

Metaphoric Symbols and Words of Hope in the Lyrics of the Song *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai

Nur Hastuti¹

¹Japanese Language and Culture Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, Indonesia

Abstract. This research is about metaphorical symbols and words of hope in the lyrics of Shunji Iwai's song *Hana wa Saku*. The purpose of this research is to examine the presence of metaphorical symbols and words of hope for the victims of the 2011 Japanese earthquake and tsunami in the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai. This study uses a semiotic approach. The method used is descriptive analysis. The source of the data in this study is the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku*. The results of this study concluded that the outer structure (shape) contained in the lyrics of the song entitled *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai includes blank symbols (empty symbols), natural symbols (symbols of nature), and private symbols (special symbols). Analysis of this literary work found two blank symbols, two natural symbols, and one private symbol. The meaning of the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai more dominantly implies hope to return to struggle in life and not sink into sadness long enough.

¹ Corresponding Author: nurhastuti12@lecturer.undip.ac.id

1 Introduction

When the song lyrics are separated from the musical accompaniment, they become a poem. Therefore, song lyrics can be studied from a literary point of view. Music is a universal expression which reaches beyond social boundaries. Anyone can appreciate music even though he is not educated in the field of music. Music is used by many people as a medium for expressing themselves in the form of ideas or values they believe in, as well as entertainment because it contains lyrics that match the emotions a person is feeling (for example happy, sad, angry, anxious, fear, jealousy, passion, and so on) [1]. Poetry, or lyrics, is one form of literary work as defined by universal publications law. Literary works contain aesthetic values as well as depictions of life whether experienced directly or indirectly by the author [2].

In human life there must be expectations that are desired. The word hope is something that (can) be expected (to happen) [3].

Hana wa Saku / 花は咲く / Blossom Flower is a charity single by NHK released to raise funds for victims of the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan. This song was composed by Yoko Kanno, a Japanese musician whose hometown in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture was hit by a disaster. The song lyrics were written by Shunji Iwai and sung by 33 artists from Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima: the three areas worst hit by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. Proceeds from the sale of this single were donated to help rehabilitate areas affected by the disaster [4].

2 Methods

Semiotics is a branch of science that examines signs, sign systems, and the process by which a sign is interpreted. When applied to language signs, the letters, words, and sentences themselves do not contain a fixed meaning, but must include the relationship between the bearers of meaning and what is meant by the speaker concerned [5]. Language as a medium for literary works is already a semiotic or signified system, namely a system of signs that have meaning. The sign system is called semiotics, and the study of sign systems is called semiotics or semiology. Semiotics views literature as an act of communication or as a sign. This is due to the fact that literary works are sign systems that have meaning using the medium of language [6]. In this study, the writer uses the semiotic theory put forward by Riffaterre. Riffaterre's semiotics proposes a special method

of meaning, namely by giving meaning to literary works as a system of signs, or producing the meaning of signs [7].

In the science of signs or semiotics, there are two semiotic systems, namely first-order semiotics and second-order semiotics. The first level of semiotics is occupied by language which is a sign that already has meaning, while the second level of semiotics is occupied by literature which has a higher position than language, or is called meaning [8].

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Blank Symbol

Words that express symbols are specially created and used by poets to express their uniqueness or the style of their creation [9].

In the following lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* there is a blank symbol, namely:

1) 真っ白な 雪道に 春風香る

Masshirona yukimichi ni harukaze kaoru

On the plain white snowy road, I breathed the sweet spring breeze

In the song line (1) there are two blank symbols, namely the words *masshiro* and *yukimichi*. *Masshiro*'s word (真っ白) in Goo 辞書 dictionary is まっしろな／真っ白な [10], which means naturally white. The white color is closely related to the impression of clean, pure, light and bright. As for being believed to have the power to reduce pain (sadness etc.), another positive meaning is that it symbolizes a new beginning. The word hope here can be seen from the choice of white words. The singers in this song invite the victims of the 2011 Japanese tsunami at that time to get up and start a new life and not drown in old sadness.

