

# Walt Whitman's Poem *I Hear America Singing*: A Study of Michael Riffaterre's Semiotics

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**Abstract:-** The object of this research was Walt Whitman's poem, entitled *I Hear America Singing*. The object will be analyzed through theory of Michael Riffaterre's theory using a descriptive qualitative method. It means the method of collecting data will be collected by analyzing, interpreting, and describing the theories contained in the poem. There were four concepts contained in Michael Riffaterre's theory: The first was indirection expression included the displacing, distorting, and the creating the meaning. It discussed figurative language such as personification, metaphor, and also the structure of verse. The second, heuristic and hermeneutic readings that have a relation with reading a verse based on language convention and overall rereading with interpretation. The third was the matrix, model, and variant. The last was the intertextual relationship. It can be concluded that the poem based on the analysis of *I Hear America Singing* described the equality and diversity of each individual regardless of profession, age, and gender.

**Keywords:-** Poetry, Semiotics, Riffaterre's Theory.

## I. INTRODUCTION

No one has been able to clearly define the definition and the meaning of literature up to now. It does not mean that scholars fail to provide definitions to literature, but when they try to define literary definitions, there are various attacks, oppositions, doubts, or proven inadequacies because they only emphasize one or a few aspects, or turn out to only apply to certain literature. As an ordinary person, the word of literature concerns a work that emphasizes the beauty of the language in it.

Literature is the result of human creativity based on spontaneous emotional outbursts capable of expressing both aesthetic and meaningful aspects[1]. Here, as a product of human imagination, there are many branches of literature, such as drama, music, and prose. In this research, the researcher will discuss and focus on poetry. Poetry is one of the human works that can make readers or listeners feel a certain atmosphere that was deliberately created by the author.

It depends on the genre of the author or the orientation of the poem itself.

Poetry always develops from the past to the present. Therefore, the definition of poetry also from time to time always changes even though the essence remains the same. The change in understanding is due to poetry always evolving changes in the concept of beauty and the evolution of tastes [2]. Poetry is a branch of literature that uses words as a delivery medium to produce illusions and imaginations, as well as paintings that use lines and colors in describing the ideas of painters. Because poetry uses language as its medium, the poet and the reader must understand well the language used, so that the message that the author wants to convey can be conveyed in entirety to the reader. The language used in poetry might be seen in the aspect of stylistics [3]. The term "poem" is sometimes used to refer to a single work of art. Poetry is a collection of poems. In other words, it's a phrase that refers to a collection of individual poems. While there is a distinction between poem and poetry, the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably. A poem is a written work, while poetry is a literary medium. A poem is a written piece, while poetry is an art form.

A poem is a system of signs that have meaning. The poem will be meaningful if the reader has lots of experience. In analyzing a poem, we must apprehend first the structure displayed, as well as the style of language that the author uses in composing words in each stanza so that the significance can be obtained optimally[4]. In analyzing the poem structures, the structuralism approach can be employed. In literary theory, a structuralism approach is an approach that analyzes the structure of meaningful signs. As for analyzing the significance of a poem, the semiotic approach proposed by Michael Riffaterre can be employed. The emphasis of Michael Riffaterre's theory concerning literary work is the understanding of the significance of the literary work itself through the sign.

In Riffaterre's semiotics theory, there are some stages in finding the significance or in other words, not only the hermeneutic meaning. These steps are finding the indirection expression, heuristics and hermeneutics reading, finding

models, matrix, variants, and hypograms or intertextual relationship [2]. Thus, the significance of the poem will be clear.

The poem that the researcher would like to analyze is Walt Whitman's poem. As we know, he is one of America's great writers of the romantic era who gained popularity in the 19th century. He was born on May 30, 1819, in West Hill, New York, and died on March 26, 1892, in Camden, New Jersey. Whitman is often dubbed "the first American poet" because of his works which are rich in local American nuances, both in terms of the themes presented and the diction used. In this research, the researcher would like to analyze the poem of Walt Whitman entitled *I Hear America Singing* by using Michael Riffaterre's theory to reveal the significance of the poem.

Some previous researchers have analyzed Walt Whitman's selected poem in some ways. First, Obeso [5] entitled *Sexuality Concerning Homosexual Standpoints in Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"*. This aims at finding the sexuality concerning homosexual standpoints in the text.

