

The Revitalization of Oral Traditional *Ngendau* Dayak Kenyah Based on Creative Industries

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Abstract

Ngendau is an oral song from the Dayak Kenyah ethnic group in East Kalimantan. *Ngendau* is sung simultaneously by the performers in a performance of traditional events and daily life. The existence of the oral tradition began to be unknown to the younger generation of the Dayak Kenyah community. Therefore, there is a need for efforts to revive the oral tradition of *ngendau* so that it does not become extinct. This study aimed to revitalize the oral tradition of *ngendau* of the Dayak Kenyah community based on creative industries, namely by making documentary films. The creative industry in Indonesia has begun to be echoed to create the creativity of the creative young generation. The method used in this research was ethnography. Field data were obtained using observation techniques and in-depth interviews with informants. This research aimed to revitalize the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition in a documentary by empowering indigenous Dayak Kenyah women in Rindang Benua Hamlet, East Kalimantan, and creative actors in the form of a documentary East Kalimantan as a form of creative industry process. Revitalizing the *ngendau* oral tradition by making documentary films is one of the best efforts and provides benefits for the Dayak Kenyah community so that the younger generation can see and understand the oral tradition.

Keywords: Oral Tradition, *Ngendau*, Dayak Kenyah, Revitalization, Creative Industries

Introduction

Oral tradition is a process by which individuals connect to the past and present while building the future (Glassie, 1993; Bidin, Saad, Aziz, Rahman, 2013; Sinaga, 2017). Oral tradition is an unwritten source written in a form suitable for oral transmission (Katubi, 2011). The preservation of oral traditions depends on the strength of the memory of successive generations of humans. It means that telling stories orally in various situations in their lives is usually based on the wisdom of their place of life.

One of the Dayak Kenyah oral traditions still practiced by the Dayak Kenyah community is *ngendau*. *Ngendau* is reading poetry by singing together. *Ngendau* in the Dayak Kenyah community is a tradition of telling stories by singing together. *Ngendau* is sung together by women and men while marching, walking, and dancing (*datun* dance) or other terms such as choral singing (Sedyawati, 1995; Billa, 2006). Singing is one of the most accessible types of folk art. Almost all traditional musical cultures in song performances occupy a central place and actively function (Sayfullina, 2013). The development of the oral tradition of the Dayak Kenyah is not like it used to be, which is always carried out in every activity of the Dayak Kenyah community. At this time, the Dayak Kenyah community has become unfamiliar with the oral tradition of *ngendau*. It was triggered by economic changes, demographic changes, and technological changes. These changes resulted in the oral tradition of *ngendau* beginning to experience criticism. Therefore, efforts are

needed to preserve a tradition not to become extinct and lost. One of these efforts is to revitalize oral traditions.

Revitalization can be interpreted as reviving and re-emphasizing. Revitalization in the form of creative industries is an effort or steps that can be taken to revive the oral tradition of the Dayak Kenyah *ngendau* as a form of preserving the traditions of the Dayak Kenyah community in East Kalimantan. Revitalization is at the level of stating the truth and at the level of implementation in social life (Majid, 2017).

In the era of the creative industry as it is today, oral traditions should be managed for the welfare of the community and become a source of inspiration for creating innovative products (Puguh, 2012; Anoeграjekti, 2015). Oral tradition is one of the nation's wealth deposits to excel in the creative industry. The *Ngendau* oral tradition, which represents the life of the Dayak Kenyah community, can be used as a creative industry process towards one of the pillars of the creative economy. Efforts to maintain and develop traditional oral arts that are already popular contribute to the development of national culture in the context of nationality. We never think that cultural treasures, both in the form of material and non-material artifacts, actually have tremendous potential to be developed. (Sedyawati, 2003; Pudentia, 2008).

The paradigm shift from an agrarian culture to an industrial culture marked by an industry or creative economy is seen as a phenomenon of the fourth phase of human civilization. The Indonesian government launched a blueprint for Indonesia's creative economy (Paeni, 2008). The creative economy blueprint is an economic concept oriented towards creativity, culture, cultural heritage, and the environment. In the blueprint for Indonesia's creative economy, there are fourteen areas of the creative economy, one of which is film. The documentary film explores real people, real actors, and real situations to represent real situations and the people involved (Rabiger, 1998). Currently, many regions in Indonesia produce oral traditions in DVDs. Therefore, it is easy to find our oral tradition genres in the form of DVD recordings for sale. (Suryadi, 2011).

Such a situation demands that the viewer or researcher not question which version of the original or complete tradition is. The flexibility of the oral tradition is a necessity as long as the speakers and the community that owns it want or accept it. Therefore, the purpose of writing in this research article was to explain the revitalization of the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition in the form of a documentary as an effort to process the creative industry and preserve the oral tradition of the Dayak Kenyah community in East Kalimantan.

