

**CHARACTERISTICS, AUDIENCE RECEPTION AND CHALLENGES  
IN MALAYSIAN ANIMATION**

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**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL  
SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA**

**KUALA LUMPUR**

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL  
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# UNIVERSITI MALAYA

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## **Abstract**

The creative content industry in Malaysia is a growing and developing business. Animation, being part of the creative industry, is also seeing a rise with the increasing number of studios being set up and the increase in numbers of animated series and films being produced. Facing powerhouses such as Japan and the United States, Malaysian animation content finds itself sandwiched in between foreign programs in channels such as Disney, Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network, though better opportunities may be found through local stations. With such an abundance of animated series and films, it is a challenge for Malaysian animation content to stand out as a product of Malaysia compared to anime from Japan and American cartoons. Furthermore, audience reception towards foreign titles has overshadowed locally-produced animation for quite some time. The Malaysian animation industry is at a point where the opportunities have been presented, government support is apparent, technologies have been made available and media becoming more and more individualized. Nowadays, producing animation has become more simplified through usage of computer technology and has allowed more room for creativity and imagination. All of this has led towards the four objectives of this research 1) to provide a descriptive list of animation produced from 1978 to 2010, 2) to analyze the tangible, intangible, verbal and non-verbal characteristics that define Malaysian animation, 3) to analyze the reception towards Malaysian animation among local and foreign audiences and 4) to identify challenges faced by the animation industry and, in turn, to recognize the future direction planned by relevant bodies to overcome these issues. This study uses the structuralist-semiotic analysis to identify Malaysian animation characteristics, focus group interviews to analyze audience reception and in-depth interviews to identify the challenges and recognize the future direction of Malaysian animation. Results of this research explain the elements that make Malaysian animation, Malaysian, and describes the perceptions and reactions of both local and foreign audiences towards Malaysian animation and also describe and explain the challenges faced by the Malaysian animation industry.

## **Abstrak**

Industri kreatif di Malaysia adalah industri yang berkembang dan sedang membangun dengan pesat. Sebahagian daripada industri kreatif, banyak studio yang dibangunkan dan jumlah siri dan filem animasi juga telah meningkat. Menghadapi kuasa besar animasi seperti Jepun dan Amerika Syarikat, animasi Malaysia dihimpit oleh kandungan-kandungan luar negara di dalam saluran-saluran seperti Disney, Nickelodeon dan Cartoon Network meskipun peluang yang lebih cerah boleh diperoleh melalui saluran-saluran tempatan. Dengan jumlah siri dan filem animasi yang banyak, ia menjadi cabaran buat animasi Malaysia untuk menyerlah sebagai produk buatan Malaysia berbanding dengan anime dari Jepun dan kartun Amerika Syarikat. Tambahan lagi, resepsi penonton terhadap animasi luar negara telah membayangi animasi tempatan pada tempoh yang agak lama. Industri animasi Malaysia telah tiba pada titik di mana peluang telah diberikan, sokongan kerajaan boleh dilihat, teknologi telah tersedia dan media menjadi semakin perdidadi. Kini, penerbitan animasi telah dipermudahkan dengan penggunaan teknologi komputer dan telah menambahkan lebih banyak ruang untuk kreativiti dan imaginasi. Kesemuanya telah membawa kepada empat objektif kajian ini iaitu 1) untuk menghasilkan senarai deskriptif animasi yang diterbitkan dari tahun 1978 hingga 2010, 2) untuk menganalisa ciri-ciri ketara, tidak ketara, lisan dan bukan lisan yang mendefinisikan animasi Malaysia, 3) untuk menganalisa penerimaan penonton dalam dan luar negara terhadap animasi Malaysia dan 4) bagi mengenalpasti cabaran-cabaran yang dihadapi industri animasi tempatan selain mengenali hala tuju yang dirancang badan-badan berkaitan animasi bagi menyelesaikan isu-isu tersebut. Kajian ini menggunakan analisa strukturalis-semiotik bagi mengesan ciri-ciri animasi Malaysia, temubual kumpulan fokus bagi menganalisa penerimaan penonton dan temubual mendalam bagi mengenalpasti cabaran serta hala tuju animasi di Malaysia. Hasil kajian ini menjelaskan unsur-unsur yang menjadikan sesuatu animasi itu animasi Malaysia dan juga menghuraikan persepsi dan reaksi penonton dalam dan luar negara terhadap animasi Malaysia serta menerangkan cabaran-cabaran industri animasi di Malaysia.

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AmirYangBaik  
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