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Poetry as literature and performance: Toward a negotiation model of verbal and performative aesthetics

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Abstract: *This article examines the relationship between poetry as a verbal structure and poetry as a performative event by positioning verbal aesthetics and performative aesthetics as two modes that dynamically negotiate with one another. The study addresses the tendency to view poetry reading as merely transferring a text from the page to the stage, although poetic actualization involves voice, body, space, temporality, and the conditions of performance. The study employs an interpretive qualitative approach with comparative textual-performative analysis of two Indonesian poems, namely "Gerilya" by W. S. Rendra and "Ke Pelabuhan" by Toeti Heraty, together with audiovisual documentation of their performances. The analysis proceeds in three stages: identifying verbal-aesthetic structures, examining performative elements, and comparing the two to identify forms of meaning negotiation. The findings show that repetition, imagery, rhythm, and syntactic structure in the texts provide performative potential that is actualized through vocal quality, tempo, pauses, gesture, bodily presence, and spatial configuration. Across the two cases, reinforcement and shifts receive the strongest empirical support, whereas expansion is primarily evident in the addition of spatial-temporal dimensions of experience. On this basis, the article proposes a Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics, which views poetic meaning as the outcome of dynamic interaction between verbal structure and performative actualization. The model complements intermediality by focusing specifically on the mechanisms of meaning-making when poetry operates across media.*

Keywords: *performed poetry, verbal aesthetics, performative aesthetics, aesthetic negotiation, intermediality*

INTRODUCTION

Poetry is conventionally understood as a literary form that intensively organizes language through rhythm, sound, imagery, metaphor, and verbal structure. Within this framework, poetry primarily exists as a text to be read, interpreted, and appreciated through engagement with language. Contemporary poetic practices, however, demonstrate that poetry does not necessarily end on the page. Poetry reading, spoken word, poetry slam, poetry musicalization, poetic performance, and the circulation of poetry through digital media show that poetic works can also exist as sounds to be heard, bodies to be seen, actions to be performed, and events experienced collectively by performers and audiences (Finnegan, 2025; Ong, 1982; Zumthor, 1990).

This issue is related to the tendency to construct a dichotomy between page poetry and performance poetry. Poetry on the page is often positioned as the primary work, while performance is treated as a secondary presentation or actualization of the text. Such a perspective is insufficient for explaining experiences of poetry that take place through voice and body. Simecek (2023) demonstrates that page poetry and performance poetry involve different modes of experience, particularly because performance presents voice as embodied and relational. Voice in performance is not

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merely a metaphorical representation of the lyric voice; it is an actual voice originating from a particular body and occurring in the presence of listeners. Simecek (2024) further emphasizes the importance of bridging page poetry and performance poetry so that the two are not treated as completely separate domains.

This argument is reinforced by Howarth (2023), who shows that performed poetry brings the space, the person uttering the poem, and the social situation into poetic experience. Performance therefore does not simply convey words already available in the text; it brings poetic form into contact with the material and social conditions in which poetry takes place. Poetry can consequently be understood simultaneously as a verbal artifact and as an event whose actualization unfolds at a particular time.

Performance Studies helps explain this shift. Schechner (2013) views performance as a practice involving action, repetition, context, and social relations. Taylor (2003) further distinguishes embodied repertoire from archival forms of cultural transmission, a distinction useful for considering how poetry persists through both text and performance. Fischer-Lichte (2008) emphasizes that performance is an event shaped through reciprocal relations between performers and spectators. In poetry reading, therefore, body, voice, gesture, expression, tempo, pauses, bodily position, use of space, and performance conditions are not merely technical elements; they can contribute to the aesthetic experience.

These performative dimensions intersect with questions of intermediality. When poetry operates through voice, stage, video, music, or digital media, the configuration of materiality, medium, and perception changes. Rajewsky (2005) provides an important framework through the distinction among medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial reference. In performance studies, Bäckström et al. (2022) show that intermediality involves the entanglement of bodies, objects, media, presence, and processes of mediation. In the field of poetry, Ayala Gallardo (2024) likewise demonstrates the importance of bringing intermediality and performance together to understand poetry as a practice involving poetic, performative, ideological, and cultural dimensions. Meanwhile, Svensson (2024) shows that oral reading can be examined as transmediation in which the verbal and visual structures of a text interact with vocal qualities.