The next previous research is from Kareem and Muhammed [6] entitled *An Analysis of Autobiographical Elements in Walt Whitman's Selected Poems*. This study exposes the similarity between Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare works, especially in literary creation. Also, it reveals his belief in Democracy and the girl, as well as Morale.

There have also been many studies that used Riffaterre's theory as the basis for evaluating the study object. One of them is the research of Kuma [7] entitled *Heuristic and Hermeneutic Readings on Robert Frost's Selected Poems*. Via heuristic and hermeneutic reading, the matrix and model operate on Frost's chosen poems, and the intertextual relationship between Frost's selected poems and other writers' work, this research aims to discover the meaning of Frost's selected poems.

From the third research above, the present researcher attempts to analyze the poem of Walt Whitman entitled *I Hear America Singing* by employing Riffaterre's theory. This research aims to reveal the significance of the poem conveyed by Walt Whitman through Riffaterre's theory.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978) book, Michael Riffaterre declares a coherent and relatively simple description of the structure of meaning in a poem. With that statement, it is clear that Riffaterre approaches poetry, especially the meaning of poetry with a structural approach. Because he attempts to interpret the meaning of poetry, his approach can also be called a semiotic-structural approach. It is called a semiotic approach because poetry tends to be understood as a system of meaning and called a structural approach because the meaning system is structurally formed. On the basis of semiotic perspective, Riffaterre elucidates four essential rules for conveying the meaning and significance of a poem:

indirection language, heuristic and hermeneutic reading, matrix and model, and intertextuality.

### A. Indirection

A poem, as one of the literary works with descriptive language, necessitates more effort to comprehend than a short story, novel, or drama script with narrative language. The formula of poem is changeable time by time due to the evolution of tastes and aesthetic concepts that always change from period to period [2]. However, Riffaterre says that although poem is changeable, one constant is that a poem communicates ideas and things by indirection.

The indirection in a poem is caused by three factors, they are displacing meaning, distorting meaning, and creating meaning. Riffaterre [2] states that "there are three possible ways for semantic indirection to occur. Indirection is produced by displacing, distorting, and creating meaning.

- Displacing meaning

We can view the appearance of displacing meaning by notice the use of figurative language in it. Riffaterre says that displacing, when sign shifts from one meaning to another, when the word "stand for" another, as happened with metaphor and also metonymy [2].

A name, phrase, or sentence that uses figurative language. For example, the word "red" has always been associated with "bravery." The use of metaphor and metonymy causes this shifting or displacing of context. Metaphor and metonymy are terms used to describe figurative language in general. There are many forms of figurative language, all of which may add interest to a poem by establishing a connection between two or more things. Figurative language is divided into seven categories. Personification, metonymy, synecdoche, and allegory are examples of simile, metaphor, and epic simile [8].

- Distorting Meaning

Michael Riffaterre explains that Where there is uncertainty, contradiction, or nonsense, distorting occurs. The presence of uncertainty, contradiction, and nonsense in a poem are all factors that contribute to indirection in a poem.

- Creating meaning

This happens when Textual acts as an organizing concept for creating a sign out of linguistics objects that would otherwise be meaningless. The example of creating meaning is rhyme, enjambement, homologue, and typography. Rhyme is the sound repeating to make the music in a poem. Enjambement is the line in a poem which directly connected with the next line of its poem. Homologue is the position of similarity in a stanza of a poem. Typography is the surface system or writing arrangement.

### B. Heuristic and Hermeneutic (Retroactive) Readings

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intentional, since they are based on requirements that treat the paper as a component of the entire proceedings rather than a stand-alone text. Please don't change any of the existing names.

Riffaterre says that sometimes a poem refers to one thing to express another thing that may be different from the thing mentioned. So that is why the reader needs harder effort to find out what is meant behind the text of the poem. There are two types of reading to get the meaning of the poem. They are heuristic and hermeneutic or retroactive reading.

Heuristic reading is called a reading action to obtain the meaning based on the structure in language or the reading process to get the meaning based on the semiotics' system convention in the first level. In this step, every word is considered as a referent. Then the hermeneutic or retroactive reading is the reading process to get the meaning based on the literature convention or the semiotics' system convention in the second level.

