



DIGITALIZATION OF ORAL TRADITION: DECONSTRUCTION OF JAVANESE PROVERBS IN THE MENDOAN PODCAST AS A LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Berlian Ayu Pangestu¹

Pascasarjana Universitas Negeri Jember¹

Email: berlianayu089@gmail.com¹

ABSTRACT

The transformation of digital media has changed the way regional languages are produced, distributed, and passed down to the younger generation. One form of this adaptation is seen in the use of Javanese proverbs in podcasts, which are no longer delivered conventionally, but recontextualized through humor and popular language. This study aims to analyze the process of recontextualization of Javanese proverbs in the Mendoan podcast, identify the discursive strategies used in the linguistic adaptation process, and explain the role of podcasts as a new social ecology in the revitalization of the Javanese language. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the paradigm of Haugen's Ecolinguistics and Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis. The research data consists of transcripts of the Pekatah Jawa Katakana episode on the Mendoan podcast and audience comments on the YouTube channel, which are analyzed through the dimensions of text, discursive practices, and social practices. The results show that Javanese proverbs have undergone recontextualization through changes in lexical elements, wordplay, code switching, the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, and the use of popular vocabulary that represents the social reality of the younger generation. Humor functions as a linguistic adaptation mechanism that bridges traditional values with contemporary social experiences, thus encouraging audience involvement in reinterpreting the meaning of proverbs. From an Ecolinguistic perspective, podcasts develop as a new social ecology that allows Javanese to continue to be used, interpreted, and passed down in the digital communication space. This study offers a Conceptual Model of Digital Oral Traditions that explains that language revitalization occurs through a process of recontextualization of oral traditions, mediated by humor, strengthened through audience participation, and culminating in the formation of language vitality in the digital ecology. This finding expands ecolinguistic studies and critical discourse analysis by showing that language revitalization does not occur directly through digital media, but rather through linguistic adaptation mechanisms that keep oral traditions relevant to the younger generation.

Keywords: *ecolinguistics; critical discourse analysis; podcast; javanese proverbs; recontextualization; language revitalization.*

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed the way society produces, distributes, and consumes language. The development of social media, video-sharing platforms, and podcasts no longer merely serves as a means of communication, but has evolved into a new social space that shapes linguistic practices, cultural identities, and the process of intergenerational knowledge transmission. Crystal (2011) states that the development of the internet has given rise to new forms of communication that influence the use and development

of language in a digital society. In this context, regional languages face two conditions that occur simultaneously. On the one hand, the dominance of national and global languages in the digital space narrows the domain of regional language use, thus accelerating language shift (*language shift*), as explained by Fishman (1991), language shift occurs when a community gradually abandons its mother tongue and switches to using a language with a more dominant social function. On the other hand, the digital space also provides new opportunities for regional languages to adapt through various forms of communication that are more flexible, creative, and in line with the characteristics of the younger generation. According to Stibbe (2021), the sustainability of a language is largely determined by its ability to adapt to changes in the social environment in which it is used, so digital media can become a new space for language preservation and revitalization.

The urgency of preserving regional languages in Indonesia becomes even more apparent when linked to the national linguistic diversity. [Language Development and Construction Agency](#) shows that Indonesia has 718 regional languages spread across various regions with varying levels of vitality. Based on the mapping of language vitality, some languages are classified as safe, vulnerable, declining, endangered, critical, and even extinct, indicating that the sustainability of regional languages faces increasingly complex challenges. This condition has prompted the government to implement the Regional Language Revitalization Program (RBD) since 2022 as a systematic effort to maintain language sustainability through education, community involvement, and the use of digital media. In line with this, Stibbe (2021) emphasized that the sustainability of a language is largely determined by its ability to maintain its social function amidst changes in the communication environment. In fact, the Language Development and Fostering Agency, in its policy direction for revitalizing regional languages, emphasizes that the use of digital media is an important strategy for expanding the domain of regional language use among the younger generation. Therefore, the challenge of preserving regional languages in the digital era is no longer solely related to the number of speakers, but also concerns the language's ability to enter new communication domains used by society, especially the younger generation.

