



## FIGURE OF SPEECH: SHIFT IN STYLE IN THE POETRY OF W.D HOWELLS AND T.S ELLIOT

### KIASAN: PERGESERAN GAYA DALAM PUISI W.D HOWELLS DAN T.S ELLIOT

Danang Rendi Saputra<sup>1</sup>, Ifatunnisa Azzahra<sup>2</sup>, Salman Alfarisi<sup>3</sup>

1,2,3 English Literature, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said

Jl. Pandawa, Dusun IV, Pucangan, Kec. Katasura, Kabupaten Sukoharjo, Jawa Tengah

Email: <sup>1</sup>danangrendisaputra2@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>ifatunnisaazzahra@gmail.com,

<sup>3</sup>salmafalisi@gmail.com

#### Abstract

*This research aims to analyze the stylistic turn in the poems about Realism entitled "Dead" and "If" by William Dean Howell and "The Fire Sermon" and "The Burial of Dead" by T.S. Eliot about Modernism. This study uses Zienkowski's (2011) theory to show the language style embodied in literary works. This research uses a qualitative descriptive design to reveal and investigate the phenomenon of style embodied in the poet. The data taken are words, phrases, and sentences related to the discourse of beauty. Data to support this research is taken from articles, journals, websites, and previous studies with the same topic but with different objects. Based on theory and analysis, the researcher argues that the poem "If," an early poem by William, uses a lot of personification and metaphor to express strong feelings and ideas, often using the language of nature. Meanwhile, in the poem "Dead," William also displays a very contrasting style. The use of personification and metaphor. "Burial of the Dead" from "The Waste Land" uses a fragmented structure and a large number of metaphors and metonymies to depict the fragmentation and loss of meaning in society. In "The Fire Sermon," Eliot explores the spiritual and sexual disillusionment of the post-World War I era. He incorporates various metonymic sounds, allusions and imagery. Thus, this identification can reveal the correlation between the poetry of William Dean Howells and T.S Eliot.*

**Keywords:** Poem, realism, modernism, style, figure of speech

#### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pergantian gaya bahasa dalam puisi-puisi tentang Realisme yang berjudul "Dead" dan "If" oleh William Dean Howell dan "The Fire Sermon" dan "The Burial of Dead" oleh T.S. Eliot tentang Modernisme. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Zienkowski (2011) untuk menunjukkan gaya bahasa yang terkandung dalam karya sastra. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengungkapkan dan menyelidiki fenomena gaya yang terkandung dalam puisi. Data yang diambil berupa kata, frasa, dan kalimat yang berkaitan dengan wacana keindahan. Berdasarkan teori dan analisis, penelitian ini dapat ditemukan bahwa puisi "If", sebuah puisi karya William, banyak menggunakan majas personifikasi dan metafora untuk mengekspresikan perasaan dan gagasan yang kuat. Sementara itu, dalam puisi "Dead" karya William juga menampilkan penggunaan personifikasi dan metafora yang penuh gaya. "Burial of the Dead" karya Eliot menggunakan struktur yang terfragmentasi dan sejumlah besar metafora dan metonimi. Dalam "The Burial of Dead", Eliot mengeksplorasi kekecewaan spiritual dan seksual. Ia menggabungkan berbagai bunyi, kiasan, dan citra yang bersifat metonimi. Dengan demikian, identifikasi ini dapat mengungkapkan korelasi antara puisi William Dean Howells dan Thomas Stearns Eliot.*

**Kata kunci:** puisi, realisme, modernisme, gaya bahasa, majas

## Introduction

Poetry has been a part of literature for many ages. It is the textual representation of human emotions, ideas, and experiences that are frequently challenging to convey in simple language. According to Kosasih (2012), poetry is a type of literary work in which beautiful and meaningful words are used. Poetry gives the poet a beautiful, abstract, and imaginative means to express his emotions. A profound comprehension of poetry allows us to communicate a vast array of feelings, from joy and love to melancholy and fear. Poetry is a form of artistic expression that can capture cultural, political, and social shifts in a society. As in Davis (2015), the poetry of realism and modernism raised issues of myth, politics, gender, and race. The modernist and realistic eras were among the most significant in the evolution of poetry. Poetry saw substantial changes in style, subjects, and inventive approaches during this time, which spanned the 19th and mid-20th centuries.

