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'Bad word' for good engagement: The commodification of 'the Suroboyoan language' in Indonesian local television newsroom

'Argo yayın' yüksek katılım: Endonezya yerel haber merkezinde 'Suroboyoan dili'nin metalaştırılması

Aditya Fahmi NURWAHID¹, Citra SAFIRA², Esa FK WIBOWO³



¹M.A, State University of Surabaya, Communication Science Department, Surabaya, Indonesia

²Assistant Lecturer, Diponegoro University, Communication Science Department, Semarang, Indonesia

³Junior Researcher, University of Darussalam Gontor, East Java, Indonesia

ORCID: A.F.N. 0000-0002-2692-6632; C.S. 0000-0002-3472-140X; E.F.W. 0009-0002-1635-2054

Corresponding author/Sorumlu yazar:

Aditya Fahmi Nurwahid, State University of Surabaya, Communication Science Department, Indonesia **E-mail/E-posta:** adityanurwahid@unesa.ac.id

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Abstract

This study explores how Indonesian TV station Jawa Timur TV's (JTV) commodified the Suroboyoan language in its Pojok Kampung news program as a part of its media convergence strategies and its influence on cultural representation. Known as a dialect in East Java Province, Indonesia, the Suroboyoan tongue has transitioned from oral-informal communication to be a staple-formal language in media, notably through news programs. By taking in-depth interviews and framing analysis, this research investigates how JTV constructs, frames, and represents Suroboyoan cultural identity through the lens of three prominent case studies: the production of Suroboyoan news content on television, online portals, and social media platforms. The study also explores how media convergence strategies influence the cultural representation to align with editorial agendas. JTV leverages the Suroboyoan language to create a unique brand identity, attracting the broader public to gain more revenue. The news content, Pojok Kampung program, is the prime-time program which has become an integral part of media convergence strategy. Pojok Kampung's content also redistributes in different formats and publishes in the online news portals, Instagram, and TikTok. This strategy aims to boost audience engagement and convert it into revenue, in advertising, clicks of visitors, also the number of digital engagements, with every platform requiring unique content strategies to maximize it. JTV's approach on Pojok Kampung content to integrating the Suroboyoan language into news products reflect a strategic commodification of local culture, which also indicates that it contributed to reinforcing language stereotypes. The news production in Pojok Kampung portrayed the Suroboyoan language as vulgar and associated with an over-class dialect.

Keywords: Commodification, the Suroboyoan language, local media, newsroom, Indonesia



Öz

Bu calısma, Endonezva televizvon kanalı Jawa Timur TV'nin (JTV) Pojok Kampung haber programında Suroboyoan dilini medya yakınsama stratejilerinin bir parçası olarak nasıl metalaştırdığını ve bunun kültürel temsil üzerindeki etkisi üzerinde durmaktadır. Endonezya'nın Doğu Java Eyaleti'nde bir lehçe olarak kullanılan Suroboyoan dili, sözlü-gayri resmi iletişimden medyada, özellikle de haber programlarında bir temel-resmi dil haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışma, JTV'nin Suroboyoan kültürel kimliğini nasıl inşa ettiğini, çerçevelediğini ve temsil ettiğini derinlemesine görüsmeler ve cerceveleme analizi voluvla su üc önemli vaka çalışması merceğinden incelemektedir: Televizyonda, çevrimiçi portallarda ve sosyal medya platformlarında Suroboyoan dilinde haber içeriği üretimi. Çalışma, aynı zamanda medya yakınsama stratejilerinin kültürel temsili editoryal gündemlerle paralel hale getirmek üzere nasıl şekillendirdiğini de incelemektedir. JTV, Suroboyoan dilinden vararlanarak özgün bir marka kimliği varatmakta

ve daha fazla gelir elde etmek adına daha geniş kitlelerin ilgisini çekmektedir. Bir haber içeriği olan Pojok Kampung programı, medya yakınsama stratejisinin vazgeçilmez bir parçası haline gelmiş bir prime-time programıdır. Pojok Kampung'un içerikleri aynı zamanda farklı formatlarda yeniden dağıtılmakta ve çevrimiçi haber portallarında, Instagram'da ve TikTok'ta da yayınlanmaktadır. Bu strateji, izleyici katılımını artırmayı ve bunu reklam, ziyaretçi tıklamaları ve dijital etkileşim sayısında gelire dönüştürmeyi amaçlamakta ve farklı platformlarda bunu en üst düzeye çıkarmak için özgün içerik stratejileri gerektirmektedir. JTV'nin Poiok Kampuna iceriğinde Suroboyoan dilini haber ürünlerine entegre etme yaklaşımı, yerel kültürün stratejik olarak metalaştırılmasını yansıtırken, dil stereotiplerinin pekiştirilmesine de katkıda bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Pojok Kampung'daki haber prodüksiyonu, Suroboyoan dilini kaba ve sınıflar üstü bir lehçeyle ilişkili olarak tasvir etmiştir. Anahtar kelimeler: Metalaştırma, Suroboyoan dili, yerel medva, haber merkezi, Endonezva

Introduction

JTV stands as one of the biggest local media in Indonesia, marking an important breakthrough in terms of local news television. The media station established multiplatform media ecosystem that represents East Java province, including the JTV broadcasting channel, portalJTV.com which responsible for news reports, also @ portalJTVcom (Instagram) and officialJTVrek (TikTok) that represents the newsentertainment content. This multi-channel network, which has been managed by JTV, has been utilized by the newsroom to build their brand and develop a relationship with a broader audience. JTV's convergence strategy appears to have created a cultural mindset that has built a loyal audienceship.

Media convergence refers to the integration of different forms of media, and it appeared in several local broadcasting stations across the country (Donoghue, 2022; Do & Jung, 2020). In the case of *JTV*, the convergence strategy is a part of their recent plans to reach new audiences, and also to adjust to the preferences and needs of their consumers, which are driven by increasing use of the internet in the country. The preresearch observation showed that *JTV* newsroom noted the development of digital content consumption by their audiences has pushed their production processes to become more diverse, not only for conventional content needs but also for digital content, especially the video platform. It also appeared on other local broadcasting stations in Indonesia, based on the research conducted by Romadlono & Indainanto (2020). The effort to create a convergent channel is considered to increase effectiveness during the information disruption era. Previous research has found that audiences consumed television content through internet-connected devices, proving that technological advancements disrupt traditional media consumption patterns (Chukwu, 2023).

