

AN ANALYSIS OF METAPHOR AS SEEN IN JOHN MILKES  
BOOTH'S EXTRAORDINARY LETTER

A THESIS

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## ABSTRAK

Dalam skripsi ini, Penulis membahas penggunaan ungkapan metafora di dalam surat yang ditulis John Wilkes Booth, pelaku utama pembunuhan Abraham Lincoln, yang dikirimkan kepada adik iparnya, John S. Clarke. Analisa dititikberatkan pada pencarian makna dari ungkapan metafora tersebut. Selain itu penulis juga membahas fungsi dari ungkapan metafora yang terdapat dalam surat yang dimaksud.

Dalam proses pengumpulan data, penulis menggunakan metode analisis isi yang dikemukakan oleh Neuman (1997), yaitu dengan mengidentifikasi ungkapan-ungkapan mana saja yang merupakan metafora. Teori dasar dari penelitian ini berkaitan dengan konsep metafora yang dikemukakan oleh George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980). Analisa dilakukan dengan teknik interpretasi dan metode referensial dimana penulis akan menganalisa makna-makna denotasi dan konotasi dari setiap metafora, untuk selanjutnya membuat kesimpulan. Analisa kontekstual Hyme's juga dilakukan untuk membantu penulis mengetahui pada situasi seperti apa surat ini ditulis. Selanjutnya, hasil analisis disajikan dengan metode formal dan informal.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa makna ungkapan metafora yang terdapat di dalam surat tersebut berkaitan erat dengan kondisi Amerika yang sangat mengerikan selama Perang Sipil berlangsung. Ungkapan metafora berfungsi untuk mendramatisasi sebuah ucapan sehingga efek emosionalnya lebih hidup dan mengesankan pembacanya.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The language has its own power in human's life. Language can be a device to provoke people's emotion. The function of language is obviously depending on the context where the language is used. The function of language does not always stand in the same point with its form. In many cases, the form and the function is often presented in different ways. An expressive form in a certain context can be defined a request to the hearer (J.L Austin stated in Yule: 1961).

Every communication among humans must have its own purpose. To convey the purpose, the speaker will employ some strategies which are considered proper to get the final goal of communication. Not even a word produced without a meaning. No doubt if many people in the world loves to play with language. Some do that to express their feeling; others do that for a certain reason and purpose.

Metaphor is one of linguistic strategies which is often used to convey an expression by employing another words which have similarities in concept. Some may perceive that metaphor is a kind of figurative language which is used to get artistic and poetic value only. But in fact, metaphor may explain more than that. Partington sees 'metaphor as the most effective way to achieve contextual effect of

getting through the hearer.' (Alan Partington, 1998:110). Metaphor may give stronger effect toward the reader since metaphor serves a group of ideas about expressed words. Metaphor will appear such imagery in people's mind therefore the meaning of an utterance will be easier to be cached by the reader.

Interestingly, in one of great case that is in Abraham Lincoln's assassination tragedy, the assassin, John Wilkes Booth leaves a letter which is close related with the assassination. The content of the letter seems to be clarification for John Wilkes Booth to defend himself from guilty. The letter was written in extraordinary language since Booth tends to employ some figurative languages such as metaphor.

This fact attracts the writer to analyze the letter deeper. Since language reflects what humans keep inside their mind, the writer is sure that Booth intents such implied meaning and unspoken purposes in his letter.

## **1.2 The Identification of the Problem**

In conducting this research, the writer formulates two main questions that become the core problem of this research. They are:

1. What are the meanings behind metaphorical expression as seen in John Wilkes Booth's letter?
2. What are the functions of those metaphorical expressions?

## **1.3 The Objective of the Study**

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of 12 data, the writer finds out that metaphor is not only used to build the artistic and poetic value in the text instead it has a power in enabling people to understand something.

In John Wilkes Booth's letter, the meanings of metaphorical expressions are closely related to the real condition of America during Civil War which is full of conflicts and secessions. The words and phrases such as *sea of blood*, *mist of blood*, *death*, *bloody deeds*, *dark cloud*, and *frightful dream* are used to give such dramatic comparison to America's condition during the civil war therefore the ideas of horrific issue may become stronger, clearer and lively.

Most of metaphors are employed to give such dramatization about an issue, so the reader may catch a deeper and vivid effect than if it is delivered in ordinary language.

The analysis shows that Booth employs metaphorical expressions to give special effect to the hearer therefore the hearer may better understand the issues that Booth wants to elaborate in his letter.



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