



Village Youtuber in the Perspective of Glocalization

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ABSTRACT

In the landscape of evolving social media platforms, YouTube stands out as a dynamic force, continuing to expand its reach globally. With a user base of 2 billion monthly visitors, YouTube ranks second among social media apps, showcasing its unparalleled potential for content creators. YouTube as a globalized platform does not always produce global content. In Indonesia, YouTube content produced by YouTubers with local themes has been able to gain tremendous exposure. By using Roland Robertson's theory of glocalization, this study aims to explore the phenomenon of YouTube as a product of globalization, examining its role in shaping local identities within a global framework. Through an analysis of YouTube content from Dimas Zaenal Universe (DZU), a group of content creators from rural Indonesia, this research delves into the intricate dynamics of glocalization. By focusing on the themes of locality, language, and cultural adaptation, the study aims to understand how DZU's YouTube channel navigates the intersection between global platform dynamics and local identity formation. The findings of this research highlight the complexity and naturalness with a *local indegeneous* spirit characterizing the existence of YouTuber Kampung in fighting in the global platform arena in Indonesia. This study illustrates the power of glocalization, where the local and global intersect to create a new, hybrid form of digital presence.

Keyword: Glocalization, Village YouTuber, Communication, Media Studies

INTRODUCTION

Media, like a social media has a function as a tool for disseminating information to society, ensuring its awareness among the populace (Afriyan Putra Nanda et al., 2023.). While much of social media has proven ephemeral, YouTube continues to grow rapidly and has become the second most visited website in the world (Walsh, 2023). Ranking second in the top 10 social media apps based on active users, YouTube reaches 2 billion users every month. Based on research, YouTube's revenue in 2022 amounted to \$29.24 billion (not including non-advertising revenue such as YouTube TV and YouTube Premium). YouTube provides many opportunities for anyone to get involved in order to reap the benefits and reach new audiences. YouTube as a globalized platform does not always produce global content. The problem is, in Indonesia, YouTube content produced by YouTubers with local themes has been able to gain tremendous exposure. This breaks the assumption that popular content is always come from global or international in theme given that YouTube is a global platform.

As a part of social media, YouTube eliminates human boundaries today for socializing, both space, distance, and time (Rahman, 2023). Its play an important role in providing information and entertainment to the public, as well as shaping public opinion and perception (Syaputra & Sabri, 2023). The term Youtuber refers to an individual or group of people who create, upload, and broadcast video content on the YouTube platform. As a highly popular platform that excels at broadcasting audio-visual images, YouTube is a wetland for video content creators. YouTube's partnership program allows Youtubers to create financial incentives. The more popular the content, the greater the opportunity to create profits. Content popularity in Indonesia is usually determined by aesthetics, daily life and lifestyle, and brand partnerships.

One of the signs of globalization is the development of technology to become more sophisticated so that it can open people's eyes. According to (Barker & Jane, 2016) globalization is a global economic, social, cultural, and political connection that leads to the global production of local products and the localization of global products. Based on this explanation, it can be said that YouTube is a product of globalization because it has global access. In addition, YouTube content creators clearly benefit from monetization through advertising revenue that comes from various countries. The content found on YouTube creates global trends and influences popular culture in different countries. The ever-increasing number of YouTube users reflects how the platform has achieved global success and become an integral part of the digital lives of the global community.

Meanwhile, glocality is defined as an attempt to experience the global locally through a local lens that can include local power relations, geopolitical and geographical factors, cultural particularities, and so on. Glocality becomes problematic when constructing narratives meant for global consumption (Roudometof, 2016). This condition is reflected in YouTuber Kampung. YouTuber Kampung is a term created by researchers that refers to content creators who come from villages or rural areas in Indonesia by emphasizing locality. Generally, the content production style of YouTuber Kampung adapts to local life and culture in the countryside. Through YouTube as a global platform, these YouTubers share their local portraits with a global audience. This creates a balance between the globality of the digital platform and the local roots of the content, reflecting the principles of glocalization. Kampung Youtubers' success lies in their ability to understand and respond to the needs and expectations of their local audience.

