

**An Analysis of Stylistic Devices in the Poetry Collection *Hujan Bulan Juni*
by Sapardi Djoko Damono**

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the language styles and stylistic elements employed in the poetry collection *Hujan Bulan Juni* by Sapardi Djoko Damono. The study focuses on how the poet uses various linguistic and stylistic devices to convey ideas, emotions, experiences, and philosophical meanings in his poems. A qualitative descriptive method is employed with a stylistic approach to examine the relationship between linguistic choices and the aesthetic and semantic effects they produce. The data consist of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences containing elements of language style, which were collected through documentation and note-taking techniques and subsequently analyzed descriptively and interpretatively. The findings indicate that Sapardi Djoko Damono makes extensive use of metaphors, personification, hyperbole, repetition, symbolism, and imagery. Metaphors are used to express abstract ideas through concrete comparisons, while personification gives human characteristics to objects, nature, and abstract concepts, creating a more intimate and emotional atmosphere. Hyperbole strengthens emotional emphasis, repetition highlights important ideas and creates rhythm, and symbolism allows ordinary objects or natural phenomena to represent deeper meanings. Imagery also plays an important role in enabling readers to visualize, hear, feel, or emotionally experience the situations presented in the poems. In addition, the poet's careful selection of simple yet meaningful diction contributes to the subtle, contemplative, and distinctive character of his poetry. Therefore, the study concludes that the stylistic richness of *Hujan Bulan Juni* significantly contributes to its literary value and demonstrates Sapardi Djoko Damono's important role in enriching modern Indonesian literature.

Keywords: Stylistics, Poetry, Figurative Language, Lexical Structure, Sapardi Djoko Damono.

A. Introduction

Poetry plays a vital role in Indonesian literature as a medium for expressing culture, emotion, and profound social criticism. It not only reflects national identity but also serves as a vehicle for exploring contemporary issues through artistic and structured language (Rahmawati, & Efendi, 2026). In literary studies, the beauty and meaning of a poem are constructed through interconnected intrinsic elements—such as diction, imagery, and figurative language—that create complex, multi-layered meanings. The relationship between the physical structure of the language and the spiritual meaning the poet intends to convey forms the fundamental basis for understanding poetic works (Jakobson & Halle, 2026).

The role of poetry is increasingly relevant in the modern era, as it serves as a reflection of the social and cultural values present within society. Values such as resilience, humility, patience, and sincerity are often expressed through themes of nature and an atmosphere of solitude vividly depicted in the lines of the poems (Carp, 2025). Over time, poetry in Indonesia has undergone significant evolution, shifting from classical forms bound by strict rules to modern modes of expression that offer greater freedom regarding both form and content (Pujiati, 2026).

This development has led to an expansion of themes, ranging from nature and love to existential concerns and environmental issues. The paradigm shift from modernism to postmodernism has prompted poetry to blend local cultural elements with global issues, including environmental degradation caused by development. Furthermore, ecocritical approaches are increasingly employed in literary studies to examine how natural elements in poetry function as metaphors illustrating either the harmonious relationship or the imbalance between humanity and the environment (George & Dhawan, 2026). Sapardi Djoko Damono was a highly influential literary figure and a pioneer in the development of modern Indonesian lyric poetry. Born on March 20, 1940, in Surakarta, he passed away on July 19, 2020. In addition to being a poet, Sapardi served as a lecturer and Dean of the Faculty of Letters at the University of Indonesia, as well as a translator of foreign literary works into Indonesian (Darma, 2026).

His academic background and experience in the literary world profoundly shaped his writing style, which tends to be romantic, profound, and contemplative. He frequently blended Javanese cultural values with universal themes such as love, life, and nature,

resulting in works that are accessible yet rich in meaning (Rahman, 2025). The influence of his work is widespread, extending to adaptations across various media, which has further enriched discussions regarding linguistic aesthetics in contemporary literature (Ali, 2025).

