CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains five parts: the background of the research, the research problem, the research purpose, the research significance, and, lastly, the definition of the key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Regarding film creation, genre relates to the grouping of films based on specific characteristics. Film genres categorize movies according to themes, styles, or story elements (Hamzah et al., 2023). Conventions define genres; there are no set standards. In the broad field of artistic and cultural studies, the word "genre" is used. Jane Stokes states that since the film industry, especially the Hollywood film industry, has used genre freely for marketing purposes, it is one of the simplest methods of categorizing films. In addition, the existence of genres can undoubtedly give audiences an idea of the movie they are about to watch. Genre makes it easier for the audience to determine what movie to watch (Rajendra et al., 2023). The most famous literary genres typically include adventure, romance, and mystery.

Nevertheless, many different movie genres exist, such as mystery, detective, drama, comedy, action, horror, romance, science fiction, and others. Some movies can also be classified into more than one genre. For example, a movie can be classified as a romantic comedy because it combines elements of comedy and romance. Some movies combine action and science fiction genres. Movie genres continue to evolve as the movie world takes shape. Many new genres have emerged that have become popular among the public. Detective stories belong to the mystery genre; therefore, the structure and content of mystery stories will continuously evolve in response to the changing times and the preferences of readers or viewers. Culture will have a significant impact on the variations in mystery stories. A mystery story must include something mysterious and a problem that must be solved, frequently leading to conflict. Popular fiction's structure is heavily influenced by the genre in which it is produced.

The detective genre is considered popular because many people like this genre. As explained, the determination of popular fiction genres depends on the audience, which determines whether or not the fiction will sell. It is said that Western, comedy, and music are established genre films because they are easily recognizable, and romances, as well as detectives, are established genres for the same reason. In other words, they have been fulfilling the audience's interests for a long time (Handayani et al., 2021). Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the detective genre has been one of the most established and long-lasting genres in the American entertainment industry. Detective fiction embodies a fundamentally scientific approach to understanding hidden facts and their visible manifestations. It explores the underlying causes that lie under the surface and the effects that are observable to us.

Genres are composed of formulas and archetypes, both of which are different. The formula is a combination of culture-specific conventions from one culture to another. At the same time, archetypes are story patterns not limited by a particular culture or time. The archetype in a detective genre story is that when someone hears the word detective, a story pattern emerges, namely an investigation into a crime and how complex the detective character is in problem-solving. Cawelti stated, "Formula is a narrative structure or dramatic principle that is used in a number of literary works" (Cawelti, 1976, p. 5). The writer will find it easier to describe an engaging and organized literary work if they use a formula. Formulas can also assist readers in analyzing a literary work. As a result, the formula in a literary work is significant and quite valuable.

Hence, the detective formula is the narrative structure for the detective genre, mainly concentrating on the detective's investigation and the crime resolution. As Cawelti claimed,

> "detective formula is perhaps the most effective fictional structure yet devised for creating the illusion of rational control over the mysteries of life, and it has served such varied purposes as intellectual play and witty escapism…" (Cawelti, 1976, p. 137).

The detective formula is divided into two, according to Cawelti, namely Classical and Hard-Boiled detective stories; both share something in common, as he stated;

> Like the classical story, the hard-boiled formula develops four leading character roles: *(a)* the victim or victims; *(b)* the criminal; *(c)* the detective; and *(d)* those involved in the crime but incapable of resolving the problems it poses, a group involving police, suspects, and so on-in effect, the set of characters who represent society in the story (Cawelti, 1976, p. 147).

Based on that, the roles of characters in the hard-boiled formula are divided into four, namely, the detective, the victim, the criminal, and those involved in the crime, which will be subsequently explained in more detail. Meanwhile, classical and hard-boiled detective stories differ in their action patterns. The hard-boiled formula contains a detective as the hero, suspense and threat, a modern city as background, the role of a woman, and the changing meaning. The emergence of the detective as a hero in the hard-boiled formula is a result of the narrative predicament. The setting of the location plays a crucial role in the hard-boiled formula, which is a modern city.