Materials and Methods

Oral traditions are various knowledge, and customs passed down from generation to generation orally. They include folklore, myths, legends, folk songs, and everything related to the cognitive system in indigenous peoples (Danandjaja, 1991; Told and Pudentia, 1995; Hoed, 1998; Kuntowijoyo, 2003). The use of oral traditions in globalization requires creative power from traditional to modern societies. This creative power is a means to foster creativity and as an effort to maintain traditional culture (Sahman, 1993; Sedyawati, 2007).

Documentary films are made with a tendency to use film media to communicate ideas or make subjective interpretations of an actual event, the history of a character, and others. Documentary films not only present facts (actual events) but also contain the subjectivity of the maker or opinion in viewing the events raised through the film (Sutisno, 1993; Sumarno, 1996; Wibowo, 1997). Documentary films are used as the proper means to reveal reality. It is rarely revealed by other media in general and can even be used to stimulate change. According to Law no. 33 of 2009 concerning the film, short film production facilitation activities were carried out to support short film communities to create works containing cultural values, local wisdom, and national character building.

Research Design and Approach

This research is a field study with the type of qualitative research. The method used in this research is the ethnographic method. Spradley (2007) explains that ethnographic research seeks to pay attention to the meanings of actions from events that occur to the people we want to understand. The data sources in this study were Dayak Kenyah indigenous women of Rindang Benua Hamlet, Sangatta Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province. The data collection technique in this study was through observation and interviews with the performers of *ngendau*. The research data instrument used observation and interview guidelines to make observations and interviews in the field. The data analysis technique in this study used interpretive techniques (Endraswara, 2009). It explains that interpretive is a description of folklore data that relates it to the forms and cultural elements of the local community in interdisciplinary techniques. In addition, it also uses three stages in carrying out revitalization activities (Pudentia, 2010) and four stages of making documentary films (Chulsum, 2016; Cikka, 2019; Pamuji, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Several oral traditions in Indonesia have developed into creative industries. In this study, the researcher revitalized one of the Dayak Kenyah oral traditions, namely *ngendau*, in the form of a creative industry. The form of the creative industry of the *ngendau* oral tradition is through one of the sub-sectors of the creative industry, namely documentary films. The concept of inheritance and preservation of the *ngendau* oral tradition in the Dayak Kenyah community is not optimal. Its existence is increasingly critical in the community itself. Therefore, with the concept of revitalization in documentary films as creative industries, the oral tradition preservation of *ngendau* can be continued so that the Dayak Kenyah community can carry out inheritance and preservation.

The revitalization of the *ngendau* oral tradition in Rindang Benua Hamlet, South Sangatta Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan was carried out based on the results of observations and research on the *ngendau* oral tradition that researchers had carried out. The results of field observations indicate that several things need to be done to revitalize the *ngendau* oral tradition in the "critical" category.

The concept of revitalizing the oral tradition of *ngendau* offered is to empower actors of oral tradition and supporters of the oral tradition of *ngendau* together through the creative industry process, namely the making of documentary films. The making of this *ngendau* oral tradition documentary involved East Kalimantan creative actors and community empowerment, especially indigenous women in Rindang Benua Hamlet, South Sangatta Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan. The indigenous women of Rindang Benua Hamlet who were involved in empowering the oral tradition of *ngendau* consisted of women in their 70s, women in their 60s, women in their 50s, and young women in their 17s. The perpetrators of the oral tradition play a very important role in the process of inheritance to the next generation, maintaining the basic concepts of oral tradition and creating the contents of the oral tradition of *ngendau*. The revitalization activities of the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition in Rindang Benua Hamlet were carried out for three months from December 2020 to February 2021 in three stages: preparation, implementation, and development. The stages of the revitalization of the *ngendau* oral tradition carried out by researchers were:

Preparation Stage




At this stage, several activities were carried out that aimed to prepare for the revitalization of the *ngendau* oral tradition. Before starting the revitalization activities, a pre-activity stage or what was known as the preparatory stage was held first. Activities carried out at the pre-activity stage in-

clude: a) Selecting the Rindang Benua Hamlet as the location for the revitalization of the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition because the village is one of the data from the research; b) Coordinate the location of the revitalization activities; c) Conducting interviews with *ngendau* performers, traditional heads, and hamlet heads regarding the existence of the oral tradition of *ngendau* in Rindang Benua Hamlet, Sangata Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province.

