

The Dynamics of Multigenre Literary Textual Shifts in Ayu Utami's Saman: A Cognitive Poetics Perspective

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Abstract

This study analyzes the shifts of text worlds in the novel Saman through Cognitive Poetics, particularly Text World Theory and the activation of mental schemata. With its multigenre character, ranging from poetic, documentary, erotic, and religious modes to light conversation and tragedy, Saman presents stylistic transitions that continually reshape the reader's spatial, temporal, evaluative, and emotional orientations. The research employs a qualitative approach with units of analysis in the form of narrative fragments that mark genre transitions. The analysis involves close reading, text-world mapping, schema tracking, and the assessment of inter-genre coherence. The findings reveal three major cognitive strategies: the shift from phatic to evidential schemata in personal tragedy, the transition from embodied cognition to moral reasoning in erotic-religious passages, and the emergence of structured empathy in the move from poetic to documentary modes. This study fills a gap in previous research, which has rarely discussed the cognitive experience of Saman's readers, while also highlighting the novel's uniqueness as a multigenre text that demands high cognitive flexibility from its audience.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature increasingly demonstrates a tendency to blur conventional boundaries between genres. This development has given rise to multigenre literary works that integrate diverse and heterogeneous modes of writing, such as prose, poetry, documentary narration, dramatic dialogue, lyrical reflection, and intimate personal discourse, within a single unified composition. Saman by Ayu Utami is a prominent example. The novel orchestrates erotic fragments, religiously reflective passages, casual conversations, and episodes of personal tragedy that shift dynamically throughout the narrative. These stylistic and modal transitions enrich aesthetic diversity while simultaneously demanding adaptive interpretive engagement from readers.

The rapid alternation of genres and discourse types in Saman generates continual shifts in textual worlds, prompting readers to continuously adjust how they construct, modify, and sustain meaning. Intratextual genre transitions, for example shifts from sensual imagery to religious contemplation or from light conversational humor to traumatic revelation, require readers to navigate changes in tone, narrative logic, and epistemic stance. Consequently, a fundamental question arises: how do readers realign their comprehension processes when the textual world shifts as a result of these genre transitions?

To address this issue, a theoretical framework is required that does not focus solely on textual structure but also attends to readers' mental processes. It is within this context that cognitive poetics becomes relevant. The cognitive poetics approach was first introduced by Tsur (1992) through research conducted since the 1970s on the perceptual effects of literary works on readers. Cognitive poetics emerged as a response to the limitations of literary analysis models that are oriented almost

entirely toward the text, such as formalism and structuralism, which are often regarded as subjective and reductive in explaining reading experience (Holland, 2002). Rather than concentrating exclusively on textual structure, cognitive poetics directs analysis toward readers' mental processes by integrating insights from cognitive psychology, cognitive linguistics, and neuroscience.

Within the framework of cognitive poetics, literary experience is understood as a cognitive activity involving biological, emotional, and affective dimensions. This perspective aligns with developments in neuroaesthetics (Zeki, 1999), evolutionary humanism (Carroll, 2015), and cognitive poetics itself (Stockwell, 2002), all of which emphasize that literary meaning does not simply reside in the text but is constructed through interaction between linguistic cues and readers' mental operations. Reading is therefore conceived as an individual and reflective activity that simultaneously opens space for imagination, emotion, and conceptual reasoning (Steen, 1999; Thon, 2008; Ryan, 2018; Viires, 2019).

Cognitive linguistic approaches play a central role in cognitive poetics because they provide an account of how meaning is constructed through the conceptual operations of the human mind, thereby enabling the integration of authorial, readerly, and textual perspectives. Rice (2002) questions whether the production and reception of literary texts rely on similar cognitive networks, while Grady (1999) demonstrates that conceptual metaphors are motivated by shared bodily experiences between speakers and listeners. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) further argue that conceptual integration is a fundamental mechanism of human thought that operates through the mapping of mental spaces that are partial, dynamic, and hypothetical. This mapping process forms the foundation of semantic and pragmatic understanding, including literary reading, which frequently involves analogy as a means of mapping attributes, relations, and systems at an abstract level (Holyoak and Thagard, 1994). Through these mechanisms, readers are able to experience immersion and narrative transportation when engaging with literary texts (Steen, 1999).