The research done by the writer focuses on the movie *Knives Out* (2019), which takes place in a modern city and falls under the mystery and detective genre. Unlike other movies in this genre, *Knives Out* offers a distinct storyline that amuses a suspenseful investigation. The movie cleverly incorporates clues and puzzles that even deceive the audience, along with a unique main cast. Furthermore, the plot twist ending of the movie is genuinely mind-blowing. The movie's strong rating among the audience is one of the reasons that piqued the writer's curiosity in analyzing and criticizing its formula structure implementing Cawelti's theory.

Multiple previous studies share general similarities with the writer's research. Previous research results were collected from various sources to facilitate the research process. Because there are many theories in this research, these sources were used to gain a deeper understanding of this topic. Previous research has different topics and research questions, but they have been evaluated and compared to determine which ones are relevant to this research. The information sources used

in this research consist of academic journals and articles. The previous research mentioned below has similar themes to this research.

The first previous study titled "The Detective Formula in Agatha Christie's Sleeping Murder: Miss Marple in The Last Case" by Priska K. Lontaan, Agustine C. Mamentu, Delli Sabudu, published in March 2022 (Lontaan et al., 2022), this research focuses on the revealing of detective formulas by using Cawelti's theory which has similarities with the writer's research, the detective formula centers on the investigation and solution of crimes by the detective, there are six main phases of this pattern (a) Introduction of the Detective; (b) Crime and Clue; (c) Investigation; (d) Announcement and the Solution; (e) Explanation of the Solution; (f) Denouement, all the phases revealed in the novel, the results of this study state that there is a detective formula, in detective stories the detective story formula is needed to organize the structure and explain how the situation, the pattern of action in this story.

The second previous study by Riyadul Falah Muharam was titled "Hard-boiled Detective Formula in Sherlock Holmes Movie" (2021). Riyadul uses the genre formula as a theoretical basis; the research aims to discover the reasons behind the popularity of Sherlock Holmes movies; the results found two reasons why this movie is so popular. 1). Sherlock Holmes' movie implements specific roles for each main character, such as detective, criminal, victim, and people involved in the crime, to create an exciting story in the movie. 2). The action pattern is crucial to the movie's popularity as it features an adventure and detective action formula full of obstacles to find the truth. The formula is built through the detective as the hero, tension and threat, the setting in a modern city, the role of female characters, and the change of meaning in the story (Muharam, 2021).

The third previous study is "Hard-boiled Detective Formula in The Batman (2022) by Matt Reeves" by Jidan Mustopa (2023). Using John G. Cawelti's theory of the hard-boiled detective formula, this research focuses on finding the action pattern of the hard-boiled detective formula and its effect on the main character in Matt Reeves' The Batman (2022) movie. The action pattern of the hard-boiled

detective formula was the detective as a hero, suspense and threat, a modern city as a backdrop, the role of women, and changing meaning. This study aims to discover the action pattern of the hard-boiled detective formula as reflected in The Batman film, as well as how these action patterns affect the main character in The Batman film. Furthermore, this research used the qualitative descriptive study research method, approaches that rely on text and image data, have distinct processes in data processing, and draw on various designs. This strategy was utilized to assess the data from a visual and narrative standpoint because both can reflect those aspects. The portrayal of the Hard-boiled detective formula in The Batman film is the product of this research. The narrative framework conveys the action pattern, focusing on the plot, characters, and conversation. These aspects, for example, a modern city as a backdrop depicting corruption and death, a moral wasteland in which criminality predominates, can affect the main character's development. The writer also discovered that several components are related to one another, which impacted the main character's development (Mustopa, 2023).

The fourth study is by Vini Nurazni (2021), titled "The classical detective formula in Agatha Christie's Murder on The Orient Express." This research reveals two findings. First, based on Edgar Allan Poe's theory of the classical detective formula, four aspects of the classical detective formula are found in the novel. Those aspects are (1) situation and (2) pattern of action, divided into six phases: introduction of detective, crime and clue, investigation, announcement of the solution, explanation of the solution, and denouement. (3) characters and relationships, divided into four main characters: the detective, the victim, the criminal, and those threatened by the crime but incapable of solving it, (4) setting. The most exciting finding is that the novel combines mystification and the inquiry process. Mystification is when the detective finds many clues about the crime and must uncover the criminal's identity and motive. The inquiry process is where the detective interviewed all passengers and conductors. Second, there are six phases of discovering clues in this novel; they are (1) the condition of the Ratchett compartment, (2) the victim's body, (3) the button, (4) the pipe-cleaner, the

handkerchief with initial H, the matches, and the burnt paper (5) the knife and (6) the grease spot on Countess Andrenyi passport (Nurazni, 2021).

