

Patriarchal discourse in the short film *You and Me in Low Angle*

Ahmad Toni¹, Ni Gusti Ayu Ketut Kurniasari², Ricky Widyananda Putra³,
 Jeanie Annisa⁴, Jauharotul Maknunah⁵

^{1,2,3,4}Faculty of Communication and Creative Design, Universitas Budi Luhur, Jakarta,
 Indonesia

⁵Faculty of Technique and Instrumentations, Politeknik Negeri Indramayu, Indramayu,
 Indonesia

Submitted: November 2024, **Revised:** Juli 2025, **Accepted:** Juli 2026, **Published:** September 2026

ABSTRACT

Background: The focus of this research is on the discourse of power and ideology manifested in the film *You and Me in Low Angle*. **Purpose:** The aim of this research is to reveal the representation of ideology and power in film. **Methods:** The study employs cultural studies with a discourse approach, combining semiotic analysis at the text level, praxis analysis with a descriptive qualitative approach, and contextual analysis through the synchronization of text with social context. **Results:** This sign explains the relationship inequality between men and women, which is manifested in the shape of the Plengkung Gading (Ivory Arch). The sign of Kebaya is a reference to the female soul, which is depicted in the characteristics of traditional clothing and becomes a national symbol of female identity. Candle Signs as a form of representation of the discourse of women's imaginary world in the future. The character Leila, as the main character in the advertising film, is portrayed as a discourse of career-oriented and independent women in the public sphere. The fifth low angle is represented in the relationship between power and hegemony tools in perpetuating the power of patriarchal ideology, specifically within the Javanese, European, and Chinese patriarchal ideologies in the Javanese cultural context of Yogyakarta. The sixth discourse sign in *You and Me in Low Angle* is represented through a painting depicting a woman riding a motorcycle. **Conclusion:** The relationship between the text and patriarchal discourse is a form of interpretation instrument about class and gender domination that continues to take place, especially in the discourse and culture of Javanese society. **Implications:** That is why Oppo made a marketing breakthrough aimed at Generation Z, who are active smartphone consumers and are predominantly men in the content industry.

Keywords: Discourse patriarchal; gender domination; ideology manifested; Javanese culture; short film

To cite this article (APA Style):

Toni, A., Kurniasari, N. G.A.K., Putra, R. W., Annisa, J & Maknunah, J. (2026). Patriarchal discourse in the short film *You and Me in Low Angle*. *ProTVF*. 10(2), 144-164. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v10i2.59126>

Correspondence: Dr. Ahmad Toni, M.I.Kom, Faculty of Communication and Creative Design, Universitas Budi Luhur, Jl Ciledug Raya, Petukangan Utara, Pesanggrahan, Jakarta Selatan, Jakarta 12660. *Email:* ahmad.toni@budiluhur.ac.id

ISSN: 2548-687X (Printed), ISSN: 2549-0087 (Online). Website: <http://jurnal.unpad.ac.id/protvf>

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>). Copyright © 2026 The Author(s).

INTRODUCTION

The originality of this research is in the broader contribution of Riri Riza to Indonesian cinema. Riri Riza has long been recognized as an influential contemporary Indonesian filmmaker for combining intimate personal narratives with broader social and cultural concerns. Through film that frequently explores identity, family, memory, and social change, the filmmaker has contributed significantly to the development of cinematic realism and humanistic storytelling in the country (Neiger et al., 2023). *You and Me in Low Angle* continues this tradition by presenting a seemingly simple story that forms opportunities for reflection on gender authority and emotional inheritance (Page et al., 2023). Previous discussions of the film have generally prioritized technological achievement as part of the OPPO CineFinders project and the innovative use of smartphone cinematography. However, insignificant attention has been given to the contribution of the film to ongoing discussions of patriarchal culture in contemporary Indonesia. By examining patriarchal discourse in the film, this research bridges a gap in the existing literature on *You and Me in Low Angle* and also enriches scholarly understanding of the cinematic project of Riri Riza as a whole (Puorideme & Diedong, 2023). The results show that the work of the filmmaker is concerned with visual experimentation or personal storytelling. The outcomes also function as a critical cultural text that reflects, questions, and reinterprets

social power relations in Indonesian society. As a result, this research contributes to both film scholarship and broader discussions of gender, discourse, and cultural transformation in contemporary Indonesian cinema.

