



**Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts**

**DEVELOPMENT OF APAI SALOI CHARACTER DESIGN IN  
NARRATIVE FOLKTALE 2D EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION**

**Syaryfah Fazidawaty Binti Wan Busrah**

**Master of Arts  
2012**

**DEVELOPMENT OF APAI SALOI CHARACTER DESIGN IN NARRATIVE  
FOLKTALE 2D EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION**

**SYARYFAH FAZIDAWATY BINTI WAN BUSRAH**

This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the Master of Arts (Animation)

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

2011

The project entitled '**Development of Apai Saloi Character Design in Narrative Folktale 2D Experimental Animation**' is prepared by Syaryfah Fazidawaty Binti Wan Busrah and submitted to the Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts (Animation)

Received for examined by :

.....

(Assoc. Prof Dr. Hj. Khairul Aidil Azlin Bin Abd. Rahman)

Supervisor

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

## **DECLARATION**

I certify that no part of the research in this dissertation have been used as a fatherly support a degree or qualification to either the university or other institute of higher learning.



(Syaryfah Fazidawaty Binti Wan Busrah)

Matric No: 09021561

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

THESIS STATUS ENDORSEMENT FORM

TITLE: DEVELOPMENT OF APAI SALOI CHARACTER DESIGN IN  
NARRATIVE FOLKTALE 2D EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION

ACADEMIC SESSION : 2009 / 2011

I SYARYFAH FAZIDAWATY BINTI WAN BUSRAH

hereby agree that this Thesis\* shall be kept at the Centre for Academic Information Services, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, subject to following terms and conditions:

1. This Thesis is solely owned by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
2. The Centre for Academic Information Services is given full rights to produce copies for educational purpose only
3. The Centre for Academic Information Services is given full rights to do digitization in order to develop local content database
4. The Centre for Academic Information Services is given full rights to produce copies of this Thesis as part of its exchange item program between Higher Learning Institutions [or for the purpose of interlibrary loan between HLI]
5. \*\* Please tick (✓)

☐

**CONFIDENTIAL** (Contains classified information bounded by the **OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT 1972**)


☐

**RESTRICTED** (Contains restricted information as dictated by the body or organization where the research was conducted)

☒

**UNRESTRICTED**

Validated by

  
(AUTHOR'S SIGNATURE)  
Syaryfah Fazidawaty Wan Busrah  
No 10 Lot 23 Lorong 3,  
Taman Lily, 95400,  
Saratok, Sarawak.

Date: 16/4/2012

  
(SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE)  
Assoc. Prof Dr. Hj. Khairul Aidil Azlin B. Abd. Rahman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \* Thesis refers to PhD, Master and Bachelor Degree

\*\* For Confidential or Restricted materials please attach relevant documents from relevant organizations/authorities



## **Acknowledgement**

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim...*

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to God Almighty who has bestowed upon me serenity and good health. Alhamdulillah as He has blessed me with an opportunity to finish up this research successfully.

There were so many amazing peoples who gave so much of themselves to this research. Thus, I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartiest thanks to these people. While space does not permit thanking each person, a sincere note of appreciation is extended to all.

A special thank you is extended to my supervisors, Assoc. Prof Khairul Aidil Azlin Bin Abd. Rahman and Mr. Ahmad Azaini bin Abdul Manaf who have offered numerous ideas, suggestions, time, effort, advice and guidance throughout the development of this research.

A special note of thanks goes to my parents, Mr. Wan Busrah Wan Skran and Mdm. Fatimah Abu Kassim. Not forgetting my dearest family for their support, encouragement, care and motivation which I truly appreciate.

This research couldn't have been completed without the help of everyone at the Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts. Much appreciation also goes to all my friends who had contributed towards the success of this research.

