2. CONGKLAK IN GENERAL

2.1 What is Congklak?

Congklak is an Indonesian traditional game which comes from Arab. It was brought by the Arabian people when they visited Indonesia to commerce centuries ago. The Arabian people did the main commerce in which the route was between Europe and Asia. Fortunately, Indonesia is one of routes which passed by the foreign traders, including the Arabian traders. They brought their own culture, religion, language, food, textile, games, etc to Indonesia. They came to Indonesia not only for selling their own things traded but also buying the spices from Indonesia when they returned to their country.

Congklak has many names in every region in Indonesia. The names are given according to where the people live and also depend on the culture of the region. The most general name is congklak. This game is called Congkak in Sumatra. In Java, this game is well-known as Congklak, Dakon, Dhakon or Dhakonan. In Lampung, this game is called Dentuman lamban. And for the people who live in Sulawesi, this game is called Mokaotan, Maggaleceng, Aggacalang and Nogarata.

Historical references to Congklak refer to the game played by young girls of Javanese nobility. It is most likely that foreign traders, due to their close contact with the upper classes, introduced Congklak to them. With the passage of time, Congklak' s popularity grew until its now widely played by the common people as well. In most regions, Congklak is limited played to young girls, teens
and women in their leisure time and its seen as a 'girl's game'. In only a few regions is Congklak played by men and boys as well.

In the past, congklak does not have its real object. It is played on the ground by digging the soil and making fourteen small holes and two big holes. The two big holes called ‘induk’ (means: mother in English). These holes are made for filling them with seven small stones as the tools to run them from one hole to the other hole which chosen randomly at the first game. It is still use a simple way because this way is usually played in the village. In other words, the congklak can be described as the following figure.

It has fourteen small holes in two sides and two big holes placed on the right and the left sides.

Nowadays, the equipment of congklak has changed and becomes more modern. The material is made of wood or plastic. It has different shapes from region to region in Indonesia. Or even some of the board are carved to symbolize the culture of the region where the people live. It can be described as the following figure.
The small holes are fourteen placed in the middle and the two big holes are on the right and the left side of the board.

2.2 Types Of Congklak

According to the shape, there are several types of congklak:

1. Boat

![Image of Boat Shape]

Picture 1. Boat shape
The above type is the common type which is often found in every region in Indonesia. It has fourteen small holes which consist of seven small holes in both sides and two big holes placed at the end of both sides. This type is usually often used by children because its shape is simple and easy to bring everywhere when they want to play.

2. Bench

The second type is the type of congklak which looks like a bench. The shape is simple and unique. It is almost found in every region in Java. It can be seen from the form of the turning at the end of both sides of congklak bench. In addition, it has four legs placed under the body of the board which function as the hardened position.
3. Bird

The third type is like a bird which has a head in one side and a tail in the other side. It is made of Jati wood. It has eighteen small holes and two big holes in the right and the left side. The painting is done to make this type be interesting. It is made to get the bird shape by engraving the whole body namely head, neck, body, wings, feather and tail to fit it in with the sense of Javanese art.
4. Turtle

![Turtle shape](image)

Picture 4. Turtle shape

The most unique shape of congklak is the turtle-shaped. This type has an unique character because people know that a turtle is a cute animal. It is made of sengon wood that is easy to find in Indonesia. The shape is carved by implementing the technique of the batik art which usually used on cloth but in this case, it is done on wood. The colour is brown to follow the wood colour, it is done traditionally by hand.

This tool has ten small holes and two big holes, one is placed at the head of the turtle and the other big hole is at the tail. For supporting the tool not to be shaken, four legs are put under the body of the turtle.

This type can be folded so that it can be brought easily everywhere. Beside as a traditional game, sometimes this tool can be utilized as the decoration or
interrior collection which can be placed at the house, office or even hotel. Furthermore, it increases the value of the art and the traditional nuance. Therefore, the turtle shape becomes more popular for the travelers either who come from domestic or international.