This perspective is in line with the Ecolinguistic paradigm put forward by Haugen (1972) through the concept *the ecology of language*. Haugen explains that language cannot be understood as a stand-alone system, but rather as part of the social environment in which it is used. The survival of a language depends on the reciprocal relationship between language, speakers, culture, and the social environment. Thus, changes in the communication environment will influence how a language is maintained, used, and transmitted to the next generation. In recent studies, this concept has been expanded by Stibbe (2021), who emphasized that ecolinguistics examines not only the relationship between language and the physical environment but also the social, cultural, and media environments that shape language practices. The development of digital technology has made digital space part of a new social ecology that allows language to adapt, negotiate, and even transform its function according to the needs of its speaking community.

In this context, podcasts are an interesting digital medium to study. Unlike formal communication media, podcasts present spontaneous, dialogic conversations that are close to everyday experiences, allowing for the emergence of various forms of linguistic creativity. Sharon (2023) explains that podcasts have developed not only as a digital media format but also as a socio-cultural space that shapes communication practices, the production of meaning, and everyday interactions. Oral traditions previously passed down through face-to-face communication are now being recontextualized into digital media without losing their communicative function. Wahyuningsih et al. (2024) show that the transformation of oral

traditions into podcasts retains their narrative character, emotional closeness, and representation of local culture, while expanding their reach to the digital community. Therefore, podcasts serve not only as an entertainment medium but can also be understood as a discursive space where negotiations of cultural identity, the reproduction of social values, and the adaptation of regional languages to new communication environments take place. The findings of Qur'ani and Ridho (2025) emphasize that regional identity in podcasts is dynamic and negotiated through linguistic practices so that this media becomes an alternative space for the re-representation of local culture.

One of the podcasts that represents this phenomenon is *Mendoan* Hosted by Dono Pradana and Agustian Pratama, this podcast consistently uses the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect as its linguistic identity while also featuring segments *Javanese proverb says* which displays various forms of puns (*wordplay*) to Javanese proverbs. In this segment, proverbs are not reproduced literally, but rather deconstructed through humor, irony, code switching, code mixing, and the use of slang, resulting in new meanings that are closer to the social reality of the millennial and Generation Z generations. This phenomenon shows that changes in language form do not always lead to cultural degradation, but can be understood as a form of linguistic adaptation that allows oral traditions to survive in the digital communication environment. To explain this process, this study uses Haugen's Ecolinguistic paradigm and Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. The Ecolinguistic Paradigm is used to understand the relationship between language and the social environment that shapes the continuity of language, while Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis is used as an analytical tool to examine how linguistic practices are constructed through three dimensions, namely text, discursive practices, and socio-cultural practices. According to Fairclough (2015), language is not just a linguistic system, but a social practice that represents relations of power, ideology, and identity in society. Therefore, the analysis of podcasts is directed not only at linguistic forms such as puns, code-switching, and lexical choices, but also at the processes of production, consumption, and social contexts that underlie the emergence of these linguistic practices. The integration of these two perspectives allows this study to explain how discursive practices in podcasts contribute to the sustainability of the Javanese language in the digital space.

Studies on the relationship between digital media, language, and language revitalization have flourished in recent years. Isti'anah and Suhandano (2021) mapped the development of ecolinguistics research in Indonesia and showed that ecolinguistics studies are still dominated by analyses of the relationship between language and environmental issues, while research on language ecology in digital media remains relatively limited. These findings suggest that the social dimension of digital media as a new environment for language use has received little attention. Furthermore, Meighan (2021) examined the role of digital technology in the revitalization of minority languages and demonstrated that digital technology can expand documentation, learning, and language transmission to the younger generation. However, this research focused more on technology's function as a medium for language preservation and did not address the discursive practices that occur in digital conversational media such as podcasts. Other research on regional language revitalization through digital media in Indonesia also shows that digital platforms can expand the use of regional languages and support the implementation of the Regional Language Revitalization Program. However, these studies have focused more on aspects of policy, documentation, and language learning, while the process of deconstructing proverbs, humor, code-switching, and recontextualizing oral traditions as strategies for language adaptation in the digital space has not been widely studied.

