

Chapter I

Introduction

Background of the Study

Commonly, everyone usually shares ideas and inspirations in literary work. They try to tell their life experience, include one who becomes their inspirator into the work itself. In short, the literary work is like a communicative device for people who transfer their ideas indirectly. In this case, people just transfer their ideas on a paper, and create figurative language to make readers attractive as if they flow into the ways of story. Maya Angelou is one of popular poets who creates poetries, and her poetries even become inspiration for almost all people in the world. These matters are also supported by Elias (2013, p. 7) in which she told the fact that Maya Angelou is not just a female, but an Afro-American female, who must have had the need to seek the knowledge to discover her inner self, where matters such as gender, sex, race, culture, domestic upbringing, etc. All are interrelated in the process. Elias also added that her poems “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” and “Still I Rise” have been inspiration and deep mirror of the wild woman’s phenomena for all women.

Those above expositions are being the first reason taking Maya Angelou as the subject of this research. I am interested in taking her poems as the object of this research because some poems of Maya Angelou intend to her life experience. It could be said that she is Civil Right female. Elias (2013, p. 12) states that she has an important role on the Civil Movement. We could have used one of her

stories or some passages of her books where she illustrates the inequalities black people used to suffer.

The second reason is her poems are attractive. She covered her poems with figurative languages so when readers interpreted that poems, they would not be offended and even angry with the author. Although in creating literary work, people basically pay attention various languages styles, Maya Angelou covered her poems with them. Keraf (1994, p. 112) enlighten that language style is needed for creating literary work, including the poems. It is usually created by authors based on their ideas, such as imagery, metaphor, metonymy, simile, and etc. In this research, the focus refers to the simile analysis of Maya Angelou's poems.

As being extended in the previous exposition, Maya Angelou created her poems in order to struggle her life among white women. Therefore, I assume that some of her poems send messages to the readers to appraise themselves. She has used simple words to register the implicit meaning. In the simile for instance, I found the words that referring to poems in her writing:

*I walk into a room
Just as cool as you please, ... (Angelou, 1994, p.130)*

*You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise. (Angelou, 1994, p. 163)*

In analysis, I found that the first line in *Phenomenal Women* uses as cool as simile marker, and the second poem of *Still I Rise* uses like as the simile marker. In the first poem, tenor (T) refers to *a room* and vehicle (V) refers to *you*. In short analysis, this poem assimilates *a room* with *you*. In this case, the situation

that she felt in a room is assimilated with someone's feelings in which she felt cool at his seat. In the second poem, tenor (T) refers to *the very dirt* and vehicle (V) refers to *dust*. Something dirty or bad that he found from someone has been assimilated with dust. In addition, for the first poem, the author uses simile to compare her walk is same with the model. Her walk is beautiful. It means that the author shows her strength as if she can do the same things like a model or the whites. On this analysis, I could analyze that Angelou does not use direct words to interpret what she wants. She just told her wish through a paper, and it can link with African American life. Therefore, this matter could be the second reason why I focus on Angelou's poems as the subject of this research. It is because I interrelated her poems with her life experiences, that she hides her suffering through figurative languages.

Analyzing simile is in fact helpful to get the real meaning and purpose of a poem. It is like a metaphor in which it could get the meaning from the poem. Cuddon (1998) states that simile is used people to enhance description of a person, place, ideas, or things. By learning simile, people could enlarge the knowledge about figurative language. A poet introduces a simile through a connecting word such as "like", "as", and "as...as". Therefore, this research is not only adding our knowledge about simile, but we can also know more about Maya Angelou's poems.

Problem Statements

The problem statements of this research is "How is simile reflected in Maya Angelou's Poems?"

Objectives of Research

The objectives of this research is basically intended to describe the simile in Maya Angelou's poems.

Significance of Research

This research is significantly giving contribution to three aspects as follows:

Language Teaching

In this aspect, this research gives contribution for teaching English, especially teaching literature. The benefit of this research for this aspect could be contributed to both teachers and students. In teachers, this research could give a way to teach English structurally. In teaching simile, they can transform structural approach in analyzing simile could be applied in the learning process. Meanwhile, for students, this research could give contribute for understanding the concept of simile, especially the theory of structural analysis in learning.

Teaching Literature

In this aspect, simile could give new understanding and comprehending in literature. The concept of simile is not only giving intention to semantics, but also giving any cases in Pragmatics. This matter could be clearly describing the concept of semantics and pragmatics. Indirectly, it perhaps adds knowledge in simile. By understanding this research, it is indirectly giving comprehending on relationship between literature and linguistics.

Personal Readers

In this aspect, this research escaped to add readers' understanding towards simile theory. Then, this research gives contribution for readers small points of

literature on the poems. This research is also giving contribution for readers to take an idea from this research so they could create new concept that relating with this idea for the further research