

POPULARIZATION OF JAZZ MUSIC BY JAZZMBENSENEN COMMUNITY ON THE SPOTIFY

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Abstract

This research aims to describe the Jazzmbensenen Community's efforts to popularize Jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify. Using a descriptive qualitative case study approach, the study utilizes primary data from in-depth interviews and secondary data from documentation. Data analysis involves data condensation, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the Jazzmbensenen community adapts European Jazz to the local culture of Yogyakarta, incorporating local events and elements into lyrics, cover art, and album titles using a constructionist approach. This strategy eliminates the elitist stigma of Jazz, preserving its Yogyakarta roots and creating a unique, accessible character. Consequently, Jazz music becomes more approachable and enjoyable for people from all walks of life, enriched with a local flavor.

Keywords: Jazz Music, Jazzmbensenen Community, Local Culture, Popularization, Spotify.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral part of human life, as stated by Sihabuddin (2023), who emphasizes that without communication, humans cannot fulfill their daily needs. Communication also serves as a bridge between individuals and groups, including in the realm of music. Music, as a medium of communication, conveys lyrics and symbols transmitted by the communicator to the audience.

Music, like communication, plays a significant role in human life. Shaleha (2019) observes that adults spend an average of 21 hours per week listening to music through radio, and technology has facilitated access to music in various settings. This ease of access allows audiences to enjoy a wide variety of music genres, including jazz.

Jazz music is often regarded as elitist or intellectual, making it less widely accepted due to its emphasis on improvisation, as explained by Szwed in Vivian (2018). In Indonesia, jazz has a long history that dates back to the Dutch colonial era, during which it was performed by the social elite in palace halls and could only be accessed through gramophones, as noted by Sudibyo in Sutopo (2012).

Following Indonesia's independence, jazz gained a foothold on radio, particularly through RRI, and became popular on university campuses during the 1980s. The development of jazz in Indonesia was significantly influenced by musicians such as Ireng Maulana and Elfa Secioria between 1980 and 1990. However, jazz experienced a decline with the emergence of new genres, such as rock and roll, which were more readily embraced by the public, as discussed by Maulida (2018).

Despite the decline in popularity, several jazz festivals continue to be held, including the Jakarta International Jazz Festival. Jazz was introduced to Yogyakarta in the 1950s by Dutch soldiers and was performed in hotels and social

halls. In the 1980s, AMI students and jazz musicians in Yogyakarta formed jazz bands that performed in cafes, restaurants, and hotels, as described by Vivian (2018).

The jazz community in Yogyakarta is divided into *Jazz Lor* and *Jazz Kidul*, with *Jazz Lor* representing modernity and *Jazz Kidul* being more traditional. This division has influenced the development of the jazz community, creating competition and conflicts regarding employment and fees, as noted by Ceto Mundiarto in Sutopo (2010).

However, this division began to fade with the emergence of new communities such as the Etawa Jazz Club, NgayogJazz, Alldint, and Jazzmbensenen. Jazzmbensenen, founded by Sindunata and Jaduk Ferianto in 2009, aims to dismantle the elitist stigma associated with jazz. This community organizes weekly events at Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta, fostering a space for learning and artistic appreciation in a local atmosphere.

Jazzmbensenen utilizes social media platforms such as Instagram and Spotify to promote jazz. They upload compilation tracks with distinctive names and rearrange Yogyakarta folk songs into jazz compositions. Songs such as *Menthok-menthok* and *Lesung Jumengglung* have been reinterpreted in jazz styles, and their compilation albums feature titles and illustrations uniquely associated with Yogyakarta.

This study seeks to explore how Jazzmbensenen popularizes jazz, often perceived as elitist, by integrating local Yogyakarta elements. The community creates a distinctive jazz identity that appeals to and resonates with the Yogyakarta public.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Popular Culture

Popular culture, according to Shamad (2023), refers to the culture most commonly practiced and enjoyed by society, encompassing contemporary cultural practices widely consumed. Raymond Williams (1983) defines culture as a process of developing intellectual, spiritual, and identity aspects, as well as a characteristic worldview of a society. Williams identifies four meanings of "popular": (1) liked by many people, (2) a form of light work, (3) works intended to entertain, and (4) culture created by people for themselves. Shamad (2023) further suggests that popular culture emerges from the influence of media, which creates and disseminates new cultural forms adopted by society. Globalization also plays a significant role in generating popular culture, particularly in the entertainment industry.

