



Fakulti Seni Gunaan dan Kreatif

**EXPERIMENTAL OF INVERTING SIGN LANGUAGE THROUGH SENSES
OF FEEL AND VISUAL**

Tiffany Loh Qi Lin

**Ijazah Sarjana Muda Seni Gunaan dengan Kepujian
(Seni Halus)
2018**

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Projek ini merupakan salah satu keperluan untuk
Ijazah Sarjana Muda Seni Gunaan dengan Kepujian
(Seni Halus)

Fakulti Seni Gunaan Dan Kreatif
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
2018

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Saya mengaku bahawa tiada bahagian dalam penyelidikan ini telah digunakan sebagai sokongan untuk sesuatu ijazah atau mana-mana kedudukan, sama ada kepada universiti atau institusi pengajian tinggi yang lain.

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PENGESAHAN

Projek bertajuk *Experimental of Inverting Sign Language Through Senses of Feel and Visual* telah disediakan oleh **TIFFANY LOH QI LIN** dan telah diserahkan kepada Fakulti Seni Gunaan dan Kreatif sebagai memenuhi syarat untuk Ijazah Sarjana Muda Seni Gunaan dengan Kepujian (**Seni Halus**).

Diterima dan diperiksa oleh:

Cik Anissa Abdul Aziz (Penyelia)

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ABSTRACT

In this proposal, the study about the experimental of sign language in expressing emotion through art was tested. Artist will study about sign language in portrayal to express emotion in artistic form being carried out in an experiment. Research problems determine based on literature review that has be read or referenced. The first research problem is how does people's point of view towards deaf people as deaf artists, followed by what ways can deaf artist be expressive of emotions through artwork and lastly, how sign language being portrayal as a medium to express emotions in an artwork. After that, objective of the research will be point out to achieve by using the qualitative methodology. The following is objectives based on this research which are to analyze people's point of view on deaf people as deaf artist, to identify the concept of deaf artist to express emotions in an artwork, to combine the portrayal of sign language as a medium to express emotions through artworks. Most of the data are collected by using the methodology of qualitative.

KEYWORD: sign language, artistic form, emotions

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini merupakan eksperimentasi bahasa isyarat dalam meluahkan emosi melalui penghayatan karya seni. Pengkarya akan mempelajari bahasa isyarat dalam gambaran visual untuk menyatakan emosi dalam bentuk artistik yang dijalankan dalam proses eksperimentasi. Pernyataan masalah kajian ditentukan berdasarkan bahan rujukan yang telah dibaca atau dirujuk. Masalah kajian yang pertama adalah bagaimana pandangan pengkarya dan masyarakat sekeliling terhadap individu yang pekak. Diikuti oleh kaedah bagaimana pengkarya dapat mengekspresikan emosi melalui sebuah karya seni berdasarkan isu tersebut. Akhir sekali, bagaimana bahasa isyarat divisualkan sebagai medium untuk meluahkan emosi dalam penghayatan seni. Objektif kajian ini ditunjukkan melalui metodologi kualitatif. Ianya berdasarkan kepada analisis pandangan masyarakat sekeliling terhadap beberapa perkara iaitu; memahami individu yang pekak dan untuk mengenali konsep artis yang pekak dalam menyatakan emosi dalam karya seni. Secara keseluruhannya, bahasa isyarat digabungkan dalam sebuah instalasi seni sebagai medium pengucapan ekspresif dan mengumpul data-data sokongan yang berkaitan dengan kajian kaedah kualitatif ini.

KATA KUNCI: *bahasa isyarat, karya artistik, emosi*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The research proposal is carried out regarding about experiment being carried out, to observe the reaction from the audience sign language used by deaf people as an expression of emotion. There will be literature review, problem statements, research questions, research problems, objectives and types of methodology in order to complete this research.

Literature review is the knowledge of understanding from the sources that have been read or referred regarding to one's research. A literature review could be produced based on a statement, opinion or facts from different sources or authors. A for this research, the literature review is extracted from different kind of sources are secondary sources such as books, magazines, and online information. All the information collected is related to the questions regarding to sign language mentioned by several of scholars or authors or deaf artists themselves.

Sign language may seems to be the universal language that can be understood by people around the world. Perhaps that there are certain sign language that seems to have the exact meaning but even in sign language, in the sign within has different languages from different countries that might be understand by all. Sign language are often seen as semiotic, gesture or even lip-reading gift as a part of their daily conversations but on the contrary, the language in sign language has varieties of language from. For example, American Sign Language (ASL) signings are slightly different from Malaysian Sign Language (MSL) though it was borrowed.

