The Ability Students of Indonesian Language and Literature Education to Appreciate the Literature Works and the Obstacles they Faced

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Abstract. The Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program students (PBSI) Universitas Negeri Medan should have good abilities in appreciating literature works, especially the works arose at the beginning of the modern Indonesian literature, literature works of the library class, new poets, 45, 66, to 2000's. However, many of them at the beginning level have never read the literature works. Therefore, this research is aimed to describe the ability of first year students to appreciate and criticize modern Indonesian literature works. This research used a descriptive method by conducting a survey of PBSI students' abilities in appreciating the literature works. The research data were obtained from the students' answers based on the test questions given. The questions are in multiple choice objective questions which consist of 60 questions. Then, the interviews were conducted with several students to obtain the data that related to the obstacles they faced. The research results indicate that (1) The ability of PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan students 2022 in appreciating the literature works is in the moderate average category with an average value of 67.13. There are 2 students or 6.25% who had a very good category, 3 students or 3.37% had a good category, 12 students or 37.5% of students had moderate category, meanwhile 15 students or 46.87% had less category. Through the results obtained, further research is certainly needed to improve the students' ability to appreciate literature works by using various learning methods and strategies that are able to provide stronger inspiration and motivation. (2) Some difficulties that the students faced are partly because of the students' experience in reading literature works is still low. Several students also were found that this condition was caused partly because the approach used in learning literature was not able to motivate them to read literature works comprehensively.

Keywords: Literature appreciation, students, PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan.

1 Introduction

The literature learning is mainly intended to lead the abilities in oral and written, as well as being able to appreciate and criticize the literature works, therefore in learning literature there

are three components, they are: (a) the ability to appreciate the literature: listening, watching, and reading literature works, (b) the ability of literature expression: the activity of verbalizing and writing literature works, and (c) the ability to criticize: analyzing, reviewing, and assessing the literature results of other people [1]. However, many literature studies do not achieve these outcome indicators. [2] based on the results of his research it was revealed that the causes of failure in learning literature include appreciation and criticism of literature carried out in learning activities so far that have been monotonous, uninteresting, and boring.

Empirical facts on various literature learning activities at junior high school, senior high school, and college education levels state that learning literature appreciation and criticism can add the students' insight, knowledge, thoughts, and feelings about the creation of literature works themselves. In addition, learning about literature appreciation can sharpen feelings, reasoning, imagination, sensitivity to culture, society and the environment. The Ministry of National Education stated that in order for the learning objectives to be achieved, there must be language competency standards. Language competence describes mastery of knowledge, language skills, and attitudes towards language skills [3]. In addition to competency standards, there are also content standards covering aspects of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. These four aspects are very closely related, they are: (a) listening ability is a skill that is used in order to be able to understand the discourse that is heard or read, (b) speaking ability is a skill that is used in order to be able to speak effectively and efficiently, (c) the ability to reading is a skill that can be used in order to obtain information that is in accordance with the content of the reading, (d) writing ability is the ability that is used in order to produce good writing from what has been read, listened to, and conveyed.

Becoming a college lecture in literature is not easy and simple. A college lecture should have extensive knowledge about literature, either in terms of theory, history, or literature criticism. The dynamic nature of literature requires them to always follow the developments. A simple example that can be put forward in this matter is about the appreciation and criticism of literature conveyed by the college lecture in the classroom. There are still college lectures who interpret prose as free essay and poetry as bound essay. This understanding is acceptable if the subject matter is about the old poetry in the genre of pantun, syair, and gurindam. If the subject is about the recent poetry, which begins with the emergence of Sutardji's poetry creed, then the definition of poetry as a composition bound by rhymes, stanzas, syllables, the number of words in one line, the number of lines in one paragraphs, of course cannot be used. This can be seen clearly in the poem entitled Q, *Tragedi Sihka and Winka*, *Pot*, by Sutardji Caldzoum Bachri, and several other poetry types. It is the same as the poetry written as visual prose, for example in Sapardi Djoko Damono's *Perahu Kertas*. This shows that the notion of poetry as bound essay certainly cannot be used for all poetry types. In prose, models of prose writing have also emerged that visually resemble poetry, for example the novel of *Pengakuan Pariyem* by Linus Suryani Ag. This is what became known as lyrical prose and prosaic poetry. This problem gives direction that the competence and knowledge of lecturers as facilitators in the learning process, especially in learning literature, should be developed. It is not only relying on existing knowledge, but following developments in literature itself. In other words, one should know a lot of literature works from various genres. This presentation illustrates that the students are still lack of learning literature.