In Indonesia, locality is a big theme that content creators are interested in. Popularly discussed in Indonesia in early 2022, the residents of Poso hamlet, Tapen District, Bondowoso

Regency went viral because the majority of its residents worked as YouTubers. (Widarsha, 2021). Long before that, 3 years earlier, Dimas Zaenal, a resident of Blora, Central Java, managed to change his fate and economy through the YouTuber route. His name soared for his prank content entitled "Prank Selling Cows Wanted to Be Slashed by Mr." has been watched by 5.5 million viewers and "Prank Tatto Mau Dicoret KK" has reached 5.3 million viewers. Although he only has 1 million subscribers, Dimas Zaenal's popularity has also spread to those closest to him. For example, Dimas Zaenal Universe (DZU) which includes the YouTube channel Lek Damis (Mother) has 535,000 subscribers and Endah Ratih (Wife) has 361,000 subscribers, which when observed, both have a specialty, namely both carrying the theme of locality.

Dimas Zaenal Universe (DZU), the YouTuber of Kampung who carries the theme of locality in the midst of the global platform arena, certainly has a reason for choosing the theme of locality in their YouTube channel. In terms of language, it can be seen that almost all content uses Javanese. On the other hand, DZU chooses to adopt the style of Prank and Daily Vlog content types pioneered by American content creators such as Roman Atwood, Vitaly Zdorovetskiy, and Dennis Roady. The adoption of a global platform that is adapted to local tastes, resulting in a new identity for these YouTubers, will be interesting if examined from the perspective of glocalization theory. Textual and contextual analysis of DZU's content and YouTube account are used to analyze the identity contestation.

Based on this explanation, this research will answer the formulation of the problem: First, how is local identity displayed in Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube content? Second, how do linguistic and cultural identities shape glocality in Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube? The purpose of this research is to understand how language and cultural identities shape glocality in Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube. Meanwhile, the benefits of this research are to provide information and references for communication and media studies, especially in digital communication research in Indonesia. In addition, this research is also useful in generating critical discourse views regarding the contestation of local Youtuber identities in the development of digital media through the perspective of glocalization.

Cultural Identity and Language Theory

The term identity literally refers to sameness. As a production, identity is understood not as a fixed and settled essence, but rather a process and is shaped in representation (Sidjabat et al., 2018). Identity and representation are interrelated because identity will be visible only when represented. Hall (Hall, 2021) explains that culture has a key role in shaping a person's understanding of self and others. Through language and cultural signs, identity construction will be formed. In addition, social and cultural locations also influence the way individuals perceive and position themselves in society. Therefore, changes in identity are dependent on changes in social position and cultural context.

As noted by (Brannen, 2016), cultural identity is not a conscious choice, but rather an involuntary formation in one's subconscious that is the result of a confrontation between several complex cultural environments. In understanding and interpreting the behavior and actions of members of different groups, it is important to understand their environmental context. In line with what was said by (Howard, 2000) that behavior can only make sense in relation to the relational system associated with members. Cultural identity can basically be seen through two perspectives. Identity as being and identity as becoming. (Hall, 2021) Hall explains that identity is also interpreted as a production, not a fixed and settled essence. In the formation of an identity, a culture is never completely new. Identity comes from the influence of existing cultures and creates new forms. Cultures do not kill each other, but enrich each other to create hybridity.

Meanwhile, the relationship between language and identity is an inseparable and mutually influencing one (Alshehri, 2020). Culture builds identity and influences language use. For example, in English-speaking countries, buyers say "Thank you" and "Please" in other requests. Unlike in Japan, the word "Thank you" is spoken by the seller. Language is always related to

specific word and sentence choices shaped by culture and society. Therefore, it can be understood that social factors are so influential in determining language, identity, and behavior as a reciprocal and interactive two-way process. YouTube, as a digital communication platform, will indirectly influence the perceptions and viewpoints of its fans in a fast and widespread manner.

Glocalization Theory

The entry of multinational companies accompanied by the sophistication of internet technology has indirectly led to intensive social and cultural interaction and communication. Information and technology can be utilized to increase productivity. However, the strengthening of homogeneity in globalization makes local elements buried so that the characteristics of a particular region slowly disappear. That's where glocalization comes in as an alternative. (Drori, Gili S., Markus A. Höllerer, 2013) states that glocalization can be defined as the idea of thinking globally, but acting locally. In glocalization, global and local form heterogeneity. Like light passing through glass and then emitting the entire spectrum. Likewise, globalization that passes through emits a spectrum of differences through glocalization.

