

Protagonist Agency in Epistolary Fiction: *Lady Susan* by Jane Austen

Syarifah¹, Rahmah Fithriani², Pardi³

Universitas Deztron Indonesia¹, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara^{2,3}

e-mail corresponding author: syarifahchaniago@gmail.com

email: syarifahchaniago@gmail.com¹, rahmahfithriani@uisu.ac.id², pardi@sastra.uisu.ac.id³

Received : 22-02-2026

Revised : 01-03-2026

Accepted : 10-03-2026

Abstrak – Agensi dalam kajian sastra umumnya dipahami sebagai kualitas moral atau psikologis yang melekat pada tokoh. Namun, perspektif semacam ini sering mengabaikan bagaimana agensi dibentuk oleh bentuk naratif. Penelitian ini menanggapi kesenjangan tersebut dengan mengkaji bagaimana agensi tokoh utama dalam *Lady Susan* dikonstruksi secara naratif melalui mediasi epistolar. Studi ini menelaah konstruksi agensi tokoh utama dalam *Lady Susan*, sebuah novela epistolar di mana tindakan dan intensi dimediasi melalui surat-surat. Alih-alih memperlakukan agensi sebagai atribut etis, penelitian ini memandang agensi sebagai produk dari mediasi tekstual. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif sastra, analisis dilakukan melalui pembacaan dekat terhadap surat-surat terpilih dengan fokus pada pengambilan keputusan, suara naratif, dan konsekuensi naratif. Fokus ini penting karena memperjelas bagaimana agensi dalam fiksi epistolar beroperasi sebagai proses tekstual yang strategis dan dinegosiasikan, bukan sekadar cerminan otonomi tokoh. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa agensi tokoh utama tidak direpresentasikan sebagai otonomi moral, melainkan sebagai kapasitas strategis yang dinegosiasikan melalui suara dan relasi sosial. Dalam struktur epistolar, agensi muncul sebagai proses yang dinamis dan dikonstruksi secara tekstual.

Kata Kunci: agensi tokoh; fiksi epistolari; suara naratif; kajian sastra kualitatif

Abstract - Agency in literary studies is commonly approached as a moral or psychological quality of a character. However, such perspectives often overlook how agency is shaped by narrative form. This study addresses this gap by examining how the protagonist's agency in *Lady Susan* is narratively constructed through epistolary mediation. This study examines the construction of the protagonist's agency in *Lady Susan*, an epistolary novella in which action and intention are mediated through letters. Rather than treating agency as an ethical attribute, the study approaches agency as a product of textual mediation. Using a qualitative literary approach, the analysis employs close reading of selected letters to examine decision-making, narrative voice, and narrative consequences. This focus is significant because it clarifies how agency in epistolary fiction operates as a strategic and negotiated textual process rather than merely a reflection of character autonomy. The findings demonstrate that the protagonist's agency is not represented as moral autonomy but as a strategic capacity negotiated through voice and social relations. Within the epistolary structure, agency emerges as a dynamic and textually constructed process.

Keywords: protagonist agency; epistolary fiction; narrative voice; qualitative literary study

INTRODUCTION

Agency in literary texts is often recognized through moments of visible action. Characters appear to decide, choose, and intervene in the course of events, inviting readers to evaluate whether they act freely or responsibly. This tendency has shaped much literary interpretation, particularly character-centered readings that emphasize moral intention or psychological motivation (Ironika, 2025). Within such frameworks, agency is commonly treated as a quality that precedes narration, while the text is assumed to merely record actions rather than shape them. Recent discussions in narrative and literary studies, however, have begun to question this assumption by foregrounding the role of representation in producing the appearance of action itself. From this perspective, agency is increasingly understood as emerging through narrative organization rather than as an inherent personal attribute (Gangopadhyay & Pichler, 2024; Meretoja et al., 2022). What matters, therefore, is not only what characters do, but how their actions are made meaningful by the narrative structures that frame them.



