

The Transformation of Local Cultural Values in Digital Poetry in the Post-Instagram Era

Sosiana

Program Studi Teknik Elektro, Sekolah Tinggi Teknik Imanuel, Medan, Indonesia
Email: sosianadosendpkkopertiswil@gmail.com

This study examines the transformation of local cultural values in digital poetry in the post-Instagram era. The rapid development of digital media has significantly reshaped literary production and distribution, particularly poetry, which has shifted from print-based formats to multimodal digital platforms. In this context, local cultural values are no longer presented solely through textual symbolism but are reconstructed through visual, audio, and performative elements influenced by algorithmic systems and audience engagement patterns. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach using critical discourse analysis and digital semiotics. The data consist of 50 digital poems published after 2022 across various social media platforms, selected based on their incorporation of Indonesian local cultural elements and significant audience interaction. The analysis focuses on identifying forms of cultural representation, examining patterns of transformation, and interpreting their implications within the digital ecosystem. The findings reveal three primary forms of transformation: symbolic reduction, contextual reinterpretation, and aesthetic commodification. Symbolic reduction occurs when complex cultural meanings are simplified to align with fast-paced digital communication. Contextual reinterpretation reflects the adaptation of traditional values to contemporary issues such as identity and social awareness. Meanwhile, aesthetic commodification emerges when cultural elements are strategically utilized to enhance visual appeal and digital visibility. The study concludes that digital poetry serves as both a space for cultural preservation and a site of negotiation between tradition and digital modernity. While digital platforms expand the reach of local culture, they also risk simplifying its depth due to algorithm-driven visibility and audience preferences. This research contributes to the interdisciplinary study of digital literature, cultural transformation, and media sociology in contemporary Indonesian literary discourse.

Keywords: Cultural Transformation, Digital Literature, Digital Poetry, Local Cultural Values, Post-Instagram Era.

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Corresponding Author:

Sosiana

Program Studi Teknik Elektro, Sekolah Tinggi Teknik Imanuel, Medan, Indonesia
Jl. Gatot Subroto No.325, Sei Putih Tim. II, Sumatera Utara 20114. Indonesia
sosianadosendpkkopertiswil@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has significantly changed the landscape of literary production and distribution. Poetry, which was previously published in print media, has now migrated to the digital space, especially through social media such as Instagram (Al-Thunaibat and Singh, 2020). However, entering the post-Instagram era, which is characterized by platform diversification, personalization-based algorithms, and multimedia integration, digital poetry is no longer just text, but a combination of visuals, audio, and performance (Reedy, 2023).

This transformation has an impact on how local cultural values are represented. In conventional poetry, local cultural values are expressed through symbols, metaphors, and traditional narratives, whereas in digital poetry, these values are adapted to suit the characteristics of a digital audience that tends to be fast-paced, visual, and interactive (Iqbal, Nasir, 2025). Local

culture, which was once sacred and contextual, is now reconstructed to be more universal, concise, and sometimes simplified in meaning (Grammatikopoulou, 2025).

Changes in literary consumption patterns in the digital age not only concern the medium, but also touch on how people interpret cultural identity (SALEHI, 2026). During the dominance of Instagram, digital poetry tended to rely on minimalist visual aesthetics, simple typography, and short quotes that were easy to share. However, in the post-Instagram era, marked by the emergence of short video formats, the integration of artificial intelligence, and increasingly personalized algorithms, digital poetry has evolved into a more performative and multimodal form (Luyten, 2024).

This situation encourages poets to consider not only the depth of meaning, but also visual appeal, speed of message delivery, and potential virality. Local cultural values that were previously conveyed through context-rich symbols must now adapt to the fast and instant rhythm of digital communication (Müller, Marvin, 2023). As a result, a process of meaning selection occurs: cultural elements that are considered “relevant” and “marketable” are displayed more often than values that are philosophical and complex.

On the other hand, the younger generation, as the main consumers of digital poetry, have a different relationship with tradition. They do not always experience local cultural practices directly, but rather learn about them through media representations. This has led to a shift in the authority of meaning, with social media playing a major role as a mediator in shaping perceptions of local culture (Basir, Mohd Zuhaili Kamal, 2025).