Advertising films and representation have an integral relationship, reflecting the social dynamics in systems of production and representation. Signs are used to represent social conditions and situations in film. In cinema, signs symbolize objects, ideas, or meanings through associations with other clues. Moreover, signs constitute the formal and material conditions of meaning, including discourse or denotation. Situations and discourse conditions expressed through clues outside denotative meaning are called connotative signs (Arnesson, 2023). In addition, connotative signs derive importance through associations with other signs (Proust, 2023). Discourse signs surface from the influence of prevailing cultural values and shared assumptions that shape common understanding in a social system. Discourse and film are closely related in shaping audience perception, interest, and behavior (Bull, 2024). Both are widely used as strategies in various marketing methods, particularly in marketing communication activities and tactics (Wang & Tong, 2025). This method refers to the use of products by consumers as an indicator of behavioral patterns in meeting primary needs through smartphone technology. The concept of marketing communication is intertwined with the discourse of power and patriarchal

ideology in the advertising film *You and Me in Low Angle*, directed by Riri Riza, forming a fascinating narrative that invites interpretation.

The objective of the advertising film production strategy by Oppo Indonesia is to increase sales of Oppo smartphone products and inspire customers to use the advanced camera features creatively by adapting the features to market preferences and individual creativity. The superiority and sophistication of Oppo smartphone products are largely based on the consumer-producer (prosumer) principle (Keller et al., 2023), which integrates consumers as both subjects and objects in the creative industry (Kubler, 2023). Oppo used innovative marketing strategies and tactics to shape the perception of smartphones as communication devices, creative tools, and valuable assets, particularly among Indonesian youth and Generation Z.

The trend shows patterns of smartphone consumption and the use of video-based social media platforms, such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, which are the primary platforms among younger generations. The pattern of smartphone uses and content production has given rise to the concept of the prosumer, referring to social media users who simultaneously act as producers and consumers. Smartphone marketing continues to be dominated by conventional strategies that treat consumers as objects and base marketing decisions on gender, cultural discourse (Timilsina et al., 2025), and other cultural

values. An advantage of the prosumer strategy is the ability to inspire consumer engagement with smartphone-based electronic products (Walsh, 2023). The prosumer strategy combines the roles of producers and consumers through video-uploading activities, in which individuals act as both content producers and consumers (Bossetta et al., 2023). Similarly, social media users also become consumers of content created by other individuals in interconnected social media networks.

The objective of prosumer-focused marketing initiatives of Oppo Indonesia is to improve sales of Oppo products, the largest smartphone brand in the country, by offering a range of features and prices that matched the budgets of consumers. The marketing method combined digital advertising, smartphone technology (Puspitaruangansari et al., 2024), film, and cinematic narrative aesthetics. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the smartphone market in Indonesia experienced significant growth. According to dataindonesia.id, the number of cellphone users in the country increased from 341.28 million in 2019 to 355.62 million in 2020. The increase reflected substantial opportunities for developing digital culture during and after the pandemic. Oppo collaborated with prominent Indonesian filmmakers, including Garin Nugroho, Jay Subiyakto, and Riri Riza, as part of the marketing strategy to introduce the Oppo Find X3 Pro 5G, which featured the advanced capabilities of the Oppo series. In the advertising film, Riri Riza

told the story of a young girl who often viewed the world from a low angle.

In the theoretical context, cultural research focuses on different interpretations of art and mass media (Zunaidi et al., 2024). It also focuses on aspects of mass media examined in relation to media context (Weiß, 2025), audience behavior, and the history of production and consumption systems as reflected in the interactions between producers and consumers (Chukwuma et al., 2024). This analysis uses a cultural research method to examine the interaction between mass media, the social structure of society (Mwangi et al., 2024), and the surrounding patterns of cultural relations (Michael & Ahlborg, 2024). Through a critical perspective, cultural research in mass media and the arts examines ideology, hegemony, race, gender, popular culture (Heřmanová, 2023), representation, dominance, power, and various cognitive biases presented in mass media. This research is also a critical method applied to literature, popular culture, mass media, and cultural artifacts (Anwar et al., 2025), examining the power dynamics and sociopolitical contexts in which cultural artifacts are situated. Class and group stereotypes are shaped by the relationship between ideology and power structures. The identities of various social groups, along with hierarchical relationships of dominance and subordination, are often instrumentalized to silence specific groups as well as perpetuate oppression and unequal power relations affecting marginalized communities.

