

# Critical Discourse Analysis on Contemporary Indonesian Poetry from 1966-1998

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## ABSTRACT

The growth of Indonesian literary works began since the generation of *Pujangga Baru* brought literature to the surface. Many poets, novelists, and writers emerged, bringing about their works which remain popular in the present. This paper is a critical discourse analysis which aims to find the dominant ideology represented in the Contemporary Indonesian Poetry from the 1960s to the 1970s. The data were taken from Contemporary Indonesian Poetry translated by Harry Aveling (1975). There are 11 poems that were analyzed in this study. They are *Sermon*, *Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress*, and *Prostitutes of Jakarta Unite!* by W.S Rendra, *Two Poems with One Title*, *Space*, and *Who Are You* by Sapardi Djoko Damono, *Between Us*, *Prayer* and *Image* by Ajip Rosidi, and *A Tale Before Sleep* and *Cold Unregistered* by Gunawan Muhammad. By using the Seven Building Tasks proposed by James Paul Gee (2011), the researchers analyzed each poem based on the seven tasks. The result shows that the dominant ideologies in Contemporary Indonesian Poetry from the 1960s to the 1970s are in the matters of socialism and humanism. Socialism here covers the condition of social life at that time where there power abuse occurred from the powerful people towards the powerless ones. On the other hand, humanism merely covers the condition of human beings, especially Indonesians, at that time.

**Keywords:** *contemporary Indonesian poetry, critical discourse analysis, ideology, seven building tasks*

## INTRODUCTION

Language is traditionally understood as a product of culture which is used by society to communicate with each other. Whatever the language is, it is “the way human beings conceive the world” (Widdowson, 1996:3). Language is generally manifested in the form of spoken or written language.

Pope (2002:55), explains that “language was initially primarily with the physical business of speech”. Writing is treated as the other manifestation of language which is used by an individual person or in a whole society. People in general prefer to use the spoken form of language rather

than the written form even when “literacy is widespread” (Pope, 2002: 55).

History proves that literary works are completely suitable to speak about everything around us. Literary works such as poems, novels, dramas, short stories and any other kinds of literary works have done their job successfully. Characteristics of language used in literature sometimes are completely different with any other forms of language. The way literature brings meaning into surface is unique. The way the literature criticizes something, how it sees things, the way it represents ideas, and many things that literature does becomes interesting to be investigated. Since literacy uncovers human life, anyone who is concerned with language, as long as the use of language is still appropriate, cannot put literature behind.

The history of literature in Indonesia cannot be separated from the Indonesian culture itself. Mohamad and McGlynn (2006: 75) stated that:

Herein is the story of contemporary Indonesian language and literature, which got their support from social groups-especially in Java-that, in the process of cultural evolution, were faced with the prospect of social dislocation. They were forced to find a new way to express themselves. In their hands or on their lips, Indonesian became, at least at certain levels, the expression of a “counterculture.” This doesn’t mean, however, that they themselves were aware they were form *-ing* a counterculture.

It is seen that Indonesians tried to find the way to express themselves. Because of the existence of social divisions among Indonesian culture, it was possible that Indonesians did not find the chance to freely express something through language in general and through literature especially. It is also possible to see the growth of literature

in Indonesia by looking at its history. Indonesia was colonized by Westerns and Asians. How literature found its way out in the Indonesian context at the time is best seen from the era where *Pujangga Baru* came to exist. Indonesian literature found its way in the 1920s when nationalism grew largely among Indonesians especially those who were educated. This is very apparent in the poetry of Muhamad Yamin and Roestam Effendi, who wrote in the 1920s, followed in the 1930s by the editors of *Poedjangga Baroe* and later by a new generation of writers (Mohamad and McGlynn, 2002).

In its development, Indonesian literature was influenced by the development of modernism which expanded the entire world at that time. In the 1940s, Indonesian literature turned its direction and began to be modernist (Foulcher, 2001). Indonesian writers during the post-colonialism began to pursue “the dream of a new Indonesia” (Foulcher, 2001: 772). This was due to the Indonesian cultural politics until 1960’s.

After the 1960’s, Indonesia came into the new era when *orde lama* (during the reign of the first president of Indonesia, Soekarno) was replaced by *orde baru* (Soeharto’s reign). At the time, Indonesian literature was influenced by the political situation. At the same time, the new era of Indonesian literature came into surface, which was called *angkatan 66* (the generation of the 1966’s). Oemarjati (1979) states that at that time, Indonesian literature merely focused on the social issues or narrowly interpreted as “social criticism”.

Literature continued its existence among the Indonesian society. There are many studies and collections of Indonesian literature. One of them has become the concern of this paper. It is the Contemporary Indonesian Poetry. It was translated by Harry Aveling (1975). The works of Indonesian poets such as W.S Rendra, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Gunawan Muhammad, and many

others have been translated by Aveling. The collection of translated poetry is the main source of data used in this study.

