

Generation Z Narrative Strategy in Writing Short Stories: Literary Learning

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the narrative strategies used by Generation Z in writing short stories in the era of digital literacy. The research method used is a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis of the collection of short stories *Warna Merdeka Kala Korona* consisting of 47 short stories published by the Banyuwangi Literacy Community. The data were analyzed using Minderop's (2011) storytelling strategy theory, which includes telling and showing techniques, as well as the influence of digital technology on narrative patterns. The results of the study show that changes in narrative structure in Generation Z short stories reflect adaptation to digital technology, with a dominance of non-linear plots, exploration of social themes, and active involvement of readers in interpreting the story. Generation Z shows a strong tendency to use an indirect storytelling style (showing), which develops characters and conflicts through actions, dialogues, and responses to problems without explicit narrative from the author. This study shows that technological developments have strengthened Generation Z's preference for reflective and interactive storytelling. This study contributes to the study of digital literacy and opens up opportunities for further research related to cultural factors and individual preferences in shaping Generation Z's storytelling strategies.

Keywords: *narrative strategy, generation Z, storytelling style, storytelling patterns*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi naratif yang digunakan Generasi Z dalam menulis cerpen di era literasi digital. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan analisis deskriptif terhadap kumpulan cerpen *Warna Merdeka Kala Korona* sebanyak 47 cerpen yang diterbitkan oleh Komunitas Literasi Banyuwangi. Data dianalisis menggunakan teori strategi penceritaan Minderop (2011), yang mencakup teknik *telling* dan *showing*, serta pengaruh teknologi digital terhadap pola naratif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan perubahan struktur naratif dalam cerpen Generasi Z mencerminkan adaptasi terhadap teknologi digital, dengan dominasi alur non-linier, eksplorasi tema sosial, serta keterlibatan aktif pembaca dalam menafsirkan cerita.

Generasi Z menunjukkan kecenderungan yang kuat dalam menggunakan gaya penceritaan tidak langsung (*showing*), yang mengembangkan karakter dan konflik melalui tindakan, dialog, serta respons terhadap permasalahan tanpa narasi eksplisit dari penulis. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan teknologi telah memperkuat preferensi Generasi Z terhadap penceritaan reflektif dan interaktif. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi dalam kajian literasi digital serta membuka peluang untuk penelitian lebih lanjut terkait faktor budaya dan preferensi individu dalam membentuk strategi penceritaan Generasi Z.

Kata Kunci: strategi naratif, generasi Z, gaya bercerita, pola bercerita

INTRODUCTION

Short stories are a form of literature that plays a crucial role in literacy studies. As relatively short narrative texts, short stories allow readers to understand and analyze the story's structure, style, and moral message in a shorter time than novels or other literary forms. In the context of digital literacy, short stories have also undergone significant changes in their writing and presentation styles, particularly among Generation Z, who grew up in the information technology era.

Generation Z tends to consume and produce texts quickly, interactively, and often influenced by digital media. This impacts their storytelling style, which is more dynamic, personal, and experimental. Literacy studies of the short stories they produce are important to understand how this generation constructs narratives, conveys ideas, and adapts social and cultural changes into their works. Therefore, this study aims to explore the narrative strategies used by Generation Z in writing short stories and how these reflect their literacy characteristics. The main focus of the study is to analyze the narrative techniques used by Generation Z, including storytelling style, structure, themes, and technical approaches that shape a distinctive identity in their works.

Narrative strategies in literary works include elements such as plot, point of view, style, and story structure that form a narrative (Jackson, 2005). In the context of short stories, narrative strategy analysis includes characterization using two methods, namely the direct method (*telling*) and the indirect method (*showing*) (Minderop, 2011). The direct method is a technique of explicitly describing characters by the author, for example an explanation of the character's name, physique, and personality. In contrast, the indirect method describes characters through the reactions of other characters, the environment, or conversations between characters. The literature review used in this study refers to previous research related to narrative strategies in literary works, the characteristics of Generation Z in reading and writing short stories, and the influence of digital media on storytelling patterns.