Research on discourse in advertising films has increasingly attracted scholarly attention because advertisements no longer function as instruments of product promotion. Advertising film has become a cultural texts that communicate values, identities, ideologies, and social relations (Smith, 2025). In contemporary marketing communication, advertising narratives are strategically designed to form emotional connections with audiences by embedding products in meaningful social and cultural contexts. In Indonesia, filmmakers have played an important role in transforming commercial advertising into a medium of cultural storytelling. Among these filmmakers, Riri Riza occupies a distinctive position because of the ability to combine cinematic aesthetics, emotional narratives, and social realities in commercial projects (Toni, 2025). Rather than presenting products through direct persuasion, Riri Riza often constructs narratives that engage audiences through family relationships, cultural memories, local identities, and daily experiences.

Discourse refers to the production of meaning through language, images, symbols, and narrative structures that shape audience perceptions from a marketing communication perspective (Haugsgjerd et al., 2023). Advertising discourse functions to inform consumers about products and to construct desirable lifestyles, identities, and emotional associations. In advertising film by Riri Riza, persuasive communication frequently occurs

through storytelling rather than explicit promotional messages. The product is integrated into the narrative as a facilitator of human relationships, self-discovery, and emotional satisfaction. This method is associated with contemporary branding strategies that prioritize emotional branding and consumer engagement. By focusing on human experiences rather than product features, Riri Riza forms advertisements that inspire audiences to associate brands with authenticity, intimacy, and personal values.

The cultural dimension of advertising film by Riri Riza becomes particularly significant when examined through the lens of Javanese values. Javanese culture prioritizes harmony, respect, self-control, family cohesion, and social hierarchy. These values frequently appear in Indonesian visual narratives and often influence the representation of interpersonal relationships. In many of the works, including commercial projects, characters are portrayed in social environments shaped by cultural expectations and family obligations. Communication tends to be indirect, emotional expression is often restrained, and conflicts are resolved through reflection rather than confrontation. The narrative selections reflect broader Javanese cultural principles that prioritize social balance and communal relationships. Consequently, advertising film becomes spaces where cultural meanings are reproduced, negotiated, and adapted for contemporary audiences (Anwar et al., 2025). Through this process, commercial messages achieve legitimacy by resonating

with familiar cultural frameworks already recognized and valued by audiences.

The relationship between discourse and culture can also be understood through the concept of representation, which is a reflection of reality and a process where meaning is actively constructed. Advertising film selectively represents certain social identities, gender roles, family structures, and cultural values while marginalizing others (Poorghorban, 2025). In the context of Javanese culture, representations of authority, respectability, and social order often carry historical and ideological significance. The narratives of Riri Riza frequently explore themes of family, memory, and belonging, forming representations that appear natural but are shaped by broader cultural discourse (Benson-Allott, 2023). Through visual composition, character positioning, dialogue, and narrative progression, advertising film communicates assumptions about what constitutes a good family member, responsible parent, respectable woman, or successful individual (Marghitu & Smyth, 2024). These representations are particularly important because advertising films reaches wide audiences and contributes to the normalization of specific cultural meanings in daily life.

A productive method for analyzing the advertising film of Riri Riza is discourse analysis, which examines how power relations are embedded in communication practices. Discourse analysis allows investigators to examine how cultural values are expressed,

social identities are constructed, and ideological assumptions become normalized through audiovisual narratives (Santori, 2023). In Javanese cultural contexts, discourse of hierarchy, obedience, gender expectations, and family responsibility often operate subtly rather than explicitly. Advertising narratives may reinforce the discourse by presenting it as common sense or desirable social behavior. Several advertising narratives may challenge traditional assumptions by offering alternative representations of identity and agency. Therefore, discourse analysis provides a framework for understanding how advertising film simultaneously functions as marketing tools and cultural texts (Jermyn & R. Weber, 2025). Rather than viewing advertisements as simple promotional materials, this analysis recognizes advertising film as sites where social meanings are continuously negotiated among producers, texts, and audiences.