This phenomenon reveals the tension between preservation and innovation. The transformation of cultural values in digital poetry is not only an aesthetic issue, but also concerns the sustainability of cultural identity amid the tide of digital globalization. Therefore, this research is important to understand how local culture is negotiated in a space that is heavily influenced by algorithmic logic, audience interaction, and the dynamics of the digital creative economy.

This phenomenon raises an important academic question: does this transformation strengthen the existence of local culture in the digital space, or does it shift it into a mere aesthetic commodity? In addition, social media algorithms also influence the visibility of works, so poets often adjust their language style and themes to be relevant to digital trends.

Based on the background described above, this study aims to identify forms of representation of local cultural values in digital poetry in the post-Instagram era -Instagram era, analyze the process of transformation of local cultural values that occur in digital poetry, both in the form of symbolic reduction, contextual reinterpretation, and aesthetic commodification, assess the implications of the transformation of local cultural values for the preservation of cultural identity in the context of digital literature, and provide theoretical and practical contributions to the development of digital literature studies and the preservation of local culture in social media spaces.

Previous research on digital literature has generally focused on two main trends. First, studies that emphasize the shift from print to digital media, particularly on platforms such as Instagram, with an emphasis on visual aesthetics, typography, and engagement enhancement strategies. Second, research that discusses the representation of local culture in conventional (print) literary

works without linking it deeply to the dynamics of algorithms and the social media ecosystem. The difference between these studies (Akorli-coffie and Sharer, 2026) is that they tend to view digital poetry as a phenomenon of form and style, while this study places the transformation of local cultural values as the main focus of analysis.

The study of the transformation of local cultural values in digital poetry in the post-Instagram era is rooted in three main theoretical frameworks, namely digital literature, cultural theory, and digital media sociology (Liu, Chan, 2026). The concept of digital literature emphasizes that the medium is not neutral, but rather influences the form, structure, and manner of reading the text. In the context of digital poetry, texts no longer stand alone but are presented in combinations of typography, visuals, audio, and even animation. Intermediality theory explains that the combination of various media creates new meanings that cannot be understood through conventional textual analysis alone. Thus, digital poetry must be read as a multimodal practice that integrates visual and performative aesthetic elements (Dwivedi, Yogesh K., 2023). Poetry on social media tends to use concise language, direct metaphors, and simple structures to suit the characteristics of digital audiences. However, most studies still focus on changes in style and format, rather than on the transformation of the cultural values they contain (Androutsopoulos and Busch, 2020).

From a cultural studies perspective, local cultural values are a system of meanings passed down through symbols, social practices, and oral and written traditions. When these values are transferred to the digital space, a process of adaptation, negotiation, and reinterpretation occurs. Cultural transformation does not always mean the loss of old values, but can be a reconstruction of meaning to make it relevant to the new context. The preservation of local culture through digital media has been explored, but it has not been specifically linked to digital poetry as a medium of literary expression. This gap is the basis for the importance of this research (Anyanwu, 2024). Media sociology theory emphasizes that content production on social media is influenced by economic structures, technology, and platform algorithms. Algorithms determine the visibility and distribution of works, so creators tend to adjust their style and themes to audience preferences. In this context, local culture can be commodified as a strategy to increase appeal and interaction (MacDonald, S, 2026). Literature on the digital creative economy shows that the aestheticization of culture is often used as a branding identity. However, studies linking algorithmic aspects to the transformation of cultural meaning in digital poetry are still limited (Alyatalathaf, Muhammad Dicka Ma'arief, 2025).

Research on digital poetry has developed, but the integration between digital literary theory, local cultural transformation, and the influence of social media algorithms in the post-Instagram era is still relatively minimal. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap with a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach. (Walker, Dana, 2021).

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with critical discourse analysis (Furidha, Brylialfi Wahyu, 2023). The data consists of 50 digital poems published on various social media platforms after 2022. The selection criteria included containing elements of Indonesian local culture, using

a digital format (creative visuals/typography), and having significant audience interaction. Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and screenshots of the works. The analysis was conducted in three stages: identification of symbols and representations of local culture, analysis of forms of transformation (reduction, reinterpretation, commodification), and interpretation of meaning in the context of digital culture.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of the study show three main forms of local cultural value transformation.

