

**AMBIGUITIES IN MERCUTIO'S QUEEN MAB SPEECH
IN SHAKESPEARE'S *ROMEO AND JULIET***

THESIS

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**ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURE STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF BRAWIJAYA**

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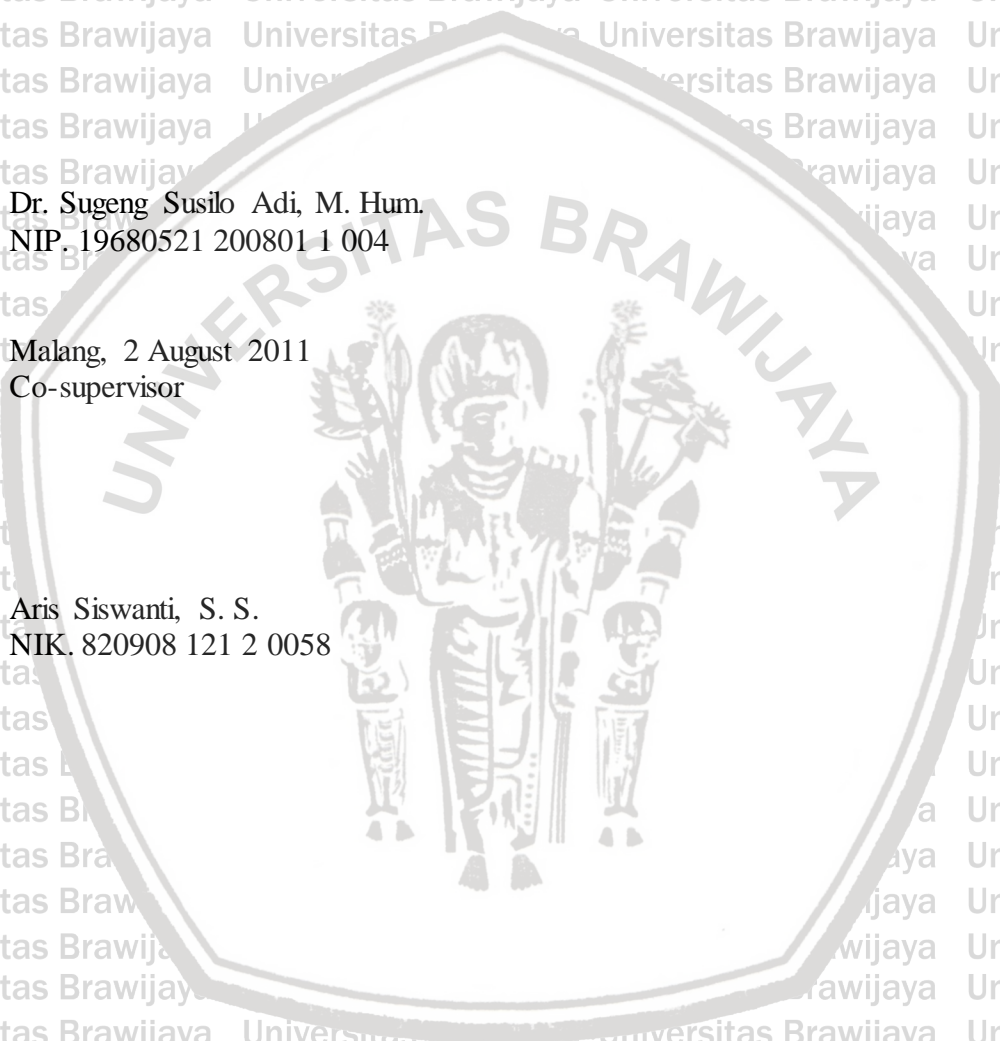
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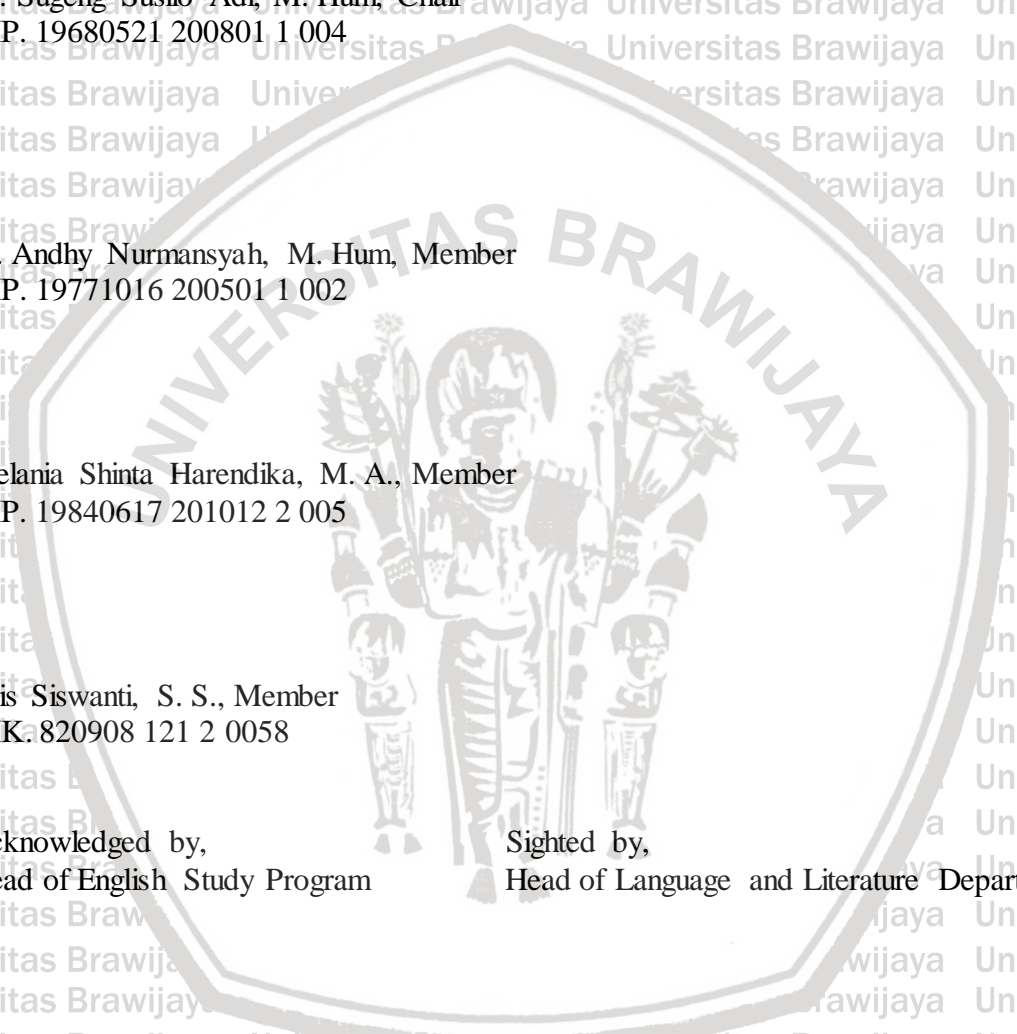
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The Writer

ABSTRACT

Sari, Wahyu Permata. 2011. **Ambiguities in Mercutio's Queen Mab Speech in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet**. Study Program of English, University of Brawijaya. Supervisor: Sugeng Susilo Adi; Co-supervisor: Aris Siswanti

Keywords: William Empson, Ambiguities, Queen Mab Speech, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Romeo and Juliet is one of the most famous plays written by William Shakespeare because it is an exquisite play to watch, read and enjoy. It also reveals the youth spirit of Shakespeare through its plot and characters. The character who has such a youth passion reflected in his lines and actions would be the Prince's kinsman and Romeo's close friend, Mercutio. Mercutio's poignant lines are the ones that keep so many people feel intrigued and entertained throughout the play. His clever banter, witty comebacks, and sexually charged language make him compelling. He has his own view about love, pleasure of loving, fight and dying. Even so, he performs a brilliant comedic monologue when he talks about the queen of dreams, Queen Mab.

In this study, the writer has a problem to be solved which is the different types of ambiguities that occur in Mercutio's Queen Mab speech. Through analysis of the intrinsic poetry elements such as meters, rhymes, and figurative languages, the writer is able to find the concrete evidence where Mercutio starts to change his tone toward the end of the speech and becomes out of control. These elements then help the writer to determine types of ambiguities that can be found in this monologue. She found five types of ambiguities and in each type she reveals the possible meanings of the speech. Through the analysis of the ambiguities, the writer deduces two conclusions. First, Queen Mab is a fairy that delivers a vision or dreams to human, though in the end of the speech she changes into a devil that gives nightmare. However, the writer suspects that this change is caused by the insecurity that Mercutio feels about himself and his hatred to women. Second, this speech is actually a foreshadow of how the play ends. Queen Mab has given warning to Romeo in order to make him not to go to the party. But both Romeo and Mercutio insist on going and this unwise decision cause five deaths in the end of the play. Thus, the writer concludes that Queen Mab is one of the most important characters in the play, which the audience and readers tend to ignore.

