

# A Needs Analysis for Poetry Appreciation Textbooks in Universities: An Exploratory Study

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**Abstract** The objective of this study is to describe the needs for poetry appreciation textbooks in universities over the years. To collect data, researchers used a qualitative descriptive method and an interview technique involving university students and lecturers. The results of data analysis show that both university students and lecturers need textbooks on the poetry appreciation. Within a needs analysis framework, lecturers had a clear mode of perceptions of what they had been doing in terms of using poetry textbooks and talked about reasons why they focused on the literary appreciation. The use of poetry appreciation textbooks in lectures they deliver can help university students instill knowledge on the poetry appreciation through which they can pursue critical ideas, self-appreciation demands and character education values. In-class literary events are also grounded in interactive practices in which university students cooperate with each other in a range of lecturing activities: poetry reading, writing and discussing. This pedagogy implies that educational needs for poetry appreciation contribute to classroom literary culture, provision of poetry textbooks and university students' engagement in poetry-related learning activities.

**Keywords:** *needs analysis, textbooks, poetry appreciation, character education, self-appreciation*

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## 1. Introduction

Poetry appreciation textbooks have widely been used in universities as sources of information. Compiled by different authors, the generic structure and sequence of such textbooks may vary. Designed and used for the sake of literary learning or study of certain objects of knowledge and arts, poetry appreciation textbooks primarily contain the presentation of scientific principles, literary criticism [5] and assessment of poems. In a general term, a poetry appreciation is a result of critical thinking, and a quest for poetry intrinsic values in which systematic understanding and interpretation are built to express literary messages to the world. Through appreciation activities, literary criticism is expected to arise in the readers' minds, and most of all, in the world of poetry, alternative options to deal with the problems of real life [8] are worth considering. Therefore, poetry appreciation constitutes an integral part of movement through which poetry textbooks significantly require adequate attention in all contexts of literary theories [5] and practices.

In many ways, however, there is an urgent demand to undertake a needs analysis for poetry appreciation textbooks because its contribution to conceptualize poetry as self-discovery, performance and self-criticism needs to evaluate. In addition, poetry is a window of exploration in which an in-depth study commonly called an exploratory study can be done accordingly. An exploratory study is an initial stage of research and development to determine

whether or not lecturers and university students are in need of poetry appreciation textbooks. That is why this study provides a great deal of insights into interviews with lecturers and university students to elicit related information on the use of poetry appreciation books in learning and teaching activities. Instead, on one end is a view of learning to explore core values behind every poem, popularly known as character education values in the 2013 Indonesian curriculum, and as a continuation of an exploratory study, students' engagement in this poetry exploration should relate to quality instructional practices.

In that sense, poetry appreciation textbooks in both private and public universities are extremely needed, so that all lecturers and students use the textbooks to prepare for learning and teaching processes in class. As primary learning resources, poetry textbooks are crucial for lecturers and students across domains, and this view leads to the development of curriculum and pedagogy by providing a needs analysis to diagnose textbooks-related problems. Therefore, this article explores the ways in which poetry appreciation textbooks in universities are assessed within a needs analysis perspective involving lecturers and students. It also sets out to describe how poetry appreciation textbooks meet the needs of lecturers and students at Indonesian Language Education and Literature Departments of private and public universities in Central Java and Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The benefits of this research are (1) to enrich the science and (2) to develop theories of poetry appreciation addressed in poetry textbooks for either lecturers or students in such universities.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is a way or a method to determine the difference between the desired and existing conditions. The desired condition often refers to an ideal condition, whereas the existing one often refers to the real situation or condition. The literature has emphasized the importance of needs analysis as an "ongoing process of collecting data to identify training needs, so that the existing training can be developed to assist the organization in order to achieve the goal" [1]. The development of needs analysis in the context of curriculum is "the process by which one defines educational needs and decides what reviews of priorities" are of paramount importance. That is to say, needs analysis is a process defined as a specified educational requirement in accordance with its priority. This process determines what is needed in education [13]. As a tool of assessment, needs analysis identifies problems to determine the appropriate action [14] taken as solutions.

### 2.2. Textbook

Textbooks are sources of information that follow a generally accepted principle called a structured sequence of materials that are written based on a scientific system considerably. Textbooks fully explain knowledge, disciplines of sciences comprehensively. As a universal component of teaching and learning activities, textbooks are appropriately used as handbooks that contain instructional designs, theories or practices. Thus, to understand the lectures fully, lecturers and university students need to read through textbooks of sciences or other related subjects.

Textbook is a learning tool that is used in schools and universities to support a teaching program [11]. In terms of its structure, the contents of a textbook comprise (1) the preface, (2) content, (3) main part which is divided into chapters or sections, (4) references, (5) a glossary, and (6) index. A textbook should contain knowledge-related materials as stated in the curriculum [9]. The contents of a textbook must meet or support school-based textbooks [10] to enrich the standard of teaching materials. The presence of textbooks in education becomes crucial because they contain ideas related to national culture. Textbooks also play an important part in affecting the transfer of knowledge, core values and cultural information through national struggles of education [4].