This study is a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which was conducted to find the dominant ideology of Indonesian poems from 1966 to 1972. We cannot define ideology here as a static term, since ideology operates or exists differently among culture. Fairclough (1995) tries to explain the relation between language and ideology. He believes that ideology cannot be defined generally and must be separated from the society. It leads us to understand that what we believe as the ideology may or may not be the same in different societies. Thus, doing critical analysis on language use is necessary to do.

What CDA does is merely to study how the power is represented in a discourse. As Van Dijk (2014:11) states, "Critical Discourse Studies more specifically focuses on the role of discourse in the social reproduction of power abuse, for instance in sexist or racist discourse". CDA provides methods and tools to help the researchers in conducting empirical studies of the relations between discourse, society and culture. Its main target is to uncover minute details of that discourse-society relation. By using the theory and approach proposed by James Paul Gee (2011), the seven building tasks, the researchers analyzed several poems written by famous Indonesian Poets such as W.S Rendra, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Gunawan Muhammad, and Ajip Rosidi. In general, Gee takes a sociocultural approach to language, literacy, discourse studies and other areas. Thus, to reach the objectives of the study, the researchers not only focus on the language used in the poems, but also the socio-cultural background or contexts which determine the choice of language pieces in the poems. As Stockwell in Aarts and McMahon (2006) states, the aspect of poetic syntactic structure (Chomskyan) and socio-cultural dimension (Hal-

lidayan) are necessarily needed in exploring literary works.

There are 11 poems analyzed in this study. They are *Sermon*, *Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress*, and *Prostitutes of Jakarta Unite!* by W.S Rendra, *Two Poems with One Title*, *Space*, and *Who Are You* by Sapardi Djoko Damono, *Between Us*, *Prayer*, and *Image* by Ajip Rosidi, and *A Tale Before Sleep*, and *Cold Unregistered* by Gunawan Muhammad.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the result of the research conducted. Along with the explanation, the researchers present the seven building tasks proposed by Gee (2011).

### W. S. Rendra

In general, most of Rendra's poems talk about human or majority against minority. The first poem is *Sermon*. The seven building tasks analysis is presented below.

#### *Sermon*

##### *Significance*

This task answers the question of how the piece of language is being used to make certain things significant or not and the way they are presented. In the poem, *Sermon*, written by W.S Rendra, we can find that he tried to talk about the condition of Christians at that moment where most of them did not understand or completely comprehend their belief. Rendra criticized Christians who have a lack of comprehension on their belief. Rendra saw this situation as something disgraceful, while Christians felt so much pride towards their belief. Rendra used the word *fantastic* at the beginning and end of the poem. The poem began with the word *fantastic* then Rendra explained the condition of Christians which were disgraceful, then ended the poem again with the word *fantastic* to emphasize this

phenomena. Here, Rendra did not use the word *fantastic* to express something good but to show irony.

### *Activities*

This part is trying to describe the activity which happened through language. In the poem *Sermon*, Rendra showed some activities done by the characters in the poem. The young priest stood in the pulpit, people who stopped praying, mouth opened, and so on and so forth. We can conclude that language can be used to show activities. In fact, in daily life, we use language to show what we are doing.

### *Identities*

This task is used in order to answer the question of what identities are presented in the poem and how the writer enacts his identities. The poem, *Sermon*, describes some identities of people. Here, Rendra described some people such as a priest. Rendra described the priest directly and sometimes used metaphor to describe the priest as in the bolded lines:

*Fantastic*  
*One hot Sunday*  
*In a church full of people*  
***A young priest stood at the pulpit***  
***His face was beautiful and holy***  
***His eyes sweet like a rabbit's***  
*And he lifted up both his hands*  
*Which were lovely like a lily*  
*And said:*  
*"Now let us disperse.*  
*There is no sermon today"*

(W.S. Rendra, *Sermon*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

Here, Rendra described the priest's identities directly at the fourth line. In line five and six, Rendra described the priest metaphorically. Rendra also described the people in the church directly as in the lines.

*"Still no-one moved.*  
*Their faces were wet.*  
*Their whole bodies were wet.*  
*Sweat poured onto the floor*  
*Because it was so hot*  
*And the misery they bore.*  
*The stench was extraordinarily foul*  
*And their questions too stank foully."*

(W.S. Rendra, *Sermon*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

It is clear here how the people are. In direct way, Rendra described people in the church as the chaotic communities. There is a total confusion here, chaos.

### *Relationship*

This task is used to signal what sort of relationship we have, want to have, or are trying to have with the listener or reader. The use of language exists to build social relationships. In general, Rendra used some languages to build relationship with the readers who had the same belief, Christians. The relationship was built by describing the condition or circumstances as a critic to other Christians.