All good things come from Allah. Thank you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.0 Overview	1
1.1 Research Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 General Objective	4
1.4 Specific Objectives	4
1.5 Research Question	5
1.6 Scope	5
1.7 Significance of the Study	8
1.8 Summary	9
<b>CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.0 Overview	10
2.1 Oral Traditions	10
2.2 Iban Comic Hero	14
2.3 Adaptation	18
2.4 Animation	20
2.5 Character Design	24

2.6 Brainstorming	26
2.7 Conceptual Framework	28
2.8 Summary	30

## **CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.0 Overview	31
3.1 Primary Data	31
3.1.1 Brainstorming	31
3.1.2 Interview	32
3.1.3 Questionnaire	33
3.1.4 Field Study	34
3.2 Secondary Data	34
3.3 Research Process	36
3.4 Summary	38

## **CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS**

4.0 Overview	39
4.1 Apai Saloi Story	39
4.2 Content Analysis of Apai Saloi Stories	40
4.3 Characteristics of Apai Saloi	45
4.3.1 Score of Apai Saloi Characteristics	46
4.3.2 Mean of Apai Saloi Characteristics	44
4.4 Mean of Apai Saloi Stories	48
4.5 Synopsis of 'Apai Saloi Fly'	49
4.6 Segment of Narrative of 'Apai Saloi Fly'	49
4.7 Storymood Chart of 'Apai Saloi Fly'	51
4.8 Apai Saloi Character Design Process	53
4.9 Proposed Character Designs of Apai Saloi	58



4.10 Validation of Apai Saloi Character Designs	59
4.11 Result of Character Design of Apai Saloi	61
4.12 Audience's Emotion towards Apai Saloi Character Design Mapping	66
4.13 Drawing Process	68
4.13.1 Refinement Process of Character Design	69
4.13.2 Environment Design Process	74
4.13.2.1 Proposed Environment Design	74
4.13.3 Placement of Tattoo of Apai Saloi	75
4.14 Animating Process of 'Apai Saloi Fly' Trailer	78
4.15 Character Design and Trailer Validation	83
4.15.1 Result of Character Design and Trailer Validation	86
4.17 Summary	89

## **CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY**

5.0 Overview	90
5.2 Contributions of the Study	90
5.3 Summary of the Research	93
5.4 Recommendation of the Study	96

<b>REFERENCE</b>	98
------------------	----

<b>APPENDIX</b>	103
-----------------	-----

## LIST OF FIGURES

Items		Page
Figure 1	Categories of Sarawak Folktales (Ozea 1988)	5
Figure 2	The Highest Factors that Make the Respondents Like or Remember the Animations (Abdul Rahman & Hui 2005)	7
Figure 3	Items of Oral Tradition (Ozea 1988)	12
Figure 4	Relationship of Kinsman of the Iban Spirit Heroes	16
Figure 5	Conceptual Framework of the Development of Apai Saloi Character Design in Folktale Narrative Animation	29
Figure 6	Research Process	36
Figure 7	Score of Apai Saloi Characteristics	46
Figure 8	Mean of Apai Saloi Characteristics	47
Figure 9	Mean of Apai Saloi Stories	48
Figure 10	Segments of Narrative of 'Apai Saloi Fly'	50
Figure 11	Story Mood Chart of 'Apai Saloi Fly'	51
Figure 12	Character Design Process	54
Figure 13	Idea Development of Apai Saloi Character Design	56
Figure 14	Character Sheet of Apai Saloi	57
Figure 15	Maquette of Proposed Apai Saloi Character Design	58
Figure 16	Proposed Character Design of Apai Saloi	59
Figure 17	Proposed Character Design of Apai Saloi	61
Figure 18	Mean of Apai Saloi Character	62
Figure 19	Mean of Apai Saloi Skeletal Structure	63
Figure 20	Mean of Apai Saloi Facial Features	64
Figure 21	Mean of Apai Saloi Character Design	65
Figure 22	Audience's Emotion Towards Apai Saloi Character Design	66

Figure 23	Sample C Character Design	67
Figure 24	Drawing Process	68
Figure 25	Detailing Process	69
Figure 26	Simplified Version of Sarawak's Pine Mat Pattern	70
Figure 27	Plane Placing in the Illustration	71
Figure 28	Transformation of Selected Design into Experimental Design	72
Figure 29	Apai Saloi Walked Down the Lane	73
Figure 30	Apai Saloi Flown by Birds	73
Figure 31	Environment Design Process	74
Figure 32	Proposed Environment Design	75
Figure 33	Placement of Tattoo on Apai Saloi Body	76
Figure 34	Scanning Process	79
Figure 35	Adobe Photoshop Editing Process	80
Figure 36	Animating Process in Adobe After Effect	81
Figure 37	Editing and Rendering Process in Adobe Premiere	82
Figure 38	Play Rendered File	83
Figure 39	Samples of Apai Saloi Character Design from Different Sources	84
Figure 40	Results of Character Design Validation	87
Figure 41	Results of Trailer Validation	88
Figure 42	Findings Model for Development Process of Apai Saloi Character Design in Narrative Folktale Animation	91