Digital developments further broaden this issue. Matter et al. (2024) show that digitalization transforms the production and reception of performed poetry and raises questions concerning liveness, performativity, and mediatization. Auslander (2008) similarly demonstrates that liveness must be considered in relation to mediatized forms rather than treated as their simple opposite. Poetry can thus exist as text, voice, performance, recording, and digital object at the same time. Yet this development does not automatically resolve the conceptual problem of the relationship between text and performance. On the contrary, the more media become involved, the more important it becomes to explain how verbal and performative structures participate in the formation of meaning.

This is where the conceptual space addressed by this article lies. Scholarship on poetry has explained the distinctiveness of poetic language, while performance studies has explained the materiality of body, voice, presence, and performer–audience relations. Intermediality studies, in turn, provide tools for understanding relationships

among media. However, a more explicit formulation is still needed of what happens to meaning when the verbal structure of poetry encounters its performative actualization. The issue is not merely how poetry changes when performed, but how such changes produce a relationship between the potentials constructed by the text and the performer's artistic decisions.

This article therefore proposes the concept of aesthetic negotiation. The term is not intended to replace intermediality or adaptation, but to explain the mechanism of meaning-making at the intersection of verbal and performative aesthetics. Verbal aesthetics refers to the ways language constructs possibilities of meaning through diction, imagery, metaphor, sound, rhythm, repetition, and structure. Performative aesthetics refers to the actualization of poetry through voice, body, gesture, space, temporality, and performance conditions. The two are not positioned as independent systems, but as two aesthetic domains that can reinforce, shift, or expand the possibilities of poetic experience.

To examine this framework, the article analyzes "*Gerilya*" by W. S. Rendra and "*Ke Pelabuhan*" by Toeti Heraty, together with audiovisual documentation of their readings. The two poems were selected because they provide different verbal configurations, allowing variation in the relationship between text and performance to be observed. The objectives are to (1) explain the relationship between verbal and performative aesthetics in poetry reading; (2) analyze how voice, body, space, and temporality actualize verbal potential; and (3) formulate a Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics as a conceptual framework for reading poetry from an interdisciplinary perspective spanning literature and performance art.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical foundation of this article is constructed integratively. Verbal aesthetics is used to examine the materiality of language; performative aesthetics is used to examine the actualization of text as an event; and aesthetic negotiation is used to explain the dynamic relationship between the two. Intermediality functions as a connecting perspective for understanding encounters among media rather than as a substitute for the proposed model.

Verbal Aesthetics: Poetry as Verbal Structure

From Jakobson's (1987) perspective, the poetic function directs attention to the message and the way in which the message is constructed. This attention to patterned language complements close-reading approaches that examine how textual form organizes interpretation (Eagleton, 2007). Poetic language therefore does not merely communicate ideas but becomes artistic material through the selection of diction, sound patterns, rhythm, repetition, metaphor, imagery, syntax, and line structure. In this article, verbal aesthetics is not understood as "linguistic beauty" in a normative sense, but as a textual mechanism through which the organization of language produces poetic experience and meaning.

Culler (2015) extends this issue by positioning lyric as a mode of utterance with particular conventions and ways of constructing poetic voice. Poetic voice should therefore not be equated with the poet's biography or psychology. What matters is how the text constructs a position of utterance and directs the reader's experience. This

perspective provides the basis for distinguishing the verbal structure of poetry from the performer's actual voice.

For analytical purposes, verbal aesthetics in this study comprises five dimensions: (1) diction, referring to the selection and distribution of words; (2) imagery and metaphor, concerning the construction of images and symbolic relations; (3) sound, encompassing rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and sound repetition; (4) rhythm, involving stress, repetition, enjambment, and textual pauses; and (5) structure, encompassing stanzas, lines, syntax, and relationships among textual elements. As summarized in Table 1, each dimension is associated with specific analytical indicators that guide the examination of the poems. These dimensions are understood as verbal potentials that may be actualized differently through vocal delivery, bodily expression, and other performative choices. Table 1 therefore provides the analytical basis for identifying the verbal features of each poem before comparing them with their performative actualization.