### *Politics*

In talking about politics, the poem describes a system where a priest has to stand in front of the people in church as in the line.

*A Young priest stood at the pulpit*

A priest should stand in front, become the center of every activity in church. The political system that is believed by some Christians is that the priest knows everything related to the truth.

### *Connections*

This task is used to show intertextuality between the content of the poem with other things. Rendra used many intertextuality with the Bible (Christian

belief) especially Jesus Christ and Moses which is described in the following line:

*Father. Father. Why hast thou forsaken  
me?*

*Through the holy prophet Moses*

The first line refers to what Jesus said when He sacrificed Himself through crucifixion. At the end of this, Jesus said “*Allahku, ya Allahku, mengapa Engkau meninggalkan Daku*”. Rendra used this intertextuality to explain the connection between the poem with the story about Jesus in the Bible. Rendra also made a connection with the story of Moses in the Holy Bible. It is clear that Rendra used intertextuality to show connection between the poem and the story in a Holy Bible.

#### *Sign System and Knowledge*

This task is used to answer the question of how does the piece of language privilege specific sign systems. Here in Rendra’s poem, there are many languages privileged to Christian sign system and knowledge, such as the words *church, priest, pulpit, monastery, suffering of Christ* and the like used.

#### ***Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite!***

The second poem is *Prostitutes of Jakarta - Unite!* in which Rendra described the condition of prostitutes who were always labeled as the source of problem for the nation. It also discussed how some politicians politicize sex and fight for their business under the flag of revolution.

#### *Significance*

In this poem, Rendra wants to show the fact about the society in Jakarta especially the prostitutes in Jakarta. He tried to describe the real condition of Jakarta at that time that was the condition of the state apparatus and their relationship with the society. Furthermore, the most dominant message that can be found in this poem is about the life of prostitutes in Jakarta. The

prostitutes did not need to feel regret about what they have done with the politicians however they need to fight back. They need to fight the oppression and criticize the politicians because they are not the source of the problems in this country. This poem also tells that the prostitutes are only the victims of politicians who judged them as the source of the problems. In this poem Rendra describes the situation of certain citizens of Jakarta that have no other option but to be a prostitute.

*The prostitutes of Jakarta  
The greatest and the least  
Have been crushed  
Hunted  
They are frightened  
Lost  
Offended and embarrassed*

*Regret as you may  
But don’t despair  
Or allow yourselves to be sacrificed*

(W.S. Rendra, *Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite!*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

This poem tries to convey the message that the prostitutes of Jakarta were always blamed by the police and politician because they thought that those people were the source of the problem of this nation.

#### *Activities*

There are some activities described in this poem. The government apparatus always oppress and frighten the people using their power. This poem also suggests that the society especially the prostitutes of Jakarta needed to fight back and attack. Furthermore, this poem also tells the critics of the state apparatus which are mentioned with the word *clown*. The word *clown* here is the imagery of police. The satire is about the police who said the prostitutes were the source of the problems in a State.

### *Identities*

This poem describes the real identity of several characters in it. The stereotype about the identity of prostitutes that will always be negative. Prostitutes are always labeled as the source of problems in this poem. Rendra also showed the character of some politicians who used their power as a mask to judge other people.

*Prostitutes of Jakarta  
Stop being ashamed  
When I read in the papers  
How those clowns persecute you  
Accuse you of being the source of all the  
nation's disasters  
I am enraged.  
You are my friends  
I can't have this  
God  
What clownmouths  
What foulmouths  
They have even politicized sex.*

(W.S. Rendra, *Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite!*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

In this poem, it also can be found that the prostitutes were always sacrificed by the politician or he mentioned the politicians as *clowns* who politicized sex.

### *Relationship*

In this poem Rendra built a relationship with the group of prostitutes in Jakarta. Rendra took a position as a part of the society which needed to react to the situation that happened at that time. He wanted to stand for their rights as a part of the society.

*My sisters  
It is harder to put you down  
Than a political party  
They must give you work  
They must return your standing  
They too much bear the weight of their  
mistakes.*

*My sisters, unite  
Take up sticks  
Wave your bras on the ends of them  
Carry them around the town procession  
Waving them like flags they have dis-  
graced.  
Now it is your turn to demand  
Tell them:  
That recommending the persecution of  
prostitutes  
Without also recommending  
Marrying them  
Is nonsense*

(W.S. Rendra, *Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite!*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

He built a connection with the prostitutes society by criticizing politicians who politicized the weaknesses of the prostitutes.

### *Politics*

Rendra told the perspective of the prostitutes who were stereotyped or labelled as the source of the problems in the nation. The politicians created a stigma about the prostitutes; they were not good people and very potential to cause so many problems.