The works of Sapardi Djoko Damono are distinguished by their unique use of language. He frequently employs various stylistic devices—such as alliteration, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and repetition—to create aesthetic beauty and reinforce the intended meaning (Pujiati, 2026). This approach not only enriches semantic depth but also lends his literary works a distinctive appeal capable of stirring the reader's imagination (Kelly, 2026). Through powerful symbolism—particularly that drawn from nature—Sapardi successfully conveys life values in a manner that is subtle yet deeply moving (Jayanthi & Jayantini, 2026). One of Sapardi Djoko Damono's most renowned and iconic poetry collections is **Hujan Bulan Juni** (Rain in June), first published in 1994 and subsequently reprinted numerous times. This work serves as a compelling subject of study due to its consistent use of natural elements—particularly rain—as primary symbols to depict various emotions, life values, and the reciprocal relationship between humans and their environment (Kockel, Haanpää, Nic Craith, Siivonen, 2026).

Within these poems, nature is not merely a backdrop; rather, it functions as a metaphor that reflects human emotions while simultaneously reminding readers of the responsibility to maintain ecological balance (Du, 2026). An analysis of the linguistic structure reveals how an atmosphere of solitude and tranquility is constructed through word choice and the use of figurative language, ultimately reflecting the value of inner resilience—a trait consistent with Indonesian culture (Zelika, 2025). This work is also rich in social values such as patience and sincerity, making it highly suitable for analysis through a stylistic approach. Stylistics is a branch of linguistics that examines language usage in literary works to explore their uniqueness, aesthetic qualities, and functional role in constructing meaning (Adam, 2026).

This study reveals how linguistic elements—such as stylistic devices and lexical structures—contribute to the poem's overall meaning (Amusan, 2026). Semantic analysis further helps uncover layers of both lexical and figurative meaning, thereby deepening the understanding of the interplay between culture, nature, and language within the literary work (Bielova, 2026).

Based on the foregoing, the researcher—a student in the Indonesian Language Education Study Program at Al Asyariah Mandar University—is interested in conducting a study titled "A Stylistic Analysis of the Poetry Collection **Hujan Bulan Juni** by Sapardi Djoko Damono: A Study of Language Style and Lexical Structure." This research is expected to serve as a reference for Indonesian language teachers when teaching poetry appreciation in schools and to enrich the body of stylistic studies within the local context of West Sulawesi. Furthermore, the findings can enhance instructional materials in higher education, given that a deep understanding of linguistic elements in literary works is essential for students to develop their teaching competencies and their ability to appreciate literature (Ibtihal, & Imane, 2026).

B. Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a stylistic approach. Qualitative methods were chosen because the research data consists of words, phrases, lines, and verses of poetry, which are analyzed based on their meaning and use in the text, rather than numerical data. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2026), qualitative research aims to deeply understand and comprehend the meaning of a phenomenon through data in the form of text or narrative.

A stylistic approach is used to examine the use of language in literary works, particularly how poets utilize linguistic elements to create aesthetic value and construct meaning. The focus of this research includes (1) language style, such as personification, metaphor, symbolism, and repetition; (2) lexical structure or diction, particularly the use of connotative and symbolic words; and (3) poetic imagery that builds atmosphere and aesthetic effects in poetry.

The data source for this research is the poetry anthology *Hujan Bulan Juni* (Seleksian Sajak 1959–1994) by Sapardi Djoko Damono published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. The research data consists of quoted words, phrases, lines, and verses of poetry containing stylistic elements, particularly the use of language style and choice of diction. The data was analyzed based on the linguistic elements contained in the poetry text, such as the use of metaphors, personification, symbolism, repetition, and words that have connotative and symbolic meanings.

Data collection was conducted using documentation and note-taking techniques. The researcher read the poetry anthology "Hujan Bulan Juni" intensively to understand the entire text, then identified and noted sections that demonstrated the use of stylistic elements. The reading process involves two stages: heuristic reading to understand meaning based on language structure and hermeneutic reading to interpret the symbolic meaning and aesthetic value contained within the poem. Each piece of data found is then classified based on the type of stylistic element and the lexical aspects analyzed. In qualitative research, the researchers acts as the primary instrument (human instrument) responsible for collecting, identifying, analyzing, and interpreting research data. Furthermore, this study utilized a data analysis table as a supporting instrument to group poetry excerpts based on their style, diction, and interpretation of their meaning.