Based on the above review, several research gaps emerged that form the basis of this study. First, previous research tends to view digital media as a means of disseminating or documenting language, rather than as a new social ecology that shapes the sustainability of language use. Second, studies on Javanese proverbs generally focus on semantic aspects, cultural values, or educational functions, while their transformation through humor and deconstruction in digital media has not received adequate attention. Third, research that integrates Haugen's Ecolinguistic paradigm with Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to explain the revitalization of regional languages through podcasts is still very limited. As a result, the relationship between linguistic adaptation, discursive practices, and the vitality of regional languages in the digital communication ecosystem has not been comprehensively explained. Based on these gaps, this study offers three main contributions. First, this study positions podcasts as a new social ecology that allows Javanese to maintain its vitality through adaptation to the digital communication environment. Second, this study integrates Haugen's Ecolinguistic paradigm with Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis so that the relationship between linguistic structure, discursive practices, and social context can be analyzed in an integrated manner. Third, this study offers a conceptual model for podcast-based regional language revitalization through the deconstruction of proverbs, humor, code-switching, and the recontextualization of oral traditions as strategies for language adaptation in the digital era. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of digital ecolinguistics studies, critical discourse analysis, and studies of regional language revitalization in Indonesia.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the form of deconstruction of Javanese proverbs and linguistic strategies in podcasts. *Mendoan*, analyzes the discursive practices that build interactions between podcasters and digital audiences, and explains the contribution of podcasts as a new social ecology to the revitalization of the Javanese language from Haugen's Ecolinguistic perspective.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-interpretive design to deeply understand linguistic phenomena in a social context. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study seeks to interpret meaning, discursive practices, and the relationship between language and the social environment that cannot be explained through quantitative measurements. Creswell and Poth (2023) explain that qualitative research aims to understand the meaning of a phenomenon based on the perspective of the participants or the social context in which the phenomenon occurs. The paradigm of this study is Haugen's Ecolinguistics, which views language as part of a social ecology that continuously interacts with the environment of its speakers. In this study, podcasts are positioned as a new social ecology that allows the Javanese language to undergo adaptation, recontextualization, and revitalization in the digital space. To examine how this process is constructed through language, this study uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model as an analytical framework. Fairclough views discourse as a social practice analyzed through three dimensions: text (*text*), discursive practices (*discursive practice*), and socio-cultural practices (*sociocultural practice*). This approach allows analysis to focus not only on linguistic aspects, but also on the processes of production, consumption, and social context that shape discourse.

The object of this research is podcasts *Mendoan*, especially the segment *Javanese proverb say* hosted by Dono Pradana and Agustian Pratama. The segment was chosen purposively because it consistently features the deconstruction of Javanese proverbs through puns (*wordplay*), the use of the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, code switching, code mixing, and slang. The research data consisted of verbal utterances obtained from podcast episode transcripts,



while supporting data consisted of audience comments on the YouTube platform to observe consumption practices and responses to the discourse produced. Data collection was carried out through documentation and non-participant observation techniques. The first stage was carried out by downloading and transcribing the podcast episodes that became the research corpus. The second stage was carried out by identifying utterances containing Javanese proverbs, puns, code switching, code mixing, and other forms of linguistic creativity. The third stage was carried out by documenting relevant audience comments as supporting data for analyzing discursive practices. The documentation technique was chosen because it allows researchers to obtain authentic data produced naturally in digital media.

Data analysis was carried out in stages following Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model. The first stage is text dimension analysis (*text*), namely identifying the form of deconstruction of proverbs, puns, lexical choices, the use of the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, as well as the practice of code switching and code mixing. The second stage is the analysis of discursive practices (*discursive practice*), namely examining how discourse is produced by podcasters and how audiences consume and respond to this discourse through digital interactions. The third stage is the analysis of socio-cultural practices (*sociocultural practice*), namely interpreting the relationship between linguistic practices in podcasts and broader social dynamics, particularly the revitalization of the Javanese language in the digital era. The results of the analysis in these three dimensions are then interpreted using Haugen's Ecolinguistic perspective to explain how podcasts form a new social ecology that supports the vitality of the Javanese language through the processes of adaptation, recontextualization, and reproduction of oral traditions. This multilevel analysis model allows for an integrated explanation of the relationship between linguistic structures, discursive practices, and social contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the corpus of transcripts of Mendoan podcast broadcast data, six main patterns or typologies of the deconstruction of traditional Javanese proverbs carried out by the hosts were found:

