Research on the Use of Mise-en-Scène in Short Film and Photograph Production: An Empirical Study in V-Log Documentary

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Abstract

This research provides an in-depth understanding of the mise-en-scène technique used in the V-log Documentary in significance to both industry and academia. First and foremost, this research has novelty as it studies the use of mise-en-scène in the V-log production. With the trend of V-logging especially among the young generations, the proper way of mise-en-scène use in V-log production would improve the quality of video and the research outcome ascertains the use of the technique in V-logging would bring volume of views and likes to a particular masterpiece.

Keywords

The Mise-en-Scène Technique; V-log; Photograph; Video.

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

Dramatic inspirations include the early Greek theatre of 500 B.C., as well as the development of stage lighting and other technologies in the nineteenth-century (Webster, 1960). Audiences began to be more clearly segregated from the stage during the nineteenth century, as well. Blogging has grown in popularity over the last few years because they show the blogger's characteristics, opinion, point of view and interests, blogs are socially inherently (Thevenot, 2007). On an advanced note, V-Log is another form of blogging which includes a video. Despite the fact that the postings may also include text to set the stage for the video, the primary emphasis of each one is a video clip. Since then, V-logs have grown in popularity. Pre-production aspects of a film set the scene in motion and are used in certain ways once filming begins. This is referred to as mise-en-scène (Martin, 2011). Everything from painting to costume to lighting to the formation of social places may be traced back to the history of mise-en-scène.

1.2. Problem Statement

Around 800 million people watched digital video in early 2017, but that figure is expected to rise to nearly 2.7 billion by 2020 (Vogel, 2020). By 2022, there are expected to be 250 million digital video watchers in the United States alone. With mobile devices taking over desktop viewing, people are spending more time watching digital video than ever before. Some sorts of video material are increasingly in demand and popular with viewers as viewing patterns lean towards internet video content. V-logs have grown in popularity as a way for V-loggers to honestly document and share their life online. Blogs are online journals with content management systems that let their authors publish blog entries on their websites (Walker, 2008).

More and more individuals are spending time watching digital video content, mostly on their mobile devices (Li, 2017). Facebook Instagram, TikTok Live's popularity may be traced back to the V-logging craze. Evolution of smartphones has allowed for both production and consumption of video content to coexist peacefully. Video bloggers have played an important

part in creating the first demand for internet video content, as can be seen by looking back. Marketers have come to understand the enormous power that V-loggers wield over their respective audiences. With nearly a decade of history behind it, V-logging looks like it will be around for a long time. The popularity of V-logging is only growing. While V-logging is a popular video format, top V-loggers provide unique advertising chances for organizations looking to break through the clutter of traditional advertising (Zhou, 2021). The Mise-en-scène techniques have been widely used in generating films and they effectively express the implied content with extended meaning directly to audience (Kvisgaaard et al. 2019). However, studies on the use of Mise-en-scène in the V-logging is rarely studied. The purpose of this research is to study the use of Mise-en-scène in Video-Content Production which in turn will be an Empirical Study in the V-Log Documentary. This section will provide the context of the study.

1.3.   Research Questions

1) What is the most used Mise-en-scène techniques used in V-log Documentary?

2) What are the challenges to apply Mise-en-scène in V-log Documentary productions?

3) Will the use of the Mise-en-scène influence the preference to V-log Documentary?

1.4.   1.4 Research Objectives

1) To identify the most used Mise-en-scène techniques used in V-log Documentary?

2) To identify the challenges to apply Mise-en-scène in V-log Documentary productions?

3) To examine the influence of the use of the Mise-en-scène on the preference of V-log Documentary?

1.5.   The Significance of Research

This research provides an in-depth understanding of the mise-en-scène technique used in the V-log Documentary in significance to both industry and academia. First and foremost, this research has novelty as it studies the use of mise-en-scène in the V-log production. With the trend of V-logging especially among the young generations, the proper way of mise-en-scène use in V-log production would improve the quality of video and the research outcome ascertains the use of the technique in V-logging would bring volume of views and likes to a particular masterpiece. In addition, the research exposes the challenges in the mise-en-scène adoption to V-log production and it would be significantly important to the V-logger to consider in V-logging process. Lastly, this research investigates the influence of the mise-en-scène to the popularity of a V-log on the internet based on the result from statistics analysis.

2. Literature Review

2.1.   The Trend of V-logging

V-log stands for a video blog or video log and refers to a type of blog where most or all the content is in a video format. V-log posts consist of creating a video of a person where he talks on a particular subject such as reporting or reviewing a product or an event (Carral, et al. 2019) involves ordinary people documenting their everyday (mostly) unedited lives. It might not fall into the category of what we imagine a video documentary, to be but it is the modern-day evolution and equivalent. V-logs have been around since Adam Kontras posted his first video of his travel to Los Angeles on his personal blog on January 2nd, 2000, for friends and family to follow along (Izatussariroh, 2020). V-logging has come a long way since Kontras' original 15-second video, and it has gone through some significant technological changes.