Mass media and modern social media accelerate the development of popular culture. Social media serves as a platform for individuals to display their lifestyles, integrating popular culture as a core component of modern social and cultural life. The popularization of pop culture involves the use of images, narratives, and ideas within mainstream culture, creating societal expectations and fostering consumerist behaviors, especially in urban areas.

Jazz Music

Indonesia, with a population of 273.8 million, presents a vast cultural market that supports the development of both local and international cultures, including music. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Dictionary), music is the art of arranging tones in sequences to produce harmonious sound compositions. Sholikhah (2012) defines music as an artistic expression conveyed through sounds and melodies from musical instruments. The elements of music, as outlined by Jamalus in Sholikhah (2012), are divided into primary elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, and song structure) and expressive elements (tempo, dynamics, and timbre), which interconnect in the creation of a musical piece.

Music spans a variety of genres, including Pop, Rock, and Jazz. Jazz, which emphasizes improvisation, introduces unexpected changes in tempo, dynamics, and harmony, reflecting its improvisational nature (Paramitha et al., 2022). This genre emerged in the 20th century within African-American communities in the United States and is characterized by strong rhythms. In Indonesia, jazz musicians need to enhance their improvisational skills, as improvisation is the hallmark of this genre. However, jazz in Indonesia is often perceived as elitist due to its historical association with high social classes during the Dutch colonial era, when jazz could only be enjoyed by the elite through gramophones (Sutopo, 2012).

The elitist stigma attached to jazz persists today, leading many musicians and audiences to gravitate toward other popular music genres. However, some musicians have combined jazz elements with other genres, creating jazz fusion. This innovative style introduces jazz to a broader audience and provides a different musical experience. Jazz fusion blends jazz with other music genres, offering innovation and reducing jazz's exclusive image.

Music Streaming Services

In the era of rapid technological advancement, the way people consume music has changed significantly. Today's digital generation prefers listening to music online via smartphones. According to a survey by APJII, as cited by Netti and Irwansyah (2018), 35.5% of Indonesia's internet users, or approximately 46.9 million people, listen to music online.

Popular online music applications vary, including Apple Music for Apple users and Spotify, which enjoys widespread popularity. Spotify is a freemium music streaming platform that offers both music and podcasts. Spotify users are categorized as either premium or non-premium, with non-premium users experiencing limited access and advertisements, while premium users enjoy unrestricted features and higher-quality streaming (Spotify.com, 2024).

Media

In this era of rapid digital development, technology has become an integral part of social life. New media, or internet-based online media, enables global connectivity without geographical limitations. This technological evolution influences how people interact and access information.

In developed countries, new media has surpassed traditional media as the primary source of information. According to Suri (2019), the term "new media" emerged in the late 20th century to describe media combining traditional formats with internet capabilities. The phenomenon of social networking sites has enriched the digital world, allowing individuals to introduce themselves and build community interactions accessible worldwide.

Semiotics

Semiotics, a discipline often used in communication analysis, originates from the Greek word *semeion*, meaning sign. A sign refers to anything that represents something else, and in communication, signs convey specific meanings. According to Harnia (2021), understanding and interpreting objects in communication involves the use of signs that carry meaning.

Ferdinand de Saussure, in his book *Course in General Linguistics* (1959), introduced key semiotic concepts, such as the sign, composed of the signifier and the signified, and the arbitrary nature of signs that explores their interrelation. Roland Barthes expanded Saussure's theory with three main concepts: denotation (the objective meaning of a sign), connotation (additional meaning or interpretation), and myth (a combination of denotation and connotation), which he introduced in 1957.

This study employs semiotic theory to analyze the lyrics of songs presented by the Jazzmbensenen community on Spotify. This approach aims to understand how the community popularizes jazz music with a distinct local Yogyakarta nuance by interpreting the meanings embedded in their lyrics.

Representation Theory

Representation theory provides a conceptual framework to understand how cultural meanings are produced, communicated, and maintained through symbols, images, or signs. Stuart Hall (1997) explains that representation involves the production of meaning in the human mind through language, linking concepts with language to refer to the real or imagined world. Representation involves a coding process in which producers select, edit, and package meanings into symbols or signs, shaping specific understandings.

Stuart Hall categorizes representation into three approaches: reflective, intentional, and constructionist. The reflective approach mirrors the meanings inherent in objects, people, ideas, or events in the real world through visual signs. The intentional approach considers how producers use language to communicate their personal views. The constructionist approach emphasizes how producers construct meaning through language, encompassing sounds, visuals, light, and scribbles with symbolic functions.