Narrative form plays a central role in this reorientation of agency. Stories do not simply present actions as isolated events; they arrange them into sequences that suggest intention, causality, and consequence. Decisions acquire significance because they are positioned as turning points, while outcomes matter because they are narratively sustained or deferred. Recent approaches to narrative agency emphasize that action is produced through relational patterns among events rather than through isolated moments of choice (Kinnunen et al., 2024). From this viewpoint, agency appears as an effect of narrative design that organizes intention, sequence, and consequence within the fictional world. Such an understanding complicates traditional character analysis by demonstrating that agency cannot be fully explained through internal motivation alone. Instead, it emerges through the formal and representational strategies that make action intelligible to readers (Stuhler, 2024).

Within this narrative process, voice becomes a crucial mediating element. Action is not only performed but also articulated through narration. Characters explain themselves, justify decisions, and frame events from their perspectives. Narrative voice thus shapes how intention is accessed and how actions are interpreted. Research on narrative voice has shown that readers' perceptions of agency are strongly influenced by how actions are narrated rather than by the actions themselves (Igartua & Rodríguez-Contreras, 2020). This relationship between voice and agency becomes especially pronounced in epistolary fiction, where letters function as the primary medium of narration. In such texts, writing is not a neutral act but a form of intervention within the story. Letters allow characters to manage impressions, anticipate responses, and negotiate relationships through language. Studies of epistolary practices emphasize that letter writing operates as a form of self-representation through which agency is actively constructed (Uzwiak & Bowles, 2021). Agency in epistolary narratives is therefore inseparable from communicative practice, emerging through voice, timing, and narrative framing rather than through direct action alone (De Vincenzo et al., 2022).

Lady Susan offers a particularly revealing context for examining this relationship between narrative form and agency. As a short epistolary novella, the text presents a protagonist whose actions and intentions are almost entirely mediated through correspondence. Critical discussions of *Lady Susan* have frequently centered on moral judgment or gendered interpretation, evaluating the protagonist in terms of social transgression or ethical conduct. While such readings have contributed to an understanding of the text's provocative character, they tend to foreground evaluation over narrative process. Scholarly attention has been limited to the mechanisms by which the text enables the protagonist to act. (Piper, 2023). This relatively critical gap indicates the need for a more form-oriented investigation that examines how agency is textually produced rather than merely morally assessed. The epistolary form does more than provide access to interiority; it structures agency by allowing decisions to be framed, timed, and narrated strategically through language (Burke, 2023). Approaching *Lady Susan* from the perspective of narrative agency, therefore, shifts critical focus from what the protagonist represents to how her actions are narratively produced. Such a shift is important because it foregrounds the procedural dynamics through which agency becomes legible within epistolary discourse.

This study responds to that critical context by approaching *Lady Susan* through a qualitative literary analysis that treats agency as a narrative construction rather than a moral attribute. Using close reading of selected letters, the analysis focuses on moments of decision-making, the deployment of narrative voice (Tavener-Smith, 2024), and the narrative consequences that follow. This use of close reading as an interpretive method aligns with national literary studies that emphasize meaning-making through systematic engagement with narrative texts (Nugraha, 2024). By grounding the analysis in closely examined textual evidence, the study ensures that claims about agency remain demonstrably anchored in the novella's narrative surface. By foregrounding epistolary mediation, this study contributes to literary discussions of agency by demonstrating how action is produced through narrative form rather than character disposition (Wang & Zhang, 2021). In doing so, it conceptualizes agency as a negotiated, strategic process shaped by textual representation, offering a narrative-centered account of agency in epistolary fiction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative literary approach to examine agency as a narrative construction. The focus of the analysis is not on measuring patterns or frequencies, but on interpreting how meaning is produced within the text. Agency is therefore treated as an interpretive category that emerges through narrative representation rather than as a psychological or moral attribute of character. In this qualitative framework, the text is approached as a site of meaning-making, and interpretation becomes central to the analytical process (Lyhne et al., 2025; Mayring, 2021). The primary data source of this study is *Lady Susan*, an epistolary novella in which actions and intentions are conveyed almost entirely through letters. The letters are treated as textual units that carry narrative meaning rather than as empirical data to be quantified. The unit of analysis comprises passages that represent the protagonist's decisions, self-positioning, and responses as articulated in correspondence. No external documents, adaptations,

or reader responses are included, as the analysis remains grounded in the literary text itself.

