



Representation of Yoko Sato's *Koutarou no Uta* Poem in *Arigatou no Uta* Poetry Anthology Book

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the representation of the actual story events that occurred during the tsunami earthquake that shook Japan in 2011. This research uses Rifattere's semiotic approach to understand the meaning of the text in the poem more deeply through heuristic reading, hermeneutic reading, and searching for matrices, models, variants, and hypograms. This research is classified as qualitative research. The results of this study are as follows: 1. Based on heuristic reading, the poem *Koutarou no Uta* tells the story of his parents/mother, who wrote a memorable poem about facing the terrible tsunami disaster with her young son, Koutarou. In the end, Koutarou died, but he will live on in the hearts of those who love him like Sakura, which continues to bloom beautifully when spring comes. 2. Based on hermeneutics reading, there is a lack of continuity of expression in hyperbole. In the second stage of reading identification, the matrix in this poem is "remembering Koutarou". The model of this poem is Koutarou's Mama who remembers the terrible incident of the tsunami disaster. She showed a mother's love to her 4-year-old son who could not run fast when the tsunami came so his mother carried him on her back. The variants derived from the matrix and model based on the poem are さくらが咲いて/The cherry blossoms which represent that even though Koutarou is gone, his name will always remain in the hearts of his parents and people all over the country. The representation of this poem shows that Koutarou will always be remembered in his lifetime and will always bloom like the cherry blossoms everyone loves.

Keywords: Poetry, Koutarou no uta, Semiotic Rifattere

1 Introduction

The British poet, Shelley, suggested that poetry is a record of the most beautiful moments in life. For example, events that are very impressive and cause strong emotions such as happiness, peak joy, romance, and even sadness due to the death of a loved one. All of them are the most beautiful seconds to record [4]. Poetry is a literary work that describes the poet's deepest feelings about life events experienced. Life experiences include not only happy feelings, but also sadness. Although poetry does not use many words in each writing, poetry has an implied meaning which it can be a challenge for readers to understand. The meaning of each poem also may reveal different contents and intentions. One poem that is "Koutarou no Uta" written by Yoko

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Sato which is found in the poetry anthology book in entitled *ありがとうの詩* (Arigatou no Uta). This poem is very interesting because it was written by a mother named Yoko Sato. She is a survivor of the Japanese Tsunami disaster but not her son Koutarou. As a token of her love and affection and in memory of him, she wrote this poem. Uta (うた) literally means "song" or "singing". However, it is a poem whose words cannot always be interpreted denotatively. This requires analysis to find out the meaning behind the writing. The purpose of this study is to determine how the author represented her feelings of the event through her poem: *ありがとうの詩* (Arigatou no Uta). The results of this study can help to know what kind of poetic representation is in this poem.

2 Methods

One literary study that can be used to examine the meaning of poetry is the semiotic study by Michael Riffaterre. Riffaterre through [5] suggests that in analyzing meaning there are four points that must be considered, namely (1) the discontinuity of poetic expression, (2) heuristic and hermeneutic readings, (3) matrices, models, variants, and (4) hypograms. The causes of discontinuity of expression are displacing of meaning, distorting of meaning, and creating of meaning.

3 Result and Discussion

This poetry work titled *ありがとうの詩 / Arigatou no Uta / Thank You Poems* is a recovery and support project for the victims of the Japanese earthquake in 2011. The book is basically a collection of poems written by the winners of the "thank you poems" competition. One of the poems in the book is called "Koutarou no Uta" written by Yoko Sato. The poem briefly tells the story of a four-year-old child named Koutarou who died during the earthquake. While Yoko Sato/ Koutarou's parents were deeply saddened by the earthquake, a lot of support came their way, so the poem is intended to thank them in memory of the unfortunate Koutarou who died during the earthquake. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), representation is an act that represents, or a state that is representative is called representation. In this study, the author tries to explain the situation experienced by Koutarou and his mother when the earthquake hit Japan accompanied by a tsunami.