These three approaches aid in analyzing the production of meaning created by producers. They enable a deeper understanding of how meanings are constructed and conveyed in social communication through various media, facilitating a more comprehensive analysis of cultural representation and communication practices.

METHODS

Research Type

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach to describe how the Jazzmbensenen Community popularizes jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify. According to Chariri, as cited in Fadli (2021), qualitative research aims to interpret phenomena occurring naturally using various methods to understand why and how they occur. This research type was chosen to deeply understand issues related to human behavior and social life (Fadli, 2021). Rusandi and Rusli (2022) further explain that qualitative research directly explores the subject using a grand tour question to clearly identify the problem, thereby enabling the study to gain insights that are more easily understood.

A case study, as a type of qualitative research, is utilized to uncover the unique and specific characteristics of the case being studied. Rahardjo (2017) and Creswell (1998) note that case studies involve intensive, detailed, and in-depth investigations of a specific case, program, or activity to derive profound insights. In a case study, researchers must identify the "case" as a "bounded system" defined by time and place, employing various sources of information for data collection, such as observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, and documentation. In this study, the researcher focuses on the Jazzmbensenen Community to explore how they promote jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify.

Research Subject and Period

This study is conducted in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, focusing on the Jazzmbensenen music community. The research is carried out during the period of April to May 2024.

Data Sources

The research is situated in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, with its focus on the Jazzmbensenen music community. The data collection period spans from April to May 2024.

Methods and Instruments of Data Collection

a. Data Collection Methods

To obtain comprehensive, detailed, and well-structured data, the researcher utilizes both primary and secondary data sources by applying the following instruments and techniques:

i. In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are a data collection method that enables researchers to gather thorough and detailed information, yielding comprehensive data (Nugrahani, 2014). This method is commonly used in qualitative research because it allows the exploration of both explicit and implicit information from research subjects, including insights related to the past, present, and future as perceived by the informants (Subadi, 2006).

In-depth interviews are conducted repeatedly with the same informants using open-ended questions about facts, events, activities, and opinions. This approach provides the researcher with current constructions within a context relevant to various aspects (Nugrahani, 2014). The in-depth interview technique is chosen because it verifies, modifies, or expands the researcher's constructed understanding through triangulation while obtaining more accurate, detailed, and extensive data directly from the field (Lincoln & Guba in Nugrahani, 2014). In this study, in-depth interviews are utilized to collect data on how the Jazzmbensenen community promotes jazz music in Yogyakarta through the Spotify music streaming platform.

ii. Documentation

Documentation in qualitative research pertains to specific social situations, which involve three main elements: the physical location where the social interactions occur, the individuals performing roles, and the activities of these individuals in the location (Faisal in Subadi, 2006). Documentation is used to collect data that depict the local situation relevant to the research. In this study, the documentation includes photographs, articles, musical works, and illustrations related to the Jazzmbensenen community on Spotify.

b. Data Collection Instruments

Research instruments are tools used to measure events or natural and social phenomena being observed, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). The researcher collects data directly through documentation and interviews, playing a central role in the research process. The researcher independently designs, determines, and processes nearly all stages of the research. Therefore, it is essential to validate the understanding of research methods, master the subject matter, and ensure readiness to conduct the study before collecting data in the field.

Methods and Instruments for Data Collection

According to Nugrahani (2014), data validity is a critical concept that serves as an evolution of validity and reliability in research. In this study, several verification techniques are applied to ensure the validity of the data:

a. Triangulation

Triangulation is a technique for verifying data validity by utilizing external references to cross-check or compare the data (Moleong, cited in Nugrahani, 2014). According to Moleong (cited in Nugrahani, 2014), triangulation can be categorized into three types: source triangulation, method triangulation, and theory triangulation. The types of triangulation employed in this research are as follows:

i. Source Triangulation

Source triangulation is a technique for collecting data from multiple sources to ensure its validity. For example, it involves comparing data obtained through observations with that collected from interviews or contrasting interview results with relevant documents. In this study, source triangulation is carried out by comparing the results of interviews conducted with various informants.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of organizing and interpreting collected data to extract meaningful insights. According to Miles and Huberman (cited in Nugrahani, 2014), the steps in the data analysis process for this study are as follows:

a. Data Reduction

Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting information relevant to the research objectives during data collection in the field. This process includes activities such as coding, identifying themes, defining the scope of the research problem, and writing memos (Miles & Huberman, cited in Nugrahani, 2014). Data reduction is a continuous process aimed at refining, categorizing, directing, clarifying, and concentrating data while discarding irrelevant elements.