The analytical focus is structured around three interconnected dimensions that guide interpretation. The first is decision-making, which examines how the protagonist’s choices are narrated and framed as intentional acts. The second is narrative voice, which considers how agency is constructed through language, tone, and self-representation in the letters. The third is narrative consequences, which explores how the outcomes of decisions are represented and how they shape subsequent narrative developments. These dimensions are not treated as fixed variables, but as interpretive lenses that work together to reveal agency as a negotiated narrative process. The analytical process was conducted through a series of sequential steps. First, the epistolary text of *Lady Susan* was read in its entirety to identify letters that function as key narrative moments. Second, passages involving the protagonist’s decision-making, self-positioning, and responses to other characters were selected as relevant analytical units. Third, these passages were examined to analyze how narrative voice operates through linguistic choices, tone, and perspective within the letters. Fourth, the narrative consequences of the protagonist’s decisions were traced by examining how subsequent letters respond to or reframe earlier actions. Finally, patterns emerging across these stages were synthesized to interpret how agency is constructed as a negotiated narrative process within the epistolary structure.

The analytical procedure follows a qualitative close-reading strategy. The text is read repeatedly to identify moments where agency is articulated through action, voice, or response. Relevant passages are then grouped according to the three analytical dimensions. Interpretation is carried out by examining how meaning is generated through narrative context, wording, and relational positioning within the epistolary structure. Throughout this process, the researcher functions as the primary analytical instrument, engaging directly with the text to construct an interpretation rather than to test predefined hypotheses (Mayring, 2021). Analytical rigor is maintained through consistency between the research focus, analytical framework, and interpretation. Passages are revisited to ensure coherence across readings, and interpretive claims are supported by explicit textual evidence. Rather than aiming for generalization, this qualitative approach seeks to produce analytical insight into how agency operates within the narrative structure of the text. This method provides a clear foundation for the analysis presented in the following section (Lyhne et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings on how the protagonist’s agency is textually constructed across the epistolary structure of *Lady Susan*. Close reading of the selected letters reveals recurring patterns in decision-making, strategic self-representation, and the narrative consequences that follow.

Table 1. Key Expression Constructing Protagonist Agency in *Lady Susan*

Analytical Dimension	Letter	Key Expression
Decision making	Letter I	“I have therefore resolved on placing her at one of the best private schools in town.”
	Letter II	“I have therefore determined on leaving them.”
Strategic self-representation	Letter IV	“her display of grief, and professions of regret”
	Letter VI	“a happy command of language... to make black appear white.”
Narrative consequences	Letter III	“but, as for myself, I am still unconvinced.”
	Letter II	“Mrs. Mainwaring insupportably jealous... and so enraged against me.”

Rather than appearing as isolated moments, these patterns form an interconnected structure through which agency becomes narratively visible. Table 1 maps the key textual expressions that organize this patterned construction of agency across the correspondence.

1. Decision-Making as Narrative Agency

Decision-making in the novella is not framed as an interior process that unfolds privately within the mind. Instead, it appears as a textual performance that becomes legible only when it is written, addressed, and circulated through letters. Within the epistolary structure, decisions are articulated as completed positions rather than emerging deliberations. Agency takes shape through declarative language that presents action as resolved,

necessary, or strategically justified. In this way, decision making functions as a narrative mechanism through which authority is asserted, and relationships are managed across the correspondence.