*Prostitutes of Jakarta  
Stop being ashamed  
When I read in the papers  
How those clowns persecute you  
Accuse you of being the source of all na-  
tion's disasters  
I am enraged.  
You are my friends  
I can't have this  
God  
What clown mouths  
What foul mouths  
They have even politicized sex.*

(W.S. Rendra, *Prostitutes of Jakarta – Unite!*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

### *Connection*

In paragraph 3 and 4, Rendra mentioned two names that were involved actively in the political revolution of Indonesia. Sarinah was a woman who took care of Soekarno in his childhood. Rendra put Sarinah in this poem for remember and appreciate women. Dasima was involved in a sex case with the Dutch in 1800s. The use of those names was to remind the people that women were not always on the wrong side in the sex case. They can be the victim in that case.

#### *Sign and system*

This poem told that the politicians have a right and ability to control other people. This poem described that politicians were allowed to make revolution and changes even if the changes that they made were only for their own interest.

#### **A Pick Pocket's Advice to his Mistress**

The third poem is *A Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress* in which Rendra portrayed a condition of the people who lived with very low economic income. In this poem, Rendra made a choice between love and life. He said that love is not number one anymore but preparing good life for their child is more important.

#### *Significance*

This poem tells the story of a pick pocket. The language that Rendra used in this poem talked about the way the people in Jakarta can survive despite their poverty. *A Pick Pocket's Advice to his Mistress* showed that love was not the most significance thing in life. The pick pocket preferred to leave the girl because his son needed a more proper life which he cannot give. The pick pocket realized that he cannot rely on his job as a pick pocket. He described the pick pocket as a poor man who left his girlfriend for economic reasons.

*Your fate is a reasonable one  
From servant to mistress of an office –  
head*

*What more could you want?  
Marrying me would only spoil your chances  
The days to come will obviously be difficult enough  
As a pickpocket my faith is chancy  
Which is not exactly news  
But I am not the right soft of father  
For the baby you wear in your womb*

(W.S. Rendra, *A Pick Pocket's Advice to his Mistress*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

#### *Activities*

The activities in this poem were described through two characters, the pick pocket and his girlfriend. The activity that was tried to be told in this story was the love between the pick pocket and his girlfriend. It showed that love was not enough to survive. It also showed that love was not the most important thing. Furthermore, the most important thing was the way to survive in several circumstances especially economic condition.

#### *Identities*

There are so many things that can be labeled to a pick pocket. In this poem Rendra tried to reveal the identity of a pick pocket which was very rarely discussed. Rendra showed us that a pick pocket was also a human being; he will do everything to make someone that he loved very much able to live in a proper condition. Rendra also described some characteristics of the politicians at that time. Most of them are very transactional and tricky. Moreover, they did everything to get what they wanted.

#### *Relationship*

In this poem Rendra wanted to remind his audiences especially people from low economic status that they did not need to rely on their bad condition. They had to find or do something in order to survive, such as being a pick pocket or be a liaison.

Rendra also wanted to tell the audiences that love was not the most important things in life, as many people believed it to be. On the contrary, the most important thing was how to survive and create a proper condition for their next generation. Furthermore, their weaknesses can be used as a weapon to trick the government workers and some politician or even a ministry. Rendra wanted the audience to see the life with both eyes open wide. They had to compromise and maximize the chance that they have.

### *Politics*

This poem also dealt with the reality that happened in the society about pick pockets and liaisons. People always labeled them as negative. In fact, there were many reasons that can make them to do that. Poverty was one of the main reasons which forced them to do that. Moreover, people would judge them based on their economic status. On the contrary, the politicians were always judged as honorable people which was a portrait that happened in the society recently. People will judge others based on the status which they belong to.

*Besides  
Among thieves honour is like lipstick  
Remember cunning above all  
Secondly courage  
And third perseverance  
Fourth resoluteness, even in telling lies  
This is how thieves live  
Don't worry then  
The little people can't stay beaten forever.*

(W.S. Rendra, *A Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

### *Connection*

In this poem Rendra tried to connect with the several situations that happened in the society. Rendra told us that bad things happened for several reasons. In this poem

Rendra portrayed the real condition of the society.

*Your man is a normal sort of senior civil-  
servant  
He enjoys being bribed and corrupting  
others  
Cheat him in exchange  
That's how it's done  
Thieves cheat thieves, that's usual  
Besides  
Among thieves honour is like lipstick  
Remember cunning above all  
Secondly courage  
And third perseverance*

(W.S. Rendra, *A Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

In this part Rendra tried to portray the real condition of the civil servant at that time who enjoyed to bribe and corrupt government's money but other people did not realize it because they always masked their faces with their honour.

