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Simile and the Functions of Its Use in the *Novel Salah Langkah* by Musa Ismail: A Stylistic Analysis

Ria Angelina[1]*, Elmustian[2], Adib Alfalah[3]
[123]Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Riau, Riau, Indonesia
*E-mail: ria.angelina4257@student.unri.ac.id

ABSTRACT
This study aims to describe the forms of simile and the functions of their use in the novel *Salah Langkah* by Musa Ismail. It employs a descriptive qualitative method with a stylistic approach. This is a library-based study using the novel *Salah Langkah*, published by Deepublish in 2022 and consisting of 133 pages, as its data source. The research data comprise words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and dialogues containing similes. Data were collected through documentation by reading the novel repeatedly, identifying comparative markers, and recording relevant excerpts and their contexts in a data table. The forms of simile were analyzed using Keraf's theory, while their functions were examined based on Leech's five language functions. The data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, following Miles and Huberman's model. The findings indicate 159 instances of simile, marked by comparative expressions such as seperti, bagai, bagaikan, laksana, ibarat, seumpama, seolah-olah, merupai, macam, bak, layaknya, and seakan-akan. Analysis of the excerpts presented identifies informational, expressive, and aesthetic functions, which occur individually or in combination. The similes in this novel tend to draw comparisons from nature and everyday life to portray social and economic issues as well as the characters' inner experiences. These concrete comparisons make abstract conditions more vivid and accessible to readers. Thus, simile not only enhances aesthetic value but also clarifies narrative events and conveys characters' feelings.

Keywords: simile, simile functions, novel, analysis stylistics

Simile dan Fungsi Penggunaannya dalam Novel *Salah Langkah* Karya Musa Ismail: Analiss Stilistika

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk-bentuk simile serta fungsi penggunaannya dalam novel *Salah Langkah* karya Musa Ismail. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan stilistika. Studi ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan yang menjadikan novel *Salah Langkah*—diterbitkan oleh Deepublish pada tahun 2022 dengan tebal 133 halaman—sebagai sumber data. Data penelitian berupa kata, frasa, klausa, kalimat, dan dialog yang mengandung simile. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik dokumentasi dengan membaca novel secara berulang, mengidentifikasi penanda perbandingan, serta mencatat kutipan yang relevan beserta konteksnya ke dalam tabel data. Bentuk-bentuk simile dianalisis menggunakan teori Keraf, sedangkan fungsi-fungsinya ditelaah berdasarkan lima fungsi bahasa menurut Leech. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan, mengikuti model Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat 159 penggunaan simile yang ditandai dengan kata-kata pembanding seperti *seperti, bagai, bagaikan, laksana, ibarat, seumpama, seolah-olah, merupai, macam, bak, layaknya*, dan *seakan-akan*. Analisis terhadap kutipan-kutipan yang disajikan mengungkapkan adanya fungsi informasional, ekspresif, dan estetis, baik yang muncul secara tunggal maupun kombinasi. Simile dalam novel ini cenderung mengambil perbandingan dari alam dan kehidupan sehari-hari untuk menggambarkan persoalan sosial-ekonomi serta pengalaman batin para tokoh. Perbandingan konkret ini menjadikan kondisi yang abstrak terasa lebih hidup dan mudah dipahami oleh pembaca. Dengan demikian, simile tidak hanya meningkatkan nilai estetis, tetapi juga memperjelas peristiwa naratif serta menyampaikan perasaan para tokoh.

Kata kunci: simile, fungsi simile, novel, analisis stilistika

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means through which humans communicate and convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Language plays a very important role in representing reality, developing thought processes, and understanding abstract ideas (Salis & Siagian, 2023). In literary works, language is not only used to convey a sequence of events; it is also selected and crafted in distinctive ways to construct meaning and aesthetic value. An author's linguistic choices can become a characteristic that distinguishes one work from another.

One important aspect of language use in literary works is style. Style is a distinctive characteristic of the way an individual or author processes words, selects sentences, and conveys thoughts and feelings in order to create particular effects. This view is in line with Haedariah et al. (2023), who state that style is the way an author conveys ideas or messages through the selection and use of aesthetically valuable language, thereby creating a distinctive and different impression for readers or listeners in literary works, with emphasis on aesthetic aspects and function.

