

Fantasy Formula in Romance Movies: Beauty and the Beast (2017) and Aladdin (2019)

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Abstract

Popular literature is an entertaining work and is widely loved by the public. This study focuses on formula analysis of fantasy genres identified from the Beauty and the Beast (2017) and Aladdin (2019) movies seen from several scenes in both movies. The films is an interesting fantasy genre movies because although the movies is different, it has the same formula. This research uses a comparative descriptive method with a qualitative approach to present data analysis. In addition, this study also used several theories from Saricks (2009) to examine the formula of the fantasy genre and the theory of comparative literature from Wellek and Warren's (1942). The study reveals that there are four points of the fantasy genre formula that have something in common in these two movies. First, in the Characteristics of Belle and Jasmine who are brave women and have an adventurous spirit. Second, the same Storyline between the two movies where both are the same against enemies who want to kill the main male characters. Third, the same Frame Setting contains magical elements. Finally, in both movies there are tense scenes that quickly turn into humorous scenes or in the fantasy genre formula called Pacing. From the results obtained by the researchers, it was concluded that in both movies there are elements of fantasy formula. These formulas then make fantasy movies into films that are great demand and liked by the audience.

Keywords: Movies, Fantasy genre, Formula.

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1. Introduction

At this time in the modern era, popular culture is experiencing such a rapid movement, this happens because of the increasingly sophisticated media and can be reached by everyone. Popular literature is one example of a culture that experienced rapid movement from the early 20th century until now. Nurgiyanto argues that popular literature is literature that is categorized as entertaining literature and commercial literature (Nurgiyanto, 1998). In addition to its purpose to entertain, popular literature also has a high selling value because the story can fulfill the wishes of the reader or audience. One form of literature that is popular and much liked by the people is a film or movie.

Movie is popular literary work that have a new form of development. Movie is one of the communication media that provides information to the public through stories that make it interesting and uses language that is easily understood by the audience (Febrianti, 2021). A literary work including a movie will contain stories or problems of human life, whether it's about social life, politics, family story, even romance. Movies apart from being a cheap and simple entertainment medium, also have a variety of different genres in them. Some of these genres are drama, thriller, romance, science fiction, fantasy, comedy, action, adventure, mystery, suspense, western, and horror. One genre that is in great demand by the public is the fantasy genre.

Fantasy is a genre that presence of magic and supranatural phenomena as the main elements of theme, plot, and setting in the story (Nurhalim, 2020). Briefly it can be said that fantasy is anything that is impossible in the real world. There are several sub-genres that are suitable for the fantasy genre, namely Science Fiction, Romance, Adventure, Horror, and Historical Fiction. One of the most popular genres, especially teenagers today, is Romance-Fantasy. *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) are movies that adheres to Romance-Fantasy genre's adapted from a fairy tale with the same title. Both movies are works of popular literature produced by Walt Disney. As we know that Walt Disney is famous for its fantasy genre. Disney's animated movies are watched by various groups in the world, including children, adults, men and women. Usually, young girls like or idolize the characters Disneyland especially the Disney Princess, namely the female characters who become a figure featured in various Disney animated films (Biasini, 2018). The love story of the Disney Princess with her prince is also liked by many people.

Apart from the success of Walt Disney in presenting various fantasy movies, of course it cannot be separated from the screenwriter who develops the storyline from an old fairy tale into a film with real visualizations that can make the audience more carried away by their imagination. In fact, there are many genres that a writer can use to convey the storyline of a novel or movie to the readers and viewers of the work. Especially in a movie, the genre inside is very varied because the movie is a combination of several genres at once, but usually a movie will still have one or two dominant genres (Himawan, 2008). For example, in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) movies highlight the Romance-Fantasy genre,

where the setting frame will make the audience unconsciously carried away by the atmosphere of romance in the fantasy world. The frame settings presented are not always dark like the horror or suspense genres but will highlight colourful colours that can spoil the eye. Likewise in the movies mentioned above where there are several dark magic scenes in them, such as the location of the cursed palace in a snowy forest in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) movie and the cave where the magic lamp is stored in *Aladdin* (2019) movie, but still the fantasy elements presented looks more prominent in both movies. The color scheme also looks colorful, especially in the *Aladdin* (2019) movie where the background is a bustling kingdom in the Middle East.