Though not all sign language are universal, but another challenge occur to the world of signing is to relate with art. Art comes in different types of form, visually and with sound that mold the whole artwork that the artist try to convey to the audience. For instance, performing arts, theater acts, poetry and etc. Even normal people with perfect hearing falls into sorrows and sadness and what's more people that was born with it or by accident that occur to them. Nevertheless, there are numerous of deaf artists managed through and use full of their disability and turn them into advantages that allows them to use the other sense to the full capability.

Next, research problem will be chosen out from the statement of literature review that need to be improvised, to eliminate or to solve a question. As there are different statements on how people view photo manipulation generally, thus research problems are produced. Hence three research questions has been surfaced. The first question is how does people point of view towards deaf people as deaf artists. The second question is what ways deaf artist can be expressive to emotions through artwork. And the last question is how sign language being portrayal as a medium to express emotions in an artwork.

After identified the questions of the problem being surface, thus objectives were created based on the research questions. The purpose of the research will be fulfilled after the research problem has been resolved. Thus, the objectives that has been set are to be achieved. There are three objectives, firstly, to analyze people's point of view on deaf people as deaf artist. Through this objectives, artist is able to collect information on opinions of what society thinks of the deaf artist in the Deaf community. Secondly, to identify the concept of photo manipulation to express emotion in an artwork. By identifying the concept of deaf

artist to express emotions in an artwork and how they are able to overcome their disability into advantages. Lastly, to combine the portrayal of sign language as a medium to express emotions through artworks. Sign language maybe used as a medium of communication but deaf artist has their own ways in portraying their emotion or the message through a different channel that allows them to tell stories of their own and uses the other senses as their advantages.

To achieve the objectives that has been surfaced, there were three type of methodologies and qualitative methods has been chosen for this research proposal. The methods include surveying, questionnaire and references. For the first objective, questionnaire method is carried out to analyze the society's thoughts on deaf people and how does art influence deaf artists in their artwork based on their personal opinions. As for the second objective, observation and interview methods are used to identify the concept of deaf people to express emotion in an artwork. Lastly is combination of sign language in raising awareness of the Deaf community in the public through experimental of producing an artwork.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Based on the data collected, there are some controversy on sign language has surfaced. As stated by Schmitt, (2016), there was a debate on the having interpreters from the Deaf people instead of the hearing one. He mentioned that that the Deaf actors need days of practice in order to align and synchronize with the flow of the show performance while the hearing one are able to make the process faster. However, there are some SLI might not express the script accordingly, because firstly, hearing SLIs need to be expressive visually for the Deaf audience.

Mentioned by Galloway, (2013), for instance using traditional ASL to express music in terms of the beat, rhythm and wordplay cannot be used truthfully because there are no expressive in both in movement and the signing. On the other hand, if theater were to use the Deaf actors as the interpreters for the live performance, some will said then the show performance's spotlight has been split into two sessions. Schmitt also mentioned that using Deaf actors, the directors and producers need to come out with strategies of coordination because they are able to access auditory. Not only that, there some argument regarding that Sign Language Interpreters (SLIs) stealing the spotlights from the performers. But the statement has uproar some heated debate on discrimination that even the Deaf community has the right to enjoy as much as the hearing. But visually, thought it may be a distraction to the hearing but it can be rewarding to the Dead audience.

Even Malaysian Deaf artist like Anuar Lim and Leon Lim both has express that being not able to hear may be an advantage whereby they use visually to view and create

sound in their own imaginary as both of them creating their own 'sound' in their respective artworks.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (a) How does people's point of view towards deaf people as deaf artists?
- (b) What ways can deaf artist be expressive to emotions through artwork?
- (c) How sign language being portrayal as a medium to express emotions in an artwork?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- (a) To analyze people's point of view on Deaf people.
- (b) To identify the concept of Deaf artist to express emotions in an artwork.
- (c) To combine the portrayal of sign language as a medium to express emotions through artworks in the sense of touch and visual.

1.4 IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

In the end of the research, the researcher aim to fully understand about the Deaf community and portrayal sign language as medium and express emotions that uses the sense of touch and visual in the forms of art.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 SIGN LANGUAGE IN FORMS OF ART

2.1.1 Performance Art and Poetry - Wim Emmerik

An article written by Callis, (2015) mentioned that deaf people enjoyed varieties of entertainments from performing art to theater show and poetry and etc just like others. However, the deaf people are enjoyed them to the fullest as there were no proper interpreter provided. This become a challenge for the both sides as the entertainer required a good interpreter that takes weeks of practices with the actors to coordinate the show properly and on the disable side will have problem understanding the show that they are performing. Not many deaf people are born with lip-reading talent and with great observation and art is need to be interpreted even for ordinary people to fully understand the meaning behind the masterpiece.



