

Sindhènan Pêmatut* in Surakarta-Style *Karawitan*: Vocal Decision-Making in Context-Dependent *Garap

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Abstract

This study examines *sindhènan pêmatut*, the context-dependent adjustment of female vocal practice, in Surakarta-style *karawitan* (Central Javanese gamelan performance) as an adaptive mode of vocal *garap* (interpretive working-out in performance) that becomes operative when standard placement schemes and melodic conventions do not adequately fit the musical conditions of a *gending* or a formally structured gamelan piece. Rather than treating *pêmatut* as an aesthetic preference, the study frames it as a set of decisions through which *pêsindhèn* (female gamelan vocalists) maintain coherence across irregular forms and regular forms with atypical phrase organisation. The findings identify three interrelated dimensions of *sindhènan pêmatut*: 1) adjustment of *wangsalan* placement according to *padhang-ulihan* phrase function and *cèngkok*; 2) *cèngkok*-based adaptation shaped by *rêbab garap*, register, and *balungan* patterns such as *ngadhal* and *nggantung*; and 3) *cakêpan*-based substitution influenced by ensemble texture and *gending* theme. Overall, *sindhènan pêmatut* emerges as a context-dependent decision process that sustains vocal coherence when schematic conventions are insufficient.

Keywords: Javanese gamelan, performance practice, *Sindhènan pêmatut*, Surakarta-style *karawitan*, vocal *garap*

Introduction

Within the scope of Surakarta-style *karawitan*, the term for gamelan music in Java, the terms *sindhen*, *sindhènan*, and *pèsindhèn* are commonly used to refer respectively to the female vocalist, the vocal practice itself, and the professional role associated with that practice (Aji, 2022; Suraji, 2005). *Sindhen* is etymologically linked to *sèndhu* and *ing*, which denote cutting or interrupting (Aji, 2022). This meaning is reflected in performance practice, as *sindhènan* does not necessarily begin at the opening of a *gending* (a structured gamelan composition), but enters at moments deemed musically appropriate within the rhythmic and melodic flow (Darsono, 2008). In this sense, *sindhènan* is understood as a vocal practice that interacts with, rather than simply overlays, the instrumental structure of a *gending*.

Sindhènan in *karawitan* is performed melodically with reference to the *balungan*, the skeletal or core melody that underpins a *gending* (Suraji, 2005). Supanggah (2002) places the *sindhen* within the category of *ricikan garap*, a classification that situates the voice among instruments responsible for melodic elaboration and interpretive shaping. *Sindhènan* may be classified into general and specific forms, with *wangsalan* (metaphorical poetic verses) and *abon-abon* (non-metrical vocal fillers or auxiliary texts) functioning as primary textual materials (Suyoto et al., 2016). Sumarsam (2003), in line with Supanggah (2002), situates the *sindhen* among melodic elaboration instruments. Despite differences in terminology, these perspectives converge in treating *sindhènan* as a core component in the construction of *gending* presentation rather than as a supplementary layer.

Previous studies note that *sindhènan* contributes to the sonic character and aesthetic configuration of Surakarta-style *karawitan* (Aji, 2021; Budiarti, 2013; Purwanto, 2012). The vocal line is typically realised through ornamented melodic contours (*cèngkok*, established melodic patterns) that demand control of tone, timbre, and phrasing. In practice, *sindhènan* requires not only technical vocal competence but also familiarity with repertoire, textual forms, and the structural logic of *gending*. This includes an understanding of how vocal material relates to instrumental patterns and how it is adjusted in response to changes in *irama* (tempo-density relationships), register, and ensemble interaction.

Within performance contexts, *pèsindhèn* (female vocalists in Javanese gamelan) are expected to respond to varying musical conditions. These conditions may include changes in *gending* form, differences in phrase length, or the presence or absence of particular *ricikan* (individual gamelan instruments) such as *rêbab* (a bowed lute) or *gérong* (male choral singing). As a result, vocal realisation is not always governed by fixed placement schemes. Instead, *pèsindhèn* often reinterpret vocal placement and melodic choice to ensure that the presentation is *patut*, a term in *karawitan* discourse referring to musical appropriateness or suitability in a given context (Setiawan, 2019). Within *sindhènan*, *pématut* refers to the *pèsindhèn*'s capacity to adjust vocal material in response to musical cues encountered during performance. This may involve reinterpreting the placement of *wangsalan* (metaphorical poetic verses), selecting alternative *cèngkok* (established melodic formulae), or substituting textual material to accommodate the structure of a *gending*.

Researchers have examined *sindhènan* from a range of perspectives, including literary analysis, musicology, ethnography, and practitioner-based studies (Purwanto, 2021; Setiawan, 2019; Suyoto et al., 2016). These studies address themes such as vocal aesthetics, textual forms, performance technique, and the cultural positioning of female vocalists in Javanese music. Other work has focused on individual performers, stylistic variation, or specific *garap* practices (*garap* referring to the interpretive working-out of musical material), including studies on *unèn-unèn* (short vocal or instrumental cues), *rêbab* interaction, and the creative strategies of particular artists (Budiarti & Siswati, 2020; Ciptaningsih & Mistortoify, 2022; Utomo & Hardyanto, 2021).

Although these studies provide detailed accounts of *sindhènan* practice, few address how *pêsindhèn* operate in situations where established schemes are insufficient or inapplicable. In particular, there is limited discussion of how vocal decisions are made in *gending* with irregular structures, such as *jinêman*, *srêpêgan*, *sampak*, and *ayak-ayakan* (forms characterised by abbreviated cycles or non-standard phrase organisation), or in regular *gending* that contain atypical phrase arrangements (Hastanto, 2009). In such contexts, reliance on standardised placement schemes may lead to misalignment between vocal material and musical structure.

