



Sensuality Representation on Ahri's KDA Popstar Skin

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ABSTRACT

This study dissected the costume contained in skin KDA Popstar on Ahri's Champion in League of Legends game to find representation of sensuality that adapted imagery from girlband Kpop. League of Legends is a game that offers player an arena to fight, survive and win the game. This studies on skin KDA Popstar of champion Ahri, which adapted from Korean girlband, the visual that can intrigue emotion, desire and addiction from players. The study is a qualitative research by describing skin KDA Popstar weared by champion Ahri then dissect the skin character based on costume matrix, analysis on similarity or relations among theories as well as element that formed perception, and interpretation to the skin KDA Popstar on champion Ahri. lastly design theory about visual culture to understand the general conception of skin character as a visual product. The analysis shows that Ahri's skin KDA Popstar contains sensual concept in it's elements that adapted from Korean girlband image. The costume is focused on featuring her charm and sexiness. Ahri's skin KDA Popstar represent sensuality evidenced by the form and visualisation of it's costume.

Keyword: Game, Representation, Sensuality, Skin Character

INTRODUCTION

Video game continues to be developed as of today become online game that connect a lot of people. The development of technology has opened the limits of capabilities and brought people into a new cultural era called digital culture (Gere, 2008). League of Legends is one of the online digital games that uses multimedia in its distribution, by creating a factor of satisfaction and interest of players towards game characters with different skin that changing the visual character, and animation when played by the players. The skin character is a virtual item that is used to change the visual appearance of a game character, either partially or as a whole body of the game character. Lin and Sun named them as virtual items both functional and non-functional (Lin & Sun, 2011). League of Legends has 150 Champion in August 2020, consisting of several



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types with their own weaknesses and strength, and the number of skins can be estimated at ten times the number of the hero because one champions can consist of more or less than ten skins. All of skin in League of Legends game can only be bought by in game currency, but sometimes player got free skin as a reward. The following figure is describing in game menu to buy a skin.

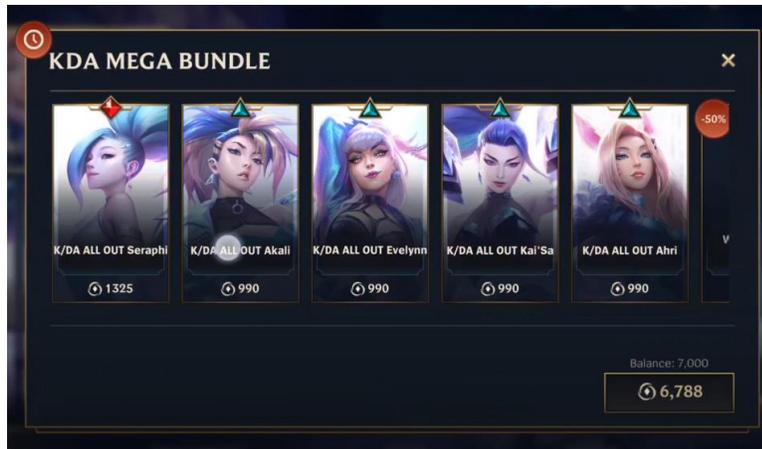


Figure 1 League of Legends game menu to buy KDA skin.

Source: Riot Games. League of Legends. Wild Rift. 2020

Skin KDA Popstar is adapted from Korean girlband that focus on sing and dance performance. Savitri and Wardani (2018) in their respective journals emphasized the existence and development of sexy and erotic concepts in Kpop music performance which of course disturbed Korean society itself, even the Korean Communication Standards Commission (KCSC) has taken firm action against the concept of sexuality in the Kpop music industry. This issue started by the culture of South Korea media industries that emphasis on bodily perfection, and focus on ideal bodies has permeated popular discourse more generally (Epstein & Joo, 2012). So, Ahri with KDA Popstar skin positioned as product or an image needs to be observed in relation to the patterns of basic elements of its costume through diversity, continuity, and dominance as well as it's similarity to the product in real world. Sensuality become a great aspect that can sell the skin, and attract more player to play the game. League of Legends is an arena team battle that let five players with five characters to fight on each side. Figure 2 show there are three lines, and two sides of team.