Several critical questions appear to guide the analysis of discourse in advertising film of Riri Riza in this research. Regarding patriarchal discourse, the following questions may be asked. How are patriarchal values expressed through family relationships, authority figures, and narrative structures in the film? In what ways do cultural expectations surrounding fathers, mothers, and children reflect broader patriarchal ideologies in Javanese society? Does the narrative reproduce, negotiate, or challenge traditional forms of male authority? Concerning the representation of women, important

questions include the following. How are female characters positioned in the narrative? Are female characters represented primarily through domestic, emotional, and relational roles, or do female characters show autonomy and agency? How do visual and narrative strategies shape audience perceptions of femininity, motherhood, and womanhood? Finally, regarding the relationship between discourse and advertising films, the following questions may be asked. How does the commercial objective of the advertisement influence the construction of cultural meanings? What discourse is mobilized to form emotional engagement between audiences and the advertised brand? How do cinematic methods, storytelling strategies, and cultural symbols contribute to the persuasive power of the advertisement? These questions provide a deeper understanding of how advertising film of Riri Riza operate simultaneously as instruments of marketing communication, means of cultural representation, and sites of ideological negotiation in contemporary Indonesian society.

RESEARCH METHOD

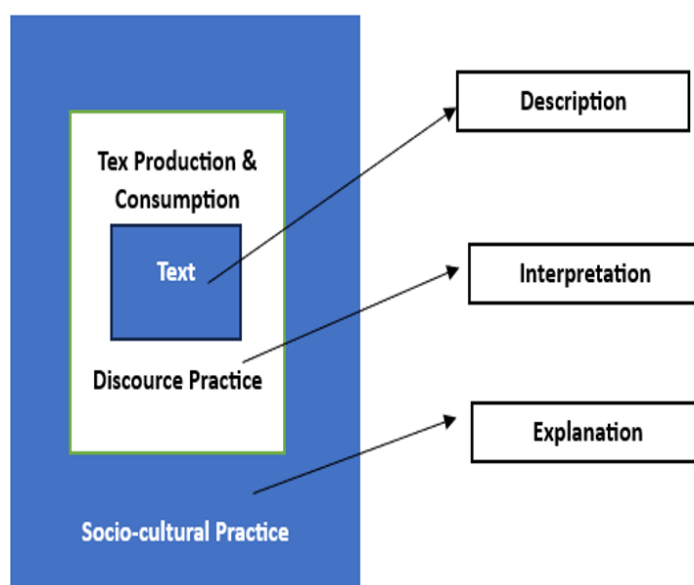
The discourse analysis method was used to interpret ideas (Larsson, 2023), signs, representations, and forms of domination contained in communication texts (Yang et al., 2022). This analysis was a critical endeavor in the field of language production and speech (discourse) (Napitupulu, 2025), as well as writing, and examining the method as a practical form of power in the social system.

The dissertation was viewed as a manifestation of the power of certain groups over others. This manifestation showed intergroup domination through the use of a sign system, comprising verbal and visual (Restianty et al., 2024), and audiovisual language. Moreover, language contained patterns of power practices that showed ideology through the signs embedded in it as a social practice and a form of ideological manifestation (Lev-On, 2023). These patterns of power production showed domination, marginalized and dominant social classes, the perpetuation of power and ideology (Mohamadpour et al., 2024), as well as the relationship between texts and the surrounding social context (Cheng et al., 2023). The language examined in this research was the audiovisual presented in the cinematic narrative.

Based on the description above, the discourse analysis used in this research was

Fairclough's evaluation. The analysis consisted of three levels, namely text, production, and social context.

