

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Todd (2010, p. 1) in his discussion about William Cullen Bryant says that Bryant was “a great American poet who wrote about nature”. This claim is supported by Perdanawati in her article when she says, “Bryant has represented the beautiful land of America which is full of trees and green grass” (2013, p. 125). Voss is also of the same opinion when he writes about the biography of Bryant in *Power for Sanity* as follows, “Bryant has nature as his inspiration to give thanks to God for His bless towards people life with green Earth full of nature diversity, including seasons, forests, and living creatures inside the green forests” (2017, p. 2). From this, it is learnt that Bryant was inspired by nature and he started to write poems to show his thankfulness to God for His mercy in giving various seasons of spring, summer, fall, winter, and the living creatures inside the nature.

Todd also informs that Bryant has written 142 poems, where 15 of his poems are about the winter season (2010, p. 3). Among the poems, it is interesting to focus on three of them, i.e. *A Winter Piece*, *The Snow Shower*, and *November*. According to Todd (2010, p. 6) and Voss (2017, p. 3) these poems contain hidden symbols related to the main theme of winter season poem. Through a semiotic theory where, “symbols and signs dealing with function and category of the symbols” (2013, p. 130) are possible, Perdanawati also says that the “Hidden

symbols inside the poems represent the beauty of nature, the disaster changes nature, and the returning back of nature” (2013, p. 129). Todd has also researched the poems from an Eco criticism perspective which is, “A perspective of literature which symbolizes human life by the elements of nature such as illustrations of season changes, animal activity, and disaster”( 2010, p. 5). He finds that the three poems deal with elements of nature, such as season changes, nature disaster, and nature behavior (2010, p. 6).

Another researcher is Voss, who has researched human life based on biographical approach, which is “An approach based on the author’s life and the author’s work relation in the term of the author’s meanings and purposes to write it” ( 2017, p. 1). He finds that in the three poems, there is a story about the loss of Bryant’s friends and his loneliness, the falling of his party in Congregate Federal, and the violation in the party election to one of Bryant’s mate, Daniel Webster, who is murdered because he had won the election ( 2017, p. 141). It is interesting that the researchers above did not use the simplest form of poem analysis, which is figurative language. This is why, in this thesis, the writer looks at the three poems from the figurative language point of view and relates it with Bryant’s theory about nature.

In analyzing the poem with figurative language, the writer takes into account the following information about figurative language which according to Taylor, is divided into 3 divisions: (1) comparison and substitution, (2) representation and substitution, and (3) contrast and inversion ( 2008, p. 167). The first category, comparison and substitution means that a real thing can be substituted with a language that symbolizes the reality (Taylor, 2008, p. 168). The

second category is representation and substitution, which means that representations of things can be substituted with actions shown in literature (Taylor, 2008, p. 173). The third category, contrast and inversion means that in literature there are languages which show contrary meaning of what is real and what is in the literature (Taylor, 2008, p. 179).

Bryant is an American poet that writes in the Romanticism era. According to Jackson (2009, p. 184) “Romanticism writers include nature in their poems because the nature has been observed to be a gift from God as their gift thanks expressions.” Romanticism writers often focus on nature. For this reason, the writer has a purpose in this study to prove the figurative language relation with the characteristics of Romantic nature poem and Bryant’s theory of nature inside the 3 poems. The writer will make categorization based on the 3 category of figurative language and then relate to the characteristics of Romantic nature poem and Bryant’s theory of nature. The writer will also use the theory of Taylor to connect the characterization and the theory of nature with the figurative language.

## **1.2. Field of the Study**

The field of the study is Literature that takes into analyzing the figurative speech point of view from an American author.

## **1.3. Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is limited to the three winter poems from Bryant’s Winter Poem collections: *A Winter Piece* (1821), *November* (1825), and *The Snow Shower* (1855).

#### **1.4. Problem Formulations**

In this study, the writer has 2 problems, they are:

1. How are the categories of Taylor's figurative language applied in Bryant's three selected winter poems?
2. How are the categories of figurative language applied to the characterizations of Romantic nature poem and Bryant's theory of nature?

#### **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

This study has 2 objectives:

1. To investigate the categories of Taylor's figurative language applied in Bryant's three selected winter poems.
2. To give information toward the application of figurative language into the application of Romantic characterization and Bryant's theory of nature.

#### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in putting to practice the application of figurative language to analyze poems and find out Romantic nature poem characterization as well as Bryant's theory of nature.

#### **1.7. Definition of Terms**

For the definition of terms, the definitions of Romanticism and American Romanticism are:

### **1.7.1. Romanticism Era**

According to Drabbe (2008, p. 872), “Romanticism era begins in British in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Romantic era is known as nature literary era. Romanticism era brings nature as an object for the writers to express the beauty of the landscape in the season changes and behaviors because Romantic era has the most beautiful landscape with green plants grown on it.”

### **1.7.2. American Romanticism**

Based on Timmerman (2011, p. 232), “Romantic era in America begins with the literature of nature phenomena. The nature phenomena usually take shape as season changes, landscape scenery of America, and tribe in American behaviors. The tribe in American has to adapt with extreme season changes in the landscape of American. It is the condition in which American is still a landscape with tribe before it turns into big city.”

