

THE VALUE OF RELEVANCE THEORY IN LITERARY ANALYSIS[1]

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Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji pandangan *Formalist Linguistics* dan *Relevance Theory* terhadap karya sastra. *Formalist Linguistics* berpandangan bahwa nilai sebuah karya sastra terletak pada keistimewaan bahasanya. Bahasa karya sastra, terutama bahasa puisi, menurut *Formalist linguists*, berbeda dari bahasa yang kita gunakan dalam komunikasi sehari-hari. Namun, bila kita cermati, ternyata banyak unsur atau elemen “bahasa sastra” yang dapat kita jumpai dalam “bahasa sehari-hari”. Bahasa iklan, misalnya, sering menggunakan apa yang diklaim oleh *Formalist Linguistics* sebagai elemen bahasa sastra, seperti rima, asonansi, dan aliterasi. Oleh karena itu, argumen *Formalist Linguistics* bahwa bahasa sastra berbeda dari bahasa sehari-hari tidak bisa secara adekuat menjelaskan keistimewaan karya sastra dibandingkan bentuk komunikasi lain. Pertanyaan ini dicoba dijawab oleh *Relevance Theory* melalui konsep *wide array of weak implicatures*. Menurut *Relevance Theory*, semakin puitis sebuah karya, semakin banyak implikatur lemah ‘*weak implicatures*’ yang bisa kita ambil dari karya sastra tersebut. Karya sastra, terutama puisi, mempunyai penafsiran yang sangat kaya, dan kita kerap tidak bisa menentukan secara pasti tafsir apa atau tafsir mana yang dimaksud oleh sang penulis/penyair. Sebagai pembaca, yang bisa kita lakukan yaitu melakukan proses penafsiran dan kemudian menarik sejumlah interpretasi berdasarkan “kunci-kunci” (*clues*) yang diberikan penulis/penyair.

This article compares the perspectives of Formalist Linguistics and Relevance Theory on literature. Formalist Linguistics holds that the value of literature lies in its language, as the language of literature differs from the language we use in daily communication. In fact, those frequently claimed to be the elements of literary language are used in daily communication as well. Therefore, the Formalist Linguistic argument that the value of literature lies in its special language is insufficient. The argument is unable to answer such a question as what makes literary communication different from other forms of communication. Relevance Theory has tried to answer the question through the notion of a ‘wide array of weak implicatures’. In the Relevance-theoretic perspective, the more poetic an utterance, the larger the array of weak implicatures.

Keywords: Literature, Formalist Linguistics, Relevance Theory, weak implicatures, and poetic effects.

1. Introduction

Formalist Linguists, according to Rivkin and Ryan (2004), were the first who initiated the study

of literary language. Literary language, as the Formalists argue, is the distinctive feature of literature that defines the “literariness” of a work. The language of literature differs from practical or ordinary language in that it “consists of an act of defamiliarization”, meaning that it “presents objects or experiences from such an unusual perspective or in such unconventional and self-conscious language that our habitual, ordinary, rote perceptions of those things are disturbed” (Rivkin & Ryan, 2004, pp. 3-4).

In fact, the language of literature is not at all autonomous, for there is no element of literary language that we cannot discover in ordinary or practical language (Fowler, 1996; Malmkjær, 1991). This has made the Formalists unable to answer sufficiently such a question as what makes literature differ from other forms of human communication. An interesting answer to this question is offered by Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, 1995), which is a pragmatic approach to human communication and cognition rooted in the argument that what we need to communicate is *to be relevant*. We are said to have communicated successfully when we can make manifest to our hearer what we intend to communicate (Mey, 2001). For example, when we want to make an offer, we can make manifest to our hearer our intention to make an offer so he[2] can recognize our intention.

In this article, I attempt to conduct a study of how Formalist Linguistics and Relevance Theory views the value or poetic effects of literary works. I argue that, regarding poetic effects, Relevance Theory provides a more profound explanation than Formalist Linguistics does. The succeeding presentation is divided into Formalist Linguistics and Poetic Effects (2), Relevance Theory and Poetic Effects (3), and Conclusion (4).