The Nielsen Indonesia report (2023) showed that the television audiences in Indonesia are currently shrinking drastically compared to before the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). On the other hand, 'Streaming Content Ratings' presented in the survey show that internet users have increased. It was recorded that the percentage of TV users in the country reached 81.1% in the third quarter of 2022, it decreased compared to the third quarter of 2019, which was 93.7%. Meanwhile, internet users in Indonesia reached 76.7% in the third quarter of 2022. This achievement increased from 55.1% in the third quarter of 2019 (Annur, 2022). Furthermore, the average Indonesian uses the

internet for 7 hours and 42 minutes daily (Rizaty, 2023). It means that Indonesian people are starting to leave traditional television consumption and switching to digital media instead.

However, as this research shows, the 'survival strategies' of JTV to face the digital challenges contributes to the commodification of local culture. Research found that it was common for local media to capture the potential of the local content and commercialize it (Hare & Baker, 2017; Jin & Yoon, 2016). The practice of commodification of local and cultural content has appeared in several local television stations globally. In South Korea, the commercialization of Korean Hip-hop culture went viral on the local television program, Who Is Next? The commodification also appeared on the Spanish television program, which was successful in globalizing their traditional games via variety shows program (Dobek-Ostrowska et al., 2010). Research conducted by Bai (2012) also showed the commercialization of accents in Chinese local television in their news programs.

In Indonesia, the commodification of local and cultural contexts also appeared on television programs. Local television brings cultural arts performance to be one of their main programs, such as *Ludruk* (Surya, 2006), *Lenong* (Mansur et al., 2022), or *Pangkur Jenggleng* (Santoso, 2016). Beside the entertainment programs, the television news programs also commercialize local culture, such as the local language of East Javanese and Madurese (Ardyani, 2020; Tohirin & Dewi, 2019), and Sundanese (Permana & Rohmah, 2022). These news programs are delivered in local languages and aired on prime-time. In addition, research also showed that the commercialization of local culture contributes to stereotypes about the culture. Research showed that local television programs in Indonesia also contribute to the representation of the cultural stereotype. It appears in various television genres such as, "soap operas" (Hidayatullah, 2019), "cartoons" (Aristhya, 2023), "variety shows" (Yuwana, Santosa & Sumarlam, 2019), and news programs (Meifilina, 2016).

This research focuses on the development of *Pojok Kampung*, the most popular program on *JTV* (Khotijah, Rahmanto & Satyawan, 2023; Hidayat, 2021). *Pojok Kampung* is a local daily news program on *JTV* delivered in the Suroboyoan language, a local tongue in East Java province, Indonesia. This research has found there to be a power imbalance in how the media represents the Suroboyoan languages via a case study of *Pojok Kampung*. This study also addresses the gap in research concerning cultural

commodification, and local media, which has institutionally struggled ro draw necessary content, capital, and audience (Dimmick & Rothenbuhler, 1984).

Several previous studies showed how the Suroboyoan dialect has been represented with many stereotypes and portrayed dirt, low-class, impolite, and "should be avoided" (Sartini, 2018; Yolanda, 2018). But very few studies have critically analyzed the digital content production of local media outlets (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; McAllister, 2011). As local media utilize digital platforms to develop their content, capital, and audience resource, it is interesting to carry out research that addresses what is going on behind the production desk.' To fill the research gap, this study systematically examines the production of *Pojok Kampung* as a part of *JTV*'s convergence strategy. Drawing from a critical media studies perspective, this paper argues that commodifying the Suroboyoan dialect aligns with *JTV*'s revenue-driven editorial strategies, impacting the representation and perception of regional identity.

News in local television

There is always an expectation by the public that information about public issues in certain regions will be easy to access through local media channels. Research showed that there is a significant consequence in locality related to the availability of information about public issues (Usher, 2023). McLeod et al (1996) also assumed that the power of local media is huge amongst local communities because they are a "better predictor of community interest, knowledge, and participation in public issues" (p. 202). On the other hand, national or international media does not cover local issues, as the big news agencies receive less complete coverage of local phenomena as it is not their main interest in news coverage (Mathisen, 2023).

The competition between local media industries becomes more complex, not just considering the dominance of financial capital. Human resources for production, the cultural acceptance among the audience, and their perspective as information suppliers for various local issues came as determinant factors that affect the media capabilities (Rusli, Chandrabuwono & Akbari, 2021; Nainggolan, 2017). It also shows that financial capital, the ability to produce quality content, and the social dynamics of the audience are intercorrelated. Financial capital is essential for media organizations to maintain infrastructure, hire skilled talent, and produce high-quality content. In Asia, where media markets are becoming increasingly competitive, outlets with strong financial

backing are better positioned to invest in advanced production technologies and skilled labor (Flew, 2010). For instance, the rise of Chinese and South Korean media industries shows that investment in production facilities and talent migration has led to the production of content with global appeal. Media hubs such as Hong Kong and Seoul have developed strong financial ecosystems that support a wide range of production activities, further enhancing their competitiveness in global media markets (Keane et al., 2007).

Quality content production, however, is not just about financial investment. It also reguires an understanding of regional tastes and preferences. In East Asia, local media companies are thriving by creating content that reflects the unique cultural imagination of the region, rather than simply imitating Western formats. For example, formats such as SuperGirl in China and Produce 101 in South Korea have gained immense popularity by blending global reality TV structures with local cultural nuances, allowing for high engagement from regional audiences (Yoshimitsu, 2020; Zhao, 2024). The social behavior of audiences is a key factor that local media must navigate. Audience preferences in East Asia are shaped by cultural values, social dynamics, and economic conditions. Viewers tend to gravitate toward content that resonates with their everyday experiences, and the success of certain genres like talent shows and family dramas in Asia highlights how understanding audience behavior is integral to content production (Hills et al., 2019). The rising demand for content that promotes social values, such as family solidarity or educational programming, reflects the role of social behavior in shaping media content preferences. This demonstrates that content creation must go beyond financial capital to include deep knowledge of regional social dynamics and cultural values, which are key drivers of content consumption in Asian markets.

Large research projects in the United Kingdom (Johansson & Nygren, 2019), China, and the United States (Sparks et al., 2016) portrayed that local media generally utilize multiple social media platforms for multiple opportunities. The necessity of local media to strengthen the resources in capital, content, and audiences could be maximized by using this strategy. Social media have become large platforms that have a high value because it provides easy access to different social networks (Moskowitz, 2021; Newton, 2021). Multiple social media platforms for local television stations provide opportunities for the station to develop their content, reach more audience, and also bring another capital such as subscribers in digital video platforms or online streaming platforms.