Generation Z, as *digital natives*, exhibits a tendency to understand and interpret text differently than previous generations (Prensky, 2022). They are accustomed to flexible, interactive, and visual-based text formats, resulting in their unique short stories possessing distinctive characteristics in their structure and storytelling style. Previous research has shown that digital technology influences not only text production but also reader consumption and interpretation (Intan, 2020). Social media encourages the emergence of more flexible and interactive writing styles (Setyawati et al., 2021), while digital literacy expands access to literature and gives birth to new genres such as digital short stories that combine visual elements and narrative experimentation (Munif, 2022). The urgency of this research lies in the changing literacy patterns of Generation Z due to the rapid development of digital technology, making understanding the characteristics of their storytelling style essential in contemporary literacy studies.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method to explore the narrative strategies used by Generation Z in writing short stories. The main data source is a collection of short stories by Generation Z in the book *Warna Merdeka Kala Korona*, published by the Literacy Community 45 Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Banyuwangi, which was written during the

pandemic situation. Data were collected through document studies and digital literacy observations. Document studies analyzed short story texts to identify narrative strategies, the application of *telling* and *showing methods*, and other narrative elements such as point of view, character descriptions, and language styles. Digital literacy observations were conducted to understand the influence of social media and digital platforms on storytelling patterns.

Data analysis was conducted through a thematic categorization approach, encompassing three stages: data reduction, classification, and interpretation. Data reduction was carried out by selecting short stories relevant to the research focus. The data were then classified based on storytelling strategy (*telling* or *showing*), narrative structure, language style, and its relationship to digital media. The interpretation stage connected the classification results with Minderop's (2011) narrative theory, thus revealing how Generation Z constructs stories in the digital era, adapting their storytelling style to technology, and demonstrating shifts in their narrative structure. These findings form the basis for understanding the characteristics of narrative strategies developing among Generation Z.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the short story is analyzed using Minderop's (2011) theory, based on direct and indirect narrative styles. Both will be discussed in the following subchapters:

To understand how Generation Z constructs narratives in short stories, it is crucial to examine the storytelling strategies they employ. This generation, born in the digital era, has unique tendencies in how they structure their stories, both in terms of structure, style, and theme exploration. This study's analysis examines direct (*telling*) and indirect (*showing*) *storytelling style*. The data from the direct storytelling analysis are shown below.

Table 1. Analysis of Direct Narrative Style

Aspect	Analysis	Description
Use of Character Names	1. Use of the character "I": from the beginning of the story, the character "I" is described as the sole narrator. 2. Starting with the use of the character's name: the narrator takes full control in directing the reader's attention to the character, the narrator places this information at the beginning of the story so that the reader already has a lot of information about the character before starting to read the story.	In direct narrative, the use of the "I" character as the sole narrator positions the main character as well as the narrator. This creates a first-person perspective, explicitly revealing the identity of the "I" character from the outset. With this technique, readers gain not only information about the narrator but also a subjective perspective that directly conveys the character's experiences, feelings, or perspectives. Using a character's name at the beginning of a story in the direct method is a narrative strategy that gives the reader an explicit description of the main character. The narrator not only introduces the name but also directs the reader's focus and establishes the story's foundation by providing important information early on.
Character Appearance Character istics	The character's character is described through his physical appearance, the objects attached to his body, and the character's social interactions.	The physical appearance of characters in direct narrative style is used to provide a clear and immediate picture of the character. This allows the reader to immediately understand the character's social and psychological background without having to interpret actions or dialogue.
Character istics Revealed Directly by the Author	The narrator takes an active role in describing the characters. Character characteristics, whether traits, physical appearance, or background, are conveyed explicitly without waiting for action or dialogue to reveal them.	1. The narrator acts as the main source of information about the characters. 2. The narrator conveys the character's characteristics clearly, both physically, in terms of personality and background. 3. Character information is conveyed directly by the narrator without waiting for the plot to develop first. All important information about the characters is provided at the beginning or in the relevant section of the text.

Based on the data analysis table, three points can be explained according to the aspects studied in the direct narrative style. The explanations are as follows.