2. Formalist Linguistics and Poetic Effects

Widdowson (1996, p. 139) argues that, as a mode of communication, literature does not fit into any conventional communicative situation because “in literature we constantly find that the normal indivisible amalgam of sender/first person and receiver/second person has been split up”. The writer or the poet is separated from the addresser and the reader from the addressee. This means that when reading Dini’s[3] novel *Tirai menurun* ‘The curtain goes down,’ I am not the addressee and Dini is not the addresser. The addresser and the addressee are the characters of the novel per se, such as *Mak*, ‘mother’ and her daughter *Dasih*, or *Kintel* and his lover *Yu Irah*. Widdowson (1996, p. 139) further argues that this division of the sender and addresser and the receiver and addressee points to the essential difference between literature and other uses of language: “in literature, the message is text-contained, and presupposes no wider context so that everything necessary for its interpretation is to be found within the message itself”. In other words, while reading literary texts, “...generally speaking, we can concentrate on the text itself without worrying about distracting social appendages” (Widdowson, 1996, p. 139).

However, Widdowson’s argument concerning the nature of literature as a means of communication is inadequate because it leaves unanswered one basic question of what makes literature different from other forms of written communication. What are the differences between literary writings and, say, comics or pulp novels? Literature and comics or pulp novels are, following Widdowson’s argument above, forms of human communication where the writer and the reader are not the addresser and the addressee. In all these types of writing, there is a division of the normal indivisible amalgam of the sender/first person and the receiver/second person. While reading *For better or for worse*, a comic in the Australian daily newspaper *The age*, for instance, Lynn Johnston, the creator of the comic, is not the addresser and I, as the reader, am not the addressee. Rather, it is April and her mother who act as the addresser and the addressee. Does

this mean that reading Johnston's *For better or for worse* is the same as reading Dini's novel *Tirai menurun* 'The curtain goes down'?

Another problem with Widdowson's argument above is related to what he claims as "the essential difference between literature and other uses of language". If literature was text-contained, and presupposed no wider context, or if reading literary text was to concentrate on the text itself without worrying about any social appendages, there would be no point of reading literary works, such as, say, Orwell's fable *Animal farm*. The readers of the novel would find no more than a mere story of a number of different types of animals living together in disharmony. It would seem that Orwell's *Animal farm* was nothing but a bedtime story. This would also be the case of other literary works that are rich in allegory, parody, or satire. The readers would find nothing but an entertaining story or an expression of the author's anger and dissatisfaction. We, as the readers, are thus unable to grasp the social criticisms that the writer or poet is trying to communicate through her works.

One fundamental point that does seem to distinguish literature from other forms of communication is *value*. It is value that encourages a writer or a poet to bother to think or work through creative uses of language. It is value that makes the reading of literature a pleasure and keeps people reading literary works despite the difficulties they might face in understanding the works:

A poem is written and read for its value, which derives from its poetic effects. A poem is successful and has value to the extent that it communicates poetic effects. A poem does not deliberately set out to be obscure, to turn interpretation into a problem or issue (Pilkington, 1991, p. 60).

Pilkington's analysis above raises a new question as to how literary texts communicate poetic effects or how these effects are produced in literary writings. Addressing this issue, Formalist Linguistics argues that the poetic effects of a literary text are the property of the text per se because the effects lie in the language used. Literary language, as Formalist Linguistics claims, is special; literary language is not the same as that which we use in daily communication. Shklovsky (1917) (in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004) characterizes this difference as *ostranenie* 'making strange' or 'defamiliarization'. Shklovsky's concept of defamiliarization is developed further into a more systematic concept of 'foregrounding' by Mukarovsky (1926) (in Rivkin & Ryan, 2004). The idea behind this theoretical framework is that literary language gains its distinctiveness when it 'de-familiarizes' or 'foregrounds' certain parts of the text. Defamiliarization or foregrounding is produced when the writer deviates from linguistic norms (linguistic deviations), or repeats certain linguistic units (repetition) or similar linguistic constructions (parallelism).