The last previous study is "Classical Detective Formula in Agatha Christie's Lord Edgware Dies" by Zidan Hamdani (2023); the research aims to analyze the classic detective in each chapter that contains elements of situation, pattern of action, character and setting, as well as the scheme built by a detective in solving mysteries based on detection analysis so that it can be ascertained the plot built in each scene. The theory used is the classic detective formula theory designed by Cawelti (1976) and detection theory by Kayalvizhi (2012); the results showed that: (1) The novel Lord Edgware Dies is categorized as a classical detective that is arranged sequentially in the faithfulness of its chapters in terms of situations or conditions, pattern of action that build the story, and settings that support each atmosphere (2) Detection characteristics of the problem-solving process and mystery disclosure are designed by the detective based on each character and their relationships (Hamdani, 2023).

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the research context described above, the writer attempted to examine the detective formula in the movie *Knives Out* (2019). As a result, the writer approaches the research question as follows.

1. What roles of the main characters are portrayed in the movie *Knives Out* (2019)?
2. How are the hard-boiled detective formula applied in the movie *Knives Out* (2019)?

1.3 Research Purposes

Based on the statement of the above, the aims of this research is:

1. To find roles of the main characters that portrayed in the movie *Knives Out* (2019).
2. To find out how the hard-boiled detective formula are applied in the movie *Knives Out* (2019).

1.4 Research Significances

The research aims to make both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this research will broaden how the detective story, the role of the main characters, and the hard-boiled detective formula are depicted in movies, particularly *Knives Out* (2019). Practically, this research will add necessary data and information for the readers and the next writer who plans to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the detective story and detective formula, specifically regarding the hard-boiled detective formula in the movie *Knives Out* (2019).

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Film:

Films were produced initially using celluloid tape and a visual audio disk to record real-life or moving images, with or without accompanying sound. Movies are a compilation of dynamic visuals and audio projected on a television screen or showcased in a cinema.

2. Detective fiction:

Detective fiction is part of the mystery genre, as it revolves around investigating and revealing a problem. The story's plot revolves around a perplexing enigma that requires resolution by a detective or a skilled investigator. Typically, detective fiction involves a series of events where an unidentified murder victim is discovered at the beginning of the novel, followed by the arrival of a detective who investigates and solves the case.

3. Detective formula:

The detective formula is the narrative structure for the detective genre, mainly concentrating on the detective's investigation and the crime resolution. Detective formula can be classified into two subcategories, each with distinct characteristics: classical detectives and hard-boiled detectives.

4. Classical Formula:

The classical detective, as depicted in Edgar Allan Poe's detective stories and popularized by characters like Sherlock Holmes, is a detached, amateur detective who solves crimes through deductive reasoning and keen observation skills. The classical detective story formula typically includes critical elements such as the introduction of the detective, the presentation of the crime and clues, the investigation process, the announcement and explanation of the solution, and the denouement. The detective's character traits, such as eccentricity, brilliance, and detachment, are crucial to the genre, with Poe's Dupin and Doyle's Holmes serving as prime examples. The classical detective story exposes hidden guilt through specific individuals, often featuring false suspects, inefficient police, and a narrative emphasizing the detective's ability to restore order and solve complex mysteries.

5. Hard-boiled Formula:

The hard-boiled detective story genre emerged in the early 1920s, characterized by urban settings, corruption, and violence. Popularized by authors like Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, this genre focuses on a strict, cynical detective navigating a corrupt society while upholding his code of ethics. The stories often feature sympathetic victims, emotionally charged criminals, and a complex mix of cynicism and honor in the detective character.

6. Main character:

The progression of hard-boiled detective fiction is influenced by four main characters: victims, criminals, detectives, and those involved in investigations or crimes.

7. Pattern of action:

The action pattern in a hard-boiled formula contains the detective as a hero, suspension, threat, the modern city as background, women's role, and changing meaning.