Enhancing Participatory Culture by using New Media to Preserve Local Culture in Museum Mpu Tantular East Java

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Abstract— **Participatory culture becomes one of the central issues in the emerging of new media. New media provides space for audience to interact and produce the content of media. In a view of social engagement, participatory culture would increase the engagement. When people have a role in a particular context, they would engage more. In a context of preserving local culture at Mpu Tantular Museum, the use of new media (*CD Interaktif*) would enhance participatory culture from the visitors. As shown in the survey result, users appraise the importance of CD *Interaktif* to understand local culture. However, users emphasized improvement on the element of learning environment and involvement of users. By the usage of new media, both become important to stimulate social engagement. This paper also gives recommendation on how to preserve local culture through new media.**

Keywords- Participatory Culture; Social Engagement; Museum Mpu Tantular; New Media; Cultural Preservation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the presence of new media has taken attention from public. Movement of *"satu juta facebookers"* in Indonesian context becomes well-known phenomenon since the end of 2009. Huge number of people is engaging in social network to confront the current issue of law enforcement in Indonesia. Success of YouTube-born artists such as Justin Bieber, Marie Digby, and Charice Pempengco may inspire people around Indonesia to produce video of their talent. Some phenomenal YouTube-born artists such as Shinta and Jojo with their lip-sync dance and police officer Norman Kamaru who sing Shahrukh Khan's song "Chaiya Chaiya". Twitter also became one of the interesting phenomenons in political realm because of several sharp-straightforward accounts.

A common message of participatory culture lies behind those examples above. When people have space to actively involve, then social engagement in any form is in a matter of time. Without disregarding other issues, participatory culture becomes one of the central issues in the emerging of new media. As explored for many years by new media scholar, Henry Jenkins, this particular culture is embedded in the presence of new media. Moreover, the movement from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 (and Web 3.0) has placed participatory culture as a vital one.

Participatory culture may encourage more than discourse practices. As a consequence of participatory culture embedded with new media, people may have opportunity to share their thoughts about any issues. Take an example of the issue of the origin of cultural legacy such as Batik (traditional clothes from Indonesia), traditional dance and musical instrument. The notion of participatory culture in new media era could be used to preserve local culture in the Museum of Mpu Tantular in East Java. In the Museum Mpu Tantular, official East Java Museum, preservation of local culture is worked on by combining exhibition of objects or artifacts and the use of new media. As an effort of maintaining local culture, Museum Mpu Tantular had established an application of New Media called *CD Interaktif* [1].

In order to enhance participatory culture in CD *Interaktif*, this paper elaborates users' responses in the context of participatory. As an early stage of creating social engagement, CD *Interaktif* should be accessed in the view of users. This paper is also elaborating several recommendations to enhance participation from users.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"We throw idea out to the world; we bring them back in an improved way because of engagement" (Henry Jenkins)

Participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creation, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices [2]. Moreover, Jenkins emphasizes participatory culture occurs when members believe their contribution matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another. Participatory culture may be seen as a best way to reach success communication. Particular message enters audience easily when there is involvement. At this

point, participatory culture may be useful to increase the effectiveness of knowledge transfer.

New media is an unproblematic term to describe the intensity of change in human culture, ideological connotation of the term new and rapid development current communication technologies [3]. In this era of rapidly growing of new media technologies and usage, participatory culture exists in new media. New media also has ability to provide space for participation in their characteristics. Some defining characteristics are digitality, multimediality, hypertextuality, simulation, networked, and interactivity. These characteristics may presence in form of new media. In a form of game, simulation and interactivity need more attention in the application. The presence of simulation in a game may enrich interactivity. Therefore, the participant may engage actively in the application.

"Museums exist in order to acquire, safeguard, conserve, and display objects, artifacts and works of arts of various kinds". [4] This means that a museum is a place or a central management and preservation of culture, whether material or non-material cultures. From these definitions, we can see also that there are many ways to do conservation. There is a way of doing ethnographic museum, which leads to certain discursive practices. It can be seen in the work of Lidchi analyzing Museum of mankind in the British Museum in 1993 under the title *Paradise: Change and Continuity in the New Guinea Highlands.* Here is also a way to simulate the existing culture into new media applications.