The local information and culture is the biggest capital in Asian local broadcasting stations (Agrawal & Kumari, 2021; Zhao, 2021). Mostly, the news and local culture program become the primary program of local media in East Asia and Southeast Asia. Specifically, the news programs were packaged with an essential localization strategy of providing the news segment in vernacular languages. In these regions, journalism is not only about delivering information but also about fostering a sense of local identity and community engagement. Vernacular journalism, which uses local languages and dialects, enables news outlets to connect deeply with their audience, ensuring that content resonates culturally and contextually. This approach is especially prevalent in countries like Indonesia, India, and Thailand, where regional languages are crucial for engaging diverse local populations (Otmazgin, 2013). It also captured that the future of local media depends a lot on program localization that commodified cultural aspects, such as languages, as the production of news itself is subject to calculus that treats information as commodity. Reflecting on what happened in local news agencies in India (Mehta & Kaye, 2021) or China (Liu & Zhou, 2022), the localization vision of local media agencies has an effect on the nature of news and public affairs programming in local places.

The commodification of language as a cultural capital can be found in various research on the Asian media industry. Asian cultures, which are deeply intertwined with their languages, commonly view language as a tool for fostering identity and promoting socio-political narratives (Chen & Starosta, 2003). For instance, Suzuki (2015) showcased how major Japanese media outlets commodified non-Japanese speech into news programs to evoke a sense of nationalism in their broadcast. Similarly, Gao (2017) investigated how Chinese media utilized English news sources to support China's neoliberal goals and assert its identity in the global order. In Singapore, Kok & Loh (2024) emphasized the changing perceptions of Singlish in the national media - once seen as negative but later appreciated for its influence on identity, demonstrating shifting attitudes towards Singlish and Standard Singapore English in different social settings. These instances demonstrate how vernacular journalism and cultural commodification tactics are utilized by media to navigate identity, strengthen community bonds, and enhance audience involvement throughout Asia.

An overview of vernacular journalism in Indonesia

The local media in Indonesia mostly present themselves as news media outlets (Yudha & Hendriyani, 2024). The format of local news outlets has been established to exhibit

stronger support for the local community via their advocacy role and the watchdog role compared with national media agencies. Research found that local media in Indonesia performed the professional ideals and maintained normative and affective ties to the local community (Sjuchro, Khadijah & Sjafirah, 2023; Soekawati, 2021; Hastjarjo, 2017).

Specifically, local television stations are still the trusted reference for people seeking information (Nielsen, 2023). Beside the information and advocacy role in the local media outlet, their newsroom also offers vernacular journalism, a type of local journalism that uses the language, culture, and perspective of a specific community to report on local news and issues (Wahl-Jorgensen & Boelle, 2023). The local context in news programs provides 'symbolic power' to construct the idea of the local community, then enrich the delivery of information as something valuable for the community. In Indonesia, vernacular journalism has been adopted by news media in various forms that pushed for the representation and voice of local people. This approach can influence news gatekeeping processes and the news values in local perspectives. The usage of local language also fosters a stronger connection with local audiences (Bogaerts, 2017).

In a nation with at least 718 different local languages (Rohana, Mukhlis, & Jamaluddin, 2024), much of the population speaks not just Bahasa Indonesia as the official languages. This condition also encourages the vernacular programs in television newsrooms to grow exponentially since the legalization of local broadcasting law in 2022. In 2019, The Association of Local Television in Indonesia (ATVLI, 2019) listed 400 local television channels which also had approximately 400 local language news programs. But, previous research found that these local television stations are different from traditional communication broadcast outlets because they captured more commercial incentives or profit-making enterprises which was the driving force behind the establishment of these local stations (Wibawa, Afifi, & Prabowo, 2014).

With the advent of digital platforms, local television in Indonesia was forced to enhance their news delivery for quicker access by the public. The digitalization of local television outlets has been supported by the rise of localized content, especially related to the usage of local language. The local media newsrooms prioritize accommodating the local language programs as a part of their media convergence strategy. Several media outlets such as *PAL TV* used their primetime local news program, "Grebek Palembang," to support their media convergence (Solekhah, Duku & Yahya, 2023). Riau

TV and Sakti TV Madiun also developed local news programs which were delivered by Malay and Javanese language as their digital news program (Syafri & Pannindriya, 2019; Hariyani & Nurchayati, 2017). This research specifically explored the Pojok Kampung Program, a prime-time news program in JTV which is delivered in the Suroboyoan language. Considering the JTV market in East Java Province, Indonesia, the program has potential access to 40 millions audience in terrestrial broadcasting and larger audiences in digital platforms (Emidari & Harliantara, 2023).

Contested media representation of the Suroboyoan culture

As one of the dialects of Javanese language, the Suroboyoan reflects a unique perspective on society. Suroboyoan dialect embodies the openness, friendliness, and directness of Surabayan culture in communication. However, it is also associated with negative connotations like dirtiness, low class, and impoliteness. Due to these stereotypes, the dialect often receives unfavorable views from Indonesian, particularly those unfamiliar with Suroboyoan culture (Anwar, 2021).

The Suroboyoan dialect is widely used, especially in Surabaya greater area. This condition has been captured by various media as the social capital to be maximized by the media industry. As the Suroboyoan language has negative stigma in society, multiplatform media adopted this 'impoliteness' in several representations. Historically, the representation of the Suroboyoan culture in mass media first appeared in 1930, by *Panjebar Semangat* magazine, then followed by *Jaya Baya* magazine in 1945 (Puteri, 2018). Beside the television program adoption, this local tongue was also used in radio programs (Nabubois & Wijaya, 2014), movies (Saputra & Hariyanto, 2024), song lyrics (Kamaluddin, 2017), newspaper articles, and also social media content (Audina, Indrasari & Pamuji, 2023).

Originally an oral dialect, the Suroboyoan language has evolved to various media platforms. Its adoption in mediatized platforms, such as magazines, newspapers, and broadcast platforms, has expanded its usage beyond in-group context. This shift has transformed the dialect from informal, in-group communication to a recognized media language. However, previous research analyzing media representations of Suroboyoan language have shown that its form generally remains quite similar to its spoken counterpart (Joyowiwdarbo, Fitriania & Puspitorini, 2019).

