

# Writing Script and Audio Production: Movement to Strengthen Javanese Radio Drama in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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Received: July 16, 2024	Accepted: September 5, 2024	Online Published: September 12, 2024
doi:10.11114/smc.v12i4.7053	URL: https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v12i4.7053	

# Abstract

This study aims to gain a deep understanding of the subjective experiences of participants who are directly involved in the strengthening movement to uncover the development of Javanese radio dramas in Yogyakarta. Due to the abstract nature of the data, including people's experiences in drama radio and radio broadcast fields, this study employs the interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) to explore and understand these experiences. We used IPA to process qualitative data from interviews with nine participants who were actively involved in strengthening Javanese radio dramas. The study's findings indicate that participants' subjective experiences in the reinforcement movement provide an overview of the positive development of Javanese radio dramas. Several actions, such as raising awareness, writing scripts (through workshops and competitions), nurturing talent, producing audio, evaluating, and enhancing the community's role, sparked this development. These actions encourage the manager's optimism about restoring Javanese dramas as an important part of the Javanese people's identity. This research not only helps policymakers re-evaluate local cultural preservation and development programs, but it also opens up space for cultural movers in general to find alternative ways to prevent the degradation of Javanese culture in the digital era.

Keywords: Javanese radio drama, writing script, audio production, interpretative phenomenological analysis, Indonesia

# 1. Introduction

In the 1970s and 1980s, Javanese radio dramas (JRD) were very popular in Javanese society (Puguh & Mufidah, 2020). The Javanese audio-radio performance art that initially developed in Yogyakarta (the 1960s) had been a favourite entertainment for people not only in Java but also Javanese transmigrants in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and even Papua (Mardianto & Darmanto, 2001). However, in the last two decades (since 2004), the popularity of JRD has plummeted because, first, the rapid technological transformation (Ji et al., 2020) encourages conventional listeners to switch to digital platforms (Arifin, 2022; D. S. Sari, 2023); second, the level of Javanese language proficiency of young people in the community has decreased (Bram, 2023; Hidayah, 2013). One reason the younger generation abandons local culture and language (Java) is the formation of a multicultural modern society (Baryadi, 2015).

Local-global encounters always degrade language, culture, and even local media (Perrino, 2019; Sonay, 2018). It happens in any country, so the owner community, with various regulations or self-help activities, seeks to carry out rescue and development according to modern needs (Papazoglou, 2019; Rispoli et al., 2013). In Indonesia, the Law on Promotion of Culture (No. 5/2017), the Language Law (No. 24/2009), and the Government Regulation on the Development, Protection, and Improvement of Language Functions (No. 57/2014) strengthen efforts to preserve local languages and cultures. The school curriculum also incorporates local languages and cultures to enhance their longevity. However, the complexity of Indonesia's conditions, which include 300 ethnicities, 1340 sub-ethnicities, 718 local languages, and over 270 million people, renders these various regulations ineffective (Ruskhan et al., 2019). That is why, in some parts of Indonesia, various movements for the development of local languages and cultures rely on community initiatives.

Yogyakarta initiated the development of JRD in response to the waning public interest and the transition of traditional listeners to digital platforms. The program, which combines scriptwriting and audio production, aims to provide more modern audio products and reach all groups to increase Javanese language proficiency among the younger generation. Notably, the production of JRD is the main obstacle for radio stations (Y. Sari et al., 2017). The scarcity of audio

products caused them to switch to other entertainment programs (music, for example) that were more practical and economical. This movement is believed to be a strategic step to save the nation from losing its identity (Hasan et al., 2024). For the sake of sustainability of life and development, the development of local culture, one of which is Javanese drama, is a non-negotiable task (Yang et al., 2022).

In Indonesian academic circles, beneficial practices that encourage the development of local culture and language, especially JRD, have not received attention from researchers. Most of the research leads to efforts to drive local culture relating to tourism and economic development (Priatmoko et al., 2021; Wolor et al., 2021; Yuliastuti & Sukmawati, 2020). Some other studies examine aspects of local culture for the sake of strengthening character in the world of education (Effendi et al., 2020; Kamisi et al., 2020; Sakti et al., 2024; Setyawan & Dopo, 2020). Recently, researchers have looked more closely at certain aspects of Javanese radio drama. They studied aspects such as program management (Y. Sari et al., 2017), marketing systems (Rizqi et al., 2021), historical aspects (Puguh & Mufidah, 2020), language aspects in drama texts for learning (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019; Nurcahyani et al., 2023), voice arrangement procedure (Angkoso, 2023), and the relationship between the listener and the content (Prasetya et al., 2023; Sonjaya, 2022). Therefore, some of these studies do not provide a concrete picture related to efforts to develop JRD.

