The Foundation of Poetry Appreciation
in Poetry Recitation Videos
by Indonesian Language Subject Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This paper delves into the essence of poetry appreciation, both from the perspective of educators and students, within the context of videos created by teachers participating in the Student Creativity Program of the Doctoral Study Program in Humanities Sciences at Universitas Gadjah Mada. Drawing from rich poetic theories, including those of Aristotle, Lotman, Wellek and Warren, Roland Barthes, Riffaterre, and further buttressed by Umberto Eco's comprehensive semiotic framework, this paper focuses on an exploration with the underlying premise that a truly exceptional poem possesses multi-layered meanings, each layer coexisting harmoniously without negating the others. This allows readers, depending on their unique backgrounds, to engage with different strata of meaning as well as the poem as a whole. In a broader sense, the method employed is the structural-semiotic approach, which functions both heuristically and hermeneutically in tandem. The findings affirm that the poems selected for joint exploration by teachers and students indeed exhibit this multi-layered signification. However, it is intriguing to observe that students, influenced by their age and proficiency, tend to gravitate towards the most superficial layer, the direct or referential linguistic stratum, in their reading practices. This phenomenon highlights the need for a complex understanding of how the multi-layered beauty of poetry can be unlocked, appreciated, and shared in educational settings.

Keywords: *poetry appreciation, poetry recitation, semiotic, multi-layered signification*

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper forms an integral facet of the Student Creativity Program, a dynamic initiative orchestrated by the Doctoral Study Program in Humanities Sciences at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM). The overarching objective of this endeavor is to empower seventh-grade educators with the proficiency to craft instructional resources for teaching Indonesian literature, particularly through the creation of poetry recitation videos featuring their own students. In this context, this paper undertakes the vital task of analyzing the underpinnings of both teachers' and students' appreciation for the chosen poetry works. This exploration is inextricably linked to the attainment of the program's lofty objectives, where the artistry of poetry finds its place in the realm of pedagogical innovation.

The selection of poetry was a collaborative endeavor, driven by the choices of teachers and their students. As illustrated in Table I, this initiative culminated in a total of 31 poetry recitations, each meticulously preserved in video recordings crafted by the educators themselves. Remarkably, the majority of the chosen poems—31 in total—transcend the realm of children's literature, instead delving into the domain of adult poetry. Notably, these verses hail from illustrious poets such as Chairil Anwar, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, Emha Ainun Nadjib, and Taufik Ismail, with even a nod to the classical master, Khalil Gibran. What distinguishes these selections is their embrace of a straightforward and accessible linguistic style, a trait that has garnered substantial recognition in the digital sphere, particularly on Google. Concurrently, a subset of the chosen poetry navigates the bridge between children's and adolescent literature, aimed at readers aged 10 and above. These poems, characterized by their ubiquity in school textbooks, offer a valuable stepping stone in nurturing literary appreciation. For instance, the anthology includes Jose Rizal Manua's evocative piece, *Aku Ingin Menari*.

Additionally, the collection encompasses works of exceptional talent, originating from students themselves. *Fajar dan Senja* stands as proof of the budding creativity and literary prowess among these young individuals, adding an extra layer of richness to this exploration of poetic expression.

The distribution of selected poems, reveals a non-uniform pattern. Reflecting their levels of popularity, Sapardi Djoko Damono's works emerged as the most favored choices among the students for recitation. Following closely behind are the poems of Sutardji Calzoum Bachri and Taufik Ismail. A notable exception within this landscape is the poetry of Putu Wijana. Despite its relatively modest popularity, Putu Wijana's verses enjoyed a level of selection on par with Sapardi Djoko Damono's offerings. Remarkably, four of his poems were embraced by four student poets. What sets this apart from Sapardi Djoko Damono's poems is the number of enthusiasts each piece attracted. While every one of Putu Wijana's chosen poems garnered one student each, a prior poet had one piece selected by two student readers. This divergence can only be comprehended by examining the dynamics of the Student Creativity Program event itself. Foremost, it should be noted that Putu Wijana not only participated in the event but also generously distributed his poetry collection book to the teachers involved, free of charge, during the event. This dynamic renders Putu Wijana's poems, within the context of the event, the most tangible and directly accessible to the participating teachers. It is a testament to the profound influence and active role teachers play in shaping the selection of these poetic works.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the factors that guide the selection process, a common thread binds all the chosen poems—simplicity. This unifying attribute is intricately linked to the educators' deliberate tailoring of the material to the seventh-grade students' educational level. It also implies certain assumptions about the students' capacity to grasp, evaluate, and appreciate poetry. However, concurrently, the teachers opted for poems authored by renowned poets renowned for their intricate depths, subtle nuances, and poetic richness. This intriguing dichotomy between simplicity and profundity takes center stage in this discourse.