Poetry is an art form that has undergone significant evolution throughout the history of literature. As in Balakian (1999), he states that the very nature of a

poet's growth is an evolution that is unpredictable yet inevitable. Each literary period has its own characteristics in terms of style, theme, and message delivery. In this context, William Dean Howells and T.S. Eliot are two poets who emerged at different periods in literary history, yet both made important contributions in illustrating changes in language style in poetry. As in Palmer (2002), William Dean Howells was committed to determining what would inspire people from different economic, political, and religious backgrounds to imagine each other as respected members of a human community. In this case, William influenced poetry in realism. Similarly, T.S. Eliot in Rees (2019), The moral and spiritual deterioration of contemporary existence is symbolized by Eliot's astute depiction of the rotten life of our major cities.

According to Keraf (2006), In rhetoric, the term *style* refers to the definition of style, particularly linguistic style. Figure of speech, also known as language style, is a manner of using language to convey ideas in a unique way that reveals the essence of the writer or language user. Other phrases that may be used in relation to language style are language art, language aesthetics, language

variety, language quality, language symptoms, and language flavor.

The use of figurative language, which enables poets to convey deeper meanings and nuances through parallels, metaphors, similes, and several other rhetorical devices, is one of poetry's most notable features. From one generation to the next, a number of poets have shaped the evolution of figurative language styles in poetry, leading to advancements and modifications in the actual use of figurative language.

American poet and author William Dean Howells lived in the 19th century. His works are renowned for their strong realist style. Howells was a part of the American literary realism movement, which placed a strong emphasis on examining real people and their everyday lives. The variety with which Howells captured the social and cultural realities of the America he lived in can be seen in his poems. In the meantime, one of the finest poets of the 20th century and a symbol of modernism is T.S. Eliot. Eliot's writings demonstrate a significant shift in poetic philosophy. He is renowned for his use of intricate detail and nuanced allusions to religion and culture in his writing. Eliot's works often express the uncertainty, anxiety,

and confusion that surrounds the post-World War I world.

In this journal, we will investigate changes in language style in the poetry of two poets who represent two different periods in American literary history. By comparing the works of William Dean Howells and T.S. Eliot, we can see how changes in figurative language style in historical, cultural, and social contexts can be reflected in William Dean Howells' poems *If and Dead* and T.S. Eliot's poem *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of The Dead*. We will look into the ways in which these poets used figurative language to accomplish their artistic objectives and how these changes are represented in their compositions. We may better appreciate the power of language in conveying concepts, feelings, and human experiences through poetry when we have a deeper grasp of the development of figurative language in poetry.

Poetry is empty material, which is devoid of content and lifeless, but poetry becomes alive if the reader provides an interpretation of the poetry. The reader cannot interpret the meaning in poetry at will, but must be based on a semiotic or sign framework, because poetry is part of a semiotic

or sign system. Poetry is created based on the author's experiences and expressions of his personal feelings. Wahyuni (2017), states that poetry consists of elements that are interconnected and form a meaning or message to be conveyed to society. So, it doesn't rule out the possibility. Consider the possibility that one of the purposes of poetry is to satirize, criticize, or even be used to oppress others. As stated by Ganie (2015), one of the functions of poetry is to show moral truth and its aim is to influence readers and spread this truth to readers or society.

Style or especially language style is known as style in rhetoric. The word style comes from the Latin word *stylus*. With the development of style or language style, it has become a problem or part of word choice or choice of words, which asks whether the use of certain words, phrases or speech is appropriate or not in certain situations. The question of style therefore encompasses the entire linguistic hierarchy. Language style is interpreted as a way of expressing thoughts through language in a unique way that reveals the soul and personality of the language user (Keraf, 2002: 112)

Language style and vocabulary have a close relationship, a reciprocal relationship. The richer a person's vocabulary, the more

diverse the language styles he uses. The increased use of language styles clearly helps to enrich the vocabulary of its users. That is why teaching language style is a substantial technique to developing students' vocabulary (Tarigan, 2009: 5).

Figurative language style or figure of speech is a style that in terms of its meaning, cannot be interpreted according to the words that form it. According to Zienkowski (2011), Figures of speech are seen in several of these frameworks as departures from common language. Some examples of FSP derived by these four operations are: prosthesis, parenthesis, tautology (addition); syncope, ellipsis, oxymoron (subtraction); metathesis, inversion, hysteronproteron (permutation); finally, substitution of sounds or syllables, exchange of word classes, metaphor, metonymy, irony (substitution) (Zienkowski. J., 2011:108). Examples of FSP resulting from rule-strengthening deviation, again taken from various levels, are: alliteration, assonance, anaphor, parallelism, synonymy, simile, allegory (position) (Zienkowski. J., 2011:108).

