

**Metaphor Analysis in *Hujan Bulan Juni*  
by Sapardi Djoko Damono as a Reinforcement of Values in Character  
Education**

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**Abstract**

This article aims to describe and explain the use of metaphor containing the values discussed as part of character education in Indonesia. Using *Hujan Bulan Juni* by Sapardi Djoko Damono for analysis, the poem suggests that belief in a Creator, wisdom and patience are key values for the Indonesian community. This work is highly metaphorical and, as such, is appropriate for inclusion in the secondary literature curriculum for the dual purpose of exposing students to major works of Indonesian literature and also to show values that are important to the community.

**Introduction**

Literature is a form of reflection that is accomplished in words. Through a literary work, a poet may express all the feelings he or she senses. Literary works are based not only on imagination but also on the realities that exist. Hence, the birth of a literary work is closely related to the character values it contains. These character values may be implicit as well as explicit.

Character values may be expressed in a variety of ways through language style. Study and interpretation of this language will show insight into the values of both the author and the target audience. Literature and language cannot be separated in terms of character values because language is the medium of transfer by which the author transmits meaning that bridges the understanding of the poet and the reader.

The medium of transfer used by the poet inevitably makes use of metaphor in conveying a message. Metaphor functions to ignite the reader's imagination which may trigger many questions which may lead to deep analysis of the metaphorical utterances used by the poet in his poetry.

Sapardi is well-known a representing an unusual genre in poetry within the body of Indonesian literature. His use of a metaphorical language style has been viewed as challenging the reader. The words have been said to come straight from the dimension of the human heart and mind and serves as reinforcement in the character-building of the nation.

The study of poetry at the school level will be more meaningful if it introduces poetry from various perspectives, including stylistics. Suwandi (2011) notes that stylistics is related to the use of language to cause an effect, especially in the reader. This may underscore the meaningfulness of the text. For this reason, reinforcement of the character values taught in upper secondary school can be combined with poetry appreciation. Studentd can be challenged to analyze poetry to seek the implicit emotional and value content. The poetic works, *Hujan Bulan Juni* and *Aku Ingin*, by Sapardi Djoko Damono are particularly appropriate for use at the upper secondary school level in Indonesia.

### **Analysis of metaphor in *Hujan Bulan Juni* by Sapardi Djoko Damono**

Poetry is a type of literary work that changes over the time. Riffare (1987) suggests that the change in poetry is influenced by the evolution of taste and changing aesthetic concepts. Pradopo (1993) feels that people can never comprehend poetry completely without the understanding to realize that a poetry is an aesthetic work that possesses meaning, not only a set of qwords without deeper meaning. In Indonesia, the forms of poetry have changed continuously over the course of literary history from the Balai Pustaka era up to the present time. This change has related to the context of content as well as orthography. Among the poetry that has exceptional qualities separate from the major literary movements are the works of Sapardi Djoko Damono. Sapardi's poetry has novelty, both in appearance and in content. Sapardi uses a variety of measures to metaphorize simple ideas using natural signs to represent meaning.

*Hujan Bulan Juni* is one of the best-known of Sapardi's poems among Indonesian teenagers. This work is presented in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade Indonesian language textbook entitled *Ekspresikan Diri dan Akademik*. The nobleness expressed in the poem is used as a tool to promote students' ability in literary appreciation of poetry. In practice, this requires that the intrinsic and extrinsic elements that play an important role in the interpretation of the poem be identified and understood. One approach to this is through language style.

Sapardi Djoko Damono often uses a metaphorical style to express emotions in his works. This metaphorical style is used in utterances which would not be comprehensible without insight into this metaphorical dimension. Metaphor has been seen as variety in the use of wordings to transfer meaning (Yeibo, 2012:183). The connotative meanings contained in *Hujan Bulan Juni* are meaningful to students who read and interpret it correctly.

The values of character in this poem are associated with the word choice in the lines of the poem. Sapardi Djoko Damono attempts to transport the reader of his poem *Hujan Bulan Juni* to the realm of wisdom, which is conveyed in the metaphorical style. The stanzas of the work can be interpreted on multiple levels to expose the values they contain.