This article examines *sindhènan pêmatut*—a mode of vocal practice in which the *pêsindhèn* adjusts vocal material in response to musical conditions—in Surakarta-style *karawitan*, and focuses on how *pêsindhèn* adjust vocal placement, melodic contour, and textual choice when conventional schemes do not adequately account for the musical situation. Drawing on empirical analysis and Rahayu Supanggah's *garap* framework, the study investigates the musical factors that shape *pêmatut*, including phrase structure (*padhang-ulihan*, referring to question-answer phrase organisation), *balungan* patterns, and interaction with other *ricikan*. Through this approach, *sindhènan pêmatut* is treated as a mode of vocal decision-making that enables performers to maintain coherence across varying structural conditions.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to examine *sindhènan pêmatut* in Surakarta-style *karawitan*. Data were drawn from literature, musical analysis, interviews, and observation to address both conceptual explanations of *garap* and its practical enactment in performance. The methodological focus is on describing how *pêmatut* operates within vocal practice through performers' responses to musical structure, phrase organisation, and ensemble interaction, as manifested in vocal placement, melodic choice, and text selection.

The research began with a focused literature review intended to establish a conceptual and historical point of reference for the study. The review addressed a set of works concerned with *garap*, *sindhènan*, *gending* structure, and Surakarta-style performance practice (Purwanto, 2021). Priority was given to studies examining vocal practice, instrumental interaction, and structural organisation in *karawitan*, as these areas bear most directly on the analysis of *sindhènan pêmatut*. Rather than offering a

comprehensive survey, the review served to situate the study within existing discussions and to clarify its scope.

A “karawitanological” orientation was therefore adopted (Sularso et al., 2023), in which musical practice is understood as a sonic and socially situated activity. Within this orientation, musical analysis relates melodic structure, phrasing, and form to performance behaviour and practitioner knowledge. Attention was directed towards the performance contexts in which *pématut* emerges, including ensemble interaction, performance conventions, and shared interpretive understandings among performers (Purwanto, 2021). Interviews and observations were used to contextualise and support interpretations derived from musical analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine participants selected on the basis of sustained involvement and experience in Surakarta-style *karawitan*. These participants comprised three groups: senior *pèsindhèn* with extensive performance experience, scholars who have published research on *sindhènan* and related aspects of *karawitan*, and recognised practitioners and researchers with expertise in vocal *garap* and Surakarta performance practice. The interviews followed a semi-structured format, with pre-defined topics guiding discussion and participants elaborating on their experiences, evaluative criteria, and interpretive strategies.

Direct observation was undertaken during live performances, rehearsals, and educational activities in order to examine *pématut* as it occurs in real time. Observations were carried out at monthly Sangalikuran events at SMKN 8 Surakarta, *Sétu Pon-nan* performances at the Mangkunegaran Palace, and performances by the Pujånggâ Laras *karawitan* group. These settings were selected due to their regular presentation of classical repertoire and the involvement of experienced *pêngrawit* (gamelan musicians) and *pèsindhèn*. Observation focused on vocal entry and placement, interaction between *sindhènan* and other *ricikan*, and moments in which performers adjusted established patterns in response to specific musical conditions.

Indirect observation was conducted through close listening to commercial recordings of Surakarta-style *karawitan*. Recordings produced by Fajar Record, Dahlia Record, Kusuma Recording, and Perum Percetakan Negara Lokananta were analysed, with particular attention to releases from the 1980s and 1990s. These recordings include performances by ensembles noted for studio practice and sustained engagement with classical repertoire. Aural analysis was used to identify recurrent vocal patterns, placement strategies, and instances of *pématut* across different *gending* forms.

Musical analysis was carried out through detailed examination of *balungan* melodies, *gending* structures, and phrase organisation. Analytical procedures included identifying *balungan* types, segmenting phrases according to *padhang-ulihan*, and assessing how *sindhènan* confirms and adapts to, or departs from, schematic expectations. The repertoire studied included *Ladrang Mugi Rahayu*, *Jinêman Mari Kangên*, *Banthèng Warèng*, *Gambirsawit*, *Kêtawang Ibu Pertiwi*, and *Srêpêg*. These pieces were selected because they present varied structural characteristics and *sindhènan* configurations that allow examination of *pématut* across both regular and irregular musical contexts.

In these analyses, emphasis was placed on how *sindhènan* responds to *balungan* flow, *rêbab garap*, and interaction with *gérong* and other vocal or instrumental components. The analysis also considered situations in which the *sindhèn* assumes a leading melodic role (*pamurbå lagu*), especially in the absence of the *rêbab*, as well as instances in which vocal delivery coincides with *sénggakan* as part of the unfolding *garap*. These observations were used to characterise *pématut* as a set of context-based vocal decisions rather than a fixed formula.

Throughout the study, interpretive rigour was supported through triangulation across literature, interviews, direct observation, and recordings. By combining these sources, the research presents a grounded account of *sindhènan pématut* as it occurs in Surakarta performance practice, without reducing the phenomenon to either schematic rule-following or individual intuition alone.

Results and Discussion

Pématut in Surakarta-Style Karawitan: Terminology and Usage

In Surakarta-style *karawitan*, *sindhènan pématut* operates differently depending on the structural organisation of the *gending*. Many common forms, such as *kêtawang*, *ladrang*, *mérong*, and *inggah*, are governed by established conventions that specify where instrumental patterns should occur. In these regular forms, instrumental placement is largely pre-determined. For example, in *ladrang*, the *kêthuk* follows a fixed scheme in which the *baku* pattern is used throughout most of the cycle and the *salahan* pattern appears only in the final *gâtrå* before the gong.

