Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

AUTEURSHIP: ANALYSIS ON JAMES WAN

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Bachelor Of Applied Arts With Honours
(Cinematography)
2017

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

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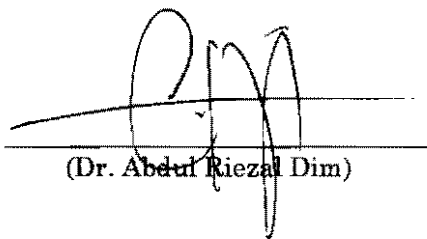
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II

AUTEURSHIP: ANALYSIS ON JAMES WAN

TAY SHEIK ER

This project is one of the requirements for
Bachelor Of Applied Arts With Honours
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APPRECIATION

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Thank You.

CONTENT

ABSTRACT

The aim of his research to identify the autheurship of James Wan. Through this research, the researcher tried to understand the real definiton of auteurship and the style of a director that can be seen in James Wan, Alfred Hitchcock and Federico Fellini films. Auteurship have to be a original or something new. Therefore, the researcher brief objective and question in completing this thesis.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti unsur autoriti James Wan. Daripada kajian ini, pengkaji cuba memahami definisi *auteurship* yang sebenar dan gaya pengarah yang dapat dilihat dalam filem James Wan, Alfred Hitchcock dan Federico Fellini. *Auteurship* adalah satu gaya yang harus dari asal atau sesuatu yang baru. Oleh itu, pengkaji merungkaikan beberapa objektif dan persoalan untuk menyempurnakan penulisan tesis ini.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, when the audience watched a movie, they could noticed who was the director or screenwriter. For example, based on the camera movement, directing style, story line and so on. However, that's not for all movie because only the auteur had auteurship just can showed their style and theme in their own film. Auteurship had to be original and created by somebody. I would did the research in this topic because audience nowadays was confuse about the real definition of auteurship. The reason 1 analysis auteurship of James Wan was peoples keep thinking he has auteurship in some style but maybe his auteurship was changed too.

Auteurship just reference to who wrote the script or in artist who create the film. 'It has been held that the film author is the director, the screenwriter, the star or the studio', (Gaut, 1997). Film author can be in so many ways, for example the style can based on a director, screenwriter or star. However, in the cinema world always had their own authors, for example the filmmakers whose names were as important as the stars: D. W. Griffith, Alfred Hitchcock, Charlie Chaplin and so on. They created the new films, different directing style and so on.

Based on (Caughie, 2001), 'auteur was the artist whose personality was 'written' in film.' That's mean the auteur have their own style and theme in their every film. They put their real personality in the film, for example the way they directed a film and the story line

in film was relate with their background or personality, so audience would noticed from it. It can be the director's personality or unique obsession to express themselves through the film.

'... authors is the creator of unique, original works such as story, plays, and poem...' According to (Jaszi, 1994), as an auteurs who have auteurship need to be create a new things or that is an original things.

It like have role and significant adapted by their history. Auteurship just not only is a theory, it would be a topic for critic also because it would be positive or negative description.

1.2 Problem Statement

The problem statement of the research was some directors have their own auteurship but nowadays somehow they changed their style or theme in other film. This is because some audience said auteurship must stick with their style.

According to Staiger Janet (2008, page 27), '*A true auteur will imprint into his film style and themes in their previous films and adapt the similar film style and theme to grow them sophisticated into the coming subsequent films.*' Most of the people mind set is think like that also. For example, some of the audience feel if the auteur lose their own auteurship when they didn't adapt the similar film style or theme in their other film.

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'Traditionally, the references to the auteur in French film criticism had identified either the author who wrote the script or in the more general sense of term, the artist create the film ', John Coughie (2001, page 9). However, there is the problem because it was simply said auteurship just only based on who wrote the script and create film. Therefore, it would be many way to identified that's auteurship or not even if they change their script.

1.3 Research Objective

I.   To analyse about James Wan film style and genre from 2004-2016.

II.   To compare between James Wan, Federico Fellini and Alfred Hitchcock movie style and directing skill.

III. To determine the auteurship after director change their style in their film.

IV.   To implicate auteur's style in short film.

1.4 Research Question

I.   Which style or genre that let audience think James Wan had his own auteurship?

II.   What type of style or theme consider for to be an auteurship?

III. What is the similarity between James Wan, Federico Fellini and Alfred Hitchcock film style?

1.5 Purpose of The Research

The method for research would applied from content analysis through observation on film, critical read books, journal and website. *'Auteurs also struggled to maintain relevance in its application to television'. Bridget Conor (2014. pg.53).* So, the importance of did the study for this research was find out the style, theme, narrative of film was James Wan apply. To determine the auteurship of the director style after the director was change. Other than that, this research compared between James Wan and Alfred Hitchcock for analysis about their style. That fixed the mind of audience nowadays because for them auteurship should not be step out from their style.