*"Don't let your lack of education scare  
you  
As long as you are vigorous and your  
breasts firm  
This always attracts them  
Your idle chatter will be of no account  
As long as you are spirited, assured and  
quite confident  
The very long as you are spirited, assured  
and quite confident  
The very model of a minister in fact."*

(W.S. Rendra, *A Pickpocket's Advice to His Mistress*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

This part is connected to the situations that there were many uneducated people in Indonesia and they had no choice besides selling their body. This part is also connected to the real identity of most of the ministries at that time.

### *Sign and System*

This poem showed that the low class society had power to control the politicians and government. Rendra showed this analogy by saying that they did not need to be afraid because of their lack of education as long as they had beautiful bodies which they can sell to the government's servants, ministry, and politicians. In this poem, Rendra used some symbols such as: lipstick, love, baby, women's body.

Based on the data analysis presented on Rendra's poems, it is clear that most of Rendra's poems portray the real condition of the society. Rendra suggests us to see the problems about society through a wider perspective. He is really concerned about the low class society. He also criticizes the government workers, politicians, and civil servants who always oppress and alienate the minority. He seems to be a socialist; standing for the lower class of society.

### **Sapardi Djoko Damono**

Most of Damono's poems talk about humanism. He criticizes the condition of human beings. In his poems *Two Poems with One Title*, *Space*, *Who Are You*, and *Space* Damono talked about human beings and their existence. The following will be the analysis of the poems based on the seven building tasks.

#### ***Two Poems with One Title***

##### *Significance*

This task is used in order to answer the question of how the piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways.

*The blood spills in the field. Who*

*Is the sacrificial-animal this time, brother?*

Here in these line, Damono wanted to describe the human condition where human was envious. The poem also drew

how human sacrifices others to gain what they wanted. This was a critic made by Damono as a concern of being a human at that time. He emphasized this condition of human being by these lines.

*True. I killed Abel, the recipient*

*Of nature's bitterness, of humanity's first  
hatred*

##### *Practices*

The poem did not explain the human condition directly, but it tended to use peculiar way to imply the activity. The word *kill*, for example, was used to explain how humans did a bad thing in their life. The sentence *we go to the world* in the poem showed the activity of being human, that was to live.

##### *Identities*

Language can be used to show identities of the speaker or the characters as in the lines:

*And You are here too. Look at my two  
hands*

*Stained with the blood of my brother*

These lines showed the identity of humans which Damono was trying to enact. *My hands stained with the blood of my brother* showed the dark side of human beings in general. Even though it was not directly portrayed, we can feel it by looking at the real world.

##### *Relationships*

In this poem, Damono tried to show his relationship with his listener as close as possible. The language used in the poem directly made us to realize ourselves. Here, Damono looked like a wise person who taught his listeners or readers about life value.

##### *Politics*

In the lines below, Damono described how people saw what they accepted as the truth.

*The bitterness of a faithful man swept to  
one side*

*True. I killed Abel, the recipient*

#### *Connection*

The story of the poem *Two Poems with One Title* made a connection with the story of Caen and Habel in the Holy Bible. The story itself describes how enviousness blind people to do bad things, such as in these lines:

*True. I killed Abel, the recipient  
And you are here too. Look at my two  
hands  
Stained with the blood of my brother  
The blood spills in the field. Who  
Is the sacrificial-animal this time, brother?*

(Sapardi Djoko Damono. *Two Poems with One Title*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

#### *Sign Systems and Knowledge*

The use of language in the poem used many biblical language because of the intertextuality that existed in the poem.

#### *Space*

##### *Significance*

The poem *Space*, written by Damono, is a very short poem. The complete poem is shown below.

*Adam has gone down into the forest  
Confused in legends  
And we are suddenly here  
Gazing into the sky: empty-silent...*

Here, through the last line, Damono wanted to show the significance of being human. What he believed was that humans did not know where they came from. Damono tried to portray that human came from nothing.

##### *Practices*

The sentence *gazing into the sky: empty-silent* showed the activity of human who gazed into the sky; trying to find the answer. At the end, what human search for was only emptiness.

##### *Identities*

Damono's poem, *Space*, uses simple sentences to show identities. The first line of the poem is

*Adam has gone down into the forest*

This explained who Adam is. He was the first human who was created by God (based on AL Qur'an story) who went down to Earth through the forest. This poem invited readers who did not comprehend why human existed. Damono showed that we, as the readers, were confused. We tried to find the answer as Damono said in the poem,

*gazing into the sky: empty-silent...*

##### *Relationship*

In his poem, Damono tried to show that our relationship is signaled through our confusion of where we are from. He wanted to show that we were in search of who we are.

##### *Politics*

The third line of the poem is very crucial.

*And we are suddenly here*

Damono explained politically that most people did not have faith in God. Politically, he described that we were doctrined by religions about who really are.

##### *Connection*

Sometimes we make something relevant to others through language. In the poem *Space*, Damono made a connection with Moslems tradition. In Islam, Adam was described as the most graceful creation of God. Because he was kicked out of the heaven as for making the mistake of eating

Kuldi. Then, he went down to the Earth through the forest.