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Tendencies of Industrial and Independent Forms in Animation (Furniss 2000)	21
Table 2	Keywords Attributes	27
Table 3	Extracted keywords From the Brainstorming under 5 Categories to Create Trailer of Apai Saloi Story	28
Table 4	List of Apai Saloi Stories	39
Table 5	Content Analysis of Apai Saloi Stories	40
Table 6	Comparison on Apai Saloi Characters from Different Sources	53

## ABSTRACT

Apai Saloi is a comic hero in Iban folktales. Back in the old days, Apai Saloi folktales are often told to youngsters by an elderly caretaker at night. This kind of folktales contains lots of moral value in it. In modern days, this kind of narrative form is much extinct. Most Iban youngsters do not know about this interesting folktale anymore. In order to preserve and sustain the verbal and expressive arts of Iban folktales, a research of development process of Apai Saloi character design from folktales into animation was carried out. This measure was taken so that this form of Iban's comic hero will be highly recognized to the local and global audiences. The primary aim of this research is to form guidelines through translation of local folktales into animation. This research explains in detail the development process of Apai Saloi character from folktales into animation using Semantic Differential method to measure audience's emotion towards Apai Saloi character design. Finding shows that Apai Saloi character is proven to have a significant characteristic that was able to pull the interest of the targeted members of the audiences.



## ABSTRAK

Apai Saloi adalah lagenda dalam cerita rakyat Iban. Suatu masa dahulu, cerita Apai Saloi sering diceritakan kepada kanak-kanak oleh penjaga mereka di malam hari. Cerita rakyat seperti ini mengandungi banyak nilai moral di dalamnya. Pada zaman moden, bentuk naratif seperti ini sudah hampir pupus. Sebahagian besar golongan muda Iban tidak tahu tentang cerita rakyat ini. Dalam rangka untuk memelihara dan mempertahankan seni verbal dan ekspresif cerita rakyat Iban, kajian tentang proses reka bentuk watak Apai Saloi dari cerita rakyat kepada animasi telah dijalankan. Usaha ini dijalankan agar lagenda Iban ini akan lebih dikenali oleh khalayak tempatan dan global. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk membentuk garis panduan melalui terjemahan dari cerita rakyat tempatan kepada animasi. Penyelidikan ini menjelaskan secara terperinci proses merekabentuk watak Apai Saloi dari cerita rakyat kepada animasi dengan menggunakan kaedah pengkamiran Semantik untuk mengukur emosi penonton terhadap reka bentuk karakter Saloi Apai. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa watak Apai Saloi terbukti mempunyai ciri-ciri signifikan yang mampu menarik minat target audiens.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.0 Overview**

Chapter 1 discusses the introduction of Iban folktales, Apai Saloi and the background of this research. Next, it discusses the problem statement, general objective, and specific objectives. This chapter also contains the limitations, scope of the research, and significance of the study.

### **1.1 Research Background**

Sarawak is the largest state in Malaysia and was occupied by people of various ethnic groups. The various ethnic are made up of Malays, Iban, Chinese, Bidayuh, Melanau, Kayan, Kenyah, Murut and Bisaya. There is also a minority ethnic such as Kedayan, Punan, Kelabit, Berawan and Punan who not so many in numbers are (Lintan, 1989).

Based on Buku Harian 2011, the Ibans are the largest race in the state. The Ibans were very unique. Their tradition and way of life is very authentic. Throwing the light into the same perspective is Buma (1987) who said that the Ibans are uniquely endowed with peculiar characteristics well as they are aggressive yet hospitable, adventurous yet simple and above all, honest.