Besides learning problems which are highlighted from the teaching aspect, another aspect that also determines is the students' ability to appreciate and criticize the literature works. THe

appreciation is an activity of appreciating and assessing art in the form of positive or negative things. One of the appreciation measurement is the value of an art work. In giving an appreciation, it should not be based on coercion, but sincerity for the evaluator of the literature work. Furthermore [5] the understanding of appreciation is giving appreciation to art works, or activities in dealing with literature works in the form of understanding, appreciation, and sensitivity to literature works created by writers. Thus, appreciation is the activity of heeding, enjoying, and experiencing literature works individually, momentarily, subjectively, and spiritually, in order to obtain care, sensitivity, love, and involvement in the literature work itself.

The appreciation of literature works can be performed as follows: a) The stage of knowing and enjoying. At this stage the literature works are viewed by reading, viewing, watching and listening. b) The appreciating stage. At this stage one must feel the benefits of literature, because it will provide entertainment and broaden the view of human life. c) The understanding stage. It is the stage of honing understanding regarding the analysis of the building blocks of literature works, both intrinsic and extrinsic, so that one can find out whether the literature work can be useful for life or not. d) The appreciation stage. It is the stage of giving arguments against what has been analyzed before. e) The application stage. It is to apply the positive values obtained from literature works in individual and social life [4]. Inh this case, the appreciation of literature works can be useful in sharpening social, religious and cultural sensitivities.

Additionally, students must also understand the literature criticism. It is giving comments on the literature works which are being analyzed. It is usually very useful for creators of literature works, so that the value of a piece of literature is higher and becomes input for writers so they can create even better works. For students, criticism can be in the form of descriptions, analysis, and interpretations in a novel, short story, poetry, and so on. Furthermore [4] the understanding of literature criticism according to Pradopo is a study that assesses the quality or not of the literature itself, but in assessing literature it must be in accordance with the norms of literature evaluation. More specifically, in criticizing literature works there are several stages that must be considered: a) The descriptive stage. It is the activity of reading and explaining what is read, for example describing the sequence of events in a novel, at this stage it has not yet reached analysis and interpretation. b) The interpretation stage. It is the activity of understanding the implied meaning of a piece of writing, for example explaining aspects of a literature work, both in terms of story content, theme, and language. c) The analysis stage. It is the stage for comparing several literature works by paying attention to theoretical studies, at this stage a conclusion will be obtained whether literature is in a good category or not.

If the literature criticism is always characterized by the activities of interpretation, analysis and evaluation, literature appreciation does not necessarily involve analysis and evaluation. In fact, the activities of reading and understanding literature works without analysis and evaluation are included in the activities of literature criticism. Furthermore, research or literature study is the activity of systematically investigating, analyzing, and understanding literature works based on certain theoretical frameworks and scientific approaches. The purpose of conducting literature studies is to understand certain phenomena contained in literature works, including understan-ding the meaning of literature works. The examples in literature studies include understanding the narrative structure or storytelling structure of novel

Sitti Nurbaya or understanding the themes of certain period Indonesian novels (for example the period of 80's). Furthermore, in contrast to literature criticism which must show an evaluation or good or bad value of the work being criticized, the research or literature studies do not always have to end with an assessment since the purpose of literature studies or research is indeed not to determine the good or bad value of a literature work, but rather to understand the phenomena of literature works systematically and based on a certain theoretical framework and method (approach).