### *Sign System and Knowledge*

The poem of Damono, *Space*, used some privilege words that was *Adam*, where this word may only be understood by some people.

### **Who are you**

#### *Significance*

People use language to say something significant. Damono's poem, *Who are you*, generally talks about humans. This poem began with a simple statement.

*I am Adam*

Through this line, Damono wanted to say that we were only human who were full of mistakes and sins. The poem used *Adam* to describe the existence of being human.

#### *Practices*

Here in this poem, Damono drew *Adam* who made mistake by breaking God's will. The second line of the poem showed an activity done by Adam which caused him to be sent out of heaven.

*I am Adam  
Who ate the apple;  
Adam suddenly aware of himself,  
Startled and ashamed*

The poem also showed the activity of Adam through these lines.

*Adam continuously suspicious  
Of himself,  
Hiding his face*

Here, Damono described how Adam tried to hide his face from his mistakes. The fear and awareness made him feel alone.

#### *Identities*

We use language to get recognized as taking on a certain identity or role, that is, to build an identity here and now. Damono used peculiar language to describe Adam in his poem like in the lines below.

*I am Adam  
Who ate the apple;  
Adam suddenly aware of himself  
Startled and ashamed.  
I am Adam who realized  
Good and evil, passing  
From one sin to another;  
Adam continuously suspicious  
Of himself  
Hiding his face*

(Sapardi Djoko Damono. *Who Are You*.  
Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of  
Queensland Press, 1975)

By these lines, Damono showed that Adam realized himself, was startled and ashamed. Damono successfully described humans by using *Adam* as the analogy. Here, it was clear that human was arrogant, untrustworthy and full of mistakes.

#### *Relationship*

In his poem, Damono showed that Adam broke the relationship with God. Damono also described that the relation between God and humans were breaking down because of Adam's fault.

#### *Politics*

This task showed what perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating. The presence of *Adam* in the poem politically used to describe humans.

#### *Connection*

Damono in his poem *Who are you* made intertextuality with the story of Adam in the AL Qur'an (same in the Bible). We know from these holy books that Adam was the first human who made a mistake by eating *Kuldi*. The entire story behind this poem told about Adam which is used to describe humans by Damono.

### *Sign System and Knowledge*

The poem of Damono, *Who Are You*, used privilege words such as *Adam*, where this word may only be understood by some people. The entire story of this poem was also privilege.

### **Ajip Rosidi**

Rosidi's Poems analyzed in this study are *Between Us*, *Prayer*, and *Image*. These three poems tell about the issues of humanity. Rosidi tells about the way humans should be in making relationships with others. Rosidi also tells about our consciousness as God's creation. Rosidi describe his poem very well as follow.

### ***Between Us***

#### *Significance*

We use language to signal the things we are talking about significant. Rosidi's poem *Between Us*, begins with a simple sentence as follow:

*When soul dances naked before soul*

*gesture*

Here, Rosidi used the word *soul* to become significant. It was because Rosidi wanted to say that when there was no secret between people, it was like a *soul* which was honest. Rosidi used this piece of language to show that it was better if we, in making relationship with others, were honest.

#### *Practices*

This task answers the question of what practices or activity the piece of language is being used to enact. By using the line above, Rosidi showed the activity of a *soul* that is dancing. This was to say that we make relationships with other people in this life. The way we should be is being honest.

### *Identities*

Language can be used to show identity. The poem writers used language to show the identity of person or his/herself. Rosidi did not show a person in his poem *Between Us* directly. *Us* here referred to those who read this poem. The entire story of the poem gave the readers identity of who we were supposed to be.

### *Relationship*

Rosidi used his language in his poem interestingly to show what we were supposed to be in making relationship with other people. We can see in this poem below.

*When soul dances naked before soul*

*Gesture*

*Is sufficient vesture*

*Between is air. A smile – a glance*

*Is enough.*

*So be it.*

(Ajip Rosidi. *Between Us*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

### *Politics*

In this poem, Rosidi wanted to show how the right or good relationships were. In the last line, Rosidi emphasized his idea by using the sentence *is enough. So be it*. That was what a relationship was supposed to be.

### *Connection*

Rosidi uses his poem to make a relevant situation where people tend to use a *mask* in making relationship. According to Rosidi, we had to be honest like *soul dances naked before soul gesture*. He also said that *between is air* to show his point.

### *Sign System and Knowledge*

Rosidi used his language not to privilege his belief. He looked tend to open mind with something he believes to other

people. The language he used, sharing his knowledge about human being.

### **Prayer**

#### *Significance*

We use language to signal the things we are talking about significant. Rosidi's poem *Prayer* is a simple poem as follow.