William Dean Howells was an American poet and novelist who wrote in a strictly Realist style. He also contributed to



numerous publications with literary reviews of other writers while occasionally writing plays. In later life he made the statement that, in his opinion, "the future of American writing was not in poetry but in novels". Howells instilled the Realism style into both his novels and his poetry and this was most evident in a powerful novel called *A Modern Instance*, which was published in 1882. It was a hard-hitting story portraying a marriage in decay and was the piece of work which really established his name in literary circles. He was very keen to highlight social issues of the late 19th century and made a political statement when he joined the Anti-Imperialist League in 1898 in protest at the government's annexation of the Philippines.

Eliot was famous as a poet as well as a literary critic. From 1916 to his 1921 years, he wrote about 100 reviews and articles for various magazines. He also made significant contributions as editor and publisher. From 1922 until 1939, Eliot edited the major magazine *Criterion*, and from 1925, he was editor and director of *Faber & Faber* until 1965. Some of Eliot's early poems were first published in collaboration with the university's literary magazine, the *Harvard Advocate*. At least one of Eliot's lifelong friendships, with fellow poet Conrad Aiken,

was forged in this nursery of writers and poets.

The first research is a journal entitled *Analysis of figurative language in Robert Frost's poem: Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* (Sharma, 2022). In order to give their compositions unique meanings, poets use figurative language. The goal of this paper is to provide a succinct examination of the figurative language used in Robert Frost's well-known poem *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Frost is renowned for his realistic portrayal of rural life and the natural world. In order to interpret the poem's implied meanings, the article writer identified and examined a few lexemes, phrases, and verse lines that seem to imply the use of figurative language. The second study is a journal by Dedi Efendi (2021). This study is about the analysis of expression related to the poem *I am Human Too* by Godsplan K. Ugwuja.

The purpose of this study is to explain the types of idioms that appear in the poem *I am Human Too* by Godsplan K. Ugwuja and how the idioms convey the message through the poem *I am Human Too*. Poetry by Godsplan K. Ugwuja The research data is taken from the words, phrases, lines or stanzas of the poem *I am Human Too* which

contains idioms. The third previous study entitled *Analysis of Figures of Speech and Theatrical Story in No Longer Human Novel by Osamu Dazai* discusses the figures of speech used by writer Osamu Dazai in evoking the story outlined in the Novel No Longer Human with its characters in literary works.

Figure of speech is the use of words in writing to influence readers by creating an interesting story. Numbers are also called figurative words or language that is used to enhance the flow of a story beautifully and can contain comparisons of certain objects with objects. The use of figures of speech is used to convey stories through various languages in general and to show the author's personality through words or even sentences. Expressing figures of speech cannot be done haphazardly, because every figure of speech written contains the meaning that the author wants to convey to the readers of his work.

Based on the previous and related research, this research focuses on stylistic shifts in the poetry of W.D. Howells and T.S. Eliot with a focus on the use of figures of speech. It also connects stylistic shifts, especially in the use of figures of speech, with the themes explored by W.D. Howells

and T.S. Eliot in their poems. The research aims to understand the literary development of the period in question, paying attention to how stylistic shifts reflect and influence the literary evolution of the time.

## Method

In this research, the research method used is descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative descriptive research is a research method that utilizes qualitative data and is described descriptively. Qualitative descriptive research is also considered a combination of descriptive research and qualitative research. Descriptive research describes the object of research by making a description of a number of variables studied systematically. Meanwhile, qualitative research is descriptive research and tends to use analysis to find out the process and meaning of the object under study.

The object of this research is a poem by William Dean Howells entitled *Dead and If*, *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of The Dead* by T.S. Eliot. This research uses structural approach theory to analyse the poem. The type of qualitative data is data in the form of words and sentences. For this reason, in this study, the analysis of poetry with a structural

approach is presented through words and sentences in the poem. Some words and sentences in the poem are studied to find out supporting data that can show the physical structure and inner structure in the poem. The data in this research is divided into two types, namely primary data and secondary data.

Primary data is obtained from the poems of William Dean Howells: *Dead and If*, T.S Elliot's whose title is *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of The Dead* as the object of research. The data taken are words, phrases, and sentences related to the discourse of beauty. Secondary data to support this research are taken from dictionaries, articles, journals, websites, and previous studies with the same topic but with different objects. In this case, the poem is analysed through physical structure, namely language style which includes the figure of speech. Imagery is a technique of language expression, language style, whose meaning does not refer to the literal meaning of the words supporting it, but rather to the added meaning, the implied meaning (Nurgiantoro, 2000: 296).

