

Character Narratives in Indonesian Digital Fiction: A Semi-Digital Stylistics Approach

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Abstract

Digital fiction is a collection of art texts in the form of short stories and novels that combine technology, virtual space, media elements, and provide access to readers or netizens to carry out certain activities in it. Narratology of Characterization is the initial foundation in research in the field of literary studies. Narratology is a field of study that explains narratives and narrative structures in a discourse context. Narratology of characterization talks about the position or scheme of characters in the story. The position of the character talks about the role and impact of the role of the character. The character gives birth to characterization. Characterization gives birth to implications. Implications provides birth to messages and perspectives that will be captured by the reader. Narratology research in digital fiction is research that aims to explain the position, role, and function of the character and characterization itself. This study found that in digital fiction, characters are dominated by women. Female characters in digital fiction hold various roles and impacts on the roles they play. Not only that, this study also found that all works included in the digital fiction category are works that are ready to be owned by many people. Digital fiction does not only belong to the author but also to the reader who acts as a ghost writer who has the right to make decisions or provide suggestions and criticisms of the contents of the story. The author is still recognized as the creator of the story and netizens still take their position as figures who assess the work subjectively and objectively, subjective because there are thoughts, ideas, personal points of view in assessing a fiction, objective in providing assessments, input, suggestions, and criticisms for the maturity or goodness of the story.

Keywords: Digital fiction; Narrative characterization; Literature analysis; Stylistic approach

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INTRODUCTION

A collection of texts with linguistic aesthetic values is known as digital literature. Digital literature has not only linguistic aesthetic values but also other equally significant components, such as virtual space, media elements, virtual space, and netizens. Every component found in digital literature has an impact on the existence of literary works, and the file format is one such influence. Digital literature files are soft copies, sometimes known as compact files (the new name is pixels). Bit (Binary Digit) is the digital mechanism that protects pixels in the digital world. Netizens are not immediately aware of every pixel in Bit; marketing and a market are required to promote them. Digital fiction is no different. For digital fiction, search is necessary.

Human life can be rejuvenated in digital fiction. Digital fiction's digitalization process necessitates that people be cognizant of technology advancements. The rise of

social media in its numerous forms is one example of technical advancements (Sobur, 2012, p.7). Because people compete to prove their existence to the world through their social media profiles, social media makes society more transparent. Digitalization affects human life in both positive and negative ways. People who can keep up with the speed of digital life can readily assimilate and adjust, while those who are unable to do so will feel cut off from the current virtual period. The existence of the digital world affects a lot of things.

First, the impact of the digital world is the increase in digital fiction on various social media. Digital fiction is an artistic writing that not only uploads text to social networks via the internet but also creates images in netizens. Digital fiction is a work that is born with a dynamic concept where the work produced is free to be seen, criticized, and owned by anyone. Works that are born by combining technology and the beauty of language. Digital fiction is a writing that exists on the www and also on hard drives (Viieres 2005, p.35). Digital fiction is closely related to technology. Digital fiction is born spontaneously and every poet is free to expose it without going through a filter process.

Digital literature was born in the 1980s. The digital equipment used was still very minimal, namely: large computers with a minimalist capacity that is very far compared to mobile phones that have been circulating in the present era. Everything related to the digital world starts from an email account that becomes the foundation for using all digital activities (Wildan 2007). The use of digital was initially intended for the military or government employees, changing its function to become a medium to expose everything without limits. The digital world is developing rapidly, producing literature from various sources, forms, and contents. All forms of literature that have been produced form a social community that plays a role in communication in the history of the development of literature in the world (Nasrullah, 2015)

Digital literature combines science and technology as determinants of fundamental changes in culture and civilization. The shift in determinants of change in the trajectory of the era began with religious values, then to art, then to economics and now to technology. In the world of technology, the explosion of creativity and innovation is increasingly exploding. Along with the development of the era, technology has begun to dominate human life. even in every aspect, technology is needed by humans to help their lives (Ratna 2007. p.18). One of the uses of technology in the world of literature in the world, especially in Indonesia, is to create a container called digital media.

This research comes from a question "If literature continues to develop to adapt to existing technological developments, will the essence and essence of literature itself change or remain the same? This research has its own uniqueness because the research data taken focuses more on the online application store called "playstore". In addition, this study focuses on its review of the narratology of characters and characterization in Indonesian digital fiction. As far as the researcher's observations, there has been no research that discusses or raises literary applications on the playstore for research. There is a vital urgency to this research. This urgency can be observed in the involvement of technology. The existence of technology in the world of literature will have a great impact on literature itself. One of these effects is the language and characters used. In addition to urgency, this research also has its own uniqueness and novelty. The research differs from other studies. This research focuses on digital fiction found in the Play Store online store. This research focuses on digital fiction that has a good rating of 4.0 - 4.5 according to the standardisation carried out by the Play Store. In this study, 10 short stories and 10 novels were taken from the Play Store, which is an application that contains both Indonesian literary works and the Indonesian language. This research is a follow-up research conducted by researchers in previous research conducted in 2020.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a focus on narratology to explore the character development and narrative symbols in Indonesian digital fiction. The primary method used for this research is phenomenological narrative analysis, which allows the researcher to delve into the subjective experiences of the characters within the digital fiction. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.111), a qualitative approach places the researcher as a central instrument, guiding the data collection and analysis process through personal engagement with the text. Additionally, Creswell (2007, p.12) notes that phenomenological research focuses on analyzing lived experiences and subjective interpretations of the phenomenon, which, in this case, is the fictional characters in digital narratives. By examining these characters, the research will uncover the underlying narrative structures and symbols that shape their actions, decisions, and identities.