This research intends to fill the gap by focussing attention on the movement to strengthen JRD in Yogyakarta. The study used the phenomenological approach (Williams, 2021) to interpret and understand the meaning of the participants' subjective experiences within the movement. The study can uncover the essence of why the experience provides a specific picture of the phenomenon (Deliktas et al., 2019; Ding et al., 2023) and contribute to the development of JRD through the participant's subjective experience. The description also enables us to view the experience as an alternative model for efforts aimed at enhancing local culture (Putra et al., 2021). Strengthening local culture is a positive way to empower local communities (Anoegrajekti et al., 2018). An empowered society can show its independence, encourage economic growth, and improve welfare (Hutagalung et al., 2022). Therefore, the community urgently needs to strengthen JRD in Yogyakarta, given that, according to Indonesia Central Bureau of Statistics (2023), Yogyakarta is currently one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia.

The main question in this study is how the actors (individuals) are working to strengthen JRD. This question raises another one: whether the experience has a significant effect on the development of JRD. This study argues that the development of JRD depends on several interrelated factors. The competence of actors' resources, community acceptance and participation, stakeholder encouragement, and professional involvement are decisive factors. Hopefully, this research will not only inspire Javanese people to rediscover their love for JRD but also spark the interest of numerous stakeholders in exploring other facets of local culture within the framework of global equality development. However, JRD is a source of local wisdom (Rahayu et al., 2020; Suyitno et al., 2023), which, in the view of the UN, can be a means of dialogue between civilisations to achieve peace (D'Orville, 2012).

# 2. Literature Review

# 2.1 Strengthening Local Culture

Building and developing local culture means raising potential assets, strengthening social cohesion, encouraging community participation, and improving the quality of local life (Mair & Duffy, 2018; Yuliastuti & Sukmawati, 2020). Furthermore, it strengthens local identity by reflecting a nation's characteristics (Setyawan & Dopo, 2020). Strengthening local culture, when done with positive cooperation, will increase local knowledge and effectively manage local resources, ultimately supporting global policies (Ulicsni et al., 2019).

The movement to strengthen JRD in Yogyakarta seeks to build, move, develop, and introduce local potential to encourage the strengthening of social ties and the welfare of local communities (Java in particular) and nationally (Indonesia in general). This movement necessitates innovative approaches to address contemporary needs. Actors, change agents, professionals, communities, societies, and stakeholders must collaborate to inspire each other. Movement is an unconventional effort to achieve extraordinary results. It can reflect the agenda of reshaping a more active and productive identity (Wong et al., 2021).

# 2.2 Javanese Radio Drama

JRD is inseparable from Javanese literary tradition, both oral and written, and has a long history: from the precolonial period (royal era) to the present (so-called modern Javanese literature)(Widati, Riyadi, Suwondo, et al., 2001; Widati, Riyadi, Triyono, et al., 2001). Javanese literature in radio media began in 1937 with NIROM (Nederlandsch-Indische Radio Omroep Maatschappij), a Dutch government radio channel for eastern cultural broadcasts. At that time, Yogyakarta-based MAVRO (Mataramse Vereneging voor Radio Omroep) was responsible for the eastern broadcast. This MAVRO served as the precursor to the establishment of Radio Republic of Indonesia (RRI) Nusantara II Yogyakarta during the independence period (Mardianto & Darmanto, 2001). Initially, *wayang* (shadow puppet), *kethoprak* (Javanese

traditional drama), *dagelan* (Javanese comedy performance), and *uyon-uyon* (Javanese language relaxation song) dominated eastern art-culture broadcasts. However, in the 1950s, Javanese dramas started to gain popularity.

RRI Nusantara II Yogyakarta's efforts to raise JRD have not only attracted the interest of various other (private) radio stations in Yogyakarta but also in Surakarta, Semarang (Central Java), and Surabaya (East Java), even outside Java. After PKJT—Pusat Kebudayaan Jawa Tengah—(Central Java Cultural Centre) held a script-writing competition in 1979 and broadcasted the results on many radios in Java, their interest grew stronger (Widati, Riyadi, Suwondo, et al., 2001). Javanese dramas, performed on art stages, also adorn various radios across the archipelago (Puguh & Mufidah, 2020). However, over time, conditions have changed due to the spread of digital media and the decline in Javanese mastery. That is why efforts to strengthen JRD to meet the needs of today are very necessary.

## 2.3 Improving Javanese Language Skills

Javanese is the largest language among 718 local languages in Indonesia, with more than 84 million speakers (30%). Unlike some of the hundreds of regional languages that may soon become extinct, such as Maluku or Papua (Ruskhan et al., 2019), where the number of speakers is less than 0.25%, Javanese falls into the safe category (MediaWiki, n.d.). However, regional languages, including Javanese, have the opportunity to survive and not become extinct soon. Furthermore, the government issued proper regulations to foster speakers and develop regional languages.