The writer suggests that the next researchers take into account conducting a character study on Mercutio, since he is one of the most complex characters in the play, using psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud in his theory of id, ego, and superego, or conducting historicism study on the speech as the reflection of the society at the time of the writing of the play.

ABSTRAK

Sari, Wahyu Permata. 2011. **Ambiguitas dalam Monolog Queen Mab oleh Mercutio dalam Drama Romeo and Juliet Karya William Shakespeare.** Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Universitas Brawijaya. Pembimbing: (I) Sugeng Susilo Adi (II) Aris Siswanti

Kata Kunci: William Empson, Ambiguitas, Monolog Queen Mab, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Romeo and Juliet adalah salah satu drama yang ditulis oleh William Shakespeare dan menjadi terkenal karena drama ini sangatlah menarik untuk ditonton, dibaca, dan dinikmati. Drama ini juga menggambarkan jiwa muda sang penulis melalui alur cerita dan karakternya. Karakter yang begitu mencerminkan jiwa mudanya dalam kata-kata dan tingkah lakunya adalah Mercutio, seorang kerabat Pangeran dan teman dekat Romeo. Kata-kata Mercutio begitu menarik hingga membuat para penonton terhibur sepanjang drama ini berlangsung. Pendapatnya tentang cinta, pertarungan, dan kematian cukup berbeda dengan orang-orang lain. Namun, dia membawakan sebuah monolog yang sangat menakjubkan ketika dia berbicara tentang Queen Mab, ratu mimpi.

Dalam studi ini, penulis mempunyai satu rumusan masalah yang akan diselesaikan yaitu perbedaan tipe ambiguitas yang terdapat dalam monolog Queen Mab. Melalui analisis dari unsur intrinsik puisi seperti meter, rima, mood, dan majas, penulis berhasil menemukan bukti dimana Mercutio mulai lepas kontrol ketika monolog ini akan berakhir. Unsur-unsur ini pula yang membantu penulis mengklasifikasikan tipe ambiguitas yang ia temukan dalam monolog ini. Melalui analisis dari ambiguitas tersebut, penulis membuat dua kesimpulan. Pertama, Queen Mab adalah seorang peri yang mengirimkan mimpi kepada manusia, walau pada akhir monolog ia berubah menjadi setan pembawa mimpi buruk. Namun perubahan ini dipengaruhi oleh kegelisahan yang ada dalam diri Mercutio dan kebenciannya terhadap perempuan. Kedua, monolog ini sebenarnya merupakan sebuah pertanda tentang akhir drama ini. Penulis juga menemukan hubungan monolog Queen Mab dengan alur cerita drama ini. Dari hasil tersebut, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa Queen Mab adalah salah satu karakter penting yang seringkali diabaikan oleh para pembaca atau penonton.

Penulis menyarankan agar mahasiswa yang akan mengadakan studi selanjutnya untuk menganalisis karakter Mercutio menggunakan teori dari Sigmund Freud tentang id, ego dan superego atau menggunakan teori *historicism* untuk mengetahui cerminan masyarakat pada saat penulisan drama ini.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To begin this thesis, in this chapter, the writer discusses (1) the background of the study to state her academical reasons on why she chose this topic of analysis; (2) the problem of the study that she is going to answer within the analysis on this thesis; and (3) the objective of the study which are the purposes on why the writer conducts this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

People have their own moments of youth and rebellious spirit. Ones who are adventurous might want to travel around the world and feel the adrenaline rushing into their blood vessels. Other people who are hopeless romantics might wish for a never ending relationship and fight for any obstacles that are on their way. While artistic people might want to reflect their rebellious attitude toward tattoos in their bodies, draw paintings, or even create amazing literary works, just like one of the most famous authors in classic literature, William Shakespeare.

Having created so many great plays and sonnets, Shakespeare became such an inspirational poet for so many people who have read his entire works or even only one line of his play or poem. The most quoted line, for instance, is taken from his very well-known play, *Romeo and Juliet*, "What's in a name?"

(Shakespeare, trans. 1998, 2.1.114). This line, among so many other great lines, might be the reason on why the play is so much more popular as time goes by. In

addition, Romeo and Juliet is also famous because of “the buoyant spirit of youth in every line, in the rapturous intoxication of hope, and in the bitterness of despair... It has the sweetness of the rose, it has its freshness too; if it has the languor of the nightingale’s song, it has also its giddy transport, if it has the softness of a southern spring, it is as glowing and as bright” (Hazlitt, 2004). From the statements above, one can see how Romeo and Juliet can be such an exquisite play to watch, read and enjoy. It can entertain us in such a way that one will never be able to forget that he or she has seen or read such an amazing play like this one.

The most important factor why Romeo and Juliet is so unforgettable because it “is Shakespeare all over, and Shakespeare when he was young” (Hazlitt, 2004).

When a person reads Romeo and Juliet playscript without knowing who the author is, he or she will know it immediately since every line describes the style of William Shakespeare. It also reveals the youth spirit of Shakespeare through its plot and characters.

There are many intriguing characters existed in this play. We see the growth of the innocent and naïve Romeo who becomes more mature throughout the play. Juliet, Romeo’s lover, is described as such a pretty girl at her age whose intelligence and bravery should be adored. However, one must say that the character who has such a youth passion reflected in his lines and actions would be the Prince’s kinsman and Romeo’s close friend, Mercutio.

Named after Mercury, the impudent god of thievery, Mercutio “embodies an instability inherent in the noble society of Verona” (Boyce, 1990). Even though he is a nobleman since he is still a relative of the Prince, he acts as if he is just an

ordinary man in this world who just wants to have as much fun as he can while he is still alive. He steals everyone's attention from the main character of the play, Romeo, by telling inappropriate jokes, insulting sexual comments or challenging mockeries. Boyce also states that Mercutio is one of Shakespeare's bawdiest characters which reflected in lines he is saying about the anatomical parts of Romeo's supposed beloved, Rosaline. This blunt side of him is the factor that makes Mercutio more understandable, more human, and more real. This character makes Romeo and Juliet an interesting and entertaining play. He is one of the most mercurial and spirited of the productions of Shakespeare's comic muse (Hazlitt, 2004). When this character dies, there also go the comedic performance and the humorous lines into wrathful comments, revenge and finally takes away the lives of other characters who are Romeo's mother, Paris, Romeo and Juliet.

Mercutio's poignant lines are the ones that keep so many people feel intrigued and entertained throughout the play. His clever banter, witty comebacks, and sexually charged language make him compelling. He has his own view about love (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.11-32), pleasure of loving (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 2.1.7-21), fight (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 3.1.14-26) and dying (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 3.1.88-94). Even so, he performs a brilliant comedic monologue when he talks about the queen of dreams, Queen Mab (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.53-95). Some would even say that this speech is one of the key moments in Romeo and Juliet (Betteridge, 2005). This opinion means that Queen Mab speech should not be taken lightly by readers and audience. Though it may seem that Queen Mab speech has no relation toward the love story between

Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare must have had included this speech in the drama script because it has its importance. This speech also makes the actors who play Mercutio forced to understand deeper and become completely one with this character since as one might notice that there is something about this Mab which causes Mercutio to lose control to the extent that he has stopped by Romeo.

Everyone that has read Mercutio's lines on Queen Mab will have their own interpretations on what the words in these lines mean. Nobody would understand them as Shakespeare would. Nevertheless, as readers who would like to feel this closeness to Mercutio and to the way he is thinking, it becomes necessary for one to understand the possible meaning or meanings of this monologue. Thus, the writer decides to have a study on ambiguities that exist in Mercutio's monologue about Queen Mab in order to understand deeper about the meaning(s) of these lines.

1.2 Problem of the Study

Based on the background the writer has written above, the problem that she finds is the different types of ambiguities that occur in Mercutio's monologue about Queen Mab.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the problem of the study, the purpose of the study is to uncover any ambiguities that are found in Mercutio's Queen Mab speech in order to reveal any possible meaning(s) of these lines.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The writer uses Formalist-criticism since her analysis deals with the internal aspect, which is ambiguities that can be found in the Mercutio's monologue about Queen Mab in Romeo and Juliet play script. Since the analysis is related to various aspects related to poetry, in this chapter the writer explains (1) how Queen Mab speech is classified as poetry; (2) Queen Mab and its origin; (3) formalist-criticism; (4) how to analyze a poem through formalist criticism; (5) the definition and types of ambiguities by William Empson; (6) the previous studies that the writer has found on this subject.