5. Dragon

![Picture 5. Dragon shape](image)

The fifth type is like a dragon which has a head in a side and a tail in the other side. It usually has ten small holes placed in its long body and a big hole is placed at the head side and the other big hole is at the tail side. Four legs to support the tool not to be shaken placed under the body of the dragon shape. It is carved by implementing the technique of the batik art and it is resoluted by the culture of Javanese and Balinese.
This congklak is often used in Solo, Semarang, and Bali. The process of making this tool is same with the turtle shape which looks like more strong because people know that a dragon is a big, strong and a rare animal.

This type of congklak is often exhibited as the decorations or interior collection which can increase the traditional nuance at the house, hotel, or office. Because this shape is carved by adding the carving art of the culture. Therefore many travelers who come from domestic or international want to collect this type as a souvenir.

6. Flat

![Flat shape](image)

Picture 6. Flat shape

This type is shaped flat and has slim body. There are fourteen small holes in the middle and two big holes in the right and the left side. It is made of wood which the colour is brown like the wood colour. This tool is small and easy to bring.
7. Plastic

![Plastic Shape](image)

**Picture 7. Plastic shape**

This type is different from the other type for it is made of plastic. It is very easy to find if everyone wants to buy it. It is provided in supermarket, toys-centre or etc. There are fourteen small holes and two big holes in the right and the left side as place to collect the seeds.

**2.3 The Material of Playing Congklak**

Playing this game is needed two players and some materials such as a board of congklak and much seeds.

The board to play this game is various. It depends on the region where the player live. For the children who live in village, usually they make holes by digging the earth. But for the children who live in the big city, they have a board of congklak which made of wood or plastic. And some of the board carved depend on the culture of the region which can add the value of art. It also has some holes. The holes can be five, seven, or nine in each side, it means there are ten, fourteen
or eighteen small holes in a set of board. And also it has two big holes in the right and the left side as called induk.

Besides the board, the seeds are also needed. The seeds are used to fill one hole to the other hole by running one by one. The seeds can be made of shells, plastics, marbles, stones, the fruit’s seeds i.e tamarind seeds, kemiri, sawo and even corn kernels. The total of the seeds depend on how many small holes on the board.

- If there are seven small holes, so the seeds are needed $7 \times 7 \times 2 = 78$ seeds.
- If there are nine small holes, so the seeds are needed $9 \times 9 \times 2 = 162$ seeds.
- If there are eleven small holes, so the seeds are needed $11 \times 11 \times 2 = 242$ seeds.

The seeds are often used to play congklak.
The congklak which is played by children who live in the village by making the holes and digging the earth. By simple way, they still can play the game. the stones are used as the seeds to play this game.

The congklak which is played by children who live in the city by using the modern board. It is made of wooden and the seeds can be stones, shell, fruit’s seeds, marbles or even plastics.
2.4 How to Play Congklak

The way to play congklak needs two players. It usually is played by girls, but it is possible played by boys, adults i.e man and woman as well.

The two players sit face to face in front of the tool which has been filled with the seeds numbered seven for each small hole. To initiate the game, the two players should determine who will be the first player. So they sut by using their three fingers i.e thumb, forefinger and little finger. After they get the winner, the winner can start to play first.

At the beginning, the player takes the seeds on her hand from one of hole of her part randomly. It can be from hole one, two, three, four, etc. the player runs the seeds one by one from one hole to the other till it can reach the big hole as the last journey. In this case, the player can not fill the big hole with seeds which do not belong to her own side. If the last seed is fallen into the empty hole, the player will stop the game. then the second player will continue the game. so the game will be done in such a way continuously. Actually the purpose of playing this game is to do mathematis to sharpen the brain.

This game will finish if all the seeds in the small holes are gathered in the big hole. In other words, there is nothing seed left in all small holes. So, the player who will gather the seeds as mush as possible, she is the winner.