In poetry, one conspicuous way in which a poet deviates from linguistic norms is the creation of phonological symmetric patterning or the repetition of similar phones or sounds. Consider the following example from Bisri's poem *Tadarus* 'Recitation of the Koran' (1993, p. 44):

	(1		(Demi		yang		sama		berpacu		berdengkusa	
)												n	
		by		REL[4		togethe		race		whinny				

]	r			
--	--	---	---	--	--	--

‘By the snorting chargers’

Yang	sama	mencetuskan	api	berdenyaran	
REL	togethe	cause	fire	flash	
	r				

‘And the strikers of fire, as they run’

Yang	pagi-pagi	melancarkan	serbuan	
REL	early in the	lead/launch	invasion/atta	
	morning		ck	

‘And the raiders at dawn’

Menerbangkan	debu	berhamburan	
fly	dust	scattered	
		about	

‘Raising thereon clouds of dust’

Dan	menembusnya	ke	tengah-tenga	pasukan	lawan)
			h		
and	penetrate	to	the middle	troops	enemy
			of		

‘Plunging therein through a throng’[5]

(lines 38-42 of the 102 line poem “*Tadarus*” ‘Recitation of the Koran’ (Bisri, 1993, p. 44)).

This extract is Bisri’s translation of the Koran chapter 100 entitled *Al-‘Adiyat* ‘The Chargers’ verses 1-5. Instead of providing the reader with the ordinary translation of the chapter which can be read in the Indonesian translation of the Koran, Bisri composed his own translation and selectively chose the words so that all the lines end with the syllable /an/. By creating a rhyme scheme, which is the repetition of this final syllable /an/, Bisri is considered to be violating linguistic norms because rhyme is a rare phenomenon in ordinary communication[6]. The harmonious sounds produced by creating the rhyme will then arouse poetic effects in the reader.

However, the argument of Formalist Linguistics that equates poetic effects with the special

structural use of language still leaves unanswered the question of how poetic effects are produced in literary works. Particular uses of language, as Formalist Linguistics points out, which are the outcome of defamiliarization or foregrounding techniques can be found in texts other than literature. What Formalist Linguistics refers to as linguistic deviations, for example, can occur not only in literary but also in non-literary texts, especially in advertisements:

(2)	Terus	Terang	Phillip	Terang	Terus
			s		
	continue/kee	bright	Phillip	bright	continue/kee
	p		s		p

‘Frankly speaking, Phillips will always shine brightly’

The verb *terus* is the Indonesian word ‘continue’ or ‘keep’ and the adjective *terang* is the Indonesian word ‘bright’. However, the phrase *terus terang* has a completely different meaning from those of *terus* and *terang*. *Terus terang* is a compound word which means ‘frankly speaking’ or ‘to tell you the truth’. The meaning of the adjective phrase *terang terus*, on the other hand, can be deduced from the meanings of its components: to keep on bright or (the light/Phillips) will keep on (shining) brightly. This advertisement is highly repetitive and redundant because of the recurrence of the words *terus* and *terang*. This manipulative use of words produces a harmonious sound effect and an entertaining effect that attracts the attention of the hearer/reader. The use of the pun also makes the advertisement easy to remember.

One might argue that the fact that linguistic deviations can occur not only in literary texts but also in non-literary texts does not necessarily mean that the Formalist Linguistics’ perspective regarding linguistic deviations is false. On the one hand, we all know that non-literary texts, particularly advertisements, often exploit the same resources that poets use to produce certain effects, including sound effects such as what we find in example (2). On the other hand, we can find a large number of literary works that utilize systemic patterning to create certain effects. English neo-classical verse and traditional Indonesian poetry, for instance, follow certain phonologically symmetrical patterning, such as metre and rhythm[7].

However, the fact that linguistic deviation can be found not only in literature but also in other genres has made the concept of linguistic deviation insufficient to answer such questions as how literary texts differ from other texts and how poetic effects, which mark the distinct quality of literature, are produced in a piece of literary writing. A poet might want to defamiliarize or foreground certain parts of her works by deviating from linguistic norms or repeating certain or similar linguistic units to arouse particular effects in the reader, as in the case of the English classical poets and the traditional Indonesian poets. However, this technique of defamiliarization or foregrounding is used only as one technique in their creativity in manipulating the language. Defamiliarization or foregrounding is not the main point of their work. Thus, defamiliarization or foregrounding is not an adequate criterion to characterize the unique nature of literature.