1.6 Limitation

This research would only analysis on James Wan, who is a director, producer and script writer. I had read some article before all was talked about James Wan is the 'King of Mainstream Horror Movie Director' and one of the article's title was 'James Wan is The Most Important Horror Director in Last 20 Years' by Trace Thurman. In the article, he just mentioned the criteria for be a master of horror. Then, James Wan was consider all of it and that's his authorship, but in 2015 he was directed an action movie called 'Fast & Furious 7'.

Do he still has his auteurship after all these changes? That's the reason I want to do this research. I want to know if a director changes his film genre suddenly was still keep his auteurship? This is because as we know as a director who was had their auteurship, would always stick with their style and theme, like Alfred Hitchcock and Federico Fellini. So, I would compare between James Wan with Federico Fellini and Alfred Hitchcock from their movie style.

1.7 Audience

My thesis target audience would veader who were interested about auteurship and James Wan movie lover. This is because in this research would give them more understanding about autheurship and the style or theme in James Wan's movie.

1.8 Conclusion

This research was determine the auteurship that director nowadays still keep their auteurship although their style changed suddenly. The audience would also be more understand about auteurship of the director. The research objective and research question for the problem statement would determine the problem for my target audience. This introduction in chapter 1 would be analyzed by next few chapter that was chapter 2 that support my research by literature review and chapter 3, research methodology to collect my data. Chapter 4 was the result I collect and chapter 5 was the summarize for this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERARURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this review, I broaden my own understanding about the subject and prepared the reader

to the theoretical questions that have been raised and even partially answered in connection

with the undergoing research. As pointed out earlier, the available literature was scattered

in articles published in research journals in different countries.

2.1 The Purpose of the Research

> *'Does any person or group of person involved in the making of films meet the*
>
> *criteria for authorship laid out in the definition? If so, films have authors, and the*
>
> *person or person who fit the criteria are such. If not, they don't'.*
>
> *(Routledge, 2008)*

Based on Routledge, the person who have auteurship involved some criteria in his/her

films. If the film maker does not have the criteria, they are not auteurship. They are just

a normal director and do not have their own style in films.

'... saw change in both film style and the filmmaking process, particularly with regard to directorial "authorship", that would have enormous impact throughout the decade.' (Schatz, 1999)

According to Thomas Schatz, if in the older years, the auteur change their style or filmmaking process suddenly, it might be get some impact for them. For example, the director would change the decision suddenly and could missed out the original style. So, in this research I analysis on James Wan about his film style and determine director change their style suddenly.

2.2 Research That is Done within the Research Area/Problem Area

'Auteurs also struggled to maintain relevance in its application to television',

(Conor, 2014)

Based on Bridget Conor, we knew auteur need to always maintain their artwork and style but that's struggled for them. As a director, he or she should have their own style or pattern to maintain, if they want to be a famous director with auteurship. For example, just like Alfred Hitchcock, Sergei Elsenstein and others.

2.3 Presentation of the Problem Area in General

'Narrative coherence and clarity supported the movement of star personalities to
the foreground and their directors toward the top of the pyramid ... the movement
from the 1930s has been increasingly in the direction of assuming that one
individual ... producer, director, writer ... ought to control almost all aspects of
filming so that that individual's personal vision can be created'.

(Bordwell, 1985)

Based on Bordwell, auteurship could depend on the director, writer style and theme.
But, sometime it just come from their personality or background. The director involved
their own personality and background into their every films. Audience can realize
clearly about the directors' auteurship. It could come from a lot of reason, the person
who had auteurship have their own criteria of film.

2.4 The Director's Film Style

'Most film do not have a distinctive style, and directors known for a certain style in
their early work often change as they evolve. Some of the change is due to different
among types of films tackled. (Taylor & Francis, 2005)

Based on Taylor and Francis, most of the director have their own style in films from
their early work and audience automatic think that's the director style. But, sometime
they will change because of some issue.