There are four main reasons why lecturers or teachers should use textbooks in learning activities. First, materials are taught although they are not designed specifically for a particular group, but it is in accordance with the needs of the group. Second, textbooks help students comprehend learning materials which will be taught in the upcoming lectures. Third, the availability of textbooks can assist independent learning activities in the absence of lecturers. Fourth, textbooks allow lecturers to adapt and improvise when teaching [3].

In short, textbooks are books that are compiled by specialists or experts in a particular field dedicated to supporting lecturers or teachers in the classroom. Textbooks are also used to supplement other textbooks

that have been issued by the government. In this case, textbooks are supplementary in a sense of enriching substantial parts of other government-issued textbooks or modules. The presence of textbooks in addition to assisting students' learning is to help lecturers redevelop the courses they had designed and taught.

### 2.3. Poetry Appreciation

Poetry appreciation is a respect or an assessment of poetry as a literary work. Literature reveals the human life, but the process of poetry creation requires the power of writers' imagination and creativity [2]. Prior to appreciating literature, an author appreciates problems of human life and re-expresses them through a means of fiction (in the form of poetry, short stories, novels, or drama). In the process of this creation, literary creativity can be "infinite".

Authors create, manipulate, and deal with the problems of life that can be observed in different intrinsic and universal truths of fiction. Authors can propose something that is likely to occur but, in fact, it never happens. In one way or another, fiction can change bitter and painful things into a pleasant contemplation of literature. Therefore, through literary work, readers will indirectly get a chance to learn to understand and appreciate the problems of human life deliberately revealed by the author. Thus, literature can ignite the readers to be more sensible.

Appreciation is usually associated with arts. Poetry appreciation has something to do with poetry activities. By hearing or reading poems, students learn to be genuinely appreciative. They also learn to write, recite and review poems they produce [12]. By doing these activities intensely, an individual student is able to understand the poetry in depth (with a full appreciation); he or she can feel what the poet feels, enables to absorb values in the poem, and appreciates poetry as work of art along with its beauty or weakness.

To appreciate poetic values means to introduce readers with self-appreciation and criticism. People who have a sense of poetry appreciation are not only convinced but also desirable to put things in the context of imagination, creativity and creation [7]. Hence, the appreciation of poetry is an "award for poetry or a result of recognition, understanding, interpretation, appreciation, and enjoyment of the work supported by the inner sensitivity of values in the poem" [12]. Within these limitations, the sensitivity to appreciate literary work like poetry helps university students to (1) identify, (2) understand, (3) be able to interpret, (4) be able to live, and (5) enjoy literary work. There are four levels of poetry appreciation, namely (1) the level of fondness, (2) the level of enjoyment, (3) the degree to react, and (4) the level of productivity [12]. Thus, a sense of poetry appreciation is a literary award that is supported by the inner sensitivity values in poetry, so that one is able to recognize, understand, interpret, appreciate and enjoy the literary work.

## 3. Research Method

The method used in this research was descriptive and qualitative as part of research and exploratory study in

which a needs analysis for poetry appreciation textbooks was undertaken. This study was conducted at six universities, namely the University of Widya Dharma in Klaten, Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo, University of Veteran Bangun Nusantara in Sukoharjo, Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta, Ahmad Dahlan University, and Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University in Yogyakarta. The data collection technique was interview with lecturers and students to determine the needs of poetry appreciation textbooks used in universities. Interview questions are related to learning through textbooks in universities and were associated with character-based education as a continuation of preliminary study (a needs analysis) in the second phase of research and development.

**Table 1. A list of interview questions with lecturers**

No.	Questions
1.	Is your academic background appropriate for the course you are going to teach?
2.	How long have you been teaching <i>Poetry Appreciation</i> course?
3.	Are you pleased or happy to teach the course assigned to you?
4.	What are your perceptions about learning activities that you have completed?
5.	Do you often prepare lesson plans and textbooks every semester?
6.	In general, what is the objective of poetry appreciation in the Indonesian Language Education Department?
7.	Do you often improve and add references used for teaching <i>Poetry Appreciation</i> course?
8.	How do you manage the processes of poetry appreciation in your course?
9.	What textbooks do you use these days?
10.	Have you ever heard about character-based education textbooks?
11.	In your opinion, what is a character-based education textbook?
12.	Do you want to use character-based education textbooks?
13.	Do you think that poetry appreciation textbooks are necessary to use?