No	Deconstruction Typology / Pattern	Traditional (Original) Proverbs	Mendoan Podcast Version of the Parody
1	Economic Relevance & Social Reality: Confronting the philosophy of patience with the pragmatic life demands of urban youth.	Alon-alon waton kelakon. Mangan ora mangan kumpul.	Alon-alon waton gak mangan. / Alon-alon waton ketinggalan. Mangan ora mangan ya golek utang. / Mangan ora mangan sing penting instastory.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| 2 | Intergenerational Relations & Responsibility: Deconstructing the moral cause-effect relationship of parents-children into the modern material realm. | Anak polah bapa kepradhah. | Anak polah bapa sing bayari paylater. |
| | | Kacang ora ninggal lanjaran. | Kacang ora ninggalne kulit... tapi ninggalne utang. |
| 3 | Romance & Validation of Gen Z's Self-Existence: Drawing theological topics or sustenance into the reality of contemporary romantic relationships. | Gusti Allah mboten sare. | Gusti Allah mboten sare, tapi awakmu sing kesuwen turu. |
| | | Witing tresno jalaran soko kulino. | Witing tresno jalaran soko kepakso. / Witing tresno jalaran soko saldo. |
| 4 | Work Ethic vs Corporate Reality: A critique of the phenomenon of burnout and hustle culture. | Sithik-sithik, suwe-suwe dadi bukit. | Sithik-sithik, suwe-suwe dadi sithik rasane. / Sithik-sithik suwe-suwe dadi utang. |
| | | Urip iku urup. | Urip iku urusan masing-masing. / Urip iku urup, tapi nek kerjo terus ya sirahmu sing murup. |
| 5 | Social Hierarchy & Authority: Uncovering the social prestige mentality in the virtual world. | Mikul dhuwur mendhem jero. | Mikul dhuwur mendhem utang. / Mikul dhuwur mendhem gengsi. |
| | | Ajining diri soko lathi, ajining raga soko busana. | Ajining diri soko saldo, ajining raga soko outfit. |
| 6 | Fate, Consequences & Luck: Highlighting the phenomena of the speed of information dissemination, the law of virality, and cancel culture. | Becik ketitik, ala ketara. | Becik ketitik, ala yo digosipno. / Becik ketitik, ala langsung viral. |



Sura dira	Sura dira jayaningrat,
jayaningrat, lebur	lebur nek wis dadi
dening pangastuti.	konten.

1. Recontextualization of Javanese Proverbs in Digital Discourse

Javanese proverbs are essentially a form of oral tradition that serves as a medium for transmitting moral values, social ethics, and the Javanese outlook on life. In their traditional form, proverbs are used as expressions containing advice, life principles, and social behavior control. However, research shows that in podcasts *Mendoan* Javanese proverbs are no longer reproduced literally, but rather undergo a process of recontextualization through deconstruction of meaning, resulting in new communicative functions that better suit the social realities of digital society. This finding suggests that these changes do not eliminate the proverb's identity, but rather adapt cultural values to the context of the lives of the younger generation. Based on the identification results of podcast transcript data *Javanese proverb says*, it was found that the recontextualization process was carried out by changing the lexical elements at the end of the proverb without eliminating the initial structure that was already known to the community. This strategy maintains the original linguistic form as a marker of cultural memory (*cultural memory*), while the ending is modified to produce a new meaning that is relevant to contemporary social experiences. For example, the proverb *Slowly, things are happening*, which originally contained the philosophy of caution and patience was changed into *Slowly, the food is not eaten*. And *Alon-alon waton ketinggalan*.

These changes demonstrate a shift in meaning orientation. While traditional proverbs place patience as a key value in achieving life goals, the podcast version constructs a new reality where delays can lead to missed economic and social opportunities. This shift demonstrates that cultural values are not being eliminated, but rather renegotiated in accordance with the experiences of urban communities living in a fast-paced culture. From the perspective of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2015), these changes in lexical choice constitute textual practices that represent changes in social reality through language. In other words, language not only reflects societal changes but also constructs how society understands those changes. A similar pattern is also found in proverbs *Eating together, not eating together* which is distorted into *Eating or not eating, yes, get the debt* as well as *Eat don't eat that's important instastory*. In its traditional form, this proverb places family togetherness as a more important social value than economic conditions. However, in the podcast *Mendoan*, the focus of meaning shifts towards the phenomenon of consumer economics and the culture of digital existence. *DEBTOR* represents the increasing dependence on digital credit and loan facilities, while the term *Instagram story* represents society's tendency to maintain self-image through social media, even when economic conditions are not always favorable. This shift demonstrates that proverbs have undergone a recontextualization from values of collectivity to critiques of the digital society's lifestyle.

Recontextualization is also seen in proverbs related to social identity. *Self-esteem, self-esteem, clothing* undergo transformation into *Self-esteem is the balance, self-esteem is the outfit*. In Javanese culture, this expression emphasizes that a person's dignity is determined by their speech and behavior. However, the podcast version demonstrates a critique of the

construction of identity in modern society, which is increasingly influenced by economic ownership (*balance*) and visual appearance (*outfit*). Through humorous strategies, podcasters convey social criticism of materialistic culture without diminishing the collective memory of the proverb's original form. This demonstrates that humor serves as a medium for conveying social criticism in a lighter way while maintaining the proverb's presence in the audience's memory.