The data analysis technique used in this research is content analysis, which is to carefully examine the poetry under study

with a depiction or presentation that is in accordance with the object of research. According to Rifaterre in Fitriyah (2021), there are four basic processes in the analysis of poetry: (1) Interpreting discontinuities in expression, which result from three sources of discontinuities in meaning: (a) meaning replacement; (b) meaning distortion; and (c) meaning invention. (2) Reading heuristically and reading hermeneutically or retroactively. (3) Keywords or a matrix. (4) Hypogram.

## Result and Discussion

### 1. Figure of Speech

A figure of speech is a rhetorical device in which words are used in unusual ways to create a certain impact. Within some of these frameworks, The Figure of Speech is conceived as deviations from everyday language (Kienpointner., M, 2011: 104). One of the captivating aspects of a reading is the figure of speech. Different writing styles are used by authors to convey each theme in their works. Every piece of writing that is produced will have an authorial style; in other words, the personality of the writer has a big impact on the work that is produced.

According to Kienpointne (2011), figure of speech consists of metaphor, metonymy,

simile, oxymoron, paradox and others. Here, we can explain some of the major The Figure of Speech used in the poems related to Generation Book.

- a. Comparison: allegory, allusion, simile, metaphor, synesthesia, anthropomorphemis, anthonomesia, apronyms, metonymy, hypocorism, lithotes, hyperbole, personification, pars prototo, totum proparte, euphemism, depersonification, dysphemism, fable, parable, periphrase, eponymy, and symbolic.
- b. Assertion: apophasis, pleonasm, repetition, pararima, alliteration, parallelism, tautology, sigmatism, antanaclasis, climax, anticlimax, inversion, rhetoric, ellipsis, correction, synecdoch, interruption, exclamation, enumeration, preterito, allonymy, collocation, silepsis, and zeugma.
- c. Opposition: paradox, antithesis, oxymoron, interminus contradiction, and anachronism.
- d. Satire: irony, sarcasm, cynicism, satire, inuendo, etc.

## 2. Figure of Speech in William Dean Howells' Poems

The analysis after collecting the necessary data from the figurative language

used in William Dean Howell's poems *If and Dead* was analyzed and interpreted using descriptive language. The analysis and interpretation of the collected data were classified in relation to the Figures of Speech used in the Poems.

Example of personification from poetry entitle *DEAD* by William Dean Howell:

*The bird from out its dream  
Break with a sudden song*

The textual data shows the presence of personification, where the bird is give human-like qualities of dreaming and singing. The personification creates a sense of beauty and wonder, as the bird's song is sudden and unexpected, breaking through the silence. The line also creates a contrast between the bird's joyful song and the death of theflowers, which is the main theme of the poem.

Example of metaphor from poetry entitle *DEAD* by William Dean Howell:

*The cat upon the stairs  
Watches with lame eye*

Zienkowski (2011), Aristotle defined metaphor as a transfer of a noun from its proper species or genus to another one, or as an analogical transfer. The textual data shows the presence of metaphor where the cat is used to represent something else. In this



case, the cat is used to create a sense of unease and mystery, as it is watching with a *lame eye*, which suggests that it may be injured or disabled.

Example of metaphor from poetry entitled *IF* by William Dean Howell:

*Yes, death is at the bottom of the cup*

This poem's main metaphor is the likening of life and death to a cup of alcohol. The *bitter drop* at the bottom of the cup of life represents death, which the poet implies everyone must confront at some point. This metaphor is used often in the poem to emphasize how inevitable death is for everyone who lives.

Example of personification from poetry entitled *IF* by William Dean Howell:

*And the black lees where lurks the  
bitter drop,*

Zienkowski (2011), metonymy, irony, personification, anaphora, parallelism, climax, rhetorical question etc can be used to produce confused, upset, manipulative, or convincing writings, but it can also be utilized to improve honest, believable, and straightforward forms of communication. By implying that death *lurks* in the dark lees at the bottom of the cup, the poem personifies

death. Death is personified in such a way as to suggest that it is a dangerous, almost evil force that is just waiting to be faced.

### 3. Figure of Speech in T.S. Eliot's poem

The analysis after collecting the necessary data from the figurative language used in T.S. Eliot's poem *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of The Dead* was analysed and interpreted using descriptive language. The analysis and interpretation of the collected data were classified in relation to the Figures of Speech used in the Poems.