Comparing to the blogs, both verbal and non-verbal cues significantly influence the mood of audience (Sanchez-Cortes, et al. 2015). Sanchez-Cortes (2015) further specifies the nonverbal cues are the audio, visual activities, and facial expressions. Sound is a primary means of

expressing emotion. Changes in pitch, volume, and speaking rate affect emotion perception, and research (Sari, 2017; Carral, et al. 2019; Stein, et al. 2020) has consistently proven that automatically generated prosodic cues are useful for capturing personal and emotional information. As the non-verbal cues, the facial expressions are key indicators of personality traits, as well as cognitive and psychological states, in human perception. Beyond that, the influence of audio is evident in the usage of music (Peng, n.d.). The influence from the visual activities can be specified as the cognitive and affective states which is revealed through gestures, gaze, posture, and movement. Because of the variety of information available, extracting these nonverbal and verbal clues in V-log is difficult, but it has been attempted to create computational models of V-logger's use of Mise-en-scène approaches.

2.2. Application of Mise-en-scène in Filming

In short, Mise-en-scène is the language of films through which the viewer is able to gather and extract relative information (Deldjoo, et al. 2018). It helps in showing the viewer, about what is going on in the film, the motives, and most importantly it helps to convey the filmmaker's message. In the Cambridge dictionary, Mise-en-scène is defined as the type of place and situation in which the action of a movie or play happens. Mise-en-scène (French pronunciation: [miz.ɑ̃.sɛn] "stage layout") is used to describe the visual art techniques of filming, film photography, and stage design, and is poetic through the director to express (Matthews, et al. 2017).

The use of mise-en-scène can improve the enrichment of content and makes the short film more attractive by delivering much more message to their audience (Canas-Bajo, 2020). When it is applied to the short film project, it constructs the camera and everything before it is set up-composition, scenes, props, actors, costumes, and lighting (Uys, 2014; Canas-Bajo, 2020; Ahn, 2021). With the shooting and editing of the movie, the Mise-en-scène affects the fidelity or credibility of the movie in the eyes of its audience. Various elements of the design can sometimes imply the inner state of the character by generating a sense of time and space, as well as the set emotions (Uys, 2014). The Mise-en-scène also includes the composition formed by the positioning and movement of the actors and the objects in the shot (Ahn, 2021). These are all areas that the director wants to supervise. One of the most important people working with the director is the art director. The two work closely together to perfect all aspects of Mise-en-scène for a long time (even to the beginning) before the actual shooting.

The art director is usually responsible for the overall appearance of the movie, leading various departments, personal scenes, locations, props, and costumes, etc. The famous French film critic and film theorist André Bazin described this set aesthetics as the careful arrangement of scenes without editing (Jeong, 2015). Because of its relationship with camera interception, it is also a term sometimes used by professional screenwriters to indicate descriptive (action) paragraphs between dialogues. In uncovering the history of Mise-en-scène within film criticism, and through the detailed exploration of scenes from films as Imitation of Life and Lone Star, John Gibbs makes the case for the importance of a sensitive understanding of film style (Gibbs, 2002). In general, Mise-en-scène almost includes the arrangement of all visual elements on the screen. As a filmmaker, the director needs to schedule these visual elements to be understood by the audience and create the greatest aesthetic and commercial value in making V-log videos.

2.3. Theory Applied

Psychoanalytic film theory (Allen, 1999) emphasizes the study of the human psyche, analyzing the effect of things like narcissism, sexual desire, or unconscious thoughts on a character's movement through a narrative (McGowan, 2015).

Auteur theory (Sarris, 1962) assumes that the director is the primary artistic visionary of a film. This theory functions under the belief that the best films are made by filmmakers with a unique, personal vision who write and direct their own films (Menne, 2011).

Aesthetic Cognitivism (Graham, 1996) is a theory about the value of the arts that approaches them not simply (or not even) as sources of delight, amusement, pleasure, or emotional catharsis, but, instead, as sources of understanding (Gibson, 2008).

3. Research Methodology

In this research, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005) were adopted to investigate the use of Mise-en-scène in short film product, which is the V-log in today's digital-connected lifestyle. Based on the past literatures, the researcher studied the representative cases of mise-en-scène used in masterpieces by famous V-loggers including PewDiePie (110 million subscribers) and Kids Diana Show (81.4 million subscribers) to identify the most used mise-en-scène techniques in the masterpiece V-logs. Afterwards, the researcher designed interview questions based on the theories applied and investigated the opinion of 10 V-loggers about the challenges faced in the adoption of mise-en-scène in their V-log Production. After the interview with V-loggers, the research summarized the transcripts into meaningful codes and further categorized the codes into themes and sub-themes as the answers (Guest, et al. 2011) to the second research question. Lastly, the statistical analysis was used to identify the influence of mise-en-scène to the popularity of a V-log in online platforms. The researcher will view 100 V-log videos and categorize the results of types, times, and length of time, mise-en-scène techniques used in descriptive analysis and then utilize multiple linear regression analysis (Pandis, 2016) to study the influence of the use of mise-en-scène to the popularity of V-log video in online platforms.

Acknowledgments

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