3.1 The heuristic reading of the poem *ありがとうの詩 / Arigatou no Uta / Thank You Poem*;

According to Ratih [5], heuristic reading is the first stage of interpretation that moves from the beginning to the end of a literary text, from top to bottom, by following a syntagmatic sequence. Heuristic reading produces an understanding of the meaning of a literary work literally: the explicit meaning or actual meaning.

First stanza

こうたろう
地震がきて おうちがゆれた。
テレビもレンジも みんな (が) こわれた。

Second stanza

そして、そして、
つなみがきて(いた)
にげた にげた。
ママのおんぶで (いた)
にげた にげた。

Third stanza

避難所は 暗くて 寒くて
雪がふって、おなかがすいた。
やっとハハが 探しにきたよ。
大きな声で、空までとどけ(いる)。

Fourth stanza

それでも それでも
あさがきて (いる)、
ハトも スズメも やってきて (いた)。
ブランコ こいだ。
ボクは 笑った。
大きな声で 空までとどけ (いる)。

Five stanza

さくらが咲いて (いる)、
さくらが散って (いる)、
こうたろう 四歳 (だ)
みんなで 守った いのち (だ)。
生きて (いる)
生きて (いる)
生きぬいて (いる)、
たくさんの人に「ありがとう」[言いました]
たくさんの人に「ありがとう」。

3.2 Hermeneutic Reading

Hermeneutic reading, according to Pradopo [4], is re-reading from beginning to end with interpretation or hermeneutic reading. This reading is the giving of meaning based on literary conventions.

First stanza

こうたろう

地震がきて おうちがゆれた。

テレビもレンジも みんな こわれた。

*Koutarou**earthquake comes**The house shook The television and microwave fell*

This first stanza tells the story of Koutarou who was at home and felt the earthquake. It can be seen when items in the house fall due to the earthquake. The author suggests that when the earthquake occurred, Koutarou or his family was at home and did not immediately run out to save themselves but instead observed the surroundings as a form of shock at the events experienced. This is evidenced by the fallen home appliances, namely the television and microwave. Koutarou and his family members seemed to be running from one room to another to take cover and as they did so they noticed the objects that had fallen. Televisions and microwaves are generally placed in different rooms in a house.

Second stanza

そして、そして、

つなみがきて(いた)

にげた にげた。

ママのおんぶで (いた)

にげた にげた。

*Then, then**The tsunami came**Run,run**Carried (on the back) of the mother**Run,run*

The second stanza tells about the events that followed after everyone in the house went out to save themselves. Koutarou and his mother seemed to be silent for a moment as soon as they left the house to observe the surroundings, but it seemed that Koutarou's mother was surprised because it turned out that there was a tsunami that began to move toward them. Koutarou's mother asked Koutarou to walk quickly or run fast like his mother, but it was impossible for a four-year-old child to run quickly enough with his short legs. Therefore, in this scary situation, as a mother who always guards and protects her child, Koutarou's mother swiftly carries her child on her back. There is something interesting in this stanza where there is a repeated word in the first line of the second stanza that reads *そして、そして、* /soshite, soshite, According to the dictionary <https://dictionary.goo.ne.jp/> this means "and then, and then" illustrating that a dangerous situation has threatened. The author of this poem (Yoko Sato / Koutarou's mother) seems to remember the terrible by pausing in her poetry writing in the form of a repeated word in her poem in the first line. This shows that Yoko Sato is trying to

recall the incident and invite us readers to join in when it happened. Yoko Sato was very traumatized when she remembered it again. There is also the third and fifth line which reads にげた にげた / nigeta nigeta / Run, run. It is even written in two lines to emphasize that the only thing the earthquake and tsunami victims could do at that time was to run for their lives.