Cognitive poetics, which Stockwell (2002) regards as an innovation in stylistics and which Steen (1999) identifies as part of the cognitive era, provides a productive framework for explaining how readers actively construct text worlds during the reading process. Within this framework, Text World Theory (Werth, 1999; Gavins, 2007) explains how readers form mental representations based on linguistic triggers, world knowledge, and discourse context. In Saman, genre transitions activate different cognitive schemata. Erotic passages evoke embodied simulation, religiously reflective segments direct readers toward ethical judgment, casual conversations rely on phatic and interpersonal schemata, and tragic events demand empathetic, causal, and evidential processing. These shifts demonstrate that multigenre texts impose complex cognitive demands on their readers.

Although Saman has been widely discussed in literary scholarship, existing studies generally focus on sociopolitical themes, feminist perspectives, or narrative structure. Very few studies examine how genre transitions trigger shifts in textual worlds or how readers cognitively navigate these shifts. Similarly, research on Text World Theory has largely been applied to monomodal narratives, leaving a gap in understanding how the theory operates when texts continuously shift between contrasting discourse forms. As a result, the cognitive mechanisms that sustain cohesion and coherence across genres remain relatively underexplored.

In response to this gap, the present study aims to examine how readers construct and modify text worlds when encountering genre transitions in Saman, to identify the cognitive strategies readers employ to maintain semantic cohesion amid shifts in mode, tone, and discourse conventions, and to analyze factors that influence the effectiveness of navigating multigenre textual worlds, particularly those related to schema activation, attentional shifts, and belief modulation. Theoretically, this study extends the application of Text World Theory within multigenre literary studies and integrates insights from genre studies (Bawarshi and Reiff, 2010) and cohesion theory (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Practically, the findings are expected to contribute to authors, educators, and literary scholars by enhancing understanding of how readers experience and interpret cross genre movement in multiform narratives such as Saman.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a literary discourse analysis design grounded in the framework of Cognitive Poetics. This approach is selected because the research focuses on understanding readers' cognitive processes in constructing, modifying, and adapting text worlds when confronted with genre transitions in Ayu Utami's novel *Saman*. The primary data source is the novel *Saman*, which exemplifies multigenre dynamics through the integration of narrative prose, dramatic dialogue, reflective fragments, and personal tragedy. Text selection was carried out purposively based on the following criteria: (1) the narrative contains at least two distinct genres within a single textual segment; (2) the genre transitions significantly influence the construction of text worlds; and (3) the selected segments are analytically relevant to the application of Text World Theory.

Data collection was carried out through close reading of the novel, with systematic documentation of analytical units in the form of textual fragments that demonstrate genre transitions and trigger shifts in text worlds, the activation of mental schemata, and the interpretive strategies employed. Data analysis proceeded through several stages: first, identifying textual segments that exhibit genre transitions; second, analyzing the construction and modification of text worlds based on Werth's (1999) and Gavins' (2007) framework; third, examining the activation of readers' mental schemata drawing on Bartlett's (1932) concept and Schank and Abelson's (1977) script theory; fourth, assessing semantic cohesion and coherence with reference to Halliday and Hasan's (1976) theory; and fifth, synthesizing the findings to reveal patterns of cognitive strategies employed by readers in navigating the multigenre dynamics of *Saman*.

RESULT

Ayu Utami's *Saman* demonstrates that shifts in text worlds occur dynamically, marked by internal genre transitions, strategic changes in narrative perspective, and the interplay of diverse storytelling styles. This heterogeneity not only constitutes the aesthetic character of the novel but also creates a reading experience that requires the reader's active engagement in interpreting and interrelating multiple layers of narrative. These transitions are not merely aesthetic; they also shape how readers construct and maintain semantic cohesion amidst a plurality of narrative forms.

Through a Cognitive Poetics lens, it becomes evident that transitions between text worlds require readers to actively activate, adjust, and integrate various mental schemata relevant to the context of each fragment. Based on the mapping table developed during the analysis, at least six major patterns of transition were identified as central to understanding the dynamics of readers' meaning construction.

The mapping reveals that each fragment in *Saman* operates within a distinct text world, ranging from modern urban narrative, intimate epistolary writing, rural-traditional flashbacks, discursive dialogues, reportorial narration, to symbolic prose. These shifts compel readers to repeatedly perform cognitive leaps involving changes in setting, character, and mode of delivery. At this juncture, the role of mental schemata becomes crucial. Readers draw upon prior knowledge to bridge the gaps between fragments while simultaneously sustaining coherence even when the storyline is non-linear.

This dynamic demonstrates that readers' cognitive strategies extend beyond recognizing narrative patterns; they also entail the ability to interpret implicit cues embedded within each genre and style. The following section elaborates on the six principal patterns of transition identified in the analysis and their cognitive implications for the reading process of *Saman*.