Research Object and Data Collection Technique

The participants in this study are not human subjects but rather the digital fiction texts themselves, which consist of short stories and novels available on the Play Store application. These digital works are the key data sources, with a focus on their narrative characters. The selection criteria for the digital fiction include: Synchronous or A-synchronous applications in Play Store Ratings between 4.0 and 4.9 stars Age ratings ranging from 3+ to 18+ Indonesian language as the dominant language Rankings within the top 1-10 in the Play Store This selection ensures that the data is reliable, popular, and representative of the prevailing digital fiction trends in Indonesia.

Tabel 1. Novel Research Data in Digital Applications

No.	Names of Application	Rate	Star	Downloader
1.	Wattpad	12+	4,2	± 100 million
2.	MangaToon	12+	4,3	± 10 million
3.	Webnovel	16+	4,3	± 5 million
4.	Dreame	16+	4,5	± 1 million
5.	NovelToon	12+	4,7	± 500 thousand

The digital novel applications presented in Table 1 are applications that have gone through the filtering process according to predetermined indicators, and can be said to be applications selected in the top ten category. The indicators used to determine the data include the reputation of the novel application, the number of downloaders, and the use of Indonesian as the dominant language in the writing work.

Table 2. Digital Short Story

No.	Nama Aplikasi	Rating	Bintang	Pengunduh
1.	Kumpulan Cerpen <i>A-sinkronus</i>	3+	4,3	± 50 ribu
2.	Kumpulan Cerpen Terbaik	3+	4,2	± 50 ribu
3.	Cerpen Horor dan Seram	3+	4,2	± 50 ribu
4.	Kumpulan Cerita Pendek	3+	4,5	± 10 ribu
5.	Cerpen Remaja Lengkap	3+	4,3	± 10 ribu

The primary instrument for data collection in this study is the researcher, in alignment with the qualitative and phenomenological approach. The researcher actively

engages with the digital fiction texts to identify and analyze the narrative symbols associated with the characters. The following data collection techniques will be employed: Textual Analysis: The researcher will closely read and analyze the digital fiction stories to identify recurring themes, symbols, and patterns that contribute to character development. This will include the symbolic representation of characters, their roles in the narrative, and how these symbols resonate within the cultural context of Indonesian digital fiction. Document Review: Relevant reviews, user comments, and ratings on the Play Store will be examined to understand how the audience interacts with and interprets the narratives, particularly the characters. This secondary data will provide additional insight into the audience's reception of the characters and narrative symbols. Thematic Coding: Through a process of open coding and categorization, themes related to character identity, behavior, and narrative context will be extracted from the texts. This will allow the researcher to understand how characters are constructed and represented within digital fiction.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will follow a phenomenological approach, focusing on extracting the meaning of the characters and their symbolic significance within the digital fiction. The key steps of data analysis are: Phenomenological Reduction: The researcher bracket personal biases and preconceptions to focus on the essence of the characters' representations in the texts. This process involve setting aside assumptions and focusing solely on the characters' actions, dialogue, and interactions. Thematic Analysis: Following the identification of significant passages related to characters, a thematic analysis is conducted to uncover key symbols and patterns. This involves categorizing the data into themes that illustrate the symbolic roles of the characters and their contributions to the narrative. Narrative Interpretation: The researcher interpret the narrative structure and symbols by considering how the characters evolve, how their actions influence the storyline, and how these narratives reflect broader societal values and beliefs within the Indonesian context. This analysis allows the researcher to understand the role of characters as symbolic representations within digital fiction. Contextual Analysis: To ensure a holistic understanding, the researcher analyzes the cultural and social context in which the narratives are created and consumed. This involve considering how cultural symbols and norms shape character development and narrative structure in Indonesian digital fiction. Through this methodical approach, the study provide an in-depth analysis of how characters are constructed and symbolically represented in Indonesian digital fiction, shedding light on the intersection of narrative, culture, and digital media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research found several things. Exposure of these findings can be observed in the following excerpts. The sender is something or someone who influences the subject to obtain an object. The sender has a significant influence on the subject, especially in the decision-making process. In digital fiction, not all stories have a sender. Some stories do not have a sender. The absence of a sender in the story is because the desire for something or someone comes from the subject himself, not from the will or influence of others. In the research on the narratology of digital fiction characterization in Indonesia, two types of authors were found.

