



Interpretation of The Messages In William Shakespeare's Selected Sonnets

Rida Marlenie
University of Bengkulu
Email: ridamarlenie@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to interpret the messages in William Shakespeare's selected sonnets. To describe these messages, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive method. There are 7 William Shakespeare's selected sonnets, they are sonnet 12, sonnet 18, sonnet 29, sonnet 55, sonnet 113, sonnet 116, and sonnet 138. The results are the interpretation of the message in sonnet 12 is nothing lasts forever in this world. If you want immortality so marry and have children. Indeed, the child is your successor so that your name will last forever. The interpretation of the message in sonnet 18 is if we love someone, we must love and appreciate her/ him with all our hearts, timeless and not lost from the soul. Always growing and admired. The interpretation of sonnet 29 is no matter how difficult life is, we must remain grateful. All of that will mean nothing if we have and live together with the people we loved. Everything will be beautiful. The interpretation message of sonnet 55 is war or destructive things will not be able to destroy memories about a love story that will exist in our minds. The interpretation message of sonnet 113 is someone we love can be a big inspiration for a work of art. In Sonnet 116, the interpretation of message is true love will never change, will continue to grow, and cannot be broken despite many obstacles faced. And the last, sonnet 138, the interpretation of message is honesty is much better than lying. All of William Shakespeare's sonnets contain good messages related to our life. The selected sonnets talked about love and life.

Key words: interpretation; message; sonnet

Introduction

Sonnets are poems that express ideas or thoughts in a variety of ways, but they all have two things in common. All sonnets have fourteen lines and are written in iambic pentameter. Bull (2008:395) states a sonnet is a poem with 14 lines and ten syllables in each line. A sonnet is a poem that is influenced by the artistic arrangement of words. On the other words, a sonnet is lyrical poem which is written in 14 lines with iambic pentameter pattern and all of these lines are arrange by artistic words.

One of the world's most famous poets and sonnets is William Shakespeare. William Shakespeare was a well-known English poet, playwright, and actor, born in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564. His birthday is most commonly celebrated on April 23, which is also the date of his died in 1616. William Shakespeare became one of the most important literary figures of the English language. Many of his works are well known to this day. Many of his works have been adapted into stories - films, songs or cashed in other works. He wrote between 1585 and 1613 and his work has been translated into almost every living language of the world and performed on stage more than any other playwright (Bevington, David. 2002)

Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets. The themes of his sonnets such as about love, passage of time, jealousy, life and mortality. The researcher selected 7 William Shakespeare's sonnets in this research. The sonnets are sonnet 12, sonnet 18, sonnet 29, sonnet 55, sonnet 113, sonnet 116, and sonnet 138. Each sonnet has different messages on it.

Like other kinds of poems, sonnets have messages that written by the writer in the strings of the words. It can contain moral values or good messages for the reader. The interpretation of the messages in the sonnets or poems is usually different for everyone. Depend on point of view of the reader. The interpretation of the message generated by each sonnet explains the meaning content of the sonnet itself. Interpretation is the act of explaining, reframing, or otherwise showing your own understanding of something. In Shakespeare's sonnets, there are different messages. And all of the sonnets contain deep messages or good moral value. It is interesting to interpret the messages of William Shakespeare's selected sonnets, because they are all poems of the highest quality.

Research Methodology

In analyzed the messages in William Shakespeare's sonnets, the researcher used qualitative descriptive method. The selected sonnets of William Shakespeare are sonnet 12, sonnet 18, sonnet 29, sonnet 55, sonnet 113, sonnet 116, and sonnet 138. The main data in this research is the sentences in the sonnets. In addition, the researcher also used some books or articles to support about the theories. The data taken from many resources, it likes online journal and research that related with this research. The method used by reading William Shakespeare's sonnets and then interpret the meaning. After that, the researcher was interpreted the messages of each selected sonnets. In Analyzed the data, the researcher used descriptive analysis.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

In the selected William Shakespeare's sonnets, to make easier in interpret the messages, the researcher have to find out the translation in modern English. Interpretation of the meaning has big influence to interpret the messages in the sonnets.