*God. Give me the strength  
To master myself, loneliness  
And greed. Guide me  
In your path, to paradise. Amen.*

This was the way Rosidi shows the significance of praying to God. Even if it was a simple poem, the entire poem is significant for the readers.

#### *Practices*

We use language to get recognized as engaging in a certain sort of practice or activity. The entire poem showed one activity; praying. We can recognize this activity through the use of language at the poem.

#### *Identities*

Language can be used to show identity. In this poem, Rosidi showed that God is the source of our entire life. We prayed to God because we realized that only God can give us strength. He is the only one who can guide us in this life.

#### *Relationship*

By this poem, Rosidi drew the relationship between people and God. God who have greatness while people ask for grace. This showed the vertical relationship between God and humans.

#### *Politics*

The social good which Rosidi wanted to say was that human cannot live without God's will. This was a right or true thing he wanted to share.

### *Connection*

Rosidi made a connection with what people usually did as humans who believed in God. The poem connected with it.

#### *Sign System and Knowledge*

Here in this poem, Rosidi showed that humans' knowledge and faith in God lead them to pray. Praying as a sign system and belief became something we should do as human.

### **Image**

#### *Significance*

The lines below are used to show the significance of this poem.

*Your image, image intoxicating me  
Haven't I committed all to Time?  
The future looms lonely, unavoidably  
The restless world growing dumb.*

The use of the word *image* showed the significance of the poem. *Image intoxicating me* was also significant here. This showed that *image* can disturb people.

#### *Practices*

In this poem, Rosidi described how the image of someone in minds is.

*Over the roof of my house the wind softly  
rises  
Bringing your voice to me amidst the  
world's whisper.*

It was not directly involved that the image of someone can come in our mind or brought by the wind. But it was clear through the use of language in the poem above that the image came and disturbed the mind.

#### *Identities*

In this poem *Image*, Rosidi creatively described someone who cannot release his/her past. The image of someone in the past cannot be erased in mind.

### *Relationships*

The poem showed the relationship between someone with another in the past time. They looked as if having a good relationship. As the time goes by, they set apart. One of them cannot erase the image of him/her from their mind. Rosidi showed the intimate relationship between humans.

### *Politics*

It was normal for humans to always remember his/her past. Rosidi, through his language, wanted to describe his perspective on remembering the image of someone.

### *Connections*

We use language to render certain things connected or relevant to other things, that is, to build connections or relevance. This poem seemed making connection with the common problem faced by human.

### *Sign System and Knowledge*

This task is used to claim something to be good or bad. The poem *Image*, was used by Rosidi to claim that most people cannot move on from their past. He claims that images seemed like they were coming from everywhere as in the following lines.

*I see your face on my plate, on the wall  
In the air, on the clouds, wherever I look*

### **Goenawan Mohamad**

The last poems are from Goenawan Mohammad. The poems which are analyzed in this paper are *Cold Unregistered* and *A Tale Before Sleep*. The poems from Goenawan are tell more about human's feeling or the relationship between them.

### ***Cold Unregistered***

#### *Significance*

This poem is talks about someone's loneliness in a quiet place. Goenawan tried

to describe the situation in the middle of nowhere and had no friends to talked to. It was very clear that it was about someone's feeling when he/she had no friends in the city that he stayed.

*Cold unregistered  
On the thermometer  
City wet  
The wind along the river  
Driving us away, yet we stay*

(Gunawan Muhammad. *Cold Unregistered*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

### *Activities*

The activity tried to be shared by Goenawan through this poem was an activity in a quiet city. In this poem, Goenawan told that there was no other activity besides nature activities. In order to make the situation perfect, Goenawan did not tell a story which was conducted by human or animate things. Furthermore, the entirety of this poem was only about loneliness. The person in that story could not move. Moreover, the city tried to kill him with loneliness.

### *Identities*

The identity that was tried to be revealed in this story is about the identity or characteristics of a city. It seemed that someone had just moved from nowhere and stayed in the city. He needed to adapt with the nature and the situation there. The city seemed very quiet for the stranger because it only shared the loneliness and cold.

### *Relationship*

The relationship that Goenawan wanted to build with the audience was to share the experience of staying in a quiet city. It was related with the situation faced by several immigrants in their new places. The places which forced them to stay and made them be thankful for what they had even though

it was probably the situation that they did not expect.

#### *Politics*

In this poem, Goenawan tried to tell the situations that would be faced by the people who were feeling lonely in the middle of nowhere. This poem changed people's perspective about cold. Some people thought that cold was beautiful especially with the snow. Goenawan tried to provide another perspective of cold for a person who had no friends in a city. Cold was not beauty anymore if there was no person to talk with.

#### *Connection*

The connection that Goenawan tried to insert in his poem was gratitude to God. In fact, the lonely feeling can be solved by appreciating what we had got. It was very clear that Goenawan wanted to say his gratitude to God, because in the worst condition, Goenawan still felt happy.

