

Cross-Cultural Concepts in Cultural Product Design

(Case Study of Shoe Design with Old Javanese Script)

Peter Ardhiyanto*

Department of Digital Media Design
Asia University
Taichung, Taiwan
*peter.ardhiyanto@unika.ac.id

Soteria Adia Mahanaim

Visual Communication Design
Soegijapranata Catholic University
Semarang, Indonesia
soteriaadia@gmail.com

Wei-Her Hsieh

Department of Fashion Design and Management
National Pingtung University of Science and Technology
Pingtung County, Taiwan
weiher@mail.npust.edu.tw

Chi-Hsiung Chen

Department of Creative Product design
Asia University
Taichung, Taiwan
chenchs@asia.edu.tw

Abstract—Cultural product design with a cross-cultural approach is currently in high demand by the younger generation. This positive thing increases the respect for local culture. However, the lack of industry player's knowledge of cross-culture principles makes less cultural ideology conveyed. This study aims to determine the process of cross-culture in design using a case study of casual sneaker shoes with ancient Javanese script culture (Hanacaraka) in the design. This research uses a qualitative case study by studying the form, function, and symbolic meaning of the culture in the shoe product design process. The results of this study found that the use of culture in popular products needs to pay attention to the symbolic meaning that represents the local culture. The use of culture in the design of cultural products gives a different look to provide its own identity that results in strengthening branding and strengthening the economy for local brands. Difficult cultural preservation can represent cultural product design with the concept of cross-culture. The implication of this research is to provide steps in the process of cross-cultural methods in industries, especially local brands that carry the cultural locality of their products. Besides, this study also has implications on the cross-culture method for the preservation of Hanacaraka culture.

Keywords—culture transformation, cultural creative industry, cross-cultural design

I. INTRODUCTION

Along the journey of culture history, Indonesia is a trading area which have various culture acculturation [1]. One of the culture acculturations in Indonesia is the old Javanese Script or mostly known as Hanacaraka [2]. At this very moment old Javanese script is vanishing and young generation lost its interest. The uses of Javanese Script are only placed on traffic signs, school signs, and some text in government city campaign program in order to be understood by the public. The use was merely to preserve the Hanacaraka script, so it will not

completely vanish. Since Latin alphabet were introduced by the Dutch in the 19th century, Javanese script was slowly replaced by Latin alphabet [3]. The Hanacaraka script itself has loose its function; young generation could speak Javanese, but they no longer could read Hanacaraka. Few elementary schools have removed the Javanese language lesson which taught students about Hanacaraka, the use of Hanacaraka script is taught in a few public and private national school once a week [4].

Hanacaraka is one of the traditional characters that exist in Indonesia. Javanese character was used by the Java citizens to develop the writing tradition in Javanese language. Hanacaraka is often used to write story scripts, history notes, ancient songs or foretelling [5]. However generally, the application of Hanacaraka in today's life could hardly be found. Some application that could still be found in few cities such as Surakarta and Yogyakarta as one of the main cities which uses Javanese script in public places [4].

Nowadays, cultural product using cross-cultural approach are gaining interest [6]. Chances of local brand to introduce the local culture including Hanacaraka is widely open together with creative industry as the vessel to create something [7]. The same thing goes to flymax.id, a local casual shoe brand in Surakarta City – Indonesia, now tries to present old Javanese script element in their shoe designs. The cross-cultural concept which was adopted by flymax.id is one of the efforts in introducing old Javanese script and preserving culture through product design, in this case shoes design. Shoes are chosen by flymax.id because it has a connection with young generation, the casual shoes are designed with old Javanese script that are usually used by young generation in daily life. Shoes are one of the daily wears that everyone uses. Shoes have a wide variety of type for an occasion, one of the shoes that are used by young generation in their daily life is sneakers. Sneaker is a type of shoes that are usually worn by young generation for casual

wear for their comfy and looks [8]. The combination between Sneaker with old Javanese script becomes a uniqueness of flymax.id in their marketing strategy as well as the preserving strategy of Hanacaraka script.

II. METHODS

The research of “SALA” shoe design study case from a local brand called flymax.id uses descriptive qualitative method by approaching the cross-cultural concepts between popular shoes (Sneakers) and old Javanese script (Hanacaraka). This research review applies the four steps of analysis, first, the identification analysis which is used to describe the cultural and design elements that exist on the shoe, second, the transformation analysis which purpose is to see the transition from the cultural element that blends into the design element, third, the symbolical analysis is used to conclude the culture ideology which is presented by the cultural design product and new concept either its implicitly or explicitly, last, the evaluation is used to see the overall conclusion of cross-cultural application in a design product [9-11].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Design Process

The design process involves cross-culture concept in the shoe design product between Indonesian Culture and western culture.