Table 1. Dimensions of Verbal Aesthetics

Dimension	Analytical indicator
Diction	Selection and distribution of words
Imagery and metaphor	Construction of images and symbolic relations
Sound	Rhyme, sound repetition, alliteration, assonance
Rhythm	Stress, repetition, enjambment, textual pauses
Structure	Stanzas, lines, syntax, relationships among elements

Performative Aesthetics: Poetry as Event

Whereas verbal aesthetics begins with the materiality of language, performative aesthetics begins with the materiality of action. Performed poetry does not merely present words; it turns those words into an event unfolding within a particular space and time. In Performance Studies, performance is understood through action, body, context, repetition, presence, and social relations (Schechner, 2013). This perspective enables poetry reading to be understood as an artistic action rather than merely the process of vocalizing a text.

Fischer-Lichte (2008) provides an important foundation through the notion of performance as an event and through reciprocal performer–spectator relations. The meaning of a performance is not entirely determined beforehand because the experiences of performers and spectators may influence one another. Phelan (1993) also foregrounds the distinctive, event-bound character of performance, while this study limits claims about reception to what its audiovisual evidence can support. In this study, however, the concept is used cautiously: the primary object of analysis is the performative configuration observable in audiovisual documentation, while audience responses are discussed only insofar as they can be captured in the documentation.

Howarth (2023) clarifies that performed poetry incorporates space, the performer, and the social situation into the poetic experience. Simecek (2023) emphasizes the significance of the embodied voice, understood as a voice produced through a particular body and in relation to listeners. Building on these perspectives, performative aesthetics in this study is defined as a system for shaping poetic experience through the actualization of text in performance, involving voice, body, space, temporality, and reception conditions. As outlined in Table 2, these five

dimensions are operationalized through specific analytical indicators that guide the examination of how verbal material is realized in performance. The table provides a framework for systematically identifying observable performative features and relating them to the verbal dimensions of the poems. The reception situation is considered only to the extent that audience presence and configuration are visible in the available documentation.

Table 2. Dimensions of Performed Poetry

Dimension	Analytical indicator
Voice	Intonation, volume, articulation, tempo, vocal quality
Body	Gesture, posture, expression, movement
Space	Position, direction, distance, spatial configuration
Temporality	Duration, pauses, repetition, momentum
Reception situation	Audience presence and configuration insofar as visible in the documentation

Aesthetic Negotiation and Intermediality

Intermediality provides a perspective for understanding relationships among media. Rajewsky (2005) distinguishes medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial reference. This framework is important because when poetry moves across or operates together with other media, the resulting change is not merely a change of channel but a change in material and perceptual configuration. Bäckström et al. (2022) demonstrate that intermediality in performance involves the entanglement of body, object, media, presence, and mediation. Elleström (2010) offers a complementary vocabulary for analyzing media borders, multimodality, and intermedial relations.

However, the term intermediality by itself does not explain how meaning is negotiated between verbal structure and performative actualization. This is where the concept of negotiation is employed. Negotiation refers to a relationship in which verbal structure provides possibilities as well as constraints, while performative decisions select, emphasize, shift, or expand those possibilities. The relationship is not linear from text to performance but relational: text ↔ performer ↔ performance ↔ performance conditions.

The concept of adaptation is also relevant, particularly when changes of medium are the focus. Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) view adaptation as repetition without replication, allowing continuity and change to occur simultaneously. However, this article focuses not primarily on the relationship between a source work and an adapted work, but on the interaction between a text that remains present and the performance that actualizes it. Transformation therefore explains changes in the configuration of media; adaptation explains the transfer or reworking of a work; whereas negotiation explains the dynamic relational mechanism that produces experience and possibilities of meaning.

On this basis, the article uses three operational categories of negotiation: (1) reinforcement, when performative elements affirm a verbal structure or effect; (2) shift, when performance applies different emphasis so that the orientation of experience toward verbal material changes; and (3) expansion, when body, voice, space, temporality, or performance conditions open experiential dimensions that are not dominant in textual reading.

METHOD

This study employs an interpretive qualitative approach with comparative textual-performative analysis. The approach was selected because the research object lies at the intersection of literary text and performative event. The study does not seek to measure audience responses quantitatively, but to explain the relationship between identifiable verbal structures in the texts and observable performative actualization in audiovisual documentation.