2. OBJECTIVES

The research objectives, hence, are as follows.
    a. Identifying the characteristics of the duality of simplicity and profundity within the works of renowned poets featured in the readings.
    b. Analyzing how the intricate connection and dynamics between simplicity and profundity in these poetic compositions can be unraveled.
    c. Identifying what complex insights emerging from the interpretations of teachers and students as they engage with the selected poetry of celebrated authors in their recitations.
    d. Analyzing what educators and students truly appreciate the artistic nuances and layers of meaning woven into these poems.

3. THEORETICAL REVIEW

To address these research questions, this study employs a synthesis of various poetic theories, particularly those that delve into the intricacies of simplicity and profundity. These theories draw inspiration from Aristotle's seminal work, *Aristotle on the Art of Poetry* (2002), Rene Wellek and Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature* (1954), Jurij M. Lotman's *Structure of the Artistic Texts* (1977), Micheal Riffaterre's *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978), and Roland Barthes' *Mythology* (1972), all underpinned by the comprehensive semiotic framework proposed by Umberto Eco (1976).

Aristotle (2002) discerns what sets "poetry" encompassing epic and drama, apart from "History" as the degree of particularity. Poetry leans toward the specific, the empirical, rooted in distinct times and spaces, confined to unique realms of experience and appreciation. In contrast, "History" tends toward universality, embodying ideas that transcend temporal and spatial boundaries, applicable broadly and perpetually. Umberto Eco (1976), on the other hand, examines the workings of poetry and its reasoning, categorizing them as abductive. This abductive logic, unique to poetry, allows it to leap from the specific to the universal. This stands in stark contrast to the logic of science, which operates through both inductive and deductive approaches. Inductive reasoning begins with a series of particulars to deduce a general or universal conclusion, while deductive reasoning begins with the universal to pinpoint the specific. Although both inductive and abductive reasoning originate from the particular, the core distinction lies in their paths. While both induction and abduction originate from the particular, a

fundamental distinction emerges—induction derives from a multitude of particulars to establish a general truth, whereas abduction springs from a solitary particular, thus truly embodying the essence of specificity.

To a certain extent, Riffaterre's (1978) perspective on poetry as a linguistic discourse conveying something beneath its surface, a concept he terms the "principle of discontinuity," can be perceived as a specific manifestation of the aforementioned abductive logic. However, in this interpretation, abductive logic has the potential to overshadow the particular with the universal. Riffaterre (1978) identifies three forms of discontinuity: the shift or alteration of meaning, the obliteration of meaning, and the creation of new meaning. In the first two forms, meaning resides within the linguistic realm, while in the third, it transcends the confines of linguistic meaning, a realm he defines as "semiotic meaning." The first mode of comprehending meaning, referred to as the heuristic method, serves as a means of acquiring knowledge about what is readily observable—an approach deeply rooted in phenomenological exploration. The second, termed the semiotic or hermeneutic method, serves as a path for unearthing insights into the universal essence that unites all phenomena, even those that initially appear unrelated. Riffaterre refers to this latter aspect as "ungrammaticality." This inclination toward phenomenology in Riffaterre's theory aligns him with Wellek and Warren's (1954) concept of normative layers, in which the metaphysical layer holds the position of transcending the empirical, surface, and phenomenal layer—referred to as the sound layer.

In his book *Structure of the Artistic Text*, Lotman (1977) introduces the idea that artistic texts, particularly within the realm of literature, consist of two distinct layers, which he labels the first-level modeling system and the second-level modeling system. The first layer of modeling involves language's capacity to shape our perception of the universe, encompassing not only linguistic elements but also the broader social and cultural context. Human beings interact with and comprehend the world indirectly, primarily through the lens of language, which serves as a model in itself. Consequently, it can be asserted that each language constructs its unique framework of understanding. The second level of modeling emerges within literature itself, as literary works are fundamentally linguistic constructs. Thus, they inherently encapsulate dual models of the universe. Importantly, one model does not compromise or overshadow the other. However, a comprehensive appreciation of literature transcends mere recognition of linguistic models and delves into an ideal understanding that encompasses all the intricate models embedded within the literary work, even those that extend beyond the boundaries of language and literature, such as cultural models. For instance, in Bakdi Soemanto's (2007) analysis of Linus Suryadi's *Pengakuan Pariyem*, it is evident that the work simultaneously incorporates three distinct models, namely language, literature, and socio-culture, illustrating the intricate interplay and coexistence of these layers within the fabric of the literary text.