2.1 Queen Mab Speech as Poetry

There are so many definitions of poetry that can be found in books and internet. Shelley, one of the greatest poets in the nineteenth century who also wrote an amazing poems about Queen Mab, believes that "poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be the expression of the Imagination" (1840, p.2). Hazlitt (1818), on the other hand, explains this term in a more specific way. He supposes poetry is "the natural impression of any object or event, by its vividness exciting an involuntary movement of imagination and passion, and producing, by sympathy, a certain modulation of the voice, or sounds, expressing it." There are so many more of definitions of poetry defined by many authors, poets, and critics.

At last, an assistant professor from Leland University named Raymond

Macdonald Alden decided to collect as many poetry definitions as possible and created his own stand point of poetry in his book *An Introduction of Poetry: For Students of English Literature*. Alden (1909, p.1) considers poetry as “the art of representing human experiences, in so far as they are of lasting or universal interest, in metrical language, usually with chief references to the emotions and by means of the imaginations.”

After defining the term poetry, Alden classified poetry as epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry. These classes are substantial of Hegel’s division of poetry and divided into the poet’s point of view. If a poet stands outside his material, representing something experienced in the world beyond himself, by what is often called “objective” method, the result is narrative or epic poetry. If he speaks for himself, setting forth inner experiences (not necessarily his own experiences) by “subjective” method, the result is lyrical poetry. If he combines these two methods, presenting an action objectively, but doing so in the words through the emotional experiences of the actors, the result is dramatic poetry.

Even though the definitions above are more than a decade old, some experts have not done any significant modification toward the definition of dramatic poetry. Johnston, for instance, states in his journal *Some Observations on Shakespeare’s Dramatic Verse in Richard III and Macbeth* (1999, para. 2) that dramatic poetry is very simply refers to “poetic language spoken aloud by characters in a drama or, in the case of individual poems, poetic language which suggests a strongly dramatic context (e.g., poetry directed to a particular listener in a specific setting, as in dramatic monologues).”

Johnston also agrees on Alden's statement that dramatic poetry, like the epic, presenting human experience objectively; and, like the lyric, viewing this experience through the minds and feelings, and expressing it through utterances, of the characters themselves (1909, p.75). Johnston (2001, para. 3) adds that dramatic poetry gives the readers and audiences "spoken language which departs considerably from naturalistic speech patterns, mainly because the poetry is more tightly and formally organized (i.e., patterned)". In other words, dramatic poetry somehow shows to its readers or audience that a poet can have both objective and subjective standpoints. Dramatic poetry also presents life as actually in progress through the actions and utterances of the characters concerned, it follows that its language attempts to represent the actual speech of man more directly, or—as is sometimes said—realistically, than the other forms of poetry.

From what Alden and Johnston explains in the quotations above, one can conclude that Shakespeare's play scripts, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, are categorized as dramatic poetry. Shakespeare presents an action objectively while at the same time being subjective through the emotional experiences of the characters in his play. The lines in his drama represent the actual speech of man more realistically compared to epic and lyric poems. These lines, such as the ones in *Queen Mab* speech, can be presented on stage although they have all elements that lines in a poem should have. Thus, the writer decides to analyze this monologue using intrinsic poetry elements such as meters, rhymes, mood and figurative languages to later determine the types of ambiguities that can be found in these lines.

2.1.1 Queen Mab's Origin

The writer has decided to include the origin of Queen Mab in this chapter since it will help her to understand better about this character whom Mercutio talks about in his monologue. Data below is merely a reference rather than a theory that needs to be applied on this study.

According to Boyce (1990, p.386), the name Mab is associated with fairies; there was a Queen Mabh in Irish fairy lore, and in the dialect of Shakespeare's native Warwickshire the word 'Mabled' was once current, meaning 'led astray by fairies or elves'. Also, Mab is expressly tiny, and the word 'mab' means 'small child' in Cymric, the language of Wales. Sterling states that in the Celtic tradition, Queen Mab was also known as Queen Maeve. "Maeve" means mead and it was said that Mab gave this blood red wine to all of her consorts.

Mead wine represented menstrual blood which was considered "the wine of women's wisdom". Mab could also mean "Drunk Woman" and "Queen Wolf".

However, mythologically Mab was the Queen of Connact; the warrior queen of the Ulster Cycle. She was the combined mother/warrior aspect of the Triple

Goddess. The Pagan festival of Mabon was celebrated in her honor each year at the Autumnal Equinox. During the festival, those wishing to be King were not

endorsed unless Mab invited them to drink of her mead wine. This ensured that the male king would be well versed in feminism and women's mysteries (1998,

para.2). Shakespeare's interest in Wales and its language at the period when

Romeo and Juliet was written, and its importance as the origin of many elements of Warwickshire folklore, make it a possible source for the name.

Queen Mab has enticed many people to write about her in fiction. Ben Jonson, for example, recounted the tale of Queen Mab during his performance before Anne of Denmark (the wife of James I) as she journeyed from Scotland to England in 1603 (his performance was later printed as Jonson's *Entertainment at Althorpe*). In 1627, Michael Drayton wrote a fairy poem called *Nymphidia*. *Nymphidia*, an attendant on Queen Mab, tells the poet everything that happens at Mab's court, and the most famous work after Shakespeare to feature Queen Mab is by the Romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley. In 1813, Shelley wrote a poem in nine cantos called *Queen Mab*. All those popularity that Queen Mab gains is all the merit from Shakespeare's Mercutio who gives a monologue about her in *Romeo and Juliet*.

2.2 Formalism

Practitioners of formalism believe that the form of a literary work, "far from being the decorative wrapping of its more meaningful content, is crucial in producing its meanings" (Harris, 2010). In other words, formalists do not only read a literary work just for what it says, but also for the often tricky ways in which it is written. They are sure that if we pay attention to the forms a literary work is created, then we can then find an origin behind its plurality of meaning.

Habib (2005, p.602) states that literature "is no longer viewed as aiming to represent reality or character or to impart moral or intellectual lessons, but is considered to be an object in its own right, autonomous (possessing its own laws) and autotelic (having its aims internal to itself). Moreover, in this formalist view,

literature does not convey any paraphrasable message; rather it communicates what is otherwise ineffable.” From those two definitions above, one can see that formalists care about the internal aspects of a literary work—such as rhyme, stress and figurative language of a poem—more than they do about the external aspects—such as social or historical condition when a poem was created. They believe everything that they need to know about a literary text’s meaning tends to be stated in the text itself; by drawing attention to its unusual and innovative forms, it refers to just itself. Thus, since the writer is going to be one of the formalists, she will focus her study much more on the monologue itself rather than any relative importance of the text’s historical, biographical, and cultural contexts.

2.2.1 Analyzing a poem through formalism-criticism

In analyzing a poem by using formalist-criticism, one will need to know more about some basic elements of a poem. Henricksen and Schrier (2004, p.1-2) discuss some of them, such as:

- a. Meter: the pattern created in a line by its structure of sounds and stressed syllables. The two most common meters that exist in English verses are named accentual meter or strong stress meter and accentual-syllabic meter.

1. Accentual meter refers to verse in which the number of stressed syllables in a line remains constant, regardless of the total number of syllables. This is the common meter in Old English verse and in popular ballads.

2. On the other hand, accentual-syllabic meter refers to lines of verse that maintain a specific number of stressed syllables per line, as well as a more or less fixed number of total syllables. Often, not only is the number of stressed syllables fixed, but the pattern in which they appear is also consistent. This kind of meter is the most prevalent meter in English poetry

b. Foot: the basic unit of the accentual syllabic line. This unit is composed of a certain number of stressed and unstressed syllables.

Poems can be classified by the number of feet per line in the following way:

1. Dimeter: two feet
2. Trimeter: three feet
3. Tetrameter: four feet
4. Pentameter: five feet
5. Hexameter: six feet
6. Heptameter: seven feet
7. Octameter: eight feet

c. Since a foot can contain various arrangements of stressed and unstressed syllables, one can specify not just the number of feet per line, but also the type of foot. The following types of feet are the most common:

1. Iamb: two syllables; unstressed, stressed
2. Trochee: two syllables; stressed, unstressed

3. Dactyl: three syllables; stressed, unstressed, unstressed
4. Anapest: three syllables; unstressed, unstressed, stressed
5. Amphibrach: three syllables; unstressed, stressed, unstressed
6. Spondee: two syllables; both stressed

d. Rhyme: poets can arrange rhyming lines in different configurations, to different effect. Reaske (1966) mentions types of rhyme which are:

1. Feminine rhyme: occurs if the rhymed syllables are stressed before the final syllable in the line. Sir Philip Sidney uses feminine rhymes in some lines of *The Nightingale*: *But I, who daily craving/ Cannot have to content me/ Have more cause to lament me/ Since wanting is more woe than too much having.* In the end of these lines, all stressed syllables come before the final syllable in the end of line.
2. Masculine rhyme: occurs if the rhymed syllables are the last in the line. For instance, the lines: *Ring out your bells, let morning shows be spread/ For Love is dead (Ring Out Your Bells, Sir Phillip Sidney)* have masculine rhyme in the words “spread” and “dead”.
3. End rhyme: rhymes appearing at the end of lines of poetry. For example, in the following lines, Dryden describes a contemporary by using end rhyme: *stiff in opinions, always in the wrong/ was everything by starts, and nothing long.*
4. Internal rhyme: even though most poems are written with *end rhyme*, sometimes we find internal rhyme where the rhyming

words are found within the line, often a word in the middle of a line rhyming with the last word or sound in line. For instance, the words *falls* and *walls* are the internal rhyme of the line in the opening of Tennyson's poem, "Blow, Bugle, Blow": *The splendor falls on castle walls.*

5. Alliteration (initial rhyme): the same sound starts several words.

The following lines from Swinburn's "Chorus from 'Atlanta'" have several alliterations: *For winter's rains and ruins are over/ And all the season of snows and sins/ The day dividing lover and lover/ The light that loss, the night that wins.*

6. Assonance: the repetition of vowel sounds, not necessarily exactly rhyming. There is assonance, for example, between the words "bird" and "thirst" because the "er" sound is identical in both words while at the same time enclosed by different consonant sound.