Meanwhile, there were dilemmas and threats. Regulations allow for the development of regional languages, but they also impose an obligation to use the national language in the public sphere (Presidential Decree No. 63/2019) and to internationalise the Indonesian language. As a result of this dilemma, people's behaviour changes, abandoning regional languages in favour of national and global languages. Numerous studies reveal an ongoing crisis in Javanese language mastery, as many families and young people no longer speak the language (Bram, 2023). Indeed, many modern-educated families in big cities no longer speak regional languages. That's why JRD in digital format is one of the right means to improve the Javanese language skills of the younger generation.

## 2.4 Digitization of Javanese Drama Audio

Digitization is the use of digital technology, software, and computing competencies to increase efficiency, accuracy, and effectiveness (Pope & Costa, 2023), productivity, security, sustainability, ease of service, and environmental friendliness (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Digitisation describes the process of transferring media from print, video, or audio to digital form that requires supporting equipment or software. Video and audio processing programs can help convert video or audio documents into digital form. The aim is to achieve efficiency and optimization in various aspects (Nser et al., 2024).

JRD's digitization is an effort to turn audio products into digital platforms for easier listening (user-friendly) through various internet-based platforms such as *Spotify*, *Audacy*, *Podcast-online*, *Listennotes*, *Noice*, and others. This will boost public interest and open up space for anyone to improve their Javanese language skills. Even today, there are innovative and collaborative bilingual podcasts (Vancour, 2022), thus allowing users to learn many languages. Digitisation makes it easier for radio broadcasting institutions to conduct continuous evaluations of both broadcast products and listener interests, needs, and characteristics.

# 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Research Approach

This research intends to gain a deep understanding of the participants involved in the JRD strengthening movement. The focus is on the individual experiences of the participants, and we try to understand the meaning. Since the focus is on the participants' experiences and we want to understand them more comprehensively and deeply and provide a picture of the situations and events they experience, in this research we use the Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA). Therefore, the study employs IPA, an approach that originated in psychology and has since spread to numerous other fields (Noon, 2018). The science approach seeks to understand the meaning inherent in the human experience and tries to capture certain experiences experienced by certain people (Smith et al., 2022). Science emphasises nature *Idiographic*: related to certain matters (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The advantage of using IPA lies in its ability to uncover the essence of an experience, thereby providing a specific picture of the phenomenon (Deliktas et al., 2019; Ding et al., 2023). This specific picture also enables us to view the experience as an alternative or example (Putra et al., 2021).

Science leads researchers to understand what the participants' experiences are like and to interpret and understand their own experiences (Hutagalung et al., 2022; Robinson & Williams, 2024). In science, double hermeneutics can maintain a balance, preventing the subjective nature of the researcher from influencing it (Engward & Goldspink, 2020). Participants strive to comprehend their personal and social worlds, while researchers comprehend the efforts of participants to comprehend their personal and social worlds. This highlights the interplay between the researcher, the research, and the participants' experiences (Robinson & Williams, 2024). This study, using science, seeks to explore the meaning and significance contained in the personal experiences of participants involved in the JRD strengthening movement.

# 3.2 Research Participants

We conducted this research in Yogyakarta. Before confirming the identity of the participant, we obtained an ethical consideration letter from the Ethics Commission (No. 264/KE.01/SK/05/2023), ensuring compliance with all relevant provisions. Before formally meeting with the selected participants in September 2023, we met and engaged in free dialogue with numerous parties who, in our opinion, had sufficient experience on this research topic within the three-month period from June to August. Professional relationships in language and literature facilitate our dialogue with them. As researchers, we are familiar with JRD. We (TS, AZ, YAS) have managed language and literature coaching broadcasts on radio for approximately 10 years (2007–2017); even AZ and YAS have been actors in several Javanese radio dramas.

In the process of selecting participants, we used two steps. The first step was direct selection. We did this because the participants were irreplaceable—in this case, the person in charge, the head of the supervisory commission, and the community coordinator—who were directly involved in strengthening Javanese radio drama. The second step used the snowball technique (Leighton et al., 2021). Previously, we had dialogues with many parties (including broadcasters, writers, culturalists, instructors, technicians, community activists, and community coaches). During these interviews, some participants proposed and identified other individuals or experts who were more competent. We evaluated some of their suggestions based on preliminary data or the suitability of their expertise and knowledge, but we did not always accept them. Through these two steps, we finally settled on nine participants based on initial information and notes.