Transition from Yasmin's Urban Narrative to Laila's Letter

The narrative fragment centered on Yasmin's life in Jakarta represents an urban text world infused with the dynamics of modern metropolitan life, particularly issues faced by middle-class women. The description of setting, social interactions, and professional details is foregrounded, as illustrated in the passage where Yasmin is depicted as the most accomplished among her peers.

"The most accomplished and wealthiest among her closest friends... She had now become a lawyer at her father's firm, Joshua Moningka & Partners" (Utami, 1998, p. 24).

This urban backdrop prompts readers to activate a mental schema associated with the image of a young urban professional. Within the framework of Cognitive Poetics, such a process enables readers to construct a concrete mental representation of the social and cultural environment surrounding Yasmin, thereby rendering the reading experience both accessible and relatable to familiar realities (Stockwell, 2002). Subsequently, as the narrative shifts toward Laila's letter, the reader's focus is redirected from a public and social sphere to a private and emotionally intimate domain. The letter begins in a tone that is explicitly personal.

*"At twelve o'clock:
I remembered, after that first meeting three years ago, we had so many reasons to see each other again..." (Utami, 1998, p. 24).*

The epistolary form fosters immediacy and intimacy, as though readers are granted access to the innermost thoughts of the character. This transition fundamentally alters the mode of meaning-making: readers are no longer mapping broad social interactions but are instead navigating affective relations and subjective reflections articulated in a personal register.

Transition from the Poetic Narrative to Documentary Fragments on Human Rights Violations

This discussion highlights the narrative shift from a poetic mode, saturated with symbolic and lyrical imagery, to documentary-like fragments grounded in facts and testimonies. Such a shift alters the reader's interpretive stance. While the poetic world invites symbolic immersion and affective resonance, the documentary mode prompts factual-analytical engagement, urging the reader to process the story as though it were journalistic reportage.

Passages resembling reports on agrarian conflicts construct a semi-journalistic text world, drawing readers into schemas associated with news discourse. Conversely, the transition into Yasmin's dream notes transports readers into an ambiguous space between reality and imagination, where symbolic interpretation is crucial even as factual details remain obscure. A fuller account of this genre transition is explored in the following sub-sections: Configuration of the Semi-Journalistic and Poetic Text Worlds, Inter-Genre Cohesion: Lexical Anchors and Thematic Continuity, and Implications for Meaning-Making: Empathy Structured by Evidence.

Configuration of the Semi-Journalistic and Poetic Text Worlds

The poetic world in *Saman* is built upon metaphorical and symbolic density, where each word resonates with layered emotional meanings. Sentences such as "the words move slowly, leaving traces of scent and vibration" affirm a lyrical nuance that situates the reader within an intimate experiential space, almost inside the consciousness of the "aku" character. This internal deictic center creates an immersive perspective, encouraging readers not only to follow events but also to feel them. However, this poetic world does not unfold linearly; instead, it sharply shifts toward a semi-journalistic style. For example:

"Texcoil tried to cover up this case by bribing the police and prosecutors so that the matter would not be investigated" (Utami, 1998, p. 35)

The language here is straightforward, factual, and investigative in tone, resembling an exposé. This transition marks a movement from imaginative symbolism to a concrete, informative mode. Further, another fragment illustrates a hybrid style, where poetic expression merges with stark realism.

"I once danced before some forty spectators, but only in the houses of the wealthy or in art galleries. There were also those who danced naked and made love in front of some forty onlookers..." (Utami, 1998, p. 147)

This passage juxtaposes lyrical confession with harsh social realities. Within a Cognitive Poetics framework, such stylistic shifts signal changes in the reader's *reading frame*. In the poetic world, the reader relies on imaginative schemas that foreground sensation, symbolism, and affective experience. In the semi-journalistic mode, however, the reader is guided by factual-analytical schemas demanding concrete data processing. These shifts are not mere aesthetic variations but narrative strategies that bridge personal experiences (the body, dance, the self-consciousness of "aku") with broader public issues such as corruption, agrarian conflict, and human rights violations.

Inter-Genre Cohesion: Lexical Anchors and Thematic Continuity

Inter-genre cohesion refers to the semantic linkage between segments of text that differ in genre or style, allowing the narrative to remain continuous despite formal shifts. Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 4) define cohesion as "a semantic relation in text which links one part with another," even across registers or genres. A key device is lexical cohesion, achieved through repetition, synonymy, or semantic association (Halliday, 1994, p. 330).

