



An Analysis of Short Story The Little Match Girl by Hans Christian Andersen in Semantics Perspective

Ni Wayan Swarniti
Universitas Dwijendra
swarniti12@gmail.com

Abstract- This research aims to analyze the antonymy and synonymy existed in a short story titled "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen. This research employs a qualitative semantics analysis to investigate the underlying meanings and implications of the language used in "The Little Match Girl," a short story written by Hans Christian Andersen. Using antonymy and synonymy as the main focus, the research demonstrates how these semantic elements can be used to convey meaning and shape the underlying themes, motifs, and messages of the story. The instrument of this research was the researcher herself. Document analysis as the data collection technique, and document analysis as the data analysis technique. The data for this research was collected through reading deeply and analysis of "The Little Match Girl," which was chosen as the source of this research. The results of this research demonstrated the value of semantics as a grand theory in literary analysis, and highlights the importance of antonymy and synonymy as powerful tools for conveying meaning in literature. The analysis of this short story provided a deeper understanding of the meanings and implications of the language used, and how it contributes to the story's themes, motifs, and messages. These findings could be used as a model for further analysis of literature texts and can provide insight for future research on semantics.

Keywords: semantic analysis, short story analysis, linguistics, semantics

I. INTRODUCTION

Semantics is a grand theory in the field of linguistics that deals with the study of meaning in language. As a grand theory, semantics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how words and phrases are used to convey meaning, and how these meanings are shaped by the context in which they are used (Kim, 2016). Semantics is the study of meaning in language, and it has been used as a powerful tool to analyze literature. When applied to the analysis of a short story, semantics allows us to explore the underlying meanings and implications of the words and phrases used by the author. It is a novel approach to literary analysis as it provides a deeper understanding of the story, beyond the surface level of plot and characterization. With semantics, we can uncover the underlying themes, motifs, and messages that the author has imbued in their work, which adds greater depth and insight to our understanding and appreciation of the story (Lee, 2018).

One important element of semantics that can be analyzed in a short story is antonymy, or

the relationship between words with opposite meanings. Antonymy can be used by an author to create contrast and tension within a story, and to highlight the opposing forces or emotions at play. For example, the use of light and dark imagery in a story can create a sense of contrast and help to convey the emotional state of the characters (Smith, 2015).

Another element of semantics that can be analyzed in a short story is synonymy, or the relationship between words with similar meanings. The use of synonyms can create a sense of repetition and emphasis in a story, and can also convey the idea that multiple words or phrases are pointing to the same underlying concept. For instance, the use of different words to refer to a specific character or place can create a sense of ambiguity and suggest multiple layers of meaning. Additionally, the use of synonyms can also be a tool for the author to describe the same subject with different words, creating a sense of richness, depth and diversity in the description.

Previous research has shown that the relationship between words with opposite

meanings, or antonymy, is a powerful tool for conveying meaning in literature. The use of antonymy can create contrast and tension within a story, and can be used to highlight the opposing forces or emotions at play. For example, the use of light and dark imagery in a story can create a sense of contrast and help to convey the emotional state of the characters (Brown, 2019).

Similarly, the relationship between words with similar meanings, or synonymy, is also a powerful tool for conveying meaning in literature. The use of synonyms can create a sense of repetition and emphasis in a story, and can also convey the idea that multiple words or phrases are pointing to the same underlying concept. For instance, the use of different words to refer to a specific character or place can create a sense of ambiguity and suggest multiple layers of meaning (Brown, 2019).

Previous research has also shown that short stories, as a literary genre, can be particularly well-suited to semantics analysis. Short stories often contain a concentrated, highly symbolic use of language, which can make them especially rich sources of data for semantics analysis. In addition, the compact nature of short stories can make it easier to identify patterns and themes, and to develop a comprehensive understanding of the story's underlying meanings and implications (Chen, 2017).

Despite the importance and relevance of semantics to the study of literature, few studies have specifically applied semantics as a grand theory in the analysis of short stories. The present study aims to fill this gap in the literature by providing a detailed analysis of the language used in "The Little Match Girl," a short story written by Hans Christian Andersen, using antonymy and synonymy as the main focus. The study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the meanings and implications of the language used in the story, and how it contributes to the story's themes, motifs, and messages.

However, limited research has been done to analyze short story from semantics theory and perspective. Regarding the existing background and gap of the research, this research aims at

analyzing the antonymy and synonymy existed in a short story titled "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen. There is one research question, namely "How the antonymy and synonymy in semantics theory perceived through a short story titled "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen?"

II. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative semantics analysis to investigate the underlying meanings and implications of the language used in "The Little Match Girl," a short story written by Hans Christian Andersen. The instrument of this research was the researcher herself. document analysis as the data collection technique, and document analysis as the data analysis technique. The data for this research was collected through observation by using a reading deeply and analysis of "The Little Match Girl," which was chosen as the source of this research. The story was read multiple times by the researcher to gain a deep understanding of its meaning and implications. In addition, the researcher also conducted a thorough analysis of the language used in the story, focusing on the choice of words, phrases, and structures used by the author. The data analysis techniques used in this study were document analysis. The researcher conducted a line-by-line analysis of the story to identify and analyze the key semantic elements, such as antonymy and synonymy, and their implications for the story's meaning. The researcher also made note of patterns and themes that emerged from the data, and used these to develop a comprehensive understanding of the story's underlying meanings and implications.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Synopsis of the Short Story "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen

Most terribly cold it was; it snowed, and was nearly quite dark, and evening-- the last evening of the year. In this cold and darkness there went along the street a poor little girl, bareheaded, and with naked feet. When she left home she had slippers on, it is true; but what was the good of that? They were very large



slippers, which her mother had hitherto worn; so large were they; and the poor little thing lost them as she scuffled away across the street, because of two carriages that rolled by dreadfully fast.

One slipper was nowhere to be found; the other had been laid hold of by an urchin, and off he ran with it; he thought it would do capitally for a cradle when he some day or other should have children himself. So the little maiden walked on with her tiny naked feet, that were quite red and blue from cold. She carried a quantity of matches in an old apron, and she held a bundle of them in her hand. Nobody had bought anything of her the whole livelong day; no one had given her a single farthing.

She crept along trembling with cold and hunger--a very picture of sorrow, the poor little thing!

The flakes of snow covered her long fair hair, which fell in beautiful curls around her neck; but of that, of course, she never once now thought. From all the windows the candles were gleaming, and it smelt so deliciously of roast goose, for you know it was New Year's Eve; yes, of that she thought.

In a corner formed by two houses, of which one advanced more than the other, she seated herself down and cowered together. Her little feet she had drawn close up to her, but she grew colder and colder, and to go home she did not venture, for she had not sold any matches and could not bring a farthing of money: from her father she would certainly get blows, and at home it was cold too, for above her she had only the roof, through which the wind whistled, even though the largest cracks were stopped up with straw and rags.

Her little hands were almost numbed with cold. Oh! a match might afford her a world of comfort, if she only dared take a single one out of the bundle, draw it against the wall, and warm her fingers by it. She drew one out. "Rischt!" how it blazed, how it burnt! It was a warm, bright flame, like a candle, as she held her hands over it: it was a wonderful light. It seemed really to the little maiden as though she were sitting before a large iron stove, with

burnished brass feet and a brass ornament at top. The fire burned with such blessed influence; it warmed so delightfully. The little girl had already stretched out her feet to warm them too; but--the small flame went out, the stove vanished: she had only the remains of the burnt-out match in her hand.

She rubbed another against the wall: it burned brightly, and where the light fell on the wall, there the wall became transparent like a veil, so that she could see into the room. On the table was spread a snow-white tablecloth; upon it was a splendid porcelain service, and the roast goose was steaming famously with its stuffing of apple and dried plums. And what was still more capital to behold was, the goose hopped down from the dish, reeled about on the floor with knife and fork in its breast, till it came up to the poor little girl; when--the match went out and nothing but the thick, cold, damp wall was left behind. She lighted another match. Now there she was sitting under the most magnificent Christmas tree: it was still larger, and more decorated than the one which she had seen through the glass door in the rich merchant's house.

Thousands of lights were burning on the green branches, and gaily-colored pictures, such as she had seen in the shop-windows, looked down upon her. The little maiden stretched out her hands towards them when--the match went out. The lights of the Christmas tree rose higher and higher, she saw them now as stars in heaven; one fell down and formed a long trail of fire.

"Someone is just dead!" said the little girl; for her old grandmother, the only person who had loved her, and who was now no more, had told her, that when a star falls, a soul ascends to God.

She drew another match against the wall: it was again light, and in the lustre there stood the old grandmother, so bright and radiant, so mild, and with such an expression of love.

"Grandmother!" cried the little one. "Oh, take me with you! You go away when the match burns out; you vanish like the warm stove, like the delicious roast goose, and like the magnificent Christmas tree!" And she rubbed the whole bundle of matches quickly

against the wall, for she wanted to be quite sure of keeping her grandmother near her. And the matches gave such a brilliant light that it was brighter than at noon-day: never formerly had the grandmother been so beautiful and so tall. She took the little maiden, on her arm, and both flew in brightness and in joy so high, so very high, and then above was neither cold, nor hunger, nor anxiety--they were with God.

But in the corner, at the cold hour of dawn, sat the poor girl, with rosy cheeks and with a smiling mouth, leaning against the wall--frozen to death on the last evening of the old year. Stiff and stark sat the child there with her matches, of which one bundle had been burnt. "She wanted to warm herself," people said. No one had the slightest suspicion of what beautiful things she had seen; no one even dreamed of the splendor in which, with her grandmother she had entered on the joys of a new year.

The Analysis of the Short Story "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen

In "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Andersen, antonymy is used to create contrast and emphasis in the story, which serves to underscore the girl's difficult situation and highlight the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses. This creates a sense of tension and helps to convey the girl's state of suffering.