*Tak ada yang lebih tabah  
Dari hujan bulan juni  
Dirahasiakannya rintik rindunya*

*Kepada pohon berbunga itu.*

The verse above is a call to humans to always be patient in pursuing their dreams. In the metaphor that links the phrase, *Tak ada yang lebih tabah* [There is nothing more patient] and *Dari Hujan Bulan Juni* [than the rain in the month of June], Sapardi uses metaphor to equate patience with the arrival of the rain. Rain is unusual in June in Indonesia as the rainy season has normally ended by then. The impossibility of rain at this time conveyed in the poem implies that faith and hope are required in the pursuit of dreams. Sapardi is suggesting that there is nothing impossible in this world as long as human beings work hard and are patient. *Hujan Bulan Juni* (rain in June) is not impossible and may arrive, in a metaphorical sense, if people believe in the possibility.

Belief in God, another important character value in Indonesia, is reflected in the line, *dirahasiakannya rintik rindunya/ kepada pohon berbunga itu* [The rain of longing is a secret/kept with the flowering tree]. Destiny and the secrets of God are implied in the use of this metaphor. Sapardi symbolically depicts human beings as flowering trees (*pohon berbunga*). People's destiny may not contain all that they desire. The desire and will possessed by human beings brings power and effort and makes them like a flower. The literal meaning and figurative meaning in the lines cited above are intertwined. Metaphor paves the way to transfer the literal meaning to fit the characteristics of poetry, which includes condensing the language. Metaphor can be categorized into dead metaphor and live metaphor (Al-Ma'ruf: 2009). Al-Ma'ruf (2009) further notes that metaphors are said to be empowered or alive if their literal meaning can be linked to their figurative meaning.

Sapardi teaches the value of wisdom which is metaphorized in two lines, *Tak ada yang lebih bijak/ /Dari hujan di bulan Juni* [There is nothing wiser/than rain in the month of June]. These lines can be seen as an affirmation of the wisdom gained in living this life. The metaphor in the poem signifies that humans should be wise in living and pursuing a dream. Sapardi portrays the patience and wisdom required to go on living in life.

Sapardi also introduces the role of the Creator in human life. God is assumed to know all that humans do. He sometimes blesses human beings as a reminder of his presence and sometimes withdraws his grace to encourage people to feel more grateful. This is metaphorized as *dihapusnya jejak-jejak kakinya/ yang ragu-ragu di jalan itu* [He erases the marks of the feet, that pass uncertain on the road]. These lines recall the presence of God among His creatures which is invisible and incomprehensible.

Metaphorical language styles provokes the reader to seek the more complex meanings contained in them. Sapardi's work combines this metaphorical usage with language of great beauty.

## Strengthening Character Values through Poetry Appreciation in School

The study of Indonesian in Indonesia involves text-based learning that applies several principles: (1) language should be viewed as text, not merely groups of words or linguistic rules; (2) the use of the Indonesian language must include the process of selecting linguistic forms to convey meaning; (3) language must be functional such that the language used can be separated from the context based on the linguistic forms used to reflect the ideas, attitudes, values and ideology of its users; and (4) language must be a tool to build reasoning ability (Mahsun, 2013). This approach implies that literature can be advantageously used to strengthen the character of Indonesian upper secondary school students. The poem *Hujan Bulan Juni* is often used as part of the learning process in the KTSP curriculum as well as the 2013 curriculum. In the 2013 curriculum textbook, the discussion of poetic text is limited to a comparative analysis of traditional poetry (*pantun*) and modern poetry. The values, such as patience, that are metaphorized in *Hujan Bulan Juni* analyzed as part of poetry appreciation is expected to have a psychological effect on students who are asked to consider the nature of *Hujan Bulan Juni*. The teacher as facilitator must also have a mastery of this poem in order to support the development of character understanding through appreciate of literature. In this, Al Musanna (2011) notes that character education can be interpreted as an attempt to encourage students to grow and develop their thinking to adhere to moral principles as well as to have the courage to do the right, even though they experience various challenges. Character education, then, is not limited to the transfer of knowledge about good values but involves making those into a totality of action (Sutjipto, 2011). For this reason, it is expected that the values that can be internalized from the study of poetry will have a strong influence on students of Indonesian at the upper secondary level.

## Conclusion

*Hujan Bulan Juni* by Sapardi Djoko Damono can play a role in strengthening the character values of students of Indonesian at the upper secondary level as required by the current curriculum framework. Use of material of this kind requires that teachers play a major role in guiding students in their interpretation of poetry. The study of poetry can be interesting and exciting when led by a creative and insightful teacher which will also serve to support character building through the study of Indonesian and its literature.

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