Other findings show that most deconstruction of proverbs leads to four main forms of recontextualization: economic recontextualization, social relations, cultural identity, and digital culture. Economic recontextualization is characterized by the emergence of vocabulary such as *balance*, *debt*, and *paylater* which represents the economic pressures of contemporary society. The recontextualization of social relations is evident in the change in proverbs about the relationship between parents and children into criticisms of family financial responsibility, for example, *The child's behavior is that the father pays paylater*. The recontextualization of cultural identity is seen through the critique of social prestige and self-image, while the recontextualization of digital culture is shown by the use of terms such as *virat*, *content*, and *Instagram story* which connects traditional proverbs with the social media ecosystem.

From Haugen's (1972) ecolinguistic perspective, these changes can be understood as a form of language adaptation to changes in the social environment. Haugen asserts that the survival of a language depends on its ability to interact with the environment in which it is used. Thus, the deconstruction of proverbs in podcasts *Mendoan* This is not a deviation from oral tradition, but rather an adaptation strategy that allows proverbs to maintain their communicative function within the digital ecology. This view is reinforced by Stibbe (2021), who states that the sustainability of a language is determined by its ability to build relevant relationships within new social environments. In the context of this research, these environments are no longer limited to families or local communities, but have shifted to digital spaces inhabited by the younger generation as primary users of social media and podcasts. The findings of this study expand on the research of Meighan (2021), which shows that digital media plays a role in the revitalization of minority languages through the use of technology. Unlike that study, which emphasized technology's function as a medium for documentation and language preservation, this study shows that language revitalization also occurs through a process of recontextualization of meaning. Proverbs are not maintained in their original form but undergo transformation to remain relevant to the audience's social experiences. Thus, the process of language revitalization is not always synonymous with the preservation of traditional forms, but can occur through creative adaptations that maintain cultural memory while generating new, contextualized meanings.

Overall, the findings on the text dimension indicate that the deconstruction of proverbs in podcasts *Mendoan* is a practice of cultural recontextualization that connects traditional values with the realities of digital society. This change is made through modification of lexical elements, while maintaining the basic structure of the proverb so that the audience can still recognize its original form. Thus, deconstruction does not function as a form of erasure of oral tradition, but rather as a linguistic adaptation mechanism that allows Javanese proverbs to remain alive, understood, and used in contemporary digital communication environments. These findings form the basis for the discussion in the next subchapter regarding how humor strategies and linguistic practices are constructed as adaptation mechanisms in digital discourse.

2. Discursive Strategy of Humor as a Mechanism of Linguistic Adaptation

The results of the study show that humor is the main discursive strategy used in podcasts. *Mendoanto* recontextualize Javanese proverbs into the context of digital society. Proverbs are no longer delivered in a normative form, but are modified through puns (*wordplay*), the use of the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, code switching, and popular vocabulary such as *paylater*, *balance*, *viral*, And *Instagram story*. This strategy produces a form of communication that is closer to the experiences of the younger generation, so that proverbs are no longer seen as rigid traditional expressions, but as part of the social reality they experience. From the perspective of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (2015), linguistic practices are part of discursive practices produced to achieve certain social goals. In the podcast *Mendoan*, Humor not only serves as entertainment, but also as a strategy for conveying criticism of social phenomena such as consumer culture, economic pressures, work culture, and even social media presence. For example, the changing of proverbs *Self-esteem* become *Self-pricing market balance* not only produces a comedic effect, but also represents a critique of society's tendency to link self-esteem with economic conditions. Likewise, puns *The child's behavior is that the father pays paylater* describes changes in family responsibilities in the digital era influenced by consumption culture and digital financial services.

