



Investigating Student Responses to Language Style of Classical Literary Texts: A Comparison of Beginner Readers and Smart Readers

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ABSTRACT

Purpose Classical literary texts have become less attractive, foreign bodies to readers, especially to the younger generation. Disinterest is triggered by a degree of difficulty in understanding language style. The study sheds light on the relationship between language styles and young readers' low interest in reading classical literary texts, what factors influence them, and solutions to minimize this phenomenon. **Methodology:** This research used descriptive-analytical methods. The sample comprised twenty students studying literature at one of the State Universities in Indonesia. Ten students were grouped as Beginner Readers and other ten as Smart Readers. Data was collected through online surveys and focus group discussions (FGD). Data analysis techniques used aesthetic reading responses and descriptive analysis.

Findings: The results show that Beginner Readers had a high level of difficulty in understanding classical literary texts. However, the Smart Readers group did not experience such conditions. The results of the study concluded that the problem of understanding classical literary texts was caused by the limitations of literature teaching materials at the senior high school level. **Implications of Research and Practice:** This research will be useful in increasing the competence of literature teachers at the high school level. The millennial generation's alienation from classical literary texts must not occur continuously.

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Introduction

The language style of a written text constitutes literary devices like diction, tone, and figurative language used by the author to achieve its aesthetic effect. The language style does not only act as a sweetener in a literary text, but it represents three other critical elements in human life. First, the author's worldview as an individual representing member of society accumulated through the style of language used by the author. Second, the language style is also a mirror for understanding the author's collective worldview in a literary text. The community's worldview is illustrated through the characters' responses to events built by the author in the text. The worldview is defined as the structure of human thinking and feeling in observing, living, and feeling everything around it. Third, the choice of language style used by the author can describe the cultural structure that occurs in the community. The cultural system is represented through aspects of backgrounds, themes, and conflicts between figures built by the author in the world of imagination contained in literary texts. Situations and information related to cultural structures in the community are structured through the building of the place and the socio-cultural background created by the author. These three essential elements represented in literary texts by the intermediary use of language styles have positioned literary texts as a direct reflection of human life and the society that produces such texts.

Past studies of language-style relationships with literary texts have remained confined to analyzing only internal relationships, and ignoring external relationships. Such inner tendency can be seen in three types of research. First, the study of the relationship of language style to the author's creative process, identifies how the author exploits language for aesthetic purposes (Fomukong, 2016; Harrison & Nuttall, 2018; Koolen et al., 2020). Creativity is seen as the ability of intelligence and high creative expression of a person to create uniqueness in work (Zhou, 2021). Second, studies explain the relationship of language style to individual and collective messages that the author wants to convey through literary texts (Christou & Tsoumakas, 2021; Piršl & Piršl, 2021; Williams, 2019) Third, studies in literary texts identify language-style relationships with the author's worldview and society (Hao et al., 2022; Li & Li, 2021; Romanenko, 2020). These three tendencies of studies have looked at the relationship of language styles to literary texts and explained language style as the author's creative medium in the use of language. The analysis ignores how language styles have contributed to millennial readers' failure to understand language styles in literary texts, especially classical literature. Language style has been understood as an aesthetic, creative strategy in language that is sometimes allowed to deviate from the standard rules in language. The language style is believed to send a categorized text as a literary text.

This paper aims to complement the shortcomings of previous research on how millennial readers have faced difficulty in understanding the language of classical literary texts. The challenge of understanding the language style of the text fails the reader to grasp the ideas represented through classical literary texts. The study of the relationship between language style and the difficulty in understanding the messages contained behind classical literary texts is carried out by analyzing how two groups of readers understand language style which results in a high level of difficulty in understanding classical literary texts and why the reading of these texts is not much in

demand. Accordingly, three critical questions were answered in this study. First, how do Beginner Readers and Smart Readers identify the forms of figurative language in classical literary texts? The second question was: how can Beginner Readers and Smart Readers explain the collective ideas of the Minangkabau people which are wrapped in figurative language in classical literary texts? The classic literary text tested in this study was the Tambo Minangkabau text, which is a form of classical literature produced by the Minangkabau people in West Sumatra, Indonesia, especially in the episode of the story *Lareh Nan Duo*. Third question: how do Beginner and Smart Readers interpret the language style of classical literary texts as a characteristic of collective character?

These three questions explained how Beginner Readers and Smart Readers interpreted figurative language as a sweetener in literary texts. The findings also made it evident that language style can also be a challenge for millennial readers to understand history, values, and cultural ideas that originate from local intelligence.

The difficulty of digesting and understanding the style of language in classical literary texts has an impact on the interest level in reading classical literary texts. As a result, Beginner Readers distance themselves from and dislike reading classic literary texts. Novice readers also suddenly become strangers to their local cultural heritage represented in classical literary texts. It is because these Beginner Readers and novice readers cannot appreciate and understand the collective ideas contained in classical literary texts. Such limitations are due to their detachments with their cultural heritage, and hence, difficulties they face when reading classical literary texts. This paper therefore departs from the argument that the complexity of the use of figurative language in classical literary texts directly affects the difficulty of understanding the text and reduces the reader's interest in digesting and understanding the contents of the text. The cultural limitations of readers prevent them from understanding the style of language of classical literary texts, and therefore, make a significant impact on the level of their understanding of the classical literary texts.