Implementation Stage

The implementation stage in *ngendau* oral tradition revitalization activity is to empower women in learning to make kendau poems to be sung. The process of inheritance can be taken through learning oral traditions to the next generation by non-formal channels, namely in the community itself through the empowerment of indigenous peoples. The steps taken in learning and empowering indigenous women in carrying out revitalization activities include:

Table 1. Steps for the Implementation of Revitalization Activities

No.	Description	Picture
1	Gathered several traditional women of Rindang Benua Hamlet consisting of the elderly, middle-aged, and young to participate in revitalization activities.	
2	Some <i>ngendau</i> speakers make poems, and then they practice harmonizing the tone and rhythm of the singing of the <i>ngendau</i> poems.	
3	Making a documentary film on the oral tradition of <i>ngendau</i> by involving several indigenous Dayak Kenyah women from the Rindang Benua Hamlet of East Kalimantan, creative actors in the field of photography and film in East Kalimantan, students from the University of Balikpapan, and researchers.	

Development Stage

The development stage of revitalization activities was carried out after the implementation activity stage. The development stage was carried out in various ways. However, the development stage was limited because the revitalization activity carried out in 2021 was still being hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. This development stage was carried out by showing the results of a documentary film on the oral tradition of *ngendau* when the stage of implementing revitalization activities for the Dayak Kenyah indigenous community using projectors and laptops in a traditional lamin and as learning media in drama appreciation courses in the 7th semester lectures of the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, FKIP Balikpapan University, East Kalimantan. As in picture 1 and picture 2 below.

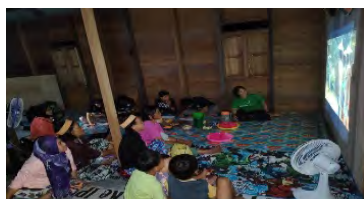


Figure 1. Presentation in indigenous peoples



Figure 2. As a Learning Media

The revitalization of the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition in Rindang Benua Hamlet, South Sangatta Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan Province was packaged in a creative industry. The making of a documentary film on the oral tradition of *Ngendau* Dayak Kenyah was carried out in three stages, namely, pre-production, production, and post-production stages. Making synopsis, making storyboards, making story scenarios, and validation. The explanation is as follows.

Pre-Production Stage

The first stage was pre-production. This stage was the stage in collecting data making a film design which includes; making storyboards making story scenarios about the oral tradition of the Dayak Kenyah *ngendau*, which were packaged in the form of community activities for the Dayak Kenyah women found in Rindang Benua Hamlet, Sangatta Sub-District, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan.

Production Stage

The second stage was production. This stage was an activity of taking pictures or shooting. Taking pictures was done based on the story script made at the pre-production stage. The shooting at this stage was carried out in the Rindang Benua Hamlet, East Kalimantan, by empowering several indigenous Dayak Kenyah women from the local community.

Post Production Stage

The third stage was post-production. This stage was the final stage of the entire documentary film production process. This stage was carried out after all the preparation of the images on the documentary film was complete. This post-production stage includes a) editing b) validation which was the degree of determination between data that occurred in the research object and data that researchers could report. It means that valid data was data that occurred in the object of research (Sugiyono, 2010). Product validation could be done by presenting material experts and experienced media experts to assess the new product design, namely documentary film media, and c) screening of documentary films. The results of the revitalization of the Dayak Kenyah oral tradition were contained in the form of a documentary. As shown in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3. The display of the documentary (a) the opening part, (b) the title of the documentary, (c) the activities of the Dayak Kenyah women taking leaves, (d) the activities of the Dayak Kenyah women weaving, (e) the closing part

The storyline in Figure 3 describes one of the daily activities carried out by Dayak Kenyah women in Rindang Benua Hamlet. They go looking for da'a leaves, like tendrils of coconut leaves. On the streets, they pass each other and have a greeting dialogue. While they are taking da'a leaves in a garden, they sing *ngendau*. It is the story of their activities from the beginning of taking da'a leaves until they are woven together and made into hats. The closing of the series of events is when the women stand while chanting *ngendau* together.

Conclusions

This research is an ethnographic study of the oral tradition of the Dayak Kenyah *ngendau* in East Kalimantan. *Ngendau* is the art of traditional folk singing in poetry and sung together as entertainment at traditional events or daily activities of the Dayak Kenyah community. The existence of the *ngendau* oral tradition is starting to be critical, and efforts must be made for its preservation. One way to preserve it is by revitalizing the oral tradition of *ngendau*, in the form of empowering indigenous peoples and the creative industry through making documentary films. In the process of revitalizing the *ngendau* oral tradition in Dusun Rindang Benua, East Kalimantan, there are three stages, namely, a) the preparation stage, b) the implementation stage, and c) the development stage. The process of making documentary films as a form of the process of revitalizing the oral tradition of *ngendau* in Rindang Benua Hamlet, East Kalimantan includes, a) the pre-production stage, b) the production stage, and c) the post-production stage. Revitalizing the *ngendau* oral tradition by making documentary films is one of the best efforts and provides benefits for the Dayak Kenyah community so that the younger generation can see and understand the oral tradition.

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