Long time ago, most of the Ibans set up their long houses in the jungle. Kedit (1993) stated that the Ibans who live in the world of tress, animals, insects and thousands of other living things in the closed system which characteristics tropical rain forest ecology, are sharing the strange environment jungle-life with non-human organism life. It was evidence that most of the Iban stories revolved around the jungle

which related to their special interaction and relationship with animals and plants. Kedit (1993) further added that the Ibans believes that all things have souls of their own and in daily activities, the soul of a man (*mensia*) and that of gods or spirits (*petara/antu*) often impinge on one another.

Lintan (1989) in his study said that among the Ibans, the language they use is also different from one region to another in terms of meaning, reference and terms of use. In the mean time, he continues that the differences were very significant until Iban speakers can be identified by the district where one belongs. Furthermore, Kedit (1993) said that "The Iban possess a very rich oral literature". Looking from that perspective, Jensen (1964) further added that "the Iban are very word-conscious people." These show that the Iban are rich in language, multi-cultural interests and also wealthy in valuable literary.

As cited in Dayak Studies by Sather (2001), Dayak communities today is facing major challenge in preserving and maintaining cultural identities. As modern world changes rapidly, these narrative forms of oral literatures are in danger of being diminished and extinct. Most youngsters do not know about this interesting folktale anymore. Hence, this is one major reason why the effort of collecting and documenting folklore continues to run.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Sather (2001) in his study stated those Dayak communities today is facing a great challenge to maintain their cultural institutions and identities. He identified Dayak cultural identities in the form of verbal storytelling that includes epic, sacred and even historical narrative, which cherished Dayak people's lives before. He further acknowledged that in the world of rapid change, many of these narrative forms are in danger of being lost.

Furthermore, Untie (2009) stated that Iban youngsters at the modern age are less interested in their tradition because there were too many distractions from modern gadgets such as television and computer. While according to Singki (1989), although a folktale was used to be collected and published long time ago but it is not too exposed to the reader as it was not conducted systematically. This has made the entire precious folktale almost forgotten and abandoned.

Malaysian animation industry lack local content in them. New Straits Time on 15th June 2010 reported that Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin the Deputy Prime Minister, suggested capitalizing on heritage and cultural diversity to create full-fledged homegrown intellectual properties as one way of moving of the value chain in animation.

In light of the point above, Datuk Seri Rais Yatim stated in Utusan Malaysia on 29th April 2011 that Malaysians must find a way on how the story of Sabah and



## 1.5 Research Question

The researcher had raised research questions as a guideline for the researcher to conduct this research. Therefore, these research questions are crucial in helping researcher meet the objectives of the research. The research questions for this research were:

1. Why Apai Saloi story is extinct?
2. How is the transformation process of folktales into animation?
3. What is the audience's perception towards a new character design of Apai Saloi and Apai Saloi Trailer?

## 1.6 Scope

According to Ozca (1988) Sarawak's folktales can be divided into four categories.