The research corpus consists of two Indonesian poems, "*Gerilya*" by W. S. Rendra and "*Ke Pelabuhan*" by Toeti Heraty, together with video documentation of each reading. The poems were purposively selected based on differences in their verbal structures. "*Gerilya*" emphasizes repetition, bodily imagery, and diction that constructs an atmosphere of violence and death, whereas "*Ke Pelabuhan*" emphasizes rhetorical questions, natural imagery, and a more reflective syntactic movement. These characteristics enable comparison of how verbal potentials receive performative actualization.

Textual data include diction, imagery, metaphor, repetition, sound, rhythm, enjambment, and line or stanza structure. Performative data include vocal quality, intonation, volume, tempo, articulation, pauses, expression, gesture, posture, spatial use, and performer–audience configuration insofar as these are visible in the videos. Audiovisual documentation is treated as analytical data rather than mere illustration because video enables the researcher to observe how verbal structure is realized temporally and in embodied form.

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, verbal-aesthetic analysis identified the elements that construct poetic potential in each text. Second, performative-aesthetic analysis identified how those elements were actualized through voice, body, space, and temporality. Third, comparative analysis brought the two layers of data together and categorized the resulting relationships as reinforcement, shift, or expansion. The procedure moves from the question "What does the text construct?" to "How is the text actualized?" and finally to "What happens to the possibilities of meaning when the two encounter one another?"

Interpretive validity was maintained through triangulation between the written texts and audiovisual documentation. Each performative interpretation was connected back to a specific textual element so that the analysis did not rely solely on impressions of the performance. Comparison of the two cases was used to distinguish findings specific to individual cases from patterns that may be more general. This analytical strategy is consistent with qualitative research, which places contextual interpretation, interconnected data, and analytical processes at the center of argument construction (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles et al., 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

In "*Gerilya,*" verbal aesthetics is strongly constructed through repetition, bodily imagery, and diction that brings violence, death, and beauty into relation. The repetition of "*Tubuh biru / tatapan mata biru / lelaki terguling di jalan*" ["Blue body / blue gaze / a man collapsed on the street"] functions as a motif connecting different parts of the poem.

Beyond creating structural cohesion, the repetition provides a rhythmic pattern that can receive emphasis through reading. The images of "*tujuh lubang pelor*" [seven bullet holes], *"subuh merah*" [red dawn], and "*jeritan manis*" [sweet scream] reveal an encounter between experiences of violence and imagistic construction (Rendra, 1955).

"*Ke Pelabuhan*" presents a different configuration. The poem is constructed through the repeated question "*benarkah setiap senja?*" [Is it true at every dusk?], images of the sun, moon, clouds, sea, and sky, and syntactic movement that connects observation with reflection. The images of "*bulan, yang bagai mangga kemuning*" [the moon, like a golden-yellow mango], "*awan-awan yang bergerigi*" [jagged clouds], and "*nyala jingga langit*" [the orange glow of the sky] create a strong visual landscape. The repetition of the question functions as a rhetorical motif that opens and binds the poem's reflective movement (Heraty, 1995).

Comparison of the two texts shows that verbal aesthetics is not merely a collection of formal elements but also provides performative potential. Repetition can become the basis for vocal emphasis; imagery can interact with expressive qualities and gesture; textual rhythm can interact with reading tempo; while syntactic structure and punctuation can influence the distribution of pauses. Thus, the text does not determine a single form of performance but provides a field of possibilities negotiated by the performer.

The audiovisual documentation shows that the actualization of both poems occurs as a temporal and embodied action. In the reading of "*Gerilya*" (Darma, approximately 6:07), the performer remains at the center of the stage for most of the performance, with a relatively constant blue visual background. At several points—such as approximately 02:40–02:55 and 05:45–05:55—the hands move toward the chest or open to the sides while the body remains frontal. This visual evidence indicates that the articulation of the text is accompanied by bodily emphasis rather than static reading. Figure 1 presents two gestural moments used as visual evidence in the analytical mapping.