Style is widely found in literary studies. The distinctive use of language can be examined through stylistics. Stylistics aims to examine and explain distinctive or unusual language use that is capable of producing particular effects, especially those related to beauty (Jadid et al., 2024). In other words, stylistics does not discuss language solely in terms of its function; it also investigates how authors use language creatively to produce aesthetic effects. Stylistics treats linguistic choices as objects of analysis in order to explain the relationship between linguistic forms and their functions in a text. One area that can be specifically analyzed is figurative language, namely the use of non-literal expressions as one form of an author's linguistic choices. Figurative language refers to the use of words or phrases that depart from their literal meanings in order to create emotional, aesthetic, and imaginative effects in literary works. According to Keraf (1991), figurative language initially developed to express comparison or similarity between two things. It makes language more vivid and less monotonous by comparing one thing with another, enabling readers or listeners to imagine more easily what the author intends to convey. In this study, figurative language is analyzed using Keraf's (1991) theory, but the discussion focuses on simile as a form of comparative figure of speech. The analysis is conducted by identifying comparative markers, the elements being compared, and the similarities in qualities or characteristics underlying the comparison. Each item is then analyzed in terms of its context of use to reveal the meaning and function of simile in constructing descriptions and linguistic beauty in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail.

Simile is a figure of speech that directly compares two things. The comparison is explicitly expressed through certain words, such as sama (same), bagaikan (like/as), seperti (like/as), or laksana (like/as), to indicate that one thing shares a similarity with another. This is consistent with the study by Rahayu et al. (2024), which states that simile is used to create more vivid and moving images in literary works. Simile helps readers understand the meanings and emotions that authors wish to convey through comparisons with other objects that are more concrete or easier to imagine. The study found that the use of simile can strengthen atmosphere, stimulate imagination, and create an emotional connection between readers and literary works. It can therefore be concluded that simile is characterized by a comparison between two different things using comparative markers. The comparison is based on similarities in certain qualities or characteristics between the thing being compared and the object used as a comparison. The use of simile can make the depiction of a quality or condition more concrete, clear, and easy for readers to imagine. One form of literary work that provides authors with a medium for expressing ideas, experiences, and imagination through language is the novel. As a prose literary work, a novel consists of interrelated

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elements that allow the author to develop a story and portray the lives of its characters.

As a work of narrative prose, a novel provides a broad context for the use of figurative language. A novel is a literary work born from an author's imagination and creative thought and expressed in written form (Rofiq & Munifah, 2022). Figurative language may appear in narration as well as dialogue and may relate to the portrayal of characters, atmosphere, conflict, imagery, evaluation, and the reinforcement of themes or messages. Therefore, research on figurative language in novels should not stop at listing types of figures of speech; it should also explain how these expressions function within the narrative structure. The novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail was selected as the research data source because various forms of figurative language have been identified in it, including simile, personification, and figures of speech involving irony or criticism. One example of a simile in the novel is the sentence "Negeri ini bagai jelapang padi" ("This country is like a rice granary"). In terms of form, the word bagai ("like") indicates a comparison between "this country" and "a rice granary," so the quotation can be classified as a simile. However, stylistic analysis does not stop at identifying this form. The quotation is worth further examination because the comparison used by the author can clarify the depiction of the country's condition while also creating a particular image for readers.

This study focuses on identifying and describing the forms of simile used by Musa Ismail in the novel Salah Langkah. Identification is carried out by examining words, phrases, clauses, or sentences that contain comparisons between two different things that share certain qualities, conditions, or characteristics. Similes are generally marked by comparative words such as bagai, seperti, laksana, ibarat, bak, and umpama.

Each item identified is then described based on the elements being compared, the aspect of similarity underlying the comparison, and the context in which it is used in the story. This description aims to explain how the author uses simile to create clearer images, strengthen the expression of the characters' experiences or feelings, and provide aesthetic value to the narrative. Thus, this study does not merely compile forms of simile; it also explains the characteristics of their use as part of the author's linguistic choices in the novel Salah Langkah.

