

The effects of cultural aspects on animation for pre-schoolers in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT - Animation has evolved from being a pure entertainment to more educational, for both linear and non-linear animation. This research is going to review the animation that suite to preschool education, its contents and the motivation that leads to the creation of those contents. Specifically this study is going to explore how much Malaysian culture actually influences the production of those type of animation. Repetitive observations and survey were used to gain the feedbacks from content creators. It is apparent that culture has always been a consideration and main flavour in producing animated content for the pre-schoolers and children for the educational value.

1. INTRODUCTION

For after many years being the sub category to film and cinema, animation has already gained its place as its own different kind of production. Animation has always been hailed as the one kind of mass entertainment, branched out from photography, cinematography and videography [1]. Rather than entertainment, animation in this new age is perfectly described as evolutionary information delivered through an interesting method that could take a lot of forms and styles. Animation has a lot to offer, so much in trade, coming from various sources and influences. This paper will discuss about cultural aspects as they are usually practiced in the animation production by local studios and companies. This research briefly covers the general idea of what is culture in Malaysia and in what way they are displayed and conveyed in the local animation productions. The study is mainly to find how cultural aspects may affect the production in terms of their theme or genre selections, storyline choices or design options. Understanding culture and knowing which part of the culture that we are trying to look at requires researchers to look at the definition from a few different approaches. Generally, culture is hard to define due to its complexity and multidimensional. According to [2], adopted definitions for their research on culture and early childhood development, culture will be defined as historically accumulated knowledge, tools and behaviours involved in the

children's daily life and this is also consists of the normal practice of the family and relatives. To associate learning culture and implementing it in preschool animation as educational tools is to implement good thinking habits, self-belief and workflow in the content. Walt Disney has working together and came out with the adaptations of infamous fairy tales such as Little Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks, Puss in Boots and Jack and the Beanstalk. This propelled animation production embraces culture as its main content for distribution [3,4]. Japanese people also very generous in sharing their customs, beliefs, myths, culture and food through their anime productions. While still quite unknown and still in the steps of revealing itself, a lot of other countries are starting to take American cartoon and anime steps in making itself known; most of the time to proudly share what the country and culture have in plates [5,6].

2. METHODOLOGY

This study first uses content analysis to analyse the contents of selected produced animations and categorize the theme used in them to figure out the common ground of these production and what are the main focuses between different productions. Study also uses survey to collect feedbacks from the forces behind local production studios and their opinions on the matter of cultural effects on their very own production.

2.1 Content Analysis

This research used content analysis to analyse the content and identify cultural aspects implementation in the preschool animation in Malaysia. To provide a comparison regarding how culture aspects influences were done, several prominent and established preschool level of animations were gathered and compared. Several criteria that were analyse includes recurring themes for the animation, culture and production themes. The important point is to see the relation of the producers and the production they made.

2.2 Survey

A series of survey were conducted. The first survey was directed to the work force behind the production companies and creative teams who work closely into designing the content and producing it. This survey was intended to find out what drives the idea and other consideration to produce the animation series. The questions are related with culture and educations. Whereas the second survey was targeted to non-expert individuals to find out how much culture being observed by the children and whether respondents recognize or have learnt anything from the animation series that they watched.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From all the questions regarding animations and culture, the respondents realized that the effects of culture aspects on animation is a huge issue in order to enhance and nurture current local content to quality which pack with good morals and behaviours examples. A whopping 90% of the respondents responded that they were aware of the effects of culture on the local animation, currently. 90% of them also agree that culture plays a huge part in shaping stories and themes for the animations. Simple conclusion from this feedback is that respondents understand that local animation theme and storylines are very well affected by culture. Most respondents give good response in a way that they are talking about how through animation, culture is and can be used as a topic to reach out to audience and teach them about important common topics such as good behaviours and well manner gestures other than exposing other knowledge and information about the culture itself to the audience that is the children.

4. CONCLUSION

It is observed in the current local animation production for pre-schoolers, or kids mainly – that majority of the content embraces a lot of fantasy and having fun in it and thus grow from it. Taking a

different animation production for observation; a foreign one to – there are a few differences of its approach and delivery for the content. Interesting to include that the feedbacks has probably seen the issue with too many fantasies and too many fun rides that a more serious but vital things still need to be addressed in a fashion that it will appeal to children for them to take note and learn from it. it is safe to conclude that culture generally is an educating elements. Whether it is way of life or an identity to people, it educates members of the society about things that may or may not be included in the textbooks. Overall it is apparent that culture has always been an influence, a consideration and main flavour in producing animated content for pre-schoolers and children. This is due to the educational value and traits that is contained in the culture, whether as a way of living or content for teaching.

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