Similar principles apply to the *kendang*, the lead drum in Javanese gamelan, especially the *ciblon*, a drumming style characterised by articulated rhythmic patterns, in Surakarta-style practice. In regular *ladrang* structures, the placement of *sêkaran* and *singgêtan* patterns follows conventional schemes that guide performance. Because these conventions are widely shared, performers generally rely on established practice rather than interpretive decision-making.

Not all *gending*, however, conform to such regular structures. Irregular forms such as *jinêman*, *srêpêgan*, *sampak*, and *ayak-ayakan* lack standardised schemes for pattern placement (Hastanto, 2009). In these contexts, *pématut* becomes central. Rather than following fixed conventions, performers must respond to musical phrasing as it unfolds. For the *kendang*, this requires interpretive judgement in determining when and how *sêkaran* and *singgêt* should be introduced. As the ensemble's aesthetic leader, the *pengêndhang* plays a key role in shaping the unfolding *garap* under such conditions (Arifin & Koentjoro, 2021).

Interpretation here draws on established *këndhangan* principles (the conventions governing *kendang* pattern selection and placement), in which *sêkaran* are associated with *padhang* phrases and *singgêt* with *ulihan*. This relationship is illustrated through the analysis of *ciblon irâmâ dados* in the *ladrang Mugi Rahayu* (laras *sléndro pathêt manyurâ*), as presented in Table 1. As a regular *gending* form with fixed structural schemes, *ladrang* provides a clear example of how these principles operate within conventional *kendang* practice.

(Note: In the tables that follow, numeric figures use *kepatihan* cipher notation and are presented schematically to indicate pattern placement and interaction rather than detailed melodic realisation.)

Table 1. *Relationship between padhang-ulihan phrasing and kendang pattern placement in Ladrang Mugi Rahayu (laras sléndro pathêt manyurâ)*

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>361.</u> | <u>3612̂</u> | <u>361.</u> | <u>3612̂</u> | <u>3523</u> | <u>6i65̂</u> | <u>i653</u> | <u>6132̂</u> |
| Phrase | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| | <i>padhang</i> | | <i>ulihan</i> | | <i>padhang</i> | | <i>ulihan</i> | |
| | <i>padhang</i> | | | | <i>ulihan</i> | | | |
| <i>Këndhangan Scheme</i> | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>singgêtan kèngsêr</i> | | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>singgêtan ngaplak</i> | | |
| <i>Kênongan (Kênong sticking) symbol</i> | ~ | | | | | | | |
| <i>Gong symbol</i> | 0 | | | | | | | |

Although the relationship between *padhang-ulihan* phrasing and *kendang* pattern placement is clearly articulated in regular forms, its application becomes less straightforward in *jinêman*, a free-flowing vocal *gending* form characterised by flexible phrasing and the absence of fixed schemes for pattern placement. In *jinêman*, performers must determine *kendang* patterns in real time and rely on phrase structure rather than pre-determined templates. The analysis shows that the same *padhang-ulihan* logic observed in *ladrang* continues to inform *kendang* decisions: *kênongan* containing *padhang* phrases are filled with *sêkaran*, whereas *ulihan* phrases employ *singgêt*. The specific type of *singgêt* varies according to phrase length.

In this study, longer phrases are distinguished as *padhang panjang* and *ulihan panjang*: *kèngsêr singgêt* appears in long *padhang*, while *ngaplak singgêt* is used in long *ulihan*. This analytical framework provides practical guidance for *pengëndhang* in navigating *jinêman* structures. The *jinêman Mari Kangên* in *sléndro pathêt sângâ* is examined as a case study, with its *padhang-ulihan* phrasing presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Padhang–ulihan *phrasing and kendang pattern placement in the jinêman Mari Kangên* (laras sléndro pathêts ângâ)

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Balungan | <u>5621</u> | <u>5216</u> | <u>1521</u> | <u>3216</u> | | |
| Phrase | <i>padhang</i> | | <i>ulihan</i> | | | |
| | <i>Padhang</i> | | | | | |
| Këndhangan Scheme | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>singgêtan kèngsêr</i> | | | |
| Balungan | <u>1521</u> | <u>3216</u> | <u>2356</u> | <u>5321</u> | <u>3532</u> | <u>1635</u> |
| Phrase | <i>padhang</i> | | <i>padhang</i> | | <i>ulihan</i> | |
| | <i>Ulihan</i> | | | | | |
| Këndhangan Scheme | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>sêkaran</i> | <i>singgêtan ngaplak</i> | | |

Aside from structural interpretation, *pêmatut* may also be understood as a responsive process between instruments. In this sense, *pêmatut* emerges through real-time interaction, particularly among melodic elaboration instruments responding to the *balungan*. One example is the interaction between *rêbab* and *bonang*, illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Application of the *cêngkok Dêbyang-dêbyung* by *bonang and rêbab*

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Balungan | . 3 . 2 |
| Cêngkok | <i>Dêbyang-dêbyung</i> |
| Imbal bonang | 313 . 313 . |
| Rêbaban | $\widehat{}\widehat{}\widehat{}\widehat{}$ 3132 3132 |

Table 3 illustrates the use of the *cêngkok Dêbyang-dêbyung* by both *bonang* and *rêbab*. Under conventional circumstances, the *bonang* performs a standard *imbal* pattern (1313 1313), followed by *sêkaran* determined by the *sêlèh*. In this instance, however, the *bonang* adjusts its *imbal* pattern (*pêmatut imbal*) in response to the *rêbaban*. This adjustment demonstrates how *pêmatut* operates as a mechanism for maintaining cohesion between instruments. As gamelan performance is grounded in mutual coordination, *garap* instruments continually adapt to and complement one another (Teguh, 2017).