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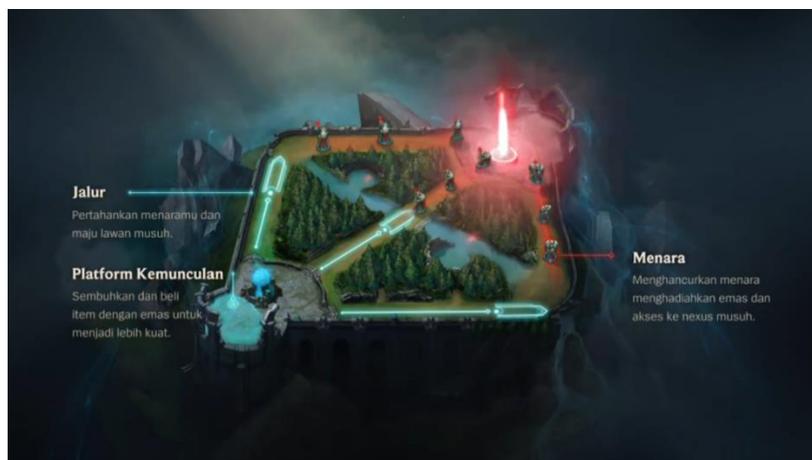


Figure 2 Maps in League of Legends game.

Source: Riot Games. League of Legends. Wild Rift. 2020

Many studies have been done relating game, character and its item that related to culture, psychology, ideology, and many other subjects. But this study goes around phenomena of sensuality representation on skin character. Aryani, Santosa, and Zpalanzani (2013) discusses game as a culture representation which according to him character design studies can be investigated from storyline, gameplay, environment, and elemen of character design. Every part of the game is human creation that contains the way of thinking and purpose of its creation. Lankoski have different design approach and its foundation in character engagement, his research show that people react to human-like entities (e.g. game character) as if they were people, including empathizing with characters, and he integrate dramatic writing insight for theatre to the character design studies (Lankoski, 2010). There are positive reactions on people and attracted to entities or product they known. In the other hand, Liang discussed the phenomenon of trending style in character design, according to his research there is a modelling pattern in the game art design from traditional culture art elements (Liang, 2017). Skin character is not that different from character design because skin character itself applied to change the appearance of the chracter and some of them changes the visual effect of the skill. The visualization of skin character is usually under one theme such as chinese new year, secret agent, western music, girlband Kpop. Yan as well discussed traditional culture characteristics in the design of game character, according to the research applying the elements of traditional culture into design of the game characters on the basis of respect history, traceability and evidence (Yan, 2016). This studies differs from any previous research which is to uncover the representation of sensuality and its visualization in skin character. Other studies has shown a



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lot of subject related to game character design and it's skin character, but none of them has studied the sensuality representation on skin character.

League of Legends is a Multiplayer Online Battle Arena (MOBA) game, the main attraction of the game is character with it's skill and visual. The character contain many values that are displayed not directly or are semiotic (Grayson, 2001). This study will examine visualization of skin KDA Popstar adapted from girlband Korea to reveal the element that represent sensuality. This research, use descriptive qualitative to encompass aesthetic studies on Ahri's skin KDA Popstar. Second, use costume studies to interrogate the element in the skin character and it's function. In expectance, this method can be applied to other skin character as well as other game with the same genre, and uncover the knowledge of digital culture that formed in present days.

METHOD

Descriptive Qualitative

Descriptive qualitative research encompasses aesthetic studies with the aim of understanding the sensual representation on Ahri's skin KDA Popstar so as to develop theoretical assumptions about context as an aesthetic assessment of the occurrence of a specific representation of sensuality in Ahri's KDA Popstar skin. Creswell defines a case study as "an in-depth exploration of a program, event, activity, process, or more individuals" (Creswell, 2007). The studies is done by gathering detailed information about champion Ahri's KDA Popstar skin using various data collection procedures, mainly visual data that released by Riot game as game developer and primary data from the League of Legends game itself.

Character Design Studies

Costume matrix is matrix method to analyze character by it's outfit or costume with a goal of uncovering information and message such as characteristics, identity, and representation (Tsukamoto, 2012). Darmaprawira suggested the theory of the study of color factors includes understanding the meaning of colors symbolically and psychologically (Darmaprawira, 2002). So, people have had a prior experience of sensuality in girlband Korea, moreover they see it more than once because sensuality become popular concept that used by korean music entertainment. This research focus on sensuality representation of skin KDA Popstar which is Korean girlband adaptation.



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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ahri's character comes from an Asian myth known as nine tailed fox spirits. This myth of fox spirit varies from each country such as China, Japan and Korea. Every country has their own story about the myth of the fox spirits. Based on Korean folklore, this fox demon is female dominant and is always evil (Lee, 2011). Champions League of Legends has many different skin character themes, these skins are defined with various names and themes used with the aim of improving the quality of player immersion.