Literature Review

Classical literature is one of the products of a past culture that contains recordings of thought and life and society's culture. As a product of past culture, classical literature contains essential teachings on character formation, and it is crucial always to socialize with the younger generation (Mart, 2018; Romanenko, 2020; Williams, 2019). Classical literature needs to be translated from source languages to various languages to be easily understood by readers from multiple walks of life (Bibbò, 2018; Li & Li, 2021). Even in this era of technological advancement, classical literature urges to be digitised to make it easier to transform (Walton, Childs, & Jugo, 2019) and taught to the younger generation at various levels of secondary school education (Gopal & Mokhtar, 2020). Classical literature has also become an essential medium in teaching languages (Belete & Mussa, 2021; Calafato, 2018; Piršl & Piršl, 2021). Classical literary texts contain a wide variety of distinctive vocabulary and locality critical in language teaching (Ahmad, 2021; Asif et al., 2020; Zhao, 2018). The peculiarity of classical literary text language lies in the richness of the style of language that became the media of classical literature. The messages and teachings contained in classical literature are no longer understood by readers of literature today. The problem lies in the difficulty of reading classical literature with the thinking logic of modern readers.

Classical literature consists of a variety of varieties. Legend, myth, folklore, proverbs, guides, folk songs, puzzles, cult poems in cemeteries, and folk theatre stories are some forms of classical literature. Although there are many varieties of classical literature, classical literature includes poetry, prose, and drama. Classical literature contains the community's cultural identity and the producing regions/ countries. Classical literature developed local cultural values (Ahmad, 2021). Indonesia has many classical kinds of literature. Every region and tribe in Indonesia have it. Even Southeast Asia is a golden region with outstanding works of classical literature. However, not many readers are still interested in reading classical literature. The millennial generation in the millennial era has been far from the knowledge and local intelligence derived from the teachings and messages in classical literature. Millennial readers are in no mood to read, hear, or even know about classic literary collections. Therefore, many research and studies are directed to generate interest and concern for classical literature as a strategy to shape human personality and identity that relies on local cultural intelligence to become a global human being.

A reading response is a series of reactions or a reader's welcome to the process of reading a written or unwritten text, even digital (Latini, Bråten, & Salmerón, 2020; Vlieghe, Muls, & Rutten, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021). Reader's welcome is essential to complete a text (Ghandehari, 2013). Various methods can measure this response. Methods to measure reading response can identify multiple cases, including a therapeutic tool for dementia and brain injury patients (Newman, 2020) and mental health disorders in veterans with depression and post-traumatic anxiety disorder (Abraham et al., 2020). At the same time, it can also be a media control of writing skills (Tasker, 2022), an understanding of artwork (Rowell & Flick, 2019), and literary texts (Swinnen, 2019). Reading responses to literary texts has the opportunity to measure the reader's imagination and understanding of the messages contained in the text (Lee, 2021; Novák, 2020). The quality of the reader's version of the message and the ideas in the literary text indirectly contribute to the transformation of typical local values, norms, and beliefs produced by the literary text (Romanenko, 2020; Zavlunov, 2020).

The transformation of values, norms and beliefs contained in literary texts is also influenced by the ability to understand the language style contained in the text (De Mendoza Ibáñez & Cervel, 2023; Rasouli & Rahimi, 2015). Language style is the language used in writing literary works and/or oral speech but with connotative meaning content. A stylized sentence is a sentence that says something but does not have the actual meaning but is conveyed using figurative or stylized language (Gibbs Jr, 2023; Junaid et al., 2022). Thus, language style is the use of language by denotatively deviating from language rules. The study of style deals with the author's readers' communication style. The study of language styles is based on the assumption of the relevance of the text to the reader. (Toolan, 2018). The term style does not simply refer to the author's style, But more than that. The style has its roots in *elocutio* (Khan & Want, 2016). It has become an Aristotelian rhetorical study dealing with the suitability of expression and relevance of stylistic choices (Green, 2006). Schopenhauer's word "style" comes from the countenance of the mind and the indexing of character (Shawa, 2015). The study of stylistics deals with the reader's speech or responses, although, ontologically, there are varying criteria about the reader (Whiteley & Canning, 2017).

Reader engagement with text can occur over long periods and situations. Readers often repeat the exact text on several occasions. One of the motivations that underlie the re-reading of the text by the reader is to analyse the text's style (Harrison & Nuttall, 2018). Stamatatos mentions that the study of style deals with using certain words and avoiding other words and sometimes biases of grammatical structure (Neme et al., 2015), which impacts aesthetics (Koolen et al., 2020).

Humans use language every hour in a variety of complex ways. For example, reading is influenced by the word stylized. This phenomenon is a linguistically peripheral cultural practice (Toolan, 2017). For example, the language of poetry does not just describe the meaning but can make language carry out that meaning. The poet transforms his imaginative abilities into linguistic tools and has a style in which he creates a stand-alone reality in the language of reality that does not depend on the reality that must be reflected. Virtual reality, it can be said, exists in language rather than the physical reality outside of language. The language of poetry creates a reality that contrasts physical reality in two opposite directions into a single poetic virtual reality movement created by poets (Al-Zubaidy, 2014). As a branch of language science, language style deals with studying styles and stylistic variations. Since its emergence in the 20th century, style study has been limited to style in literary texts and has extended to non-literary texts (Hussain & Mansoor, 2017), as in advertising discourse that produces language positively to persuade readers by favouring the advertised product (Fomukong, 2016).