Jakobson (1996) tries to solve this problem by propounding the concepts of the functions of language, which are determined by six fundamental factors in verbal communication: addresser, addressee, context, message, contact, and code. Language, as Jakobson contends, has six functions, namely referential, emotive, conative, phatic, metalingual and poetic functions.

However, it is very unlikely that verbal messages fulfill only one function at a time. Very often, verbal messages have more than one function at the same time. The argument behind the concepts of the language functions are not that of monopoly, but that of hierarchy. In other words, the function of verbal messages is not determined by which function controls the whole situation of the verbal communication at a certain time, but by which function plays a predominant role in that period of time. The referential function, for instance, plays a role when the verbal message is oriented toward a given context or referent, of which the addresser and the addressee share the same knowledge. This function plays a predominant role when the addresser and the addressee, for example, refer to someone other than the participants in the conversation (the third person). When the addresser refers to herself (the first person), expressing her own attitude or emotion toward her utterances, the emotive function predominates the addresser's message. When the orientation of the verbal message is toward the addressee (the second person), the conative predominates the verbal communication. The phatic function of language focuses on contact, which Jakobson (Jakobson, 1996, p. 13) defines as "a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication". This function relates to such utterances as "Well," "Uhm," or "Hey, are you listening?" which are used to confirm that the communication is going well. The metalingual function deals with the code or language used by the addresser and the addressee. This relates to utterances, such as "What do you mean?" "What does the word 'celeb' mean?" "Celeb stands for celebrity, which means famous people." Finally yet importantly is the poetic function of language that focuses on the message[8] of the communication itself. It is this poetic function of language that has a central role in verbal art, including poetry.

As discussed previously, the basic idea behind Jakobson's functions of language is not that of monopoly, but that of hierarchy. Therefore, the discussion of the poetic function of language cannot be constrained to the discussion of literature, including the discussion of poetry, and vice versa. Like the study of other functions of language, the study of the poetic function cannot be separated from the study of language in general:

This (poetic) function cannot be productively studied out of touch with the general problems of language, and, on the other hand, the scrutiny of language requires a thorough consideration of its poetic function. Any attempt to reduce the sphere of the poetic function to poetry or to confine poetry to the poetic function would be a delusive oversimplification. The poetic function is not the sole function of verbal art but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in all other verbal activities it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent (Jakobson, 1996, p. 15).

In the first place, Jakobson's notion of poetic function answers the question of what makes literature different from non-literary texts: literature differs from non-literary texts because in the former the determining function is the poetic function while in the latter the determining function is that other than the poetic function. This means that Jakobson believes that the value of literary texts, like what Shklovsky and Mukarovsky have proposed before, lies in the language used by the writer or poet. It is the property of the texts. The fact that literary language may share certain similar features with the language of non-literary texts does not necessarily lead us to question the

distinctiveness of literary language. Rather, this is a question of which language function is dominant. An advertisement that uses a particular literary device, such as example (2) above, cannot be classified under the same “heading” as Bisri’s poem in (1) because their dominant functions are different. In Jakobson’s analysis, the dominant function of an advertisement would be the conative function whose orientation is set toward the addressee, i.e. to persuade the addressee, while the dominant function of a poem would be the poetic function whose orientation is focused on the message as such.

In the second place, Jakobson’s concepts of language functions lead to a further challenge. How are we able to recognize that in a text one function is more dominant than the other functions? Who has the privilege to make such a judgment? If I compose a verse that is rich in phonological deviations like Bisri’s poem in (1) above and argue that this verse is a literary work because its dominant function is the poetic function, is my argument, and thus my judgment concerning the dominant function of the verse, acceptable? Do I, as the “writer”, have the authority to judge that it is the poetic function which plays a dominant role in my work? Would the people to whom I show the verse agree with me? If they disagree with my judgment concerning the poetic function of my verse, whose judgment is more “powerful” in determining whether or not the verse is art? Is it the writer or the readers who have “more power” to make a judgment? What if, among the readers themselves, there are different opinions regarding the value of my verse?