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques with the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2025) data analysis model, which includes three stages, namely: (1). Data Condensation namely data obtained from the poetry text was selected and simplified according to the research focus. Data unrelated to the stylistic study was not used in the analysis; (2). Data Presentation. It means that the classified data is then presented in the form of an analysis table containing poetry excerpts, stylistic styles or lexical elements, and interpretations of their meaning; (3) Conclusion drawing and verification. It means that the final stage involves interpreting the relationship between language use and the meaning of the poem. The analysis results are then verified based on stylistic theory to draw conclusions regarding the characteristics of Sapardi Djoko Damono's language use in his poetry collection Hujan Bulan Juni (June Rain).

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

Based on the analysis of 20 poems in Sapardi Djoko Damono's collection Hujan Bulan Juni, various forms of stylistic elements were found, including figurative language (figures of speech), imagery, symbols, repetition, diction, and poetic language structures. The results of the study indicate that the most dominant use of stylistic elements in the collection of poems is personification, metaphor, symbolism, repetition, and imagery. The use of these elements serves to strengthen the delivery of the main themes of the poems, such as time,

death, silence, love, the relationship between humans and God, and the relationship between humans and nature.

Sapardi Djoko Damono's poetic style tends to use simple language, yet conveys profound philosophical meaning. The simplicity of his word choice in his poetry does not diminish the complexity of the meaning, but rather serves as an aesthetic strategy to convey an inner experience that resonates with the reader.

The results of the identification of stylistic elements in the 20 poems analyzed can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Results of the identification of stylistic elements

No	Stylistic Elements	Function in Poetry
1	Personification	Endowing objects, nature, and abstract concepts with human qualities to make the poem's meaning more emotional.
2	Metaphor	Conveying abstract ideas through symbolic comparisons that expand meaning.
3	Symbolism	Conveying philosophical meaning through objects such as time, rain, twilight, the earth, and flowers.
4	imagery	Building a sensory experience for the reader through visuals, sound, and feeling.
5	Repetition	Emphasizing specific ideas and creating the musicality of the poem.

The Use of Personification as an Aesthetic Strategy by Sapardi Djoko Damono

Research findings indicate that personification is the most frequently encountered figure of speech in the poetry collection **Hujan Bulan Juni**. Sapardi Djoko Damono consistently attributes human characteristics to objects, nature, and abstract concepts such as time, night, rain, the earth, and death.. In the poem “Tangan Waktu” (The Hand of Time), for instance, the use of personification is found in the line: “selalu terulur ia lewat jendela”

The line portrays time as if it possessed physical capabilities akin to a human's—able to reach out and move closer to people. Through this use of personification, time is no longer perceived merely as an abstract concept but emerges as an active force influencing human life. Selain itu, larik:

"without turning around even though you're excited" ...demonstrates that time is portrayed as something that can neither be stopped nor recalled. This use of personification reinforces the philosophical idea that human beings face limitations in the face of the passage of time.

The findings indicate that personification in Sapardi's poetry serves not merely as a linguistic embellishment but as a means to establish an emotional connection between human beings and the phenomena of life. This aligns with the stylistic perspective that a writer's choice of language—or stylistic style—represents a linguistic decision intended to create aesthetic effects while simultaneously reinforcing the meaning of the literary work.

Metaphor as an Expression of Philosophical Meaning

In addition to personification, metaphor serves as a dominant stylistic element in the collection **Hujan Bulan Juni**. Sapardi employs metaphors to convey abstract concepts—such as life, death, love, and spiritual connections—through concrete symbols.