In multigenre contexts, lexical anchors maintain topical continuity. Stockwell (2002, p. 15), within Cognitive Poetics, argues that topic continuity allows readers to sustain a stable mental schema, ensuring that transitions across genres do not disrupt interpretive pathways. In other words, even as style, perspective, or communicative intent shifts, readers "carry over" a coherent semantic field. For example, Shakuntala's world is initially framed through bodily and sensory imagery:

"It felt like climbing a mountain and finding at its peak a caldera of experimental expression, and I plunged right into it" (Utami, 1998, p.147)

The impressionistic phrasing evokes sensory and aesthetic schemas. Yet this mood shifts into a fragment describing violence.

"The violence committed by the police and the military is called a legal act in the name of security or development." (Utami, 1998, p. 173)

Despite the genre shift from poetic narration to documentary reporting, lexical anchors such as *gardens/land, residents, and officials* preserve continuity. In poetic contexts, these words blur with metaphor and atmosphere; in documentary contexts, they function as concrete entities in factual accounts. This thematic overlap establishes a cognitive bridge, enabling readers to cross from affective-imaginative to factual-analytical reading without losing narrative coherence.

Implications for Meaning-Making: Empathy Structured by Evidence

Stockwell (2002, p. 138) describes readerly empathy as a combination of emotional involvement and rational evaluation. Emotional responses evoked by the text acquire greater significance when framed by information that allows readers to assess situations critically. Similarly, Keen (2007:4) argues that narrative empathy arises not only when readers "feel with" characters but also when they comprehend the factual contexts of their suffering. The shift from poetic to documentary modes in *Saman* exemplifies this mechanism. Consider a passage that begins with lyrical subjectivity:

"When I am staying in the city, I always long for the smell of the forest. The damp earth and the charred scent of firewood." (Utami, 1998, p. 161)

This evokes a strong affective atmosphere but remains metaphorical and subjective. The subsequent transition provides factual grounding.

"... the company indeed deceived the people, because the content of the agreement was the surrender of land to Anugrah Lahan Makmur ..." (Utami, 1998, p. 162)

Here, the previously symbolic "wound" transforms into a tangible conflict involving specific actors, claims, and evidence. The reader's role shifts from emotionally resonating with atmosphere to critically engaging with testimony and proof. Thus, empathy evoked by poetic fragments is reinforced and reframed by documentary evidence, ensuring that readers' responses extend beyond sympathy to moral and social judgment. Meaning emerges not merely from being emotionally moved but also from conviction shaped by data. Imagination (feeling) and verification (reasoning) collaborate, creating a textual world that touches the heart while persuading the mind.

Transition from Erotic Fragments to Religious-Reflective Narratives

The textual world-shifts in *Saman* occur not only at the level of setting or character, but also within the dimension of the reader's experiential engagement. One of the most striking and significant transitions is the movement from fragments saturated with erotic content to segments imbued with religious and reflective tones.

This transition juxtaposes two radically different modes of representation: one oriented toward the body and sensation, the other toward the soul and contemplation. For the reader, this leap does not merely alter the content of the story but compels a recalibration of textual processing from "feeling" to "evaluating" Werth (1999), through Text World Theory, identifies such phenomena as *world-switches*, in which readers are required to reorganize their conceptual frameworks in accordance with narrative shifts. Stockwell (2002, p. 75) further emphasizes this through the notion of *restructuring*, namely the mental reconfiguration readers undertake when narrative style or representational mode changes.

More broadly, neurocognitive research by Jacobs et al. (2014) demonstrates that differences between "fiction mode" and "fact mode" in reading involve distinct cognitive pathways: the former emphasizes empathy and experiential simulation, while the latter encourages reflective evaluation. Within this framework, Cognitive Poetics provides a robust lens for understanding how readers' mental schemas in *Saman* are activated, disrupted, and reorganized through the collision of sensuality and spirituality.

The Erotic Textual World: Embodied Processing and Deictic Intimacy

Erotic fragments in *Saman* employ language that acts directly upon the reader's body, not merely at the level of linguistic imagination. Lexical choices emphasizing sensory domains such as touch, breath, heartbeat evoke kinesthetic sensations that can be almost physically felt. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) describe this phenomenon as a form of *embodied cognition*, where meaning arises from the deep interconnection between language and bodily experience. This intimacy is further reinforced through the use of deixis, particularly personal pronouns (*I* and *you*) and present-tense temporal markers, which create a zero distance between the scene and the reader. As a result, the experience of reading the erotic fragments is not limited to observing bodily descriptions, but instead involves the reader's own body in the rhythm of narrated events.