This study is expected to contribute to the development of stylistic studies in Indonesian literature, particularly regarding the use of simile in novels. It is also expected to broaden understanding of the forms of simile and their use in creating beauty and distinctive language in literary works, enrich scholarly references, and serve as a basis for further research. Practically, this study is expected to serve as a reference for future researchers interested in stylistics, particularly simile in literary works, and as a comparison for similar studies with different objects and research focuses. For readers, this study is expected to help them understand the forms of simile used in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail while increasing their appreciation of the beauty of literary language. For university students, this study is expected to broaden their knowledge of stylistic studies and assist them in identifying, classifying, and describing simile in literary works. For teachers, the findings are expected to provide supporting material for Indonesian language learning, particularly lessons on figures of speech and literary appreciation, enabling students to recognize the use of simile, understand the comparative relationships constructed, and improve their ability to analyze linguistic elements in literary works.

The theoretical review in this study is organized around the relationship between stylistics, style, and figurative language. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that studies language use, particularly style, in producing particular functions in a text. According to Wellek and Warren (1989), stylistic research is conducted by examining various distinctive linguistic features through comparisons between one language system and another. Stylistic research does not stop at

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identifying linguistic forms; it also involves comparative and functional analyses in order to produce a systematic and in-depth study of style in literary works. Furthermore, Leech and Short (2007) explain that stylistics is the study of style, intended to describe language use while demonstrating the relationship between language use and the aesthetic value it produces. Stylistics serves as a link between linguistic aspects and beauty in literary works. In line with this view, Tarigan (2023) explains that stylistics is used to examine the reasons why an author chooses particular language forms or diction in the work being created. Stylistics aims to reveal the reasons, functions, and effects of an author's linguistic choices, thereby helping readers understand literary works more deeply, both in terms of language and function. Therefore, in this study, stylistics is understood as an approach used to examine an author's linguistic choices in literary works, including style.

Style is the way a person expresses thoughts and feelings through distinctive language use. Such use aims to create particular effects so that the message conveyed becomes clearer, more precise, and easier to understand (Budi et al., 2023). Style is not merely a matter of word choice; it is a particular way in which someone conveys thoughts and feelings. Aditya et al. (2026) explain that style not only serves to provide aesthetic beauty for readers but also carries deeper meaning and serves as a means for authors to convey ideas and feelings in distinctive and creative ways. Every author has their own way of choosing diction, constructing sentences, and using style. In stylistic studies, style is one linguistic aspect that can be analyzed to understand how an author's language choices are used to construct meaning and particular effects in literary works. Thus, stylistics functions as an approach to studying style, while style is the form of language use that becomes the object of that study.

Style has various forms of use, one of which is figurative language. In stylistic studies, figurative language refers to the use of non-literal language to convey thoughts, feelings, and messages in a more vivid, imaginative, and meaningful way. According to Keraf (1991), figurative language initially developed to express comparison or similarity between two things. It makes language more vivid and less monotonous by comparing one thing with another, enabling readers or listeners to imagine more easily what the author intends to convey. In line with this view, Laia and Pratama (2023) explain that figurative language is specifically used to convey thoughts and feelings indirectly or metaphorically. It can therefore be concluded that figurative language is the use of non-literal language to convey thoughts, feelings, and messages in a more vivid, imaginative, and meaningful way. In this study, Keraf's (1991) theory is used as the basis for analyzing the forms of figurative language.

According to Keraf (1991), comparison or simile is a figure of speech that directly compares two things. The comparison is explicitly expressed through certain words, such as sama (same), bagaikan (like/as), seperti (like/as), or laksana (like/as), to indicate that one thing shares a similarity with another. This is consistent with the study by Rahayu et al. (2024), which states that simile is used to create more vivid and moving images in literary works. Simile helps readers understand the meanings and emotions that authors wish to convey through comparisons with other objects that are more concrete or easier to imagine. Simile is characterized by a comparison between two different things using comparative markers. The comparison is based on similarities in certain qualities or characteristics between the thing being compared and the comparison object. The use of simile can make the depiction of a quality or condition more concrete, clear, and easy for readers to imagine.