Today, the representation of the Suroboyoan language in media has closely been associated with the local television station, JTV. As the capital of East Java Province, the city of Surabaya has become the most important coverage for JTV. This situation also brought JTV to introduce several main programs on television, such as "Cangkru'an," a talk show that used a street talk scene as the setting. Another main program is "Pojok Kampung," a daily news bulletin broadcast during prime time. All the news in this program is delivered in the Suroboyoan local language. This program is well-known as a hallmark of the JTV television channel.

Aim and methodology

This study employs a case study approach to examine the phenomenon of local language being used in the media industry. To explore this phenomenon, this research involved in-depth data collection from multiple sources of information. The first step of this study was to identify the context of language commodification. This paper focuses on the news program, *Pojok Kampung* as an appropriate context which frames a number of news productions that utilize the Suroboyoan language. The larger spectrum in the *Pojok Kampung* program analyzed in this study include the television program, the online portal, and original social media posts. To address the research question, the multi-perspective approach was used to capture the evidence about production, representation, and public effect context which assumed that it is closely related with local language commodification in media convergence strategy. This study examines three media layers: newsroom, multi-platform content, and audience.

Aim

Being in a culturally, socially, and locationally disadvantaged space, the Suroboyoan culture is vulnerable to any commodification by the mainstream cultural hegemony of the local community and identity in the East Java province. It is also connected with the social capital of the Suroboyoan community—the value of social connections that can be mobilized to build trust and foster mutual support (Campante, Durante & Tesei, 2022). Local languages are embedded as social capital, encompassing a network of trust and shared norms. JTV newsroom as the biggest local media in East Java play a critical role in strengthening, sustaining, and reproducing the culture, identities, and linguistics of the surrounding communities. JTV used this social capital to produce, circulate, and publish the content in the Suroboyoan languages. Based on all these, this study proposes

to add a more nuanced understanding on how the local newsroom engages with the ideas of the Suroboyoan culture which represent community, culture, and identity.

This research analyses three case studies that were salient in the editorial agenda: the production of the Suroboyoan news on television, online portal, and social media content. Based on these three cases, it compares how the development of the Suroboyoan culture and identity was framed in news production on different platforms, and explained the interpretation and representation of social issues. Answers to the following questions were sought in this study:

RQ1. How does the *JTV* newsroom construct, frame, and represent the Suroboyoan language and culture in the news program *Pojok Kampung*?

RQ2. How do the convergence strategies in *JTV* affect the *Pojok Kampung's* editorial agenda?

Methodology

This study adopts a multi-method approach, combining framing analysis with in-depth interviews to explore both the representation of the Suroboyoan Language and the internal production processes within *JTV*. Brannen (in Bryman, 2014) defines multi-method research as a combination of two or more data sources to gain respective strength when investigating a research question. This research used two distinct studies to examine and address the way that a TV newsroom represents local culture via the case of *Pojok Kampung* content. Framing analysis allows for an examination of the processes of representation in the newsroom, highlighting recurring themes and rhetorical strategies that can play a role in commodifying cultural elements (Brummet, 2008).

In-depth interviews can complement our understanding of news production context by providing contextual insights from newsroom staff, and shedding light on the motivations and strategic considerations that underpin editorial choices. This research design addresses the Suroboyoan-news by taking into consideration the context of production in the newsroom, and the representation of languages in the news agenda, while demonstrating the meaning of the Suroboyoan identity in media representation. This approach is particularly suited for capturing the nuanced relationship between cultural representation and economic objectives in local media.

This study employs framing analysis to compare the Suroboyoan language in news, aiming to capture the frames and arguments in the news production process. Grounded in the circuit of culture theory, the research examines how framing effect and framebuilding process will picturize the process of representation (Vliegenthart & van Zoonen, 2011). Every form of news that appeared in *Pojok Kampung* television program, online site, and social media content will be analyzed from a rhetorical perspective, analyzing word choices, description, and characteristic of messages. In the analysis of Pojok Kampung, the commodification of the Suroboyoan language serves as a clear example of how local news media outlets capitalize on cultural elements. Rhetorical perspective refers to the way arguments and persuasive techniques are used to shape the audience's perception (Herrick, 2020). Word choices involve the specific language and terminology selected to convey messages, which reflect underlying biases, tone, and intention. Description refers to how events, people, or issues are presented in the content, whether through detailed, neutral, or emotive depictions, influencing how the audience interprets the subject matter. Also, the characteristics of messages, such as the structure, tone, and style of communication, determine whether the message is formal, informal, direct, or indirect, and how it engages or influences the audience.

This study systematically analyzed 84 news from the 'Pojok Kampung' program, including television news segments, online articles, and social media posts. These entries were published between June 1, 2023 and December 1, 2023. The dataset was manually recorded in a spreadsheet, capturing key details such as news labels, relevant keywords, categorization of topics (social affairs, politics, crime, culture and lifestyle), and its corresponding URL. The coding process started with an identification phase for recurring themes and patterns within the content, followed by systematic coding guided by three key nodes: Issues Representation, Linguistic Style, and Audience Engagement. Each content was analyzed segment by segment, ensuring that each excerpt was accurately categorized under the appropriate node. To ensure reliability, a coding process was assessed independently by three researchers based on the intercoder agreement that refined the coding scheme and resolved discrepancies. This systematic and reliable approach allowed the research to uncover frame frequencies and co-occurrences, providing insights into how the Suroboyoan language was represented and commodified across platforms. Patterns of framing, particularly how rhetorical choices influenced audience engagement, were identified to highlight consistencies and variations across the television, online, and social media contexts.