Erotic passages in *Saman* situate the reader at the very center of bodily experience. Sensory references to touch, breathing, and heartbeat generate an intimate kinesthetic texture. The sentences are short, rhythmic, and pulse-like, making readers feel as if they are inhabiting the scene:

"... we did it in this park, right here, on the bench beside the homeless man who was fast asleep..."

*"We did it without taking off all our clothes, because the day was still too cold to be naked."
"She prayed without ever caring whether God would grant her request or not." (Utami,
1998, p. 54)*

Through such fragments, the human body is not merely rendered as a sensual object but also as a vessel of emotions and memories. Here, corporeality, affect, and spirituality intertwine, producing an intensity *that* transcends pure eroticism. The deployment of temporal deixis (*now, at this moment*), personal deixis (*I, you, she, we*), and sensory detail amplifies the embodied quality of the reading experience. Readers do not merely imagine what is happening; rather, they mentally simulate the rhythm of movements, the intensity of breath, and the tension of emotional atmosphere. In this way, the erotic fragments in *Saman* construct a powerful cognitive and affective closeness, situating the reader in intimate proximity with the textual world.

Rhetorical Turning Point: Rhythm Disruption and Shifting Evidential Mode

A rhetorical turning point refers to the moment when a text deliberately interrupts or shifts the rhythm of discourse to generate a change in meaning. Barthes (1977, p. 89) calls this a *rupture*, a narrative strategy that disrupts the continuity of style or theme to mark a shift in the horizon of interpretation. Meanwhile, the concept of evidential mode concerns the way narrative presents evidence and truth claims. According to Sanders and Redeker (1996, p. 292), evidentiality in literary texts emerges through the author's manner of presenting the source of experience, whether direct, imaginative, or reflective. Thus, the transition from erotic fragments to religious-reflective passages in *Saman* signifies not merely a thematic shift but also a transformation in how the text establishes the authority of meaning. From the body experienced intimately through sensual language, the reader is invited into a moral horizon that demands ethical evaluation and normative reflection. The vocabulary previously saturated with sensuality is replaced by normative terms such as *prayer, forgiveness, sin, and sacredness*, broadening the text from the private realm toward the moral horizon. For instance, following an intense bodily scene:

"That prayer, if granted, would bring no good to the many, only relief to oneself. Could such a request truly be called a prayer? Is it fitting to ask God to satisfy one's personal curiosity?" (Utami, 1998, p. 63)

Here, the word *prayer* functions as a semantic anchor that shifts the reader's perception. The body, once celebrated, is now reframed as a mirror for spiritual and moral questioning. Deixis also expands. Whereas in the erotic fragments the focus rested on *I* and *you* within the immediate coordinates of "here" and "now," in the reflective passages, attention shifts to universal dimensions of humanity's relationship with God, community, and moral values. The reader is compelled to adjust their reading stance: moving away from the dominance of sensory imagery and instead activating a more propositional and analytical mode.

In this sense, the turning point is not merely a thematic transition but a rhetorical strategy that recalibrates the rhythm of the text and the reader's cognitive distance. The body, once the center of sensual intensity, is repositioned as a locus of moral reflection, constructing a textual world that is at once intimate and transcendent.

The Religious-Reflective Text World: From Sensory Experience to the Calculus of Meaning

The textual world-shift in *Saman* operates not only at the level of setting or character, but also at the level of reading experience. One of the most striking transitions is the movement from fragments laden with erotic intensity to passages imbued with religious and reflective tones. This shift juxtaposes two radically different modes of representation: one oriented toward the body and sensation, the other emphasizing the soul and contemplation. For the reader, such a leap is not merely a change of narrative content but also a demand to adjust the mode of textual engagement from simply "feeling"

to actively “evaluating” Paul Werth (1999), through Text World Theory, terms this phenomenon a *world-switch*, whereby the reader is compelled to reorganize their conceptual framework. Peter Stockwell (2002) further underscores that in such moments, readers undergo *a restructuring* or reconfiguration of mental schemas to accommodate changes in style or mode of representation. In line with this, Jacobs et al. (2014) demonstrate that imaginative fiction tends to activate empathy and experiential simulation, whereas factual or reflective texts encourage cognitive evaluation and judgment.