In the context of media technology usage, museum could be a space for new media. Taking account form McLuhan, media could be use to extend the museum. Digital future today can be seen as a challenge for the museum's manager to do a re-presentation of objects, artifact, and artwork. With an understanding of the uniqueness and benefits of digitalization and new media interactivity, then communicate of the local culture, both material and non-material, would be a good alternative.

This study also implies cultural flow. Crane conducted an elaboration of cultural flow models and offer recommendations on the existence of alternative forms [5]. It is expected that local or national culture driven culture through media technology will not be lost. Strengthening the cultural aspects of their own through the use of digital technologies for accomplishments today by alternative use of balancing the flow of globalization, so that, the process of cultural negotiation can take place [6]

III. METHOD

A survey has been conducted by giving questionnaire to the visitors. The questionnaire is designed with Likert scale and consists of 18-item questions related to CD *Interaktif.* For the use of this paper, researchers highlight some related findings.

Four major categories in the findings are usefulness of the application, characteristics of the application, elements of learning experience, and involvement of users in the application. Usefulness of application measures importance of the application to the user, in order to understand about local culture trough CD *Interaktif.* Characteristics of application occur to measures the technical abilities in term of convergence, hypertextual and the name of application. Element of learning experience consists of the uniqueness of the content compared to museum brochure and exhibit, because there are challenges provided and presence of educational game to stimulate learning process. Last, the involvement of user measures the topic offered, purpose of the application, freedom to explore, role given, instruction given, and comfort way of using the application.

Young people are important in the process of preserving local culture. They are the next generation to maintain this legacy to be acknowledging in future life. Another important factor is the visitors in the museum mostly dominated by the young people according to the visitors' data in the museum and mostly are organized by school. Researchers have limited the population to Junior High School (SMP) and Senior High School (SMA). Total of 99 respondents are selected as sample. The period of data collection is June – July 2010.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

In general, CD *Interaktif* received high appreciation from the users. As seen in graphic below, all the elements received scores higher than 60%. Two elements, usefulness and characteristics of application receive respond larger than 75%. Users understood the importance of this application to increase their knowledge about local culture in East Java. *CD Interaktif* also helps user to learn about local culture in the museum. Elements of characteristics such as convergence and hypertext received positive respond from users. In the application, there is combination of medium text, audio and visual. CD *Interaktif* also provides a virtual version of the collection room.

GRAPH 1. PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE
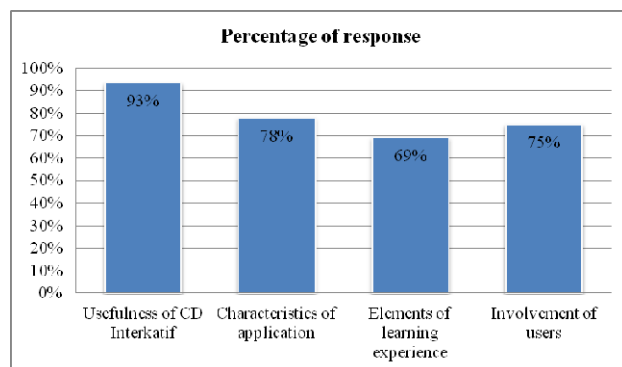
The use of new media in transferring knowledge is not an issue anymore. Most of the learning processes are using new media technologies as data access, presenting, or even data

processing. When the presence of *CD Interaktif* as a medium for transferring knowledge and culture, then the users may respond it well.

Understanding new media as one of educational tools is different than maximizing its potential. Many educators fail to realize the potential of multimedia technologies to offer new and improved learning activities. These technologies are largely limited as a tool for data access, communication, and administration. Therefore, this practice is an "add-on" approach to multimedia technology use rather than truly integrated curriculum approach.