Observation of Ahri's K/DA Popstar's skin

The K/DA Popstar skin is a skin with the theme of a Korean girlband which the costume adapting the style of western music pop singer costume, and night clubs style dress. This skin does not have any effect on stats in battle, but the skin changes the appearance of champions outfit and form, skill effects, and gestures. As stated in various journals and books, the image of Kpop idols and girlband (Kpop performers) focuses on gender sensuality. Lusia Savitri and Dimas Putra Wardani in their respective journals emphasized the existence and development of sexy and erotic concepts in Kpop music performance which is disturbed Korean society itself, even the Korean Communication Standards Commission (KCSC) has taken firm action against the concept of sexuality in the Kpop music industry (Wardani, 2018). Although not all Korean girlband highlight their sensual traits, but every Korean girlband consists of women who have ideal bodies. KDA Popstar skin represent Korean girlband as an image of profession, a group of idols who have ideal bodies and can easily attract attention from the opposite sex and are idolized by both girls and boys as their idols. As seen in the silhouette image of the Ahri's KDA Popstar skin below, it shows the ideal body shape like a model (see figure 3).



Figure 3. The appearance of the Ahri's KDA Popstar skin and its silhouette



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The champion with the KDA Popstar skin has a slim and sexy body that can be seen from the curves of the body even though the image is only a silhouette though. As Korean girl groups who often show shapes and curves with tight clothes and do not cover certain parts to emphasize the beauty of their ideal body. This ideal body concept has long been marketed and demonstrated as part of Korean girlband performance. They often show long and smooth curve legs, small belly that accentuates the chest and hips size. The shape of the body is one of the objects of human desire or passion which gives rise to certain wills and emotion. Unique identity of character is a significant factor in creating immersion and attracting player (Manninen & Kujanpaa, 2007). So, visual element such as form and color in KDA Popstar skin is unique feature that will be giving certain impressions, such as sensual or luxury feeling as a first impression.

Form

Designers can create imaginative skin character designs beyond human reason or it can also come from something that logically already exists from the real world. Skin character is an expression of personality and paradigm based on its appearance and visual element. Ahri's KDA Popstar skin form matrix analysis (Tsukamoto, 2012), start with the body shape based on the proportion, silhouette, and lastly gesture. Starting from the proportion of a champion's body, the following will scale the size of the champion's body based on the size of the head of each champion. In the other hand, silhouettes provide visual information that is presented in a form of impression that can be easily captured through a silhouette display. There is representational correspondance inside game makes signage system more complicated caused by game independency (Curry, 2010).

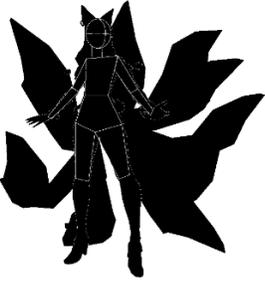
Ahri's KDA Popstar skin body size and proportions measured by the scale of the head size reveals that Ahri has a height of 9 heads with a length of feet 5 heads and body 3 heads. The KDA Popstar skin follows a real-world size scale with the proportion of a model who often has a height exceeding 7 heads. Ahri's ideal body proportion is like a model, and dolls are coveted by both women who want to have the same body posture and men who admire it. Next is followed by analysis using had length scale, simple body form, and grid system which will show the scale of the champion Ahri with KDA Popstar skin in more detail (see Table 1).



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Table 1. Size and proportion analysis

Head length scale	Body form
	
Grid System Analysis	
	

The shape of the body is getting smaller from the shoulders to the stomach and get bigger in the buttocks. The sensual image can be seen from the proportion of the body silhouette of Ahri's KDA Popstar skin, the ideal shape of the body that desired by most of men. Grid system shows the details of the shape of the body straightforwardly from the shape of the head, chest, stomach, hips to legs. Ahri's champion body shape looks slender with a two square wide belly, 10 square of feet length, 2.5 square wide chest and 3-square wide bottom. Ahri looks sexy with her slim body and body shape with beautiful curves on the body. Body shape that indicates sensuality for appearance that shows a sexy body or simply shows the curves of the body on the chest and buttocks. This skin is an adaptation of Korean girlband that followed by their image as a performance with sexual and erotic concept. Stephen and Rachael mention on their research in regard of the increasing emphasis on the nude male torso and exposed female legs reveals about ideologies of nation, gender and sexuality in, and regarding, contemporary Korea (Epstein & Joo, 2012).