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2.5 The Style that Consider for to be an Auteurship

'Style is primarily dependent on the needs of the story being told wedded to the director's vision of the world, or his or her personal relationship to it.'

(Nicholas T.Proferes, 2005)

Based on this statement, we all knew that the director have different point of view, so the style and theme applied were different. They have their own reason when they applied some style or theme in the film.

2.6 Alfred Hitchcock Directing Style.

'Within such paradigms of dramatic production as spy schemes and plots to otherwise formulate, enact or solve crimes, authorship in Hitchcock's films is allegorized as more than a struggle among those occupying to position of director, rule player, and audience.'

(Springer, 2016)

Based on this statement, Alfred Hitchcock was the person who already had auteurship and we have to admit he really did very well in his films. He always has his own style and genre of movie. He never change his auteurship until he passed away.

2.7 Conclusion

I analyzed through observation on reading books, journal and website would helped me to answer and achieved for the Research Objectives. It would helped me to make this research to be more clear and deep understanding for each problem. It also establish a theoretical framework for my subject area. In the next chapter, I would continue to proceed this research based on different methodology.
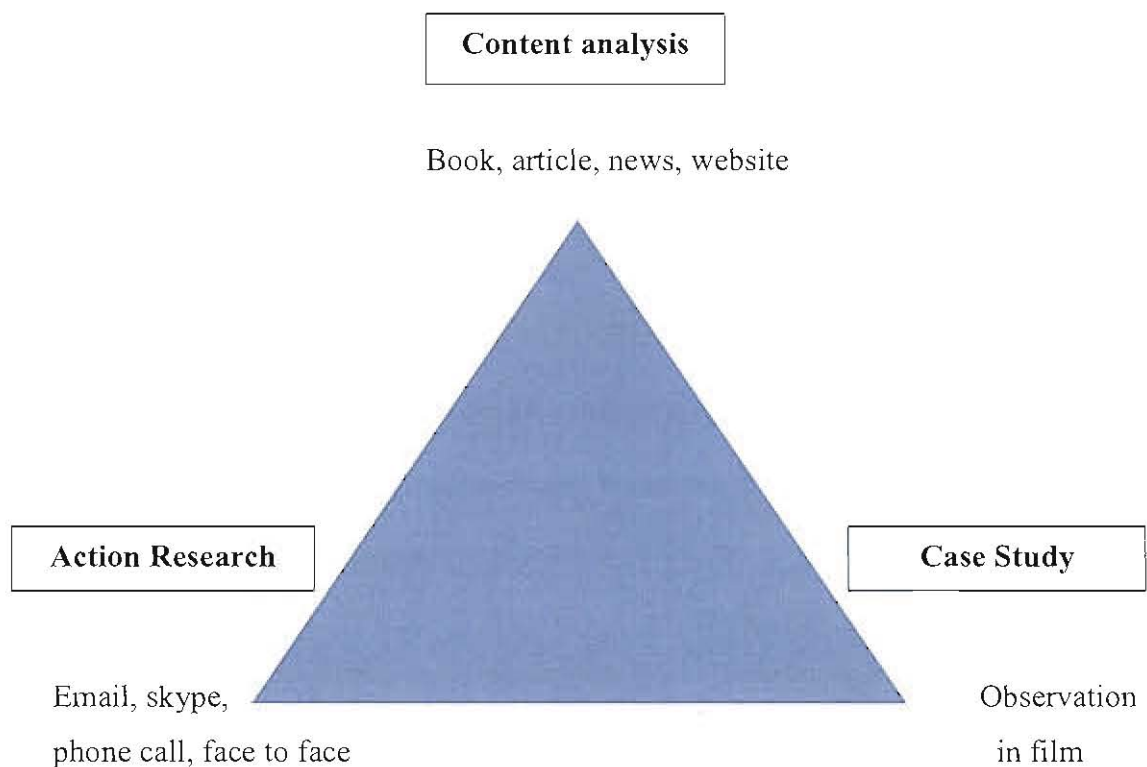
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

This research would involve different research methodology to obtain the necessary information to support the ideas, opinion and arguments discussed in this particular research. This research would explain how to find out the answers to all researcher questions.