(1) Use of Character Names

a. Use of the figure "I"

A direct narrative style that begins with the mention of a character's name serves to explicitly introduce the character, allowing the reader to understand their nature and position in the story from the beginning. With this approach, readers are not only introduced to the character narratively, but also given a glimpse into the emotions they are experiencing. A character who expresses dislike for a particular situation from the outset, for example, immediately creates a strong impression of the personality and conflicts they will face in the story. Similarly, characters introduced through nicknames or nicknames reflect how they are perceived by those around them. As in the following data: "Hi, my name is Alice, I am currently in my second year of high school. I have been studying online for about 5 months, and you probably know why. You could say I hate this virus, because it has changed my life." (TMMAW/P. 59). The narrator places this information at the beginning of the story so that the reader already has a good understanding of the character before starting to read the story. As in the following excerpt, the character "Alice" introduces herself directly and states that she is a second-year high school student experiencing major changes in her life due to the pandemic. The use of the greeting "Hi my name is Alice" shows a familiar and informal storytelling style, building an immediate connection with the reader.

This emotional engagement is further enhanced by the straightforward and *to-the-point narrative*, reflecting the communication style widely used by Generation Z in everyday life. The straightforward storytelling, without numerous metaphors or lengthy descriptions, allows readers to grasp the story more quickly without losing its emotional essence. This approach makes the characters' experiences feel more authentic, not just as something told, but also as something felt by the reader.

In many Generation Z short stories, the "I" perspective is used to depict everyday events in a reflective and personal way. The characters' lives are not only told chronologically but also filled with personal opinions and responses that clarify their feelings about various situations. This can be seen in the many themes raised, from the struggle to achieve dreams and social relationships to reflections on the changes occurring around them.

The existence of digital media also influences this storytelling pattern. Generation Z is accustomed to expressing their thoughts and feelings directly through social media, so their short story writing style follows this communication pattern. Sharp dialogue, candid internal monologues, and a storytelling style that resembles informal conversation are part of the narrative, making the story more lively and easy to follow.

b. Use of Character Names

A direct narrative style that begins with the mention of a character's name serves to explicitly introduce the character, allowing the reader to understand their nature and position in the story from the beginning. With this approach, readers are not only introduced to the character narratively, but also given a glimpse into the emotions they are experiencing. A character who expresses dislike for a particular situation from the outset, for example, immediately creates a strong impression of the personality and conflicts they will face in the story. Similarly, characters introduced through nicknames or nicknames reflect how they are perceived by those around them. As in the following data: "Hi, my name is Alice, I am currently in my second year of high school. I have been studying online for about 5 months, and you probably know why. You could say I hate this virus, because it has changed my life." (TMMAW/P. 59). The narrator places this information at the beginning of the story so that the reader already has a good understanding of the character before starting to read the story. As in the following excerpt, the character "Alice" introduces herself directly and states that she is a second-year high school student experiencing major changes in her life due to the pandemic. The use of the greeting "Hi my name is Alice" shows a

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Besides strengthening character identity, using names early in the story also builds an emotional connection between the reader and the character. Characters introduced with specific emotional expressions, such as sadness, determination, or skepticism about their circumstances, provide a foundation for readers to understand the dynamics of feelings that develop throughout the story. Thus, this style helps readers place themselves in the character's perspective more quickly and deeply.

Another characteristic of this direct storytelling is the minimization of lengthy descriptions and the use of straightforward, conversational language. Dialogue and narration are often designed to resemble everyday conversation, reflecting the influence of digital culture that emphasizes fast and efficient communication. The characters in the story are introduced not through lengthy, analytical descriptions, but through their actions, speech, and responses to their surroundings.

The main factor influencing this style is the communication patterns of the younger generation, shaped by social media and digital technology. The information absorbed and conveyed in everyday life tends to be direct, clear, and to the point. Furthermore, social experiences, such as pandemics or major life changes, also shape how they express emotions and present their stories. Situations that demand quick responses make lengthy, reflective narratives less relevant, so a more explicit and direct approach is preferred in short story writing.

The impact of this storytelling style on readers is a faster engagement with the plot. With straightforward and expressive character introductions, readers don't have to guess about their personalities or positions in the story. This allows them to immediately understand the dynamics of the relationships between the characters and the developing conflict.