Symbolic Reduction

Complex cultural values are simplified into concise visual symbols so that they can be easily understood by digital audiences. For example, the tradition of mutual cooperation is represented only through the visual metaphor of interconnected hands.

Contextual Reinterpretation

Some poems reinterpret traditional values as contemporary issues such as identity, the environment, and gender equality. Local values are not lost, but rather their meanings are expanded.

Aesthetic Commodification

Some works feature local culture as an aesthetic element to enhance visual appeal and engagement. In this context, culture becomes part of the poet's digital branding strategy. The discussion shows that this transformation is ambivalent. On the one hand, digitization expands the reach of local culture. On the other hand, there is a risk of simplifying meaning due to algorithmic demands and audience preferences.

The results show that the transformation of local cultural values in post-Instagram era digital poetry does not occur linearly, but rather through a complex process of negotiation between tradition, technology, and audience preferences (Koivukoski, Joonas, 2025).

Transformation at the Level of Language and Symbols. At the linguistic level, there is a tendency to use simpler and more communicative diction compared to conventional printed poetry. Archaic or philosophical cultural terms are often replaced with more popular equivalents so that they are easier for younger generations to understand. For example, the concept of local wisdom, which was originally conveyed through lengthy natural metaphors, is now condensed into short, "shareable" symbolic phrases.

However, this simplification does not always mean a degradation of values. In some cases, there is actually a process of creative reinterpretation that makes local cultural values more contextual and relevant to contemporary issues such as the environment, gender identity, and social solidarity.

Transformation at the Visual and Multimodal Levels

Digital poetry in the post-Instagram era shows a strong integration between text and visual elements. Traditional backgrounds, ethnic motifs, regional music, or natural sounds are often used

to reinforce the cultural atmosphere. Here, there is a shift from the dominance of text to the dominance of visual-auditory experiences. The results of semiotic analysis show that visuals do not only function as illustrations, but also as the main meaning-makers. In some works, cultural symbols are more prevalent in the form of images or videos than in the text of the poem itself. This signifies a shift in the center of meaning from the verbal to the multimodal (Gross-Wyrtzen, 2023).

The Influence of Algorithms and Audience Interaction

Interaction data (likes, comments, and shares) shows that poems with more universal and emotional cultural representations tend to receive higher responses than poems that are heavily influenced by specific local contexts. These findings indicate a creative adaptation to algorithmic logic and audience tastes. Further discussion shows that poets consciously or unconsciously curate cultural values, selecting elements that are considered to have broad resonance. This is where the potential for commodification arises, when local culture is presented as an aesthetically appealing identity that is visually and emotionally appealing.

4. Discussion

The transformation of local cultural values in digital poetry in the post-Instagram era shows a negotiation between tradition and modernity. Cultural values are not completely lost, but rather undergo reduction, reinterpretation, and commodification in accordance with the characteristics of digital media.

Research (Leach, 2021) concludes that digital poetry provides a new space for the preservation and reconstruction of local culture. The challenge ahead is to maintain the depth of cultural meaning so that it is not reduced to mere visual aesthetics. Further studies are recommended to expand the research object to other platforms and use quantitative approaches to measure audience perceptions of local cultural representations in digital poetry.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the transformation of local cultural values in digital poetry in the post-Instagram era is a dynamic and multidimensional process. Changes occur not only in the medium of delivery, but also in the language structure, cultural symbols, and representation strategies used by poets in the digital space. The results of the study show that local cultural values undergo three main forms of transformation, namely symbolic reduction, contextual reinterpretation, and aesthetic commodification. Symbolic reduction occurs when complex cultural meanings are simplified to suit the fast and concise nature of digital communication. Contextual reinterpretation is evident in poets' efforts to link traditional values with contemporary issues, thereby ensuring that culture remains relevant to the digital generation. Meanwhile, aesthetic commodification arises when cultural elements are exploited as visual identities and strategies to increase appeal amid competition for social media content. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of digital literary studies by integrating cultural and media sociological perspectives. In practical terms, this study emphasizes the importance of critical awareness among poets and content creators in representing local culture in order to preserve its depth of meaning amid the

demands of the digital ecosystem. Further research is recommended to expand the scope of study to other digital platforms and combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

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