This dynamic is immediately visible in Letter I, where Lady Susan frames domestic arrangements through decisive formulation. She writes, *"I have therefore resolved on placing her at one of the best private schools in town,"* followed by the insistence, *"I am determined, you see, not to be denied admittance at Churchill."* The paired verbs *"resolved"* and *"determined"* construct a rhetoric of finality. Decisions are narrated as settled before any response can intervene. The language does not invite consultation; it establishes terms. Agency here emerges through grammatical closure, as writing fixes intention and projects it into the social field of the letter. The decision regarding Frederica's schooling and the decision to secure entry into Churchill together reveal how domestic and spatial choices are asserted through textual authority.

A similar pattern appears in Letter II, where Lady Susan reflects on her conduct and movement. She remarks, *"I was determined to be discreet,"* and later declares, *"It is time for me to be gone: I have therefore determined on leaving them."* The repetition of *"determined"* constructs a linguistic continuity that frames action as inevitable rather than optional. The phrase *"it is time"* shifts the decision from personal preference to temporal necessity, positioning departure as aligned with circumstance. Decision-making is thus narrated as both rational and timely. Through these formulations, Lady Susan shapes how her actions are interpreted, reinforcing the impression of controlled, purposeful agency.

The strategic dimension of decision making becomes more explicit in Letter V. Lady Susan states, *"I mean to win my sister-in-law's heart through the children,"* and, in a different context, asserts, *"It is undoubtedly better to deceive him entirely."* Here decisions extend beyond movement into calculated social maneuvering. The verb phrase *"I mean to"* signals intentional design, while the endorsement of deception reveals a willingness to manipulate communicative situations to achieve desired outcomes. The agency operates through a relational strategy, as decisions are framed not only as personal choices but as interventions within networks of perception and influence.

Taken together, these letters demonstrate that decision-making forms a spectrum across the narrative, encompassing domestic arrangements, mobility, self-presentation, and interpersonal strategy. Each decision is articulated through language that asserts resolution, constructs necessity, or anticipates response. Agency emerges through declaration and is reinforced through the reactions that such declarations invite. Within the epistolary form, decisions do not merely precede action; they constitute action at the narrative level. Understanding decision-making as narrative agency thus reveals how authority in the text is produced through the act of writing itself, as choices are continuously performed, negotiated, and interpreted across the correspondence. This pattern supports recent discussions of narrative agency that view action as an effect of narrative structuring rather than purely internal motivation (Kinnunen et al., 2024; Stuhler, 2024).

2. Strategic Self-Representation as Narrative Voice

If decision-making shows how agency is asserted, narrative voice reveals how that agency is sustained, defended, and made persuasive within the epistolary exchange. In Lady Susan, voice is never neutral. It operates as a strategic instrument through which character is constructed, softened, justified, or exposed. Because the novella unfolds entirely through letters, identity is inseparable from address. What Lady Susan is cannot be separated from how she writes and how others describe the effect of her writing. Agency, therefore, expands beyond decisive language into the realm of self-representation. It is through tone, rhetorical posture, and calculated tenderness that authority becomes socially viable.

Letter VI, written by Mrs. Vernon to Reginald De Courcy, offers one of the clearest examinations of Lady Susan's narrative voice from an external perspective. Mrs. Vernon remarks on *"her display of grief and professions of regret."* The choice of the word *"display"* immediately frames emotion as a performance rather than as a spontaneous feeling. Grief is not simply experienced; it is exhibited. The paired phrase *"professions of regret"* further suggests verbal declaration rather than inward sincerity. What is foregrounded here is not the content of Lady Susan's emotion but its theatrical presentation. Voice becomes an instrument through which moral legitimacy is staged. Agency thus extends beyond making decisions to shaping how those decisions are perceived as moral.