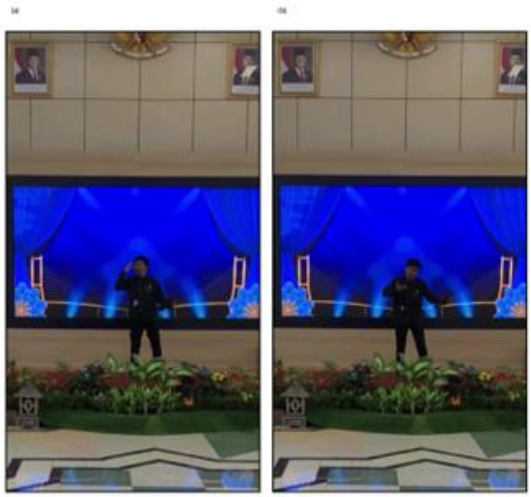


Figure 1. Gesture and Verbal Reinforcement in *Gerilya*

In the reading of "*Ke Pelabuhan*" (Putri, approximately 7:34), temporal variation is more pronounced. Audio analysis indicates pauses at approximately 98–104 seconds,

135–146 seconds, and 397–407 seconds; during the 135–146-second interval, the performer is not visible within the camera frame for part of the interval before returning to the stage position. These long pauses are significant because they slow the syntactic flow and create temporal space for imagery and rhetorical questions. Figure 2 presents two important moments: the phase when the performer is absent from the camera frame and the phase when the performer becomes visible again after the extended pause. Thus, the video shows not only the words being voiced but also how duration, silence, bodily position, and camera space shape the conditions of experiencing the text.

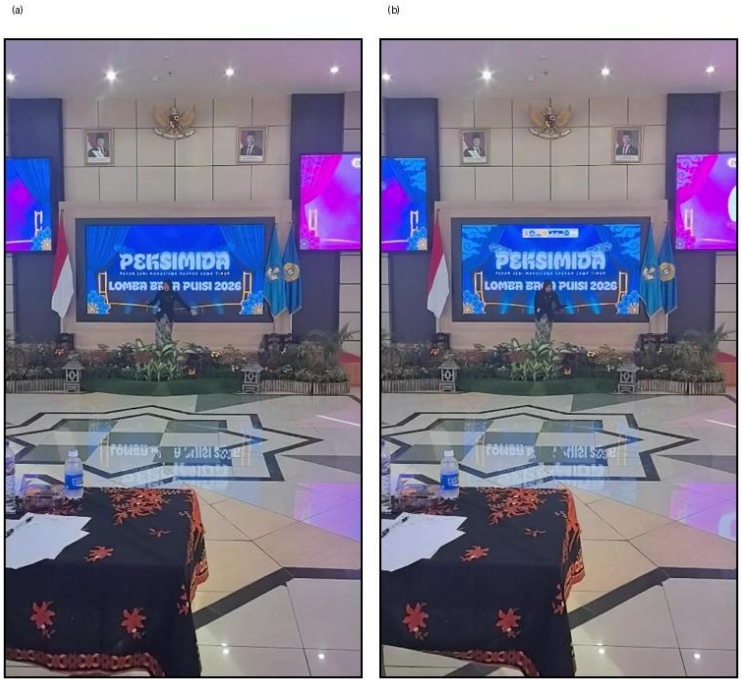


Figure 2. Spatial-Temporal Dynamics in Ke Pelabuhan

These audiovisual findings support Simecek's (2023) concept of the embodied voice, but the evidence must be methodologically bounded. The video permits observation of voice as a temporal action, body, gesture, position, and pause; it does not provide sufficient evidence for conclusions about the psychological responses of the audience. Accordingly, the audience in this study is treated as part of the performance conditions only insofar as it can be understood through spatial configuration, while claims about spectators' experiences or emotions are not treated as empirical findings.

Discussion

Three Patterns of Aesthetic Negotiation

The textual-performative comparison does not show that the three categories—reinforcement, shift, and expansion—appear with equal strength in both cases. The strongest evidence concerns reinforcement and shift, whereas expansion is primarily visible in the addition of spatial-temporal dimensions. Therefore, the three categories are treated as analytical possibilities rather than findings that must be imposed on every poem.

The following mapping connects textual fragments with audiovisual evidence and meaning-making effects that can be responsibly supported by the documentation.