The difficulty with Formalist Linguistic and Jakobson’s perspectives is that they see literariness as related to “the formal linguistic and structural properties of texts” (MacKenzie, 2002b, p. 199). Meanwhile, a text will not be of value if nobody reads and appreciates it. If a text has never been read, who will appreciate it as a literary work? Only after it is read and evaluated, is a text justified as good or bad writing. This suggests that the reader plays a central role in the evaluation of a text. However, this does not mean I want to say that *any* reader can appraise the quality or literariness of a text. Evaluating and deciding the quality of a text is not an easy task, particularly for those who are unfamiliar with literary reading conventions. What I want to highlight here is that it is the reader, not the text or language, who plays a central role in determining whether a text is a work of art. Poetic effects are *not* emotions, feelings, attitudes, or impressions experienced by texts or language. Rather, they are “emotional responses, evaluative attitude, impressions of intensity, profundity and sublimity, and awareness of epiphanies” (Pilkington in MacKenzie, 2002b, p. 200) aroused in or experienced by the reader when reading literature. Hence, literariness is not a formal and structural property of a text, but “a universal form of aesthetic experience”. Aesthetic response includes “mental representations that occur when a literary text is read or, on a smaller scale, when a rhetorical device is used to create poetic effects” (Pilkington in MacKenzie, 2002b, p. 199).

Since they are feelings or impressions we experience while reading literature, we need to account for poetic effects under a theory that sufficiently explains how our mental device works to process inputs available in literary texts and to perceive the poetic effects. Here lies the superiority of Relevance Theory compared to Formalist Linguistics. Relevance Theory explores how our mental device processes creative utterances in literary texts, during which process we experience aesthetic pleasure. The following section discusses poetic effects in the Relevance Theory perspective.

3. Relevance Theory and Poetic Effects

In the Relevance-theoretical perspective, poetic effects are explained in terms of a vast

range of weak implicatures (Blakemore, 1992; Pilkington, 2000; Sperber & Wilson, 1995). Every act of communication communicates the presumption of its optimal relevance. This means that in an act of communication, the audience has an assumption that the communicator has provided him with the most relevant input she is willing and able to produce. An input is relevant to the audience when it costs him a minimal effort to process but results in rich cognitive or contextual effects. If the communicator provides the audience with the most relevant input compatible to her ability and preference, she will provide the audience with an input that needs the least effort to process, but results in the richest cognitive effects. However, unlike other acts of communication where the communicator aims at minimizing the audience's effort to process information, in literature the writer or poet raises the reader's cost of processing information. She does this not because she wants to violate the Principles of Relevance and provide the reader with irrelevant information, but mainly because she offers different kinds of relevance to her reader. The poet raises the cost of processing information on the one hand, but, on the other hand, she promises an even richer cognitive effect to the reader (Trotter, 1992). This act of raising the reader's effort in the exchange of producing an even greater contextual effect is performed when the poet provides the reader with creative non-literal utterances. Creative non-literal utterances "give" the reader a greater responsibility in the interpretation process to recover the poet's intention because they have a wide range of weak implicatures. The wider the range of the weak implicatures, the more creative the utterances are. The more creative the utterances, the more poetic they are. The following excerpt from Bisri's poem *Selamat Tahun Baru Kawan* 'Happy New Year, My Friends' (Bisri, 1993, p. 47) illustrates this point:

(3)	Syahadat		kita		rasanya		sepert		perut		bedug	
							i					
	confession/testimo		our		feel		like		stomach		large drum	
	ny											

'Our confession/testimony as Muslims is like an empty large drum'

Atau	Pernyataan		setia		pegawai		rendahan		saja	
or	Statement		loyal		employee		lower		only	
							rank			

'Or like a loyal statement of a clerk'

Kosong	Tak		berdaya	
empty	no/withou		power/energy/streng	
	t		th	

'(Our confession is) empty, without strength/energy'

Syihadat is a brief authoritative formula of religious belief in Islam. It is the profession of faith that there is no god other than God (Allah) and that Muhammad is the messenger of God. Here, *syihadat* is compared to *perut bedug*, which is a large drum suspended horizontally in (Indonesian) mosques used to summon prayer, or to *pernyataan setia pegawai rendahan* ‘a loyal statement/confession of a clerk’.