### C. Matrix and Model

Riffaterre explains that understanding a poem has the similarity with the view of doughnut. There is a hole in the middle of the doughnut to strengthen its shapes as a doughnut. The hole also appears as certain the characteristics of the doughnut itself which can distinguish it from another kind of bread or cake. This also happens in a poem. In a poem, the hole in the center of meaning is called *matrix*. Matrix does not exist in a text, but the actualization of its named *model* appears in the text. Matrix can be in one word or phrase.

The model can be a word or certain lines in a poem that has uniqueness or poetics. Those uniqueness and poetics sense in the certain lines in a poem can differ these lines with another line in the whole poem. So, a matrix is the generator of a text, and a model is a way to get and develop. Therefore, the theory of Michael Riffaterre as the tool in this research expecting can give some help to the researcher to reveal the whole and complete significance of Walt Whitman's selected poems.

The previous explanation told the reader that literary works especially poem grows and develops by the development of time. This statement implies that before the present-day poem exists, there is the previous poem precede it. Further, those literary works come from the author, and the author himself comes from the society with kind of things around it, such as culture, religion, the historical background and so on. Because culture and language are inseparable. They are expressions of social and people behavior [9]. The author does not write the literary works accidentally. Teeuw [10] states that "literary work always lay between the convention and the revolution, between the old and the new one".

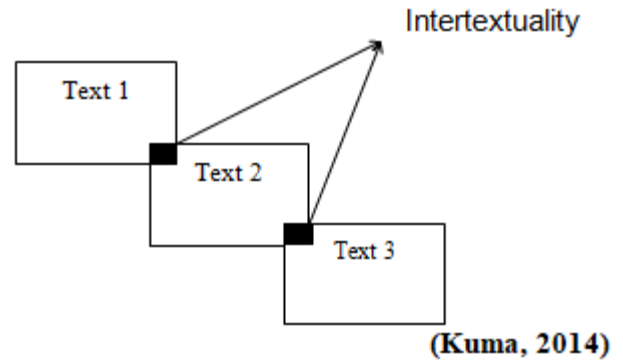


Figure 1. Intertextuality

There is a certain relationship between one text to another text that influences one another. It is named intertextuality. A literary work may appear as a response to another text. The response may support the other texts or even stands in the opposite line from the previous text. Riffaterre names it as hypogram. Next, Riffaterre states that the reader will get the significance of a literary work in its relationship or contradiction with another text. This is the concept of intertextuality which is explained by Riffaterre. In this case, the reader should understand that the text is not only the written or spoken text, but here text is the general thing in the universe. That is why the literary work may not be separated from other texts in understanding it. Therefore, in revealing the significance of a literary work, the reader should pay attention to another text that supports its appearances.

## III. RESEARCH METHOD

### A. Research Design

The type of this research is a descriptive qualitative, which is a research procedure that produces data in words rather than numbers as the result of it. The qualitative research tradition focuses on the application of implicit knowledge (intuitive or feeling) because sometimes, this is the only way to appreciate the nuance of various realities.

The design of this research purposes at revealing the truth or meaning that is implied behind the poems as the object of this research. This research focuses on the deep comprehension of the interaction between one to another concept which is analyzed empirically and transforms it to words as the system of sign that can give us more comprehensive understanding. Then the approach used in this research is the approach of Michael Riffaterre's theory. In this case, the semiotic of poetry theory by Michael Riffaterre above is expected to be able to explain the meaning even a new meaning in several poems of Walt Whitman.

### B. Source of Data

This study's data is split into two parts. There are two types of data: main and secondary. The primary data or the main data are all words, lines, and stanzas in the poem of Walt Whitman, entitled I Hear America Singing. The secondary data is references and all information that has relation to this research which collected from other sources, such as book, internet, thesis, journal, article, and other sources.

### C. Method of Collecting Data

This study's data collection approach is to collect and accumulate data that is important to the study. The following are the three steps in gathering data for this study:

- **Technique of Reading**

In this stage, the researcher has to read the poem of Walt Whitman which is going to be analyzed.