In the poem "Sajak Desember" (December Poem), a metaphor appears in the line:

"Then I count my debts to You"

The phrase "my debts" does not refer to material debt; rather, it illustrates a human awareness of sin, responsibility, and one's spiritual relationship with God. This metaphor reveals a process of introspection as the individual evaluates their life's journey. A similar instance is found in the poem "Tentang Seorang Penjaga Kubur yang Mati" (About a Gravedigger Who Died) in the line:

"the earth is a cold embrace"

This phrase is a metaphor depicting the earth as humanity's final resting place after death. The word "embrace" conveys a sense of acceptance, while "cold" characterizes the neutral and inevitable nature of death. The use of metaphors in Sapardi's poems demonstrates the poet's tendency to address existential themes through simple language. Grand concepts such as death and divinity are not explained explicitly but are conveyed through symbols that invite the reader to engage in deeper interpretation.

Nature Symbolism as a Representation of Human Life

Research findings also indicate that nature symbolism is a key characteristic of Sapardi Djoko Damono's poetic style. Various natural elements—such as rain, the sky, the earth, twilight, flowers, and the sun—are employed as symbols representing the human inner state. In the poem “Hujan Turun Sepanjang Jalan” (Rain Falls Along the Way), rain functions not merely as a natural phenomenon but as a symbol of tranquility and the process of spiritual purification. The line:

“upon a secret message”

It suggests that the rain carries a hidden meaning linked to the human spiritual experience. Meanwhile, in the poem “Lanskap” (Landscape), the symbol of twilight is used to depict the passage of time and human awareness of impermanence.

“the sky grows older”

This phrase demonstrates both personification and a symbol indicating that all things undergo change and move toward an end. Through this nature symbolism, Sapardi establishes a connection between humanity and the surrounding environment. Nature serves not merely as a backdrop for the poems but as a medium for reflection on human life.

Imagery in Establishing a Poetic Atmosphere

The use of imagery is also a significant finding in this study. Sapardi frequently employs visual, auditory, and tactile imagery to evoke an experience that the reader can perceive. In the poem “Sajak Desember,” auditory imagery appears in the line:

“outside, I can still hear the rain”

The word “kudengar” (I hear) evokes an auditory experience, making the reader feel as though they are hearing the sound of rain amidst the silence of the night. Meanwhile, in the poem “Kita Saksikan,” visual imagery is evident through the depiction of:

“birds crossing the air”
and
“small clouds in the northern sky”

This use of imagery creates a contemplative atmosphere while simultaneously revealing the poet's appreciation for the beauty of nature.

Relevance of Stylistic Findings to the Characteristics of Sapardi Djoko Damono's Poetry

Based on the overall analysis, it is evident that Sapardi Djoko Damono's writing style tends to be minimalist, reflective, and symbolic. The poet avoids structurally complex language, instead employing simple words that possess depth of meaning.

Discussion

A stylistic analysis of the poems by Sapardi Djoko Damono within the studied collection reveals that the poet frequently employs personification, metaphor, symbolism, repetition, and imagery as dominant elements in constructing poetic meaning. The use of these stylistic devices not only embellishes the language but also reinforces the emotional atmosphere, themes, and messages conveyed to the reader.

Personification is the most frequently occurring stylistic device across nearly all the poems. Sapardi portrays natural objects and abstract concepts—such as time, rain, night, wind, the earth, and the sun—as possessing human qualities. For instance, in the poem **Tangan Waktu** (The Hand of Time), time is depicted as capable of "grasping the collar of your shirt," while in **Berjalan di Belakang Jenazah** (Walking Behind the Corpse), "tree after tree bows its head." This use of personification creates a more vivid and emotional atmosphere, allowing readers to sense a close connection between humanity and nature.

In addition to personification, metaphor is a crucial element in Sapardi's poetry. Metaphors are used to convey meanings regarding life, death, love, solitude, and the human relationship with God in a profound and symbolic manner. An example is found in the poem **Pada Suatu Malam** (On a Certain Night) with the phrase "silence is strong liquor," portraying solitude as something both painful and intoxicating. In the poem **Sementara Kita Saling Berbisik** (While We Whisper to Each Other), "paper flowers" serve as a symbol of fragile and fleeting love. These metaphors demonstrate the poet's ability to transform simple elements into carriers of deep philosophical meaning; as Ratna (2025) explains, metaphors play a role in expanding meaning and deepening the message of a literary work.