Lotman's perspective bears a resemblance to Barthes' interpretation of myth. Barthes (1972) discerns myths, which encompass literary works, as constructed from two semiotic systems: the primary semiotic order and the secondary semiotic order. The former embodies denotation, while the latter carries connotation. The mythological order is a connotative realm layered atop the denotative foundation of language. Within this mythological domain, the process involves a reduction in the richness of the second order, effectively vacating the full, meaningful, linguistic sign to accommodate a new layer of meaning – the mythological essence. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that, in the presence of the mythological order, the linguistic order does not vanish entirely. In principle, Barthes (1972) suggests that myth perpetually oscillates between the denotative linguistic order and the connotative mythological order. It teeters between the replete significance of the sign within the first order and its subsequent hollowness within the second order. This rhythmic interplay, according to Barthes, mirrors the operation of a revolving door, perpetually shifting between emptiness and fulfillment. In Barthes' discerning eyes, a myth relinquishes its mythical quality when the first order becomes entirely eclipsed, rendering it bare or divesting itself until it no longer adheres to the essence of myth.

Within the framework presented earlier, an exploration of ostensibly "simple" poems authored by renowned poets, serving as the foundation for the recitations, takes center stage. These poems are far from being mere innocuous, straightforward, or denotative verses. They possess an intrinsic capacity to convey something beyond their apparent simplicity, layering their expressions with deeper connotations and subtleties. Crucially, the existence of this second order, the realm of connotation and complexity, does not render the first order, the plane of denotation, devoid of significance. Instead, it remains an indispensable facet of the literary landscape, akin to a multifaceted second order. Without the first order, which is characterized by its specificity, the tangible, the surface, and the unadorned, poetry risks forfeiting its essence as both poetry and myth. Conversely, the first order's

presence is equally vital, serving as the canvas upon which the second order artfully intertwines, creating the rich tapestry of meaning that defines literary work.

4. METHOD

To unravel the answers to the questions posed in the problem statement, this study employs the structural-semiotic method, a methodology akin to the general hermeneutic approach. It involves a fluid interchange between dissecting the parts and synthesizing the whole, a process Riffaterre characterizes as a dynamic transition from the heuristic to the hermeneutic method. The primary data sources for this study encompass the poetry under examination, segmented into distinct lingual units. These units are classified into two major categories: data pertinent to grasping the linguistic-based layers of meaning on the surface, and data crucial for comprehending the deeper strata of meaning that extend beyond the confines of linguistic interpretation within the subject poems. The analysis involves establishing the equivalences that bridge the first and second sets of data, unveiling the intricate connections within the poetic works.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In line with the focal issue at hand, which pertains to the appreciation of poetry by students and teachers through an exploration of its inherent simplicity and depth, our focus in this paper is directed solely toward the works of distinguished and widely recognized poets. Specifically, we delve into the poems authored by eminent figures such as Chairil Anwar, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Taufik Ismail, Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, and Emha Ainun Nadjib.

Within the context of this Student Creativity Program activity, a singular poem by Chairil Anwar (2019) was selected for recitation - specifically, *Krawang Bekasi*. This particular piece holds a revered status, frequently gracing the commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day. Its enduring popularity arises from the poignant portrayal it offers of the heroic souls who sacrificed their lives in the arduous struggle for Indonesia's liberation from Dutch colonial rule.