Sonnet 12

*When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls, all silvered o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,*

*Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
 And die as fast as they see others grow;
 And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
 Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.*

In this sonnet, Shakespeare uses a number of images to depict the passage of time, as well as the aging and decay of living things. As he observes how everything decays and dies, Shakespeare begins to doubt the Fair Youth's beauty, which he had previously praised: even the Youth, as young as he is now, will grow old and die.

Sonnet 18

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this and this gives life to thee.*

This sonnet is a sonnet that expresses the poet's admiration for beauty of his lover (Shakespeare Online, 2019e). All parts of the poem that state the beauty of love is different from summer and will never fade with time or disappeared for various reasons.

Sonnet 29

*When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
 I all alone beweep my outcast state,
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
 Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
 Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,*

*With what I most enjoy contented least;
 Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising,
 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
 Like to the lark at break of day arising
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
 For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.*

This sonnet describes the state of life of the poet in his time (Shakespeare Online, 2019). In this sonnet, quatrain 1 tells about the bad luck and misfortune of a man in his life. It was as if heaven did not care. Quatrain 2 shows that the poet dissatisfied with their own lives and envious of the lives of others. Q3 indicates a change in mood or attitude when compared to the first and second quatrains expressing sadness and hopelessness. The couplet reveals how a poet at least feels lucky to have a loved one who cannot be exchanged for anything.

Sonnet 55

*Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
 Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
 But you shall shine more bright in these contents
 Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
 When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
 And broils root out the work of masonry,
 Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.
 'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.
 So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.*

This sonnet tells the story of the poet's love for the girl he loves (Shakespeare Online, 2019g). In Q1, explained the love of the poet to his lover will never be devoured by time, unlike inscriptions or monuments which will shattered over time even though it was made of solid stone. In Q2 explained that war or destructive things will not be able to destroy memories about a love story that will

continue to exist. The word "The living record of your memory", this word that strengthen the statement of the story in the poem will not be destroyed because it will still be stored in the in memory. In Q3, explained that the eternal love story will forever be remembered or in the future until the end of time (to the ending doom). On couplets, confirms the statement stated in the three couplets above, that the love story will remain eternal and will be heard clearly again on the day of judgment, although at this moment it can only be expressed through the words of a poem.

Sonnet 113

*Since I left you, mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about
Doth part his function, and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectively is out;
For it no form delivers to the heart
Of bird, of flow'r, or shape which it doth latch.
Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
For if it see the rud'st or gentlest sight,
The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature,
The mountain, or the sea, the day, or night,
The crow, or dove, it shapes them to your feature
Incapable of more, replete with you,
My most true mind thus makes mine untrue.*

In this sonnet, it is told about a poet whose heart and mind are filled with the shadow of his lover, because to him his lover is his only inspiration (Shakespeare Online, 2019b). Q1, stated that since being separated from his lover, the poet seemed to lose all his abilities. In Q2, it is stated that various the forms that exist in the universe cannot touch his heart. In Q3, the poet observes everything like in the world, but still turned into the shadow of his idol. on couplets, stated that the poet is very dependent on the idol of his heart. The word "Incapable", states the inability of the poet to do many things (composing poetry and poetry) because all His mind and heart are filled with the idol of his heart. For the poet, his lover is everything, feel the idol of the heart in all things. For him the idol of the heart is the only inspiration.

Sonnet 116

*Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,*

*That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
 It is the star to every wandering bark,
 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
 Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
 Within his bending sickle's compass come;
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
 But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.*

This sonnet is a sonnet that describes the nature, attitude, and form the truth of love (Shakespeare Online, 2019c). In the first quatrain, this sonnet reveals that true love will never has changed and will remain the same. The sentence "Admit impediments" states that true love accepts all difficulties or obstacles. In Q2, the initial two sentences contained is a continuation of the first couplet which states about the solidity of true love. Sentence "It is the star to every wandering bark" which describes true love like the stars in the sky shows the direction for ships that get lost in the ocean. It can be interpreted that true love can lead things that are not good to a better direction or to the right path and stay strong even though there is a big storm. In Q3, it stated that true love will last until the end of time. Say the "doom" in this quatrain is a symbol for death. This word at the same time confirms about another advantage of true love, which is that it will survive even at the end of death or the end era. In the couplet, the poet gives a guarantee about his words that describe what true love is like. The sentence "I never write" in the couplet is an expression of the poet who stating that there really is no true love as said, nor what is said about true love as in his poems, the poet will withdraw or delete all the poems ever written about love.