Some of the popular literary admirers including the movie could only enjoy the work, without knowing that the work itself contained a formula supporting the film's genre performances. Of course, this genre formula is very important because it affects the course of the story and is an element of attraction for the audience so that they can better recognize the contents of the story. As stated by Saricks, that characterization, story line, frame (physical setting and atmosphere), pacing, tone and mood, and style and language played important roles in what readers enjoyed about one book over another and helped us recognize others we might suggest (Saricks, 2009). To analyze a movie, the researchers only use the theory of Characterization, Story Line, Frame Settings (physical setting and atmosphere), and Pacing because Tone and Mood are only used to analyze novel object. Because the object that the researchers examines is a scene from a movie, not a narrative from a novel, the theory of Tone and Mood in the fantasy formula is not used in the study.

This research tries to find out the fantasy genre's formula in Romance Movies *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019). The researchers were interested to discussing this fantasy movie because both movies contain very strong magic elements and an interesting love story in it. The researchers use these movies to compare each other and compares the two works using a comparative literature approach. This is because two movies which produce in same production house, but from different director, different script writer, and different years distance between *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019). These two movies also have the same genre, namely Romance-Fantasy but with different characters and storylines, so that it makes researchers interested in comparing the two stories, especially in the genre formula.

What is meant by a formula? Formula is an element found in the context of popular fiction. With this formula in a genre will form a fixed rule. For example, a formula that is applied in food such as several ingredients to make donuts namely, wheat flour, sugar, eggs and other ingredients. The ingredients for making these donuts can also be used to make bread, the only difference between the two is the shape. If the donut will definitely be round with a hole in the middle, which is different from other bread shapes. The term of the ingredients is meant by the formula and the shape of the donut is the literary work. This research focuses its analysis on finding elements of the fantasy genre in the literature formula, as said by Cawelti

in explaining the concept of formula: "Formula literature is, first of all, a kind of literary art. Therefore, it can be analyzed and evaluated like any other kind of literature" (Cawelti, 1976). In a genre there are usually similarities that will make the audience confused about the actual genre in the movie. For example, between the Fantasy and Science Fiction genres that look identical and are the same beyond logic or impossible, but actually these two genres have differences namely, Fantasy exists in a world that most people believe never could be, while Science Fiction worlds are those we accept as possible, even if improbable (Saricks, 2009). To distinguish the two can be observed by analyzing. If there's a magical element in the story, it means that the movie is a fantasy genre. But if the movie has logic elements, it means the movie has a science fiction genre (Febrianti, 2021).

The researchers want to find similarities in the different movies for a research object, which is by finding the movie of the same genres or production house because the researchers want to compare between two movies. Researchers have also compared the objects to be studied, namely the two movies which are remakes of the previous film with the same title. *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin* previous version is an animated film by Walt Disney. The difference is clearly visible in some of the scenes and characters shown in the two films. For example, in the *Beauty and the Beast* movie where Belle's character looks more 'weird' than the animated film. There are also several new characters featured in the 2017 version of *Beauty and the Beast*, namely Maestro Cadenza and Madame Garderobe.

Whereas in the *Aladdin* movie, the difference can be seen in the character of Jasmine, which in the 2019 version, Jasmine is described as a strict princess, brave, and even succeeded in being elected as sultan to replace her father's position. This is different from the previous version of *Aladdin* where the character of Jasmine is described as a gentlewoman. The storyline shown is clearly different where the Genie character in the animation, in the end, remains in the form of a genie, while in *Aladdin* (2019) the genie is successfully freed to become a human and marries a royal maid. It is these differences that make researchers interested in studying the remake version (live action) because the researchers feel that the two movies (live action) version of the film is the latest identities that were raised by Walt Disney rather than the animated version.

This research focuses on the identification and interpretation of fourth theories in fantasy genre's formula in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) as romance movies. This research can be a reference to the study of literature and further research in the field of literature primarily on comparative study of Formula Fantasy in popular literature. This research is expected to strengthen the theory of fantasy formula in movie, especially in the *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) movies. Based on the existing problems, the research was conducted to answer research questions about what fantasy genre's formula applied in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) movies.

2. Method

The research method that the researchers use in this study is a comparative descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Comparative research is conducted to compare the similarities and differences between two or more facts and the properties of objects that were examined based on a certain frame of mind (Qibtiyah, 2019). Bogdan and Biklen define a qualitative approach as a research mechanism by producing descriptive data in the form of speech or writing and the behavior of people observed by researchers (Putra, 2019). Qualitative research is concerned with the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals producing subjective data. Qualitative research methods emphasize a deep understanding of all aspects of the problem rather than focusing on generalized research methods. Due to its detailed nature, qualitative methods can easily help researchers dig deeper into information related to the research topic, so that the information obtained can be used to determine the objectives of the research (Febrianti, 2021). The results of this study are interpreted in detail from various perspectives to form a description. Descriptive method is used by researchers to describe and answer the problems in this study systematically, accurately, and also based on facts.