(2) Character Appearance Characteristics

The direct narrative style in Generation Z short stories places physical description as a crucial element in explicitly building character, allowing readers to quickly grasp the character's social and psychological background. Directly narrated physical characteristics provide concrete information without the need for further interpretation of actions or dialogue. By presenting the character's appearance from the outset, the narrative not only clarifies their identity but also places them in a specific social context that reflects their status, habits, or values. As in the data "I also left the house with Si Vega, the motorbike I usually ride, wearing a mask I went to meet my friends" (SB/P.25). The character is described as a simple student who rides a motorbike and is active in socializing with his friends. Therefore, it is clear from this quote that the figure of "Aku" is a student who has a community in his social environment. Generation Z tends to use straightforward and to the point physical descriptions, without excessive metaphorical exploration, reflecting a concise and efficient digital communication pattern.

The distinctive style of Gen Z storytelling in describing characters' physical appearance is evident in the use of more casual language that is reflective of social realities. They prefer to depict characters in relatable, everyday situations, such as wearing casual clothing, wearing certain accessories, or having hairstyles that indicate their identity. These physical descriptions are also often linked to social perceptions, where elements such as hair color, clothing style, or the vehicle used can reflect how society perceives the character. Some characters face stereotypes or social stigma based on their appearance, but the direct storytelling style allows for exploration of how they respond to or resist these assumptions.

The main factors influencing this style are digital culture and the way Generation Z consumes and produces content. In the age of social media, they are accustomed to conveying information quickly, concisely, and directly to the point. As a result, the physical descriptions in their short stories are concise yet still reflect the characters' identities and personalities. Furthermore, exposure to

diversity in popular culture makes them more inclusive in depicting characters from various backgrounds, whether in terms of clothing style, self-expression, or social status.

The impact of this storytelling style on readers is a faster and more powerful engagement with the story. By describing the characters' physical appearance directly and simply, readers can quickly form a clear mental image of them, without having to wade through lengthy narratives to understand their personalities. This also helps readers feel closer to the characters, especially if the descriptions reflect their experiences or values. Furthermore, this straightforward approach makes the story feel more authentic and relatable to everyday life, allowing readers to more easily connect emotionally with the plot.

Thus, the direct storytelling style used by Generation Z in describing characters' physical appearances not only serves to build character but also reflects their way of thinking and communicating in the digital age. This simple, *to-the-point*, and reflective approach to social reality makes their short stories more accessible, closer to real life, and more effective in conveying messages and emotions to readers.

(3) Characteristics Revealed Directly by the Author

The direct storytelling style in Generation Z short stories not only serves to convey the plot, but also builds emotional closeness with the reader through explicit and relevant descriptions of the atmosphere in everyday life. The narrator plays an important role in describing the environmental conditions and the psychological state of the characters, allowing the reader to understand the dynamics of the story without having to interpret too much. As in the data "My daydream was shattered. The time showed 2 a.m., the sound of the ticking of the clock's second hand increasingly strengthened the desire of the eyes that did not want to close. Occasionally I heard the sound of a wooden table being tapped on a stone," (KA75/P.157). In this quote, the atmosphere of the sky that changes from clear to dark and followed by the rumble of thunder reflects the tension felt by the character. The silent night setting, accompanied by the echoing ticking of the

clock and the sound of the table being tapped, depicts the feelings of anxiety and insomnia felt by the character. Characters in Generation Z short stories are not only introduced through dialogue or action, but also through settings that reflect the feelings and challenges they face.

One of the hallmarks of Generation Z short story writing is the use of settings that directly reflect the social situations they are experiencing. For example, the pandemic setting, with its uncertainty and social limitations, shows how characters face emotional stress and adapt to new circumstances. This challenging atmosphere reinforces the characters' characterizations as individuals who survive hardship, without the need for excessively reflective narrative. This aligns with Generation Z's communication patterns, which prefer straightforward, fast, and to-the-point storytelling, without lengthy descriptions.

Furthermore, depictions of cities as cold and individualistic often appear in Generation Z short stories, reflecting feelings of alienation or a lack of emotional connection in urban life. The city serves not only as a physical setting but also as a symbol of strained social relationships and the search for identity in a fast-paced and competitive society. Characters in these stories are often depicted as individuals trying to find meaning amidst the hustle and bustle of modern life, reflecting the existential dilemmas many Generation Z face.