Language styles also allow it to be seen as an aberration in the use of language (Van Cranenburgh, van Dalen-Oskam, & van Zundert, 2019). This deviation is a kind of activity to manipulate language (Miller, Kirkorian, & Simmering, 2020; Zhu, Mogadala, & Klakow, 2021). The sentence structure's intended variation differs from the standard grammatical language (Rivolta, Costello, & Carreiras, 2021). Its usefulness is to build aesthetic effects (Kamis et al., 2021; Koolen et al., 2020). The tendency to use such wording is not only in national languages but also in local languages. Minangkabau is one of the local languages in Indonesia that has such a tendency. There are three language functions created in literary works: elaborate, index, and symbolise the landscape imagined (Stockwell, 2006). Authors can elaborate on imaginary worlds through artistic language (Abubakari, Assem, & Amankwah, 2021). Creative use of language means maximising the use of language styles in expressing ideas or conveying ideas (Leung, 2021). One form of artistic language uses comparative styles, such as metaphors, similes, personifications, allegories, and euphemisms (Walker et al., 2021). And also irony sarcasm (Frenda et al., 2022). The use of comparative styles in literary works indicates a tendency to contrast something that wants to be conveyed with something else. The use of comparative styles at once shows a tendency to say something indirectly.

Based on existing literature, there have been no studies explaining how language styles can cause various difficulties in reading texts, especially classical literary texts. The study offers new findings in language style studies that have piqued the interest of young readers to read classical literary texts that tend to contain symbolic, Western language and have comparative forms.

The research focused on readers' responses to the use of language style in classical literary texts and their relevance to the level of difficulty of readers' understanding, so

the research questions were set to collect data: 1) How is the ability of novice readers to recognize and identify figurative language forms in classical literary texts? 2). Is there a significant difference in reading responses between novice readers and advanced readers regarding the style of language of classical literary texts which affects their level of understanding of the messages that are locally hidden behind the classical literary texts? 3). What is the correlation between the failure to digest the implied messages behind the use of language style and the interest in reading classical literary texts among the two groups of readers?

Methodology

Research Design

Language style is an element that is inevitable in a literary work, both classical literature and modern literary works. The relationship between difficulty understanding language styles and the low interest of readers in reading the text of classical literature, mainly Tambo Minangkabau, was chosen as the object of research based on three reasons. The first reason, the reading of classical literary texts is no longer in demand by the younger generation. As a result, they are uprooted and alienated from the source of their local cultural intelligence represented in classical literary texts. Second, there is still limited attention and study of classical literary texts in Indonesia. Existing analyses show the descriptive and relatively superficial study of philology but do not specifically address how classical literary texts are still significant to readers in millennial times. Third, analysis of the difficulty in reading the text of classical literature is indispensable given the potential of the message and teaching contained in classical literary texts in establishing the identity of millennials as a pillar the guardian of local culture throughout their lives. These three reasons show that a careful understanding of the difficulty of understanding the language style with low interest in reading the text of classical literature is a crucial and urgent question to mediate. This study can be a foundation to bridge the alienation of millennials with the text of classical literature as a source of knowledge of cultural intelligence.

Qualitative research explains the relationship between difficulty understanding language styles and low interest in reading classical literature texts. The study relied on primary data and secondary data. Primary data is sourced from reading the text of classical literature, especially the Tambo Minangkabau text on the episode of *Lareh Nan Duo*. Primary data included reading responses in beginner reader groups and intelligent reader groups, reading types in both groups of readers who were given the task of hammering the text of classical literature, and variations in the reading responses of both groups of readers. Secondary data consists of background cultural insights of both groups of readers, education level, gender, age, country of origin, and place of birth. Both primary and secondary data are used to analyse the relationship between difficulty understanding language styles and low interest in reading texts of classical literature that impact the reader's stay away from reading the text of classical literature.

Research sample

The study involved ten first-year students representing Beginner Reader and ten graduate students creating a thesis to represent Smart Reader. Ten budding reader informants were presented in conjunction with the experience of reading the text of a classic literary work given to them. The difficulties that occur in reading classic texts by groups of beginner readers were identified through the questions provided in the Google form application. Ten beginner readers were new students who had begun studying literature in the undergraduate program in literary studies at University XXX in 2021. Meanwhile, ten other informants representing intelligent readers were also presented to identify the reading experience through a series of questions provided in the Google form app. These ten Smart Readers were graduate students studying in semesters four and five and were also doing a thesis. Variations in reading responses in both groups of readers were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). In addition, online surveys were conducted to identify the experiences of both groups of readers after they had read classical literary texts. Table 1 presents a few characteristics of research informants.