- **Technique of Noting**

After researchers have finished reading, make a note or write down something that pertains to the research subject. They end words, phrases, and stanzas in Walt Whitman's poem, which is the main source of data.

- **Technique of Choosing**

This technique is done by choosing the indirection expression and the matrix, model, and variant on Walt Whitman's poem.

### D. Research Instrument

This research instrument is a human instrument. The poem is I Hear America Singing by Walt Whitman will be analyzed by the descriptive qualitative method using Riffaterre's semiotic approach. The supporting instruments in this study are a laptop, flash disk, book, pen, dictionary, and printer.

### E. The technique of Analyzing Data

The researcher takes several steps to collect and analyze data in order to find answers to the above-mentioned problem statement:

- **Display**

It makes the relationship between one data to another data to get the relevant relation of the whole data and get the meaning of these poems.

- **Interpreting**

It is to interpret the selected poems of Walt Whitman through heuristic and hermeneutic reading, to find out the indirection expression, and to find out the model, matrix, and variant contained in Walt Whitman's selected poems.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study's review of Whitman's selected poems was based on Michael Riffaterre's semiotic poetry theory. The meaning of the poem can be revealed using four concepts. This study's review of Whitman's selected poems was based on Michael Riffaterre's semiotic poetry theory. The meaning of the poem can be revealed using four concepts.

### A. Indirection Expression

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### 1) Displacing Meaning.

According to Riffaterre, the displacing meaning is caused by the use of figures of speech, such as simile, metaphor, personification, allegory, metonymy, synecdoche, and epic simile. The use of figures of speech is a tool for acquiring a poetic effect in poetry. In this displacing meaning, a word or sign has another meaning (not according to the real meaning). In the poem, *I Hear America Singing*, it can be found in several figurative languages.

#### a) Metonymy

*"I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,"*

In the first line, the word varied carols is the metonymy of the Christmas song. Carol is a happy song derived from the French words carole and Latin carula. Carol was performed with a happy tone accompanied by a circular dance. Carol is better known as the joyful song sung when Christmas comes. In other words, Carol is synonymous with Christmas songs.

#### b) Personification

*"I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,"*

The first line of this poem is classified as personification. In this sentence, the word America seemed to be singing. As we know, America is likened to a living being. Only living things like humans can sing.

### 2) Distorting Meaning

Distorting meaning in poetry occurs because of ambiguity, contradiction, and nonsense. In the poem *I Hear America Singing*, there is a distorting meaning caused by ambiguity. In this *I Hear America Singing*, there is no found any contradiction and non-sense.

Ambiguity is words, phrases, or sentences in poetry that have multiple interpretations. In the poem, *I Hear America Singing* some ambiguities are found.

#### <sup>1</sup> *I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear*

In the first line of this poem, *I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear*. The sentence is ambiguous. As we know, America is the name of a continent that is an inanimate object. But in that sentence, America is pretended as a living creature that could sing. The word *America* meant by the author refers to the people who live in America.

#### <sup>2</sup> *Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,*

#### <sup>3</sup> *The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam*

#### <sup>4</sup> *The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,*

In lines 2, 3, and 4, there is the word *his* in each of the sentences. The word *his* has the meaning of belonging to a man. The word *his* here has an ambiguous meaning, it can be meant the mechanics, the carpenter and the mason have their own creation songs, or *his* is meant they have each favorite song. Based on the observations of the researcher, the word *his* here is closely related to they have each favorite song.

#### <sup>576</sup> *The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,*

In lines 5 and 6, there is the word *what belongs to him*. The word *what belongs to him* has the meaning of what a man has. The word *what belongs to him* here is kind of ambiguous, it could be meant that the boatman has his own creation song or he has a favorite song. Based on the researcher's observation, the word *what belongs to him* here is closely related to having his own creation song.

<sup>12.</sup> *Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else.*

In line 12, there is the word *what belongs to him or her*. The word *what belongs to him or her* has the meaning of what he or she has. The word *what belongs to him or her* here has an ambiguous meaning, it can be meant that each person has their own creation song or each person has their own favorite song. Based on the researcher's opinion, the word *what belongs to him or her* here is immediately interpreted as having its own creation song.