This study is aimed to measure the students' ability from year 2022 in the Universitas Negeri Medan PBSI Study Program to appreciate and criticize literature. This research is the initial activity of a series of development research that was carried out. The data on students' abilities to appreciate and criticize literature works are used as material for consideration and initial data in further research activities. Various studies focused on improving the quality of learning literature in higher education continue to be pursued. As [5] produces a multicultural-based short story appreciation textbook for universities. In his research at universities in East Java it was found that the textbooks on short story appreciation based on multiculturalism were more effective than textbooks which were previously commonly used by the teaching community to teach appreciation of prose-fiction. Moreover, [6] in his experiment also tried to improve short story learning for students. The study was conducted as an effort to improve the competence of literature appreciation and literature literacy of students at one of the tertiary institutions in Bandung, Indonesia. In this case, learning literature through Indonesian language short stories is used as a means to improve students' literature appreciation and literature literacy compe-tencies. Furthermore, [7] carried out the development of an interactive taxi E-book (fictional story) as a medium for literature appreciation skills to improve the quality of the students' understanding and appreciation towards literature works.

In addition to the research above, improvements to learning literature are also sought through the development of ability test kits and designs for learning literature that incorporate advances in internet technology. The use of technology such as gadgets and laptops in the learning process will certainly attract the students' interest so that the learning process and learning outcomes will be optimal [8]. Furthermore, [9] revealed that learning assessment must refer to the demands of 21st century learning. The 21st century skills must be mastered and owned by every student in order to face the Industrial Revolution 4.0 [10]. The use of technology in learning Indonesian language and literature can be implemented in various forms according to its function in education [11]. Therefore, Indonesian language lectures need to develop science and technology-based assessment instruments and have the benefit of assessing the achievement of student learning outcomes in short story appreciation.

The ability to appreciate and criticize literature works is generally related to an understanding of the elements that make up a literature work, such as the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the literature work. [12] explained that the intrinsic elements of literature works, for example prose fiction, contain plots or storylines, themes, characterizations, settings, points of view, mandates, and language styles. Meanwhile, the extrinsic elements are building elements outside of literature texts or in other words as elements that influence the story structure of literature works. The extrinsic element is useful for understanding the meaning of a literature work in understanding the subjectivity of the author in the form of attitudes, beliefs, and outlooks on life which become the creative process of creating the literature works. For that reason, in this research, the students' understanding will also be measured through their ability

to appreciate literature works based on their understanding of the elements that create the literature work.

2 Research Method

A descriptive method was used which intends to conduct a survey regarding the year 2022 students' abilities of Universitas Negeri Medan PBSI Study Program students in appreciating and criticizing literature. This research will find the that relate to the certain phenomena as explained above. The number of participants in this research was 32 students from regular class A of the PBSI Study Program class of 2022. The research data is the students' scores after taking tests of appreciating and criticizing literature works. The test given is in the form of multiple choice objective questions which consist of 60 questions that related to appreciation of poetry, prose, and drama from batch 20 (*balai pustaka*) and 33 (*pujangga baru*). The result is then assessed based on the research instruments compiled. Then the interviews were conducted to several students to get the answers that related to the difficulties they faced when appreciating and criticizing literature works. To determine the students' abilities, an assessment standard is used as follows:

Table 1 Assessment Standard Appreciation of Literary Works

No	Value	Category
1	85-100	Very Good
2	75-84,9	Good
3	65-74,9	Moderate
4	51-64,5	Less
5	≤ 50	Very Less

Based on the assessment standard above, it can be described that students who got a score of 85-100 are considered very good, the score of 75-84.9 are considered good, the score of 65-74.9 are considered moderate, the score of 51-64.5 are considered less, and the score of <50 considered very less.

3 Research Results and Discussion

The description of the PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan Study Program year 2022 students' ability to appreciate and criticize literature works by is known after they have finished answering 60 items of appreciation and criticism of literature given via the google form. Each student is given time to answer the test questions for 60 minutes. The questions are categorized based on the periods of modern Indonesian literature. As it is known, the period of Indonesian literature consists of: generation of 20^s (*Balai Pustaka*), generation of 33^s (*Pujangga Baru*), generation of 45^s (Struggle), generation of 66' (Unrest), generation of 80^s (Romanticism), and generation of 98 (Reform). The categorization of the generations is mapped based on the change of Indonesian literature which is influenced by the social, cultural and political aspects of the Indonesian nation. [13] in *Ikhtisar Sejarah Sastra Indonesia* (An Overview of Indonesian Literature History), [14] in *Lintasan Sejarah Sastra Indonesia* (The tack of Indonesian Literature History), and [15] in *Beberapa Teori Sastra, Metode Kritik, dan Penerapannya* (Several Literature Theories, Critical Methods, and Their Applications). However, in this research, the measurement of the students' understanding on

the Indonesian literature works was only based on a number of works that were classified in the *Balai Pustaka*, and *Pujangga Baru*.