**Table 2. A list of interview questions with students**

No.	Questions
1.	What is your opinion about the poetry appreciation learning?
2.	Do you like the poetry appreciation learning?
3.	What difficulties do you find in the learning of poetry appreciation?
4.	How do you handle the difficulties?
5.	What advantages do you take from learning the poetry appreciation?
6.	What kinds of textbooks do you use so far?
7.	What are the main references that the lecturers have recommended you to learn from?
8.	Do your lecturers assign you to read the recommended references?
9.	What teaching method do the lecturers use when teaching in class?
10.	Do the lecturers correlate the poetry appreciation learning with character education?
11.	Is necessary or unnecessary to use poetry appreciation textbooks that are commonly character education based?

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. A Needs Analysis for Poetry Appreciation Textbooks

#### 4.1.1. Lecturers' Needs Analysis

A lecturers' needs analysis in the early stage of this research (exploration) was conducted by interviewing six lecturers from each of the six locations and at different times (representing University of Widya Dharma in Klaten, Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo, University of Veteran Bangun Nusantara in Sukoharjo, Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta, Ahmad Dahlan University, and Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University in Yogyakarta).

**Table 3. A sample of interview with a lecturer**

No.	Questions	Answers
1.	Is your academic background appropriate for the course you are going to teach?	Iya Bu, latar My educational background has been appropriate for the poetry appreciation course since I graduated from the Literature Department.
2.	How long have you been teaching <i>Poetry Appreciation</i> course?	Oh, since a long time ago, exactly since 1986.
3.	Are you pleased or happy to teach the course assigned to you?	Yes, I'm glad because appreciation of poetry is a course which is relevant to my competence and specialty as a graduate of Literature Department.
4.	What are your perceptions about learning activities that you have completed?	Pembelajaran The purpose of teaching poetry appreciation can be achieved smoothly but not maximally because many students do not know about poetry.
5.	Do you often prepare lesson plans and textbooks every semester?	Yes, I often prepare books before teaching.
6.	In general, what is the objective of poetry appreciation in the Indonesian Language Education Department?	Tujudi prod The purpose of poetry appreciation in the Indonesian Language Education Department is to improve students' competence in learning poetry appreciation of old and new genres, especially poetry.
7.	Do you often improve and add references used for teaching <i>Poetry Appreciation</i> course?	Iya Bu, sai Yes, I always add a reference, usually an example of poetry.
8.	How do you manage the processes of poetry appreciation in your course?	Proses pemb The learning processes of poetry appreciation is less effective because of the background of different students and thus require considerable time to explain in detail the appreciation of poetry.
9.	What textbooks do you use these days?	1. <i>Assessment and Appreciation of Poems</i> by Herman J Waluyo. 2. <i>Assessment of Poems</i> by Grace Djoko Pradopo.
10.	Have you ever heard about character-based education textbooks?	Not yet.
11.	In your opinion, what is a character-based education textbook?	Poetry appreciation textbook of character-based education is a textbook that contains a character value.
12.	Do you want to use character-based education textbooks?	Ada bu, tet I want to, but I don't have the book yet, so I teach materials based on the existing syllabus.
13.	Do you think that poetry appreciation textbooks are necessary to use?	PerlYes, pay Yes, I think it's necessary to help students learn something different in the poetry appreciation.

The interview results with six lecturers at different universities show that the entire poetry appreciation lecturers have the same opinion in terms of the poetry appreciation courses that are crucial in universities. Poetry appreciation courses are expected to equip students with appreciating poetry fully. In addition, students can either understand the appreciation of poetry or implement its character-based values in theory and practice. Common textbooks use instead of the ones written by professors, for example, *Assessment and Appreciation of Poems* by Herman J. Waluyo and other supporting textbooks are highly recommended. In contrast, there is no character-based education textbook. Therefore, professors are required to write poetry appreciation textbooks of character education.

#### 4.1.2. Students' Needs Analysis

A needs analysis was conducted by interviewing six university students, each of whom information concerning poetry appreciation textbooks was elicited. In fact, students need a textbook of poetry appreciation that contains the character education. Below is a sample of interviews with students.

##### 1. Interviews with students at the University of Widya Dharma in Klaten

Interviews with students of Indonesian Language Education and Literature Study Program at the University of Widya Dharma in Klaten prove that students are pleased to attend the appreciation of poetry course. Lecturers use the *Assessment of Poetry* textbook, together with other recommended textbooks for students. Moreover, lecture and discussion are methods that the lecturers mostly use in class, but they never associate the learning of poetry appreciation with character education. Therefore, it is time for them to provide students with required textbooks on the appreciation of poetry and character-based education.

##### 2. Interviews with students at the Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo

The interviews with students of Indonesian Language

Education and Literature Study Program at the Muhammadiyah University of Purworejo conclude that students like reading poems in the poetry appreciation course and they are eager to study literature. Lecturers in this university use *Assessment and Appreciation of Poetry* textbooks from which principles of poetry appreciation and learning encourage students to get involved in the classroom activities. Even lecturers use a discussion method in delivering lectures, but at the same time they never care about connecting the poetry appreciation course with the character education. That is why the students are recommended to have appreciation of poetry textbooks that contain the character-based education.