Glocalization can be interpreted as an attempt to fortify oneself against the mixing of local culture with foreign culture (Bhaduri, 2008). In addition, glocalization is defined as experiencing the global locally or through a local lens (including local power relations, geopolitical and geographical factors, cultural distinctiveness, and so on). McDonald's, a large American company, made product innovations to be accepted by the Indonesian people. The effort was made by adding a chicken porridge menu that has cultural and historical roots and can be enjoyed by the Indonesian tongue. Therefore, glocalization is closely related to the process of offering global product industries without leaving local issues. In this study, the application of glocalization theory includes analysis related to the factors that emphasize local values which include traditions, customs, language, art, and way of life that are put forward in the content on Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube channel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research in this paper is qualitative research. The method used is descriptive analytic theory by Roland Robertson (1994). Robertson theory of glocalization is a concept that seeks to understand the dynamics between global and local processes in the context of globalization between global and local interactions through text and context analysis (ROBERTSON, 1994). This method aims to understand the glocalization shown in Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube through the language and cultural identity it builds. The materials of this research include:

1. Dimas Zaenal Universe YouTube channel which includes: Dimas Zaenal, Lek Damis (mother), and Endah Ratih (wife).
2. The most popular content from each of DZU's YouTube channels
3. Literature from various journals that contain related research.

The research was conducted by collecting data in accordance with the actual conditions and then the data was compiled, processed, and analyzed to provide an overview of the existing problem.

Framework of Thought

YouTube Dimas Zaenal Universe:
Dimas Zaenal, Lek Damis (mother), Endah Ratih (wife)

YouTube as a global market environment

Textual Analysis: Resolution and Thumbnails

Contextual: Glocality in the Identity of a Hometown YouTube

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Simplicity as a Local Strategy

YouTube plays a significant role in creating a global market environment. As the world's largest video social media platform, YouTube has opened the door for individuals, corporations, and content creators from around the world to participate in the global digital ecosystem. Despite its many advantages, the *platform* comes with many "challenges" that may be faced by content creators, especially those working on local-themed content. Therefore, it is important to understand cultural and linguistic identity as the capital of Kampung Youtubers in fighting in the global market arena.

Resolution and Quality

(Hermawan, 2022) said that YouTube users are divided into two categories. Passive YouTube viewers who only act as consumers (viewers) and also active users who produce videos as well as share them or what is referred to as prosumers (*producer-consumer*). Local YouTubers, as prosumers, have their own challenges. These challenges lie in terms of video resolution and quality. The quality of video content is important as it affects the success of the video and the revenue generated by the content creator. A good quality video upload can help increase viewership and user interaction. In addition, the creator's reputation is also enhanced if the quality is good enough.

Dimas Zaenal's YouTube channel was established in August 2018. Before joining YouTube, he had a career on Instagram and can also be said to be a kampung celebgram because his locality theme remains his main characteristic on the *platform*. From the looks of the videos he uploads both on Instagram and YouTube, he does not

use sophisticated and sensational tools in making them. At the beginning of his career, DSLR cameras or *mirrors*, *stabilizers*, external microphones, *lighting*, and computers with high specs were not owned by him due to economic limitations. Based on an interview conducted by Denny Caknan (a popular campursari singer from Magetan, East Java) in his YouTube content "Soan-Cerita Dimas Zaenal & Lek Damis Orang Kampung Milyarder" watched by 2.4 million viewers, Dimas admitted that he did not use sophisticated tools in making his videos. He only uses an android cellphone camera to record images and an Iphone 6 cellphone used to record sound. To edit the video, he only uses an android phone with a free video editing application.



The video "Prank to Sell a Cow and Get Stabbed by Your Father" is Dimas Zaenal's most viral video. The video contains a *prank* that he did to his mother and father. In the video, Dimas claimed to have sold his parents' cow, which he had hidden in a neighbor's house. The *epic part* of the video is that he was almost stabbed by his own father considering that the cow was not his father's cow but someone else's cow. In the picture, you can see how simple the quality of the video is. The background of a simple village house, lighting from a gap in the roof tiles, low image resolution, and a low-spec cellphone voice recorder, managed to catapult his name. Not only his YouTube channel. Lek Damis and Endah Ratih's YouTube also use similar shooting techniques.

Simple *Thumbnails*

The cover of a YouTube video is called a *Thumbnail*. *Thumbnails* are thumbnails that show a snapshot or visual representation of the actual video content. As an icon, a *thumbnail* is visible to users before they click to watch the video. Because of their *covering* nature, *thumbnails* play an important role in influencing users to be interested in clicking on a YouTube video. Based on (Jutamas Chotivachirapun, Krittin Wongpom, Kavin Pradubchat, Pornkrist Ngam-udomkiat, Pitipong Pimpiset, 2022), an effective *thumbnail* in a video involves attractive visuals, easy-to-read *fonts*, prominent colors, focus on the face as the main central object, and the right size and resolution.