TABLE I. DESIGN PROCESS OF FLYMAX.ID HANACARAKA SHOES



B. Identification

TABLE II. IDENTIFICATION PROCESS OF FLYMAX.ID HANACARAKA SHOES

Outer level in Physical Element	Middle Level in Functional Element	Inner level in Symbolic Element
Javanese or Hanacaraka Script	Old communication language before the Latin alphabet in Indonesia.	Preserving the Javanese Script culture.
Aesthetic needs	Daily footwear	Comfortable and casual shoes for daily wear.
Material: canvas fabric, rubber, ink, pen, paper.		

The identification process is divided into three parts, namely:

- **Outer Level (Physical Elements):** Explaining about color, shape, pattern, texture, etc.
- **Middle Level (Functional Element):** Explaining the function, making process, and safeties.
- **Inner Level (Inside Element):** Explaining the representation, culture values, value upon the product, etc.

1) *Indonesian culture identification:* Indonesia is huge archipelago which stretch from Sabang to Merauke City resulting diverse ethnic language. One of the languages which was used generally in the period was old Javanese script or Hanacaraka [5]. Hanacaraka was originated from early Pallawa Script and the Kawi script. During the development, Javanese scripts were being used in Javanese literature and oral legend of the Hanacaraka origin. Old Javanese script were divided into few scripts, mainly the Carakan, Sandhangan and Murdha scripts. The Carakan Script consist of 20 main script has no sandhangan or clothes, therefore it needs another script to make vowel sounds. The sandhangan script is used to fill the vowel while murdha scripts is to write something which are considered respected [12].

In these days, Hanacaraka or Javanese script are introduced in elementary school with an hour lesson per week. As it being replaced by Latin alphabet, young generation starts to use the general alphabet which is more convenient. With the passage of time, Indonesia learns new culture form every part of the world including the fashion trends from western culture such as sneakers [13]. Sneakers are shoes model which was used for daily footwear ranging from the simplest model to the sporty looking model. However, regarding to the shoe regulation from schools in Indonesia, the shoes are designed in black and white color which is considered appropriate for school uniform. Furthermore, this black and white sneaker shoe is aimed for teenager till young adult where they can use it in a semi-formal event.

2) *Western culture identification*: Sneakers are a pair of shoes originated from America in 1839, where a scientist created vulcanized rubber which results a durable sole. Back then, it was called plimsolls that are used for sports purpose giving name to famous shoes brand. In 1950, teenager in America start the looks of combining sneakers with denim jeans followed by famous actor and actress [14]. As many people said, sneakers are comfortable and casual which makes people move easily. It took around a decade or two, until most people notice sneaker was a good choice of shoes to walk in.

C. Translation

TABLE III. TRANSLATION PROCESS OF FLYMAX.ID HANACARAKA SHOES

Physical Element	Function Element	Symbolic element
Old Javanese script writing	Preserving the Javanese script	“SALA” or Solo word written in Javanese Script, to remind a connection for people who live in Java. Especially Solo City
Sneaker shoes	Footwear	Casual shoe design, where young generation mostly use for daily wear.
Black and white colour	Printing and embroidery.	School regulation of black and white shoes.

D. Implementation

TABLE IV. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF FLYMAX.ID HANACARAKA SHOES

Physical Element	Function Element	Symbolic element
Shoes with Javanese Script.	Shoes for teenagers and young adults.	Preserving the Javanese script and a fashionable sneaker shoe.
Javanese Script	Made by printing the script to the rubber surface.	
Shoes	Made by black canvas fabric and white rubber.	
Combination of embroidery and printing.	To give identification on the shoes.	

The idea of connecting each culture gives a new impression that interest young generation toward this cross-culture concept; in order to preserve the local culture which is Hanacaraka script within the sneaker shoes. Therefore, as the Javanese script is implemented in the shoe design (sneakers), this will help the preservation, not to mention people will start to observe the design and take interest. They would start to find out and learn about the culture further. Flymax integrate the word “SALA” from Solo which is written in Javanese script to grasp the emotional bonding with the majority who once lived there. The design was not only made to fulfill the aesthetic needs, but it also connects to the school regulation for shoes which enables teenager to wear this shoes design

E. Evaluation

The cross-culture concept implemented on flymax.id shoe design which involves old Javanese script and sneaker shoe is one of the great example of a cross-culture product design where it finely combine the three elements of physical, function and symbolic in a harmony. The use of this elements hopefully broadens the user’s knowledge of how cultures in Indonesia starts to disappear one by one. This is one of the cultures which needs to be preserved and therefore becomes an example for other local culture in Indonesia that could be implement cross-culture concept in their product. The design process used in this research could help designers in creating new products that involves cross-culture concepts from Indonesia’s rich culture and tradition.