Krawang-Bekasi

Kami yang kini terbaring antara Krawang-Bekasi
tidak bisa teriak "Merdeka" dan angkat senjata lagi,
Tapi siapakah yang tidak lagi mendengar deru kami,
terbayang kami maju dan mendegap hati

Kami bicara padamu dalam hening di malam sepi
Jika dada rasa hampa dan jam dinding yang berdetak
Kami mati muda. Yang tinggal tulang diliputi debu.
Kenang, kenanglah kami

Kami sudah coba apa yang kami bisa
Tapi kerja belum selesai, belum bisa memperhitungkan
arti 4-5 ribu nyawa

Kami cuma tulang-tulang berserakan
Tapi kami adalah kepunyaanmu
Kaulah lagi ada yang tentukan nilai tulang-tulang berserakan

Atau jiwa kami melayang untuk kemerdekaan
kemenangan dan harapan
atau tidak untuk apa-apa,

Kami tidak tahu, kami tidak lagi bisa berkata
Kaulah sekarang yang berkata

Kami bicara padamu dalam hening di malam sepi
Jika dada rasa hampa dan jam dinding yang berdetak

Kenang, kenanglah kami
Teruskan, teruskan jiwa kami
Menjaga Bung Karno
menjaga Bung Hatta
menjaga Bung Sjahrir

Kami sekarang mayat
Berikan kami arti
Berjagalah terus di garis batas pernyataan dan impian

Kenang, kenanglah kami
yang tinggal tulang-tulang diliputi debu
Beribu kami terbaring antara Krawang-Bekasi.

Amidst the evocative imagery of fallen heroes on the battleground that stretches between *Krawang Bekasi*, a powerful message resonates. These valiant souls, who gave their all in the name of Indonesia's independence, convey a solemn plea to the younger generation: the need to remember their sacrifices and to safeguard the nation, embodied by its triumvirate leaders. However, a sense of profound uncertainty permeates their discourse. These voices, now silenced in death, their remains scattered, have transcended the realm of the living. They no longer play a role in shaping Indonesia's post-war trajectory. Their apparent doubt mirrors a sense of apprehension regarding the nation's future, a future that seems uncertain and indistinct. Their words echo with a somber tone, akin to a "lonely night" devoid of hope and fervor, akin to a "hollow chest" confronting the relentless march of time. Furthermore, these voices allude to the imperative for the younger generation to stand as sentinels at the "borderline of reality and dream." It suggests that the essence of nationality and nationalism is inherently fragile, often leaving individuals caught between the realms of "reality" and "dream." Notably, "reality" is described as a "statement," hinting that it might not be an inherent truth but something shaped to become real or more substantial.

In this context, the poem transcends the mere depiction of ardent sacrifices in the crucible of war, characterized by an unwavering readiness to lay down one's life. It also paints a vivid picture of a daring wager on something inherently uncertain, a gamble in which one stands to lose everything, even life itself, in pursuit of a potentially futile objective. The state and the nation, as portrayed in the poem, resemble not only a physical battlefield but also an internal struggle, a battle waged within the very depths of the heart against the relentless tide of uncertainty. This mystical conundrum casts a poignant aura, fostering a series of repetitions – "*terus* (keep going), *teruskan* (keep going), *menjaga* (preserve), *menjaga* (preserve), *menjaga* (preserve)." These repetitions transcend mere rhetorical devices designed to galvanize the younger generation; they also serve as a means of self-assurance. They reflect the underlying anxiety and trepidation in the face of the enigma of uncertainty, a force that appears to reanimate the departed souls, compelling them to transcend their corporeal limitations.

The interpretation of the aforementioned poem predominantly focuses on its external facets—matters of spirit, the drive to conquer adversaries, or the inspiration of the younger generation to engage in physical combat. Regrettably, the inner dimensions of the poem often go overlooked. These inner layers not only complement the external ones but also introduce an element of contradiction, marked by despair, doubt, and underlying anxiety. Strikingly, the more fervently the hero's message is conveyed, the more conspicuous the presence of these elements of doubt and apprehension. Nonetheless, emphasizing the external layer is not inherently erroneous. This layer serves as the conduit through which the poem resonates with a diverse array of readers, spanning various age groups and interests. Moreover, it acts as a protective shield, safeguarding the presence of an inner layer that introduces elements of contradiction. Indeed, the irony woven into the poem would remain elusive without the scaffolding provided by the external layer.

Out of the four poems penned by Sapardi Djoko Damono (2015), as mentioned earlier, our focus in this discussion centers solely on the poem titled *Hanya* (Only). Notably, this particular poem holds distinction as both the inaugural piece recited and the one that garnered the attention of two distinct readers.

Hanya

Hanya suara burung yang kaudengar
dan tak pernah kaulihat burung itu
tapi tahu burung itu ada di sana.