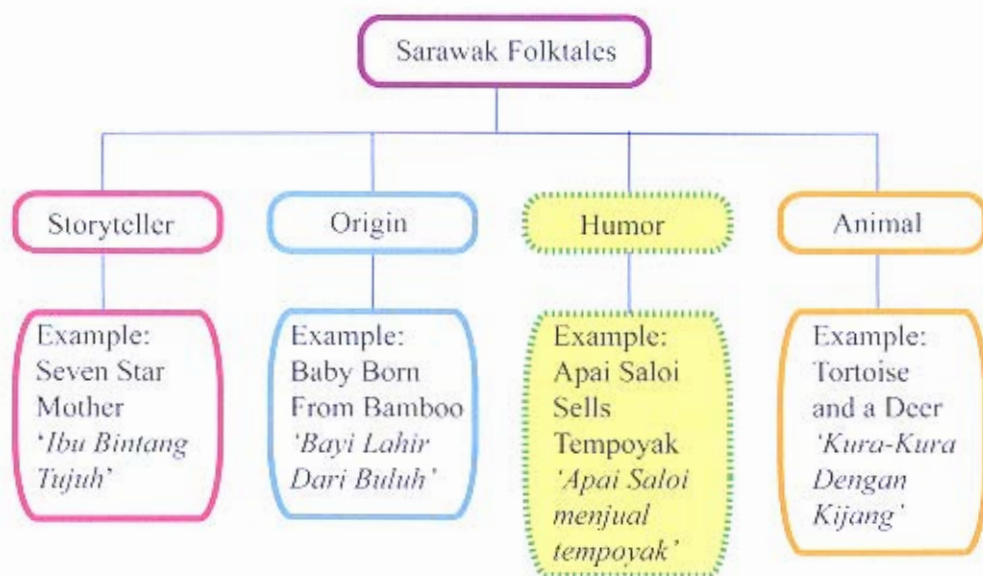


Figure 1: Categories of Sarawak Folktales (Ozca 1988)



Ozea (1988) in his study stated that under the storyteller category, the kind of story is mainly about heroism and valor. These stories contains many traits such as separation, re-meeting, pregnancy, birth, refugee or adventure or attempted resistance, friendship with animals, attacks, wars, supernatural, heroism, romance, transformation, the role of *Nenek Kebayan* or old women, the underworld or heaven, disguise, storm or flood events, live events, and finally, the role of the customs and beliefs.

According to Ozea (1988), there are many Origin types of story in Sarawak. These types of story mainly related to the myths. Among their famous attributes are born out of bamboo, born from eggs, genealogy and belief in spirit.

Furthermore, Ozea (1988) mentioned the traits in this animal type of story which include advice or moral value, tit for tat, intelligence, ignorance, fraud and deceit, arrogance, and finally the origin and satire.

While in Humor category, Ozea (1988) viewed it from the perspective of character in the story and classified it as a story of a fool. Among the traits in this story are ignorance, intelligence, morals, exemplary and greediness.

Based on the above categories, this research only focused on the humor category under the scope of Apai Saloi documented stories. The documented stories were from two books that were compiled by Clifford Sather (2001) and Francis Jalak (1994).

According to Rahman & Hui (2005) on a research of Viewing Habits and Preferences of Malaysian Children towards Local and Foreign Animation, among the highest factors that make the respondents like or remember the animations were their interesting storylines, story originalities and their level of humors. These three highest factors are presented in the following figure.

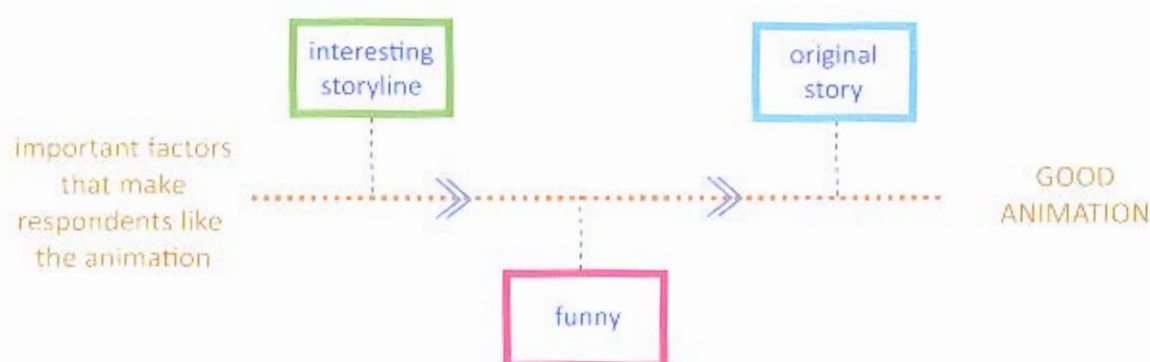


Figure 2: The Highest Factors that Make the Respondents Like or Remember the Animations (Rahman & Hui 2005)

The reason why researcher wanted to create a character design of Apai Saloi is because based on the preliminary research done, out of 15 documented stories of Apai Saloi, 14 of them were in comedy genre. Based on the observation of 15 documented Apai Saloi stories it contains all the highest factors that make the respondents like or remember the animation. This important factor in Apai Saloi stories will help a lot to grab audience's attention when researcher wanted to animate the trailer of Apai Saloi story once the character design process is done.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this research is to depict selected folklores from expressive Iban literature into animation. Currently, there are lacks of animations depicting Iban folklores as animation genre. Our hope is these forms of animations could be highly recognized by the local and global audiences in the future. This research has the potential to promote local culture as well as to educate the students and audiences about the importance of preserving local content.