In *CD Interaktif*, users emphasize on the need of learning experience. It is a common knowledge that participant of a learning process has higher possibility to gain knowledge when they are participating on the process. The application focuses only to extend the way of seeing the collections. CD *Interaktif* does not have a constructive way of transferring knowledge. In museum context, learning is now regarded as an active participation of learner with environment (Hein, p.6, 2002). Learning in this context should be understood as 'informal' learning. Learning in a museum is not like learning in a formal classroom. Learning in a museum may encourage the element of exploration by the learner, but still the element of pedagogy should be included.

In a concrete way, learning in a museum by new media could be done with games. However, in the application of CD *Interaktif*, users gave 56% response to the element of game in transferring knowledge. This finding shows the application is not embedded with learning games. The element of play in the application is the virtual exhibition which is not the educational games. Games, as known are playing or entertainment activity may be turned into a learning activity. Buckingham (2009) stated that "We need to know more about how ... [to] perceive and balance out the 'educational' and 'entertainment' aspects of new media, and understand their creative potential (p.86). Integration of entertainment and education is an important aspect to transfer knowledge.

As a basic starting point of social engagement, the involvement of user in transferring knowledge is inevitable. Involvement of user in this application seems acceptable in general. Users may feel their involvement because they can access the application by use the computer, they may click to the entire menu and find information. However, at the same time, users give 61% response to one of the indicators: "I have active role in using CD *Interaktif*". Users have the opportunity to access all the information in the application but users do not have the opportunity to give feedback to the application.

The more users know about the application, the importance and its characteristics, the more user wants to involve in the application. However, the involvement of users is limited to the ability of medium to provide space for participation. Users may expect more in interacting with CD *Interaktif* or in

preserving local culture in the museum. This is an important aspect that should be addressed in the effort of preserving local culture.

In general, the movement of new media technology to the phase of 2.0 has enabling participation from user. At least there are two major topics implied by this research namely the use of game and social media to enhance participation of users [7]. There are two important ideas in understanding participatory culture namely: interpretation and deconstruction, and reconfiguration and construction of game elements [8]. In other form, social media have been used to facilitate a participative cultural experienced by a number of institutions. MoMA in New York is creating a retrospective of an avant-garde multimedia group the Residents, posted clips by the finalists on YouTube and invited votes and comments from the public to help determine the final exhibition [9].

These two recommendations should address the form of participatory culture. Creating educational games may employ the form of participatory culture particularly on collaborative problem-solving. Users involvement can be performed through completing challenges in the game. This way, users are obtaining new information while engaging to new media. Users may involve in completing task or challenge and develop new knowledge by playing an education game of Batik. Education games may lead user to explore about this particular culture in East Java context. User also may discover new knowledge from their exploration throughout the Batik game.

Affiliation could be reached by membership in formal or informal online communities. These forms of online communities may be established through social media. In the context of preserving local culture, people may engage in online community about particular cultural materials such as Batik community. In form of expression and circulations, people may produce new creative forms of disseminating culture of may be creating new ways of presenting culture. Social media would be a good choice to do this kind of participatory culture.

By this notion of increasing participatory culture through new media, everyone has the potential to involve. New media provides enough space for users to contribute. However, not every member must contribute, but all must believe they are free to contribute when ready and their contribution will be appropriately valued [10]. Therefore, we must promote people to contribute by any means of communications to preserve local culture.

V. CONCLUSION

CD *Interaktif* is an early effort of increasing participatory culture by the use of new media. In general, users gave good response into the application in term of the importance of application, characteristics, learning experience, and involvement of users. However, there are two specific parts that should be addressed: the use of educational games and

increase involvement of users. Taking account in participatory culture, previous studies has demonstrated the importance of games and users involvement through social media. Moreover, the presence of web 2.0 provides space for users to actively involve by sharing content or comments.

Enhancing participatory culture is a strategic effort to preserve local culture. Opening participation may lead to a form of social engagement form people in preserving local culture. Opening participation may break the boundary of preserving local culture by particular group of people. Everyone has the potential to contribute actively in preserving local culture.

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