What does Bisri’s simile above mean? Can Bisri’s simile be adequately summed up in a sentence:

(4)	Syihadat	kita	tidak	bermakna
	confession/testimo	our	not	meaningful
	ny			

‘Our testimony has no meaning/Our testimony is meaningless’

Is the single sentence in (4) the same as Bisri’s simile in (3)? Does the sentence in (4) have the same meaning as the simile in (3)? Does this single sentence have the same effect as the simile? If the answer is ‘yes’, why does Bisri bother to create the simile? If he could have saved his energy by saying it in a single sentence, why should he have bothered himself by creating a difficult simile? If he could have communicated his intention in a much simpler way, why would he have chosen such a complicated way? Does this all suggest that the answer to the first set of the questions above is ‘no’? If the answer is ‘no’, where does the difference lie?

There is “something” missing when I simplify Bisri’s simile in (3) into the single sentence in (4). My sentence in (4) fails to capture “something” that Bisri wants to communicate through his simile, but what is this “missing thing”? An emotion? An impression? Or an attitude? Here lies the inadequacy of the paraphrase in (4) (Blakemore, 1992). Claiming that there is only a single proposition (or a set of propositions) which is specifically intended by the poet, as in the case of sentence (4), has made me miss “the *bite* of the original” (Blakemore, 1992, p. 156). However, it is not easy to explain this *bite* since, as Blakemore (1992) points out, *bite* is a very vague concept. How do we explain it? If we try to explain it from the perspective of Shklovsky’s defamiliarization or Mukarovsky’s foregrounding, all we can say is that Bisri’s simile in (3) is an example of semantic deviation, which concerns meaning relations that are logically inconsistent. This logical inconsistency occurs because Bisri compares *syihadah*, which is an Islamic profession of faith, to a large drum or a loyal confession of a clerk. Certainly, there is no way that a religious formula is equal to an empty large drum or a clerk’s confession. However, trying to figure out what is actually happening behind this “logical inconsistency” or semantic deviation will only lead us to a single proposition that we believe to be the intended meaning of the simile, as in the case of (4) above. Again, we fail to figure out the *bite* of the simile.

From the perspective of Relevance Theory, non-literal utterances like Bisri’s simile in (3) cannot be paraphrased with one particular proposition or a set of specific propositions because the utterances are not literal utterances with a fixed meaning. Rather, these are utterances which have a broad range of meanings. In other words, these utterances have an array of weak implicatures. Bisri’s simile above, for instance, can be “seen” in terms of the following implicatures:

- (5) a. Our *syihadah* is meaningless.

- b. Our *syahadah* is worthless because we do not utter it wholeheartedly.
- c. Our *syahadah* is worthless because we have never performed its message in our daily lives.
- d. We are not good Muslims because we often ignore the message of *syahadah*, which is the first and the most fundamental pillar of Islam.
- e. We (Indonesian Muslims) are not good Muslims because we do not conduct our lives in accordance to the teachings of God and The Prophet.

Here, we, as the reader, can add numerous weak implicatures to the list in (5). For example, we can add that the simile exhibits Bisri's deep concern or upset feeling about Muslims' attitude and behavior nowadays that are far from Islamic teachings. However, this does not mean that we can add *any* implicature that we want. Here, what Bisri gives us is a greater responsibility to interpret his intention behind the simile, not a freedom to deduce his simile into how we want the simile to be interpreted. When Bisri gives a greater responsibility to the reader to discern his intention, he himself has a responsibility to give the reader a "clue" through which the reader can see his intended meaning. A poet does not compose a work without having the intention that the reader will recognize what she wants to communicate. Otherwise, there will be no communication at all:

In this sense, a speaker who engages in communication intends the hearer to recognize the intended content, context, and contextual effects. A speaker could not engage in communication (in this sense) by producing an utterance which did not enable the hearer to recognize his intention (Blakemore, 1992, p. 171).