Garap Sindhènan Pêmatut in Surakarta-style Karawitan

Sindhènan occupies a central position in *karawitan* performance, as vocal interpretation plays a key role in shaping the musical character of a *gending*. When the *pêsindhèn* articulates this character with clarity, the resulting musical impression becomes more distinct. Although the *rêbab* can also convey melodic nuance, not all *gending* include this instrument. In *Gending Srêpeg Tludur*, for instance, the *balungan* contains an internal melodic contour featuring *minir* (minor) tones associated with *nges* and *welasan*. These expressive tones may be realised through the *rêbab* or the voice; when the *rêbab* is absent, *sindhènan* assumes a decisive role in shaping melodic flow and conveying the intended affect.

Within Surakarta-style *karawitan*, *sindhènan srambahan* represents one recognised vocal practice. It is characterised by the predominant use of *wangsalan*, supported by *abon-abon*, *parikan*, and *senggakan* as complementary textual elements (Suraji, 2005). *Wangsalan* itself comprises four types—*lâmbâ*, *rangkêp*, *mêmêt*, and *padintènan*—of which *wangsalan rangkêp* is most frequently employed in *sindhènan srambahan* (Suparsih, 2019). Its use is closely related to decisions concerning text placement and the selection of *cêngkok* in relation to the intended *sèlèh balungan*.

In regular *gending* forms, the placement of *wangsalan* is often presented through schematic frameworks, largely intended as pedagogical guidance for novice *pêsindhèn*. In performance practice, however, such schemes are not consistently applied. Certain *gending* follow alternative placement patterns, and experienced singers frequently respond to the melodic direction of the *pamurbâ lagu* through real-time judgement rather than predetermined schemes. The selection of *cêngkok* likewise resists codification: a single *sèlèh balungan* may be realised through different *cêngkok*, depending on ensemble interaction. Variations in instrumental patterns can therefore shape vocal decisions as performance unfolds.

For these reasons, *sindhènan srambahan* may be understood as facultative, with its enactment shaped by musical conditions specific to each *gending*. This flexibility places it within the category of *sindhènan pêmatut*, whose presentation depends on contextual musical factors. Figure 1 on the next page outlines the classification of *sindhènan pêmatut* and the elements that inform its application.

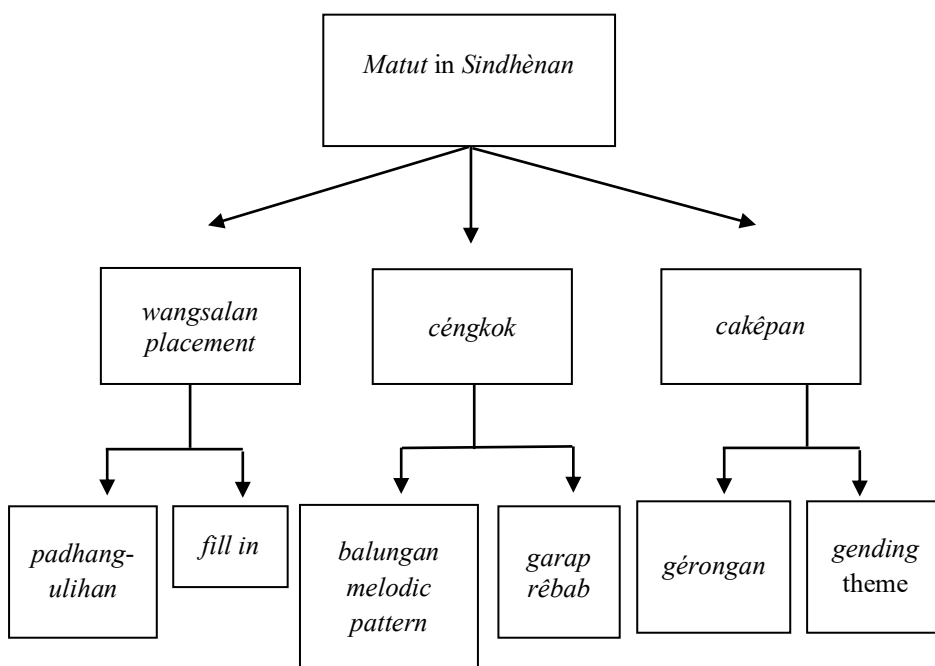


Figure 1. Classification of *garap sindhènan pêmatur* in Surakarta-style *karawitan*

Matut in Relation to Wangsalan Placement

Phrase Correlation between Ulihan Cêngkok and Wangsalan Placement

In regular *gending* forms, the placement of *wangsalan* is commonly organised through schematic conventions, primarily for instructional purposes. In *sindhènan mérong gending kêtuk 2 kêrêp*, the relationship between *ulihan cêngkok* and *wangsalan* follows a system of syllabic groupings that distinguish question (*tanya*) and answer (*jawab*) phrases. These groupings include four-syllable question phrases (4t), eight-syllable question phrases as extensions of 4t (8t), four-syllable answer phrases (4j), eight-syllable answer phrases as extensions of 4j (8j), and complete twelve-syllable answer phrases realised as a single unit (12j).

For instance, a four-syllable question phrase (4t) may appear as *ancur sotyâ* and be extended into an eight-syllable question (8t) as *sotyâ kang mungwing sutaknyâ*. Similarly, a four-syllable answer phrase (4j) such as *dasar nyâtâ* may be expanded into an eight-syllable answer (8j) as *linuwih limpat ing bâsâ* or realised as a complete twelve-syllable answer (12j) in *dasar nyâtâ linuwih limpat ing bâsâ*.

In *mérong kêtuk 2 kêrêp*, a single *gongan* typically presents a complete *wangsalan* consisting of one question phrase and one answer phrase, each comprising 12 syllables. Although this distribution may initially appear to follow an even metric pattern across the *gâtrâ* of each *kenong*, closer examination suggests otherwise. Rather than being governed by metric symmetry

alone, *wangsalan* placement corresponds to the organisation of *padhang* and *ulihan* within the musical structure. In performance, *wangsalan* are placed on *ulihan* phrases according to the *céngkok* in use, rather than by strict formal symmetry.