2.1. The subject of research

The main subjects of this research are movies in title *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) which is equipped with supporting theories of the genre's formula by Joyce Saricks and the theory of Comparative Literature by Wellek & Warren's. *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) is a Romance-Fantasy movies directed by Stephen Chbosky and Evan Spiliotopoulos. This movie is a live-action adaption from Disney's 1991 animated film of the same name, premiered on March 17, 2017 and received positive reviews since its first release. This movie contains a classic mystical love story. The story tells of a prince who was cursed to become an animal and met a beautiful woman then they fell in love and finally broke the curse. Meanwhile, *Aladdin* (2019) was directed by Guy Ritchie and John August, which also is a live-action adaption from Disney's 1992 and based on folklore originating from the Middle East. The story is one of the stories on the eponymous tale from *One Thousand and One Nights*. *Aladdin's* stories have been shown in various forms such as animated fairy tales, theater, musical dramas, and movies. This movie tells the story of a man who has been orphaned since childhood (*Aladdin*), he falls in love with a princess from Agrabah named Jasmine who makes him hope to become a prince. His wish was realized by the help of a genie from inside a magic lamp.

2.2. Data collection procedure

The researchers collecting the data by several steps. The first step is downloading *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019) movies on the Disney Plus Hotstar App, then the researchers watched the movies, next step is collecting the data by making notes and screen capture of conversations and dialogues in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019)

movies that contain fourth elements of fantasy formula, and last the researchers applied the identification results to this research.

2.3. Data analysis techniques

Researchers strive to collect a plenty data whether that primary or supporting data which relate to the research, these are some of techniques of analyzing data, firstly identified the data obtained and then analyzed it with the relevant data and also related to the research. Next, interpreted the data using the comparative literature theory and genre formula to describe two movies. After the data is interpreted, then it is concluded the whole of the research which is formulated by correlating the research data to theory.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Characterization

Characterization is a way for the author to introduce the characters in the story. Sudjiman argues that characterization is the presentation of characters and the creation of character images (Sudjiman, 1998). A character can be defined as a person in a literary work who has identities such as their appearance, behavior, role, character, personality, conversation, and things that lead to a character. While characterization is a clear depiction of a person shown in a story (Nurgiyantoro, 1995). Characters always use communication tools to interact with others. For example, the dialogue where interactions between characters can shape the character's feelings can be seen from conduct, roles, character, personality, and things that are peculiar to character. Every movie has different character. In fantasy movies, there are two prominent characterizations, namely the main character and the complex character. The main character plays the protagonist who is usually liked by the audience and a complex character who helps the main character to complete the missions in the movie. As in Saricks's book which states that characters play a crucial role in the Fantasy genre, and the protagonist is particularly important (Saricks, 2009), so do complex character who also play an important role in a movie.

3.1.1. Main Character

Main Character in Beauty and the Beast (2017)

The first one is Belle who is cheerful and adventurous girl. She was called a strange woman by the people there because she was busy in her own world and always curious about what was going on in her life. Independent and determined are Belle's main characteristics, that's why Belle felt like she didn't fit in with the famous young man in her village named Gaston who fell in love with her. Fate led him to a handsome prince who was cursed to be the Beast. But with Belle's sincerity of love, the curse can be broken and make the prince return to normal and can live happily with Belle.



Figure 1. Belle



Figure 2. Beast

The second one is Beast. In the past, Beast was a handsome prince, but he grew up to be a proud and selfish young man until he was cursed to become an ugly man who was imprisoned in his castle. Beast must learn to love others sincerely and share kindness with others. To break the curse, Beast must find his true love, which is someone who can see the goodness in him regardless of appearance.

Main Character in Aladdin (2019)

Aladdin is an orphan who has been abandoned by his parents since he was a child, he lives neglected and lives in a former tower with a monkey named Abu. Aladdin has a habit of stealing to meet the necessities of his life. But actually, Aladdin is a character who is kind, generous, not greedy and does not break his promise to his words. He stole because circumstances required him to steal so he could eat.