### 3) *Creating of Meaning*

According to Riffaterre [2] the creation of meaning occurs when the text space acts as an organizing principle to make signs out of grammatical matters that are linguistically meaningless. The creating of meaning usually has no clear lingual meaning, but when interpreted as a whole, it turns out to have a deep meaning. In other words, the creation of meaning is due to rhyme, enjambment, and typography. In the poem, *I Hear America Singing* is found creating meaning caused by enjambement, but there is no found rhyme and typography.

Enjambement is a syntactic jump from one line to the next. Enjambement aims to link between the lines before and after it. In addition, enjambement also aims to emphasize the line. In the poem, *I Hear America Singing* an enjambement is found.

<sup>13-14.</sup> *The day what belongs to the day-at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,*

<sup>15.</sup> *Singing with open mouths their melodious songs.*

*The day what belongs to the day-at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly* in line 13 and 14 and *Singing with open mouths their melodious songs* in line 15 are classified as enjambement. As we know that enjambement is the splitting of words into the next line. The sentence *The day what belongs to the day-at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly* is an incomplete sentence. The sentence was continued in the next line in order to emphasize the meaning, *Singing with open mouths of their melodious songs*. By language convention, it becomes *The day what belongs to the day-at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly, singing with open mouths their melodious songs*.

## B. *Heuristic and Hermeneutic Reading*

### 1) *Heuristic Reading*

The second step in analyzing the poem *I Hear America Singing* is by heuristic reading. The reading is based on linguistic structure. This reading is done to translate and clarify the meaning of words and synonyms in poetry. The literary language contained in poetry is changed in such a way as to use ordinary language that is used every day to

make it easier to be understood. Here is Walt Whitman's *I Hear America Singing* poem in heuristic reading.

In *line 1*, the word *America* refers to American or the people who live in America. Here, the author heard many people are singing various carols. As we know, Carol is a happy song derived from the French words *carole* and Latin *carula*. Carol was performed with a happy tone accompanied by a circular dance. After the Protestant Movement, carol was closely associated with Christmas observances. Carol later became known as the cheerful song sung at Christmas (Christmas Carol). Whitman was not very impressed with Protestant teachings. In fact, he was deeply influenced by the teachings of Deism, the teaching of enlightenment in the 18th which saw the mind as a means for humans to know God. This teaching produces an attitude of tolerance in accordance with social and rational human existence. Enlightenment teachings reveal that man does not need to submit to everything that is outside himself. The period of development of this sect is known as the Age of Enlightenment in response to a prolonged war (30 years) between Protestant groups and Catholic groups. The war resulted in the loss of millions of lives, moral decency, the collapse of the economy, increased poverty, and distrust of religion that is too dogmatic. Whitman himself accepted or tolerated all schools of the church without discrimination, but none of which he believed. Here Whitman wants to convey two things to the reader. First, the carol song that is heard is a reflection of the peaceful and peaceful condition of society at the beginning of the American industrial revolution, because it has a positive impact on society, of course. Second, life must be filled with a high sense of tolerance. As we know that wherever we stand, we will find a variety of beliefs, languages, or cultures that spread in society. To be able to survive with these differences, we must be able to adapt and respect each other's differences, so that stability and tranquility in society can be properly maintained.

In *line 2*, the first American element that Whitman mentions in this poem is mechanic. The word mechanic here is closely related to American industrialization. After the Civil War period (Civil War 1861–1865), America reached its era of fame. The American nation soon achieved economic independence and not anymore depends on Europe. Farmers and American merchants started to stretch the market economy, the government accelerates economic development, and industrialists began juggling the area's rural areas to become urban industries. Lowell, Massachusetts, becomes the center textile industry and soon followed by the development of the home weaving industry. The harvest milling business is growing rapidly as it grows railways. The expression "should be blithe and strong" expressed by Whitman contains harmony (harmony) elements that support his poetry, that mechanics as the first element of American society sings songs happily and loudly. This expression refers to the joy of the American nation in the nuances of the Industrial Revolution.

In *line 3*, the carpenter who is singing when measuring plank or beam refers to the progress of the American revolutions which at that time helped the development of

housing in America. Here, Whitman mentions another type of work class, namely carpenter, to show the positive impact of the industrial revolution which has even reached the lower level working class such as carpenter.