The transition into the religious-reflective segments of *Saman* also illustrates how language can redirect the focus of the reading experience. While the erotic fragments situate the reader within the immediacy of bodily intensity and emotion, the religious-reflective passages employ longer, more structured narratives infused with evaluative modality. Halliday (1994, p. 354) identifies words such as *should* or *ought to* as markers of modality, revealing the speaker’s stance toward truth and obligation. This resonates with Ricoeur’s (1970, p. 43) view that religious language is inherently hermeneutic: it does not stop at description, but opens a space for ethical and spiritual interpretation. Accordingly, the text no longer merely invites the reader to *feel*, but also to *weigh*; the body becomes not only a source of sensation, but also a medium for moral reflection. This can be observed in the following passages.

“Her hair was once again seized as she still searched for the last drops of dew between the thighs with her tongue.”

“You violated me. For you, there is torment and pain!” (Utami, 1998, p. 198).

Here, the body is displaced from the realm of sensuality into the moral domain, guiding the reader to contemplate the tension between desire, faith, and spirituality. Similarly, another statement reads.

“Pleasure is sin. Yet the woman had already felt punishment.” (Utami, 1998, p. 199).

Such utterances do not convey certainty but open up a space of ambiguity, compelling the reader to engage in ethical weighing. These rhetorical strategies reorient the act of reading from sensory processing toward a calculus of meaning, combining emotional experience with moral evaluation. In this way, the religious-reflective text world in *Saman* underscores that genre transition is not merely a matter of stylistic variation, but also an epistemic mechanism—one that negotiates the intersections of body, faith, and morality in language, and forces the reader into a reflective framework of judgment.

The Shift from Lighthearted Conversations to Personal Tragedy

In *Saman*, shifts in mood are not always signaled by dramatic leaps or conspicuous changes in setting; often, transitions begin with seemingly light, everyday conversations. In certain fragments, the characters engage in casual dialogues filled with humor, jokes, or playful banter. These passages create a sense of intimacy, allowing the reader to feel close to the characters and to enter the text world without a heavy emotional burden. Yet, as Bruner (1990) observes, narrative has the capacity to “lead” readers from ordinary experiences toward deeper meanings through contextual shifts. It is from such lighthearted points of entry that *Saman* often pivots sharply into stories of personal tragedy that are deeply moving and evocative.

This transition compels readers to alter their perspective and mode of engagement abruptly from light processing to emotionally charged immersion. Within the framework of cognitive poetics, Stockwell (2002) refers to this as *frame switching*, whereby an initially active schema (e.g., casual conversation) must be replaced by a new schema that is more emotionally intense and reflective. This resonates with Oatley’s (1994) view that fiction functions as an emotional simulator, training readers

to shift from lighter feelings to profoundly tragic experiences. Thus, the transition from lighthearted conversations to personal tragedy in *Saman* is not merely a matter of stylistic variation, but a deliberate narrative strategy that layers emotional intimacy—first establishing familiarity and comfort, only to disrupt it with tragedy.

The Text World of Lighthearted Conversations: Phatic Schemas and Social Intimacy

The segments of lighthearted conversation in *Saman* highlight the function of language not merely as a tool for conveying information, but also as a medium for sustaining social relations. Jakobson (1960:355) identifies this as the *phatic function* of language, namely the use of speech to maintain contact, solidarity, and a sense of togetherness among interlocutors. Within the narrative context, lighthearted conversations serve to create an atmosphere of ease, egalitarianism, and intimacy.

This becomes especially evident in the humorous banter among the female characters, for instance, when they exchange teasing remarks.

“Why does his wife always have to tag along, as if she were holding back thunder in her chest?” Shortly after, the *dialogue* continues: *“That wife of his, even when she takes a dump, she probably needs someone to keep her company, right?”* (Utami, 1998, p. 124).

Such wordplay is not intended to convey new information but instead functions to affirm emotional closeness and intimacy among the characters. The language employed tends to be fast-paced, rhythmic, and marked by quick turn-taking, replete with phatic markers such as “yeah,” “hm,” or other short interjections. References to popular culture and the use of hyperbole enhance the sense of humor and playfulness. As Tannen (1989, p. 25) observes, this form of dialogue constitutes *rapport talk*—a conversational style that emphasizes personal relationships rather than propositional content. For the reader, this sense of familiarity creates a light and easily processed atmosphere, since meaning relies more on shared knowledge and social context than on complex narrative detail. Thus, the text world of lighthearted conversation performs a dual function: on one hand, it fosters a warm and enjoyable sense of social closeness, while on the other, it prepares a stark contrast for the more serious tonal shifts in subsequent fragments.