We determined the participants based on the assumption that each would obtain accurate, credible, and theme-related information. In this research report, we assigned each participant a P-code (participant) to protect their identity, experiences, and personal narratives. They are P1 (male, facilitator, mover, person in charge, government official); P2 (women, supervisors, chairmen of broadcasting commissions); P3 (male, literary, cultural practitioner, actor, instructor, community coordinator); P4 (women, broadcasters, movers, coordinators of Javanese drama broadcast programs); P5 (male, production and marketing coordinator); P6 (male, director of broadcasting institutions); P7 (male, literary, Javanese linguist, instructor); P8 (male, audio technician, community activist); and P9 (male, teacher, community coach, activity participant).

# 3.3 Data Collection

In data collection, we used interview techniques. The portion of the interview varies 2–5 times, depending on the participants' position, role, and position. In the guide, we prepare some basic questions, including (1) how do you understand, (2) how do you perceive, (3) how do you get involved, (4) how do you see other people's involvement, (5) what practices do you do, (6) how is your practice experience, (7) how important is your practice experience to you, (8) what challenges do you face, (9) how to overcome your challenges, and (10) what are your expectations for Javanese radio dramas. We ask additional questions within the context of each main question, ensuring that the participants have no more than 90 minutes to narrate their experiences. This process culminates in a joint reflection (Pezalla et al., 2024). During the interview, we used Javanese and Indonesian. We give participants the freedom to choose between Javanese and Indonesian. However, the outcome was the simultaneous use of two languages.

We conduct interviews in stages. Initial interviews focus on a few semi-structured questions to explore experiences that can provide information for a pre-reflective understanding of the phenomenon related to Javanese radio dramas (Lauterbach, 2018). The next interview is more in-depth, specific, and reflective about the main themes to explore a more systematic process. We recorded all interview data, and each researcher also documented significant elements to support the themes. During the interview, participants showed evidence in the form of photos, activity videos, drama scripts, books, audio products, and other documents in print and electronic form. All of this serves to confirm and affirm the results of the interview. To maintain the purity of the participant experience narrative, we used the term bracketing, putting aside our subjective experience at the time of the interview (Robinson & Williams, 2024). We interviewed participants (not in groups) in different places and times. After completing the entire research process, we store all interview data, field notes, and other texts in the official government database, in addition to our documentation.

# 3.4 Data Analysis

Before the analysis process began, we collaboratively transcribed all audio recordings from interviews with nine participants. Because our interview was bilingual, we had to translate the results from Javanese into Indonesian during the transcription and scripting process. This process takes more than three months. Even though they are temporary, transcriptions can reveal important qualitative units that help group themes. Only after completing all transcript results and other data do we initiate the analysis process.

In data analysis, the study conducted four basic steps of the phenomenological approach (Giorgi, 2012). This four-step approach offers the chance to examine objects from the perspective of their experiences, facilitating the exploration of a phenomenon's essence through creative and unrestricted variation to understand why the object embodies a particular phenomenon (Deliktas et al., 2019). With that perspective, the step of analysing data (objects) begins with (1) detecting

the total impression, from chaos to theme; (2) sorting out the unity of meaning, from theme to code; (3) condensing, from code to meaning; and (4) synthesising, from condensation to description and concept (Giorgi, 2012).

Chronologically, the study follows a process of analysing repeated readings of transcripts (and other data) to identify themes, sorting themes by providing codes, condensing symbols to derive meaning, and finally combining condensed codes to formulate concepts. If a bias arises, we confirm it by referring back to the transcript or listening to the audio recording. In the analysis process, we do not use any data processing platform. We heavily consider technology, but in qualitative data processing, we believe that human intuition and logic outperform technology.

# 4. Findings

JRD in Yogyakarta presents a relatively positive development. Strengthening the movement based on awareness, active participation, collaboration, capacity building, and productivity has encouraged JRD to move again. The awareness that it is a marker of identity (Javaneseness) triggers the community's enthusiasm to maintain it. However, awareness is not sufficient without ideas and actions. "It is self-awareness that strengthens us to awaken JRD," said the person in charge (P1). Some parties also welcomed me positively. "As a supervisory institution, we fully support the idea. This is not only due to broadcasting institutions' obligation to broadcast programs that represent 10% of Javanese culture, but also because it aligns with Java's national identity" (P2). Several program, production, and marketing coordinators agreed. "We are happy, because for a long time, our station has no longer broadcast JRD" (P6). "The script and the lack of actors often constrain us" (P5). "I'm glad that this idea will overcome our difficulties" (P4). The willingness of many parties leads to cooperation. As the drama community manager, P3 also stated that he was ready: "Together with all members and related parties, we are ready to work."