Hanya desir angin yang kaurasa
dan tak pernah kaulihat angin itu
tapi percaya angin itu di sekitarmu.

Hanya doaku yang bergetar malam ini
dan tak pernah kaulihat siapa aku
tapi yakin aku ada dalam dirimu.

This poem delves into the realm of the imperceptible, the seemingly inconsequential, and the often-dismissed *hanya* (only). It navigates the terrain of the unseen, the barely noticed, and the seemingly purposeless, bestowing the moniker *hanya* (only) upon these entities. In this tapestry, the bird's voice remains an ethereal presence, the wind's whispers a subtle caress, and the *aku* (I) is merely an entity with prayers that reverberate in the unseen depths. Yet, readings of the poem often adopt a somewhat uniform perspective, treating these elements as if they occupy equal footing, residing in a shared realm of invisibility. They coexist in obscurity, believed to exist, albeit without the tangible evidence afforded by the sense of sight. In essence, the initial layer of meaning within the poem underscores the idea that invisibility does not equate to non-existence. Instead, their presence hinges not on empirical proof but on belief, residing in the realm beyond sight.

Nonetheless, it's imperative to recognize that the poem in question is crafted with a meticulous selection of words, setting it apart from being a mere repetition of the same concept. Firstly, the presence of the birds is epitomized by the auditory perception that extends its reach across vast distances. Secondly, the wind's existence is distinguished by the tactile sense, capable of effecting only objects nearby, even those in direct contact with one's person. Thirdly, the existence of "I" aligns with a sensory experience akin to the second, specifically, the sense of touch through vibration. However, a nuanced disparity emerges between the concept of "swish" and "vibrate." While the former possesses a characteristic subtleness, evoking a faint and elusive quality, the latter resonates with a heightened intensity. Vibration has the capacity to extend its influence beyond the point of contact, permeating not only the external surface but also penetrating deeper, reaching the interior of the body itself.

Another crucial distinction among the three stanzas lies in the factor of distance. The sound resonates over a greater expanse than swish, and swish, in turn, extends beyond vibrate. In essence, this implies that of the three entities presented, the subject matter in the third stanza exists in the closest proximity to the reader, even merging with one's very essence. The variance in distance thus configures these stanzas into a hierarchical arrangement. What resides in the realm of vibration, deep within one's being, ascends to the highest perch in terms of significance and position, surpassing sensations felt on the body's surface and those experienced farther away from the body. This hierarchy transforms the poem *Hanya* into a narrative, possessing a developmental progression, ascending from the lowest position to its zenith. It calls for a reading that mirrors this dynamic journey, a constant ascent or an inward dive. Moreover, the hierarchy signifies the interplay between the external and the internal, the sensory and the non-sensory, the connection between the created and the Creator, and the unification of humanity and the divine. It exemplifies the growth of *kawula* (servants) and *gusti* (the Almighty). This potential is further accentuated by the term *doa* (prayer), resounding with wholehearted vibration. In harmony with the force that sustains the third stanza, namely vibration, culminating the reading in a manner that echoes this resonance is particularly fitting. The next subject of discussion is Taufik Ismail's (1993) poem entitled *Dengan Puisi, Aku* (With Poetry, I) as follows.

Dengan Puisi, Aku

Dengan Puisi, aku bernyanyi
Sampai senja umurku nanti

Dengan puisi, aku bercinta
Berbatas cakrawala
Dengan puisi, aku mengenang
Keabadian yang akan datang

Dengan puisi, aku menangis
Jarum waktu bila kejam mengiris

Dengan puisi, aku mengutuk
Nafas zaman yang busuk

Dengan puisi, aku berdoa
Perkenankanlah kiranya.