This relationship can be understood through Martopangrawit's (1975) distinction between two types of *padhang-ulihan* organisation in Javanese *gending*: *padhang-ulihan* based on *céngkok* and *padhang-ulihan* based on *gending* form. In the former, the first *céngkok* functions as *padhang* and the second as *ulihan*. An example of this principle can be seen in Table 4, which analyses *Ladrang Pangkur* according to *padhang-ulihan* by *céngkok* across different *irâmâ*.

Table 4. Analysis of *padhang ulihan* based on its *céngkok*.

| <i>Padhang</i> | | <i>Ulihan</i> | | <i>Irâmâ</i> |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <u>3 2 3 1</u> | | <u>3 2 1 6</u> | | <i>Lancar</i> |
| <u>3 2 3 1</u> | | <u>3 2 1 6</u> | | <i>Tanggung</i> |
| <u>3 2 3 1</u> | | <u>3 2 1 6</u> | | <i>Dados</i> |
| <u>3 2</u> | <u>3 1</u> | <u>3 2</u> | <u>1 6</u> | <i>Wilêd</i> |
| <u>3 2</u> | <u>3 1</u> | <u>3 2</u> | <u>1 6</u> | <i>Rangkêp</i> |
| <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | |

Padhang-ulihan as determined by *gending* form refers to the predefined structural organisation of a *gending*. In this framework, a *padhang* phrase is a segment that has not yet reached a state of *sèlèh*, while an *ulihan* phrase is one that resolves at *sèlèh*. Such phrases may comprise more than one *céngkok balungan*. An illustration of this form-based phrasing can be seen in Table 5, which marks the distribution of *padhang* and *ulihan* phrases within the *gending Gambirsawit*.

Table 5. *Padhang-ulihan phrasing as determined by gending form in Gambirsawit*

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>. . . 5 . 3 5 6</u> | <u>2 2 . . 2 3 2 1̂</u> |
| <i>Padhang phrase</i> | <i>Ulihan Phrase</i> |

The analyses presented above indicate that *wangsalan* placement in *sindhènan mérong gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp* is consistently linked to *ulihan* phrasing and shaped by the *céngkok* employed. This relationship can be observed across successive *kênong* sections of the *gending Gambirsawit*. Tables 6 to 9 present the distribution of *wangsalan* within each *kenong*; they show how vocal placement follows *ulihan* phrases rather than metric symmetry.

Table 6. *Gambirsawit, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt sângâ (kênong I)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>. . . 5</u> | <u>2 3 5 6</u> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>2 3 2 1</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> | - | - | - | 4t |

Table 7. *Gambirsawit, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt sângâ (kênong II)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>. . 3 2</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>2 3 2 1</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan scheme</i> | - | 4t | - | 4j |

Table 8. *Gambirsawit, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt sângâ (kênong III)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>. . 3 2</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> | <u>. . 5 6</u> | <u>1 6 5 3</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan scheme</i> | - | 4j | - | 8j |

Table 9. *Gambirsawit, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt sângâ (kênong IV)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 2 . 3</u> | <u>5 3 2 1</u> | <u>3 5 3 2</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan scheme</i> | - | 4j | - | 8j/12j |

Further support for the placement of *wangsalan* within *ulihan* phrases as determined by *céngkok* can be found in the *sindhènan mérong* of the *gending Banthèng Warèng*, specifically in the second *kênong* of the fourth *gâtrâ*. The *balungan* configuration at this point forms an ambiguous phrase. When examined through *céngkok*-based analysis, the second *kênong* of the *mérong* allows for two alternative interpretations. These possibilities are set out in Tables 10 and 11 (Table 10 presents the first analysis, while Table 11 offers the second.)

Table 10. *Banthèng Warèng, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt manyurâ (kênong II)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 1 3 2</u> | <u>6 2 . 6</u> | <u>6 2 . 3</u> | <u>5 6 5 3</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> | | | | <i>wangsalan</i> |

Table 11. *Banthèng Warèng, gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp laras sléndro pathêt manyurâ (kênong II)*

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 1 3 2</u> | <u>6 2 . 6</u> | <u>6 2 . 3</u> | <u>5 6 5 3</u> |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> | | | | <i>abon-abon</i> |
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 1 3 2</u> | | | |
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | | | |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> | <i>wangsalan</i> | | | |

Based on the *padhang-ulihan* analysis outlined above, two alternative placements of *wangsalan* can be identified. In the first, the *pêsindhèn* places the *wangsalan* on the *balungan* 5653. In the second, the *pêsindhèn* replaces the *wangsalan* at *balungan* 5653 with *abon-abon*, thereby shifting the *wangsalan* to the subsequent *balungan* (2132). This comparison shows that *wangsalan* placement follows *ulihan* phrasing as determined by *céngkok*.

Space Filling and Wangsalan Replacement

As described above, *wangsalan* in *sindhènan srambahan* are positioned on *ulihan* phrases according to *céngkok*. Beyond *padhang-ulihan* organisation, the *pêsindhèn* must also take into account the syllabic length of the *wangsalan*. The number of *wangsalan* employed within a musical form depends on the length of that form within a single *gongan*.

In the *kêtawang* form, for example, a *wangsalan* consisting of 12 question syllables (12Q) and 12 answer syllables (12A) is completed over two *gongan*. By contrast, in *mêrong gending kèthuk 2 kêrêp*, a complete *wangsalan* (12Q and 12A) is realised within a single *gongan*. According to *srambahan* convention, a *wangsalan* should not be presented partially or with omitted components; it must appear in its complete form, comprising both question and answer.