This study found that efforts to strengthen JRD began with planning, implementation of activities, and evaluation. The steps are: (1) awareness of many parties; (2) script-writing movement through workshops and competitions; (3) talent development (acting); (4) audio production; and (5) evaluation. The implementation of this step resulted in the relative rise of Javanese dramas because radio broadcasting institutions no longer had difficulties with scripts. Audio products are also available on various online portals. Although this program has only been running for a year (2019), it is evident that 23 radio stations are broadcasting JRD again (Admin, 2020). Active participation and strong encouragement from all parties determine the work's success.

## 4.1 Awareness

The potential for JRD in Yogyakarta is quite large. Yogyakarta is home to a wide range of artists, writers, cultural figures, dramatists, various educational institutions, art communities, and cultural stages, both traditional and modern. However, people often fail to recognise their potential. Therefore, awareness is crucial to unlocking their potential and inspiring them. "In 2019, we conveyed this idea to various radio stations, the drama community, artists, practitioners, and academics" (P1). "At that moment, we encouraged our friends to recognise the importance of reviving Javanese dramas, as they are integral to the lives of Javanese people" (P4). "We are ashamed if the Javanese people lose their Javanese identity" (P2).

Internal meetings are not the only way to raise awareness; seminar forums, discussions, and coffee shop chats with various groups and segments are also effective. It results in several commitments to organise writing workshops, competitions, talent development, and audio production. A number of leaders from various broadcasting institutions serve as advisors, reminding everyone of the importance of consistency and commitment, which in turn leads to the formation of several agreements. Therefore, as a consequence of moral responsibility, the community (*Swarabawa Family*) bears the responsibility for conducting writing, talent development, and audio production programs while also utilising the facilities of the relevant official institutions. Meanwhile, the competition activities are the responsibility of regional official institutions. "We realise this task is heavy. But thanks to all parties' awareness and positive cooperation, the difficult task feels light" (P3).

# 4.2 Writing Script

In the past (1970s–1980s), Sumardjono had written 780 JRD scripts in original works and translations or adaptations from foreign literature, and RRI Nusantara II has aired all of them. However, those manuscripts are not well documented. During that period, the manual typing of manuscripts on paper, in the absence of soft files, left them vulnerable to damage and loss. The 2006 earthquake in Yogyakarta damaged and lost the manuscripts. Furthermore, experts deemed the script from that era unsuitable for broadcasting today. Current interests necessitate new manuscripts. Therefore, regularly carrying out the process of writing scripts through workshops is the appropriate course of action.

A total of 100 participants, including student groups, teachers, and members of the public from private radio broadcasting institutions and community radio, participated in four 2-day workshop packages held in July-August 2019. The *Swarabawa Family* Community offered the same package in February 2020 as it did the previous year. In

November 2021, the number of participants grew to 150. The total number of people participating in February and May 2022 remained unchanged from the previous year. In 2023, the workshop had only 37 participants. "From 2019 to 2023, we have trained at least 537 people to learn to write Javanese dramas" (P3). "Although not all participants ended up becoming capable writers, we are still proud of them. At least this workshop has opened a wide space for them to learn Javanese dramas" (P7).



Figure 1. Workshop participants in the student category



Figure 2. Workshop participants in the teacher category

In each workshop, there are 4–10 instructors according to their respective expertise. Materials provided: general dramaturgy, methods of exploring ideas, techniques for pouring ideas into writing, special terms in drama, use of Javanese, acting and being an actor, management of energy and vocals, management of breathing as support for emotions and vocal products, procedures for using microphones, and so on.



Figure 3. Microphone usage training

"The material provided is quite a lot, while the face-to-face time is only two days. Therefore, even after the official workshop schedule is completed, the training process continues, occurring both in person and via social media (a WhatsApp group) on alternate days. We must always be ready to meet and serve them" (P3). "Given that the majority of the participants are young, the majority of their inquiries pertain to the use of the Javanese language. Understandably, they now have difficulty using standard Javanese according to their *undha-usuk* (Javanese language level)" (P7).

The workshop aims not only to gather multiple manuscripts but also to spread awareness that JRD is more than just

entertainment. It also serves as a platform for expressing experiences rooted in local wisdom and preparing for future challenges. The workshop for radio broadcasting institutions aims to short-term preserve the continuity of JRD broadcasts. Workshops for teachers aim to revitalise their ability to guide students in school and foster the development of new writers. Students attend the workshop to understand that acquiring local culture and language does not equate to "retarded thought." Meanwhile, the training for local government employees aims to enhance their performance in promoting Javanese culture within the community. "Naturally, our objective extends beyond the immediate future. We hope that drama, in particular, and Javanese culture in general will continue to thrive for a long time to come" (P1). "I believe this workshop encourages the younger generation to love their own culture more" (P3).