The success of this humorous strategy is evident in the audience response in the YouTube comments section. Most comments indicate that viewers not only enjoyed the comedy but also understood the social message conveyed. For example, in a YouTube comment, the account @Bagus_Prati wrote: "*Ajining self soko balance, ajining raga soko outfit. Subtle satire but mak jleb gawe corporate slave plus arek skena jaman saiki*". These comments demonstrate that the audience not only enjoyed the humor but also grasped the social critique of the materialistic culture and consumerist lifestyle that serve as the context for the proverbial twist. This demonstrates that the humor in the podcast successfully shifts the function of proverbs from mere traditional advice to a means of reflection on contemporary social realities. Another comment from the account @Putri_Utami stated, "*I'm a Javanese, but I only just learned about the original proverb after hearing Dono's pun on Tian. So this podcast is educational, bro*". These comments demonstrate that humorous strategies actually foster new linguistic awareness. Audiences previously unfamiliar with the original form of the proverb are encouraged to rediscover its traditional version. Thus, humor does not obscure cultural meaning, but rather serves as a gateway for learning and the transmission of oral traditions.

In addition to building cultural awareness, audience comments also demonstrate the process of internalizing meaning. For example, @Dedi_P's comment reads, "*Slowly, don't eat, this is a slap in the face for me to get back at work. I need to get up!*" shows that the use of proverbs is not limited to comedy, but has been internalized as a reflection of work ethic and personal behavior. Audiences reinterpret the meaning of proverbs according to their life experiences, resulting in a process of negotiation of meaning between the podcast text and the social reality they face. This indicates that audiences play an active role in reconstructing the meaning of discourse based on their social experiences. Thus, the practice of discourse consumption is not passive, but becomes part of the process of meaning production, as explained by Fairclough. This finding aligns with Sharon (2023), who stated that podcasts are a communication space that allows for interaction, negotiation of meaning, and the formation of community through informal conversations. Furthermore, Dynel (2021) explains that humor

in digital communication functions as a pragmatic strategy to convey social criticism in a way that is more easily accepted by audiences. In this study, humor does not diminish the cultural value of proverbs, but rather serves as a mechanism of linguistic adaptation that makes cultural messages more relevant to the lives of the younger generation.

Overall, the research findings suggest that humor is a key mechanism connecting oral tradition with digital culture. Through puns, the use of local dialects, and popular language, podcasts *Mendoan* successfully built rapport with the audience while maintaining the presence of Javanese proverbs in the digital communication space. Thus, the discursive strategies employed not only provided entertainment but also created a linguistic adaptation process that became the foundation for the survival of regional languages in the digital age.

3. Podcasts as a New Social Ecology for the Javanese Language

The results of the study show that podcasts *Mendoan* has created a new communication space that allows Javanese proverbs to continue to be used in digital society. Findings in the text dimension indicate a recontextualization of proverbs through changes in lexical elements, while in the discursive practice dimension, it appears that these changes are accepted and reinterpreted by the audience. Both findings indicate that podcasts are not merely a medium for language dissemination, but have developed into a new social environment that allows for interactions between language, speakers, and contemporary social contexts. Thus, podcasts function as a space where oral traditions are not only maintained but also continuously negotiated according to the dynamics of digital society. This phenomenon aligns with Haugen's (1972) Ecolinguistic paradigm, which views language as part of a social ecology that is always connected to the environment of its speakers. According to Haugen, the sustainability of a language is determined not only by its linguistic system but also by the language's ability to maintain its communicative function in a constantly changing social environment. Therefore, the changes in the form of proverbs found in podcasts *Mendoan* cannot be understood as a form of language degradation, but rather as a process of adaptation to a new communication environment. In this context, digital media becomes a new habitat where language acquires functions and meanings appropriate to the needs of today's society.

This interpretation is reinforced by Stibbe (2021), who states that the sustainability of a language depends on its ability to build relevant relationships with the social environment in which it is used. A language that is unable to adapt is at risk of losing its domain of use, while a language that is able to adapt to social change will retain its vitality. In this study, the use of humor, the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, and popular vocabulary does not eliminate the identity of Javanese proverbs but instead expands their domain of use into the digital space, which has previously been dominated by Indonesian and global languages. In other words, recontextualization serves as an adaptation mechanism that allows Javanese to remain present in the communication practices of the younger generation.

