CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a system of communication that plays an important role in all aspects of human life. It is the most effective tool of communication for people. Without language, the world cannot develop normally. Whatever we do in this world, we use language to express everything in our mind. The study about language is called Linguistics. Linguistics is scientific study deals with language. But although it is the only academic discipline that deals with language alone and is concerned with, its practitioners cannot claim a monopoly of the whole of their subject matter (Matthews, 1997: vii). One of the branches in linguistics which concern with meaning is called Semantic. Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences in the language or semantics is the study of linguistic meaning (Leech, 1981: 2). The meaning can be distinguished by the technique of substituting other words in the same context and enquiry whether the resulting sentences are equivalent (Lyons, 1977:2).

There are two varieties of meaning in Semantics, linguistic meaning and speaker meaning. Leech (1981: 8) states, “The linguistic meaning of an expression is simply the meaning or meanings of that expression in some form of language. Speaker meaning is what a speaker means in producing an utterance”. Speaker meaning is divided in two different types, literal meaning and non literal
meaning. Literal meaning based on the real or lexical meaning of utterance. We can find this meaning in the dictionary, for examples:

1. I am a smart student.
2. They are university students.
3. She is beautiful.

All the sentences above have literal meaning as long as the speakers mean lexically in all utterances. The first sentence means that “I” is smart, or clever, has a good knowledge, it also shows an ability in study. The second sentence means that “they” are university students, a group of person who study in university. While the third sentence means that “she” is beautiful, or gorgeous, has a nice face.

In daily activity, a speaker does not always speak literally and means what his words mean, but sometimes the speaker speaks non literally, to tell the listener another meaning of his word. So, non literal meaning is very important to understand to avoid misunderstanding of the meaning between speaker and listener.

Martin (in Siswantoro, 2002: 10) says that in the case of non literal meaning, there are a number of different ways one can speak non literally. Non literal uses of language are called figurative language. They are described by a large set of rhetorical terms including simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, hyperbole, etc.

Non literal expression are often found in literary works such as novel, plays, short story, poems or even in lyrics of the song. In this thesis the writer is
interested to analyze the non literal meaning found in poem. Poem is defined as a piece of writing in which the words are chosen for their sound and the images they suggest, not just for their obvious meaning (Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary 1995: 890).

Percy Bysshe Shelley in Pardeede (2009:6) says that poetry is the record of the best and happiest moment of the happiest and the best mind. This statement tells us that there is something hidden in every poems, there’s a memory, it may be a happiest memory or not. So that, the poems need to be analyzed if the reader wants to know the deep meaning of the poems. Sometimes it is very difficult to understand a poem for it may contains so many expression with non literal meaning.

As the object analysis, the writer chooses Edward Estelin Cummings poems. Cummings's poetry often deals with themes of love and nature. Cummings often wrote in very straightforward prosaic English, sometimes created word images that are difficult to analyze but easier to feel. More than most poets, he often make the difficult look simple, to give the reader the feeling of "oh, I could have written that"(www.yu-hu.com).

1.2 Problem of the Study

According to the background explained above, there are some problems that appeared in this research. The problems are:

1. What are the types of non literal meaning found in Edward Estelin Cummings’s selected poems?
2. What literal meanings are found in each type of non literal meaning in Edward Estelin Cummings’ selected poems?

3. What types of non literal meaning are most dominant in Edward Estelin Cummings’ selected poems?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Concerning with the problem above, this analysis is intended to achieve some objectives, namely:

1. To find out the types of non literal meaning in Edward Estelin Cummings’s selected poems.

2. To describe the types of meaning found in each type of non literal meaning in Edward Estelin Cummings’s selected poems.

3. To find out types of non literal meaning which are most dominant in Edward Estelin Cummings’ Selected Poems.

1.4 Scope of the Study

In a research, it is important for the writer to limit the analysis in order to concentrate on a specific object that has been chosen in order to get the best result from it. This would help the writer to avoid over complicating the issues and analysis.

This research was limited to the discussion of the types of non literal meaning as proposed by Siswantoro (2002: 10), whereas descriptions of non literal meaning are summarized from Wren and Martin (1990: 359), Keraf (1991: 112) and Wikipedia.
There are nine types of non literal meaning based on Siswantoro’s theory (Siswantoro, 2002:10) they are simile, metaphor, personification, apostrophe, hyperbole, antithesis, synecdoche, paradox and symbol.

1.5 Significance of the Analysis

This thesis is expected to enrich the literature in the study of meaning and add the knowledge of the students of language in terms of semantics, especially to understand non literal meaning. And it can also helps the students or the readers to digest the horizon of the poem.