As presented in Table 3, the mapping brings together three analytical components: selected textual fragments, corresponding audiovisual evidence, and the meaning-making effects that can be inferred from their relationship. This structure provides a systematic basis for examining how the poems' verbal features are actualized and interpreted through performance, while distinguishing observable evidence from analytical interpretation. Timestamps are treated as approximate markers because the videos do not provide segmented transcripts; matching was conducted based on reading sequence, pause distribution, and continuity of verbal fragments. Textual quotations refer to the versions of the poems used as research data (Rendra, 1955; Heraty, 1995).

Table 3. Textual Fragments, Audiovisual Evidence, and Meaning-Making Effects in Poetry Reading

Case / timestamp	Textual fragment	Audiovisual evidence	Type of negotiation	Data-supported effect
Gerilya / 01:05–01:20	*"Tubuh biru / tatapan mata biru / lelaki terguling di jalan"* [Blue body / blue gaze / a man collapsed on the street]	Performer remains frontal at center stage; reading proceeds continuously; hands begin to be used for emphasis.	Reinforcement	Verbal repetition receives accentuation through bodily presence and gestural emphasis; the motif of "body" is not only heard but becomes present through the performer's body.
Gerilya / 02:10–02:25	*"Gadis berjalan di subuh merah ... jeritan manis / dan duka daun wortel"* [A girl walks in the red dawn ... a sweet scream / and the sorrow of carrot leaves]	Performer uses facial expression and hand movement during the middle section of the reading.	Shift (limited)	Expressive quality directs the violence–beauty imagery toward a more emotional experience; what changes is primarily the orientation of experience rather than the textual content.
Gerilya / 04:35–04:50	*"ditimba air bergantang-gantang / disiram atas tubuhnya"* [bucket after bucket of water was drawn / and poured over his body]	Hands move toward the chest and then open to the sides; the body remains at the center of the stage field.	Reinforcement + expansion	Gesture reinforces the action stated in the text; "being washed" acquires a kinesthetic dimension not available as actual movement on the page.
Gerilya / 05:15–05:35	*"Lewat gardu Belanda dengan berani / berlindung warna malam / sendiri masuk kota"* [Bravely passing the Dutch guard post / sheltered by the darkness of	Performer remains alone within the stage field; at the end of the section, the hands open while the body remains frontal.	Expansion (limited)	The solitude expressed verbally also appears as a visual configuration of a single body within a broad space; the expansion occurs at the level of spatial materiality rather

Case / timestamp	Textual fragment	Audiovisual evidence	Type of negotiation	Data-supported effect
	night / entering the city alone]			than as independent new meaning.
Ke Pelabuhan / 01:38–01:50	*"dunia, dan dunia matahari —"* [the world, and the world of the sun —]	Several pauses longer than one second occur within approximately 98–114 seconds; tempo becomes interrupted and reflective.	Shift	The pauses alter the temporal orientation of the long sentence toward a more contemplative mode; the structure of questioning and reflection is not removed but newly emphasized through duration.
Ke Pelabuhan / 02:15–02:27	*"bulan, yang bagai mangga kemuning / menyandarkan diri pada awan-awan"* [the moon, like a golden-yellow mango / leaning against the clouds]	An extended pause occurs at approximately 135–146 seconds; the performer is not visible within the camera frame for part of the interval before returning.	Expansion	The landscape imagery acquires a spatial-temporal dimension through silence and the absence of the body from the camera frame; this is an expansion of experience rather than an addition of words.
Ke Pelabuhan / 06:37–06:47	*"suatu saat matahari dan lautan / akan bersentuhan, dan berjanji"* [one day the sun and the sea / will touch and make a promise]	An extended pause occurs at approximately 397–407 seconds; the performer remains the center of the frame when visible again.	Shift + expansion	Silence extends the temporal horizon before the meeting of sun and sea; the poetic effect shifts from a merely verbal proposition toward an experience of waiting and temporal suspension.
Ke Pelabuhan / 06:55–07:20	*"bagai kedahsyatan yang menghilang / dan akan kembali lagi"* [like a mighty force that disappears / and will return again]	The final section takes place in a stable stage space, with the performer's body remaining the focal point before closure.	Reinforcement	The repeated idea of "return" is sustained by the continuity of the performer's presence until the end; the evidence is insufficient to claim audience response.