The literature works appeared in *Balai Pustaka* period is the forerunners for the birth of Indonesian literature. Even some of the dominant literature works in the form of romance are still familiar to us today. The roman of *Azab dan Sengsara* (1920) by Merari Siregar, *Sitti Nurbaya* (1922) by Marah Rusli, *Muda Teruna* (1922) by M. Kasim, *Salah Asuhan* (1928) by Abdoel Moeis, *Salah Pilih* (1928) by Nur Sutan Iskandar, *Tak Putus Dirundung Malang* (1929) by Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana, and many more.

In the following developments, the themes of Indonesian literature were not limited to forced marriage, as a tradition of marginalizing women at that time. Then the Indonesian literature is influenced by Western culture. The writer who played the most role was Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana (STA). As a form of renewal, Poedjangga Baroe magazine was founded in 1933 which was also identified with the name of the period of 30s. Some of the literature works that appeared in this generation are: *Dian Yang Tak Kunjung Padam* (1932), *Layar Terkemban*g (1936) by STA; *Belenggu* (1940) by Armijn Pane; *Hulubalang Raja* (1934) and *Katak Hendak Jadi Lembu* (1935) by Nur Sutan Iskandar; *Sukreni Gadis Bali* (1936) by I Gusti Njoman Pandji Tisna; *Percobaan Setia* (1931) and *Kawan Bergelut* (1938) by Suman Hasibuan; and others.

The following is the overall profile of the year 2022 students' abilities of PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan Study Program in appreciating and criticizing modern Indonesian literature works in *Balai Pustaka*, and *Pujangga Baru* periods.

Table 2. The students' ability to appreciate literature works

| Participant | Understanding towards the literature work | | | | | | Total | Score |
| | Period of *Balai Pustaka* | | | Period of *Pujangga Baru* | | | | |
	Poem	Prose	Drama	Poem	Prose	Drama		
01	5	4	6	5	7	6	33	55
02	6	5	5	6	6	6	34	56,66667
03	7	5	6	7	5	7	37	61,66667
04	7	8	6	5	7	5	38	63,33333
05	8	7	8	5	8	8	44	73,33333
06	8	8	7	7	7	6	43	71,66667
07	8	9	8	8	9	9	51	85
08	7	6	8	7	8	8	44	73,33333
09	8	6	8	8	7	5	42	70
010	7	8	7	7	8	6	43	71,66667
011	8	8	6	8	7	8	45	75
012	8	7	8	7	8	8	46	76,66667
013	9	8	7	8	7	6	45	75
014	9	9	10	8	7	9	52	86,66667
015	8	7	8	6	8	6	43	71,66667
016	7	6	7	8	7	7	42	70
017	8	7	5	8	7	7	42	70
018	7	8	10	8	8	8	49	81,66667
019	8	7	8	7	6	7	43	71,66667
020	7	7	6	6	7	5	38	63,33333
021	6	5	6	6	5	8	36	60

022	6	5	5	6	5	6	33	55
023	5	5	7	6	5	4	32	53,33333
024	5	7	4	6	7	8	37	61,66667
025	8	7	8	9	6	5	43	71,66667
026	6	5	5	7	5	7	35	58,33333
027	8	5	5	7	8	6	39	65
028	6	7	5	7	6	6	37	61,66667
029	8	7	6	7	6	5	39	65
030	5	6	5	6	7	6	35	58,33333
031	8	6	5	5	7	5	36	60
032	6	5	5	7	5	5	33	55
Average score of the PBSI students' ability to appreciate the Indonesian literature works								67,13542

Table 3 The score of the students' ability to appreciate the Indonesian Modern Literature work