In addition to its forms and characteristics of use, simile also needs to be examined in terms of the functions it contains. According to Leech (1981), there are five language functions: informational, expressive, directive, aesthetic, and phatic. The informational function relates to conveying information or describing characters,

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events, conditions, and situations in a story. The expressive function concerns the expression of feelings, attitudes, and emotional states of characters or the narrator. The directive function aims to influence the attitudes or actions of the addressee through invitations, requests, advice, prohibitions, or commands. The aesthetic function relates to creating beauty, distinctiveness, and imaginative power in storytelling, while the phatic function serves to maintain communication, build familiarity, and sustain social relationships among characters. These five functions are used as the basis for analyzing the role of simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail, taking into account the context of each quotation.

Relevant previous research was conducted by Aditya et al. (2026) in a study entitled "Comparative Figures of Speech and Their Functions in the Novel 3726 MDPL by Nurwina Sari." The study identified 53 data units of comparative figures of speech, consisting of 24 metaphors, 20 instances of personification, and seven similes.

Furthermore, Amelia & Rakhman (2024), in their study "Analysis of Figures of Speech in the Novel Kembang NU Dipitineung by Tety S. Nataprawira (A Stylistic Study)," identified eight similes, one metaphor, 14 instances of personification, and 13 instances of metonymy.

Meanwhile, Ramadhan & Fatinova (2024), in their study "Personification and Metaphor in the Poetry Anthology Aurora by Eva Dwi Kurniawan (A Stylistic Study)," showed that personification was used more dominantly than metaphor. These three studies share a focus on examining style in literary works through a stylistic approach. The difference lies in the focus of the present study, which specifically analyzes the forms and functions of simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail based on Keraf's and Leech's theories.

Thus, the stylistic analysis of the quotation is conducted by identifying simile markers and examining the comparative relationships constructed. Based on the discussion above, this study examines simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail through a stylistic approach. The research focuses on two aspects: the forms of figurative language based on Keraf's (1991) classification and the textual functions of figurative language use.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a stylistic approach. Fraenkel et al. (2012), Razak (2017), Abubakar (2021), the qualitative descriptive method is commonly used in various types of research, including in the humanities. The descriptive qualitative method is used to describe and interpret the use of simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail. The research data consist of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and dialogues containing similes. The data source is the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail, published by Deepublish in 2022 and comprising 133 pages. The analysis of simile forms is based on Keraf's (1991) theory, while the analysis of their functions refers to the five language functions proposed by Leech (1981), namely informational, expressive, directive, aesthetic, and phatic functions.

The data collection technique used in this study is documentation. Data were collected by reading the novel carefully and repeatedly, identifying comparative markers, and recording quotations containing similes along with their page numbers and contexts of use. The collected data were then analyzed through three stages based on the model of Miles & Huberman (1994): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. At the reduction stage, data were selected and focused on quotations containing similes. The data were then presented and analyzed based on the characteristics of simile according to Keraf (1991) and their functions according to Leech (1981). Finally, conclusions were drawn, and the quotations, classifications, and analysis results were rechecked for consistency with the story context and the theoretical foundations used.

RESULTS

Based on the identification and classification of data in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail,

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159 instances were identified as similes. This figure of speech is used to compare one thing with another that shares certain qualities, conditions, forms, or characteristics. The use of simile in the novel is marked by comparative words such as seperti, bagai, bagaikan, laksana, ibarat, seumpama, bak, layaknya, and seakan-akan. Of all the data identified, the quotations presented in the following table are the result of data reduction and were selected to represent the use of simile in the novel. This article presents 12 selected quotations as examples of simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail. The selection of these quotations aims to show the variation in comparative markers, the relationships between the elements being compared, and the functions of simile based on the story context. Thus, the following table does not contain all the research data; rather, it presents selected quotations to provide an overview of simile in the novel. The following discussion focuses on analyzing the forms and functions of the quotations presented.