The findings of this study also indicate a change in the environment in which oral traditions are passed down. While in the past, Javanese proverbs were generally transmitted through family, informal education, or social interactions within the community, this process has now shifted to digital media. This shift indicates that the function of cultural inheritance no longer relies on physical space but also takes place in virtual communication spaces, enabling broader and more sustainable interactions. From an ecolinguistic perspective, this environmental change is a natural consequence of changes in the language ecology that follow developments in society and technology. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that the relationship between language and the environment is dynamic. Podcasts are not only a place for the use of Javanese but also a space that produces new linguistic forms through the



recontextualization of proverbs. This condition demonstrates that language vitality is not always characterized by the preservation of intact traditional forms, but rather by the language's ability to continue to be used, interpreted, and reproduced in various social contexts. Thus, the linguistic changes that occur in podcasts *Mendoan* Instead, it reflects an ecological adaptation process that maintains the continuity of the social function of Javanese amidst changes in communication culture. This finding expands the concept *language ecology* Haugen demonstrates that the language environment in the digital age is no longer limited to geographical speech communities but also encompasses virtual communities formed through digital media. Podcasts provide an interactive space that allows Javanese to exist in a more flexible form without losing its connection to the cultural values passed down through proverbs. Therefore, digital media serves not only as a means of language documentation but also as a communication ecosystem that supports the continued use of regional languages.

Based on all these findings, it can be understood that podcasts *Mendoan* has played a role as a new social ecology for the Javanese language. Recontextualizing proverbs through humor and linguistic adaptation not only produces a more engaging form of communication but also creates a new space for the continuation of oral traditions in the digital age. Thus, language revitalization in the context of this research does not occur through the static preservation of language forms, but rather through the language's ability to adapt to changes in the social environment without losing its cultural identity. This shows that the sustainability of the Javanese language in the digital age is largely determined by the ecological adaptation process that occurs in new communication media such as podcasts.

4. From Humor to Language Revitalization: A Conceptual Model of Digital Oral Tradition

The results of the research synthesis show that the revitalization of the Javanese language in podcasts *Mendoan* takes place through a gradual and interrelated process. Findings in the text dimension show that Javanese proverbs undergo recontextualization through changes in lexical elements, word play (*wordplay*), the use of the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, code switching, and popular vocabulary that represent the social reality of digital society. This process does not eliminate the basic structure or cultural identity inherent in proverbs, but rather presents new, more contextual meanings that are easier to understand and accept by the younger generation. In the dimension of discursive practice, this recontextualization is realized through the strategy of humor as a medium for conveying cultural messages. Humor not only functions to create a comedic effect, but also becomes a communication strategy capable of bridging traditional values with the social experiences of contemporary society. Through this approach, proverbs that were previously seen as formal and rigid traditional expressions are transformed into a form of communication closer to everyday life. This process shows that humor has a broader function, namely as a mechanism of linguistic adaptation that allows oral traditions to maintain relevance in the digital communication space. Furthermore, the results of the study show that this strategy encourages active audience involvement in the process of meaning formation. Audiences not only receive the discourse produced by podcasters but also interpret, reproduce, and connect it with their own social experiences. This involvement demonstrates that podcasts have created a participatory communication space, where the process of passing down oral traditions is no longer a one-way process, but rather through interactions between content creators and audiences. Thus, the meaning of proverbs continues to evolve in line with social dynamics without losing their connection to inherited cultural values.

From Haugen's Ecolinguistic perspective, this entire process demonstrates that podcasts have evolved into a new social ecology for the Javanese language. Language is understood not only as a linguistic system but as part of a social environment that continuously adapts to societal changes. Therefore, the sustainability of a language is not solely determined by its ability to maintain its traditional forms, but also by its ability to adapt to new communication environments. Podcasts provide a space that allows Javanese to continue to be used, interpreted, and passed down in a form that suits the communication characteristics of the digital generation. In other words, recontextualization is not a threat to oral traditions, but rather an adaptation mechanism that strengthens language vitality. Most previous studies have concluded that podcasts play a role in helping preserve regional languages. While these findings are important, this study demonstrates that the role of podcasts extends beyond their mere media function. Language revitalization does not occur directly due to the existence of digital media, but rather through a process of recontextualizing oral traditions, making proverbs relevant again to the social experiences of the younger generation. In this process, humor functions as a mediating mechanism that connects oral traditions with audience participation in the digital ecology. Through this mechanism, proverbs are not only preserved as cultural heritage, but also revived as active communication practices in the lives of digital communities.

The main contribution of this research lies in the development of a conceptual model that explains the relationship between the recontextualization of oral traditions, humor, audience participation, and digital social ecology as mechanisms for regional language revitalization. This model expands Haugen's Ecolinguistic paradigm by showing that the language environment in the digital era is no longer limited to geographical speech communities, but also includes virtual communities formed through digital media. Thus, this research confirms that the sustainability of regional languages in the digital era depends not only on preservation efforts, but also on the language's ability to continuously adapt, build social relevance, and create new communication spaces for generations of its speakers.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Javanese proverbs in podcasts *Mendo* cannot merely be experiencing a pun as a form of humor, but undergoing a process of recontextualization that changes its function and meaning to suit the social realities of digital society. Through changes in lexical elements, the use of the Suroboyoan Javanese dialect, *wordplay*, code-switching, and popular language, proverbs are re-presented as more contextual discourse without losing the cultural identity inherent in their traditional forms. Thus, the deconstruction employed by podcasters is a linguistic adaptation strategy that allows oral traditions to remain relevant amidst changing communication environments.