The closing couplet in the aforementioned poem assumes a pivotal and conspicuous role, primarily due to its enigmatic and ambiguous nature. In contrast to the preceding lines, these concluding statements brim with uncertainty, distancing themselves from the firm declarations made by the "I." The preceding lines resound with decisive proclamations, resolute and unwavering, pledging to sing with the poem until life's end, engage in a profound love affair with the horizon, reminisce over eternity, shed tears at the unrelenting passage of time's cruel needle, and curse the malodorous breath of time. In stark contrast, the last two lines remain shrouded in ambiguity. They neither specify the object of the prayer nor elucidate the rationale behind this choice. This dual ambiguity engenders a multifaceted interpretation. The subject of desire within a poetic prayer might encapsulate a wide array of emotions, ranging from the pleasurable to the melancholic. It could also encompass everything articulated or aspired to in the preceding lines, including singing, weeping, reminiscing, and invoking curses, all mediated through the medium of poetry. This second possibility does not fundamentally contradict the first; rather, it forms an integral part of the broader narrative. If prayer is the conduit through which all desires are realized, it applies equally to the aspirations articulated in the preceding lines. However, the fulfillment of these wishes remains contingent not on the "I" alone but also on divine intervention, a transcendent force that dictates the course of destiny.

In addition to the air of definitiveness that pervades the "I"'s choices in the preceding lines, there exists an alternative perspective. This alternative view suggests that all these proclamations are, in essence, confined to desires, hopes, or prayers, their resolutions subject to divine determination. In other words, the finality and certainty of decisions in the preceding lines are eclipsed by the subtlety of longing, yielding to an essence of humility and dependency. While the activities ordained by the poem may project grandeur and universality, endowed with the potential to transcend temporal and spatial boundaries—to sing throughout a lifetime, to foster an intimate connection with the horizon, to cast curses upon time's breath—the last two lines serve as a poignant reminder of human fragility, constraint, and their inherent connection to time and space. The poem poses a profound challenge to the reader, weaving a tapestry of dualities. On one hand, it projects unwavering certitude and the faculty of choice, while simultaneously unveiling shades of uncertainty, impotence, and vulnerability. Humans may exude strength when confronted with earthly matters, yet they find themselves in a state of vulnerability before a divine force that perpetually overshadows their human agency. In practice, students grapple with the dichotomy that emerges between the prevailing mood set by the preceding lines and the distinct atmosphere prevailing in the poem's final two lines.

The poem entitled *Jembatan* (Bridge) by Sutardji Calzoum Bachri (1981) is as follows.

Jembatan

Sedalam-dalam sajak takkan mampu menampung airmata
bangsa. Kata-kata telah lama terperangkap dalam basa-basi
dalam ewuh pekewuh dalam isyarat dan kilah tanpa makna.

Maka aku pun pergi menatap pada wajah berjuta. Wajah orang
jalanan yang berdiri satu kaki dalam penuh sesak bis kota.

Wajah orang tergusur. Wajah yang ditilang malang. Wajah legam
para pemulung yang memungut remah-remah pembangunan.
Wajah yang hanya mampu menjadi sekedar penonton etalase
indah di berbagai palaza. Wajah yang diam-diam menjerit
mengucap
tanah air kita satu
bangsa kita satu
bahasa kita satu
bendera kita satu!

Tapi wahai saudara satu bendera kenapa kini ada sesuatu
yang terasa jauh diantara kita? Sementara jalan jalan
mekar di mana-mana menghubungkan kota-kota, jembatan-jembatan
tumbuh kokoh merentangi semua sungai dan lembah
yang ada, tapi siapakah yang akan mampu menjembatani jurang
di antara kita?

Di lembah-lembah kusam pada pucuk tulang kersang dan otot
linu mengerang mereka pancangkan koyak-moyak bendera hati
dipijak ketidakpedulian pada saudara. Gerimis tak mampu
mengucapkan kibarnya.
Lalu tanpa tangis mereka menyanyi
padamu negeri
airmata kami.

It is a poem rich in concrete, particular events, which allows it to be quickly absorbed by the reader's sensory grasp as well as cognition and affection. There are images of people crammed into city buses, people being evicted, the faces of the unfortunate ticketed, the jet-black faces of the scavengers, the mesmerized faces watching the beautiful window displays in various plazas, the faces silently screaming the youth oath. These scenes are contrasted with the construction of roads and bridges. In the face of these two events, the poem is full of pleasantries, courtesies, shyness, which make it unable to "hold the nation's tears". The first layer of the poem clearly depicts the social gap between the big, grand, luxurious development projects and the poor, dreary people who live in them. The gap between the development that brings happiness and the tearful society that lives within it.