Figure 3. Aladdin



Figure 4. Jasmine

Jasmine is the daughter of the sultan of Agrabah Kingdom, she is the only child. She fell in love with Aladdin as a young man from the common people. She is very beautiful, smart and has a tall body. Her mother had died because she was killed while walking outside the palace. Thus Jasmine was not allowed to leave the palace by Baba (Sultan Agrabah, Jasmine's father). Jasmine has a caring nature for her people. Jasmine also has a brave nature she dares to change the laws of the kingdom.

3.1.2. Complex Character



Figure 5. LeFou

Complex Character in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) is LeFou, a loyal guard of Gaston, the antagonist in the story. LeFou is a new character made more feminine than the animated version. He was a man who was shy and disinclined of his master Gaston. But at the end of the story, he sided with the truth and helped the prince's followers.

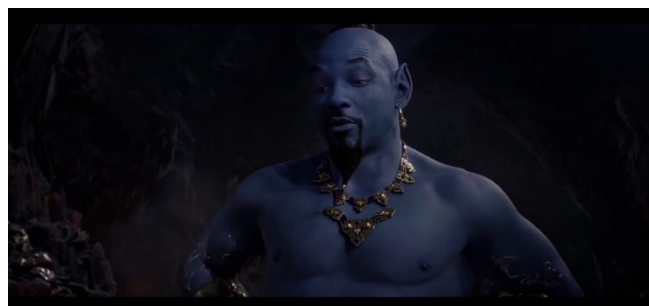


Figure 6. Genie

In Aladdin (2019), Genie is a blue creature that lives in a magic lamp because of a curse, he must serve the master who brought him out of the magic lamp by granting his master's 3 wishes. Genie has a cheerful nature and is loyal to Aladdin because he knows that Aladdin is a kind and sincere person.

In the Beauty and the Beast (2017) and Aladdin (2019) movies, there are similar characteristics, namely the main character Belle in the Beauty and the Beast movie and Princess Jasmine in the Aladdin movie. Both of these characters are a woman who is brave and has an adventurous spirit. They are courageous in opposing what she considers to be untrue and fearless in the dangers ahead. In addition, both of them also have a sincere heart and care for others.

3.2 Story Line

Story line or plot is a sequence of events that builds the story so that it forms the main framework in the story. Story line is of course very important because it is the basic framework of a story so that an event is related to other events. As stated by Perrine that, "plot is the sequence of incidents or events which the story is composed and it may conclude what character says or thinks, as well as what he does, but it leaves out description and analysis and concentrate ordinarily on major happening" (Perrine, 1974). The sequence of events can start anywhere, for example from the conflict or ending first, it doesn't have to start from the character introduction. In the fantasy formula the story line or plot is very unique where the plot always contrasting and usually the power of good will definitely conquer evil. According to Saricks, fantasy is a genre of contrasts—good and bad, light and dark (Saricks, 2009). No matter how painful trials the protagonist go through in the fantasy genre, victory in conquering evil has a high chance of satisfying the desires of the audience.

In figure 7, the scene shows that Gaston is influencing people to go to the palace to kill the Beast. He mentioned that Beast were cruel creatures that would threaten the lives of people there. Finally everyone went to the palace with sharp weapons, but that same night Belle managed to escape from Gaston's custody and went to rescue Beast to the palace.



Figure 7. Gaston when going to attack the Beast castle



Figure 8. Jafar when threatening

In figure 8, the scene shows Jafar forcing Aladdin to admit that his servant is the Genie from inside the magic lamp. Jafar threatened Aladdin to push him into the sea if he wasn't honest, but Aladdin still claimed that he was a prince, after that Jafar pushed him into the sea until Aladdin drowned, but luckily the genie from inside the magic lamp came out because of the friction of Aladdin's hand. The genie looked for every way to save Aladdin, then Aladdin survived and came to Jafar.

Both movies have the same storyline where both of them fight the same enemy who wants to hurt the main male character in order to get what he wants. In *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) the enemy is Gaston who wants to marry Belle by force so as to do anything to get her, including trying to hurt Belle's father and Beast. Meanwhile, *Aladdin* (2019) the enemy is Jafar who is obsessed with power, and will do anything to get the throne. The ending in both movies is the same, the two main characters unite for their love and the two enemies can be defeated.