7. Consonance: the reverse of assonance. Thus in consonance, consonant sounds are the same but there are different vowel sounds. The words "wood" and "weed" have identical consonant sounds but different vowel sounds and thus they become consonance.

8. Perfect rhyme (exact rhyme): occurs when the rhyming vowel and consonants are exactly the same such as *slow* and *grow*, *fleet* and *street*, *buying* and *crying*, *bring* and *sing*.

9. Slant rhyme (or off-rhyme): imperfect rhyme in which either the consonants or the vowels rhyme, but not both. In these examples: quietness and express, unheard and endear'd, on and tone, the initial consonants, and the vowel sounds differ, but in each pair, the final consonant sound is identical.

10. Onomatopoeia: the technique of using a word whose sound suggests its meaning, for instance: *buzz*, *crackle*, *hum*, *shiver* and *quake*.

e. Mood: the creation of an atmosphere through the proliferation of certain common emotions (Reaske, 1966). If everyone in a poem is sad or speaks of his sadness, for example, there is a mood of sadness dominating the atmosphere or world of poem. Mood is thus the prevailing tone in a poem and this tone is established by the accumulation of a set emotions. It is possible to have a "gay" or "pensive" mood, or a mood of love. There is, in short, a mood for every set of generalized emotions.

In analyzing Mercutio's monologue about Queen Mab, the writer will thus use any of the useful elements above to help her then to find any possibilities of hidden meanings in one or more lines.

2.2.2 William Empson's Ambiguities

Since ambiguities in Mercutio's monologue are the writer's main concern, she will use the theory which is stated by William Empson in his book *Seven Types of Ambiguities* (1963). In this book, Empson states that one can call a line,

a poem, or a story ambiguous when “we recognize that there could be a puzzle as to what the author meant, in that alternative views might be taken without sheer misreading” (Empson, p.x). So if a pun is quite obvious it would not ordinarily be called ambiguous, because there is no room for puzzling. Empson also states that until we have done our analysis, we cannot be sure whether a pun’s total effect is ambiguous or not. However, the fundamental situation, whether it deserves to be called ambiguous or not, is that a word or grammatical structure is effective in several ways at once.

Empson determines that there are seven types of ambiguities as the followings:

1. First-type ambiguities are, for Empson, the hardest to illustrate with specific examples, yet it is the most capacious and typical. Harris (2010, p.13-18) also talks about Empson and this type of ambiguity. Harris mentions how Empson defines ambiguity as ‘any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language’ (2010, p.16). Thus, almost any statements, Empson concedes, can be ambiguous inasmuch as it can produce different reactions. Harris also helps Empson in explaining that metaphor in particular produces deliberately ambiguous effects. Metaphor is a figure of speech in which an object, idea, or phrase is substituted for another in order to suggest the similarities between two. In other words, it compares one thing to another directly. For instance, if we say, “Erin is my little muffin,” little muffin has

become a metaphor for Erin. Because of its reliance on metaphor, literary language is especially susceptible to such ambiguity. To illustrate his argument, Empson discusses the fourth line of Shakespeare's sonnet 73. Its first three lines read "*That time of year thou mayst in me behold/When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang/Upon those boughs which shake against the cold*" (Shakespeare, trans. 1988, 73: 1-3). According to Harris, this is the standard metaphor of old age as the autumn of one's years. But the line that interests Empson is the next.

Here the narrator shifts from his autumnal metaphor, with its images of trees losing their leaves, and compares himself to "*Bare ruined choirs, where late the birds sang*" (Shakespeare, trans. 1988, 73:4.). This new metaphor is ambiguous in several ways. Empson then discusses that

The comparison holds for many reason; because ruined monastery choirs are places in which to sing, because they involve sitting in a row.... because the cold and Narcissistic charm suggested by choir-boys suits well with Shakespeare's feeling for the object of the Sonnets, and for various sociological and historical reasons (the protestant destruction of monasteries; fear of Puritanism), which it would be hard to trace out in their proportions; these reasons, and many more relating the simile to its place in the Sonnet, must all combine to give the line its beauty, and there is a sort of ambiguity in not knowing which of them to hold most clearly in mind. Clearly this is involved in all such richness and heightening of effect, and the machinations of ambiguity are among the very roots of poetry. (1963, p.2-3)

Harris (2010, p.18) notes that, in Empson's reading, the myriad ambiguities of line 4 do not entirely open up to endless semantic play.

Nor does his discussion seek to make reader's attention exclusively to the words on the page. Instead, line 4's metaphorical twists and turns lead Empson to consider a) the mind of author ('Shakespeare's feeling') ; b) historical context ('the protestant destruction'); and c) the experience of the reader ('there is a sort of ambiguity in not knowing which [reason for the metaphor] to hold most clearly in mind'). So, this explanation seconds Harris's argument that in formalist analysis, one might also have to include other factors than the text itself.

2. In second-type ambiguities, Empson specifies "two or more alternative meanings are fully resolved into one" (1963, p.48). There are alternatives, even in the mind of the author, not only different emphases as in the first type; but an ordinary good reading can extract one resultant from them. In simpler words, second-type ambiguities exist when there are two or more words, lines or statements have the same meaning simultaneously. According to Empson, this type is more common than any of the later types. He then gives an example from an anonymous poem: "*Cupid is winged and doth range/Her country so my love doth change/But change she earth, or change she sky/Yet I will love her till I die*" (Ford, trans. 1997, 21-24).

Empson exposes that these lines could mean

I will love her though she moves from this part of the earth to one out of my reach; I will love her though she goes to live under different skies; I will love her though she moves from this earth and sky to another planet; I will love her though she moves into a social or intellectual sphere where I cannot follow... (1963, p.48)

However, all those meanings have the same main point which is 'I will love you no matter where you are or where you live.' Thus, in these lines that the second-type of ambiguities can be found.

3. The condition for third-type ambiguity, according to Empson, is that

"two apparently unconnected ideas, which are connected only by being both relevant in the context, can be given in one word simultaneously" (1963, p.102). The key word of this definition is "unconnected" which differentiate this type from the second-type ambiguities. In other words, there are two seemingly irrelevant ideas or meanings which can be stated in one context at the same time.

Empson takes an example from a line that is said by Delilah in Milton's *Samson Agonistes*: "*That specious monster, my accomplished snare*" (Milton, trans. 1990, 240). Empson then explains that

specious (means) 'beautiful and deceitful'; monster (means) 'something unnatural and something striking shown as a sign of disaster'; accomplished, 'skilled in the arts of blandishments and successful in undoing her husband.' The point here us the sharpness of distinction between the two meanings, of which the reader us forced to be aware... (1963, p.102)

So, the third-type ambiguities exist in words in a line that have contradictory or irrelevant meanings, yet the author seems to put those words together in purpose so that it can create an additional effect for the readers, as any pun would.

4. An ambiguity of the fourth type occurs when “two or more meanings of a statement do not agree among themselves, but combine to make clear a more complicated state of mind in the author” (Empson, p.133). This type of ambiguities seems to be derived from the third-type ambiguities. However Empson discusses their differences

I put into the third type cases where one was intended to be mainly conscious of a verbal subtlety; in the fourth type the subtlety may be as great, the pun as distinct, the mixture of modes of judgment as puzzling, but they are not the main focus of consciousness because the stress of the situation absorbs them, and they are felt to be natural under the circumstances... (1963, p.133)

Thus, one can say that these fourth type ambiguities pay more attention on what is happening in the author’s mind while the third type cases focus on the verbal matter.