Quotion-1: Aesthetic Function

"Mengapa minyak kosong di ladangnya *seperti* ayam mati di lumbung padi saja." (Ismail, 2022:2) [Why is the empty oil in the fields like dead chickens in the rice barn]

Quotion-2: Informationa Function

"Negeri ini *bagai* jelapang padi." (Ismail, 2022:2) [This country is like rice fields]

Quotion-3: Aesthetic and informational Function

"Beberapa restoran di Kota Pantai beterbangan dibantai bom *bagaikan* kapas putih ditiup puting beliung." (Ismail, 2022:51) [Several restaurants in Beach City were blown up by bombs like white cotton blown by a tornado]

Quotion-4: Aesthetic and informational Function

"Tawa para wartawan berderai *bak* hujan panas di tengah hari gat-gat." (Ismail, 2022:63) [The journalists' laughter sounded like hot rain in the middle of the day]

Quotion-5: Expressive and aesthetic Function

"Mengenang-ngenang masa lalu, perasaan Tuan Sulaiman begitu pedih *laksana* luka yang disiram dengan air limau kasturi." (Ismail, 2022:68) [Reminiscing about the past, Mr Sulaiman's feelings were as painful as a wound doused with musk lime juice]

Quotion-6: Informational and aesthetic Function

"Di mukanya, ada goresan lelah. Ada lukisan penat yang berkecai-berai *ibarat* sobekan kertas yang tidak beraturan." (Ismail, 2022:47) [On his face, there were tired scratches. There were tired paintings that were scattered like random pieces of paper.]

Quotion-7: Expressive and aesthetic Function

"Melihat ceceran darah itu, rasanya *seumpama* luka yang disiram dengan air perasan jeruk kasturi." (Ismail, 2022:51) [Seeing the blood splattered, it felt like a wound that had been doused with musk lime juice.]

Quotion-8: Expressive and aesthetic Function

"Kini, kedua adik-beradik itu yang duduk tercakang *seakan-akan* dua gundukan batu besar yang sedang diterpa deburan gelombang secara bergantian, berulang-ulang." (Ismail, 2022:47) [Now, the two brothers are sitting on their backs as if two large piles of rocks are being hit by the waves alternately, over and over again]

Quotion-9: Informational and aesthetic Function

"...orang tua malang tersebut masuk ke rumah dan diletakkan di pembaringan *seolah-olah* sebarisan semut hitam yang sedang menggotong sebutir gula pasir." (Ismail, 2022:71) […the poor old man came into the house and was laid out on his bed as if a line of black ants were carrying a grain of sugar]

Quotion-10: Informational and aesthetic Function

"Badai itu *merupai* berbagai gambaran; hinaan, rasuah, persekongkolan gelap,

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nepotisme, utang, krisis, dan segala macam." (Ismail, 2022:14) [The storm takes various forms; insults, corruption, dark conspiracies, nepotism, debt, crisis, and all kinds.]

Quotion-11: Expressive and aesthetic Function

"Di luar, persahabatan dan kasih sayang menjadi liar *layaknya* kehidupan binatang di rimba raya." (Ismail, 2022:58) [Outside, friendship and affection run wild like the life of animals in the jungle.]

Quotion-12: Informational and aesthetic Function

"Hanya beberapa kendaraan yang tampak merayap *macam* barisan semut yang sedang bergotong-royong membawa seongkah rezeki untuk menghidupi hari-hari mereka." (Ismail, 2022:112) [Only a few vehicles were seen crawling like a line of ants working together to bring a piece of good fortune to support their days.]

DISCUSSION

1. "Mengapa minyak kosong di ladangnya *seperti* ayam mati di lumbung padi saja"

The quotation "Mengapa minyak kosong di ladangnya seperti ayam mati di lumbung padi saja" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail illustrates the disparity between natural resource wealth and the reality faced by society. The difficulty of obtaining oil is likened to a chicken dead in a rice barn, a condition in which something is surrounded by abundant resources but cannot benefit from them. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different conditions through the comparative marker seperti. The two conditions share a similarity: the contradiction between resource availability and the inability to obtain its benefits. This comparison makes an abstract issue more concrete and easier for readers to imagine, while strengthening the criticism of the gap between natural wealth and the fulfillment of society's needs. In terms of function, the quotation has an aesthetic function according to Leech's (1981) theory because the idea is conveyed through an imaginative and expressive comparison. The image of a chicken dead in a rice barn creates a more tangible contrast between abundance and the inability to benefit from resources, making the issue more powerful and memorable.