Thus, if a *ladrang* form within one *gongan* requires 12 question syllables and 12 answer syllables, but the *pêsindhèn* completes only the question phrase, the organisation of the *wangsalan* may be considered unsuccessful. The division of *wangsalan* structure has been outlined in the basic scheme discussed earlier, although this scheme serves primarily as a learning guide and does not apply uniformly across

all *gending* forms, even those with regular structures. Indeed, within the same *gending* and by the same *pêsindhèn*, *wangsalan* placement may vary between the first and subsequent rounds or *rambahan*.

In this study, such variation is examined through the example of *Kêtawang Ibu Pertiwi* in *pélog pathêt nêr*. Further details are provided in Table 12.

Table 12. *Ibu Pertiwi, kêtawang laras pélog pathêt nêr (umpak section)*

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| First <i>rambahan</i> : | | | | |
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>5 5 6 1</u> [^] | <u>3 3 1 2</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> [^] |
| <i>Sindhènan Scheme</i> | | 4t | | 8j |
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>5 5 6 1</u> [^] | <u>. 1 6 5</u> | <u>. 2 . 1</u> [^] |
| <i>Sindhènan Scheme</i> | | 8j | | <i>gérongan</i> |
| Second <i>rambahan</i> : | | | | |
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>5 5 6 1</u> | <u>3 3 1 2</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> [^] |
| <i>Sindhènan Scheme</i> | | 8t | | 8j |
| <i>Balungan</i> | <u>2 2 . .</u> | <u>5 5 6 1</u> | <u>. 1 6 5</u> | <u>. 2 . 1</u> [^] |
| <i>Sindhènan Scheme</i> | | 4t 8j/ <i>abon-abon</i> | | <i>gérongan</i> |

Based on the comparative data in Table 13, the *pêsindhèn*'s selection of *wangsalan* placement becomes evident. This can be observed in the *sindhènan* of *Kêtawang Ibu Pertiwi* during the second gong of the *umpak* (second *rambahan*), where two alternative placements of *wangsalan* are possible.

The first option involves the use of a 4–8 *wangsalan* (comprising four question syllables and eight answer syllables) placed on the *balungan*. This approach ensures that the *wangsalan* is completed by the second gong of the *umpak kêtawang*, as the final *balungan* (.2.1) does not permit *wangsalan* placement due to the presence of *gérongan gawan gênding*. The second option substitutes the *gérongan wangsalan* in *balungan* 5561 with *abon-abon* or fills the space with a 12-syllable *wangsalan* realised through the 4–8 configuration.

Wangsalan substitution also occurs in special forms of *sindhènan*. Special-form *gending* are characterised by uneven phrase lengths, as found in *Ayak-ayakan*, *Srêpêgan*, *Sampak*, and *Kemudå* (Hastanto, 2009). Among these, *Srêpêgan* is examined as a representative example. Hastanto describes *Srêpêgan* as an irregular form in which *sindhènan* presentation is *pématut*. Further analysis shows that this irregularity is closely linked to *padhang-ulihan* organisation, with each *Srêpêgan* exhibiting a distinct *padhang-ulihan* pattern.

Conceptually, the presentation of *sindhènan* in *Srêpêgan sléndro pathêt nêṃ* is shaped by the correlation between *padhang-ulihan* phrasing and *céngkok*, which governs both the placement of *wangsalan* and the use of substitution as an alternative strategy to ensure that the *wangsalan* resolves (*mulih*). Table 13 presents several variations of *sindhènan srêpêg sléndro pathêt nêṃ* for further analysis.

Table 13. *Placement of wangsalan in relation to ulihan phrasing in Srêpêg (sléndro pathêt nêṃ)*

| Balungan | $\parallel \overset{\sim}{6}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{6}\overset{\sim}{5}$ | $\overset{\sim}{2}\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{3}$ | $\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{3}$ | $\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{2}\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{5}$ | $\overset{\sim}{1}\overset{\sim}{6}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{3}$ | $\overset{\sim}{6}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{2}$ | $\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{2}\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{2}$ | $\overset{\sim}{3}\overset{\sim}{5}\overset{\sim}{6}\overset{\sim}{5}\parallel$ |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| Phrases based on <i>céngkok</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> | <i>padhang</i> | <i>ulihan</i> |
| Variation I | | <i>abon-abon</i> | | | | 4t | | <i>abon-abon</i> |
| Variation II | | 4t | | <i>abon-abon</i> | | 8j | | 8j |
| Variation III | | <i>abon-abon</i> | | | | 12j | | <i>abon-abon</i> |

With respect to the *wangsalan* placements shown in Table 13, all occurrences remain within *ulihan* phrases and follow the *céngkok balungan*. A notable case appears in *balungan* 3565, where the *ulihan* phrase may be filled either with *abon-abon* or with a *wangsalan*. When this principle of space filling and *wangsalan* replacement is applied, *Srêpêg nêṃ* requires only a single *wangsalan* per piece. As indicated by the analysis presented in the table, three alternative *wangsalan* placements are possible within the *balungan*. In this context, substituting *wangsalan* with *abon-abon* does not affect the musical outcome, as the *gending* lacks a regular *sèlèh* phrase.

Matut Based on Céngkok Selection

In the presentation of *sindhènan srambahan*, attention is required not only to the schematic placement of *wangsalan* but also to the choice of *céngkok* used to interpret a given *sèlèh balungan*. The selection of *céngkok* is shaped by several considerations. A single *sèlèh balungan*, for example, may be realised through more than one *céngkok*, depending on musical context.