Sender : Near People

In the first focus of the sender sub-focus, it was found that the sender was some of the closest people in the subject's life. The statement data can be seen as follows:

Namaku Yunita, aku kelas 6 SD. Aku mempunyai 6 sahabat, termasuk aku, kita juga satu kelas. Sahabat aku ada Dayyah, Ani, Ivana, Eka dan Sabila. Mereka semua sahabat terbaik aku. Setiap aku sedih, mereka selalu ada buat aku. Sebaliknya, setiap mereka sedih aku juga selalu ada buat mereka. Setiap hari kita selalu bareng terus. Sampai-sampai istirahat bareng, makan bareng, pulang sekolah bareng, pokoknya serba bareng deh (Data 1.1)

My name is Yunita, I'm in 6th grade. I have 6 friends, including me, we are also in the same class. My best friends are Dayyah, Ani, Ivana, Eka and Sabila. They are all my best friends. Every time I am sad, they are always there for me. Conversely, every time they are sad I am also always there for them. Every day we are always together. We take breaks together, eat together, go home from school together, everything together (Data 1.1).

The data supports the existence of data that shows that the sender and subject have a close relationship, namely friends. In the friendship context data presented, it is a friendship between elementary school children, while the friendship context data presented is a friendship between college friends (Booker, 2004; Bradford, 1997). In addition to close relationships in the form of friends, there are also other forms of close relationships that are established by the subject with the sender.

Sender : Distant People

In addition to the sender being a close person, the research on the symbolization of characterization narratives in Indonesian digital fiction found that there were senders who had distant relationships with the subject or had no relationship at all, which could be said to be distant or strangers. The first data which is the category of distant senders is as follows:

In the wet autumn, two students, Makimura Jun and Enomoto Satoshi, are forced to stay on campus longer, to complete a paper assigned by one of the lecturers (SA.Apl 03.Pgm.Cpn 01).

Di musim gugur yang basah, dua orang mahasiswa, Makimura Jun dan Enomoto Satoshi, terpaksa tinggal di kampus lebih lama, untuk menyelesaikan makalah tugas dari salah seorang Dosen (SA.Apl 03.Pgm.Cpn 01).

The sender in the data is a lecturer. The absence of a special bond or closeness between the subject and the sender makes everything run using a professional system. If the first data is a lecturer, in the second data it is found that the sender is a teacher. The first and second data show the similarity of the sender's work, namely as an educator. There are many characters who act as senders. The characters who act as senders, whether the sender is a close person or a distant person, both have important positions in the subject's life. Both influence the subject's life and motivate the subject to get the object (Berry, 2012; Bimo-mahendra, 2017). Not only that, the sender in the actantial symbol has a certain pattern, if the sender is a close person then the status or closeness will appear at the beginning of the story. However, if the sender is a distant person, then the status or role will appear in the middle of the story, not at the beginning of the story. This association can be observed in the following picture.

This study found that characters in digital fiction play several roles. The roles played by the characters can be similar or different in real life. If viewed from the theory of psychology, there is an attachment that occurs between one character in digital fiction and another character (Darwis, 2002; Davis & Elder, 2006). The term attachment was first

put forward by a psychologist from England in 1958, namely John Bowlby. According to Bowlby, attachment is the existence of a relationship or connection between a certain social figure and a certain phenomenon that is considered to reflect unique relationship characteristics. The attachment that is formed during infancy has an important influence on the development stage. Attachment last quite a long time in the span of human life which begins with the child's attachment to the mother or other figure that replaces the mother. Attachment is a strong desire from someone to always be close to another person who becomes an attachment figure (Agung & Kurnia, 2017; Agitha, 2013). This attachment figure can consist of a mother, father, other family members and or caregivers.

This is supported by Martin Herbert in *The Social Sciences Encyclopedia*, "Attachment refers to a bond between two or more individuals, the nature of which is a discriminatory and specific psychological relationship, and binds one person to another within a certain time and space". Attachment is a special bond that develops between a baby and its caregiver. Santrock defines attachment as an emotional bond that forms between two people who are always close and offer physical and psychological security (Djoko-Saryono, 2017; Djoko-Saryono, 20120). Attachment is a strong emotional bond children develop through interactions with people with special meaning in their lives, usually parents. According to Gold (2012), attachment is a strong bond of affection between a child and parents or special people in the child's life, which leads the child to feel pleasure when the child interacts with them. In forming attachment, parents are required to be able to create a sense of trust in children since infancy.

From several explanations regarding the concept of attachment that have been explained above, it can be concluded that attachment is a strong relationship or connection from someone who becomes an attached figure in a special bond between two or more people who have closeness and offer physical security to establish an emotional bond and affection in the child's life that leads the child to feel pleasure when the child interacts with them.

CONCLUSION

Through research Narrative Characterization in Indonesian Digital Fiction (Digital Stylistics Semi-Digital Perspective) can be concluded several things, namely : First, Through digital fiction, we can learn how to speak more politely and engagingly so that readers can also learn to speak politely and engagingly. Second, Female characters dominate the characters in digital fiction. This indicates that the position and power of women in the digital era is getting stronger and growing. Women are no longer figures that can be underestimated, but women are figures who can give color to literary life in Indonesia. The narratological scheme can explain the characters' characteristics and position in digital fiction.

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