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Designing the "Kesah: Son of Ranying Hatalla Langit" Tabletop Trading Card Game(TCG) as a Medium for Preserving Dayak Ngaju Folklore

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ABSTRACT

The cultural heritage and folklore of the Dayak Ngaju people in Central Kalimantan—including heroic tales from Tetek Tatum and the philosophy of Batang Garing—are gradually being forgotten by younger generations due to the tide of modernisation. Current conventional learning media have proven ineffective in capturing teenagers' interest in exploring this cultural legacy. This research aims to design an interactive medium in the form of a Tabletop Trading Card Game (TCG) titled "Kesah: Son of Ranying Hatalla Langit" as a cultural preservation innovation.

The design methodology using 5W+1H analysis, with data collected through literature review, observation, and consumer journey analysis from audiences aged 13-25 years. This design adapts local folklore and beliefs into strategic gameplay mechanics, allowing players to directly engage with cultural narratives. The output of this design is a complete starter pack that includes a card deck, rulebook, and play mat. It is also supported by promotional media such as motion videos and merchandise. Through this medium, we hope to reintroduce the wisdom and values of Dayak Ngaju culture in a way that's communicative, competitive, and relevant to today's youth lifestyle.

Keywords: *Trading Card Game (TCG), Dayak Ngaju People, Folklore, Cultural Preservation*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation blessed with incredible diversity in its ethnic groups and cultures. Each ethnic group has its own unique way of preserving its cultural heritage. Culture represents teachings passed down through generations to maintain traditional values, and this diversity of ethnicities and cultures has long been a fascinating subject for research and development (Wijono, 1998). One cultural treasure worth preserving belongs to the Dayak Ngaju (*Ot Danum*) people of Central Kalimantan, who hold strong beliefs in *Ranying Hatalla Langit* (God Almighty) (Riwut, 2003; Sukiada, 2018). The noble values and ancestral history of this ethnic group are passed down through *Tetek Tatum*, an epic that serves as the foundation of Dayak Ngaju identity (Maunati, 2006).

However, as time marches on and modernization sweeps in, Dayak Ngaju culture has begun to fade and is slowly being forgotten by younger generations (Maunati, 2006). Conventional learning media such as literature books are often considered ineffective in attracting teenagers' attention to learn about this cultural heritage. On the other hand, Trading Card Games (TCG) have evolved from mere hobbies into international competitions with strong narrative and visual potential, making them a relevant medium among teenagers (Marshall et al., 2010).

The design of a TCG titled "*Kesah*: Son of *Ranying Hatalla Langit*" is proposed as an innovative solution to reintroduce and preserve Dayak Ngaju folklore. Through TCG, elements of heroism and mythology can be packaged with visual approaches and competitive game mechanics that align with the interests of today's target audience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Media Design Concept

This design produces a Tabletop Trading Card Game (TCG) Starter Pack titled "*Kesah*: Son of *Ranying Hatalla Langit*". The main concept combines elements of Dayak Ngaju culture such as weapons, traditional clothing, and mythology with high-fantasy genre elements. This game is designed as an effective and competitive medium for delivering deep narratives to the target audience (Marshall et al., 2010).

Folklore and Cosmology Adaptation

The game's narrative is adapted from *Tetek Tatum* (heroic epic) and the cosmological concept of *Batang Garing* (Tree of Life). Both elements are fundamental to Dayak Ngaju spirituality and identity (Riwut, 2003; Maunati, 2006; Sukiada, 2018). The game world is divided into two main factions: the Humanoid faction (humans) and the Beast/Spirit faction (mythological creatures). Legendary characters are adapted into character cards (Units), such as "*Bawi Kuwu*," "*Jata*," and "*Sangiang*." Their stories are drawn from regional folklore collections (Iper, 2009; Danandjaja, 1986). Other cultural elements, like *Kamantahu* (sacred house), are adapted into Spell or Field cards that provide special effects in gameplay.

Character Visualization and Game Assets

Visualization is done using Digital Painting techniques with a semi-realistic cartoon style to suit teenage market preferences.

1. **Characters:** Character illustrations showcase detailed Dayak traditional clothing, such as beaded weaving and traditional weapons like *Mandau* (sabre) and *Lunju* (spear). The design of these cultural attributes maintains the original visual essence of Dayak culture (Wijono, 1998).
2. **Symbolism:** Each card is equipped with elemental attributes (Nature, Fighter, Ruler, Shaman) represented through specific visual icons, such as the Nature icon featuring the Hornbill, a bird native to Kalimantan.
3. **Supporting Media:** In addition to the main card deck, this design also produces a game rulebook, play mat, packaging, and motion graphic videos as promotional media.

CONCLUSION

The design of the Tabletop Trading Card Game "*Kesah*: Son of *Ranying Hatalla Langit*" successfully creates an effective alternative medium for preserving Dayak Ngaju culture. Through adapting folklore (*Tetek Tatum*) rich in life values (Danandjaja, 1986) into a strategic game format, noble values such as heroism and belief in *Ranying Hatalla Langit* (Riwut, 2003; Sukiada, 2018) can be conveyed to younger generations without feeling preachy or didactic.

The use of fantasy visual styles and interactive game mechanics has proven capable of packaging traditional cultural heritage into a pop culture product that's relevant to modern times. We hope this will increase teenagers' interest in exploring the rich cultural heritage of Central Kalimantan more deeply.

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