Figure 1: The film poems of Growth (2003): Reflection of Wim Emmerik signing

However, the late Wim Emmerik has proven that signing and interpreting sign language is a form of arts. A Dutch sign language poetry and a teacher that has perfect hearing ability who is passion towards performing art showed the world that even without having the ability to hear, the deaf community too are able to demonstrate art the same way as others. For an example, in documentary journal of Small, (2017), describe that Wim's poetic styles has layers of depth with meaning, metaphor and symbolic, body movement, the usage of space and gave him the impression of delivering the poet.

2.1.2 Music Interpreter - Amber Galloway Gallego

There are many deaf people would love to enjoy music and live performances as much as hearing people. Therefore, these are some of the interpreters that help the Deaf community to enjoy music as interesting as hearing people do. For an example, one of the famous music interpreter, Amber Galloway Gallego, who uses specialized version of American Sign Language that emphasizes more in the movements of the body that follows the flow of the music and the facial expressions according to the lyrics. She is an interpreter for concerts in Specialized American Sign Language for almost every singer that anyone would know and song interpretations slightly above 400. Amber's career is being part of the ASL interpreters to translate a hearing music, (varies type of genre) into visual for the Deaf community. Disapproving against the traditional ASL because many of those interpreters do not show any expressions and other sign language except for the sign 'music' and thus, her doing the specialized ASL and narrow the gabs that connects

the Deaf people with music. Amber breaks down all the instruments, the beats and the tonality into categories, then translate the English which is the lyrics into ASL.

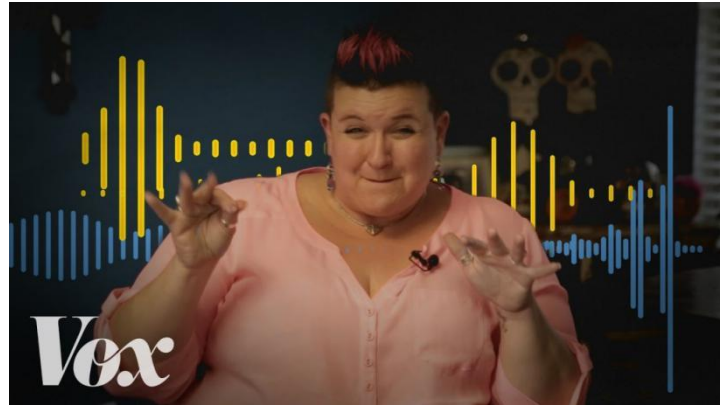


Figure 2: Amber Galloway Gallego's interview video with VOX

There are three elements that music interpreter's needs to focus on which are rhyming, metaphor and wordplay are the essential part of lyrical music especially hip pop music. For instance, Amber combine two ASL signs together to convey a wordplay. Amber mentioned in one of the interview features in Youtube, saying that when it comes to music, the Deaf people too wants to experience the moments live and enjoyed as much as hearing people to but because the interpreters do not translate the music correctly with emotions and expressions, there lies the problems that lose interest of the Deaf people.

2.2 DEAF PEOPLE LIVING THE LIFE OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

2.2.1 Helen Keller

Helen Keller is an American educator and author who is deaf and blind after afflicted with an illness at 19 months old. A 20 year blind teacher, Anne Sullivan

was sent to teach a 6 years old Helen and took care of her till her death. One famous word was taught to Keller by Sullivan is water. When she fingerspell it to Keller, Sullivan pump water at the same time, to let her feel the water running to her other hand.



Figure 3: Helen Keller (left) with her teacher, Anne Sullivan.

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

According to Berke, (2017) stated that Keller famous quote was ‘deafness has “greater affliction” than blindness’ and another one is *blindness cuts us off things, but deafness cuts us off people*. Helen was taught with sense of touch by associating with them and spelling it out using finger signals on her palm. Then Sarah Fuller slowly taught her the process of speaking by placing her fingers on both the lips and throat of the speaker that are simultaneous spelling out for her. Despite her condition, she manage to graduate with outstanding honors from her college, with the help of her teacher, Sullivan spelled out the lectures and read to Keller for hours every day. Keller also wrote several books that tells about her life. To keep the legacy of Helen