Workshops alone cannot guarantee the availability of JRD scripts, as not all training scripts align with production standards. The scripts' weaknesses lie in their storytelling and language usage. That is why writing competitions are an important choice as a reinforcement of workshop activities. Since 2019, the competition was open to students and the public. In 2023, it was open to the public. The competition saw the submission of 101 manuscripts in 2019, 123 in 2020, 97 in 2021, 76 in 2022, and 20 in 2023. There is a tendency for participants to decrease from year to year, even though the competition is open nationally. There is a sense of "boredom" among the participants, as they rarely change over time. Those who lose the competition will miss the next one. "Even so, we are proud because, through the competition, we obtained some quality manuscripts for production" (P1). "We have produced some of the competition manuscripts, which are now accessible on the web," (P3).

The workshop organiser then produced the winning scripts in audio and printed book form to meet the community's needs. The workshop published five books from 2020 to 2022, each containing 15–20 manuscripts under the title *Mancawarna Sandiwara Radhio* (An overview of radio drama). "We give this book away for free to the public, and anyone can produce it for their broadcasting" (P1). This book was also welcomed by many radio broadcasting institutions. "We are happy that the themes of the drama in this book are diverse, ranging from family to social, cultural, health, educational, and political issues, and we are free to advantage over them" (P4, P6). Drama community facilitators in various schools, especially junior and senior high schools, expressed their excitement at the publication of this book. "The book serves not only as a resource for practice but also as a valuable teaching and research tool" (P9).



Figure 4. An example of a book published in 2020

These workshops and competitions have created many JRD scriptwriters. Some of them are youth and students. "To develop creativity, we recruit some of them to join our community" (P3). "Some of the students have also formed a drama group at school with the guidance and supervision of teachers who have previously participated in workshops" (P1). "As teachers, we feel that there is a new enthusiasm in the children's environment to learn Javanese through drama" (P9). This synergy makes them creative in both drama and other fields.

4.3 Talent Development

Talent development (actor ability) is a critical factor in broadcast production success. To express the character's soul, actors must have a distinctive voice colour. Actors can only perform souls and expressions appropriately when they are in a calm and clear-minded state. This also influences the actors' ability to dialogue, narrate, and manage voices, vocals, and blocking during recording, even though audio-radio dramas can be recorded in different locations. The radio drama performers develop their talents not only during the workshop through the cast materials, but also before the recording. "It is impossible for all participants to follow the recording and production process. We conduct a selection process to determine who is talented. From each batch, there are 5–10 people to participate in further training" (P3). "In addition to talent, the selection process also takes into account various factors, such as proficiency in the Javanese language, which is particularly relevant to the vocal characteristics of different groups such as men, women, parents, children, and even grandparents" (P3).

Talent development took place in several stages. First, after reading the manuscript, the instructor asked participants to understand the content, study the psychology of the characters, and imagine the time, place, and culture so that each could play a character according to their position in the story. Second, the instructor divides the roles, arranges the opening and closing narratives, illustrates the music, sets the pauses for each half, directs the tone and voice, adjusts the microphone distance, and so on. The third is the practice of casting. In the casting practice, each actor portrays a character from the story. During casting practice, recording also takes place, not for publication but for evaluation purposes. The training organizers repeat this process of rehearsal and evaluation until they find a potential cast member who meets the script's requirements. "Training prospective actors at least four to five times is necessary to improve their abilities" (P3).



Figure 5. The process of reading the script and the cast

In every acting rehearsal, vocal training is the main exercise. Vocal exercise is critical to the success of radio drama broadcasts. "Moreover, this is a Javanese radio drama. We, especially young people who are Javanese, often struggle to distinguish between utterances such as /t/ and /th/ or /d/ and /dh/" (P3). Therefore, vocal exercises, especially practicing proper Javanese pronunciation, receive a larger portion of training.



Figure 6. Vocal training

The organisers divided participants into groups during the talent development workshop based on the titles of the scripts they were to produce. Each group conducted rehearsals in accordance with the demands of their script. "However, some actors take on roles in multiple scripts due to their unique voice characters, which can be challenging for others to replicate" (P3). "Fortunately, there are several members of the *Swarabawa* community who are experienced and ready to accompany them" (P7). The instructor arranges the training time based on an agreement with the participants, who include employees, teachers, and students. "We often conduct training in the afternoon or on holidays (Sundays)" (P3). For them, holidays are not an obstacle because they are based on a strong intention to revive JRD.

# 4.4 Audio Production

Audio production is not easy. During the final recording phase, the production coordinator (P3) repeatedly reminds the team members of this. Before the final process, instructors and participants always do a recording exercise, which is part of the talent development process. From the beginning of script reading to the final recording process, directors, vocal instructors, Javanese linguists, sound effector experts, music specialists, and others always accompanied the participants. The actors and prospective actors undergo training to hone their patience and persistence throughout the stages and rehearsal process of their journey into the world of JRD.