5. Empson mentions that an ambiguity of the fifth type “occurs when the author is discovering his idea in the act of writing, or not holding it all in his mind at once” (1963, p.155). This type is another type of ambiguities that also stresses on the state of an author’s mind when he or she creates a literary work. However, Empson also adds in this kind of ambiguities that occasionally there will be a “simile which

applies nothing exactly, but lies half-way to between two things when the author is moving from one to the other" (1963, p.155). Simile is a figure of speech like a metaphor, but using the words "like" or "as" to compare the two objects. If one says, for example, "I love you as much as I love a million red M&M's," one is using a simile. He or she is making a comparison between his or her love to someone and to a million red M&M's. This figure of speech becomes a sign of the shifting process from one idea to another in the author's mind.

Empson gives an example of this case from Shakespeare in his play

Measure for Measure: *Our Natures do pursue/Like Rats that ravyn
downe their proper Bane/A thirsty evil, and when we drinke we die*

(Shakespeare, trans. 1963, 1.2). Empson discusses that

Evidently the first idea was that lust itself was the poison; but the word *proper*, introduced as meaning "suitable for rats," but also having an irrelevant suggestion of "right and natural," and more exact memory of those nowadays phosphorous) poisons which are designed to prevent rats from dying in the wainscot, produced the grander and less usual image, in which the eating of the poison corresponds to the Fall of Man, and it is drinking water, a healthful and natural human function, which it is intolerable to avoid, and which brings death. By reflection, then, *proper bane* becomes ambiguous, since it is now water as well as poison (1963, p.155).

Shakespeare uses simile to shift his one idea to another which then lead Empson to conclude that "proper bane" itself is ambiguous since it has two meanings. The shifting of ideas becomes Empson's main

concern in this case and how this process can be as puzzling for the readers, thus he classifies it as the fifth type of ambiguities.

6. An ambiguity of the sixth type occurs “when a statement says nothing, by tautology, by contradiction, or by irrelevant statements; so that the reader is forced to invent statements of his own and they are liable to conflict with one another” (1963, p. 176). Here, Empson stresses in the invention of meanings (statements) by readers so they can understand some words in a certain line. When the reader has no idea what the author means or talks about, this type of ambiguity will occur simultaneously. Taking example from the beauty of Zuleika Dobson which was “not strictly beautiful” (Beerbohm, trans. 1963, p.3), Empson interprets that one is not supposed easily imagine how beautiful Zuleika was. In this state, the reader has no clue at all about this Zuleika so they are “forced” to create their own image of Zuleika. In the next line, Zuleika’s eyes were described as “a trifle large.” Empson continues that the readers don’t know how large this trifle may be, so they have no means of being certain whether they should be charmed or appalled and this is one of the cases when the seventh-type of ambiguity will occur.

7. An example of the seventh type of ambiguity, or as Empson himself calls it as the most ambiguous that can be conceived, occurs “when the two meanings of the word, the two values of the ambiguity, are the two opposite meanings defined by the context, so that the total

effect is to show a fundamental division in the writer's mind" (1963, p.192). He also adds that a contradiction of this kind may be meaningless, but can never be a blank. Empson then quotes Rupert Brooke's line "*The keen/Impassioned beauty of a great machine*" (qtd. Seven Types of Ambiguity, 1963, p. 205).

It seemed to Empson that:

the contrast between the appearance of effort and the appearance of certainty, between the forces greater than human and control divine in its foreknowledge, which is what excites one about engines; they have the calm of *beauty* without its complacency, the strength of *passion* without its disorder. So it was a shock to me when I looked at one of the quotations of the line one is always seeing about and found that the beauty was unpassioned, because machines, as all good nature poets know, have no hearts (1963, p. 205).

This last type of ambiguity is probably the most puzzling of all.

However, if one pays attention to the key terms here which are

"opposite meanings" and "division in the writer's mind", it might not

be a difficult to understand. It has the same characteristics as the

fourth and fifth type of ambiguities, which is the dependence of the

author's state of mind. However, the difference from the previous

types is that this type combines two "opposite" values or meanings as

one then reflect them so that we know what happened in the author's

mind.

There is a high probability that not all the seven types of these ambiguities

will exist in the Mercutio's monologue about Queen Mab. However, the writer

would like to find any type of ambiguities that can be found in this monologue with the help of the formal details of the poem so one will understand more about this poem and its possible meanings.

2.4 Previous Studies

The writer has not found any research or essays that focus on applying ambiguities theory by William Empson. However, she did find some essays on Mercutio and his actions throughout the play in the internet. One of them is an essay titled “Mercutio’s Character: The Lethal Joker in Romeo and Juliet which is written by Jem Bloomfield. In this essay, Bloomfield agrees with what some critics are saying that though Mercutio is not as central as Romeo or Juliet, she is a “nuanced role whom provides the very hinge of play’s shift from comedy to tragedy” (2007, para.1). She explains that Mercutio is a “louche aristocrat” who never takes anything seriously. However, she discusses on how Mercutio changes his playful tone into bitterness when he is dying and the reason why he curses not only Tybalt who kills him, but also everyone that is involved in the feuding families who are the household of Montague and Capulet.

Sumantha Dutta, on the other hand, also submits an essay titled “The Role of Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare” which talks about how Mercutio becomes such a likeable character. Dutta mentions in brief about how Mercutio is so different from Romeo. Romeo is an idealistic romantic while Mercutio is portrayed as a character with skeptical approach to Romeo’s visions of love. In the end of the essay, she explains that Mercutio maintains “a light

hearted element of wit through his presence in the play and to represent moral integrity and the strength of fighting for what you believe in” (2008, para.7). Both essays reason why Mercutio is such an important character in *Romeo and Juliet* and talk in depth on how he fights for the ones that he loves until the end of his life. Although none of the essays above specifically relates to Queen Mab or ambiguities specifically, they will become references for the writer to cross-check her interpretations in this study.

In this study, the writer analyzes the Queen Mab speech by finding the intrinsic poetry elements, such as meters, mood, rhyme, and figurative language that will lead her to classify the type of ambiguities that William Empson states in his book. Intrinsic poetry elements are very important in finding any possible hidden meaning or ambiguities. Next the writer concludes lines in which ambiguities might occur and then classifies this finding into seven types of ambiguities. After knowing the possible meanings that are revealed from the classification of ambiguities, the writer analyzes the importance of this speech and its correlation toward the plot of the play. This last step is to prove to the audience and readers that Queen Mab speech is not supposed to be taken lightly and that it is one of the key moments of this magnificent play.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, the writer discusses (1) the intrinsic poetry elements in Queen Mab Speech which will help the writer determine (2) the types of ambiguities that she can find in monologue of Queen Mab and the creation of possible meanings.

3.1 Intrinsic Poetry Elements in Queen Mab Speech

In order to find ambiguities in Queen Mab speech, one should analyze the intrinsic poetry elements in these lines first. These intrinsic elements are the meters, rhymes, and mood.

Mercutio O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you:

U - / U - / - - / U - / U - /

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes

- U / U - / U - / - / U U - /

In shape no bigger than an agate-stone

U - / - - / U - / U - / U - /

On the forefinger of an alderman,

U U - / U - / U U - / U - /

Drawn with a team of little atomi

- U U / - U / - U U / - U /

Over men's noses as they lie asleep.

U - / - - / U - / U - / U - /

Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,

U - /U - /U - /U - /U - /

Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,

- /U /U - /U - / U - / - - /

Time out a'mind the fairies coachmakers:

U /U - /U - /U - /U - /

Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,

U - /U - / - U / - - / U - /

The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,

U - /U - /U - / U - /U - /

Her traces of the smallest spider web,

U - /U - /U - / U - /U - /

Her collars of the moonshine's wat'ry beams,

U - /U - /U - / U - /U - /

Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,

U - / U - / U - / U - /U - /

Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,

U - /U - /U - / - - /U - /

Not half so big as a round little worm

- - /U - /U - / - - /U - /

Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.

- U / U - /U - /U - /U - /

And in this state she gallops night by night

U - / - - / U - /U - / U - /

Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love,

- /U - / U - / U - /U - /

O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on cur'sies straight,

U - /U - / U - / U - /U - /

60

65

70

O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dreams on fees,

U - / U - / U - / U - /

O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,

U - / U - / U - / U - /

Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,

- - / U - / U - / U - /

Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.

U - / U - / U - / - - / U - /

Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,

U - / U - / U - / U - /

And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;

U - / - - / U - / U - / U - /

And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail

U - / U - / - U / U - / - - /

Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,

- U / U - / U - / U - / U - /

Then he dreams of another benefice.

U - / - U / U - / U - / U - /

Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,

U - / U - / U - / U - / U - /

And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,

U - / U - / U - / U - / U - /

Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,

U - / U - / - U - / - / U - /

Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon

U - / - - / U - / U - / U - /

Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,

U / U - / U - / U - / U - /

75

80

85

And being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,

U - / U - / U - / U - / U - /

And sleeps again: This is that very Mab

U - / U - / - U/ - -/U - /

That plats the manes of horses in the night,

U - / U - / U - / U - / U - /

And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,

U - / U - / - U/ - -/U - /

Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.