Like other acts of communication, literature communicates the presumption of its optimal relevance. The writer or poet uses non-literal utterances because these are the most relevant utterances that she is willing and able to produce. While reading a literary work, the reader should also "hold" this principle of optimal relevance in mind: that the poet provides him with the most relevant utterances compatible with her preferences and ability to communicate. Therefore, in order to interpret the intention of the poet, he needs to find a "clue" which will give him access to contextual assumptions and will help him to derive contextual implications/conclusions. How does the reader find this "clue" given by the poet? How does he find evidence to support his interpretation of the poet's intended meaning? In this case, the reader needs to refer to the physical and the socio-cultural contexts in order to find evidence that can support his interpretation: "A major source of evidence for interpretation comes from context. In communication, there must be some sharing of the context between communicator and communicatee. This shared context might be physical, but it might also be cultural" (Fabb, 1997, p. 253).

The answers to the questions in the previous paragraph lie in the literary work *per se*. It is the text which encourages and guides the reader in interpreting the intention of the writer or poet by giving him access to contextual assumptions which yield implicatures. However, as I have pointed out earlier, in literature there is a strong relationship among three components: the writer or the poet who has certain socio-cultural values, the text and the language used in the text, and finally the reader who also has certain socio-cultural values. Therefore, the interpretation of a

literary work must also include the socio-cultural context of the writer or the poet when she produces the work. Thus, as Fabb (1997) emphasizes above, the reader should consider not only the physical context (the literary text) but also the (socio) cultural context (of the literary work studied).

In conclusion, the Relevance-theoretic account of poetic effects is more profound than that of Formalist Linguistics. According to Formalist Linguistics, poetic effects arise when the poet or writer violates linguistic norms or foregrounds particular linguistic units. This means that Formalist Linguistics holds that the poetic effects of a text lie in the text per se. This argument is inadequate because the evaluative and appreciative process of a literary text occurs not in the text per se, but in the readers' mind. Poetic effects arise as the result of the reader's effort in recovering the poet's intention: exploring the physical and socio-cultural contexts to search for evidence that support his interpretation of the poet's intention, and accessing a range of weak implicatures that are relevant to the poet's intention.

4. Conclusion

In this article, I have illustrated the value of Relevance Theory for literary analysis, especially in relation to the poetic effects of literary texts. As has been discussed, compared to Formalist Linguistics, Relevance Theory provides a more adequate theoretical approach to account for the nature of poetic effects. Rather than arguing that poetic effects are the property of literary language, Relevance Theory views poetic effects in terms of the reader's mental process in interpreting the intention of the writer or poet. Poetic effects are thus seen as the result of a vast range of weak implicatures, from which the reader is encouraged to explore. While exploring and deciding which of these weak implicatures are consistent with the principles of relevance, the reader needs to consider the physical and the socio-cultural contexts of the author and the literary works.

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 [1] Some parts of this article have appeared in my thesis *A Relevance-theoretical account of parallelism in Mustofa Bisri's poems* (Candria, 2005).

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[2] For practical reasons, in this article, pronoun 'she' is used for the communicator or speaker, and pronoun 'he' is for the audience or hearer.

[3] Nh. Dini is one of the best Indonesian women authors. She has written and published a number of works, including several literary novels, such as *Pada Sebuah Kapal* 'On The Ship' (1976), *Namaku Hiroko* 'My Name is Hiroko' (1977), *Tirai Menurun* 'The Curtain Goes Down'

(1993), and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* 'Japan, Hiroko's Country' (2000).

[4] REL stands for relative clause marker.

[5] Translation by Fakhry (2004, p. 630).

[6] See, for instance, Traugott and Pratt (1980, p. 31) for a discussion of rhyme as a linguistic deviation in T.S. Eliott's "Rhapsody on a Windy Night".

[7] Metre is an organized pattern of strong and weak syllables; rhythm is "a patterned movement of pulses in time which is defined by both periodicity (it occurs at regular time intervals) and repetition (the same pulses occur again and again)" (Simpson, 2004, p. 15).

[8] According to Weber (1996, p. 1), Jakobson's use of the word "message" is misleading; what Jakobson means by the word "message" is what we usually refer to as "text."