"We, the director and other instructors, are required to have high sensitivity. We are always responsible and absolutely give attention to matters such as the announcer's introductory and closing narratives, music illustrations, round changes, atmosphere building, suspense building, conflict peaks, and their resolution. Naturally, we need to modify numerous aspects to suit the physical and mental circumstances as well as the methods employed, and we reach an agreement on these matters through careful deliberation and dialogue" (P3).

Additionally, the whole team had to imagine who the potential audience would be. "The success of an audio-radio drama hinges on its potential listeners" (P3). "Since this is JRD, we have to understand the Javanese social and cultural aspects" (P2). "In Javanese, there are levels (*undha-usuk*) that describe etiquette and manners; therefore, we must understand the complexity of those levels. Otherwise, we risk disappointing our listeners" (P7). "We are fortunate that the team in this radio drama development program agreed to cater to the needs of modern listeners, so the language is not too tied to the standard Javanese language structure" (P4).



Figure 7. Recording process

At the time of this research, the JRD Development team had successfully documented all Javanese radio drama products online, each lasting 25–45 minutes. Listeners can listen to these products through online channels like Spotify, YouTube, Audacy, Podcast-online.org, and Listennotes.com (Table 1).

# Table 1. Online Channel

Channel	Links
Spotify	https://open.spotify.com/show/5pGGZ6cxHt8ftbzvSqiJVI
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@sandiwararadiobahasajawa4786/featured
Audacy	https://www.audacy.com/podcast/sandiwara-radio-bahasa-jawa-javanese-language-radio-drama-369fb/episo des
Podcas-online.org	https://www.podcasts-online.org/sandiwara-radio-bahasa-jawa-javanese-language-radio-drama-1508256796
Listennotes.com	https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/sandiwara-radio-bahasa-jawa-javanese- KX2WvRSdQrs/

During this program, they produced 67 Javanese radio drama audio products. The program successfully collected and made available Javanese radio drama scripts from workshops and competitions; however, the production process, which takes three to five weeks, could not accommodate all of them into audio format. The production process is heavily dependent on each performer's time and busyness. "We must deal with time, which slows production. Yet we are

confident we can produce all available manuscripts" (P3). The role of audio technicians is also important. They are responsible for converting the final audio into a digital format for uploading to the online portal. This task runs smoothly if all the tools (audio processing programs) are adequate. "For the time being, our audio processing program is enough to complete this task. We have a team that can overcome difficulties" (P8).

# 4.5 Evaluation

Evaluation activities are crucial in determining the continuation or discontinuation of the program. Since 2019, the JRD strengthening program in Yogyakarta has conducted evaluations not only at the end of the year but also at the conclusion of each activity, including workshops, competitions, talent development, and audio production. "We distribute the questionnaire to all parties involved. Their answers tell us what to do and want" (P1). "Additionally, the activity venue provides a suggestion box. Participants are free to give criticism and suggestions" (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6). They use criticism and suggestions as discussion material to find solutions.

All involved managers, stakeholders, experts, and instructors participate in the evaluation meeting forum. "At least once a month, we meet, exchange ideas, evaluate problems that arise, and find solutions together. For approximately two years since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been holding meetings via the Zoom application" (P3). In the evaluation forum, they intend to discuss not only general issues related to workshop and competition management but also specific issues like talent development and production. Workshop participants' feedback, suggesting an extension of the face-to-face activities, is also considered in the evaluation. "Unfortunately, the training time is only two days, so we feel that it is not enough, and in the future, we want to be involved again" (P9). This demonstrates that JRD strengthening has received a lot of praise from the community.

## 5. Discussion

The United Nations supports local culture development, stating that strengthening local cultural aspects is an important agenda item for realizing sustainable development goals (General-Assembly, 2015). This movement fosters the emergence of creative, innovative, and productive actions aimed at enhancing community welfare, as exemplified by the JRD movement. This movement not only opens up economic opportunities for broadcasting institutions but also maintains imaginative expression of social and cultural values to inspire future generations to protect the planet, people, culture, and existing resources (United Nations, 2018). Although the results have not yet reached their peak, this movement is a positive step that strengthens the existence of local communities and Java culture in the face of rapid global cultural acculturation (Rahayu et al., 2020). Therefore, everyone must become aware of the situation.