Building on the commodification of culture, this research clarified the findings in framing analysis through non-participative observation and in-depth interviews with the newsmakers. This study focused on understanding the context of news production, the media capital and social resources, the newsroom strategy, as well as the organizational factors such as production norms, values, or ideology (Makwambeni & Msimanga, 2023). The non-participative approach was chosen to maintain objectivity and avoid influencing the news production process. Observations were conducted in three key areas: the newsroom, which portrayed the daily operations and decisionmaking of the television production team; the team behind the news portal portalJTV. com; and the social media team responsible for managing content across various platforms. These observations provided insights into workflows, content creation strategies, and audience engagement practices. In addition to observation, we conducted in-depth interviews with six personnel: Social Media Specialist 1, Social Media Content Editor 1, Content Editor 1, Content Editor 2, Journalist 1 and Chief of Social Media Division 1. These individuals represented diverse roles, ensuring comprehensive perspectives on how the Suroboyoan language is framed and the economic motives shaping content creation. These interviews provided deeper context into the production process, team dynamics, and the integration of content across multiple media formats. The interviews were conducted with newsmakers to gain insights into newsroom culture, the news framing process, as well as the motivations and challenges involved in news production. This study received ethics committee approval from Institute of Research and Community Services UNIDA on 22 June 2023, under reference number 664/KE.01/SK/06/2023xx. This research also analyzes the production of content, using 84 news content in 6 months as a sample from June 1, 2022 to December 1, 2023. All of these contents were distributed in the news television program, portalJTV.com, and the post of @portalJTV in Instagram and analyzed in framing analysis. The selection of these entries was based on their virality across multiple platforms, with a focus on content that achieved the highest levels of engagement. Specifically, we examined the most viewed videos on Portal JTV's video platform, the most liked posts on their Instagram account, and the most read articles on their news portal. This approach allowed us to identify and analyze the most impactful content, providing insights into the strategies that contribute to virality and audience engagement across different digital platforms. By focusing on high-performing content, the study highlights how local media outlets optimize their production to cater to and capitalize on audience preferences in a competitive media landscape. A detailed coding scheme was developed to categorize the various

elements of news framing, allowing for a nuanced understanding of how Suroboyoan identity is constructed and represented in *JTV*'s news content.

Findings

This study aims to apply the circuit of commodification framework, which demonstrates the relationships between production, consumption, and regulation in media industries (Nieborg & Poell, 2018). This research explores how *Pojok Kampung* as local news is commodified and circulated within the media landscape. This analysis highlights the interplay between economic, cultural, and media platforms factors that shape the production and consumption of Suroboyoan identity in news content.

Frame building of the Suroboyoan language

The framing analysis featured dataset consists of the 84 news products from *Pojok Kampung*, distributed across multiple platforms: television news segments, news articles on *portalJTV.com*, *Instagram* posts on @portal*JTV* and *TikTok* videos that are published by @official*JTV*rek. The dataset was recorded from June 1, 2023 to December 1, 2023, during when *Pojok Kampung* started featuring the multiplatform content on television programs, online news sites, and social media. The dataset was recorded manually and inputted into the spreadsheet. All of the news entries were inspected and placed in a news category that reflected the content, differentiated by news label, keywords, and categorization of news topics. The coded sheet contained every URL of news content from every platform, then was imported to NVivo for the content to be coded.

The volume of representation for each node in the coding sheets showed the dominant frames in the *Pojok Kampung* content. The text within the nodes were analyzed with framing analysis to identify specific discursive construction of the Suroboyoan culture via the use of language. The dominant idea positioned in the primary position: in headlines, top, leads, and the opening paragraph of captions. In other words, it portrayed how much the newsroom highlighted particular themes in the *Pojok Kampung* content and where the news-ideas were most frequently positioned.

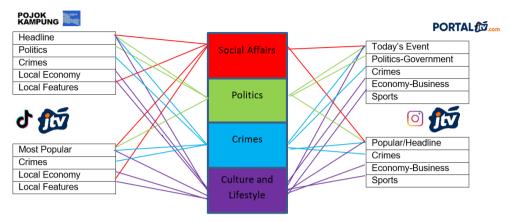


Figure 1. Chart of each news category in *Pojok Kampung* news production **Source:** Research Findings

Each of *Pojok Kampung's* content in television, online news portal, *Instagram*, and *TikTok* was examined to identify the most salient themes and categories related to the use of the Suroboyoan language. The results of this analysis are presented descriptively, combining textual analysis with interpretive explanations.



Figure 2. Manual coding of language used in *Pojok Kampung's* platform

Source: Research Findings

The case of 'Pentil Muter' could be an example on how *Pojok Kampung* newsroom commodified the Suroboyoan language in their news content. 'Pentil muter' had been chosen as the headword of the post of *Pojok Kampung* because it was recognized as the most popular word. Pentil muter is commonly used in the program when they report about tornado disasters. This word is commonly used in the middle of Surabaya community and neighborhood city, but also has become one of the most unique words introduced by *JTV*'s *Pojok Kampung* news program. The news article adopted a term which roughly translates to 'spinning nipple' in English, and it is considered a low-class, informal word in the Javanese language hierarchy.

Different content strategy was implemented on every *Pojok Kampung* content. For example, the *Instagram* post features an eye-catching graphic highlighting key Suroboyoan terms, such as 'Pentil Muter.' These posts provide concise summaries of news stories, including 'What, When, Where, Who, Why and How' (5W+1H) elements of news related to the specific item. The 5W+1H elements are short highlights of the news reports from *Pojok Kampung* or *portalJTV.com*. The Editor of Kamus *Pojok Kampung* also stated "Our use of certain Suroboyoan terms is carefully chosen to appeal to the audience's cultural pride, but also to create a memorable, engaging product."

Pojok Kampung's social media presence also employs additional strategies to capture audience engagement. On their *TikTok* and *Instagram* platforms, caption incorporates a call to action strategies which encourage viewers to save the content, This strategy becomes a tactic that positions *Pojok Kampung* content as valuable and worth keeping. Additionally, the social media team has created a hashtag, #PojokKampung*JTV*. Another noteworthy strategy involves leveraging platform features. For instance, on both *TikTok* and *Instagram* platforms, social media posts are featured by music, with the administrators strategically selecting viral songs on that day. Based on the interviews with the social media administrator, this strategy aimed to "increase the post's visibility in users' Explore and FYP tabs."

However, a stereotype is attached to 'pentil muter' as a word in the etymology part. The word 'pentil' is a Javanese word for 'nipple,' and it suggests a dirty and impolite language. Pentil muter has a stereotype as a low-class language to explain the tornado disaster. In Javanese language strata, 'pentil muter' is known as one of the 'ngoko,' or casual language. This level of the language is related to street chat. But, it seems that 'pentil muter' had been chosen because the stereotype is a gimmick for the social media content to boost the exposure and engagement in social media algorithm.

Beside 'pentil muter,' this research listed several nodes and criteria for placing text in a category of information that emerged in *Pojok Kampung* content were:

Social affairs

When we talk about social affairs on news, it commonly refers to a social event that is conducted by social group members. But in *Pojok Kampung*, this section is mostly filled by the news about sexual-relationships. This media coverage of adultery and gossip makes the *Pojok Kampung* appear to be similar to a yellow journalism media outlet.

