and the situation. They also carry the ideas and the emotions of the poem. For this reason, each poet seeks the perfect and indispensable word, the word that looks right, sounds right, and conveys all the compressed meanings, overtones, and emotions that poem requires.

Content analysis includes a large part of the work in literary criticism in which the close reading of texts is followed by summary and interpretation of what

appears therein (Berelson; 1971:114). This statement means that content analysis takes an important role in analyzing the literary works. In agreement with Berelson, Krippendorff (1980:1) states that the analysis theory makes the study of literature works more specific in its objectives, data collection, procedure of analyzing the data and findings, so that a systematic and qualitative description of the object of the study can be achieved.

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms, theoretical framework and organization of the thesis. Chapter II is about the review of related literature. Chapter III describes about the research methodology. Chapter IV is the analysis of the data. Finally, chapter V presents the conclusion.