Garap Ricikan Rêbab

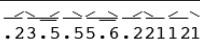
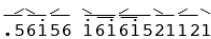
In Surakarta-style *karawitan*, the *ricikan rêbab* functions as *pamurbâ lagu* (Martopangrawit, 1975). In this role, the *rêbab* provides musical cues to which other *ricikan garap*, including the *sindhèn*, respond. Variations in *rêbab céngkok* or *wiledan* therefore carry direct implications for the choice of *sindhènan céngkok*. An example of this relationship can be observed in *Gending Gambirsawit* laras *sléndro pathêt sângâ*, at the first *kênong* of the *ingguh* in *irâmâ wilêd*, gâtrâ four. In this passage, the *pêsindhèn* employs different *céngkok* in the first and second *rambahan*, reflecting changes in *rêbab* articulation.

Table 14. *Variations of céngkok sindhènan against rêbaban in the first and second rambahan*

| | |
|------------------|---|
| First rambahan: | |
| Balungan: | . 2 . 1 |
| Sindhènan: | 5 6 5 i 5 2 321 1 Harda-ning wong lu- mak-sâ- nâ |
| Second rambahan: | |
| Balungan: | . 2 . 1 |
| Sindhènan: | i 2 i 6i 5 2 321 1 Hardaning wong lu- mak-sâ- nâ |

When the *balungan* phrase .2.1 shown in Table 14 is realised in *irâmâ wilêd* within *pathêt sângâ*, most instruments conventionally employ the *céngkok puthut gêlut*. In the example discussed here, however, although both realisations draw on *puthut gêlut* within the *pathêt sângâ* register, the *pêsindhèn* adopts different *céngkok* variations in each increment. This choice reflects a musical response to the specific *puthut gêlut* variation articulated by the *rêbab*, with attention to the *ambah-ambahan* associated with each variation. The corresponding *rêbab céngkok* variations for each *rambahan* in this section are presented in Table 15.

Table 15. *Variations of céngkok rêbaban against balungan in the first and second rambahan*

| | |
|------------------|---|
| First rambahan: | |
| Balungan: | . 2 . 1 |
| Rebaban: |  .23.5.55.6.221121 |
| Second rambahan: | |
| Balungan: | . 2 . 1 |
| Rebaban: |  .56156 i6161521121 |

The relationship between *rêbab céngkok* and the selection of *sindhènan céngkok* in each *rambahan*, as shaped by *ambah-ambahan*, is summarised in Table 16.

Table 16. Variations of *céngkok sindhènan* against *rêbaban* in the first and second *rambahan*

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| First <i>rambahan</i> : | |
| <i>Rêbaban</i> : | |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> : | |
| Second <i>rambahan</i> : | |
| <i>Rêbaban</i> : | |
| <i>Sindhènan</i> : | |

Based on the foregoing analysis, the choice of *sindhènan céngkok* is closely related to the register selected by the *pêngrêbab*. Decisions concerning register have a direct effect on how the *pêsindhèn* initiates and shapes the chosen *céngkok*. When the *pêngrêbab* predominantly employs a high register, the corresponding *sindhènan céngkok* is likewise realised in a higher register. This relationship can also be observed in other forms of *garap*, such as *céngkok Ayu Kuningin balungan* .3.1. When the *pêngrêbab* articulates the *balungan* phrase using *céngkok Ayu Kuning*, the *pêsindhèn* similarly adopts a relatively high register.

Balungan Melody Patterns

In Surakarta-style *karawitan*, *balungan gending* may be classified into 10 types: *balungan mlaku*, *nibani*, *nggantung*, *ngadhal*, *mlèsèd*, *dhélik*, *tikêl*, *pin mundur*, *maju kembar*, and *balungan pancêr* (Supanggih, 2009). Among these, *balungan ngadhal* is relatively uncommon in Surakarta *gending* construction

and typically appears only in specific *gâtrâ* within a song phrase. Its inclusion combines rhythmic and melodic features that generate motifs or *céngkok* conceived by the composer. As a result, the interpretation of such *céngkok* is not universally transferable across contexts.

The *balungan ngadhal* pattern functions as a means of conveying musical cues from the composer to the performers, either to produce unison passages or to articulate the character and melodic contour of the *balungan* phrase. In response, a corresponding *sindhènan céngkok* emerges, in which the *pêsindhèn* employs a melodic contour that closely reflects the *balungan ngadhal*. In this study, a sample drawn from the *mérong* of *Gending Rujak Sentul* (laras pélog pathêt nêr), specifically the third *gâtrâ* of the fourth *kênong*, is examined to illustrate the relationship between *balungan* structure and the *sindhènan céngkok* employed (Table 17).

Table 17. *The melodic pattern of sindhènan in the mérong of Gending Rujak Sentul*

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>Balungan:</i> | $\overline{42} \ 1 \quad \underset{\cdot}{6} \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 1 \ (\hat{2})$ |
| <i>Sindhènan:</i> | 4 $\underline{542}$ 1 $\underline{6123}$ 1 <i>Yo go - nèr nè- nèr</i> |

When examined closely, the *sindhènan* arrangement discussed above may be understood as an elaboration of the underlying *balungan ngadhal* pattern in the gending *Rujak Sentul*. In this context, when a *pêsindhèn* encounters a *balungan ngadhal* pattern, the use of a *pématut céngkok* on the *balungan* becomes a viable approach. This response, however, is not applicable in all cases. Certain instances of *balungan ngadhal* continue to follow more general *sindhènan céngkok*, without reference to the specific rhythmic configuration of the *balungan ngadhal*. A clear example can be found in the *balungan ciblon* of *Ladrang Sri Karongron*, laras *sléndro pathêt sângâ*, where the *balungan* in the third and fourth *gâtrâ* of the third *kênong* may be classified as *balungan ngadhal* (Table 18).