Figure 2
Thumbnail view of the most popular videos
Dimas Zainal (left) and Endah Ratih (right)
(source: YouTube)

Unencumbered by aesthetic obligations, Dimas Zaenal and Endah Ratih's YouTube *thumbnails* are kept simple. The minimalist look of the *thumbnail* is characterized by: *First*, the fonts. Impact (left) and Arial (right) are simple fonts and are available on many operating systems. *Second*, the color of the *font*. This font has a light and unpretentious nature, but is deliberately made to stand out by using colors that contrast with the *background*, namely bright colors such as yellow, purple, and green. *Third*, the images are minimally edited. The image on the *thumbnail* is less eye-catching as seen from the abstention of the focus of the face as the main center.

Although YouTube opens the door to global connectivity, Youtuber Kampung does not care much about shooting techniques, nor does it focus on the aesthetics of *thumbnail* displays. The focus of Youtuber Kampung content is more likely to be on lifting local themes such as culture and typical rural life which are deliberately displayed as they are. The videos are simple, natural, and minimally edited so that even though they were initially made accidentally, these YouTuber Kampung videos are able to attract the attention of the audience. Therefore, it can be said that despite being in a global market arena, YouTuber Kampung is able to exist through "simplicity" which further emphasizes the authentication and uniqueness of YouTuber Kampung.

2. Glocalization in the Embrace of Cultural and Linguistic Identity

To emphasize its local existence, there is clearly an effort made by the DZU YouTube channel in fortifying itself from foreign cultural mixing and embracing cultural and linguistic identity. The local lens it builds encompasses cultural identity and language identity. The identification of these identities will be revealed further in this section.

Prank/Daily Vlog (Cultural Identity)

In 2018-2019, YouTube *prank* content became a trend. *Prank* or practical joke is a trick played that generally makes the victim surprised, uncomfortable, or astonished (Yasa & Wiguna, 2021). The *prank* trend has become a content advantage for Youtuber Kampung because it has succeeded in inviting many viewers. Dimas Zaenal's top 3 contents are prank-type contents with the titles: "Prank Selling Cows Wanted to Get

"Stabbed by Father", "Prank Tattoo Wanted to Cross Out KK", "Prank Mabok Malah Lek Damis Minggat". This is in line with Endah Ratih's most popular content entitled "Jam 12 Bengi Bu Yuni Nglindur Pe Pengajian Ning Bu Mudhah! Unedited Ngakak Banget" (12 o'clock at night Bu Yuni didn't realize she was going to Mrs. Mudhah's recitation! Unedited, laughing out loud). Meanwhile, Lek Damis's most popular content is titled "Youtube's First Salary from June to September (Alhamdulillah Maturnuwun Sanget Yo Ngger) 'Alhamdulillah, thank you very much, son'" which is categorized as *Daily Vlog* type video content.

Prank videos are Dimas Zaenal's most popular because in *prank* videos, there has been a commodification of Javanese emotions and expressions. According to research conducted (Suciati & Agung, 2017), Javanese people are less expressive in showing their emotions because it is related to the stratification restrictions of communication language that is adjusted to the interlocutor when communicating. Furthermore, Suseno in (Putra Kurniawan & Hasanat, 2007) argues that Javanese people have the principle of harmonious and harmonious life because they prioritize good relations between people so that they avoid uncontrolled expressions of emotion, fighting, and prefer to respect each other, mutual cooperation, tolerance, and hospitality.

Prank videos contain bouts of social anxiety and panic recorded amidst an emotional maelstrom that can potentially act as a catharsis between the content and its audience. Meanwhile, (Arthurs et al., 2018) asserts that *daily vlogs* emphasize *proximity, accessibility, and immediacy* (immediate engagement through questions and comments directed at the *audience*). Therefore, it can be said that *prank* videos present the highly expressive emotions of Javanese society, which are rare and expensive.

Meanwhile, the video of Lek Damis receiving his first salary is categorized as a *vlog*. *Vlogging*, literally absorbed from the word *video-blogging* (diary-blogging) grew out of content through the phenomenon of prosumerism and today represents the most important part of YouTube as a whole (Arthurs et al., 2018). There is a plethora of *vlogging* styles, tastes, and preferences based on topics such as *gaming*, politics, beauty, fashion, food, family, or more generally lifestyle *vlogs* that are often produced in the *vlogger's* own home or a set built to resemble it (Hillrichs, 2016). They are symptomatic of broader changes in audio-visual media culture brought about by reality television. "*Direct-to-camera*" diary-themed videos establish an ethos of "recognition" as they relate to personal moments. This moment of Lek Damis receiving his first salary relates to the concept of "cooperation" in Javanese culture. One such concept is manifested in the Javanese proverb, "Sepi ing pamrih, rame ing gawe" which means 'alone in thinking and planning, but crowded in working'.