In this study, the researcher initially gathered data regarding the origins of the Jazzmbensenen community, member regeneration, and media utilized to popularize jazz music in Yogyakarta. Subsequently, the research was narrowed down to focus on the promotion of jazz music in Yogyakarta through the Spotify platform as the central theme.

b. Data Presentation

Data presentation involves summarizing information into a comprehensive descriptive narrative based on the key findings from the data reduction process. This presentation should be structured logically and systematically to facilitate understanding (Nugrahani, 2014). It is recommended that data be categorized into groups or typologies that align with the research problem. The purpose of data presentation is to address the research questions through analytical processes.

In this study, the data will be presented in narrative form, divided into several sections: respondent and informant identities, the role of the Jazzmbensenen community in popularizing jazz music in Yogyakarta, the community's presence on Spotify, and the meanings behind the wordplay and illustrations with Javanese elements used in their Spotify compilation albums.

c. Drawing Conclusions or Verification

Conclusion drawing or verification involves interpreting the results of data analysis and interpretations. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on hypothesis testing, qualitative research conclusions are derived through iterative examination of the research steps, cross-checking field data, and refining conclusions based on field notes and preliminary summaries (Nugrahani, 2014). To ensure validity, the conclusions must be verified throughout the research process. The researcher will cross-

check the collected data regarding the Jazzmbensenen community, ensuring the conclusions are credible and that the data presented is accurate. Verification will involve various relevant sources, including informants who are members of the Jazzmbensenen community involved in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Research Findings

This study presents the findings from in-depth interviews regarding the production processes and the meanings behind the works of the Jazzmbensenen community in their efforts to popularize jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify. The researcher conducted interviews with relevant individuals and supported the findings with articles and documentation to provide a comprehensive explanation of the community's initiatives.

In addition to their idealism, the agenda-setting process is influenced by the unique characteristics of the artists involved and their level of interest in political topics. The idealism of an artist, such as a cartoonist, cannot be separated from their perspective on political events. The final product of a political cartoon serves as a reflection of how the artist's idealism operates.

The first research question concerns how the Jazzmbensenen community popularizes jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify. Community members, including respondent Danny Eriawan Wibowo, explained that their approach involves performing at major events such as Ngayogjazz and incorporating elements unique to Yogyakarta into their works. Jazzmbensenen does not seek financial gain from their performances at Ngayogjazz; instead, they focus on meeting others, sharing experiences, and playing music with strong character.

Before the advent of streaming platforms, Jazzmbensenen utilized physical releases to document and archive their works. Album digitization was carried out to broaden their listening audience and provide easily accessible archives. The aim was not to target specific listeners but to disseminate their music and ensure the availability of their works.

Jazzmbensenen also collaborates with other musicians in producing albums uploaded on Spotify. This demonstrates that their goal is not only to expand their audience but also to engage in a creative process that makes jazz music more comprehensible and accessible. They blend jazz music with Jogja's local culture, creating a unique character that reflects their Javanese cultural background.

According to Danny, jazz music serves as a tool or medium filled with the unique character of musicians from diverse backgrounds. Jazzmbensenen delves into Jogja's cultural heritage to shape their jazz music's character, which is then shared on Spotify. They also adapt *lagu dolanan* (traditional children's songs) to make them more familiar to the public, aiding in the collaborative learning process and introducing jazz music.

Local symbols are showcased through visuals and naming in each of their works. A clear example is the album *Swing Ora Jazzmu*, which features nine songs symbolizing that their jazz music is a modified adaptation of Javanese characteristics rather than traditional swing jazz from Europe. This unique local interpretation is evident in every work by Jazzmbensenen, giving their music distinctive character and cultural significance within the context of Yogyakarta.