U - / - U/ - - / - U/ - - /

This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,

- U/ U - / U - - / - U/ - - /

That presses them and learns them first to bear,

U - / U - / U - / - - / U - /

Making them women of good carriage.

- U/ - U/ - U/ - - / U - /

This is she—

- U/ - /

(Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.53-95)

This monologue generally has iambic pentameters in its lines. However there are some exceptions in certain lines which then give signals to the actor that will perform Mercutio about how this monologue starts from a pretty plain intonation that becomes out of control, judging from so many exceptions of meters in the last five lines. In line 91, for example, there are an iambic foot, two trochaic feet, and two spondaic feet. In the next line, there are two iambic feet, two trochaic feet, and one spondaic foot. In line 94, the meters is hardly an iambic pentameter anymore. It has three trochaic feet, one spondaic foot, and one iambic foot.

Meters in lines help one to read a poem correctly. When a poem starts in a certain pattern of meter, such as iambic pentameter in this speech, with little exceptions of other feet such as trochee, dactyl, or spondee, then there will not be any significant change of intonation from line to line. However, this speech is gradually having more and more exceptions in its lines when it comes to the end.

As explained in previous paragraph, many other feet “occurs” and “put aside” the iambic feet which in the beginning dominate this speech. Of course, when reading these lines, one should consider a significant change of tone since they are not “ruled” by iambic feet anymore. Finding many other feet—instead of iambic feet—toward the end of the speech, the writer grabs the existence of any hidden meaning in these lines.

Empson also mentions that “the demands of meter allow the poet to say something which is not normal colloquial English, so that the reader thinks of various colloquial forms which are near to it, and puts them together” (1963, p.28). It is for such reasons as above that poetry can be more compact, while seeming to be less precise, than prose. Thus, the meters have a great role in the occurrence of any hidden meaning or ambiguities.

Some other intrinsic poetry elements besides meters in this monologue, such as:

a. Mood

The mood of this speech starts out with playful tones from Mercutio, as he tries to prove to Romeo that his dream means nothing. However, this tone is gradually changing towards the end of the monologue. This can be seen

from the regular meter of the beginning of the speech which then changes into irregular in the last six lines. Empson explains that the mood or the atmosphere is “the unconsciousness of what is implied by the meaning” (1963, p.18). In this speech, it is such an anomaly since Mercutio who is really clever and so controlled with banters can be out of control when he is talking about a fairy that is supposedly bringing dreams to human. This anomaly will be explained further when the writer discuss on the types of ambiguities that she found in this speech.

b. Rhymes

According to Empson, “the sound are valuable because they suggest incidental connections of meaning” (1963, p. 11). There are six kinds of rhymes that the writer found in the monologue that should be taken into consideration as one of the signs of the occurrence of an ambiguity or a hidden meaning.

1. Feminine rhymes occur in lines 57 and 60: Drawn with a team of little **atomi**/ .../ Made by the joiner squirrel or **old** grub.
2. Masculine rhymes occur in all lines in this monologue except the ones that have feminine rhymes which are lines 57 and 60. For instance, lines 53-56 have masculine rhymes in each: *O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you/ She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes/ In shape no bigger than an agate stone/ On the forefinger of an alderman.*

3. End rhymes occur in several lines in this speech, but none of these end rhymes come one right next after another—some of them even have more than ten lines in the middle of the two end rhymes. Perfect end rhymes occur in lines 59 and 67: *Her chariot is an empty hazel**nut**/ .../ Her waggoner, a small grey-coated **gnat***; lines 84 and 86: *Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish **blades**/ .../ Drums in his ear, at which he starts and **wakes***; lines 58 and 80: *Over men's noses as they lie **asleep**/ .../ Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies **asleep***; and lines 70 and 89: *And in this state she gallops night by **night**/ .../ That plats the manes of horses in the **night***. However, the writer also found half/slant end rhyme in several lines, such as lines 62 and 64: *Her wagon spokes made of long spinners **legs**/.../ Her traces, of the smallest spider **web***; and in lines 65 and 74: *Her collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry **beams**/... /O'er ladies lips, who straight on kisses **dream***. Both of the half end rhymes have the similar vowel sounds in the last syllables of each line.

4. Internal rhymes can be found in line 67: *Her wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat*; line 70: *And in this state, she gallops **night** by **night***; lines 73-74: *O'er courtiers' **knees**, that dream on **curtsies** straight/ O'er lawyers' **fingers**, who straight dream on **fees***; and line 93: *That presses them and learns **them** first to bear*.

5. Alliterations are found in many lines of this speech, such as in line 62: *Her wagon spokes made of long spinners **legs***; and in lines 70-78: *And*

*in this state she gallops **night by night**/ **Through** lovers' brains, and
then they dream of love/ O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies
straight/ O'er lawyers fingers, who straight dream on fees/ O'er ladies
lips, who straight on kisses dream/ **Which** oft the angry Mab with
blisters plagues/ **Because** their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.*

However, the same alliteration [ð] goes without stopping in the last eight lines which are lines 88-95, except line 91 which only has [m] alliteration: *And sleeps again. **This** is **that** very Mab/ **That** plats **the** manes of horses in **the** night/ And bakes **the** elflocks in foul sluttish hairs/ **Which** once untangled **much** misfortune bodes/ **This** is **the** hag, when maids lie on **their** backs/ **That** presses **them** and learns **them** first to bear/ Making **them** women of good carriage/ **This** is she—.* These alliterations should be considered as the signal to the movement of the flat emotion to fire through the end of this speech.

6. Assonances and consonances are found in lines which also have half end rhyme, such as lines 62 and 64: *Her wagon spokes made of long spinners legs/.../ Her traces, of the smallest spider web*; lines 59 and 60: *Her chariot is an empty hazelnut/ Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub*; lines 73 and 81: *O'er lawyers fingers, who straight dream on fees/ .../ Then dreams he of another benefice*; and lines 91 and 92: *Which once untangled much misfortune bodes/ This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs.* These lines have only the same vowel sound

in each final syllables, thus they could also be classified as assonance/consonance and half end rhyme.

Other than meters, mood and rhyme are also useful in determining whether a line has any 'double meaning' or ambiguities and the emotion of Mercutio himself.

When the meter of a line is off and there is found any assonance or slant rhyme then the possibilities of any hidden meaning also become bigger. Line 93, for example, does not have many exceptional feet since it has four iambic feet and one spondaic foot. However, there are consonance—[s] in the words presses, learns, and first; [ð] in the words this, them, them—and internal perfect rhymes (them, them) found in this single line. This finding should not be taken lightly. Shakespeare was a clever man. There must be some other hidden meaning—other than the literal meaning of the written words—if he wrote it this way. Therefore, the writer takes this finding seriously and analyzes any possible hidden meaning in this speech which will be explained in the classification of ambiguity types below.

3.2 Different Types of Ambiguities in Queen Mab Speech

As explained in the previous chapter, there are seven types of ambiguities that Empson determines in his book. However, there are cases when in this monologue, some lines may be classified to two types at the same time.

3.2.1 The First Type of Ambiguities

As Empson explained, the first type ambiguities arise when a detail is effective in several ways at once. The writer found there are two first type of

ambiguities in this speech. First, in line 54 which is *'she is the fairies' midwife'*.

Webster's Thesaurus in Romeo and Juliet interpret midwife as an *accoucheur*, oculist, or obstetrician (2005, p.31). An *accoucheur* derived from French means male midwife. While an oculist derived from Latin *oculus* 'eye' means a person who specializes in the medical treatment of diseases or defects of the eye. On the other hand, an obstetrician as we all know is a physician or surgeon qualified to practice in childbirth.

Through all definitions above, one may eliminate the first definition as an *accoucheur* since Shakespeare clearly uses the pronoun 'she'. Most people would choose the third definition which is a person who is qualified in helping a woman to deliver her baby. However, midwife can also mean an oculist. As stated above, oculist heals diseases related to eyes. Here we can join those two definitions into someone that 'delivers' visions or what we would call dreams.

Another first type ambiguities occurs in line 92-94 which are *'This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs/that presses them and learns them first to bear/making them women of good carriage.'* In these lines Queen Mab is simply no longer a midwife, but a hag. Hag could mean a female evil spirit or demon (Bloom, 2004) or a night-mare [Anglo Saxon 'mare' means 'incubus'] (Evans, 2003). If one puts them together, Queen Mab now is described as a monster that gives nightmares. This very fiend is the one that makes unmarried women, or maids, have to lie on their backs and presses those women and teaches them how to bear either the weight of a man—as in when they have a sexual intercourse for the first time—or to bear children. These meanings continue in the next line.

Carriage could mean (1) deportment or (2) burden. Deportment because as in the way a person stands and walks, particularly as an element of an etiquette which then relate to how a lady should act in certain ways since she carries her husband's name. On the other hand, burden is related to the two possible meanings of the word 'bear' above. The weight of a man can be a burden to a woman physically as they are having a sexual intercourse, and bearing children would be a burden mentally since a woman would not be appreciated if she can't bear any children.