Creating atmosphere is also used to heighten tension in a story. Descriptions of gloomy weather or desolate surroundings can be elements that signal impending conflict or feelings of distress within a character. This style is influenced by Generation Z's habit of consuming visual and digital media, where cinematic elements such as lighting, atmosphere, and visual symbolism are often used to convey emotion. Instead of using lengthy descriptions, they prefer sentences that immediately establish atmosphere and strengthen emotional connections with the reader.

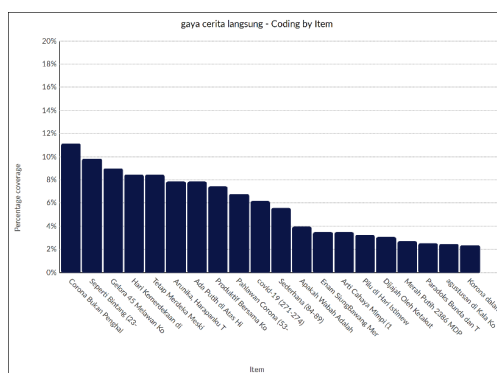
As a result, readers of the same generation can easily understand and relate to the experiences presented in the story. The explicit and direct storytelling

allows them to connect more quickly with the characters and conflicts presented. Furthermore, by incorporating elements of modern life familiar to Generation Z, such as isolation in the digital world, uncertainty about the future, or the search for meaning in a rapidly changing social reality, this short story becomes more relatable and emotionally evocative for readers.

Thus, the direct storytelling style in Generation Z short stories not only serves to establish the setting, but also reflects the way this generation thinks, communicates, and processes their experiences.

The use of a direct storytelling style in the short story collection "Color Merdeka Kala Korona" is shown in the following graphic.

Graph 1. Direct Storytelling Style in Short Stories



The direct storytelling style creates a balance between informative narrative and powerful emotional experience, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the story world through a deeply personal perspective. This style not only conveys the plot but also influences how readers perceive the characters, conflicts, and themes, providing a more immersive reading experience. With a *to-the-point approach*, the story becomes more effective in conveying meaning without losing its emotional depth.

The digital culture inherent in Generation Z plays a significant role in shaping this trend. Accustomed to rapid communication on social media and the

consumption of ephemeral content like short videos or *Twitter threads*, they prefer a concise yet expressive style. This pattern reflects their spontaneous, reflective, and direct way of documenting life experiences, making their stories feel more authentic and relevant, in line with the dynamics of modern communication that prioritize efficiency without sacrificing depth of meaning. The analysis data for Generation Z's indirect storytelling style is shown in the following table.

Table 2. Data Analysis of Indirect Narrative Style

Aspect	Analysis	Description
Dialogue between Characters	Dialogue between characters serves as the primary medium for conveying information, developing characters, and advancing the plot. The primary focus in this aspect is on how dialogue between characters depicts events, emotions, and relationships without requiring a dominant descriptive narrative.	1. Information emerges contextually through interactions between characters. 2. Dialogue depicts important events without the need for lengthy narratives. 3. Dialogue moves the story along by creating suspense, providing clues, or triggering character action. 4.
Character Actions	The character's actions reflect the character's personality, emotions, or motivations, becoming the storyline to build conflict and express the story's theme.	1. personalities, emotions, and motivations are depicted through dialogue without being explained explicitly. 2. The storyline develops, bringing the reader to relevant conflicts. 3. Conflicts (internal and external) build naturally, without explicit narrative. 4. The theme of the story is revealed implicitly through the struggles or decisions made by the characters.
Response to Problems	This response is not conveyed explicitly through monologue or direct description, but rather through a narrative that describes the situation or the character's reaction to a particular event. Dialogue between characters is used to express emotions, thoughts, or motivations without having to directly describe the character's feelings.	1. The author conveys the character's response to the problem through verbal interactions that provide an implied picture of the character's feelings or struggles. 2. The author does not direct the reader explicitly but provides clues to understand the character's response. 3. Readers need interpretation to

		describe the characters' responses to problems or conflicts in the story.
		4.