Example of metonymy from poetry entitled *The Burial of The Dead* by T.S. Eliot:

*Here is the man with three staves,  
and here the Wheel,*

*And here is the one-eyed merchant,  
and this card,*

Zienkowski (2011), metonymy, irony, personification, anaphora, parallelism, climax, rhetorical question etc can be used to produce confused, upset, manipulative, or convincing writings, but it can also be utilized to improve honest, believable, and straightforward forms of communication. In both lines *the man with three staves* and *the one-eyed merchant* use metonymy, as these

descriptions represent the actual cards each of which is associated with a specific image or figure.

Example of imagery from poetry entitled *The Fire Sermon* by T.S. Eliot:

*The river's tent is broken: the last  
fingers of leaf*

*Clutch and sink into the wet bank.*

*The wind,*

The imaginal comprehension of a poetic comparison: the imaginal content largely concerned with the figurative portion of the comparison (Downey., 1919:108). The lines are an of imagery, where the broken river's tent, the last fingers of leaf, and the wet bank create a visual image of something damaged and decaying. The imagery creates a sense of loss and despair, as the poem is about the decline of Western civilization after World War I.

Discussion about William Dean Howells and T.S. Eliot's poetry analysis offers a fascinating look at how American poetry changed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The poets exhibit a noteworthy metamorphosis in their employment of figures of speech, which mirrors not only their individual creative growth but also the wider literary trends and cultural shifts of their times.

*If*, an early poem by William Dean Howells, is a prime example of realism. The poem uses a lot of personification and metaphors to express strong feelings and ideas, often using the language of nature. The sentence *As if in that still garden over there* perfectly captures the romantic impulse to make a connection between nature and human emotions. Meanwhile, in *Dead*, Howells also contains realism. This poem displays a very contrasting style. The use of personification and metaphor to describe the cat is used to create a sense of unease and mystery, as it looks with *lame eyes*, which suggests that it may be injured or deformed, exemplifying this transition, as the poem focuses on the stark reality of death without the romanticized idealization of nature.

*The Burial of The Dead* from *The Waste Land* Further exemplifies Eliot's modernist style. He uses a fragmented structure and a plethora of metaphors and metonymy to depict the fragmentation and loss of meaning in society. In lines *the man with three staves* and *the one-eyed merchant* use metonymy, as these descriptions represent the actual cards each of which is associated with a specific image or figure. In *The Fire Sermon*, Eliot explores the spiritual and sexual disillusionment of the post-World War I era. It



incorporates multiple voices, allusions, and metonymic imagery, such as the references to the lines are an of imagery, where the broken river's tent, the last fingers of leaf, and the wet bank create a visual image of something damaged and decaying. The imagery creates a sense of loss and despair, as the poem is about the decline of Western civilization after World War I.

A comparison of Howells' and Eliot's works highlights how figure-speaking is a sign of larger trends in both culture and the arts. Eliot's acceptance of modernity is clear in his convoluted and disjointed language, while Howells' shift from Romanticism to Realism is reflected in his more grounded and streamlined use of figures of speech.

## Conclusion

The shift of language style (figure of speech) analysis of the selected poems by William Dean Howells and T.S. Eliot, namely *If* and *Dead* by Howells, and *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of The Dead* by Eliot, offers a thorough analysis of the development of poetic form and the application of figures of speech in relation to the historical setting of each period. As evidenced by *If* and *Dead*, William Dean Howells' journey from

Romanticism to Realism is representative of the changing literary scene of the late 19th century. Howells' earlier Romantic inclinations, characterized by rich metaphors and personification that connect human emotions to the natural world, gradually gave way to a more restrained style in *Dead*. This change is a reflection of the larger literary style known as realism, which emphasized the commonplace and the unadorned in an effort to capture life as it really was. The poems *The Fire Sermon* and *The Burial of the Dead*, by T.S. Eliot, on the other hand, represents a turning point in the evolution of Modernist poetry. Eliot's inventive use of metonymy and metaphors in his figures of speech reflects the disillusionment and fragmentation that characterized the years following World War I. His poems defy conventional poetic forms and invite readers to participate in active interpretation because of their fractured structure and oblique references.

The analysis of William Dean Howells and T.S. Eliot's shift in language style, or figure of speech, highlights the interaction between the poets and their respective cultural settings. Though Eliot's adoption of modernism reflects a greater cultural unease and sense of meaninglessness following

international conflict, Howells' change in style and use of figures of speech reflects the changing literary landscape and the rejection of Romantic ideals.

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