Discussion

To analyze how the Jazzmbensenen community popularizes jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify, the researcher employs Stuart Hall's theory of representation. This theory produces meaning through language and signs, generating unique characteristics that distinguish Jazzmbensenen's jazz from European jazz. Hall divides the theory of representation into three concepts: the reflective approach, the intentional approach, and the constructionist approach. Based on interviews and observations, this theory is contextualized to understand the production and construction of meaning in Jazzmbensenen's jazz music on the Spotify platform as follows:

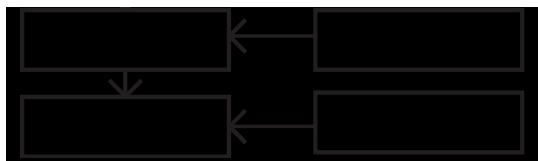


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of Representation Theory in this Study* (Source: Personal, 2024)

Intensional Approach

In the intensional approach, the Jazzmbensenen community seeks to represent jazz music in a distinctive manner by blending traditional and modern musical elements in their songs. They rearrange folk songs such as "Touch of Slendro" and "O A E Kerthi Buana," combining the pentatonic scale typical of Javanese gamelan with modern instruments such as guitar, bass, and drums. These songs reflect Jazzmbensenen's efforts to highlight the local cultural elements of Yogyakarta through the Spotify platform, creating a unique fusion of traditional and modern sounds in their music.

Additionally, as exemplified by the song "Lesung Jumengglung" from the Jazzmbensenen community, it emphasizes the swing jazz atmosphere while incorporating traditional elements of Yogyakarta, such as the use of pentatonic notes and the kendang (traditional drum). This song depicts togetherness and the spirit of mutual cooperation through lyrics in Javanese, reflecting the agrarian life of the village. Lesung Jumengglung, as a symbol of a traditional farming tool, is used to showcase the unique character of Jazzmbensenen's music. The song also features characteristic karawitan vocals to invite listeners to dance, emphasizing the community's efforts to popularize jazz music across various audiences through Spotify.

Lesung Jumengglung Song

Lesung jumengglung
Sru imbal-imbalan
Lesung jumengglung
Maneter mangungkung
Ngumandhang ngebeki sak
Jroning pra desan thok
Thok thek tok thok gung thok
Thok thek thok thek thok gung thok
Thok thek thok thok gung thok
Thok thek thok thek thok gung

Construction Approach

The Jazzmbensenen community combines local Yogyakarta elements with jazz music to make jazz more accessible and enjoyable for listeners. This construction approach is evident in the use of traditional Yogyakarta visual elements, such as lurik fabric, blangkon (traditional hat), gunung (mountain-shaped offering), and wayang (puppet), which are incorporated alongside jazz instruments like trumpet, saxophone, and double bass. Their albums, such as "Sesarengan," "Swing Ora Jazzmu," "Panen Karya," "Lain Ladang Lain Jazznya," and "Jazz Basuki Mawa Beya," use illustrations and puns typical of Yogyakarta to enhance the local cultural atmosphere on Spotify. For instance, the album "Jazz Basuki Mawa Beya" is derived from the Javanese proverb "Jer Basuki Mawa Beya," emphasizing the importance of hard work to achieve one's goals.

The album "Sesarengan" by the Jazzmbensenen community features an illustration of people gathering while wearing traditional lurik clothing, with a sense of togetherness portrayed by individuals eating around a wooden table. This illustration also includes jazz instruments such as the saxophone, trumpet, and double bass. The album title "Sesarengan," which means togetherness, reflects the sociable nature of the people of Yogyakarta, who highly value communal spirit, as reflected in the saying "madang ra madang, sing penting kumpul" (whether or not we eat, the important thing is to gather).



Figure 2. *"Sesarengan" Album by the Jazzmbensenen Community on Spotify*
(Source: Spotify Jazzmbensenen, 2010)

The "Panen Karya" album by the Jazzmbensenen community, released in 2012, features illustrations with elements of Yogyakarta culture, including a symbolic gunung for a harvest celebration. The illustration also depicts people playing jazz instruments such as the double bass and trumpet. This album represents the fusion of Yogyakarta culture with European jazz, creating a festive and celebratory atmosphere as a form of appreciation for the Jazzmbensenen community's contribution to the music world.



Figure 3. *"Panen Karya" Album by the Jazzmbensenen Community on Spotify*
(Source: Spotify Jazzmbensenen, 2012)

The "Panen Karya" album is also a form of gratitude from the Jazzmbensenen community, which has long been active in the music world. In this album, the Jazzmbensenen community harvests their creative works by showcasing the songs they have produced over several years of being a community.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research, it can be concluded that the Jazzmbensenen community has popularized jazz music in Yogyakarta through Spotify by combining elements of European jazz music with the local culture of Yogyakarta. This community integrates local events, cultural elements of Yogyakarta, and traditional aspects into song lyrics, cover art illustrations, and album naming. This approach removes the elitist stigma associated with jazz and introduces jazz music with a more accessible local flavor, making it more enjoyable for a wider audience.

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