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Costume

The KDA Postar skin has its own characteristic and unique appearance which indeed adapts the appearance of Korean girlband with pop music as it's visual theme. Costume or clothing is one of the elements in the KDA Popstar skin which is adapted from several forms of clothes and pants and a combination of various other visuals to create new clothing styles. Ahri's outfit consisted of three parts, a cover of chest , torso , and legs. These three clothes were adapted from existing clothes, namely a chest covering that looks like an open shoulder dress, a body covering that resembles a Japanese swimsuit or diving suit, and leg covers that resemble glossy stockings. and lasrly high heels. The appearance of the clothes on Ahri's KDA Popstar skin is intended to attract the attention of the opposite sex or increase one's attractiveness by showing the shape of the body with tight clothes and not covering a certain part of the body. Saeji mention on his research, the wide-spread sexual objectification of women in Korean popular music performance subconsciously teaches men and boys that women and girls are sexual objects that exist to please them (Saeji, 2013). The following is an analysis of costume of the KDA Popstar skin and their similarities to existing clothes (see Table 2).

Color

The next visual element is color that can bring out certain human emotions and feelings, besides that it can also become a certain identity. Even though in the same skin theme the four champions have different dominant colors. Champion Ahri has a predominantly purple color on its tail. one of the base elements of design while also the most expressive in terms of the meaning it conveys and the psychological effects perceived by the audience (Alnasuan, 2016). A single color can have diverse meanings in different cultures, USA and Canada associates adultery with red,while Western European associates love romance with red and flirtation with pink. USA and Canada associates purple with meanings such as bravery, loyalty, law, and nobility. Western European associates purple with meanings such as nobility, vanity, power, and luxury. Japan associates purple with meanings such as royalty. In the context of the KDA Popstar skin which the looks represent sencuality which is emphasize ideal woman ideal body with tight and revealing clothes. As of today purple color can be easily found in night club, it may represent luxury and prestige of the place. According to Jung, Henderson, Franz, Jeffe & Jacobi (2013) symbols are the terms, and names that may be familiar in daily life yet have some unique cultural connotations in addition to the obvious meanings (Jung, Henderson, Franz, Jaffe, & Jacobi, 2013). So, according the theme of the skin that adapted from Korean girlband and the form of the outfit that matches with night club dress or night club performer, it is hard to deny that this skin has represented sensuality (see Figure 4).



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Table 2. Ahri's KDA Popstar skin costume analysis

Similar product	Costume	Champion Ahri
 <p>Swimwear</p>		
 <p>Open shoulder dress</p>  <p>Wetlook stocking</p>		



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Figure 4. The color of Ahri's KDA Popstar skin, and three dominant color, purple, black, and beige. The color analysis reveals various color contained in Ahri's KDA Popstar skin and their colors code.

CONCLUSION

Champion Ahri's KDA Popstar skin is visualization of Korean girlband in the world of League of Legend game, adapted from the real Korean girlband will also bring the image that has already been created. One of them is sensuality aspect of Korean girlband that will also be represented in the element of the skin. Form matrix analysis uncover that champion Ahri's KDA Popstar skin form represent sensuality by it's body proportion, body curve, and the form of each body parts such as chest, waist, bottom and leg. Costume matrix analysis emphasize that champion Ahri's KDA Popstar skin has sensual concept based on it's outfit. The type of outfit that wore by performer and visitor of night club party, it's reveals body shape with tight outfit and emphasize sensual feeling. Lastly, based on champions Ahri's KDA Popstar skin color analysis, the skin has cool or cold theme color. There are three dominant colors: purple, black and beige. Although, the meaning of color differs depends on culture and context, this purple color familiar with neon color in the club. Purple can be associated with luxury and prestige of high class club or even more satire meaning that is cold love and hidden desire. This is a phenomenon of cultural change over time corresponding to the change of social values that believed by society. Ahri's KDA Popstar skin is a desireable product with prestige according to the form, outfit and color, they even represent the luxury and sensuality of Korean girlband. The image of Korean girlband has been more sensual, emphasizing women ideal body by revealing body shapes as much as they can. Ahri's KDA Popstar skin design represent the image of Korean girlband, visualized in the outfit style, and body shape. Sensual concept can attract player and richen the values of the game as one of digital culture, but at the same time can spark criticism and any other negative view if not used wisely.



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