The next Blank Symbol is *yukimichi* (雪道) in Goo 辞書 dictionary is 雪の降っている道／snowy road. Snow is a solid form of water that crystallizes in the atmosphere and falls to earth, covering permanently or temporarily, about 23 percent of the earth's surface. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), snow is white water vapor grains like cotton that freeze in the air and fall to the earth due to the air temperature in that area being below freezing. Snow is solid precipitation in the form of ice crystals. Snow comes from clouds when the temperature is below freezing (0 degrees Celsius or 32 degrees Fahrenheit), when water vapor in the atmosphere condenses directly into ice without going through the liquid stage. Once an ice crystal forms, it absorbs and freezes additional

moisture from the surrounding air, growing into snow crystals which then fall to earth. Snow in Japan usually falls from December to February.

2) 悲しみの向こう側に

Kanashimi no mukougawa ni

On the other side of sadness

In the stanza array (2) there is a blank symbol for the word *kanashimi*/悲しみ. *Kanashimi*/悲しみ in Goo 辞書 dictionary is *hitan no namida ni kureru*/ 悲嘆の涙にくれる/tears of sadness. This shows that a person/human being experiences a deep cry of sadness. Sadness due to disappointment, failure, loss and others. When someone experiences sadness, sadness or heartache can affect the physical and mental wellbeing of a person. This situation sometimes makes people who experience sadness feel unenthusiastic about activities. Deep sadness can impact physiological health such as disturbed sleep patterns, difficulty concentrating etc. People who experience this need support to get back up and not sink into the situation. When Japanese people experience disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, etc., they strengthen each other by giving motivational words in the form of the words *ganbatte kudasai/ganbarimashou* which means let's keep spirit (start life, get up again, etc.).

3.2 Natural Symbol

Words that express the symbol of natural reality as a material for projecting life. The symbol can be animal life, water phenomena, air, forest, etc. In the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* there are two identified natural symbols:

3) 真っ白な 雪道に 春風香る

Masshirona yukimichi ni harukaze kaoru

On the plain white snowy road, I breathed the sweet Spring breeze

In the line of song (3) above, the natural symbol is found in the sentence *harukaze kaoru*/春風薫る/I breathe in the fragrance of the Spring breeze. In the lyrics of this song there is a synesthesia figure of speech. Seto Kenichi in the book 日本語のレトリック explains about synesthesia, namely *Shokkaku, mikaku, kyūkaku, shikaku, chōkaku no gokan no ma de hyōgenori tori suruhyōgen-hō. Hyōgen o kasu gawa to kariru gawa to no ma de, ittei no kumiawase gaa* 触覚、味覚、嗅覚、視覚、聴覚の五感の間で表現をりとりする表現法。表現を貸す側と借りる側との間

で、一定の組み合わせがあ[11]. A method of expression that expresses the five senses, the sense of touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing. Between one sense imposed on of other senses. This means that I feel (smell) the Spring breeze has come. Spring also signifies that the air temperature is no longer cold and is starting to warm. Spring means new beginnings, just like trees grow leaves and flowers. At school or university, it marks a new semester, new passion and hope, which precisely starts early April when the cherry blossoms are in full-bloom. From the blooming flowers, the birds chirping merrily, they breathe hope (for a new, better and happier life). This Spring indeed spreads signals of life, namely the sun shines more and all the bare trees begin to grow young branches, green shoots and flower buds. For them, it's like a breath of new air after struggling in the cold for months. All of this shows that the arrival of Spring brings good news in the form of new hope after being hit by sadness, darkness (about the future) and tears.