3.3 Frame Setting

Frame Setting is very important to support a story for making it more real to be featured in a film. Setting refers to nature and artificial scenery or the environment in which the characters in a literary work live and move (Robert, 1987). Everything related to the environment such as, the time, the atmosphere that occurs is an arrangement in the setting. Frame Setting can help the audience to know about what genre the movie is presenting. For example, if the movie is set in the desert, it means that the movie is a western genre. Frame Setting in fantasy formula are set in imagination world and are usually thick with magic element. It's this magical element that distinguishes the fantasy from other genres. The audience will feel entered into a fantasy world because of this magic element.



Figure 9. The cursed castle

Beauty and the Beast (2019) is set in a small town in France. The town is quite calm and comfortable for its residents. But deep in the forest there is a castle that is abandoned as if without an inhabitant. The palace was cursed and forgotten by everyone. Inside was a handsome prince who was cursed to become a Beast and some of his servants who were cursed to become things, of course they were all alive. This magical thing that shows the fantasy genre in this movie.



Figure 10. Magic cave

The film Aladdin (2019) is set in a kingdom in the Middle East called Agrabah. The atmosphere in the city is very lively and the people live well, most of them work as traders. Nearby, in a desert, there is also a cave in which there are many treasures and a magic lamp. The cave is also magical because it can talk and destroy itself if someone who enters there does a certain prohibition.

Both of these movies have the same place, namely the palace but in different countries. The Beauty and the Beast (2017) movie is set in a small town and castle in a cursed forest. While in the Aladdin (2019) movie the setting is in a bustling kingdom, namely Agrabah. Both movies have a Frame Setting in a fantasy world, which will make the audience feel that the world really exists.

3.4 Pacing

Pacing is a technique invented by writers to show how fast or slow a story is going. This technique was created with the aim of avoiding the boredom of the reader when reading a

long story or watching a movie. Slow stories usually appeal to an older audience, while fast stories appeal to younger audience. Writers usually cut out extra words that are not important. Pacing is used to keep stories that are made quickly to avoid boredom, and made slow to pay more attention to detail. However, in the fantasy genre pacing is a shift from a tense atmosphere to an atmosphere of humor. As in the book Saricks it is said that humorous fantasy often moves more quickly from the first pages, or at least seems to do so, as it sucks readers in with the lavish wordplay (Saricks, 2009).



Figure 11. Fight in the castle

The pacing scene in *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) movie can be seen in the scene when Gaston and his entourage force their way into the palace to kill the Beast, but Beast's servants who are living stuff try to fight back by attacking everyone there. This scene is particularly thrilling because it is the climax of the story but changes to humor comes from people who lose to living stuff.



Figure 12. Aladdin and Genie

The pacing scene in *Aladdin* (2019) movie is mostly shown in the humorous character of Genie. There is also a scene when Prince Ali comes to Princess Jasmine's palace and talks with the Sultan and other royal officials, but Prince Ali looks very stiff and nervous when answering all the questions from the Sultan. Even when asked about where Ababwa was, Aladdin and Genie gave different answers, this made the audience laugh because of their behavior.

In the Beauty and the Beast (2017) and Aladdin (2019) movies there are several tense scenes that quickly turn into humorous scenes. This funny scene is called pacing in the fantasy genre, where the audience will feel entertained and not bored while watching the movie.

4. Conclusion

One of the popular literary works that are widely loved by the public today is Movie. Movie is one of the communication media that provides information to the public through stories that make it interesting and use language that is easy for the audience to understand. In movies, there are many different genres, one of which is Fantasy. Fantasy is something that is impossible to happen in the real world, usually in fantasy it contains magical elements. In each genre there are different formulas that will form a fixed rule.

Researchers chose Beauty and the Beast (2017) and Aladdin (2019) movies to analyze the genre formula. From the two movies that the researchers discussed, it can be concluded that both are fantasy genre movies that have many similarities. There are four points of the fantasy genre formula that have something in common in these two movies. First, in the Characteristics of Belle and Jasmine who are brave women and have an adventurous spirit. Second, the same Storyline between the two movies where both are the same against enemies who want to kill the main male characters. Third, the same Frame Setting contains magical elements. Finally, in both films there are tense scenes that quickly turn into humorous scenes or in the fantasy genre formula called Pacing. From the results obtained by the researcher, it was concluded that in both films there are elements of the fantasy formula.

Even though the two movies have a similar formula, each movie has its own characteristics that the audience will remember. This study can be a reference to help increase knowledge of fantasy genre formula in a movie. For those who are interested in studying comparative literature with a fantasy formula review, this study may be of great help. Likewise with the researchers who are going to use the theory of Saricks. This theory can be applied in Novel of Film with any genre including fantasy as in this study.

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