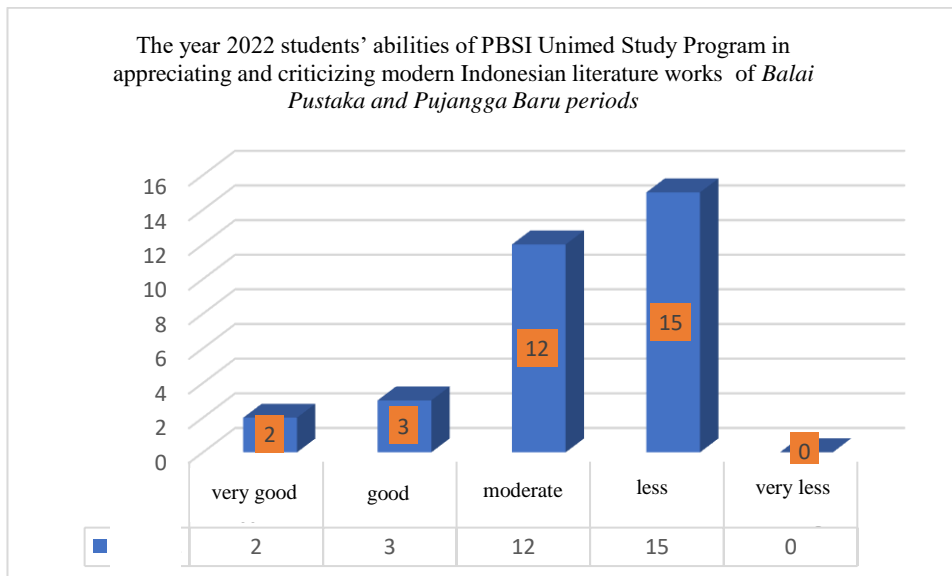| No	Score	Category	Number of students
1	85-100	Very Good	2
2	75-84,9	Good	3
3	65-74,9	Moderate	12
4	51-64,5	Less	15
5	≤ 50	Very Less	0
Total			32

Fig 1. The year 2022 students' abilities of PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan Study Program in appreciating and criticizing modern Indonesian literature works of *Balai Pustaka* and *Pujangga Baru* periods

The findings as shown in the table and figure above, reveals that the students' interest is still low which means it needs to be improved. It seems that students' interest in literature works is currently on the decline. As [16] also found the fact that learning prose appreciation received less positive responses from students at Semarang State University. This condition is partly due to the way of the college lectures who tends to be theoretical and does not provide opportunities for students to appreciate literature intensely.

Based on various problems, various research has also been conducted on this subject, including [17] whose the finding revealed that the critical discourse analysis model in the study of short stories with a gender ideology can develop students' abilities in studying short stories with a gender ideology. Then [18] in his dissertation examined the effectiveness of prose fiction learning models with a reception aesthetic approach. Also [19] found that the application of post-reading discussion strategies in prose fiction appreciation courses improved the students' literature appreciation skills. Based on several research results it is known that the students' ability to appreciate literature can be improved in various ways. Therefore, the findings of this study are important in providing recommendations for further research, in seeking to improve the 2022 PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan Study Program students' ability to appreciate literature using effective methods based on the criteria of the problems they faced.

The data on the students' abilities also shows that the quality of learning literature is much low. The low quality of learning literature can be seen from the low ability of the students to appreciate literature. According to the research by some experts, this is due to the approach used in learning literature, which is not in line with the nature of learning literature and the goals of learning literature. Based on the problems analysis, it was found that the experience of reading literature works among the students is still low. Based on the interviews conducted, only 10% of the total number of the students in the learning class claimed to have read the literature works of Balai Pustaka and Pujangga Baru. This condition is surely very concerning and needs to be corrected with various learning strategies in order the students may have high motivation in reading literature works.

4 Conclusion

From the previous description, it can be concluded as follows: (1) The year 2022 students' abiity of PBSI Universitas Negeri Medan Study Program in appreciating literature works is in the moderate average category with an average value of 67.13. The details of the scores obtained are 2 students or 6.25% who had a very good category, 3 students or 3.37% who are good category, 12 students or 37.5% of students who are in moderate, meanwhile 15 students or 46.87% who are in less good category. Based on the results, further research is certainly needed to improve the students' ability to appreciate the literature works using various learning methods and strategies that are able to provide a stronger inspiration and motivation. (2) Some of the difficulties that the students faced are partly because the experience of the students' reading the literature works is still low. The condition on several students was caused partly because the approach used in learning literature was not able to motivate them to read literature works.

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