

THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITIONAL FOLKLORE INTO ANIMATION: IMPACT ON TODAY'S SOCIETY

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Abstract

As most of the local folklores are not properly documented, the move to transform local folklore into animation is indeed a good news. However, whether the transformation of the folklore into animation maintains its originality in terms of certain important elements, remain unknown. This matter can become an issue in the future, especially among the community in which the folklore belongs to. Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the original and the animated versions, in terms of theme, plot, main cast, setting, and values, particularly among the local folklores in the state of Sarawak (East of Malaysia). This study uses qualitative descriptive method in order to examine the folklores. Three animated folklores from Sarawak namely 'Apai Saloi Hunting', 'The Legend of Santubong' and 'Commander of Mount Sadok' were used as prime sources of the study. Data were also collected from people's statement, written documents, historical heritage, and information from the internet. The results of the study revealed that all the three folklores have at least 95% of similarity between the original version and the animated version. The present study also provides information about the impact and contribution of animated folklore toward the society. It is hoped that more local folklores will be transformed into animated version by maintaining its originality, so that the intangible cultural heritage is being preserved and protected.

Keywords: Folklore, Transformation, Animation, Impact.

1 INTRODUCTION

Folklore is a legacy that has been passed down from generation to generation. In the past, folklore was articulated orally, has no author, used as a medium of entertainment that also contains its own history and moral values [1]. Folklore as an item which formed by a certain community in the past and has become a special identity of that particular community and has been circulated from generation to generation [2]. Whether we like it or not, technology has evolved rapidly and the advancement of technology has in away led to the existence of folklore animation and this phenomenon also indirectly involved Malaysian creative industry. The national creative industry policy is also established to provide assistance in terms of funds and other support to parties involved in the development of creative content which is seen to have potential not only in terms of generating the national economy, but also in preserving the nation's culture [3]. The emergence of various forms of animation adapted from folklore is also on the rise. Animation in Malaysia was pioneered through the formation of the Malayan Film Unit (now known as *Film Negara Malaysia*). Involvement in the field of animation at that time was just to publish documentary films and advertising. The field of animation in Malaysia then underwent changes because it was influenced by digital technology with the emergence of Malaysia's first animated film, '*Silat Legenda*' which was played in cinemas in 1998 [4]. Currently, the animation industry has produced various types of animation, film and drama. A total of 50% of local animations use the direct-to-system method (drawing directly on a computer). Nowadays, the development of the animation industry in Malaysia is growing, and its development is directed in the form of cartoon products, advertisements, and broadcast pictures that are entertainment and educational [5].

As most of the local folklores are not properly documented, the move to adapt local folklores into animation is indeed a good news. However, whether the adaptation of the folklore into animation maintains its originality remain unknown. This matter can become an issue in the future, especially among the community in which the folklore belongs to. Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the original and the animated versions, in terms of theme, plot, main casts, setting, and moral values, particularly the local folklore in the state of Sarawak, east of Malaysia. Other than that, as stated by Awang Pawi [6], the integration of technology of local folklore in Malaysia will somehow give a big impact to the community. Thus, this study also identifies the contributions and impacts of animated local folklore on the society particularly in Sarawak (east of Malaysia). Three popular animated folklores ('Apai Saloi Hunting', 'The Legend of Santubong' and 'Commander of Mount Sadok') in Sarawak had been used as the material for this study.