Sonnet 138

*When my love swears that she is made of truth
 I do believe her, though I know she lies,
 That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
 Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
 Although she knows my days are past the best,
 Simply I credit her false speaking tongue:
 On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd
 But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
 And wherefore say not I that I am old?
 O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
 And age in love loves not to have years told:*

*Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.*

This sonnet is a sonnet that tells the love life that stands above lies (Shakespeare Online, 2019d). Q1 shows that the poet's lover lies about his true status to the poet. The word "I do believe" her though I know she is lies ", shows the poet pretending to believe what is said by her lover, even though the poet knows that the lover is lying. In Q2, the poet reveals that in fact the poet also lied to his former lover lied to him. The poet's lie is age. The poet does not say the actual age. In Q3, explain simply that the two of them lie and know each other each other's lies. The sentence "But wherefore says she not she is unjust? And wherefore say not I that I am old?", illustrating to the reader that the poet knows his lover lied, and the lover also knew the poet had lied to him. On couplets, reveal their lives after both find out they lied to each other. It is revealed that the poet and his lover live happily together while staying with each other lie and both hide the truth about themselves.

Discussion

Interpretation of meaning has big influence to the interpretation of messages in each sonnets. There are some messages that found in those sonnets. After analyzed the meaning sentences by sentences, the researcher got the messages in sonnet 12, sonnet 18, sonnet 29, sonnet 55, sonnet 113, sonnet 116, and sonnet 138. The interpretation of the message in sonnet 12 is nothing lasts forever in this world. If you want immortality so marry and have children. Indeed, the child is your successor so that your name will last forever. The interpretation of the message in sonnet 18 is if we love someone, we must love and appreciate her/ him with all of our hearts, timeless and not lost from the soul. It is always growing and admired. The interpretation of sonnet 29 is no matter how difficult life is, we must remain grateful. All of that will mean nothing if we have and live together with the people we love. Everything will be beautiful. The interpretation message of sonnet 55 is war or destructive things will not be able to destroy memories about a love story that will exist in our minds. The interpretation message of sonnet 113 is someone we love can be a big inspiration for a work of art. In Sonnet 116, the interpretation of message is true love will never change, will continue to grow, and cannot be broken despite many obstacles faced. And the last, sonnet 138, the interpretation of message is honesty is much better than lying.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the results of research and discussion obtained after analyzing the William Shakespeare's sonnets, it can be summed up in this research all of William Shakespeare's sonnets contain good messages related to our life. The selected sonnets talked about love and life.

Based on the results of this study, suggestions are recommended to the readers can learn poems as a means to increase the wealth of knowledge possessed. In addition, poems can inspire the soul of the reader through the use of language with meaningful meanings deep. It is hoped that further

researchers will conduct research with a quantitative approach. Furthermore, the next researcher can conduct research on other aspects and poetry, or can research with a wider and comprehensive scope.

References

- Bevington, David (2002), Shakespeare, Oxford: Blackwell, ISBN 0-631-22719-9.
- Bull, Victoria (2008). Oxford Learners' Pocket Dictionary : New Edition. London: Oxford University Press
- Rafli, R., & Zai, J. R. (2018). Figurative Languages in William Shakespeare's Poem: a Fairy Song, a Madrigal, Bridal Song, Dirge, and Sonnet 116. *Jurnal Ilmiah Langue and Parole*, 2(1), 53–58. <https://doi.org/10.36057/jilp.v2i1.334>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019a). Shakespeare's Sonnets. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019b). Sonnet 12. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/12.html>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019c). Sonnet 18. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/18.html>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019d). Sonnet 113. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/113.html>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019e). Sonnet 55. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/55.html>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019f). Sonnet 116. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/116.html>
- Shakespeare Online. (2019g). Sonnet 138. <http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/138.html>
- Vaughn, L. (2014). *Beginning Ethics: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*. W.W. Norton. <https://books.google.co.id/books?id=BwChoAEACAAJ>