One example of antonymy in the story is the use of "cold" and "dark" to describe the girl's physical state in contrast to the "warm" and "light" inside the houses she sees through the wall. This contrast highlights the girl's poor condition and emphasizes the contrast between her life and the life of the people she sees inside the houses. This creates a sense of tension and helps to convey the girl's state of suffering.

Another example of antonymy in the story is the use of "bareheaded" and "naked feet" versus "roast goose" and "deliciously" that create contrast between the girl's poverty and the warmth and comfort of the people inside the houses. This creates a sense of tension and highlights the girl's state of

suffering, contrasting it with the comfort and warmth of the people inside.

Furthermore, the author uses antonymy to create contrast between "barefooted" and "shivering" versus the "large slippers" and "warmth and comfort" that were once belonged to her mother. This contrast highlights the girl's current state of poverty and emphasizes the contrast between her life and the life of her mother. It also evokes empathy from the readers as it shows how desperate the girl is in her current situation.

In addition to antonymy, synonymy is also used in the story to create emphasis and repetition, and convey the idea that multiple words or phrases are pointing to the same underlying concept. For example, the girl's physical state is described as "cold" and "freezing" and "numbed" all pointing to the same concept of her being cold. This repetition of synonyms emphasize the girl's difficult condition and helps to convey the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses.

Moreover, the use of synonymy also emphasizes the girl's state of suffering by using phrases like "picture of sorrow" "hunger" and "shivering" all indicating a state of misery that the girl is experiencing. This repetition and emphasis serve to further highlight the girl's difficult condition and emphasizes the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses.

Hence, the use of antonymy and synonymy in "The Little Match Girl" serves to underscore the girl's difficult situation and highlight the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses. It creates a sense of tension and helps to convey the girl's state of suffering, making the story more poignant and evocative, and allows readers to identify with the girl's struggles and empathize with her condition. This is supported by study that were done by Ye (2018) and Chen (2017).

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research was as applied semantics as a grand theory in the analysis of "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian

Andersen. Using antonymy and synonymy as the main focus, the study has demonstrated how these semantic elements can be used to convey meaning and shape the underlying themes, motifs, and messages of the story. It has been found that the use of antonymy in the story serves to create contrast and emphasis, and helps to convey the girl's state of suffering and the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses. The use of synonymy also creates emphasis and repetition, and serves to convey the idea that multiple words or phrases are pointing to the same underlying concept, which helps to further highlight the girl's difficult condition and emphasizes the contrast between her life and the lives of the people she sees inside the houses.

The results of this research demonstrated the value of semantics as a grand theory in literary analysis, and highlights the importance of antonymy and synonymy as powerful tools for conveying meaning in literature. The analysis of this short story provides a deeper understanding of the meanings and implications of the language used, and how it contributes to the story's themes, motifs, and messages. These findings could be used as a model for further analysis of literature texts and can provide insight for future research on semantics.

Therefore, it is recommended for future studies to apply semantics as a grand theory in the analysis of other literature texts, particularly short stories, in order to further explore the role of antonymy and synonymy in conveying meaning in literature. Furthermore, the studies could focus on the exploration of other elements of semantics such as polysemy, homonymy, and etymology in literary analysis.

REFERENCES

- Antari, N. N. P., Rajistha, I. G. N. A., & Warmadewi, A. I. M. (2023). The Sign Found in The Movie "Mr Harrigan's Phone". *PRAGMATICA: Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 1(1), 18-29.
- Brown, T. (2019). The impact of antonymy on reader perception in short fiction. *Journal of Creative Writing Studies*, 4(1), 12-26.
- Chen, W. (2017). A study of synonymy in modern English poetry. *Journal of English Language and Literature*, 23(1), 1-15.
- Fitria, N. S. (2023). A Semiotics Analysis Found on Music Video of You Belong with Me by Taylor Swift. *PRAGMATICA: Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 1(1), 39-46.
- Kim, H. Y. (2016). Synonymy in literature: A semantic and stylistic analysis. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 7(2), 57-69.
- Lee, Y. J. (2018). The use of antonymy in poetry: A corpus-based study. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32(4), 33-44.
- Martinius, A. (2023). The Analysis of Semantic Meaning Found on Emma Watson's Speech. *PRAGMATICA: Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, 1(1), 12-17.
- Smith, J. A. (2015). The role of semantics in literary analysis. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 6(1), 1-15.
- Swarniti, N. W. (2021). The Analysis of Semantics Meaning Found In Comments of Instagram Account of Info Denpasar. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Linguistik Dan Sastra (SEMNALISA)*, 193-199.
- Swarniti, N. W. (2021). The Meaning of The Verb "Destroy" in the Balinese Language: A Natural Semantic Meta Language Approach. *HUMANIS: Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 25(3), 292-298. <https://doi.org/10.24843/JH.2021.v25.i03.p05>
- Swarniti, N. W. (2022). Analysis of Figurative Language in "Easy On Me" Song Lyric. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 8(1), 13-18.
- Ye, L. (2018). An analysis of antonymy in political speeches. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 19