These two contrast meanings of Queen Mab can set the tone to the speech. This speech is gradually becoming very emotional for Mercutio which one can also see through the irregular meters as explained above.

3.2.2 The Second Type of Ambiguities

In this type of ambiguities, there are two or more alternative meanings are fully resolved into one. The following lines of the monologue are full of the second type of ambiguity. Queen Mab comes:

*In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomi
Over men's noses as they lie asleep.
Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out a' mind the fairies coachmakers:
Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,
Her traces of the smallest spider web,
Her collars of the moonshine's wat'ry beams,
Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,
Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,
Not half so big as a round little worm
Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.*

(Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.54-68)

These lines beautifully describe Queen Mab, her chariot and her employees. Shakespeare explains how Queen Mab is no bigger than the stone on a city councilman's ring. This stone when put on a ring can range from 11 x 16 millimeters to 15 x 24 millimeters. The readers and audiences must imagine a fairy this small rides around in her small wagon drawn by tiny creatures as small as atoms. She rides over men's noses at night as they lie sleeping.

In the next lines, Shakespeare details Queen Mab's wagon is from an empty hazelnut that is made and decorated by two small creatures. First is the sharp toothed squirrel, like a 'joiner' or a furniture maker (Evans, 2003, p. 92). Second is the mature grub (around 7-8 months before they turn into puppas and later adult Japanese beetles [2010, p. 1]) which usually bear holes in nuts or feeds on the roots of grass. These animals have made wagons for the fairies as long as anyone can remember. The spokes of Queen Mab's wagon are made of spiders' legs (around 20-250 millimeters long [2011, para. 3]) and the cover of the wings of the grasshoppers (around 38-50 millimeters long [2011, para. 4]). The traces, or harnesses, are made of the smallest spider webs and the collars out of moonbeams.

Her wagon driver is a tiny gnat—a kind of fly that bites—which is not even half the size of a little round worm that comes from the finger of a lazy servant. This gnat is wearing a grey coat and holding a whip made of cricket's exoskeleton—since crickets do not have bones/endoskeleton (2011, para. 1)—with the lash made of a membrane of either animal or vegetable (Evans, 2003, p. 93) which is very thin.

Shakespeare gives his readers and audiences a very detailed description about Queen Mab, her chariot and her employees. However, these fifteen lines can simply mean “Queen Mab is really small, her chariot is made for her only, and her employees are smaller than her.”

3.2.3 The Fourth Type of Ambiguities

The fourth type ambiguity occurs when a statement has two or more meanings that are in contrast, but they are still combined to state the author’s complicated mind (Empson, 1963, p.133). Fourth type of ambiguity occurs in line 74-76: “*O’er ladies’ lips, who straight on kisses dream,/Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,/Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are*”.

One may argue that this opposite description is because of the insecurity of Mercutio of his inner self. Mercutio is a person that believes in pleasure, fun way of living, and loyalty. However, he does not seem favoring ladies in the whole play. Some experts, such as Clum (2000) in his book *Still Acting Gay: Male Homosexuality in Modern Drama* and Hadilgo (2001) in *Paradigms Found: Feminist, Gay, and New Historicist Readings of Shakespeare*, agree that Mercutio extensive love for Romeo is not only because he is one of Romeo’s close friend, but also because he truly ‘loves’ Romeo as in love from a woman to a man. However, he insists on not showing it, but instead he hates women and why he unfairly has a body of a man but a woman’s heart and soul.

This thought about Mercutio’s sexual insecurity is attached to the same type of ambiguity that is expressed in later lines: “... *This is that very Mab/ that plats the manes of horses in the night/ and bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hair/*

which once untangled much misfortune bodes" (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.89-91). Mercutio, after talking about a life of a soldier, suddenly turns his direction to the manes of horses which then lead him to talk about "sluttish hair". Sluttish here can mean slatternly, loose, untidy, easy, light, promiscuous, blowsy, blowzy, foul, dirty or unkempt (Webster's Thesaurus). However, Evans interpret sluttish hair belongs to prostitutes (2003, p.156). If one combines these two sources, both of them relate to each other. Prostitutes' hair can be considered dirty for some people and untidy if one refers to the state of their hair after their sexual intercourse. Shakespeare then relates this state to the tale that in this kind of hair, the elves would curse it so that the hair will become stiff and harder. Some people believe that when one starts to untangle the hair by force, it will bring much more bad luck to the owner.

This sudden turn from the dreams of soldiers into the tale of hair and elves also still relates to the hatred to women that Mercutio possesses. These lines are the effects of Mercutio's jealousy and rage toward them. They do not appreciate their bodies which Mercutio wish to be in one. This wishful thinking makes him cursing them through the elves and the misfortunes that he prays for them.

3.2.4 The Fifth Type of Ambiguity

Empson mentions that when the author is discovering his idea in the act of writing his works, or when he does not holding his ideas all in his mind at once, then the fifth type of ambiguity will occur (1963, p.155). One of the fifth type of ambiguity's characteristics is the occurrence of similes. Lines 64-65 of this monologue are the only lines that have this kind of figurative language in the

speech. Mercutio is talking about the size of the wagoner of Queen Mab's chariot which is "*not half so big as a round little worm/pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.*" This kind of ambiguity occurs to show that when Shakespeare discovers this idea in the middle of writing these lines.

When Shakespeare talks about the driver of Queen Mab chariot, he mentions that he wears a grey coat and his size is not even half the size of a worm that is pricked from a lazy finger of a maid. Evans (2003, p. 92) says that at the time Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, it was still believed that when a maid is lazy and did not do her chores, her fingers would grow little worms. The writer believes that Shakespeare put this tale on purpose to once again show the reader or audience how Mercutio unconsciously dislike women. In fact, when Mercutio includes this tale into his speech is the first sign of his displeasure toward women.

The next indications are in lines 74-76 and 89-91 which are explained in the sub-subchapter The Fourth Type of Ambiguity.

3.2.5 The Sixth Type of Ambiguity

When the readers are forced to use their imagination since a statement does not explain its meaning clearly, there will occur the sixth type of ambiguity (1963, p.176). The sixth type of ambiguity can be found in the exact same lines the second type of ambiguity occurs which are lines 54-68. In the sub-sub chapter of the second type of ambiguity, the writer has explained about any sizes and ages that are possible to find out such as the possible size of an agate stone ring, how old is a mature grub, the possible length of spider legs, grasshoppers' wings, or a gnat. However, despite these possible measurements, no one would be able to

know exactly the precise size of Queen Mab, her wagon, or her employees.

Shakespeare somehow forces one's imagination from the lines' description.

In line 56, Queen Mab is mentioned "drawn with a team of little atomi".

Bloom explains that atomi are tiny creatures in the size of atoms (2009, p. 38) and then Evans further mentions that little here may be taken as an intensive (2003, p.

92). Scientists may know the exact size of atoms through the help of microscopes,

however, Shakespeare seems rather not satisfied by using only atomi, but he also

mentions that Queen Mab is drawn by little atomies. This makes the readers and

audiences imagine more about how small exactly is these employees of Queen

Mab.

The same case happens in lines afterwards. In line 63, Shakespeare

explains that Queen Mab's chariot's traces, or harnesses, are made of the smallest

spider webs. One might ask how small the smallest spider web is. No one would

know the answer. Even Shakespeare himself probably would not be able to find

out the exact size. Moreover, in the line after that, Shakespeare describes Queen

Mab's collar is made of *moonshine wat'ry beams*. In order to see the moonbeams

collars and smallest spider webs traces, one could only use one's imagination.

This kind of ambiguity somehow refers to the definition of poetry itself: "Poetry,

in a general sense, may be defined to be the expression of the Imagination"

(Shelley, 1840).

From these five types of ambiguities, there are two things that can be

inferred. First, Queen Mab is a fairy that delivers a vision or dreams to human. In

the beginning of the speech, these dreams are merely human's inner wishes.

Lovers dream of love, a lawyer dreams of their fees, a courtier of curtsies, and ladies of kisses from men they love (lines 71-74). In the middle of the speech, Queen Mab starts giving people dreams according to their greediness. The same courtier dreams of making money off of someone, a priest of a large donation to his church, a soldier of killing his enemies (lines 77-85). Toward the end of the speech, Queen Mab is not simply a fairy anymore, but she becomes a demon spirit that teaches young women to bear their lover or children for the first time. However, this ending of Queen Mab speech is most likely affected by the insecurity that Mercutio feels inside him. He is not comfortable about the fact that he adores and hates women at the same time. That is why there is a significant change of tone in the end of the speech when Mercutio cannot control himself anymore from revealing his hatred toward women.