2. "Negeri ini *bagai* jelapang padi"

The quotation "Negeri ini bagai jelapang padi" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts a country rich in natural resources. A rice granary is a place for storing rice and represents an abundance of harvests. Through this comparison, the author emphasizes the country's great wealth potential, although such potential does not necessarily guarantee that society's needs are met. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it compares the country with a rice granary through the comparative marker bagai. The two are connected by a shared meaning, namely an abundance of resources or supplies. This simile helps readers imagine the country's wealth through the concrete image of a rice granary while clarifying the contrast between its wealth potential and the reality faced by society. In terms of function, the quotation has an informational function according to Leech's (1981) theory because it conveys a description of the country's condition through a comparison related to the central issue of the story. The image of a rice granary helps readers understand that the country possesses abundant wealth, although its people may not necessarily be able to enjoy it.

3. "Beberapa restoran di Kota Pantai beterbangan dibantai bom *bagaikan* kapas putih ditiup puting beliung"

The quotation "Beberapa restoran di Kota Pantai beterbangan dibantai bom bagaikan kapas putih ditiup puting beliung" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the destruction of restaurants caused by bombing. This condition is compared to white cotton scattering when struck by a whirlwind to emphasize the force of the bomb blasts and the extent of the resulting damage. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it compares the destruction of the

restaurants with white cotton blown by a whirlwind through the comparative marker bagaikan. The two are connected by a similar image: something being scattered by a powerful force. This comparison helps readers imagine the destruction more concretely and dramatically. In terms of function, based on Leech's (1981) theory, the aesthetic function can be seen in the distinctive expression used to depict the scene, while the quotation also has an informational function because it conveys the condition of the restaurants after the bombing. The comparison with white cotton blown by a whirlwind not only informs readers that the restaurants were destroyed but also clarifies the magnitude of the blast's impact.

4. "Tawa para wartawan berderai *bak* hujan panas di tengah hari gat-gat"

The quotation "Tawa para wartawan berderai bak hujan panas di tengah hari gat-gat" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the journalists' reaction as they laugh at the behavior of a man they find amusing. The laughter is expressed through the phrase tawa berderai, which creates an image of laughter that is uninhibited and spreads widely. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it compares the journalists' laughter with hot rain through the comparative marker bak. The two things are different but are connected through a distinctive depiction of a condition. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has both aesthetic and informational functions. The aesthetic function is evident in the distinctive expression bak hujan panas di tengah hari, which gives the depiction of the journalists' laughter a particular quality. Meanwhile, the informational function is apparent in the description of the journalists laughing in response to the man's behavior.

5. "Mengenang-ngenang masa lalu, perasaan Tuan Sulaiman begitu pedih *laksana* luka yang disiram dengan air limau kasturi"

The quotation "Mengenang-ngenang masa lalu, perasaan Tuan Sulaiman begitu pedih laksana luka yang disiram dengan air limau kasturi" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the inner suffering experienced by Mr. Sulaiman when recalling his past. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker laksana. The elements being compared are the pain Mr. Sulaiman feels when remembering the past and the pain of a wound doused with calamansi juice. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has expressive and aesthetic functions, with the expressive function being dominant. The expressive function is evident in the depiction of Mr. Sulaiman's inner suffering as he recalls the past. The expression begitu pedih laksana luka yang disiram dengan air limau kasturi emphasizes the intensity of the character's feelings through an image of physical pain. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the comparison between inner suffering and a wound doused with calamansi juice. This comparison creates a concrete and imaginative image, making the character's emotional experience stronger and more profound for readers.

6. "Di mukanya, ada goresan lelah. Ada lukisan penat yang berkecai-berai *ibarat* sobekan kertas yang tidak beraturan"

The quotation "Di mukanya, ada goresan lelah. Ada lukisan penat yang berkecai-berai ibarat sobekan kertas yang tidak beraturan" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts a person who appears extremely tired and weary. The expressions goresan lelah and lukisan penat yang berkecai-berai show how the author portrays exhaustion through the character's facial expression. This condition is then clarified through a comparison with irregular scraps of paper. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker ibarat. The elements being compared are the depiction of fatigue on the character's face and irregular scraps of paper. They have different characteristics but are connected through a visual impression of disorder. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has informational and aesthetic

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functions. The informational function is evident in the description of the character's visibly tired and exhausted condition through his facial expression. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the figurative and imaginative expression lukisan penat yang berkecai-berai ibarat sobekan kertas yang tidak beraturan.