As Indonesian journalism activities were guided by the Journalistic Code of Ethic (Press Council, 2008), the practice of adultery issue coverage in Indonesia still conducts in a sensational and dramatic manner (Syam et. Al., 2020). Research also found that Indonesian media's newsroom valued the news coverage of sexual issues in the terms of the economic benefits they bring (Astria, Nuzuli & Handayani. 2021).

Several the Suroboyoan words which were often published in this section are:

- Hohohihe-The word 'hohohihe' is used to describe intimate behaviour between a man and a woman. But the word is used to describe sexual relations without marriage or can refer to adultery. The use of the word 'hohohihe' attempts to turn a sense of taboo into a sense of humor.
- Gendakan The term 'gendak' refers to a romantic partner, typically in an informal, non-marital relationship. The word is primarily used to describe a sexual relationship outside of marriage.
- Ngipik-ipik The word 'ngipik-ipik' is used to describe the act of having sex between a man and a woman by force (rape).
- Mbok dewor 'Mbok Dewor' is used to describe middle-aged women as actors in the news. However, *Pojok Kampung* often associates Mbok Dewor with the representation of widows.
- Lanang Erung Ndrangus 'Lanang Erung Ndrangus' refers to a man who disrespects
 women. Therefore, 'Erung Ndrangus' is an idiom that is used to refer to men who
 behave irresponsibly in their relationships and display problematic sexual behaviour.
- Mbalon The word 'mbalon' means prostitute. *Pojok Kampung* uses the word 'mbalon' to modify words that have a similar meaning to prostitution.

Politics

In local news reporting, spatial proximity rises as a significant news value. Local journalism provides a specific angle or hook of information to offer to the public, especially related to political issues. The local government decision then becomes an important topic and brings greater attention to local news in Indonesia (Halim & Jauhari, 2019).

Pojok Kampung covers the political dynamic in the local context, by delivering it using the East Javanese perspective. The only one the Suroboyoan tongue that used in this rubric is 'Guminte'

• Guminte – "guminte' is a Suroboyoan word for 'government.' The usage of guminte in oral language is for informal/street conversation, not for the formal forum.

Crimes

Crime news is seen as newsworthy in various news media as the coverage offers news value, such as the crime risk, the name of the offender or victim, or the level of violence (Nasi et.al., 2021; Park, Fisher & Lee, 2022). As argued by Reiner, Livingston, and Allen (2003), media outlets sometimes use a sensationalized approach, emphasizing drama instead of prevention or education. This 'law of opposites' tactic, as stated by the news editor's statement that "crime news is the powerful way to make the audience attached." It prioritizes grabbing attention but potentially leading to the commodification of crime news.

In *Pojok Kampung*, the use of the Suroboyoan language in crime news is vital. This research found that the newsroom uses more hard diction words to strengthen the information, or in other words, the newsroom deliberately replaces words with words that are more impolite or rude. This could be because what is being talked about deserves a harsh word, or because what is being talked about is a bad thing.

Other Suroboyoan words which often published in the crime news are:

- Matek 'Matek' means no longer alive. The word 'matek' is used in the quote because it expresses displeasure and emphasises actions that result in someone death, especially suicide or the death victim of brawl.
- Kendat 'Kendat' in Javanese ngoko language means suicide. The word 'kendat'
 is the harshest word in Javanese language to describe suicide. This word is used
 in general because suicide is not allowed in the perspective of religious norms,
 social norms, and moral norms.
- Sunduk Pentol 'Sunduk pentol' means same-sex rape. It emerged as the Suroboyoan slang describing deviant sexual behaviour. 'Sunduk pentol' is also abusive/harsh language as it relates to paedophilic behaviour.
- Bejat-'Bejat' means unforgivable behaviour. The Suroboyoan language captures 'bejat' as the highest level of sin or bad behaviour. 'Bejat' is also perceived as language that makes the public condemn the behaviour of the actors in the news, such as murderers, corruptors, rapists, etc.

Culture and **lifestyle**

Human interest stories have significant impact in the media industry, inline with the development of popular journalism. Beside the urgency to manage public discourse related to 'serious issues,' lifestyle news engages with audience with more relatable content. It explores traveling destinations, culinary, music, or cultural arts in East Java province. As one journalist noted, 'Suroboyoan dialects are frequently used in lifestyle news to create a more personal and engaging connection with the audience.' Several researchers also noted this lifestyle journalism as the arbiter of "taste culture" (Banjac & Hanusch, 2022; Jenkins & Jeronimo, 2021).

With respect to culture and lifestyle, *Pojok Kampung* used more daily-language of the Suroboyoan language. Several cultural tongues have been adopted in the news production that reveals the daily conversation in the Suroboyoan culture.

- Saktaek ndayak 'Sataek ndhayak' means very much and scattered. The phrase 'sataek ndhayak' is hyperbole because it emphasises and expresses something bad or disliked.
- Badhog 'Badhog' is a crude Javanese word meaning to eat. Badhog is rarely
 used in everyday language except in the language of friendship. In news about
 food, badhog indicates that the food is worth eating and is liked by everyone.

All of these words that have been used in the *Pojok Kampung* news content indicate the practice of dysphemism in local journalism. In linguistic studies, dysphemizing is the process of designating any phenomenon or news subject using more vulgar or rude words or expressions (Druzhinin, 2021). The adoption of dysphemism in journalism deliberately utilizes taboo linguistic forms, contributing to a negative tone in news content.

The use of the Suroboyoan language in JTV newsroom showed the local language to be commodified in *Pojok Kampung* content, especially when presenting the news featuring expression of anger, exaggerating, and satirizing. This condition also showed that *Pojok Kampung* primarily pushed 'problematic-news' content that are made of dysphemistic representation. Possibly, the aim of negative-language used in *Pojok Kampung* had the aim to convert lack of news value content into a taboo-tabloid writing.

Political economy of content production of JTV

JTV adopts a profit business model geared toward the production of content more suitable for securing advertising revenue. Although JTV implemented the convergence strategy, the company still derives the main revenue stream from selling advertising space and through the digital engagement (news clicks, social media statistics) and has not adopted any paywalls yet. The focus of the newsroom is directed to the news agenda that covers the beats and topics, appealing to a wider audience to get as many clicks as possible. Also, the newsroom put much attention on what is popular in the data analytics report.

This research examines the newsroom personnels' perspective on the convergence strategy by developing *Pojok Kampung* content in a multiplatform channel that is managed by *JTV*.