4) 花は咲く

Hana wa saku

Flowers will bloom

Hana (花) in Goo 辞書 dictionary is *shokubutsu no/植物/* a flower; *omoni kaju no/ 主に果樹の/a blossom*; cherry blossoms which means plant flowers; flowers especially fruit trees; Cherry blossoms. Cherry blossoms symbolize life and death, beauty and violence. As the arrival of Spring promises new life, the blossoming of cherry blossoms brings vitality and vibrancy [12]. At the same time, their short lifespan is a reminder that life is fleeting [13]. Cherry blossoms signify the cycle of life when flowers bloom, so many people rejoice. When the blossoms fall, people will contemplate the ending of life and remember the departure of their loved ones [14] (Tsunami). This means that the cherry blossoms that bloom encourage people to get up after the tsunami disaster and start life with new hopes and enthusiasm to achieve dreams and happiness.

3.3 Private Symbol

Are words that express symbols specifically created and used by the poet to express the uniqueness or style of his creation. In the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* there is a private symbol as follow;

5) 傷ついて 傷つけて 報われず 泣いたりして

Kizutsuite kizutsukete mukuwarezu naitari shite

Hurt and hurt, I cry without reply

In data (5) there is a private symbol from the word *kizutsuite kizutsukete mukuwarezu naitari shite* (傷ついて 傷つけて 報われず 泣いたりして) in the Goo 辞書 dictionary is *hito no kanjō nado ga sokonawareru*/人の感情などが損なわれる/The emotion of a person carrying a hurt/hurt heart. The author here wants to convey that he has felt hurt because of being hurt by other people. He also feels he has hurt other people's feelings. This made him regret and cry and was only able to remember the people he cared about after they were gone because of the tsunami.

4 Conclusion

The outer structure (form) contained in the lyrics of the song entitled *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai includes blank symbols, natural symbols, and private symbols. This research found two blank symbols, two natural symbols, and one private symbol. The words of hope that appear in the lyrics of this song to cheer up the victims of the 2011 Japanese Tsunami are the word *Masshiro*/white which means the power to relieve pain (sadness, etc.). Another positive meaning is symbolizing new beginnings. *Haru*/Spring conveys the meaning of a new beginning, just like trees that grow leaves and flowers. At school or university, it marks a new semester, new passion and hope. *Hana wa saku/sakura* blossom means Spring promises new life, the blooming of cherry blossoms brings vitality and (new) enthusiasm to achieve dreams and happiness. The meaning of the lyrics of the song *Hana wa Saku* by Shunji Iwai more dominantly implies hope to return to struggle in life and not sink into sadness long enough.

References

1. A. Hamzah, *Hubungan Antara Preferensi Musik dengan Risk Taking Behavior pada Remaja*. Jakarta: Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah (2010)
2. F. Fenny, “*Representasi Samurai sebagai Kelas Atas dalam Stratifikasi Sosial Masyarakat Jepang di Zaman Edo dalam Novel Tokaido Inn Karya Dorothy dan Thomas Hoobler*”. Jurnal Majalah Ilmiah Unikom (2016)
3. <https://kbbi.web.id/harapan>
4. https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hana_wa_saku
5. R. Noor, *Pengantar Pengkajian Sastra*. Semarang: FASindo (2015)

6. D.P. Rachmat, *Pengkajian Puisi*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press (2012)
7. R. Rina, *Teori dan Aplikasi Semiotik Michael Riffaterre*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar (2017)
8. D.P. Rachmat, *Pengkajian Puisi*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press (2015)
9. M. Hermintoyo, *Kode Bahasa dan Sastra*. Semarang: Gigih Pustaka Mandiri (2014)
10. <https://dictionary.goo.ne.jp>
11. K. Seto. 日本語のレトリック(2015) dalam situs <http://user.keio.ac.jp/~rhotta/hellog/2015-04-27-1.html>
12. <https://www.kompasiana.com/medianmutiara/58dc8916319373c4062f9a0e/musim-semi-harapan-dan-depresi-di-jepang>
13. <https://www.jal.co.jp/id/id/guide-to-japan/experiences/cherry-blossom/what-do-cherry-blossoms-represent/index.html>
14. <https://kumparan.com/sejarah-dan-sosial/filosofi-bunga-sakura-bagi-masyarakat-jepang-205p7ZjYJOt/full>