7. "Melihat ceceran darah itu, rasanya *seumpama* luka yang disiram dengan air perasan jeruk kasturi"

The quotation "Melihat ceceran darah itu, rasanya seumpama luka yang disiram dengan air perasan jeruk kasturi" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the anguish that arises when someone witnesses scattered blood following a bombing. In the context of the story, the bombing in Kota Pantai damages restaurants and causes casualties, leaving blood scattered around. This situation illustrates the effects of violence not only in the form of physical destruction but also as a painful experience for those who witness it. The anguish is expressed through a comparison with a wound doused with calamansi juice, which can cause a stinging sensation when it comes into contact with an open wound. This image of physical pain helps readers imagine the intensity of the anguish felt when seeing the aftermath of the bombing. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker seumpama. The elements being compared are the feeling experienced when seeing scattered blood and the stinging pain of a wound doused with calamansi juice. These are different experiences, but they are connected by the similarity of the painful sensation they produce. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has expressive and aesthetic functions. The expressive function is evident in the expression rasanya seumpama luka yang disiram dengan air perasan jeruk kasturi, which reveals an emotional response to the sight of scattered blood. The comparison with a stinging wound intensifies the expression of anguish that arises when witnessing the aftermath of the bombing. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the comparison that connects an emotional experience with a concrete physical sensation.

8. "Kini, kedua adik-beradik itu yang duduk tercakang *seakan-akan* dua gundukan batu besar yang sedang diterpa deburan gelombang secara bergantian, berulang-ulang"

The quotation "Kini, kedua adik-beradik itu yang duduk tercakang seakan-akan dua gundukan batu besar yang sedang diterpa deburan gelombang secara bergantian, berulang-ulang" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the confusion and inner pressure experienced by Sanah and Nahar when facing a difficult choice. In the context of the story, they must consider an assignment to Bali while also thinking about Emak, who is being treated in hospital. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker seakan-akan. Sanah and Nahar's condition is compared to two large mounds of rock being struck by waves alternately and repeatedly. Sanah and Nahar are human beings facing a dilemma, whereas the mounds of rock are inanimate objects depicted as continually receiving the impact of waves. The two are connected through the image of something motionless and pressure that occurs repeatedly. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has expressive and aesthetic functions. The expressive function is evident in the depiction of Sanah and Nahar's confusion and inner pressure as they weigh the assignment to Bali against their mother's condition in hospital. The comparison with mounds of rock repeatedly struck by waves portrays the two characters as sitting silently amid problems that continue to burden their thoughts. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the use of natural imagery to convey the characters' emotional states imaginatively. The image of mounds of rock and crashing waves gives a distinctive quality to the expression of inner conflict because the characters' pressure is conveyed through a natural event rather than merely through a direct statement of their confusion.

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9. "...orang tua malang tersebut masuk ke rumah dan diletakkan di pembaringan *seolah-olah* sebarisan semut hitam yang sedang menggotong sebutir gula pasir"

The quotation "...orang tua malang tersebut masuk ke rumah dan diletakkan di pembaringan seolah-olah sebarisan semut hitam yang sedang menggotong sebutir gula pasir" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts the neighbors' cooperative efforts to help Mr. Sulaiman. In the context of the story, the neighbors arrive at Mr. Sulaiman's house and work together to carry him inside and lay him on a bed before taking him to the hospital, as suggested by the residents. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker seolah-olah. The neighbors' act of carrying Mr. Sulaiman is compared to a line of black ants carrying a grain of sugar. The neighbors are people carrying someone in order to help him, whereas ants are insects that carry food together. Although they are different, both share the characteristic of collective action to move something. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has informational and aesthetic functions. The informational function is evident in the description of the neighbors working together to bring Mr. Sulaiman into the house and lay him on a bed. Through this depiction, readers receive information about the assistance provided by residents to someone in need. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the comparison with a line of black ants carrying a grain of sugar. This image gives a distinctive quality to the author's depiction of the residents' actions because human cooperation is portrayed through ants carrying food together.

