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Submission date: 28-Sep-2019 05:08PM (UTC+0700)
Submission ID: 1181795141
File name: anita_rahmah_dewi_jurnal_karangan.doc (67.5K)
Word count: 3328
Character count: 16984

Point of View on Death: A Study of Intertextuality in John Donne's 'Death, Be Not Proud', Emily Dickinson's 'Because I Could Not Stop for Death', and *Appointment in Samarra* as Retold by William Sommerset Maughm

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INFO ARTIKEL
Diterima:
Disetujui:

Key Words:
Death, Intertextuality, connection.

Abstract: In producing literary work, sometimes the author influences or is influenced by the other works consciously or not. In this case, This study aims to discover the connection among text of John Donne's "Death, Be Not Proud", Emily Dickinson's "Because I Could Not Stop for Death", *Appointment in Samarra* as retold by William Sommerset Maughm, and other sources which are considered relate to them, such as Bible and Arabian Night Tale. It also focuses on the point of view on 'death' which is served in those works. The theory which is used is the theory of structuralism which is focused on intertextuality that is formulated by Julia Kristeva and also Roland Barthes. The result of this study indicates that among those works have connections each others. By analyzing those works, it points out that although among those works have same theme about death, but they have different point of view on death through the constructing idea from the previous text.

Abstrak: Dalam menciptakan karya sastra terkadang seorang sastrawan secara sadar maupun tidak, sedang mempengaruhi atau terpengaruh karya lain. Dalam hal ini, studi ini bertujuan untuk menemukan hubungan antara teks puisi "Death, Be Not Proud" karya John Donne, puisi karya Emily Dickinson yang berjudul "Because I Could Not Stop for Death", dan story "Appointment in Samarra" yang sudah diceritakan ulang oleh William Sommerset Maughm, serta sumber-sumber lain yang dianggap berhubungan dengan puisi-puisi tersebut, seperti Bible, and Arabian Night Tale. Studi ini fokus pada sudut pandang kata 'Kematian' yang terkandung dalam karya-karya tersebut. Teori yang digunakan adalah strukturalisme yang difokuskan pada intertekstual konsep yang dirumuskan oleh Julia Kristeva dan Roland Barthes. Hasil dari studi ini menunjukkan bahwa karya-karya tersebut saling berhubungan antara satu dengan yang lain. Dengan menganalisis karya-karya tersebut, dapat diketahui bahwa meski karya-karya tersebut mengusung tema yang sama yaitu tentang 'Kematian', tetapi juga mempunyai perbedaan sudut pandang pada kata 'Kematian' melalui gagasan dari teks-teks sebelumnya.

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Intertextuality is the shaping of texts' meanings by other texts. It can refer to an author's borrowing and transformation of a prior text or to a reader's referencing of one text in reading another. The term intertextuality is proposed by Julia Kristeva, drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of dialogism (the necessary relation of any utterance to other utterances) to indicate a text's construction from texts: a work is not a self-contained, individually authored whole, but the absorption and transformation of other texts, a mosaic of quotations (Kristeva, 1986).

Relation to the statement above, in "The Bounded Text", Kristeva is concerned with establishing the manner in which a text is constructed out of already existent discourse. Authors do not create their texts from their own original minds, but rather compile them from pre- existent texts, so that, as Kristeva writes, a text is 'a permutation of texts, intertextuality in the space of a given text', in which 'several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another. (Allen,2000:35). Moreover, she defines intertextuality as 'the passage from one sign system to another' which involves 'an altering of the thetic position, the destruction of the old position and the formation of a new one' (1980: 59). Keen to avoid the reduction of intertextuality to the traditional notions of influence, source-study and simple 'context', Kristeva now drops the term intertextuality in favour of a new term transposition.

In this case of a text influences other, Barthes in Allen gives further explanation, he says "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture ... the writer can only imitates a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them (Barthes, 1973: 146). Barthes refers to that traditional notion of the author in theological terms. We might remember here the opening of the Gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. In the religious traditions of the West, God is viewed as the originary author of two books: the Bible and the Book of Nature (allen,2000: 27). Having known that statement, it means that Barthes believed that the authors never produce the text. They only take and mix the words from other text and produce new text. They produce a text on their own terms, forging meaning from what has already been read, seen, done, and lived.

METHODOLOGY

Basically, research of literary work has distinction method than the other research studies, due to in literary research the theory becomes method in conducting study. In accordance with the background of this study above, this study focuses to investigate the relation among several works which is strongly linked by intertextuality concept. Thus, this study is designed to apply structuralism theory.

In literary theory, structuralism relates literary texts to larger structure, which may be a particular genre, a range intertextual connections, a model of a universal narrative structure, or a system of recurrent pattern of motifs (Barry:1995). In this case, the branch of structuralism which is applied to investigate the relation among several texts of literary works follows intertextuality concept. It leads the researcher to find the connection about point of view on 'death' which appears in aforementioned some literary works.