- Flymax implement the Javanese script culture from cross-culture concept to preserve the culture existence.
- Cross-culture concept from Javanese Script and sneaker shoes culture which are originated from Indonesian and Western Culture.
- This could lead to other cross-culture concept to help other cultures in Indonesia that starts to disappear.
- Cross-cultural concepts for product design need to consider involving three elements: physical, functional and symbolic elements. These three elements can clarify and break down the meaning step by step from implicit to explicit meaning.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this case study carries the three form of element (physical, function, symbolic) that are important in cross-culture concept which goes in harmony. Given the case study which comes from Indonesian culture (Old Javanese script) and Western culture (sneaker shoes), thus creating a design to preserve the fading culture, enabling the public to wear as a daily footwear and fulfilling their aesthetic needs. This case study could be a fine example for other creative industries that applies cross-culture concept in their product design.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Gratitude is highly expressed to Soegijapranata Catholic University Indonesia and Asia University Taiwan for full support on this research.

REFERENCES

- [1] M.C. Ricklefs, "A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300". In A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300. 1993. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-22700-6>
- [2] V.I. Ekowati, "Javanese Letters: Symbols Of Javanese Civilization: (Introductio N, History, Philosophical Values, Learning Methods, Utilizations, To Uch Of Technology In Javanese Letters)". 1st Mae Fah Luang University International Conference 2012, 66(1975), 37–39. 2012.

- [3] E.K. Aribowo, "Digitalisasi Aksara Jawa Dan Pemanfaatannya Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Bagi Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Jawa Smp Kabupaten Klaten". *Warta LPM*. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.23917/warta.v21i2.5620>
- [4] A. Setiawan, A.M. Sulaiman, "Hanacaraka: Aksara Jawa Dalam Karakter Font dan Aplikasinya Sebagai Brand Image". *Ornamen*. 2015.
- [5] F.R. Nur Awal, "DUNIA BATIN JAWA: Aksara Jawa Sebagai Filosofi dalam Memahami Konsep Ketuhanan". *Kontemplasi: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin*. 2017. <https://doi.org/10.21274/kontem.2017.5.2.289-309>
- [6] M. Peltoniemi, "Cultural industries: Product-market characteristics, management challenges and industry dynamics". *International Journal of Management Reviews*. 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12036>
- [7] P. Ardianto, R.S. Nababan, C.H. Alfons, and A.M. Soteria, "Designing a tourism map, Case Study Pecinan Semarang". *SCU Knowledge Media*. 2019.
- [8] B. Liz, "Shoes: A History from Sandals to Sneakers". *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*. 2007. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13612020710824643>
- [9] R.T. Lin, "Transforming Taiwan aboriginal cultural features into modern product design: A case study of a cross-cultural product design model". *International Journal of Design*. 2007.
- [10] R. Lin, M.X. Sun, Y.P. Chang, Y.C. Chan, Y.C., Hsieh, and Y.C. Huang, "Designing "culture" into modern product: A case study of cultural product design". *Lecture Notes in Computer Science (Including Subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics)*. 2007. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-73287-7_19
- [11] D. Gumulya, M. Batangtaris, and O. Nathalisa, "Perancangan Desain Produk Dengan Konsep Silang Budaya: Studi Kasus Perancangan Tas Dengan Konsep Silang Budaya Cina Peranakan Dan Kontemporer". *Jurnal Dimensi Seni Rupa Dan Desain*, Vol 10(No 2), 221–239. 2013. <https://trijurnal.lemlit.trisakti.ac.id/index.php/dimensi/article/view/473/0>
- [12] S. Wardoyo, W. Kuntari, A.S. Pramudyo, Suhendar and S. Hidayat, "The development of javanese language teaching materials through introduction of java scripts using artificial neural network". *Telkonnika (Telecommunication Computing Electronics and Control)*. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.12928/TELKOMNIKA.v16i4.8465>
- [13] R. Casidy, A.N. Nuryana, and S.R.H. Hati, "Linking fashion consciousness with Gen Y attitude towards prestige brands". *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*. 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-09-2014-0136>
- [14] C. Hertz, "Shoes: A History from Sandals to Sneakers (Riello and McNeil, eds.)". In *Museum Anthropology Review*. 2011.