It is impossible to separate work success from the awareness of those who conducted the activity. The awareness will nurture a deep-seated desire. A strong passion for work will positively predict an awareness of life's purpose. A strong and harmonious passion for work plays an important role in achieving well-being (Yukhymenko-Lescroart & Sharma, 2019). Reflective awareness is also a key variable for a person or group to rise and develop (Verhaeghen & Aikman, 2020). Similarly, the parties are aware of the need to develop JRD in Yogyakarta. Awareness of individuals, groups, institutions, and communities is the main key to the revival of JRD because understanding fosters a sense of empathy, belonging, appreciation, and responsibility (McDonell, 1993). However, building awareness is not an effortless task, as it requires continuous attachment. Therefore, continuous awareness-building is necessary to prevent the revival of JRD in Yogyakarta from weakening (Hermawan et al., 2023).

The development of JRD is inseparable from the existence of scripts, which is an important factor for the continuity of radio drama broadcasts (Crook, 2023). T Writing scripts through training and competition is an appropriate step. The participation of teachers, students, and government employees is also a strategic action. However, it is important to remember that teachers, students, and employees undergo regeneration over time. Therefore, training and competitions demand sustainable action with different target participants. Talent development, specifically acting, requires the same approach (Widharta, 2021). Performing during workshops or in the lead-up to recording or production is insufficient. Due to the unique nature of radio acting, which differs significantly from stage or television acting (de Fossard, 2005), a radio drama actor requires specialised training that includes a variety of special tips. Therefore, broadcasting institutions and the radio drama community need to provide specialised training for radio actors.

For four years, workshop activities and writing competitions have produced many ready-to-broadcast manuscripts. However, due to the relatively longer production process (de Fossard, 2005), it is not possible to produce all manuscripts. It encourages the parties who have been involved and strongly committed to developing Javanese dramas from the beginning to rearrange production management (Y. Sari et al., 2017). Of course, this demanded quick action, considering that Yogyakarta had more than 100 radio broadcasting institutions and only 67 new audio products available. In general, every radio broadcasting institution adheres to the principle of not broadcasting the same "broadcast product" at the same time or nearby for the sake of "market" and credibility (P5). Therefore, to strengthen JRD, the cultural community, with the support of the government, needs to immediately produce all available manuscripts in

order to increase the number of JRD products in audio format. Product availability is a critical success parameter in JRD development (P. A. Sari et al., 2016).

In the presentation of the findings, the involvement of the *Swarabawa Family* community is significant. This community is a pioneer and plays a crucial role in providing a unique atmosphere for the spirit and awareness of all components to move. It poured its energy, resources, and thoughts into the entire process of developing JRD. This community performs optimally despite its status as a non-governmental institution with limited economic resources. That is why, in order to optimise the development of JRD in particular and local culture in general, it is also important to pay attention to the involvement of other broader communities in finding better strategies (Rihartono, 2015).

Regular and periodic implementation of the evaluation system is also crucial. Evaluation is not sufficient only for activity management; it is effective if carried out holistically in the public sector (Duy et al., 2020). Some of the important questions that need to be answered by the relevant agencies are (1) whether the needs of all broadcasters are being met, (2) how listeners are responding to the dramas being broadcast, and (3) how much digital audio products are in demand by listeners. The answer to this question is urgent, given the lengthy efforts to develop JRD. Therefore, collaborative partnerships (Freeman et al., 2006) that accommodate consumer needs are very necessary (Hayati & Ariestanty, 2023). This requires professional action from all parties, including how to creatively manage the channels that house digital audio products for Javanese dramas.

### 6. Conclusion

In the framework of saving local cultural wealth, preserving identity, inheriting wisdom values, creating national and global social equality, fostering creativity and productivity, stimulating the growth of work culture, and improving community welfare, the movement to strengthen Javanese language radio drama is one of the decisive factors for the development of radio drama in particular and Javanese culture in general. The involvement of many parties (individuals, institutions, and communities) with full awareness, strong commitment, sincere intentions, massive actions, and consistent and beneficial cooperation in determining steps is the main prerequisite for achieving the goal.

Meanwhile, the implementation of awareness activities, writing movements, talent development, online production and dissemination of digital audio, and routine evaluations are the right operational steps that can be a simple model for efforts to develop local culture. The practical and concrete experience of Javanese radio drama activists in Yogyakarta not only offers a unique perspective on local culture in the context of modern technology, but also serves as a straightforward model for the preservation and advancement of local culture globally.

This research focusses on the actors' experiences in developing JRD in Yogyakarta, making the management model relative. Therefore, future research needs to explore the experience of JRD managers in Central Java and East Java to find a more precise, complete, operational, and comprehensive model. Furthermore, given Indonesia's multicultural nature, it is crucial to uncover the experiences of other local cultural managers.

# Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the National Research and Innovation Agency for providing funding support for this research (No. 10/III.8/HK/2023).

# **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## Informed consent

Obtained.

# Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing. The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

### Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

### Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

### **Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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