Table 1

Characteristic of informants

Participants	Code	F	Percentage
Gender	Male	8	1.6
	Female	12	2.4
	Total	20	100.0
Beginner Reader	First-semester students of the undergraduate literature program.	10	50
	Provision of literary knowledge from high school lessons		
	Total	10	50.0
Smart Reader	Postgraduate students who have studied literature for more than 5 years.	10	50
	Provision of knowledge of literature after studying for at least 4 years in the undergraduate program.		
	Total	10	50.0

Research Instrument and procedure

Research on the relationship between difficulty understanding classical text language styles and the low interest of readers to read and understand classical literary texts, underwent primary and secondary data collection stages. Both stages of data collection took place through online surveys and focus group discussions using the Zoom meeting application. Primary data was obtained after reading classical literary texts from novice and intelligent reader groups. Questionnaire surveys and focus discussion groups collected the types and variations of reading responses in beginner and smart groups through. The questionnaire survey took place through the Google form application as a few places are still in the impact of the pandemic and prefer to take physical precautions. Focus group discussion also took place online through the Zoom meeting application. In this online FGD, both groups were invited as participants who faced researchers' in depth questions related to their responses after conducting an activist reading of classical literary texts. Various categories of data derived from classical literary text reading activities, online surveys, and focus group discussions were the basis for the analysis of relationships with difficulty understanding the style of the classical text with low interest in reading and understanding classical texts.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis took place through three stages of analysis and two data analysis techniques. The three stages of investigation included reducing data to organize data in a more systematic form, especially thematically. Second, displaying data as a strategy for presenting research resulted in the form of tables, graphs, and interview data snippets. Third, data verification concluded the data trends obtained. Furthermore, the data obtained through three stages of analysis were analyzed using descriptive methods and aesthetic responses to the activity of reading literary texts. Aesthetic responses measured the result of aesthetic reading of literary texts (Iser, 1980). The student's aesthetic response was measured through a test of the student's ability to understand classical literary texts filled with various kinds of language styles. The classic literary text tested on students was the Tambo Minangkabau text, which is one of the classical literary works belonging to the Minangkabau tribe in Indonesia. This text consists of various language styles which are dominated by hyperbole, metaphor, personification, simile and others. Next, the data description becomes the basis for contextual interpretation, which is then interpreted by measuring the aesthetic response. Finally, the analysis stage and analysis techniques are used to formulate conclusions regarding the relationship between difficulty understanding language styles and low interest in reading classical literary texts.

Results

The power of the thought-enveloping style of the language in literary texts has made it difficult for readers to understand the ideas, ideas, and messages stored behind the text, impacting the reader's low interest in reading classical literature. The relationship between difficulty understanding language styles and low interest in reading classical literary texts can be proven by three critical questions. The first map shows how novice and intelligent readers identify language styles after reading classical literature. Furthermore, it is questionable how the reading in both groups of readers can simultaneously describe the quality of reading in both groups against classical literature. The third question is how to respond to groups of novice and intelligent readers who manifest their insights into the local culture contained in classical literary texts. All three questions are answered in detail and supported by the data described in the following sections.

The activity of reading classical literary texts in beginner groups and groups and intelligent readers in the identification of language styles

The group of beginner readers had difficulty identifying the language styles found in classical literary texts. The problem arose when they were presented with a classic literary text of the Tambo Minangkabau type from an episode of the story about the *Tale of Lareh Nan Duo*. This text is given to both groups of Beginner Readers in photocopies. They were given forty-five minutes to do the reading. After the text reading time ended, they were given a Google form link containing a questionnaire. The content of the questions asked of them covered five aspects, namely the ability to identify the names of linguistic styles, qualify their

feelings while reading classical texts, determine the meaning of linguistic styles, respond after reading classical texts, and the frequency of reading classical literature. The same treatment procedure was also given to the intelligent reader group. The results of the same treatment for both groups of readers are presented in Table 2. The data in Table 2 contains answers to three aspects of questions, especially regarding the ability to identify language styles, qualifications in identifying language styles, and the ability to determine the meaning of language styles in the classical literary texts that are read by both groups.

Table 2

Ability to identify language styles in text in groups of beginner readers and Smart Readers

1. Identify language styles			
	Sum(n=20)	Language style name	Qualification of identification ability
Beginner readers	10	Symbolic style	Very difficult
Smart reader	10	Hyperbole Metaphor Personification Simile Repetition Allegory.	Difficult
2. Meaning of language styles found			
	Disable	Able	Not sure
Beginner reader	7	2	1
Smart reader	1	7	2
3. Language style learning experience at the previous educational level			
	Yes	No	Not sure
Beginner reader	1	8	1
Smart reader	10	0	0

The data in Table 2 explains that ten Beginner Readers can only identify a very minimal number of language styles. According to the novice reader's version, they can only identify the symbolic style. The results of their identification were obtained with great difficulty and complexity, so they simply concluded that the style of language contained in the literary text being tested was a style of symbolic language. The names of the figurative language they mention are not included in the names of the figurative language known in stylistic studies. Symbolic and stylistic are general terms that are commonly used when the structure of a sentence is made not with a standard structure and has a denotative meaning. So, the Beginner Readers group did not know the names of the language styles asked by the research team. Therefore, they also cannot answer the second question, namely about the meaning of language style. The opposite happens with Smart Readers. They were able to name more figurative language names. There were at least six names of language styles that they managed to identify and confirm their meaning, namely Hyperbole, Metaphor, Personification, Simile, Repetition and Allegory (see second question in Table 2).