*In line 4*, the word *mason singing* here is still related to the American industrial revolution. As for the word *ready for work, or leaves off work* describes the character of American as a hardworking society (going to and from work), especially at that time a new identity attached to the 'New Englander' encouraging the American nation to achieve identity as a prosperous nation. In this line, Whitman wants to convey the message behind the prosperity possessed by the American nation that the American is indeed known for their hardworking nature. Apart from being hardworking, American at work is also very structured and disciplined. Time is very valuable for them.

*In lines 5 & 6*, the boatman and the deckhand refer to the steamship technology developed in America in the 1800s. Although at that time they did not rely on coal as the main fuel, wood. Besides that, Whitman also wants to show that the positive impact of the industrial revolution reaches to workers who work in the sea, not only workers who live in cities.

*In line 7*, the word of shoemaker refers to boots maker. Boots maker and hatter play a role in the sparkle of American life. Boots known as Western boots and hats are a fashion style that was very popular in New England in the 1800's. American men wear boots made of leather with a high sole which varies. Different types of hats have also been an important part of the fashion traditions of the time. Starting from the Tricorn, Quaker, Salem, Ply-Mouth, Sir Walter, Shovel, Sea Rover, Pirate, Buccaneer, until the Puritan models dominated American men's fashion at that time. After the industrial revolution, American fashion styles also increased, especially in shoes and hats.

*In lines 8 & 9*, the word *ploughboy* here represents the American workers. As for the purpose of the mention of the words morning, noon and sundown are that the spirit of the hard-working Americans who go to work in the morning and return home in the evening.

*In lines 10 & 11*, the words *mother, young wife and girl* refer to the set of elements of American society. Whitman is a champion of equality and democracy in America. Gender equality has been promoted through the Feminism movement that began in the 1890s. As Whitman travels throughout America, he finds expressions of happiness by working men and women who demonstrate America's prosperity.

*In line 12*, it tells us about equality and democracy which is at the heart of Whitman's struggle which is reflected in his works. In a democracy, various voices, various songs from every element of America are heard by him.

*In lines 13 & 14*, it tells us about the character and work ethic of American society at that time. The workers during the Industrial Revolution were hard workers who spent their

minds and energies working hard during the day. When night falls, they socialize to unwind after a long day's work. Whitman wants to show one of the habits of Americans in balancing their daily busyness which is known for their hardworking figure, by looking for entertainment at night either alone or with friends.

*In line 15*, the words *singing with open mouths* are a reflection of Whitman's optimism in seeing his nation. With the development of various aspects of life in society after the industrial revolution, Whitman saw a bright future and had high hopes for the prosperity of his nation.

### C. Matrix, model, and Variant

Poetry is the development of the matrix into a later model *transformed* into variants. The matrix is the source of all meanings in poetry. According to Pradopo, the matrix is the keyword for interpreting concretized poetry [8].

The matrix in the poem *I Hear America Singing*, in general, is a description of the equality and diversity of each individual American regardless of profession, age, and gender. In this poem, Whitman also raises the idea of the power of work, that no matter who or what someone does, every American should try to always work hard and be proud of what an American does.

Apart from the matrix, there are also models and variants. Model is the word or sentences that can represent stanzas in poetry. The model can also be said as the first actualization of the matrix. The model in this poem is happiness. Each line in this poem describes how wonderful happiness is. Every profession that is written in every line of the poem reflects the condition of happiness in society at that time after the industrial revolution.

The poetry model is then described in each line in the poem. In Riffaterre's theory, the description of the model is called a variant. The variants in the poem *I Hear America Singing* are in the first line to the end, which are as follows.

*In line 1: I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,*

The first line explains to the reader that the speaker is listening to Americans singing carols. As we know, Carol is a happy song derived from the French words *carole* and Latin *carula*. Carol was performed with a happy tone accompanied by a circular dance. Carol later became known as the cheerful song sung at Christmas (Christmas Carol).

*In line 2: those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,*

The second line tells us that each mechanic is singing his favorite song as usual. They sing the song happily and loudly.

*In line 3: The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,*

The third line describes to us that the carpenter is singing his favorite song while measuring his plank or beam.