Aside from Mercutio's personal feeling toward Queen Mab and women in general, Queen Mab is still believed to give visions to human. So the second thing that can be inferred from this speech is how this monologue becomes foreshadow of the end of the play. Before one relates the Queen Mab speech to the plot of the play, one should be aware of the context on why Mercutio starts talking about this fairy who is supposedly bringing dreams to human. It all starts from Romeo who has been broken hearted to the girl named Rosaline (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.1.151-228), who is also a Capulet. One night, the Capulets are having a party and Mercutio, as one of the Prince's kinsmen, is invited (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.2.63-81). He tries to get Romeo attending the party so that he can forget about his own sadness for a moment (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.13-47).

However, Romeo insists that he will not go to the party since he has a dream that something bad is going to happen if he does (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.49, 52). This triggers Mercutio in talking about Queen Mab, a fairy whose department delivering dreams to human beings (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.53-95). He starts the speech flatly as he wants to prove Romeo that dreams are nothing, but then the speech becomes too much for him to handle. In the end, Mercutio does not just talk about a fairy that brings dream, but an evil spirit that brings much misfortune to human's mind and body. Eventually he does get Romeo to attend the party by keep insisting that his dream will not mean anything (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.96-103).

This dream, or a premonition for some people, that Romeo has is supposedly delivered by Queen Mab. In a way, one may assume that Queen Mab has warned Romeo that something bad is really going to happen if he attends the party. In the end of the play, rather than bringing happiness to both Romeo and Juliet, this love results sadness, desperation and finally death of innocent peoples. There are five deaths, including Romeo's close friend Mercutio (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 3.1), Romeo's lover Juliet, Juliet's supposed fiancée, Romeo's mother, and his own death (Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 5.3), that are all caused by Romeo's decision in attending the party.

Since Romeo's dream does come true, Queen Mab speech becomes foreshadow of the play. Queen Mab's warning should have been taken seriously by Mercutio and Romeo. It seems that the tragedy happens because of the ignorance of both young guys on something that they should have believed in. In

short, Queen Mab and the speech about her are two of the most important elements in the play. Audience should not ignore both of them since they are the ones that connect elements of the love story between Romeo and Juliet in the play.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusion

In a monologue about Queen Mab that is performed by Mercutio, a character in *Romeo and Juliet*, the writer found concrete evidence that there is a significant change of mood and the tone toward the end of the speech and becomes out of control through the analysis of the meters of the poem. This finding then leads her to find other intrinsic poetry elements, such as rhymes and any figurative languages. By analyzing these elements, the writer is able to find any possibilities of the occurrence of ambiguities.

There are five out of the seven types of ambiguities that occur in this poem. The first type occurs in line 54 and 92-94 in which metaphors are also found as one of the characteristics of this type of ambiguity. This first type of ambiguity reveals how the narrator changes Queen Mab as a fairy that merely gives dream to human changes into an evil spirit that gives nightmare. The second type occurs in lines 54-68 and discloses how these fifteen lines can conclude the smallness of Queen Mab, her chariot and her employees. The fourth type of ambiguity occurs in lines 74-76 and 89-91 which discloses the sexual insecurity that Mercutio feels. Similes can be one of the characteristics of the fifth type ambiguity which is found in lines 64-65. This kind of ambiguity exposes the first sign how Mercutio feels jealous and angry toward women. The last type of ambiguities that the writer found is the sixth type of ambiguity which occurs in

the exact same lines the second type of ambiguity occurs which are lines 54-68 reveals how Queen Mab precise size can only be imagined. It appears that one or more lines can be classified into different types of ambiguities as long as it is not out of the main context of the line itself.

By analyzing these types of ambiguities, there are two things that can be inferred. First, Queen Mab is a fairy that delivers a vision or dreams to human. In the beginning of the speech, these dreams are human's inner wishes. In the middle of the speech, Queen Mab starts giving people dreams according to their greediness. Toward the end of the speech, Queen Mab is not simply a fairy anymore, but she becomes a demon spirit that teach young women to bear their lover or children for the first time. However, this ending of Queen Mab speech is most likely affected by the insecurity that Mercutio feels inside him. He is not comfortable about the fact that he adores and hates women at the same time. That is why there is a significant change of tone in the end of the speech as Mercutio is not able to control himself anymore from revealing his hatred toward women.

The second thing that can be inferred from this speech is how this monologue becomes foreshadow of the end of the play. Even though one may think that this monologue has a very little or rather no relation to the plot at all, it actually becomes one of the key moments in Romeo and Juliet. Queen Mab speech is originally performed by Mercutio to prove to Romeo that Romeo's dreams mean nothing. However, what happens in the play proves otherwise. By giving dreams, or a premonition, Queen Mab has warned Romeo not to go to the party, but both Romeo and Mercutio insist on going and this unwise discussion

ends in five deaths in the end of the play. Thus, the writer concludes that Queen Mab is one of the most important characters in the play, which the audience, listeners and readers tend to ignore.

4.2 Suggestions

One of this thesis's purposes is to help the future researchers conducting better study, so the writer would like to propose some suggestions:

- a. The next researchers should take into account conducting a character study on Mercutio, since he is one of the most complex characters in the play, using psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud in his theory of id, ego, and superego.
- b. To help readers understand better about Queen Mab and Mercutio, the future researchers may conduct a historicism study on the speech as the reflection of the society at the time of the writing of the play.

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Appendix 1: Queen Mab Speech

Mercutio O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you:

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes

In shape no bigger than an agate-stone

On the forefinger of an alderman,

Drawn with a team of little atomi

Over men's noses as they lie asleep.

Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,

Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,

Time out a'mind the fairies coachmakers:

Her wagon-spokes made of long spinners' legs,

The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,

Her traces of the smallest spider web,

Her collars of the moonshine's wat'ry beams,

Her whip of cricket's bone, the lash of film,

Her waggoner a small grey-coated gnat,

Not half so big as a round little worm

Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.

And in this state she gallops night by night

Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love,

O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on cur'sies straight,

O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dreams on fees,

O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,

Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,

Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.

Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,

And then dreams he of smelling out a suit;

And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail

Tickling a parson's nose as 'a lies asleep,
Then he dreams of another benefice.

Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
Of breaches, ambuscadoes, Spanish blades,

Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,

And being thus frighted, swears a prayer or two,

And sleeps again. This is that very Mab

That plats the manes of horses in the night,

And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,

Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.

This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,

That presses them and learns them first to bear,

Making them women of good carriage.

This is she—

(Shakespeare, trans. 1599, 1.4.53-95)

Appendix 2: Berita Acara



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN NASIONAL
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5. Judul Skripsi : Ambiguities in Mercutio's Queen Mab Speech in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet
6. Tanggal Mengajukan : 7 Maret 2011
7. Tanggal Selesai Revisi: 12 Agustus 2011
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9. Keterangan Konsultasi

No	Tanggal	Materi	Pembimbing	Paraf
1.	7 Maret 2011	Penyerahan material yang akan dibahas	Pembimbing I dan II	
2.	8 Maret 2011	Pembahasan materi dan landasan teori yang akan digunakan	Pembimbing I	
3.	14 Maret 2011	Penyerahan draft bab I dan 2 ke-1	Pembimbing I	
4.	22 Maret 2011	Penyerahan draft bab I dan 2 ke-2	Pembimbing I	
5.	4 April 2011	Penyerahan draft bab I dan 2 ke-3	Pembimbing II	
6.	14 April 2011	Penyerahan draft bab I dan 2 ke-4	Pembimbing II	
7.	19 April 2011	Penyerahan draft bab I dan 2 ke-5	Pembimbing II	
8.	25 April 2011	Seminar Proposal Skripsi		
9.	28 April 2011	Penyerahan terjemahan Queen Mab speech	Pembimbing I	
10.	16 Mei 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-1	Pembimbing I	
11.	19 Mei 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-2	Pembimbing I	
12.	7 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-3	Pembimbing I	

Lanjutan tabel

13.	10 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-4	Pembimbing I	
14.	14 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-5	Pembimbing I	
15.	15 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-6	Pembimbing II	
16.	20 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-7	Pembimbing II	
17.	23 Juni 2011	Penyerahan draft bab III dan IV ke-8	Pembimbing II	
18.	11 Juli 2011	ACC bab I-IV	Pembimbing I dan II	
19.	25 Juli 2011	Seminar Hasil Skripsi		
20.	27 Juli 2011	Revisi bab I-IV	Penguji I	
21.	28 Juli 2011	Revisi bab I-IV	Penguji II	
22.	29 Juli 2011	Revisi bab I-IV	Pembimbing I dan II	
23.	2 Agustus 2011	ACC Revisi Bab I-IV	Pembimbing I dan II	
24.	9 Agustus 2011	Ujian Skripsi		
25.	10 Agustus 2011	Revisi bab I-IV	Penguji I dan II	
26.	11 Agustus 2011	Revisi bab I-IV	Pembimbing I dan II	
27.	12 Agustus 2011	ACC bab I-IV	Pembimbing I dan II	

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