Third stanza

避難所は 暗くて 寒くて
 雪がふって、おなかがすいた。
 やっとハハが 探しにきたよ。
 .大きな声で、空までとどけ(いる)。
The shelter was dark, and cold.
It was snowing and I was hungry.
Finally, Mother looked for me
With a loud voice, it reached the sky

The third stanza tells about 避難所 /The shelter or shelter for disaster victims. In general, disaster shelters are places that have good lighting and a good temperature control system / air conditioner. But this is the opposite of what they get, they are in a shelter that is dark and cold. In the poem it seems that Koutarou is separated from his mother, Koutarou feels hungry and hears his mother's voice calling his name loudly but Koutarou cannot answer the call because Koutarou is likely under the rubble caused by the earthquake.

Fourth stanza

それでも それでも
 あさがきて (いる) 、
 ハトも スズメも やってきて (いた) 。
 ブランコ こいだ。
 ボクは 笑った。
 大きな声で 空までとどけ (いる) 。
But still, but still
morning comes,
and the pigeons and sparrows arrive.
I swing on the swing.
I laughed
Sing loudly and let it reach the sky.

The fourth stanza tells the story of me (Koutarou) who seems to be happy in Heaven and does not feel any more suffering because of the earthquake disaster. This is illustrated when Koutarou is on a toy swing and laughs with the day that has changed tomorrow and is accompanied by doves and sparrows. Koutarou laughs and is happy while singing to the sky and tells the world to be happy with him.

Fifth stanza

さくらが咲いて (いる) 、
 さくらが散って (いる) 、
 こうたろう 四歳 (だ)
 みんなで 守った いのち (だ) 。
 生きて (いる)
 生きて (いる)
 生きぬいて (いる) 、
 たくさんの人に「ありがとう」[言いました]
 たくさんの人に「ありがとう」[言いました]

The cherry blossoms

The cherry blossoms

Kotaro is four years old.

We all protected this life.

Live.

Live.

Live and survive

"Thank you" to so many people

"Thank you" to so many people

The fifth stanza tells about Yoko Sato that the sadness of Koutarou's death is relieved because everyone in the world loves Koutarou and that although Koutarou is gone, Koutarou's poem will live on in memory of poor 4-year-old Koutaro who died in the Japanese tsunami earthquake. Koutarou's mother thanked everyone in the world for their love through Koutarou's poem. He will live on and bloom like a cherry blossom in the hearts of all those who love him.

3.3 Matrices, Models, and Variants

Overall, Koutarou's poem is about parents (Koutarou's mother and father) remembering the death of their son in the earthquake. Therefore, the sentence that makes up the matrix is こうたろう /Koutarou/ the son of Yoko Sato has died. The model is the first actualization of the matrix. The model in this poem is ママのおんぶで / Carried (on the back) of the mother. The model of this poem describes Koutarou's mother who remembers the horrible incident of the tsunami disaster where she showed a mother's love to her 4-year-old son who could not run fast when the tsunami came so his mother carried him on her back. The variants derived from the matrix and model based on the poem are さくらが咲いて / The cherry blossoms. They represent that even though Koutarou is gone, his name will always be in the hearts of his parents and people all over the country, Koutarou will always be remembered in his lifetime and will always bloom like the cherry blossoms that everyone loves.

3.4 Hypogram: Intertextual

The hypogram found in Koutarou's poem is a potential hypogram. Potential hypograms are matrices that are keywords or the core of the text in the form of words, phrases, and clauses. The meaning of the text can be understood from the work itself, without having to refer to other or previous texts. The hypogram in this poem is the same as the matrix, "Koutarou".

4 Conclusion

This Koutarou no Uta poem was one of the winners in the Arigatou no Uta/ Thank You Poems poetry collection. This poetry collection was created to encourage people to express their gratitude for the support (people across the country) they have received. Koutarou's Mother received many phone calls from all over the country and many laughs comforted them. The representation of this poem shows that Koutarou will always be remembered and will always bloom like the sakura that everyone loves.

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