Based on the data analysis table, three points can be explained according to the aspects studied in the indirect storytelling style. Indirect storytelling is used to describe the context and setting of the story, while enriching the characters with a more subtle yet meaningful narrative. The explanation is as follows.

(1) Dialogue between Characters

The indirect narrative style, using dialogue, allows characters to develop naturally without explicit narration. Characters reveal their personalities through language, tone, and responses in conversations, creating a more lively and interactive dynamic for the reader.

In Gen Z short stories, this strategy is often used to portray assertive, innovative, and emotional characters. As in the following sentence: "Yes, sir, I know. My friends and I discussed that yesterday. So, we still want to hold the ceremony and competition, but we will comply with the rules and social distancing recommendations. Sir, please review the agenda we have prepared and reconsider," Rani explained. (TBS/P. 121). The dialogue style demonstrates Rani's polite and persuasive interaction with authorities (the neighborhood head), demonstrating her ability to plan activities while adhering to health protocols. This dialogue demonstrates Rani's initiative to adapt traditions to social distancing regulations, reflecting her social sensitivity and leadership within the group. The indirect narrative allows readers to interpret the characters through their interactions, creating a more immersive and realistic reading experience. Characters in Gen Z stories tend to demonstrate critical thinking, courage in voicing opinions, and a closeness to relevant social issues.

Several factors influence this trend, including advances in technology and digital culture, which have shaped faster and more direct communication patterns. Social media platforms, films, and short series have accustomed this generation to direct dialogue, without lengthy descriptions. Furthermore, a preference for

reflective and relatable stories leads them to prefer a natural, interaction-based style.

The impact on readers is a stronger emotional engagement with the characters and the story. Readers can experience authentic interactions and understand the characters without having to rely on lengthy descriptions from the narrator. This also encourages freer interpretation, allowing readers to construct their own understanding of the characters and the conflicts presented in the story.

(2) Character Actions

The indirect storytelling style develops characters through their actions, allowing readers to understand their traits and emotions without explicit narration. Characters are presented through their behavior in specific situations, allowing for natural interpretations of their personalities, motivations, and emotions.

In Gen Z writing, this style emphasizes authenticity and speed of expression, influenced by the concise and interactive culture of digital communication. For example, a character who complains about missing social interaction reflects an extroverted nature and a reliance on social environments. As in the data: "Lately, Tika has been feeling bored with this highly contagious disease, Covid-19. She complains because she misses school, teachers, and friends, and the activities she was supposed to do have been postponed because of Covid-19." (RH/P.100). The portrayal of Tika through her actions indirectly reveals her feelings about the Covid-19 pandemic. Tika's actions of complaining and missing school, teachers, and friends demonstrate the importance of social interaction and learning routines to her. The activities she usually does at school are now postponed, and this makes Tika feel bored and isolated. A character's strategy-building before speaking to an authority figure demonstrates initiative and adherence to social norms. Another character's enthusiasm for teaching and interacting demonstrates empathy and a strong emotional connection to those around them. Furthermore, a character's persistent efforts to promote education in her village reflect determination and social awareness, while a character's impulsive response to panic demonstrates spontaneity and defiance in the face of

pressure. The emotional interactions between children and parents also demonstrate a realistic sense of family warmth and bond.

This action-based storytelling enhances reader engagement, encouraging them to understand characters through observation, rather than direct description. This approach creates a story that's more vivid, reflective, and close to real-life experiences, making it effective in building emotional connections with readers.

(3) Response to Problems

In an indirect narrative style, characters' responses to problems become the primary means of revealing their emotions, thoughts, and values. Without explicit narration, readers are guided to understand the characters through actions and dialogue, creating a more in-depth and reflective reading experience.