Context

To explore the contextual factors behind news platform use in *Pojok Kampung* publishing, interviews with Content Editor of Kamus *Pojok Kampung* revealed a theme between their initial decision to engage in every channel. As noted by the participants, this motivation was driven by internal and external factors.

The 'internal motivators' appeared to be driven by JTV vision of convergence, to embrace the new form of media. Moreover, it has also become the media channel to maximize the marketing strategy and revenue stream. As the Chief of Social Media Content stated, "every platform should be equipped with a fit strategy, but all of it is an overall strategy to maximize the economic potency of the content." The convergence content strategy in Pojok Kampung has been executed by the television production team, portalJTV.com's team, and the social media team. Based on the observations, different teams employed distinct content strategies to present the same information. For instance, the Pojok Kampung TV program utilized a clear script and voiceover to deliver precise information in Suroboyoan dialect. The journalist in portalJTV.com updated the information periodically, allowing for multiple news articles on the same topic. The social media team manages the content on TikTok and Instagram using a more informal and personalized approach, packaging the information in a visually engaging manner.

In addition, there are also 'external motivators' that appear to be related to the audience-centric view. Every *Pojok Kampung's* channel has different audience characteristics, and it needs a different strategy to grow every content in each different channel. Based on interviews and observation, the production stage was the crucial process in *Pojok Kampung*. As the program broadcasted live, *Pojok Kampung* acted as a gatekeeper of the information that not just has newsworthiness but also is potentially engaging. This engagement factor translates into sensationalism for audiences, achieved through various methods. As the Head of Social Media stated, "We sometimes use visually striking content to create an immediate association in viewers' minds." Clickbait headlines on *portalJTV.com* or the selection of crime news for *TikTok* content exemplify this approach. It's worth noting that crime is a recurring theme in *Pojok Kampung's* news, with sensationalism often built around information related to murder, theft, etc., as a journalist acknowledged: "Crime news is easiest to obtain. You just need to visit the police station, there's plenty of it."

The audience engagement strategy aligns with the program format, which leverages the Suroboyoan language. This approach necessitates distinct strategies for different platforms. While the television program focuses on delivering clear information, *TikTok* and *Instagram* prioritize fostering interaction and conversation. To achieve this, the news content is formatted to be engaging and shareable, utilizing visual design, captions, hashtags, songs, and collaborations with other accounts. This "conversational strategy" aims to broaden the reach of the content on social media.

Company benefit

All the six JTV newsroom personnel acknowledge that there were benefits and value gained from efforts in media convergence strategy, such as reinforcement of JTV's brand identity, support for marketing related activities, and audience engagement. As Pojok Kampung developed their content in digital platforms, the news that was published had also congruence with the TV brand image as news media in public minds. The previous exposure from television programs may not have allowed them to develop the brand association of Satus Persen Jatim (100% representing East Java), the slogan of JTV. The uniqueness of the Suroboyoan culture that closely related with Pojok Kampung content in portalJTV.com and social media pages helped differentiate their brand from competitors. Thus, in order to reinforce the JTV brand identity as representing the Suroboyoan and East Javanese culture, JTV's online channel has been strategically used by its newsroom.

Pojok Kampung's digital presence not only boosts JTV's audience on Instagram and TikTok but also generates revenue through strategic partnerships. The newsroom maximizes the content creation to act as a 'quasi-media distributor.' As the Social Media Specialist explained, "News related to the local economy presents opportunities to collaborate with small and medium enterprises." JTV capitalizes their number of followers on social media by integrating sponsored content into its Pojok Kampung news packages, particularly on Instagram. Furthermore, the Chief of Social Media confirmed that "JTV newsroom opens the potency of digital platforms to allow the promotion of their intra-content." This cross-promotion strategy tries to encourage new viewers from social media platforms to watch Pojok Kampung TV program or read another Pojok Kampung story on portalJTV.com.

Digital platform, brought the ability to engage and interact with the public. Differing from the television channel, digital media can provide a deeper level of meaningful conversations with the public. The Chief of Social Media also stated that "digital platforms allow for a two-way communication, and with the Suroboyoan language push, this happened more effortlessly." The interaction came in various ways: likes, comment, share, and re-create, which indicated a deeper level of engagement. All of those aspects in public engagement are described in the newsroom key performance index. Also, one of the biggest benefits stated by several newsroom personnel is the co-creation of content, to which the public also contributes by developing user-generated content.

All of this content strategy used in *Pojok Kampung's* social media posts is related to the discussion of maximizing the media resource. Followers and users are seen as a key resource in managing the social media platform, and *JTV* wants to produce a program with a high quality of graphic and message, and to maximize the shares, likes, comments, and how to make it viral on social media pages. However, the choices that *JTV*'s social media team make on their social media posts still ride on the commodification of content. In *JTV*'s *Pojok Kampung*, they use a word that is not necessarily related to the news rubric or issue, only to open the possibility of viral sharing. The newsroom chooses the word to create larger exposure and to increase its number of followers, engagement rate, so they can fulfill their strategy to introduce the program to the broader public in social media platforms. Another feature that has been used in *JTV* social media platform is the collaboration feature, which is achieved by the main account (@*JTV*_rek) posting about *Pojok Kampung* while featuring *JTV*'s news account (@ portal*JTV*com).

Circuit of culture in JTV newsroom

The concept of the Circuit of Culture provides a framework for understanding how media content as a part of cultural artifacts are produced, represented, consumed, and regulated within society (Bødker, 2018). This model, introduced by Stuart Hall, establishes the five interconnected stages which each aspect is influencing and being influenced by others in a cyclical manner. The framework emphasizes visible and invisible aspects of cultural production. Analyzing media content through the Circuit of Culture uncover how cultural meanings are encoded into news products, the organizational and sociocontextual factors shaping these meanings, and the broader societal impact of these representations on identity and public engagement.

Applying the Circuit of Culture framework to *Pojok Kampung* newsroom reveals the dynamics of media convergence within a local cultural context. The interplay between production practices, cultural representation, and audience interaction shapes *JTV*'s newsroom vision to develop their content while adapting to the demands of a hybrid media environment.

News production

In the case of *Pojok Kampung*, news production embodies the convergence of traditional journalism practice with the affordances of digital platforms. This development has allowed for enhanced interaction with audiences, the creation of a distinctive regional identity, and the opening of new revenue streams through marketing opportunities. *Pojok Kampung* exemplifies this transformation by leveraging digital platforms to foster two-way communication channels, which extend beyond the conventional broadcaster-viewer relationship. These platforms enable organic exchanges between newsroom personnel and audiences, cultivating a sense of community engagement deeply rooted in the cultural identity of East Java, specifically in the Surabayans community.