Furthermore, since the source of data is literary works, this study also applies text-oriented approach in conducting this study as Klarer points out that, "text-oriented traditions, center on the text, primarily investigating its formal or structural features. Traditional philology, for example, highlight 'material' elements of language; rhetoric and stylistics analyze larger structure means of expression, and formalist-structuralist schools, including Russian formalism, the Prague school of structuralism, new criticism, semiotics, and deconstruction, attempts to trace general patterns in texts or illuminate the nature of literariness"

Dealing with the statement above, since this study analyzes the connection among several works which focuses on influencing and influenced works, it strongly shows that text of those works which becomes object of this study. Therefore, text-oriented approach is compatible to be applied in conducting this study. While in collecting the data, the researcher attempts in having close reading and documenting the data to be analyzed based on the aforementioned theory, and the last step is proofreading and revising the analysis.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Addressing to the explanation which has been elaborated in the previous chapter, in this part will discover some connections among the texts and find out various point of view on death of Donne's 'Death, Be Not Proud', Dickinson's 'Because I Could Not Stop for Death', Maughm's *Appointment in Samarra*, and other sources which is related to this topic.

I. "Death, Be Not Proud" and the Bible

'Death, Be Not Proud' is a poem by English metaphysical poet, named John Donne, written around 1610 and first published posthumously in 1633 (Jokinen:2002). This poem talks about the death, it describes that death was seen mighty and dreadful. Death has a great power, but in this poem Donne invites the reader to believe that death is not dreadful as people imagine, the power of death is not eternal, death just a short sleep before the eternal life comes. Death is a term which will be found in many cases, even in the Bible also tells much about death. In this case, in producing the poem entitled "Death, Be Not Proud", Donne is assumed has been inspired by Bible. Then, in 1615 he becomes an Anglican priest, while in 1621 he was appointed the Dean of St, Paul's Cathedral in London. (2012:3). In line with his biography, it can be considered that Donne was religious man and certainly he always read and keep what Bible said in his mind. Therefore, in producing this poem, he is consciously or not influenced by Bible. Besides, Bible has existed in long time ago before this poem produced. As Barthes formulates the traditional notion of the author in theological term, in the religious traditions of the West, God is viewed as the originary author of two books: the Bible and the Book of Nature (Allen: 2000). It means that God is the original author, and Bible is from God, so that it is possible that the religious man like Donne is influenced by God's work. Mostly, all of part in this poem is influenced by Bible, but it will not show all of the evidence of it. This is one of evidence which indicates that this poem is influenced by Bible; in last line (One short I sleep past, we wake eternally- and death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die), Donne is intertextualized by Bible which said "Listen, I tell you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (Corinthians 15:51-52). In this matter, both of this poem and the Bible have same point of view on death, they told that death is just a mediator before the eternal life. Donne intertextualizes Bible into his poem as compilation as Kristeva stated that authors do not create their texts from their own original minds, but rather compile them from pre- existent texts. Likewise Donne has compiled the texts of Bible which talk about death in his poem.

II. "Because I Could Not Stop for Death" and "Death, Be Not Proud"

'Because I Could Not for Death' is written about 1863 by Emily Dickinson and published in 1890 (Kirk:2004), it also talks about death. She describes death as a character that can do everything like human being. Death was described as gentleman who comes and takes a lady from her house. The same theme which is brought out by them make the reader assumes that Dickinson's poem has been influenced by Donne's poem. Basically, by knowing the time of producing both of these poems, Dickinson's poem is considered as the influenced poem because Donne's poem is existed before Dickinson's poem, although he offers few different points of view on death in his poem. It is linked to the statement which Kristeva stated concerning with the establishing the manner in which a text is constructed out of already existent discourse. Actually, the two poems both look at the subject of death. In this case, Donne looks death by using personification as arrogant man who can be proud of its action. However, Dickinson serves a story by constructing out Donne's poem; she looks at death through using a metaphor of a journey. The evidence can be seen in the first stanza "the carriage held….", it tells that speaker and death ride carriage and set out on a journey. Both of two poems serve different point of view on death, in Dickinson's poem, the speaker is just along for the ride, "we slowly drove- he knew no haste" (second stanza), while in Donne's poem, the speaker is challenging death, and using harsh language "Death shall be no more" (last line). Besides, Dickinson is also intertextualized by some words which has used in Donne's poem. It can be proved in line 13 in Donne's poem, the word 'short' and 'eternally' is influenced Dickinson's poem in the last stanza but it is modified to be 'shorter' and 'eternity'. However, both of the two words serve the resemble meaning, 'short' describes about death is just a sleep a moment, while 'eternally' represents the immortal life after death. It is like Barthes stated that "the writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others". Having known some relations between those poems, it indicates that in producing the poem entitled "Because I Could Not Stop for Death", she consciously or not has been influenced by Donne's 'Death, Be Not Proud', but she serves the different point of view which makes this poem has own differences from the pre-existent text.