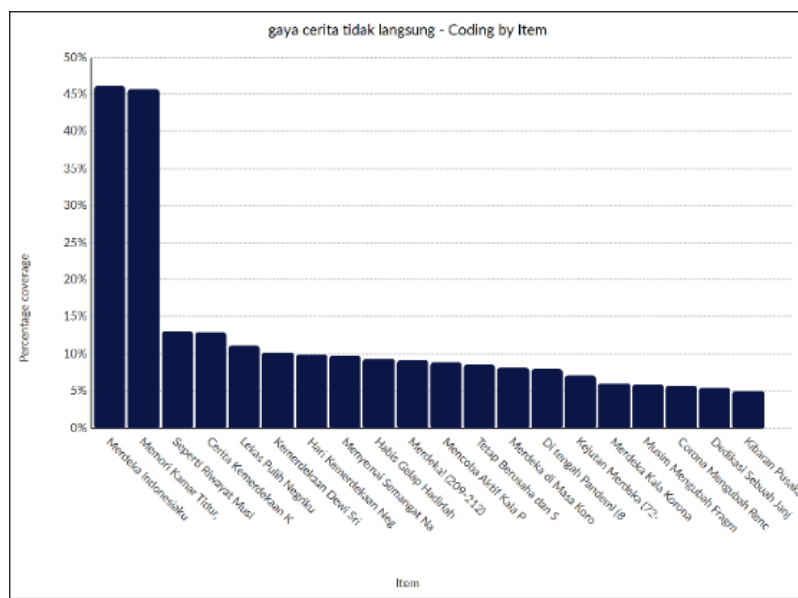
The characters in the short story respond to various problems in ways that reflect their personalities. As in the quote: "I just realized, your sacrifice of not coming home for days was actually to ensure our sleep was sound and comfortable. We could sleep soundly, without worrying about thieves breaking into the house," said Galuh, regretting her behavior (MGW/P. 252). This quote shows Galuh's response, realizing and regretting her behavior after understanding the reason behind her husband's sacrifice of not coming home for days to ensure security.

This storytelling style reflects the characteristics of Gen Z writing, which emphasizes natural expression through realistic dialogue and interaction. Several factors that influence this approach include: (1) the influence of digital media because Generation Z has a habit of consuming stories in the form of films, series, and social media, forming a preference for dialogue- and action-based storytelling rather than long descriptions; (2) a tendency towards reflective narratives, namely that Generation Z prefers psychological exploration that allows readers to interpret the meaning of the characters' actions and conversations for themselves; (3) a focus on social issues, namely that Gen Z short stories often describe concern for environmental, social, and cultural issues, presenting characters who are more aware of changes around them.

The impact on readers is greater engagement in the story. By relying on interpretation, readers actively understand the characters and conflicts, increasing emotional appeal and personal connection to the story. This style also allows for deeper identification with the characters because their responses feel more real and relevant to the life experiences of modern readers.

With an indirect storytelling approach, short stories produced by the younger generation, especially Gen Z, offer a more reflective and in-depth reading experience. The characters' responses to problems not only depict their emotional and psychological dynamics but also reflect social values and current narrative trends. The influence of digital media, more reflective narratives, and a focus on social issues shape unique characteristics in their storytelling style. Thus, this style not only enriches the form of modern literary storytelling but also provides space for readers to actively engage in understanding the conflicts and dynamics of the characters, creating a closer connection between the text and the reader's life experiences. The use of indirect storytelling dominates the character of the author's narrative style in this short story collection. The following graph shows short stories with an indirect storytelling style.

Graphic 2. Indirect Writing Style in Short Stories



The dominance of indirect storytelling in these short stories aligns with the characteristics of Generation Z, which tends to prioritize natural expression and flexibility in storytelling. This generation is more interested in reading experiences that allow for exploration and interpretation than instructive narratives. With this approach, readers are invited to actively interpret the meaning of the characters' actions and dialogue, reflecting the reflective nature and critical thinking typical of this generation. Furthermore, the tendency to dig deeper into meaning rather than simply receiving information directly demonstrates how this storytelling style is highly relevant in building emotional connections with readers.

The use of indirect storytelling also creates a more immersive reading experience, where the reader becomes part of the creative process of understanding the plot and characters. By allowing freedom of interpretation, the story serves not only as entertainment, but also as a means of reflection and learning. This approach strikes a balance between the reader's freedom to understand the story and the author's implicit direction, making the short story a dynamic medium for dialogue. This strengthens the position of literature not only as an artistic expression, but also as a vehicle for profound communication between the author and the reader.