JTV explores innovative content strategies to shift to digital spaces. By embedding the Suroboyoan language and local dialects into Pojok Kampung's digital content, JTV strengthens its connection with regional audiences on social media platforms, particularly on Instagram and TikTok. This strategy extends to co-creating content with audiences, blending user-generated content with professional journalism. This collaborative

process underscores the newsroom's responsiveness to contemporary audience preferences and cultural nuances.

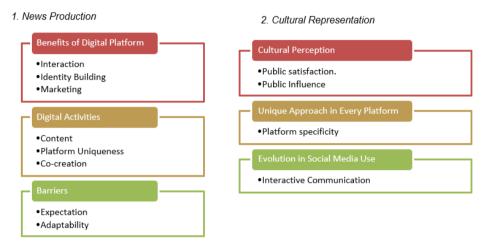
However, the adoption of digital practice in JTV's Pojok Kampung is also facing challenges. Balancing the immediacy and interactivity of digital platforms with the traditional practice of journalism requires a negotiation of professional norms and evolving media practice. Through these strategies, JTV's newsroom presents innovative formats like Kamus Pojok Kampung on Instagram and informal TikTok news, demonstrating a dynamic interplay between content and cultural adaptation that integrates journalism and digital storytelling that is engaging for audiences.

Cultural representation

In the case of *Pojok Kampung*, cultural representation is a central element of *JTV*'s newsroom strategy, particularly in their effort to engage with audiences through the lens of regional identity. *JTV* reinforces its commitment to the cultural authenticity of East Java by embedding the Suroboyoan dialects into their flagship program. The use of local dialects of Suroboyoan, often characterized by their informal and direct tone, reflect the everyday vernacular of the East Java community. This linguistic choice also positions *JTV* as a cultural custodian, maximizing the appearance of regional identity as their capitals in the digital age.

JTV tailors their news content to suit the character of each digital channel, ensuring that the media's cultural representation resonates across diverse platforms. Using portal. JTV.com, Instagram, and TikTok, JTV's nuanced understanding of platform specificity and its role in enhancing cultural representation. For example, Kamus Pojok Kampung that has been published in Instagram comes as a feature that decodes Suroboyoan news for broader audiences. This content blends information with entertainment, expanding the cultural accessibility of local dialects using an attractive format of graphic. The appearance of Pojok Kampung in Instagram and also TikTok allows audiences to actively participate in the storytelling process. Furthermore, the virality of content related to social issues and crime, prominent in Pojok Kampung, highlights the dual role of cultural representation: addressing societal concerns while strengthening audience engagement.

On the other hand, informal and harsh tones associated with the Suroboyoan dialects sometimes challenge traditional perceptions of journalistic professionalism. However, these linguistic characteristics also reflect the authenticity of local discourse, resonating deeply with audiences and reinforcing the Satus Persen Jatim vision. *JTV*'s approach exemplifies how cultural representation can be both a tool for community connection and a strategy for navigating the evolving expectations of media audiences.



 $\textbf{Figure 3.} \ \textbf{Circuit of cultural commodification in } \textit{JTV}$

Source: Research Findings

Discussion and conclusion

This study elucidates the process of cultural commodification in local media. By applying the commodification framework, the analysis reveals how *JTV*'s strategic use of the Suroboyoan language enhances audience engagement while reinforcing cultural stereotypes. This adds depth to existing theories on media commodification by demonstrating how cultural elements are repurposed for commercial gain within a regional media context, highlighting the balance between cultural integrity and economic objectives

JTV newsroom strategically commodified the Suroboyoan language to resonate their product with local audiences and differentiate themselves from national or global media. But, this study found that it is more than just a linguistics choice or newsroom strategy, but also showed the editorial agenda which exemplifies Vincent Mosco's commodification theory, by transforming the Suroboyoan languages as cultural identity and the news content into marketable commodities. The vision is closely related with

the political economy of media, which enhances the audience engagement, attracts advertisers, and sustains them in the evolving media landscape (Liu & Gao, 2020).

Using Mosco's argument in the case of media's commodification strategy, *Pojok Kampung* came as a program that turned culture and language into a commercial product that the industries could package and sell. While *JTV*'s approach still represents the local dialect as a second-class language to generate viral content, its contribution to culture is overshadowed by its perpetuation of stereotypes about the dialects. It also showed that local dialects are leveraged as assets for the local media industry, especially if they can be utilized by the newsrooms. The findings of this research align with Vincent Mosco's commodification theory, illustrating how local dialects can be transformed into commodities that drive audience engagement and brand identity of *JTV* as a media company. The Suroboyoan language serves not only as a cultural marker but as a utility for marketable content, confirming the dual function of cultural elements as both identity anchors and commercial assets for the media industry.

JTV adaptation to digital platforms and utilizing media convergence strategies present ethical concerns. JTV's diverse platforms have broadened the agenda for Pojok Kampung, their flagship program. Strong editorial decisions are crucial when arranging content strategies for each platform, encompassing television, portalJTV.com news sites, Instagram, and TikTok. These strategies must balance key performance indicators (KPIs) measured by engagement metrics with ethical considerations. Building on Mosco's argument regarding media commodification, Pojok Kampung could be seen as a program that packages cultural elements like language for commercial purposes. JTV's approach of using Suroboyoan dialects to generate viral content risks blurring the lines of cultural contribution by perpetuating stereotypes.

The Suroboyoan dialects serve a dual function: a cultural marker and a tool for creating marketable content. It reveals how local dialects can be commodified to generate viral content, attract audiences, and highlights the ethical considerations associated with commodifying cultural elements. Several studies have shown that language commodification by media contributes to stereotypes of the cultural identity, such as the local dialect in Egypt (Bassiouney, 2018), English in Spanish culture (Gomez Cerdeno, 2010), and dialects in local Chinese media (Sun, 2012). The data-driven editorial approach in *Pojok Kampung's* content illustrates that the TV channel only considers its market position and audience reach, without offering any quality-driven journalism to the public.

Future research could delve deeper into the commodification of regional dialects within Indonesian media or in comparable Southeast Asian contexts. Comparative studies could provide broader insight into the interplay between commercial and cultural objectives in the regional media industry. Methodologically, quantitative approaches like sentiment analysis and audience surveys could measure the long-term effect of commodification on public perception and engagement with culturally commodified elements.

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