III. "Death, Be Not Proud" and *Appointment in Samarra*

Appointment in Samarra is published in 1933 (Dynes:1978); it is retold by William Sommerset Maughm. This short story tells about a merchant's servant who tries to avoid his appointment with Death. In the story the servant meets with Death at Baghdad then he lends a horse from the merchant and flees to Samarra. He is thought that he will escape from death, but he doesn't know, death had an appointment with him in Samarra. This story is also considered has got influence from Donne's poem because it also serves the same theme, death. However, this story portrays the different point of view on death with Donne's poem entitled "Death, Be Not Proud". It is appropriate with the theory which formulated by Kristeva, she defines intertextuality as 'the passage from one sign system to another' which involves 'an altering of the thetic position, the destruction of the old position and the formation of a new one'. In this story, Maughm destructs Donne's poem which is challenging death, while Maughm portrays the life condition nowadays in which many people certainly afraid to face death. For people in this time, death is dreadful thing which cannot be avoided though people run far away as has been done by servant in this story. Having known the time of publication, it can be determined that this story which has been influenced by Donne's poem as the pre-existent text. Furthermore, in elaborating the point of view on death, this story is also interterxtualized by some words which use in Donne's poem. In can be proved in line 9 (Thou'rt slave to **fate**, chance kings, and **desperate men**), in this short story also uses the word 'fate' to represent the way death will come. In Donne's poem death is consider as slave of fate, death can come every time if fate order it, while in Maughm's story is told the servant will avoid fate in order to death will not come, "and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate…". Then, the word 'desperate men', unconsciously represent of the servant which "white and trembling" after met with death in Baghdad, and finally he decided to ride away in samarra which actually he visit upon death.

IV. Because I could not stop for death and Appointment in Samarra

Both of these works have been elaborated in the previous explanation, they serve same theme, but they employ the different point of view in facing a death. When in Dickinson's poem depicts death as a gentleman, " **He** kindly stopped for me" (first stanza). 'He' refers to death, and in this poem the speaker faces the death with happiness. While in Maughm's story constructs it by depicting the death as a woman, "I was jostled by a **woman** in the crowd…it was **death** that jostled at me", and the speaker faces the death by dreadful. Based on the theory which has been elaborated before that text is a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. Maughm's story is clash with Dickinson's poem to serve the different point of view on death, so that it makes this story has own identity from the pre-existent text. This story also portrays similarity in using horse as the vehicle on going to death. In can be proved in the first stanza in Dickinson's poem "the carriage held…", and in Maughm's story "…lend me your horse…". It shows that both of them use the same vehicle because actually horse symbolizes of the power and bravery, so that the author uses that animal to strengthen the sense of this story.

V. *Appointment in Samarra* and Arabian Night tale

When people read the short story entitled *Appointment in Samarra*, it directly reminds the reader to the story entitled *No Escape from Death: A Real life Story of Prophet Solomon* (2000). This story tells about a man who entered the court of Prophet Solomon and meet with a strange man who Prophet Solomon tells that he is the Angel of death. He really afraid and ask to Prophet Solomon to send him to India. He is thought that he will escape from death, but he doesn't know that the Angel of death had appointment with him in India. It is assumed that Maughm's story is inspired by the story which happened on Prophet Solomon. Both of these story is almost similar, only setting and character which differ it. The time of writing this story is unclear because it kind of folklore, which has been published yet. However, reader can hear this story from the older man, or find it in the internet. As the theory about transposition by Kristeva, this story changes the element to create a new story and can be enjoyed by reader. In this case, both of those stories have same point of view on death because it is assumed that Maughm just change the setting and character to make this story different with the previous text

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To sum up, after analyzing those works above, it indicates that every work has the connection each other. Even they have different theme, but they serve the different point of view on death through the sequence of story which is portrayed within them. In producing literary work, the authors are often influenced by some other sources around them. Before authors produce a literary work, their role is the reader of another work. Then when they produce a work, they write down everything that they ever read unconsciously or not but in their own version. It means that the author is influenced by other authors. Therefore, intertextuality is the theory that can discover those connections that happen among texts.

Surely, this study has many shortages although the researcher has attempted to elaborate well. Therefore, the researcher hopes that the next researcher will have better writing than this study. The researcher just suggests to the reader to understand more to the theory before analyze the data, due to it is the particular thing in conducting literary research. The researcher also suggests to the further researcher to create another fresh concept in the world of literature in order to enrich the literature research field and make the world of literature is more colored.

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