##### 3. Interviews with students at the University of Veteran Bangun Nusantara in Sukoharjo

The interview with students of Indonesian Language Education and Literature Study Program at this university shows that poetry appreciation is important because it can encourage students' excitement in appreciating poems. Lecturers use textbooks concerning the assessment and appreciation of poetry. Meanwhile, the lecturers' teaching methods deal with lecture and discussion, but they never associate the learning of poetry appreciation with the character education. In fact, students need poetry appreciation textbooks that mainly discuss the character education to make them more motivated and well-experienced.

##### 4. Interviews with students at the Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta

The students of Indonesian Language Education and Literature Study Program at this university state that they are happy about taking the poetry appreciation course. Lecturers use textbooks on assessment and poetry appreciation that are highly recommended for students to read. In terms of teaching methods, lecturers prefer to use lecture and discussion, but they never associate the learning of poetry appreciation with the character education. Therefore, students need poetry appreciation textbooks that emphasize the character education for the young generation.

Table 4. A sample of interview with a student

No.	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your opinion about the poetry appreciation learning?	I think poetry appreciation means to enjoy, to feel and to know the messages behind poems.
2.	Do you like the poetry appreciation learning?	Yes, Mom, because I do like the poetry appreciation course.
3.	What difficulties do you find in the learning of poetry appreciation?	Analyzing a poem.
4.	How do you handle the difficulties?	Just by way of reading and analyzing poems.
5.	What advantages do you take from learning the poetry appreciation?	The advantages are that I can understand how to appreciate poetry, how to analyze poems deeply.
6.	What kinds of textbooks do you use so far?	Well, I use <i>Assessment and Appreciation of Poems</i> by Herman J. Waluyo.
7.	What are the main references that the lecturers have recommended you to learn from?	The same book, <i>Assessment and Appreciation of Poems</i> by Herman J. Waluyo.
8.	Do your lecturers assign you to read the recommended references?	Iya Bu, Sometimes, I am recommended to read books [or other references] on Internet.
9.	What teaching method do the lecturers use when teaching in class?	Lecture and discussion methods.
10.	Do the lecturers correlate the poetry appreciation learning with character education?	Tidak pe Never. All the teaching activities only deal with definitions of poetry of old and new genres, especially the new one.
11.	Is necessary or unnecessary to use poetry appreciation textbooks that are commonly character education based?	Perlu Bu, It's necessary because of the presence of poetry appreciation textbooks that talk about character education. I think students learn something new, get new insights and understand the character education.

### 5. Interview with students at the University of Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta

The interview results with students of Indonesian Language Education and Literature Study Program at this university prove that students' preference to take the poetry appreciation course depends on how the course inspires students to learn poetry comprehensively. Lecturers use textbooks concerning the assessment and appreciation of poetry. They also recommend students to use *Assessment and Appreciation of Poetry* textbooks. By using lecture and discussion as the teaching method, lecturers do not connect the learning of poetry appreciation with the character education. Of course, students need poetry appreciation textbooks that discuss the character education, so that they can add new insights to values they have in everyday life through poetry.

### 6. Interviews with Students at Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa University in Yogyakarta

The students of Indonesian Language Education and Literature Study Program at this university assert that they are excited about taking poetry appreciation course because they can learn how poetry influences their perspectives. Lecturers use textbooks on the assessment and appreciation of poetry that are highly recommended for students to read. When delivering a lecture, most lecturers use a discussion method, but they never connect the learning of poetry appreciation with the character education. In general, students need poetry appreciation textbooks that discuss the character education to add new insights to core values of their life.

Notwithstanding the interviews conducted in six universities point out that students' needs analysis is in relation to (1) students' courses are concerned with the appreciation of poetry; (2) lecturers use discussion, lecture when delivering lectures; (3) there is a disconnected link between the character education and the learning of poetry appreciation; and (4) students need poetry appreciation textbooks that contain the character education.

## 5. Conclusion

This study has examined (1) the appreciation of poetry in universities; (2) the poetry appreciation course is strongly expected to equip students with the poetry appreciation knowledge and poetry criticism; (3) most lecturers used *Assessment and Appreciation of Poetry* by Herman J. Waluyo as well as other highly recommended textbooks; (4) poetry appreciation textbooks do not contain the character education; (5) lecturers need the poetry appreciation textbooks that discuss character

education; (6) students need courses that deal with the appreciation of poetry; (7) lecturers provide students with lecture and discussion methods in the classroom interactions; (8) lecturers do not correlate the character education with the poetry appreciation in teaching and learning processes; and (9) students need poetry appreciation textbooks that mainly talk about the character education.

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