The difficulty in understanding the meaning of figurative language in classical literary texts occurs because the sentence structure in the language of literary texts is connotative. The language used in classical and non-classical literary texts does not adhere to a standard sentence structure that applies to the standard rules. This condition makes it difficult for Beginner and Smart Readers to understand classical literary texts. Various responses and comments on the Google form link were given to answer the questionnaire questions. The fourth question contains information about the reactions of the two groups of readers after reading classical literary texts for 45 minutes. The following data in Table 2 and Table 3 are evidence of repeated responses of the two

groups. First, the reactions of the beginner reader group will be presented as described in Table 2. Second, the reaction of the smart reader group will be shown in Table 3.

Beginner readers and smart reader's responses to readings of classic literary texts

Both groups of readers responded differently to reading classical literary texts tested. The beginner reader group has a response that tends to be negative. Their limitations trigger this response when given the treatment of reading classical literary texts. The following Table 2 presents those responses and also comes with their comments.

Table 3

Response of a group of Beginner Readers when asked to read a classic literary text

Respondents	Commentary	Coding	Meaning
BR1	Well, I don't understand this text. The language is local. I'm not familiar with the local language. There's a lot of vocabulary that I don't understand. I'm sorry, I can't define the style of speech.	Unable to identify language style.	Negative
BR 2	I'm trying to understand this text a little bit. There are parts I don't understand either. Language style? I can't determine it. What style of language? I don't know, ah!	Unable to identify language styles.	Negative
BR 3	I think there's just a simile. That's the only language I know.	Capable enough	Positive
BR 4	This condition is the first Tambo Minangkabau text I've read. What is Tambo? It's about the history of the Minangkabau people. But I don't understand either.	Unable to determine the language style, but has an insight into the Minangkabau Tambo text.	Positive
BR 5	In this text, I see that there is a parable style. That's how people talk. Unlike the child now who likes to speak to the point, they like that.	Able to identify the style of the hyperbola.	Positive
BR 6	The style of language in this text is difficult for me to understand. But, you see, the way older people talk anyway. So I like to use those tropes. But I don't understand identifying the name of the language style.	Unable to identify language style.	Negative
BR 7	This condition is the first time I've read Tambo's text. So, where could I possibly know the names of the language styles in this text?	Unable to identify language style.	Negative
BR 8	Figurative language styles are present in this Tambo text. Besides, I don't know the name of the language style.	Only able to identify the style of figurative language only.	Negative
BR 9	In my opinion, Minang people like to speak creatively and use a symbolic language style. This condition is evident from Tambo's text. But I don't know the names of the language styles.	Only able to identify the style of figurative language only.	Negative
BR 10	In my opinion, this Tambo text contains many compounds.	Quite able to know the style but do not mention the type of language style.	Negative

Note: BR: Beginner Reader

The data described in Table 3 shows that Beginner Readers negatively respond to classical literary texts. They have difficulty identifying and understanding the meaning of the language style contained in the Tambo Minangkabau text. In contrast, the Smart Readers group experienced no significant problems when asked to comment on the results. Thus, the smart reader group's responses were all positive. Table 3 below describes the responses of groups of intelligent readers to their reading of classical literary texts.

Table 4

Response of a group of Smart Readers when asked to read a classic literary text.

Respondents	Complaints	Coding	Meaning
SR 1	Sometimes it is also tricky for us Minangkabau to understand the contents of Tambo carefully because Tambo speaks figurative and comparative. But I know the content of this Tambo text story.	Able to identify styles of figurative language and comparison.	Positive
SR 2	It's a story about how our ancestors opened the land of early settlers and devised a system of government and customs that governed the lives of the Minangkabau people long ago. But, if the style of the text language is Tambo, what is it? Maybe personification, metaphors, symbols, and more.	Able to identify language styles of personification, metaphors, and symbols.	Positive
SR 3	I don't know many language styles, but I believe that the Tambo was indeed arranged in the typical language style of the Minangkabau ancestors. We know that Minangkabau people don't like to speak outspokenly. Our people want to use figuratively and use Pantun (a kind of poem from Minangkabau). It shows a high level of ethics. Tambo has many figurative language styles. This condition is common in oral texts. However, I	Unable to name language style but know that metaphor language is a way of speaking typical of the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe.	Positive
SR 4	can't name the names of those styles. I know that there is a style of metaphor, simile, and personification in this Tambo.	Able to identify metaphorical language styles, similes, and personifications.	Positive
SR 5	Minangkabau styles include simile language style, metaphor, and language using local poems.	Able to identify simile language styles, metaphors, and figurative language.	Positive
SR 6	To my knowledge, in this text, there are metaphors, symbols, and personification.	Able to identify metaphorical language styles, symbolic, and personification.	Positive
SR 7	Using the language style is indeed a characteristic of speaking the words of older people, but it shows polite ethics. In this text, there seem to be many symbolic and metaphorical styles.	Able to identify metaphorical language styles, symbolic, and personification.	Positive

Note: SR: Smart Reader

The impact of difficulty understanding language styles on the low interest in reading classical literary texts

Various difficulties caused by the inability to identify and understand the meaning of various language styles in classical literary texts positively affect the interest in reading classical literary texts. Beginner Readers seem reluctant to read classic literary texts. The majority of Beginner Readers have only once read the classical literary texts provided for reading activities in this study. For example, the text of *Lareh Nan Duo's* Story, which sampled the classic literary text in the study, was only seen and read for the first time by a group of Beginner Readers. However, in the smart reader group, most of them have read the text of *Lareh Nan Duo's* Story. Someone has read it more than three times. The following Figure 1 data describes the condition in more detail.