From the Materiality of Language to the Materiality of Event

The findings show that verbal aesthetics constitutes the basic material, whereas performance provides a selective mode of actualization. In "*Gerilya*," the repetition "*Tubuh biru / tatapan mata biru / lelaki terguling di jalan*" [Blue body / blue gaze / a man collapsed on the street] establishes a recognizable formal pattern that can be emphasized through vocal delivery and gesture. In "*Ke Pelabuhan*," the repetition of "*benarkah setiap senja?*" [Is it true at every dusk?] constructs a rhetorical pattern that

acquires temporal weight through pauses in the video. These findings are consistent with Jakobson (1987) regarding the materiality of the poetic function and Culler (2015) regarding lyric utterance.

The video shows that this materiality does not stop at sound. Howarth (2023) demonstrates that performed poetry brings space, performer, and situation into poetic experience, while Simecek (2023) emphasizes the embodied voice. In the present data, the most concrete evidence is the presence of the body within the stage field, gesture, and the distribution of pauses—particularly in "*Ke Pelabuhan*." Accordingly, the transition from text to performance is more appropriately understood as an actualization that changes the conditions of experience rather than as a replacement of the text.

The evidence also reveals an important limitation: not every performative element automatically produces new meaning. The visual stage background, for example, cannot be said to expand the poem's meaning without more specific evidence of a semantic relationship. The safest finding is that body, voice, pauses, and space provide additional material that enables the text to be experienced temporally and in embodied form.

Body and Voice as Agents of Meaning-Making

The distinction between the body represented and the body performing the representation is important. In "*Gerilya*," the word "*tubuh*" [body] and bodily images of falling, bullet holes, and being washed receive a material counterpart in the performer's actual body. When the performer uses the body to articulate these fragments, verbal meaning is not replaced but acquires an observable kinesthetic form in performance (Rendra, 1955).

In "*Ke Pelabuhan*," the relationship is more apparent in tempo and pauses. The images of the sun, moon, sea, and horizon are not realized as stage objects but are given temporal space through slowing and silence. Thus, the expansion identified here is not the "addition of new images" but the addition of sensory-temporal conditions through which the images constructed by the text can be experienced (Heraty, 1995).

Fischer-Lichte (2008) helps explain performance as a relational event between performer and spectator. However, this study does not contain direct reception data. Therefore, the term "relational situation" in the model refers only to observable performance conditions, not to claims about what spectators psychologically experience. This limitation is important to ensure that the model does not exceed the evidentiary strength of the audiovisual data.

Why "Negotiation," Rather Than Merely "Transformation" or "Adaptation"?

The concepts of transformation and adaptation remain necessary, but they serve different functions. Rajewsky (2005) helps explain intermedial configurations through medial transposition, media combination, and intermedial reference. Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) explain adaptation as repetition with difference. Both perspectives describe changes or transfers involving a work; neither directly provides categories for assessing how vocal, gestural, temporal, and spatial decisions affect the orientation of meaning in poetry reading.

In this case, "negotiation" is more productive as an analytical term because the text remains present in its entirety while the performer selects how it will be actualized. The data show that negotiation does not always involve major semantic change. In "*Gerilya*," repetition and bodily imagery primarily undergo reinforcement through articulation and gesture. In "*Ke Pelabuhan*," extended pauses produce shifts in temporal orientation and expansion of experience across space and time. Negotiation therefore occurs at the point where verbal potential encounters performative choices and produces particular experiential effects.

The notion of shift should consequently be understood strictly. It does not claim that the performer changes the "meaning" of the poem into an opposite meaning; rather, tempo, pauses, emphasis, or gesture provide a different orientation of experience toward the same verbal material. The strongest evidence for this category occurs in "*Ke Pelabuhan*," particularly in the 98–114-second and 397–407-second pauses. For "*Gerilya*," the evidence is stronger for reinforcement than for shift.

Operationally, transformation explains changes in media configuration; adaptation explains the reworking of a source work into another form; whereas negotiation explains the mechanism of interaction between verbal structure and performative choices. With this formulation, negotiation does not replace intermediality or adaptation but provides a level of analysis closer to the question: "What happens to the possibilities of meaning when poetry is performed?"

Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics

Based on the evidence, this article proposes the Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics as an analytical model rather than an established new theory. The model operates through three main layers: (1) verbal structure as a source of material and a boundary of possibilities; (2) performative actualization through voice, body, gesture, space, and temporality; and (3) meaning negotiation, which may take the form of reinforcement, shift, or expansion. As summarized in Table 4, these three layers are interconnected: verbal structure provides the material for performance, performative actualization shapes how that material is presented, and meaning negotiation describes the relationship between textual features and their realization in performance. The table also identifies reinforcement, shift, and expansion as analytical categories for examining these relationships. The three categories do not have to occur simultaneously or with equal intensity; rather, their relevance depends on the specific relationship between the verbal features of a poem and the available audiovisual evidence.

Table 4. Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics

Stage	Component	Analytical function
Verbal structure	Language, metaphor, imagery, rhythm, structure	Provides material, patterns, possibilities, and boundaries of meaning-making.
Performative actualization	Voice, body, gesture, space, temporality	Transforms verbal potential into an event that can be heard, seen, and experienced.
Relational situation	Performer, performance space, audience	Shapes conditions of reception and the context of experience.
Meaning negotiation	Reinforcement, shift, expansion	Explains how the two aesthetic regimes influence one another.
Dynamic poetic meaning	Experience and interpretation	Shows that meaning constitutes a possibility that may differ across actualizations.

The model can be represented as follows: verbal structure ↔ performative actualization ↔ relational situation → meaning negotiation → poetic experience. The bidirectional arrows (↔) indicate that the relationships among verbal structure, performative actualization, and relational situation are not strictly linear. Although performative choices are shaped by the poem's verbal features, the experience of encountering the poem in performance may also inform subsequent interpretations of the text. Meaning negotiation thus emerges from the interaction between textual features, their performative realization, and the conditions in which the performance is presented. However, in this study, the relational situation is examined only through conditions observable in the available audiovisual documentation. Since direct audience responses were not empirically investigated, the model does not make claims about audience reception or psychological effects beyond what the documented evidence can support.

The theoretical contribution of the model lies in a clearer separation of three analytical questions: what language constructs; how that potential is actualized through body and voice; and what meaning consequences arise from their encounter. Thus, the model does not merely state that poetry can be performed but provides a framework for comparing different modes of actualization. The two cases show that reinforcement is clearest in "*Gerilya*," whereas temporal shifts and experiential expansion are more prominent in "*Ke Pelabuhan*."

Within an intermedial framework, these findings extend attention to the entanglement of body, media, and performance discussed by Rajewsky (2005), Bäckström et al. (2022), Ayala Gallardo (2024), and Svensson (2024). The difference lies in this article's focus on the effects of negotiation on poetic experience. The model remains preliminary because it has been tested on only two pieces of documentation; applying it to spoken word, poetry slam, poetry musicalization, or digital media requires a broader corpus and, especially, direct reception data.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that reading poetry as performance should not be understood merely as transferring verbal text into an oral or stage medium. In W. S. Rendra's "*Gerilya*" and Toeti Heraty's "*Ke Pelabuhan*," verbal structures involving

repetition, imagery, rhythm, and rhetorical questions are actualized through voice, body, gesture, pauses, space, and temporality. Audiovisual evidence shows that reinforcement and shift have stronger empirical support, whereas expansion primarily appears as an addition of spatial-temporal experience.

On this basis, the Negotiation Model of Verbal and Performative Aesthetics is proposed as an analytical model that views poetic meaning as the result of a dynamic encounter between verbal structure and performative actualization. Reinforcement occurs when performance affirms a verbal motif or effect; shift occurs when tempo, pauses, emphasis, or gesture alter the orientation of experience; and expansion occurs when body, space, and temporality add experiential conditions that are not materially present on the page.

The principal value of the concept of negotiation lies in its ability to explain the mechanism of meaning-making between text and performance without eliminating the contributions of intermediality or adaptation. However, the claims of this article are limited to what can be observed in two audiovisual documents. Future research should expand the corpus, compare different performers, and incorporate audience reception data so that the "relational situation" dimension can be empirically tested.

More broadly, the model opens possibilities for examining poetry as a cross-media and cross-art literary practice. Its development can be directed toward spoken word, poetry slam, poetry musicalization, and digital transmediation while maintaining a clear distinction among textual evidence, performative evidence, and interpretive inference.

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