10. "Badai itu *merupai* berbagai gambaran; hinaan, rasuah, persekongkolan gelap, nepotisme, utang, krisis, dan segala macam"

The quotation "Badai itu merupai berbagai gambaran; hinaan, rasuah, persekongkolan gelap, nepotisme, utang, krisis, dan segala macam" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts various problems that overwhelm the lives of Wak Leman and Nahar. In the context of the story, these problems include insults, corruption, dark conspiracies, nepotism, debt, and crises, which together create pressure in their lives. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation can be categorized as a simile because it uses the comparative word merupai (resembles) to connect a storm with the various problems listed, such as insults, corruption, dark conspiracies, nepotism, debt, and crises. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has informational and aesthetic functions. The informational function is evident in the mention of various problems, which provides a picture of the sources of pressure in the characters' lives. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the use of the word badai (storm) as a figurative image that encompasses these various problems. This expression creates the impression that problems arrive one after another and shake the stability of the characters' lives.

11. "Di luar, persahabatan dan kasih sayang menjadi liar *layaknya* kehidupan binatang di rimba raya"

The quotation "Di luar, persahabatan dan kasih sayang menjadi liar layaknya kehidupan binatang di rimba raya" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail reflects the perspective of a man who feels that relationships among people outside the place where he lives have lost their warmth and sincerity. In the context of the story, the man feels more comfortable living in that place because he still experiences care and social interaction that he cannot find in life outside it. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker layaknya. The elements being compared are friendship and affection in social life and the lives of animals in the wilderness. Friendship and affection are forms of human relationships, whereas the lives of animals in the wilderness depict life in the wild. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has expressive and aesthetic functions. The expressive function is evident in the expression persahabatan dan kasih sayang menjadi liar (friendship and affection become wild), which reflects the

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character's critical judgment and disappointment toward social relationships outside his environment. This view shows that the character believes friendship and affection have lost their sincerity when personal interests become more prominent than concern for others. Meanwhile, the aesthetic function appears in the comparison between human social life and the lives of animals in the wilderness. This expression gives a distinctive quality to the author's criticism because issues in human relationships are depicted through the image of wild life.

12. "Hanya beberapa kendaraan yang tampak merayap *macam* barisan semut yang sedang bergotong-royong membawa seongkah rezeki untuk menghidupi hari-hari mereka"

The quotation "Hanya beberapa kendaraan yang tampak merayap macam barisan semut yang sedang bergotong-royong membawa seongkah rezeki untuk menghidupi hari-hari mereka" in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail depicts light traffic, with only a few vehicles moving slowly. The movement of these vehicles is compared to a line of ants walking together to carry food. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, the quotation is a simile because it explicitly compares two different things through the comparative marker macam. The movement of several vehicles is compared to a line of ants working together to carry a morsel of sustenance. Vehicles are means of transportation moving along the road, whereas ants are insects that walk in groups to carry food. According to Leech's (1981) theory, the quotation has informational and aesthetic functions. The informational function is evident in the depiction of light traffic and the slow movement of several vehicles. The expression membawa seongkah rezeki untuk menghidupi hari-hari mereka (carrying a morsel of sustenance to support their daily lives) also creates an image of efforts to meet the needs of life.

CONCLUSION

The use of simile in the novel Salah Langkah by Musa Ismail demonstrates various forms of comparison employed by the author to depict conditions and experiences in the story. Based on Keraf's (1991) theory, simile is used to explicitly compare two different things through comparative markers such as seperti, bagai, bagaikan, laksana, ibarat, seumpama, bak, layaknya, and seakan-akan. A distinctive feature of simile in this novel is its depiction of social and economic issues, such as the gap between natural resource wealth and society's needs, destruction caused by violence, and various pressures of life. In addition, simile is used to portray the characters' inner experiences, including suffering, exhaustion, confusion, and disappointment with human relationships. The author tends to use comparisons drawn from nature and everyday life to create images that are more tangible, imaginative, and easy for readers to understand. Meanwhile, based on Leech's (1981) theory, analysis of the excerpts presented reveals informational, expressive, and aesthetic functions. Directive and phatic functions, on the other hand, were not identified in the simile excerpts. The use of two functions in a simile quotation shows that simile does not merely beautify language; it also conveys information, expresses the characters' feelings and attitudes, and strengthens the depiction of events and issues in the story. Thus, the use of simile is one of Musa Ismail's linguistic choices for expressing social issues and human experiences more vividly and strengthening the expressive power of the novel Salah Langkah.

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