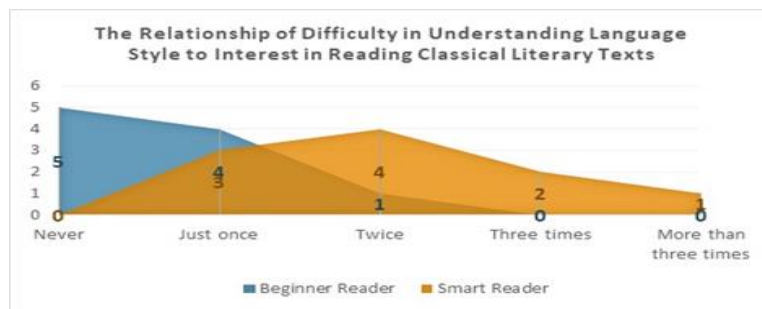


Figure 1. Relationships have difficulty understanding language styles and interests in reading classical literary texts

Contrary to the image data in Figure 1, we can get an idea that the language of the text affects the interest in reading classical literary texts. The easier the language of the text is understood, the better the interest in reading classical literature. However, the more complex the language of the text, the more it significantly affects the reader's desire to read classical literary texts. The survey conducted on the two groups of readers through the Google form application shows that there have been differences in the reading styles of classical literary texts and the atmosphere of reading classical literary texts. The different types of reading kinds of classical literary texts are shown in Figure 2. Related to the learning atmosphere of classical literary texts is shown in Figure 3. The following two data are presented one by one.

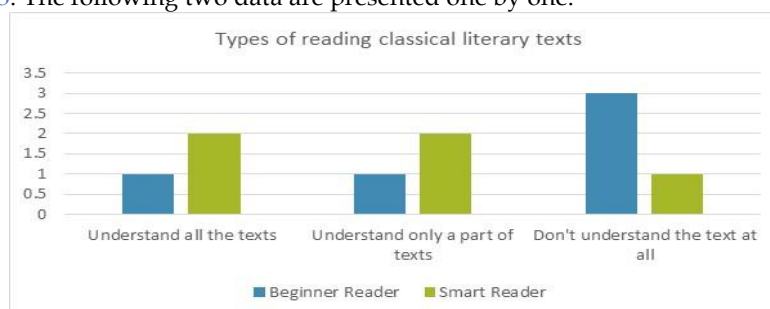


Figure 2. Classic literary text reading type on groups of Beginner Readers and Smart Readers

Figure 2 describes differences in the type of reading of classical literary texts in beginner reader groups and smart reader groups. Beginner Readers are less likely to understand a given classical literary text. Only a tiny percentage of them are willing to read classical literary texts. The opposite situation occurs in the smart reader group. Smart Readers can read all parts of the text, and only a small percentage do not understand the classical literary text assigned to them. This type of reading of classical literary texts takes place in four situations, as described through the data in Figure 3 below.

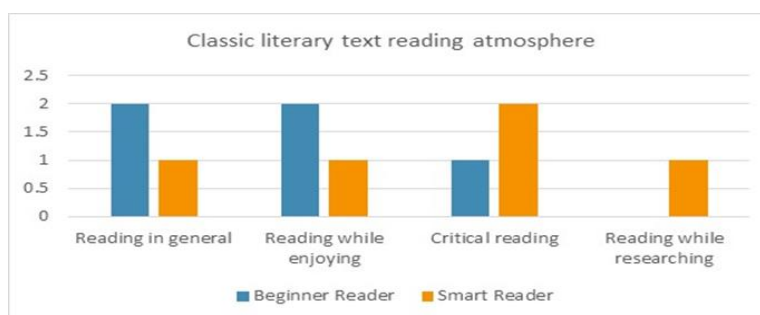


Figure 3. The atmosphere of reading classic literary texts in groups of Beginner Readers and Smart Readers

Figure 3 shows the data affecting the respondent's difficulty reading classical literary texts. The age difference between the novice reader group and the intelligent reader is a variable that affects the problem of understanding the language style of classical literary texts, thus causing low interest in reading classical literary texts. A cohort of 50% of novice readers is 18 years old, 33% 17 years old, and 17% 19 years old. Biologically and psychologically, teenagers in this age group grow up and look for themselves. They grow and seek identity in a time of rapid and limitless growth in the advancement of technology and information. The filter of culture and family is likely to be defeated by the shocking global cultural influence through digital technology, which is the daily consumption of teenagers in this age group. Teenagers' lifestyle, way of speaking, and mindset in this dominant age group reflect a globalized world. The language they use in daily communication also uses non-local communication patterns. At the same time, classical literary texts are still at the local language level. The following Figure 4 data more clearly describes the respondent's age variable, which significantly affects an interest in understanding language style in classical literary texts.