Table 18. *Balungan ngadhal* pattern

| | |
|------------------|--|
| <i>Balungan:</i> | $(\overline{.2} \ \overline{56125612} \ \overline{5612165})$. |
|------------------|--|

The *sindhènan céngkok* applied to the *balungan* discussed above does not alter the rhythmic structure or melodic pattern but instead employs a *sèlèh-5 céngkok* within *pathêt sângâ*. Closer analysis shows that the *balungan ngadhal* in *Gending Rujak Sentul* occurs within a *padhang* phrase, whereas in *Ladrang Sri Karongron* the *balungan ngadhal* appears in an *ulihan* phrase. In this context, the use of *céngkok pématut* requires that the *balungan ngadhal* be situated within a *padhang* phrase of the *gending*.

Further support for this observation can be found in the *balungan ngèlik* transition of *ciblon ladrang Pangkur*, laras *sléndro pathêt sângâ*. Although this

transitional *balungan* is likewise classified as *balungan ngadhal*, its placement within the *ulihan* phrase leads the *pêsindhèn* to refrain from employing *céngkok pêmatur*.

Beyond *balungan ngadhal*, another *balungan* configuration that permits the use of *pêmatur* in *sindhènan céngkok* is *balungan nggantung*. This term refers to *balungan* patterns in which at least two identical tones occur consecutively (Supanggah, 2009). When such a *balungan* appears after the *ulihan* in a song phrase and reiterates tones associated with the preceding *sèlèh*, the *pêsindhèn* may employ *céngkok plèsèdan bêsut* (Martopangrawit, 1975; Suraji, 2005). In this study, this principle is illustrated through the *mérong* of *Gending Gambirsawit*, *laras sléndro pathêt sângâ*, specifically in *gâtrâ* three and four of the third *kênong*.

Table 19. Illustration of *céngkok plèsèdan bêsut* against *balungan nggantung*

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Balungan: | . . 5 6 i 6 5 3̂ 2 2 . 3 |
| Sindhènan: | 5 6.i 5 56i6.53 2 Woh-ing a- rên |

Examination of the foregoing illustration shows that the *sindhènan céngkok* employed is derived from the primary *sindhènan sèlèh* 3 in *sléndro pathêt sângâ*, with the *sèlèh plèsèd* directed towards the initial tone of the subsequent *balungan nggantung*.

Matut Based on Cakepan

In *sindhènan srambahan*, the *cakêpan* most commonly takes the form of *wangsalan*; however, its use is not obligatory. Alternative poetic forms such as *salisir*, *kinanthi*, and *parikan* may be employed depending on performance context.

A clear illustration occurs in the *inggah* section of *Gending Gambirsawit*, where *kinanthi cakêpan* is used. From the midpoint of the third *kênong* to the *gong* in *irâmâ wiled*, the *pêsindhèn* draws text from *Sékar Mâcâpat Kinanthi*. This coincides with *gérong* singing that also uses *kinanthi* text, prompting the *pêsindhèn* to replace *wangsalan* accordingly. The contextual nature of this substitution is evident when the *inggah* is performed in *garap rangkêp* without *gérongan*: in such cases, the *pêsindhèn* reverts to *wangsalan* rather than retaining *kinanthi*. This indicates that the presence of *gérongan* necessitates the change in *cakêpan*.

More broadly, *cakêpan* selection is a central component of *pêmatur* and requires sensitivity to the *gending's* thematic content, narrative, conflict, and character. A *gending* concerned with love, for example, calls for *wangsalan* that reflects that theme, as would be expected for other thematic orientations.

Conclusion

This study has examined *sindhènan pêmatur* in Surakarta-style karawitan as a form of vocal *garap* that operates when conventional placement schemes and melodic rules do not sufficiently account for the musical conditions of a *gending*. Rather than

treating *pêmatut* as a loose aesthetic notion, the analysis has approached it as a practical mechanism through which *pêsindhèn* adjust vocal placement, melodic contour, and textual choice in response to phrase structure, melodic interaction, and ensemble context.

The findings indicate that *sindhènan pêmatut* does not function outside the conventions of Surakarta-style *karawitan*, nor does it replace established schemes. Instead, it becomes operative precisely in situations where those schemes are incomplete, ambiguous, or structurally incompatible with the *gending* being performed. In such cases, *pêmatut* allows the *pêsindhèn* to maintain coherence by interpreting *padhang-ulihan* phrasing, responding to *rêbab garap* and *balungan* patterns, and aligning textual material with ensemble texture and *gending* theme.

Based on the analyses presented, *sindhènan pêmatut* can be understood through three interrelated forms: schematic adjustment, *céngkok*-based adaptation, and *cakêpan*-based substitution. These forms do not represent discrete categories of practice but rather analytical distinctions that clarify how vocal decisions are made under varying musical conditions. In each case, the determining factor is not adherence to a fixed rule but the *pêsindhèn*'s interpretation of musical direction and phrase function within the unfolding performance.

By framing *pêmatut* as a mode of decision-making rather than as a stylistic variant, this study positions *sindhènan* within the broader logic of *garap* as an adaptive process. The analysis demonstrates that vocal practice in Surakarta-style *karawitan* involves continuous negotiation between structural expectation and situational demand. This negotiation is not arbitrary; it is guided by shared musical knowledge, ensemble interaction, and established concepts such as *padhang-ulihan*, *sèlèh*, and melodic register.

The implications of this study are methodological as well as analytical. Treating *sindhènan pêmatut* as a functional response to musical context provides a framework for analysing vocal practice in *gending* with irregular structures or atypical phrase organisation. It also offers a basis for understanding how experienced *pêsindhèn* manage variability without relying solely on schematic instruction. Further research may extend this approach by examining how similar adaptive processes operate in other regional styles or in instrumental *garap*.

In conclusion, *sindhènan pêmatut* is best understood not as an exception to Surakarta-style convention, but as a key mechanism that enables vocal practice to remain structurally grounded under conditions where conventional schemes alone are insufficient.

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