Javanese Language as Local Wisdom

Language is not just a means of communication, but an expression of culture, history, and values that shape the identity of a community or individual. On the DZU YouTube channel, Javanese cultural identity is strongly built on the use of *taglines* and everyday language used in their YouTube videos. With the *tagline* "Channel Jowo Sing Njowoni" (Javanese people who truly understand the aspects of Javanese norms), it is clear that Dimas Zaenal's YouTube channel does not want to lose its identity despite fighting in the arena of global *platforms*. Meanwhile, Lek Damis' *tagline* is "Manohara, Shoimah, Los. Ayu lek Damis". *Loss* means more than. Manohara and Shoimah are top Indonesian artists. The *tagline* implies that Lek Damis' beauty exceeds the beauty of Manohara and Shoimah, which she brings in a joke. Endah Ratih's tagline, reads "Ready to Entertain Wherever You Are" which clearly conveys the message that the YouTube channel is always ready to be watched anytime and anywhere.

In addition to Javanese, Indonesian is a secondary language used in DZU. (Shahrebabaki, 2018) explains that sometimes, individual speakers maintain dual identities by using two linguistic varieties to communicate within the community. Intra- and interlinguistic identities can change in different ways over time. As a tool of social interaction, language plays an important role in building identity. (Sarah, 2018) explains that language forms a central role in defining social and political organization so that in the post-structuralism era, language represents individual diversity.

Apart from the account owner, Youtuber Kampung content often involves local communities and local residents. Activities include exploring local stories, introducing residents, sharing food, and there is definitely involvement of residents and content creators in these activities. (Kencana & Sukmono, 2022) said, in the midst of the onslaught of globalization, it is important to understand the nation's regional culture through the development and utilization of cultural culture, especially language in the form of *local indigeneous*. It seems that this is the spirit of "YouTuber Kampung". The local language and style of speaking through the indigenous dialect of the local community reflect the linguistic and cultural identity of the region in which they live.

CONCLUSION

YouTube is a product of globalization because it has global access. The ever-increasing number of YouTube users reflects how the *platform* has achieved global success and become an integral part of the digital lives of the global community. Meanwhile, glocality is defined as the attempt to experience the global locally through a local lens that can include local power relations, geopolitical and geographical factors, and cultural particularities. It becomes problematic when glocalities construct narratives that are meant for global consumption. This condition is reflected in YouTuber Kampung. He is in a battle between the globality of digital *platforms* and the assertion of identity reflected in the principles of glocalization found in his content.

Dimas Zaenal, a resident of Blora, Central Java, managed to change his fate and economy through the YouTuber route. Dimas Zaenal Universe (DZU), a hometown YouTuber who carries the theme of locality in the midst of the global *platform* arena, certainly has a reason for choosing the theme of locality in their YouTube channel. The adoption of a global *platform* adapted to local tastes that results in a new identity for this YouTuber will be interesting if examined from the perspective of glocalization theory. The purpose of this study is to understand how language and cultural identity shape the glocalization of Dimas Zaenal Universe's YouTube channel.

This research contains: First, despite being in a global market arena, Youtuber Kampung is able to exist through "simplicity" which further emphasizes the authenticity and uniqueness of Youtuber Kampung as seen from the resolution and *thumbnails* used in its content. Secondly, the *prank* and *vlogging* type content and the use of Javanese language in the *tagline* have put forward a local style of speaking that reflects the spirit of Javanese linguistic and cultural identity, especially Blora, the area where they live.

Based on this explanation, the results of this study are, Dimas Zaenal Universe as a Local YouTuber, carries the concept of glocality in the midst of complex dynamics between globality and local identity. YouTuber Kampung is able to manage this balance through content strategy and *platform* adaptation by not leaving elements of his regional identity. Instead, they make culture and language a source of strength for the YouTube channel. Simplicity and naturalness with a *local indigeneous* spirit characterize the existence of YouTuber Kampung in fighting in the global platform arena in Indonesia.

In summary, Dimas Zaenal Universe's success illustrates the power of glocalization, where the local and global intersect to create a new, hybrid form of digital presence. The study underscores the importance of cultural and linguistic identity in shaping digital

content and demonstrates how local influences can thrive on global platforms, enriching the digital landscape with diverse and authentic voices.

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