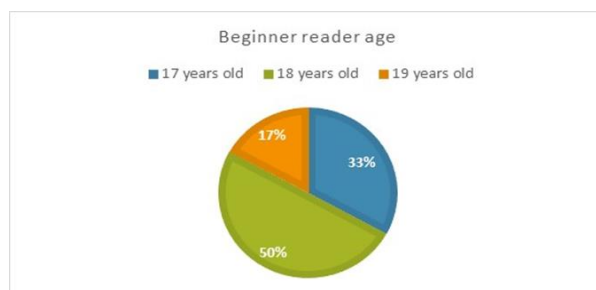


Figure 4. Influence of age on mastery of classical text language styles

Beginner Readers and Smart Readers interpret the language style of classical literary texts as a characteristic of the collective character

The response from beginner readers and Smart Readers was quite significant. This condition was investigated after the FGD. Activities were carried out between the research team and groups of novice readers and groups of intelligent readers. Beginning readers find classical literary texts complicated and long-winded. The complexity of classical literary texts is exacerbated by the text's language style which tends to be symbolic, plastic and difficult to understand. The high level of complexity of classical literary texts means that the Beginner Reader group is not interested in reading classical literary texts. Low interest has implications for their inability to grasp the messages and themes contained in classical literary texts. However, different conditions occurred in the smart reader group. They were able to identify culturally nuanced ideas and messages contained in classical literary texts, especially the *Lareh Nan Duo* story episode originating from Tambo Minangkabau. The abilities of the two groups are explained in more detail in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Comparison of understanding of beginner readers and Smart Readers in capturing ideas about Minangkabau customs and culture in classical literary texts

		Main Idea			
Respondents	The idea of the story of ancestral voyages from across the land	The idea of the first country to be established	The idea of two sons who are mothers and different fathers	Ideas about <i>Lareh Nan Duo</i>	The idea of a feud between two brothers and sisters but different fathers
Beginner Readers	Never heard before	I've heard it but don't know the name of the country.	Don't know	Not understanding	I had never heard of the story of <i>Batu Batikam</i> , one of the names of tourist attractions
Smart Reader	I have often heard the story of the journey of the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe anchored on the slopes of Mount Merapi.	Of course, it's called <i>Nagari Pariangan</i> .	The two boys after adulthood were given the title <i>Datuk Ketumang-gungan</i> and <i>Datuk Perpatih nan Sebatang</i> .	These are two types of customary law systems that apply in Minangkabau land.	In the future, it becomes the cause of the split of two legal systems, inheritance and leadership patterns, into two different parts.

Departing from the data in Tables 2 and 3, novice readers feel unfamiliar with cultural information related to their ethnicity. They do not know the story of the journey of the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe who came from across the sea. They did not know the story of two brothers and sisters from the mother's side but different fathers, who later became important figures in formulating Minangkabau tribal customs. The two men later became known as *Datuk Ketumanggungan* and *Datuk Perpatih Nan Sebatang*. Two important people were the ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe apart from *Datuk Suri Dirajo*. The Beginner Readers Group also doesn't know the story about *Lareh Nan Duo* at all. The story of *Lareh Nan Duo* is

the story of a clash of ideas and ideologies between *Datuk Ketumanggungan* and *Datuk Perpatih Nan Sebatang*.

The group of intelligent readers gave a positive response to the FGD. The reaction of the group of Smart Readers indicated that they already knew and had heard the story contained in the classical literary text given to them. They were able to explain the story of the formation of the first country named Minangkabau. The group of discerning readers also understood the tale of *Lareh Nan Duo*, especially the story of two people who were revered as ancestors of the Minangkabau tribe. They know how the two important figures clash in thought and ideology. The clashes caused the indigenous system of government to split in two and paradoxically. As it turns out, the group of Smart Readers is no stranger to the topics told in the episode *Lareh Nan Duo's* story.

Discussion

Tambo Minangkabau's complex, specific, and nuanced style of locality has increased the difficulty in understanding classical literary texts. Generally, groups of Beginner Readers are hindered from understanding the content and messages contained in Tambo Minangkabau's text. They cannot identify and recognise the different language styles found in the text. They instinctively felt that the language of classical literary texts was symbolic, connotative, and local. However, they were unable to name the language styles. Conversely, smart reader groups are not as tricky as beginner reader groups to identify language styles. The level of difficulty felt by the smart reader group was lower than the beginner reader group.

Difficulty in understanding the language style of classical literary texts has become an early condition that results in the low interest of readers to pursue the reading activities of classical literary texts. Knowledge of language styles in language and literature lessons given to high school students in Indonesia is insufficient. Therefore, the language and literature learning curriculum that the government has made so far needs to be reconstructed. The group of beginner readers comes from students who have just graduated high school. They graduated high school in 2021 and then became first-year students at the college where the study was conducted. The smart reader group comes from graduate students who have studied language and literature in the master's program. Practically speaking, the group of Smart Readers has been studying language and literature for more than six years. However, high school students also learn from beginner readers from the same language and literature curriculum.