3.1 Preparatory Work

A research design was took some data, link together and collected for the research topic. It was the good way to solve the Why's. So before asking need to make sure about the fact we developed are correct and true. 'One of the fundamental purpose of research design in explanatory research is to avoid invalid inference', (Sage, 2001). Based on Sage, we needed research design to get more information and detail to explain, it would avoid a lot of invalid inference in a research. 'Necessarily fallible... they were indirectly linked to observable', (Cook & Campbell, 1979). To avoid the unnecessary inference, we would minimize the chance of incorrect by using research design. Other than that, research design was a structure before collect the data and analysis, that's the work plan to complete a research.

3.2 Triangulation Methodology

Content analysis

Book, article, news, website

Action Research

Case Study

Email, skype,
phone call, face to face

Observation
in film

Triangulation was a mixed method in research, that's mean more than one method to find out the answers in a same topic. 'It has been found to be beneficial in providing confirmation of findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity and enhanced understanding of studied phenomena.' , (Bekhet A, 2012). From here we knew this method would provide confirmation and capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon, this was also the reason I choose triangulation for my research. In this research, I used content analysis, case study and action research to collect my data and answered my research question. It would be easier to link all the answer. In the end, I also would get the confirmation answer.

3.3 Methodology of Design and Implementation of the Work

In this research, I would involve content analysis, action research and case study to become my method for answered my research questions and achievement.

'Content analysis was a research technique for making replicable and valid inference from text (or other meaning full matter) to the content of their use.' (Krippendorff, 2013). That was a technique for describing written, spoken or visual communication. For example, media, article, television, video, movies, and website. I would find the answer in all of this tools. It makes me feel more understanding and the result I get was more confirmation and true.

The next method was action research. Action research was more significant and sometime the outcome were not same but from there I would learned and understand more about our research from each side. 'Action research was known by many other names, including participatory research, collaborative inquiry, emancipatory research, action learning, and contextual action research, but all were variations on a theme. Put simply, action research was "learning by doing".' Based on (Brien,1998), action research was putting effort to get the research result and learn.

The last one was case study, a case study was needed to study more depth about the research and did some survey. It would narrow down and could easily research the topic. According to Martyn Shutterworth in 'Explorable' article, 'The case study research design is also useful for testing whether scientific theories and models actually work in the real world'. This was the same as a movie which bring some message to audience.

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3.4 Method for Research Question and Research Objective

The combination of three method as a triangulation, it would be a research tools to justify the research results.

At first, based on the content analysis, I read the book, journal, web and article for collected the data about authorship. For example in my research question 1 and 2, I would read more about the information and detail from book, journal, news, article, web to get the specific true fact. After that, I would find out the criteria to be a person with authorship and do the analysis to link with my research.

Next, action research that I used was interviewed by Email, phone call, face to face or Skype. The person who I wanted to interview was the directors in Malaysia, such as James Wong. At first, I would plan the question I should ask and the time for interview. After that, actions were taken, such as went to their location and shot the interview part or direct interview through email or Skype. So, when the interview is on process, I have to observe their language, fact, opinion and other minor things. In the end, I concluded the answer they gave and linked them together with content analysis, especially their opinion about Auteurship.

The methodology of case study in my research was analyzed from the film I watched. I choosed some James Wan movie to watch and observe the similarity in his film. Then, I analyzed them to get the output. Based on this action would let me clearly to get more details and information about my research topic.

3.5 Extend Background and Basic Concept

There is a lot of research methodology but I choosed content analysis, action research and case study to become a triangulation for my research. This was because each of the method has their requirement. This combination would replace weakness of each method and come out a good output. I am sure this was suitable to answer my research question.

First, I applied content analysis in my research by reading the articles, books, journals and information from different website. All of it is based on written source. I prefer to use the content analysis because it would let me discovered more details and true fact to answer some of the question. For example, I would found the authorship details from books, websites and articles. Besides that, there's more people would admit the fact was true and available.

Other than that, action research was also one of my choices too and I used the interview method for my research. It would bring out a lot of interesting opinion from other people to answer my research question which cannot find from content analysis. I would relate it with all the opinions to make a conclusion and some description about James Wan style and his auteurship. That's helpful to gather data when dealing with complex or sensitive issues. Open-ended questions were also used to collect data. By obtaining feedback and using visual aids (face to face), it would provide opportunity to explore topics in more depth also.

I choose case study in my research because case study method was responsible of intensive study of a unit and more deeply exploration. It enable us to fully understand the behavior pattern and helps in formulating hypothesis along with the data. It would