The effect of this performance becomes more complex when Mrs. Vernon describes Lady Susan's manner directly. She observes, *"her address to me was so gentle, frank, and even affectionate."* This description complicates suspicion. The adjectives *"gentle," "frank,"* and *"affectionate"* construct a surface of openness

and warmth. Narrative voice here functions as an affective strategy. Lady Susan's language does not confront resistance; it disarms it. The persuasive force of voice lies in its tonal calibration. By presenting herself as transparent and emotionally accessible, she stabilizes her position within a potentially hostile domestic space. The agency operates through modulation. It is not only what she says but how she says it.

Yet the same passage exposes tension beneath this gentleness. Mrs. Vernon asks, "*what is this but deceit?*" The rhetorical question marks the fracture between tone and intention. Voice produces trust while simultaneously provoking doubt. This moment reveals the double edge of self-representation. Lady Susan's rhetorical control is powerful enough to create credibility, yet perceptive enough to invite suspicion. Agency here becomes precarious rather than absolute. It depends on the continual maintenance of performance. The question does not eliminate her authority; it confirms that her authority works through ambiguity. Voice creates a space in which sincerity and manipulation coexist.

The most striking commentary on this rhetorical power appears when Mrs. Vernon reflects that Lady Susan possesses "*a happy command of language, which is too often used, I believe, to make black appear white.*" This formulation captures the essence of strategic self-representation. Language is not simply expressive; it is transformative. To "*make black appear white*" signals the capacity to reframe moral categories through verbal dexterity. Narrative voice becomes an instrument of reinterpretation. Actions that might invite criticism are rearticulated as prudence, affection, or necessity. The agency, therefore, operates at the level of discourse. It reshapes perception before judgment can stabilize.

The persuasive impact of this rhetorical skill is not hypothetical. Mrs. Vernon admits, "*She has already almost persuaded me of her being warmly attached to her daughter.*" The word "*almost*" is crucial. It registers resistance, yet it simultaneously acknowledges influence. Voice does not merely project an image; it nearly alters conviction. This admission demonstrates that Lady Susan's self-representation generates tangible interpretive effects within the narrative network. Agency is confirmed through reception. The capacity to nearly persuade a skeptical observer reveals the efficacy of her rhetorical positioning.

Letter VI thus shifts the analytical focus from intention to impression. Earlier letters allow Lady Susan to construct herself through self-narration. This letter, however, exposes the mechanics of that construction from the outside. Voice becomes observable as a strategy. It is evaluated, questioned, and partially believed. The epistolary form amplifies this process by circulating identity through multiple narrators. Lady Susan's authority is not fixed by a single perspective. It is continuously negotiated across responses. Strategic self-representation, therefore, depends on the interplay between projection and interpretation.

Seen in this light, narrative voice functions as an extension of agency rather than a supplement to it. Decisions establish movement and direction, but voice ensures those movements remain intelligible and defensible within a social environment. Through tonal softness, moral framing, and linguistic dexterity, Lady Susan manages perception as carefully as she manages circumstance. Agency in Lady Susan is not secured by inner resolve alone. It is sustained through rhetorical performance. The novella demonstrates that in an epistolary narrative, controlling language is to control the field of interpretation. Narrative voice becomes the medium through which agency is not only enacted but continually renegotiated. This pattern supports recent discussions of narrative agency that view action as an effect of narrative structuring rather than purely internal motivation (Kinnunen et al., 2024; Stuhler, 2024).

3. Negotiated Agency as Narrative Consequences

If the earlier letters demonstrate how Lady Susan asserts control through decisions and sustains influence through carefully modulated voice, the subsequent correspondence reveals the limits and aftereffects of that authority. In *Lady Susan* by Jane Austen, agency does not operate in isolation. It enters a responsive social field in which actions are interpreted, resisted, and partially absorbed. Narrative consequences, therefore, become crucial to understanding how power circulates in the epistolary form. Agency is measured not only by intention but by the reactions it provokes within the network of letters.