The Text World of Personal Tragedy: From Phatic to Evidence-Driven

The seemingly light conversations among the characters in *Saman* gradually shift into narratives of far greater gravity. While lighthearted dialogue functions to maintain social intimacy, the emergence of personal tragedy marks a transformation in the function of language into a medium of confession and testimony. As Labov and Waletzky (1967, p. 20) note, personal experience narratives are characterized by *evaluation clauses* that underscore the emotional significance of events, alongside *orientation clauses* that provide factual details about time, place, and situation. The movement from a phatic function (merely sustaining relations) toward an evidence-driven style (anchored in testimony) compels readers not only to feel the emotional weight of the story but also to assess its significance through the narrative evidence presented.

Emotionally evaluative words such as *fear*, *guilt*, or *loss* are interwoven with sensory details of sound, smell, or bodily gesture. Consider the following excerpt:

“He had always loved the sea, but that creature swallowed his best friend and belched trauma. He feared he would hate the sea from then on.” (Utami, 1998, p. 19).

This utterance demonstrates that tragedy is conveyed not merely through factual events but through embodied experiences that leave lasting traces. The dialogue that follows illustrates the transition from lighthearted talk to confessional narrative:

“...to Laila he recounted his childhood on the beaches, amid the sound of the waves. His father was a harbor master. The family moved several times, but they always lived near the port.” (Utami, 1998, p. 19).

The use of *free indirect discourse* in this fragment blurs the boundary between character voice and narrator, intensifying the empathic bond with the reader. The background of affinity with the sea, once a source of joy, becomes inverted in light of the tragic event. As a result, readers are drawn into deeper empathetic proximity. The amount of propositional information increases temporal sequencing, causal chains, and consequences of events are laid out more explicitly. Thus, readers are guided away from the enjoyment of playful banter toward weighing the gravity of the characters' tragic experiences, combining empathetic engagement with factual understanding.

Mechanisms of Inter-Phase Coherence: Lexical Anchors and Returning Motifs

The term *inter-phase coherence* refers to how a text maintains semantic connectedness despite shifts in style, theme, or mood across different segments. Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 274) describe this process as operating through *lexical cohesion*, namely the repetition or association of particular words that function as anchors, while *returning motifs* involve the reappearance of details or symbols previously introduced, but recontextualized with new functions in different narrative phases. Thus, coherence is not always produced through uniformity of style but through the text's ability to mobilize lexical and symbolic traces that link contrasting phases.

In *Saman*, this mechanism is evident in the repeated use of words such as *land* and *soil*. At first, these terms appear in light, almost nostalgic depictions, as in:

“... she longed for the smell of the forest. Wet soil and firewood.” (Utami, 1998, p. 161).

Yet in the tragic phase, the same words reemerge with a heavier connotation:

“... the company was indeed deceiving the people, since the content of the agreement was the transfer of land to Anugrah Lahan Makmur.” (Utami, 1998, p. 162).

This repetition functions as a lexical anchor, preserving continuity of meaning even as the textual mood shifts from warmth to tension. Returning motifs are also visible in the recurrence of *sound*. In lighter segments, sound appears in the form of laughter and joking that ease social relations.

“They then nodded, and laughed.” (Utami, 1998, p. 34).

But in later phases, sound resurfaces in a darker context:

“Suddenly I began to suspect. Could it have something to do with the gunpowder I told you about? This world is full of evil men who go unpunished. They wander freely.” (Utami, 1998, p. 34).

The reappearance of the same detail generates a sense of emotional continuity, binding together light and tragic fragments within a single semantic network. In this way, even when the text undergoes drastic stylistic shifts from casual conversation to testimonial narrative, the reader still perceives a connective thread. Coherence here arises not from tonal uniformity but from lexical anchors and returning motifs, which render the reading experience both cohesive and layered.

Transition from Personal Text Worlds to Public-Political Text Worlds

The movement from personal narration to public-political discourse in literature marks a transformation from what Ricoeur (1984, p. 52) calls *individual mimesis*, the intimate representation

of subjective experience to *social mimesis*, the representation of events within a collective and structural horizon. At this point, the text does not merely present the characters' private emotions but interweaves them with broader social conditions. Van Dijk (1998, p. 211) emphasizes that political narratives are often constructed through *macrostructures*, overarching patterns of meaning that connect individual stories with systems of ideology and power. Thus, *Saman* does not stop at the processing of personal trauma but turns it into an entry point toward collective political consciousness. In the novel, this shift often begins with a character's subjective experience. For example, the confession of inner unrest when facing fragile domestic relations: "*It was an extension of the patriarchal household.*" (Utami, 1998, p. 184). This sentence belongs to the private world, drawing the reader into an empathetic engagement with personal experience. Yet the following passage immediately opens up a public space as the narrative shifts toward structural issues: "*Women are secluded in matters of the domestic, in caring and nurturing. Strategic decisions remain in the hands of men.*" (Utami, 1998, p. 184). The connection between inner experience and broader social landscape demonstrates how the text sutures micro-narratives with macro-narratives.