Utusan Malaysia reported on 29th April 2011 that Datuk Seri Dr. Rais Yatim the minister of Information Communication and Culture has recommended arts and culture communities in Sabah and Sarawak to bring up the issuance of animation, quality documentary and attractive fictional narrative to the international stage. He further stated that both Sabah and Sarawak were given special attention because the industry already perceive these two states as a source of romanticism and the story of human nature. He mentioned that this action was in accordance with government insight to see Malaysia exporting animation film, documentary and fiction every year to the international market.

Furthermore, Osman (1982) said that collection of oral tradition should be published and disseminated. He believes that creativity involves changes in artists' original creations as time passes by. So, with each passing of a tradition, a new tradition takes its place. This is what researcher wanted to do. By creating a trailer of Apai Saloi story from the published folktale, it will help to broaden the dissemination of this precious folktale of the Iban.



According to Furniss (2001), “The use of traditional stories has proven economical because, as public domain materials, they cost nothing to use. In addition, well-known stories cut down on the amount of work an animation writers need to do”. The animator does not need to develop the character because the character itself already has been developed in the story and the audience already has a general scenario and basic understanding of the contents and lines of the story. The animator only needs to maintain the structure of the story to hold the audience’s interest. When the adaptation is made from oral folktales to a creative way such as animation, it can be interesting for the audience to discover what differences have occurred during the process of adaptation itself.

### **1.8 Summary**

The works of previous narrators, authors, compilers and publishers who had gathered Iban folklore have contribute much to the collection of literatures in the state. The change from paper documentation of the development work that combines the today’s technology has mooted the idea to produce the animation of the Iban folklore. This has aroused researchers interest to conduct a deeper study on Iban folklore in an effort to transform this medium into a form of animation in the hope that such work is getting the attention from the younger generation of today’s world.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### **2.0 Overview**

This chapter discusses literature review on Apai Saloi in narrative animation, explaining the items in oral traditions. It will also cover on Iban folktale. The overview on Iban comic hero, animation, character design and adaptation will also be presented in this chapter.

### **2.1 Oral Traditions**

Osman (1982) refers oral tradition as “those traditions in the life of a community which have been transmitted in time and space by means of the word of mouth”. Gill (2010) viewed oral tradition as a manner in which information is passed from one generation to the next in the absence of writing or a recording medium.” The Cultural Heritage Initiative for Community Outreach (2001) offered some meaningful insight by providing the idea that “Before the invention of written language, and before the advent of widespread literacy, oral tradition was much more of a daily presence in people's lives than it is in our world today.”

From generation to generation the contents of oral tradition remains the same and have only a slight change even it spread only through word of mouth (Osman, 1992). This was maybe due to a tradition influenced by sanctions and beliefs which were repeated without slightest change. He however argued that oral tradition is easy to be forgotten by generations as it is only transmitted through word of mouth. Earlier in



his writing, Osman (1982) recognized that the items of oral tradition would have variants or different versions.

Tradition belongs to people in particular social groups. However, Osman (1982) argued “it is not expected that everyone in the [social] group would participate actively in the tradition” even though not all parts of the community are actively participate the tradition continues to live and survive because the members of the community subscribes to it majority. Based on the above argument, Osman (1982) concluded that tradition would lose their function in social life when the community is no longer subscribing to it.

Since two decades ago, Osman (1982) has come out with the idea that only the active carriers would still have the intimate knowledge of the older traditions. The active carriers were consists of the elderly of the community who is still practicing the old way of life in particular society which is not so many in numbers nowadays. It is these people who have inherited the oral tradition, meet with the modern innovation and finally had documenting the oral tradition.

According to Osman (1982) items in oral tradition can be divided into two categories which are verbal and non-verbal. Items in non-verbal are those which exist not in verbal form but existed in behavioral, material or musical forms. On the other hand, items in verbal category are those existed in verbal form. This research only focuses on verbal category of oral tradition. Under the verbal category, it can be divided into two categories which are narrative and non-narrative. Under the narrative items are