Mrs. Vernon provides the earliest clear evidence of this social impact when she notes Lady Susan's "*display of grief... were sufficient to soften his heart*" (Letter III). The emphasis on "*display*" frames emotion as a performance rather than as a spontaneous feeling. The outcome is nevertheless effective. Mr. Vernon's attitude is measurably altered. Narrative authority proves consequential at the level of affect, where carefully staged sensibility reshapes interpersonal response. The agency operates here through indirect influence rather than overt confrontation.

Mrs. Vernon immediately marks the limits of that influence with the pointed qualification, “*but, as for myself, I am still unconvinced*” (Letter III). This resistance is analytically crucial. Lady Susan’s rhetorical performance does not produce universal assent. Instead, it generates a divided interpretive field in which persuasion and skepticism coexist. The phrase “*still unconvinced*” signals an ongoing evaluative posture rather than a fixed rejection. Agency, therefore, emerges as negotiated rather than absolute, requiring continual reinforcement in the face of scrutiny.

Mrs. Vernon’s guarded stance is reinforced by her anticipation that Lady Susan “*will have occasion for all those attractive powers for which she is celebrated*” (Letter III). Reputation begins to function as a narrative force even before new actions unfold. The agency operates prospectively as well as retrospectively, shaping expectations in advance of direct encounter. The remark also contains a defensive inflection. Recognition of Lady Susan’s persuasive capacity does not translate into passive acceptance. The social field is already prepared to monitor and potentially resist her influence.

The mechanics of that influence are articulated with particular clarity in the observation that Lady Susan possesses “*a happy command of language... to make black appear white*” (Letter VI). This formulation exposes the discursive engine behind her effectiveness. Language does not merely describe reality; it actively reorganizes it. Through verbal dexterity, morally ambiguous actions are reframed as reasonable or even sympathetic. Narrative voice thus generates consequences that extend beyond individual letters into the broader interpretive environment. The explicitness of this critique simultaneously reveals the fragility of her strategy, since persuasive power remains vulnerable to exposure.

Mrs. Vernon’s admission that “*She has already almost persuaded me of her being warmly attached to her daughter*” (Letter VI) provides especially strong evidence of negotiated influence. The adverb “*almost*” is decisive. It registers measurable persuasive force while preserving critical distance. Lady Susan’s self-representation succeeds to a significant degree without achieving total dominance. Agency occupies a fluctuating middle ground in which impressions shift but do not fully stabilize. The epistolary form captures persuasion in motion rather than as a completed state. The wider social disturbance produced by Lady Susan’s conduct becomes more explicit when she herself reports that “*Mrs. Mainwaring [is] insupportably jealous... and so enraged against me*” (Letter II). This reaction demonstrates that her interventions do not remain confined to private intention but generate observable emotional backlash within her social environment. Jealousy here functions as narrative evidence of impact. Her strategic conduct provokes hostility strong enough to destabilize surrounding relationships. Agency, therefore, acquires relational visibility, measured not only through successful persuasion but also through the resistance and agitation it produces in others.

Taken together, these responses demonstrate that agency in the novella is continuously negotiated through reception. Lady Susan’s decisions initiate movement, and her narrative voice refines self-presentation, yet the reactions of others ultimately map both the reach and the limits of her authority. Some correspondents are softened, others remain vigilant, and the social environment around her grows increasingly unstable. The epistolary form foregrounds this dynamic by distributing interpretive power across multiple observers. Narrative consequences do not merely follow action; they actively reshape its meaning. Agency in *Lady Susan*, therefore, emerges as a process sustained through persuasion, challenged through skepticism, and continually recalibrated within the shifting social field of the letters. Such dynamics reinforce the view that agency in epistolary fiction is relationally produced through ongoing interpretive exchange rather than individually contained (De Vincenzo et al., 2022; Meretoja et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study reexamines agency in literary analysis by shifting the focus from psychological intention to narrative construction. By addressing the limited attention in previous studies to the narrative mechanism through which agency is produced in epistolary fiction, this study reexamines agency in literary analysis by shifting the focus from psychological intention to narrative construction. In *Lady Susan*, the protagonist’s agency emerges through the mechanics of the epistolary form rather than from stable moral autonomy. The analysis demonstrates that agency is produced when decisions are linguistically asserted, when narrative voice strategically shapes self-representation, and when other characters respond, resist, or partially accept that influence. These findings are derived from qualitative close-reading analysis of selected letters, which examined how decision-making, narrative voice, and narrative consequences function as interconnected dimensions within the epistolary structure. The findings indicate that agency in the novella operates as a negotiated textual process. Lady Susan’s authority is repeatedly reinforced through persuasive language, yet simultaneously limited by scepticism and emotional backlash from other correspondents. This pattern confirms that agency in epistolary fiction is structurally mediated