In the world of modern literacy, the development of digital technology has brought significant changes to storytelling patterns, especially in relation to the reading preferences of Generation Z. The indirect storytelling style that dominates many literary works today is not just an aesthetic choice, but also a reflection of changing literacy consumption patterns influenced by technological advances. Generation Z, who grew up in a digital ecosystem, shows a tendency to be more actively involved in the process of interpreting stories. They are more interested in narratives that are not instructive, but rather that allow them to think, feel, and draw their own conclusions.

One of the main impacts of digital technology on storytelling patterns is a change in narrative structure. While previously literacy was dominated by linear

plots and lengthy descriptions, now storytelling is more dynamic, exploring non-linear plots, multiple points of view, and more complex psychological depth. The influence of digital media such as films, serials, and social media is encouraging Generation Z to prefer dialogue- and action-based stories over lengthy descriptive narratives. Thus, the indirect storytelling style, which focuses on character interactions and exploration of action, is becoming increasingly relevant in the context of modern literacy.

The transformation of literacy media has opened up new possibilities for how stories are consumed and understood. Generation Z not only reads printed texts but also consumes literacy through audiobooks, podcasts, web novels, and even interactive stories that allow readers to choose their own storylines. This reflects the shift in the reader's role from passive recipients to active participants in shaping narratives. With greater engagement, readers feel valued as part of the creative process, strengthening emotional connections with characters and increasing empathy and social understanding.

In many stories that use an indirect narrative style, characters' responses to problems become a key aspect that depicts values, emotions, and broader social dynamics. Characters in modern short stories often face conflicts relevant to contemporary social issues, such as environmental awareness, the impact of digital media, and the values of collectivity in society. In an increasingly interactive digital world, exploration of these themes is increasingly complex, allowing readers to not only understand the characters but also reflect on the realities they face in their daily lives.

The interaction between digital technology and storytelling styles indirectly creates a new space for dialogue between writers and readers. Stories are no longer static artistic products, but rather dynamic mediums, where readers' interpretations enrich the work's meaning. With the existence of discussion spaces on online platforms, such as reader forums and digital literacy communities, readers' involvement in the meaning-making process is increasingly evident. This

further strengthens the role of literacy as a reflective and educational vehicle that not only entertains but also builds insight and social sensitivity.

Thus, the transformation of storytelling styles in modern literacy cannot be separated from the influence of digital technology and changes in Generation Z's reading preferences. The indirect storytelling style that has previously been proven to increase readers' emotional engagement is now further strengthened by digital media that encourages more active participation in understanding and interpreting stories. The combination of a flexible narrative approach and interactive digital technology makes modern literacy a space that is increasingly adaptive, relevant, and able to reflect contemporary social and cultural dynamics.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Generation Z's narrative strategies in writing short stories have undergone significant transformations due to the development of digital literacy. The indirect storytelling style (*showing*) has become a dominant characteristic, where characters and conflicts are developed through actions, dialogue, and responses to problems without explicit descriptions from the narrator. This reflects Generation Z's tendency to prefer reflective, participatory narratives, which allow readers to interpret the story's meaning for themselves.

These findings are relevant to digital literacy studies, as they demonstrate how technology is changing patterns of narrative text consumption and production. More dynamic narrative structures, the use of non-linear plots, and the exploration of social and personal themes reflect how Generation Z interacts with information in digital environments. Furthermore, the shift in storytelling mediums to platforms like audiobooks, web novels, and interactive stories demonstrates that modern literacy is increasingly flexible and multidimensional.

However, this study has several limitations. The analysis was conducted only on a specific collection of short stories, so it cannot broadly represent the entire spectrum of Generation Z storytelling styles. Furthermore, factors such as cultural background and individual preferences have not been thoroughly

explored in relation to their narrative strategies. Future research is recommended to utilize a more diverse dataset, both in terms of genre, cultural background, and digital publishing platform. Further studies could also explore how readers' interactions with digital stories influence their understanding and interpretation of literary texts. Thus, this research can provide broader insights into the role of technology in shaping the storytelling patterns of current and future generations.

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