At the level of discursive practice, this study found that humor serves as a primary mechanism for building connections between oral traditions and the social experiences of younger generations. Humor not only produces an entertaining effect, but also serves as a communication strategy that encourages audiences to interpret, reproduce, and reconnect proverbs with the realities of everyday life. Audience responses indicate that the process of discourse consumption occurs actively through negotiation of meaning, so that podcasts are no longer understood as a one-way communication medium, but rather as a space for interaction that enables participatory cultural inheritance. From Haugen's Ecolinguistic perspective, this study shows that podcasts have developed into a new social ecology for the Javanese language. The sustainability of a language is determined not only by efforts to maintain its traditional forms, but also by its ability to adapt to a constantly changing social environment. Podcasts provide a communication space that allows Javanese to continue to be used, understood, and



passed on to younger generations through forms of communication that are appropriate to digital culture. Thus, digital media functions not only as a means of language documentation but also as a new habitat that supports language vitality through ongoing social interaction.

The main contribution of this research is the development of a Conceptual Model of Digital Oral Traditions, which explains that language revitalization occurs through a gradual process, namely the recontextualization of proverbs, the use of humor as a mechanism for linguistic adaptation, audience involvement in constructing meaning, the formation of podcasts as a new social ecology, and the creation of Javanese language revitalization in the digital space. This model expands Haugen's Ecolinguistic paradigm by showing that the language environment in the digital era is no longer limited to geographical speech communities but also includes virtual communities that enable the language to continue to develop through digital communication practices. In contrast to previous studies that generally conclude that podcasts play a role in preserving regional languages, this study shows that language revitalization does not occur directly due to the existence of digital media, but rather through a process of recontextualization of oral traditions that makes proverbs relevant again to the social experiences of the younger generation. In this process, humor functions as a mediating mechanism that connects oral traditions with audience participation in the digital ecology. These findings enrich ecolinguistic studies and critical discourse analysis by offering an explanation of the social and linguistic mechanisms that enable regional languages to maintain vitality in the digital communication era.

This study still has limitations because it only focused on one podcast and one episode as data sources, so the results cannot fully describe the dynamics of regional language revitalization in the digital space. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the study object to various digital platforms, such as TikTok, Instagram, or other podcast channels, and compare various regional languages in Indonesia. Further research can also develop the conceptual model generated in this study to test the effectiveness of various forms of digital media as a new social ecology in supporting the revitalization of languages and oral traditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank the Master of Applied Linguistics Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Jakarta State University, for their academic support throughout this research. Appreciation is also extended to the supervising lecturers who provided guidance, input, and constructive criticism during the preparation of this research. Thanks are also extended to the Podcast team *Mendoan* who provided podcast material as a source of research data, and to all audience members who participated through comments on the YouTube platform, enriching the analysis of discursive practices and language revitalization in the digital space. The author also expresses gratitude to all parties who have provided support, both directly and indirectly, to complete this research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Language Development and Construction Agency. (2022). *Revitalization of regional languages*. Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.
- Language Development and Construction Agency. (2024). *The future of regional languages*. Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2023). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Crystal, D. (2011). *Internet linguistics: A student guide*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and social change*. Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (2015). *Language and power* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Fishman, J. A. (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Multilingual Matters.
- Haugen, E. (1972). *The ecology of language*. Stanford University Press.
- Heller, M., Pietikäinen, S., & Pujolar, J. (2024). *Critical sociolinguistic research methods: Studying language issues that matter* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Meighan, P. J. (2021). Language revitalization in the digital age: A review of digital approaches to language reclamation. *Language Documentation & Conservation*, 15, 345–370.
- Sharon, T. (2023). Peeling the pod: Towards a research agenda for podcast studies. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 47(3), 324–337.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2023.2201593>
- Spinelli, M., & Dann, L. (2019). *Podcasting: The audio media revolution*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Stibbe, A. (2021). *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by* (2nd ed.). Routledge.