A similar pattern is visible in the earlier depiction of loss. A character speaks of personal trauma over the disappearance of a close friend: "*... and because of that, her friend's body was lost.*" (Utami, 1998, p. 17). Such transitions invite the reader to interpret individual grief not as an isolated event but as part of a collective wound that resonates more broadly.

This transition activates two types of cognitive engagement. First, *embodied empathy* allows readers to feel the characters' personal trauma. Second, *critical socio-political awareness*, which prompts readers to evaluate events within the framework of structural repression and political power. This dual resonance positions *Saman* not only as an intimate story of bodies, relationships, and emotions, but also as a literary testimony to Indonesia's socio-political conditions.

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that *Saman* strategically employs multigenre shifts to guide readers' cognitive engagement. The transitions among lyrical, documentary, and reflective modes require adjustments in cognitive schemas, moving from affective and sensory processing toward propositional reasoning and ethical evaluation. These shifts do not disrupt narrative coherence, as global cohesion is maintained through lexical repetition and topical continuity. From a cognitive poetics perspective, meaning in *Saman* does not arise solely from narrative content but is constructed through the dynamic interaction between textual form and readers' cognitive processes. Based on these findings, future research is encouraged to expand the scope of analysis to other Indonesian literary works with multigenre characteristics and to combine qualitative textual analysis with empirical reader-response approaches to directly examine the cognitive and affective responses assumed in this study.

Furthermore, the interaction among erotic, religious-reflective, casual conversational, and personal tragic fragments reveals that emotion and rational judgment are mutually reinforcing. Erotic passages activate embodied schemas and affective experience, while religious and reflective fragments situate these experiences within moral and spiritual frameworks. Light-hearted dialogue establishes intimacy that prepares readers for encounters with tragic testimony, with narrative prosody regulating emotional intensity to remain effective without excess. Taken together, *Saman* illustrates how sensory experience can be integrated with ethical reflection, enabling readers not only to feel but also to judge and contemplate, thus affirming literature's role as an embodied experience and a site of moral-intellectual inquiry. Accordingly, future studies are also advised to further develop cognitive poetics within the Indonesian cultural context and to explore its practical implications for literary pedagogy, particularly in fostering empathy, ethical awareness, and reflective capacity through multigenre literary texts.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of *Saman* reveals that its narrative operates through shifting modes and the

corresponding cognitive strategies of the reader. Lyrical fragments foreground inner experiences, affect, and sensory imagery, while documentary or reflective fragments redirect attention toward facts, evidence, and moral evaluation. Such transitions require readers to perform schema adjustments from visual-affective processing to propositional reasoning so that attention, granularity, and belief are gradually reoriented in line with the demands of the narrative. Global cohesion is maintained through lexical anchors and topical continuity, enabling readers to navigate inter-genre transitions without losing their sense of connection to the text world.

Moreover, the interplay between erotic and religious-reflective fragments demonstrates how sensory experience and moral value are interwoven in the construction of meaning. Erotic passages activate embodied schemas, simulating kinesthetic and intimate experience, while religious-reflective passages orient readers toward ethical-spiritual frameworks that emphasize intention, sin, and existential reflection. This combination illustrates that affect and rationality are not opposed but mutually reinforcing: emotion becomes structured, while moral judgment gains grounding in narrative evidence and conceptual reflection.

The shift from light-hearted conversation to personal tragedy further highlights the novel's ability to regulate readerly engagement. Casual dialogue establishes intimacy and phatic bonding, which then transitions into evidence-driven testimony that elicits both empathy and ethical response. Narrative prosody, the length of sentences, pauses, and reading rhythm carefully modulate the rise and fall of emotional intensity, preventing melodrama while remaining deeply affecting. Taken together, Saman demonstrates how narrative can integrate affective energy with factual propositions, producing text worlds that are both convincing and moving. The novel enables readers not only to feel but also to judge and to reflect, thus enacting literature's dual role as an embodied experience and a moral-intellectual inquiry.

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