*God, how can we ever  
Be happy?*

#### *Sign and System*

This poem showed that we had to stay and accept the condition that we got. We had to be happy and grateful because the situation could be worse.

#### *A Tale Before Sleep*

#### *Significance*

This poem told about loyalty in a marriage. In this poem, Goenawan tried to discuss human's characteristic that tended to be either loyal or betray someone's trust. This story was also taken from the legend of Angling Dharma and his wife. In this poem, Goenawan wanted to show that a promise was very hard to be kept. Furthermore, Angling Dharma was a king of Maja Pahit. It meant that every word that he said will be followed by the folks. In fact, Angling failed to prove his loyalty.

*In the morning she died*

*Then the king realized that he must flee-  
with the help of the  
Gods (I forget which ones) – because of  
his faithlessness.*

*“Batik Madrim, Batik Madrim, why, my  
lord? Why must one love  
Faithfulness more than life and such like  
and so forth?”*

(Gunawan Muhammad. *A Tale Before Sleep*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

This part showed that he was expecting God's help in order to save his life. It also showed that he betrayed his loyalty because of his faithlessness. In the last sentence, it can be found that Angling loved his life more than his loyalty.

#### *Activities*

The event that was told in this poem was Angling Dharma's wife's suicide to prove the loyalty of her husband. On behalf of loyalty, his wife jumped into the fire and Angling Dharma was expected to follow his wife to show his loyalty and honesty. In the beginning of the story, Goenawan described that there was a small talk between Angling and his wife in their room. His wife accused him that he was cheating but he declined it. In order to prove that he was saying the truth, his wife jumped into the fire to show his loyalty. She expected that he would follow her to prove his loyalty and honesty.

*“The lizards, my love, are talking about  
us.*

*Talking nonsense.”*

*So the king said to his queen that night.  
Breath in the bed*

*Flowed calmly and twilight crawled be-  
tween the mattress and  
The sheet.*

*“Why do you not believe me? Dreams will  
convince you as surely  
As tomorrow's sun.”*

*The woman wept as Anglingdharma coldly  
pulled the cover back  
Over her breasts, even though he kissed  
her long, long hair.  
In the morning she died.  
Then the king realized that he must flee –  
with the help of the  
Gods (I forget which ones)- because of his  
faithlessness.*

(Gunawan Muhammad. *A Tale Before Sleep*. Translated by Harry Aveling, *Contemporary Indonesian Poetry*, University of Queensland Press, 1975)

### *Identities*

This poem described a real identity of a king as a human. This poem showed us that a king was also a human who had human characteristics. It was the reason why he refused to jump and preferred to be loyal to his life. It portrayed the real condition of human nowadays. People can be very loyal but in the certain situations and condition he can betray others' trust.

### *Relationship*

The relationship that Goenawan wanted to build through this poem is giving an example to the audience that loyalty is very expensive and the poem showed that the loyalty in a marriage can be broken by the problems that they face. Goenawan wanted to remind people that most of them will prefer to be loyal to their life rather than his wife.

### *Politics*

Most of people will think that a marriage will survive in any condition because they will do it on behalf of love and loyalty. Loyalty and love are something that cannot be seen clearly. It needs to be tested because as a human we will have an intention whether being loyal or not. Moreover, Goenawan also wanted to show that suicide was an honor to show the truth and loyalty.

### *Connection*

This poem was connected with the story of Angling Dharma, a king of Majapahit. Angling Dharma, who understood the animals' language refused to tell her wife what two lizards were talking about. Then, his wife committed a suicide by throwing herself in to the fire to prove her husband's loyalty.

### *Sign and System*

Angling Dharma as a person who understood the animal language, had a privilege to tell his wife about what two lizards were talking about. However, he refused to tell his wife. Then, she decided to commit a suicide.

## **CONCLUSION**

Contemporary Indonesian Poetry from the 1960's to the 1970's was dominated by socialism and humanism. Socialism here covers the criticism of the Indonesian writers to the condition of society where power imbalance exists among society. There are aspects of society which is in the powerful position such as the government, and the lower aspects of society such as women and the marginalized people. On the other side, humanism here covers the criticism on the situation where people live in chaotic circumstances and how they interface each other.

In general, most of Rendra's poems talk about humans and majority against minority. Most of Damono's poems talk about humanism. Damono, through his poems, wants to describe the issue of humanity. He criticizes the condition of human beings. Rosidi tells about the way humans should be in making relationships with others. He suggests that the true way is honesty. When there is nothing hidden or secrets between us, it will be better. Rosidi also talks about people's consciousness as God's creation. Rosidi reminds people through his poem *Prayer* that peo-

ple are God's creation so that people have responsibility to praise and pray to God. While the poems from Goenawan talk more about human's feeling or the relationship between them.

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