Difficulty understanding the language style of classical literary texts in groups of novice readers occurs due to two conditions. First, structurally and educationally, they are 17-19 years old and will just graduate from high school in 2021. Adolescents at this age are a group of teenagers who are highly influenced by watching television and social media that are contaminated with foreign culture. This age group tends to like Korean, Chinese and other Western menus. Second, novice readers are alienated from their local culture. Cultural values that originate from intelligence and local cultural wisdom are no longer of interest to young people in the Beginner Reader age group. The classical literary texts examined are part of local culture which is a source of local knowledge and intelligence. Of course, they are no longer interested in knowing because it has lost its

popularity and influence as a global cultural attraction. Local culture tends to be disliked by teenagers, especially the young group of Beginner Readers. However, this condition is different from the Smart Reader group. The members of this group of intelligent readers, even though they are still young, are graduates of undergraduate education, especially graduates of language, literature and culture study programs. Those who have studied language, literature and culture longer than the beginner reader group do not experience significant obstacles. As a result, the Smart Reader group's response tended to be positive in understanding and overcoming various difficulties in digesting the language style of classical literary texts.

The method of studying classical literary texts requires serious creativity. A study once offered digitalization in literature learning (Christou & Tsoumakas, 2021; Walton, Childs, & Jugo, 2019). More creative methods of learning literature can guarantee students' interest in reading and understanding classical literary texts (Belete & Mussa, 2021; Elche Larrañaga, Yubero Jiménez, & Larrañaga Rubio, 2021; Gopal & Mokhtar, 2020; Piršl & Piršl, 2021). The success of cultivating adolescent interest in reading and understanding classical literary texts has a significant effect on the successful transfer of local identity values and local intelligence contained in classical literary texts. The successful transfer of values through literary texts can also change morals (Asif et al., 2020; Williams, 2019). It also facilitates language teaching (Ahmad, 2021; Calafato, 2018). Other research has also carried out similar methods in learning biology and mathematics based on local cultural wisdom (Dewi et al., 2021; Mariani, 2022).

Based on research findings in several countries, the government needs to carry out activities to digitize classic literary texts and program them as mandatory reading material for high school students in various places in the world. It is urgent to carry out this activity so that the alienation of teenagers from classical literature which contains educational, cultural and ethical values that are important in literary learning and have an impact on the formation of national character can be optimized in the future. In some developed countries this program may have been implemented, but similar attention in some developing countries has not been prioritized.

The various difficulties experienced by novice readers in reading classical literary texts due to failure to understand the language style indicate weaknesses in literary study methods and materials. This inability to digest the language style of classical literary texts must be changed for the better. The change method must provide competent and creative literary studies teachers (Benne, 2021). Teachers who teach literature lessons must be graduates of literature study programs, not only from language teacher education. The competence of literature teachers must be supported by the teacher's vocational abilities in the field of literature. The government is obliged to program non-teaching higher education graduates, especially from literary disciplines, to fill teacher formation in literary learning studies. Apart from that, the government needs to require literature teachers to have special expertise in the field of literature, such as poetry writers and/or readers, writers and/or playwrights, and short story and/or novel writers. The availability of competent literature-learning teachers will have a positive impact on the success of the reading literacy movement (Rintaningrum, 2019), especially for millennial readers.

When teachers who teach literature subjects have additional expertise in writing literary works, the teacher will be able to provide direct examples of language-style sentences in writing literary works. Examples of stylistic sentences shown by the teacher will make it easier for students to remember and understand the various stylistic names contained in literary texts, especially classical literary texts. The ability to give direct examples by practising writing literary works with sentences containing linguistic styles will be difficult for teachers who do not have additional competencies in literary writing skills.

Conclusion

Learning how the potential of language styles wrap around locality values has made it difficult for the younger generation to understand classical literary texts. Such difficulties significantly impacted the younger generation's low interest in reading classical literary texts. This factor is due to the lack of literature on high school education. As a result, the younger generation who have just graduated from high school education, in this study represented by a group of Beginner Readers, have been separated from knowledge of local cultural intelligence. Such separation is due to a low insight into understanding language styles. The root of the problem stems from a lack of knowledge about language styles they gained in literary learning in High School. These difficulties had a significant impact on the low interest of the younger generation to read classical literary texts. Government policy is needed to take these obstacles seriously, especially regarding human resources teaching literary learning materials in High School. Teachers must be competent to teach and skilled in writing, researching, and staging literary texts.

This research, it turns out, has proven that the lack of adequate knowledge in literary learning at the high school level has a significant impact on the understanding of language style mastery. A lack of knowledge of language styles has made it difficult for millennials to understand classical literary texts that structurally tend to be symbolic and rich in stylized languages. As a result, the younger generation who only capitalized from the experience of learning literature at the high school education level has experienced severe difficulties in understanding classical literary texts. However, these difficulties can be minimized for younger generations who have gone through a longer and deeper period of literary learning in graduate education.

This limited research is carried out in a city in Indonesia that focuses on the younger generation taking education in literary science. Expanding the scope of research in different locations and a more significant number of respondents is needed to obtain a more comprehensive and in-depth picture to formulate more competitive recommendations.

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