The poem articulates, both implicitly and explicitly, the yearning for a bridge capable of reconnecting all that resides within the looming divide. The initial bridge is of a physical nature, yet it falls short in bridging the chasm, for the divide extends beyond the physical realm. It encompasses realms of the mind and spirit, entwining sentiments of sorrow, isolation, and alienation. The second bridge is a manifestation of nationalism, embodied in the promise of youthful devotion and the flag symbolizing national unity. However, even this bridge falters in its mission, as the breach is not solely ideological but also economic in nature. The third prospective bridge takes the form of rhyme, yet rhymes, too, prove inadequate in uniting or drawing closer those dwelling within the gap. Rhymes, laden with pleasantries and affectations, lack the depth required to traverse the mental and spiritual divide, one that finds expression through tears.

The three bridges in the poem also serve to delineate the three strata of meaning or layers within, namely the external, ideological, and intrinsic layers. The gap depicted in this poem extends beyond the mere economic disparity between the affluent and the impoverished. It delves into an ideological schism, the erosion of a collective sense of unity among citizens, and a spiritual chasm laden with feelings of alienation and isolation, fostering an unfriendly environment for the inhabitants. Indeed, the poem's resonance carries a note of melancholy, partly attributed to the presence of the term *air mata* (tears). However, this melancholy does not bear the mark of irony; instead, it is suffused with a sense of compassion for those who grapple with economic deprivation. What is referred to as ironic sadness emerges from the myriad bridges offered as a means to unify, to draw nearer. Irony takes center stage in the poem's concluding two lines.

The last poem is Emha Ainun Nadjib's (1983) *Tuhanku* (My God).

Tuhanku

karena cintaku pada-Mu
sering tak tega aku melihat nasib-Mu
di bumiku.
Engkau tertawa, Bukan?
Engkau Maha-Agung yang tak perlu
dibela, tapi demikianlah kata hatiku,
yang betapa pun ia sekadar
debu, namun sangat mendambakan-Mu.
Tuhanku
ingin kuambil bumi ini
kulemparkan ke matahari
agar pecah dan musnah
agar Kau ciptakan lagi
kehidupan yang damai.
Tuhanku
Engkau tertawa, bukan?
itu wewenang-Mu
itu pula misteri yang kutunggu.

Much like the preceding poems, the one at hand maintains a straightforward quality, akin to a prayer, yet it resembles a dialogue—a monologue, to be precise—between the narrator and their God. In a manner reminiscent of Taufik Ismail's *Dengan Puisi*, this poem also showcases the resilience and capacity of human beings to stand up for their God against the indifference of the *bumi* (earth). Nevertheless, the narrator, while portraying themselves as a powerful advocate for God, is acutely aware of their own vulnerability in the face of the almighty. This self-awareness leads to a sense of ironic self-mockery. This represents the poem's initial layer of meaning and order. However, delving deeper, we uncover the poem's second layer, which unravels the paradox of faith while simultaneously embracing the paradox of God, referred to as *misteri* (the mystery) the narrator anticipates. On one hand, God expects humanity to defend Him as a testament to their devotion. On the other, humanity acknowledges that God, in reality, requires no defense. This paradox highlights the duality of humans, who are but dust while yearning for God's greatness. It is important to note that this profound paradox was not fully captured in the poetry readings within this program.

6. CONCLUSION

In the Student Creativity Program, all the poems selected for recitation adhere to a direct and straightforward style. These poems employ simple language that mirrors the everyday reality and can be readily apprehended through the human senses. However, beneath this apparent simplicity lies a more intricate layer of meaning, one that remains hidden from plain view. This concealed stratum delves into the religious connection between man and God, the ideological dynamics within human relationships, and the subtle, often ironic dialogue that transpires within an individual. The choice of these poems for seventh-grade students appears apt, aligning with the age and aesthetic sensibilities of the students in question. Students can readily grasp the poems' surface meanings. However, given the esteemed status of these works, created by renowned poets and boasting a degree of popularity, they house not only the straightforward layers of meaning conveyed by the words but also more abstract and complex messages. These abstract dimensions, unrepresented by mere literal interpretations, beckon for further exploration. Hence, it is incumbent upon teachers to elucidate these underlying strata to their students and endeavor to render them accessible in the course of the students' reading.

7. COMPETING INTEREST STATEMENT

This article is free from any conflict of interest regarding the data collection, analysis, and the publication process itself. Either replicate or modify the previous sentence for this part.

8. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Faruk conceived of the presented idea, developed the theory, and wrote the article. I Dewa Putu Wijana verified the analytical method. Anis Mashlihatin collected data and edited the manuscript. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

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