The use of symbolism is also highly prominent. Symbols such as rain, twilight, the sun, flowers, graves, and journeys are frequently employed to represent life, death, memory, time, and spirituality. In the poem **Lanskap** (Landscape), twilight symbolizes the end of life, whereas in **Ziarah** (Pilgrimage), graves and cypress trees serve as symbols of the human connection to ancestors and origins. These symbols demonstrate the contemplative nature of Sapardi's poetry and its profound reflection on life.

Visual, auditory, and tactile imagery further enhance the atmosphere of the poems. Visual imagery—evident in the depiction of rain, the sky, twilight, and streets—creates a mood that is both melancholic and serene. Auditory imagery emerges through the sounds of rain, whispers, and the tolling of bells, evoking a sense of solitude, religiosity, and deep contemplation. Meanwhile, tactile imagery fosters a deeper emotional resonance regarding suffering, loneliness, or inner peace. This imagery serves to provide a sensory experience for the reader, allowing them to visualize, hear, and physically sense what is depicted in the poems (Sudjiman, 2024).

The use of diction in these poems also possesses a distinctive character. Sapardi selects words that are simple and accessible yet carry potent connotative meanings. Common words—such as rain, time, night, and flowers—are not merely interpreted literally but are transformed into symbols representing life's values.

Overall, the stylistic approach in Sapardi Djoko Damono's poetry is characterized by language that is simple and gentle, yet possesses philosophical depth. The poet successfully conveys major themes—such as life, death, love, solitude, time, and spirituality—through diction that is simple yet evocative. This imbues his works with a powerful emotional and reflective impact on the reader.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the stylistic analysis of poems by Sapardi Djoko Damono, it was found that the dominant stylistic elements include personification, metaphor, symbolism, repetition, and imagery. The use of these elements serves not only an aesthetic function but also reinforces the conveyance of the themes, emotional atmosphere, and messages embodied in the poems. Through personification, inanimate objects and natural elements are presented as if they

possess human qualities, creating a stronger emotional connection between the poem and the reader. Metaphors and symbols allow the poet to communicate abstract ideas, such as love, longing, death, loneliness, and human existence, in an indirect yet meaningful manner. Meanwhile, repetition contributes to emphasis, rhythm, and emotional intensity, while imagery helps readers visualize and experience the situations described in the poems. Furthermore, Sapardi's choice of diction is generally simple, concise, and familiar, yet it contains profound meanings. This combination of simplicity and depth becomes one of the distinctive characteristics of his poetic style. His poems demonstrate that ordinary words can produce complex interpretations when arranged through carefully selected stylistic devices. The interaction between diction, figurative language, imagery, and poetic structure creates a harmonious aesthetic effect and strengthens the overall meaning of the poems. Therefore, the stylistic features found in Sapardi Djoko Damono's poetry demonstrate his creativity in transforming everyday experiences and natural phenomena into expressions of deeper human emotions and philosophical reflections. His distinctive style also contributes significantly to the development and richness of modern Indonesian poetry. Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions can be proposed. First, future researchers are encouraged to conduct more comprehensive stylistic studies by examining additional elements, such as rhyme, rhythm, syntax, sound patterns, semantic aspects, and poetic structure. Such research could provide a broader understanding of Sapardi Djoko Damono's literary characteristics. Second, future studies may compare Sapardi's poetry with the works of other Indonesian poets to identify similarities and differences in the use of figurative language, diction, symbolism, and imagery. Comparative research could contribute to a deeper understanding of the development of Indonesian poetic styles. Third, teachers and students of Indonesian literature can use the findings of this study as learning material for understanding figurative language and appreciating poetry. Analyzing stylistic elements can encourage students not only to identify literary devices but also to interpret the deeper meanings, emotions, and values contained in literary works.

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