In line 4: *The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,*

The fourth lines narrate to the reader that the mason is singing his favorite song before going to work or after back from work.

In line 5 & 6: *The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,*

The fifth and sixth lines explain to us that the boatman is singing his favorite song in his boat, whereas the deckhand is singing on the steamboat deck.

In line 7: *The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,*

The seventh line narrates to us that the shoemaker is singing while sitting on his seat, whereas the hatter is singing while standing.

In line 8 & 9: *The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,*

The eighth and ninth lines depict us that the ploughboy's on his way sings the wood cutter's song in the morning or at noon intermission or at sundown.

In line 10 & 11: *The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,*

The tenth and eleventh lines tell the reader that the speaker heard the delicious singing of the mother or of the young wife at work or of the girl who is sewing or washing.

In line 12: *Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,*

The twelfth line narrates to us that each person is singing what he or she wants to sing, do not following each other.

In line 13 & 14: *The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,*

The thirteenth and fourteenth lines describe to us that after everything happened at the day, the young fellows who are robust and friendly make the party at night.

In line 15: *Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.*

The fifteenth line tells us that the young fellows are singing the melodious song loudly by opening mouth.

## V. CONCLUSION

Whitman's poem is fascinating to study, particularly when it comes to analyzing the symbols using Riffaterre's theory. Indirection language, heuristic and hermenutic reading, matrix, model, and version, and the intertextual relationship or hypogram are the four aspects of Riffaterre's theory.

The researcher is searching for a sign of poetry in the discussion before explaining the heuristic and hermenutic reading. The researchers found some symbols in the poem *I Hear America Singing*. They are America, Mechanic, Carpenter, Mason, Boatman and Deckhand, Shoemaker and

Hatter, Ploughboy, Mother, Young Wife, and Girl and Young Fellow.

The conclusion of the poem *I Hear America Singing*, tells the equality and diversity of each individual regardless of profession, age, and gender. We must respect one another. No matter who the person is, whatever the profession, everyone must be treated the same. In this poem, we are also told that no matter who or what someone does, every individual should try to always work hard and be proud of what he or she does.

Matrix, models, and variants in the poem were studied as follows; Models of the poem *I Hear America Singing* is happiness. Each line in this poem described how wonderful happiness is. Every profession that is written in every line of the poem reflects the condition of happiness in society at that time after the industrial revolution. Then the matrix in the poem *I Hear America Singing*, in general, is a description of the equality and diversity of each American regardless of profession, age, and gender. The variants in the poem *I Hear America Singing* are in the first line to the end, which are as follows;

In line1: *I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,*

The first line explains to the reader that the speaker is listening to Americans singing carols. As we know, Carol is a happy song derived from the French words *carole* and Latin *carula*. Carol was performed with a happy tone accompanied by a circular dance. Carol later became known as the cheerful song sung at Christmas (Christmas Carol).

In line 2: *those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,*

The second line tells us that each mechanic is singing his favorite song as usual. They sing the song happily and loudly.

In line 3: *The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,*

The third line describes to us that the carpenter is singing his favorite song while measuring his plank or beam.

In line 4: *The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,*

The fourth lines *narrate* to the reader that the mason is singing his favorite song before going to work or after back from work.

In line 5 & 6: *The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,*

The fifth and sixth lines explain to us that the boatman is singing his favorite song in his boat, whereas the deckhand is singing on the steamboat deck.

In line 7: *The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,*

The seventh line narrates to us that the shoemaker is singing while sitting on his seat, whereas the hatter is singing while standing.

In line 8 & 9: *The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,*

The eighth and ninth lines depict us that the ploughboy's on his way sings the wood cutter's song in the morning or at noon intermission or at sundown.

In line 10 & 11: *The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,*

The tenth and eleventh lines tell the reader that the speaker heard the delicious singing of the mother or of the young wife at work or of the girl who is sewing or washing.

In line 12: *Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,*

The twelfth line narrates to us that each person is singing what he or she wants to sing, do not following each other.

In line 13 & 14: *The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,*

The thirteenth and fourteenth lines describe to us that after everything happened at the day, the young fellows who are robust and friendly make the party at night.

In line 15: *Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.*

The fifteenth line tells us that the young fellows are singing the melodious song loudly by opening mouth.

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