and socially contingent. Future studies may extend this approach by examining negotiated agency across Austen's other works or by applying discourse and multimodal perspectives to contemporary mediated narratives. Such work would further clarify how agency continues to be shaped by evolving communicative forms.

REFERENCE

- Burke, M. (2023). *The Routledge handbook of stylistics* (2nd editio). London: Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/The-Routledge-Handbook-of-Stylistics/Burke/p/book/9781032032838>
- De Vincenzo, C., Serio, F., Franceschi, A., Barbagallo, S., & Zamperini, A. (2022). A “viral epistolary” and psychosocial spirituality: Restoring transcendental meaning during COVID-19 through a digital community letter-writing project. *Pastoral Psychology, 71*, 153–171. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-021-00991-0>
- Gangopadhyay, N., & Pichler, A. (2024). Embodiment and agency in a digital world. *Frontiers in Psychology, 15*, 1392949. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1392949>
- Igartua, J.-J., & Rodríguez-Contreras, L. (2020). Narrative voice matters: Improving smoking prevention with testimonial messages through identification and cognitive processes. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(19), 7281. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17197281>
- Ironika, G. (2025). An Analysis of Haryo Pamungkas's Short Story 'The Old Writer' and Its Correlation with the Old Age of Indonesian Society. *YASIN, 5*(4), 3088–3097. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58578/yasin.v5i4.5929>
- Kinnunen, E., Meretoja, H., & Kosonen, P. (2024). Applying the approach of narrative agency: A dialogue between theory, reading group practices, and analysis of participants' experiences. *Narrative Inquiry, 34*(2), 281–306. <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.22029.kin>
- Lyhne, C. N., Thisted, J., & Bjerrum, M. (2025). Qualitative content analysis: Framing the analytical process of inductive content analysis to develop a sound study design. *Quality & Quantity, 59*, 5329–5349. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-025-02220-9>
- Mayring, P. (2021). *Qualitative content analysis: A step-by-step guide*. London: SAGE Publications. <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/asi/qualitative-content-analysis/book269922>
- Meretoja, H., Kinnunen, E., & Kosonen, P. (2022). Narrative agency and the critical potential of metanarrative reading groups. *Poetics Today, 43*(2), 387–414. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03335372-9642679>
- Nugraha, D. (2024). Posthumanism in Indonesian Short Stories and their Relevance to the Development of Critical Literacy. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun, 12*(2), 929–952. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v12i2.1162>
- Piper, A. (2023). What do characters do? The embodied agency of fictional characters. *Journal of Computational Literary Studies, 2*(1). <https://doi.org/10.26083/tuprints-00028910>
- Stuhler, O. (2024). The gender agency gap in fiction writing (1850 to 2010). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 121*(29), e2319514121. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2319514121>
- Tavener-Smith, T. (2024). Establishing narrative voice and encountering the “I” in life writing. *Life Writing, 21*(3), 305–322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14484528.2024.2331696>
- Uzwiak, B. A., & Bowles, L. R. (2021). Epistolary storytelling and self-representation. *The Senses and Society, 16*(4), 389–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17458927.2020.1858656>
- Wang, Y., & Zhang, G. (2021). Translation of narrative voice and the reproduction of storytelling mode. *SAGE Open, 11*(4), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211060349>