Discourse analysis, as shown in Figure 1, referred to text, praxis, and sociocultural discourse. Text was interpreted as a process of representing power from dominant groups to subordinate groups. It became a realist empirical form and served as the most critical representation in the order of discourse (Batrancea et al., 2024). Text was realized as the most persuasive tool of power (Tan & Yu, 2024), representing the relationship among representation, relation, and identity (Patki et al., 2024). This discourse also referred to the way the consumption system of texts produced as a tool of power was manifested through experience, knowledge, production habits, themes, environment, conditions, and relationships with objects in the film production system.



Source: Discourse Analysis, Fairclough, 2023

Figure 1 Film Discourse Analysis

Table 1 Unit Analysis Film/Cine-finders

Data Primary & Analytical Level	Unit of Analysis & Number of Units	Criteria for Scene Selection
Camera shot and cinematography Textual level Analysis	Scene and Visual sequences 18 selected scenes	Scenes containing low-angle shots, character interactions, visual emphasis on authority, gender relations.
Visual Object and film properties Context/ Praxis	Production element (Setting, costume, dialogue, props, narrative structure) 12 production elements	Relationships, identity, memory, and social roles
Social and cultural representations Social level	Social system, cultural values, and film setting 8 thematic categories	Representations related to Javanese cultural values, patriarchy, gender, and social norms

Source: Research method, 2024

The units of analysis in Table 1 were selected purposively based on relevance to the research objective, namely the identification of patriarchal discourse and the representation of social relations in *You and Me in Low Angle*. A total of 18 major scenes were selected because the scenes contained significant visual and narrative moments associated with family relationships, authority, memory, and gender positioning. At the textual level, the analysis focused on camera angles, framing, dialogue, facial expressions, and visual composition to identify meanings embedded in the filmic text.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A significant result in *You and Me in Low Angle* was the consistent use of low-angle cinematography as a visual discourse that shaped the understanding of power, identity, and gender relations of the audience. Film research traditionally associated low-angle shots

with authority, dominance, and symbolism. However, Riri Riza reinterpreted this cinematic convention through the character of Leila, a young woman searching for traces of an absent father and simultaneously constructing her identity. Rather than simply portraying male authority, the low-angle perspective became the way of seeing and interpreting the world by Leila. The analysis showed that cinematography functioned as a technical device and discursive strategy where power relations were negotiated and redefined.

Cinema had historically positioned women as objects of visual pleasure in a patriarchal gaze from the perspective of Feminist Film Theory, particularly the work of Laura Mulvey. Consequently, Leila was presented as an active subject who controlled the narrative perspective. The repeated low-angle shots inspired viewers to experience events through the perspective of Leila rather than through a male point of view.

As a result, the film challenged conventional patriarchal representations by granting epistemological authority to a female character. Patriarchal discourse remained present through the narrative absence of the father, whose influence continued to shape the emotional journey of Leila. The father functioned as a symbolic center of authority despite physical absence, showing how patriarchal power often operated through memory, expectation, and cultural norms rather than direct domination.

A significant scene appeared in the early section of *You and Me in Low Angle* (approximately minutes 02:10–02:45), when Leila observed the Plengkung Gading (Ivory Arch) from a low-angle perspective. At the textual level, the camera was positioned below eye level, prioritizing the monumental structure of the gate and directing the gaze of the viewer upward. In film research, low-angle cinematography traditionally signified power, authority, and dominance. The visual

composition transformed the arch into more than a historical landmark. The arch became a symbolic representation of social structures that continued to shape contemporary life. As Leila gazed upward, the audience was invited to experience the perspective of Leila, forming a relationship between personal memory and broader cultural meanings embedded in the urban landscape of Yogyakarta.

The Plengkung Gading conveyed historical associations with the Javanese palace tradition and the hierarchical social order that characterized Javanese society from a cultural perspective, as shown in Table 2. The gate symbolized continuity between the past and the present, reflecting values of respect, authority, and social stratification. In Javanese culture, hierarchy was often maintained through symbolic spaces, architecture, and daily social interactions. The low-angle framing reinforced the cultural significance by visually elevating the structure above the individual. The result

Table 2 Plengkung Gading

Unit analysis	Level
Camera shot and Textual	 OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza
Scene and Visual sequences	Scene 1 (02:10 – 02:45)
Criteria for Scene Selection	Symbolic power within patriarchal culture

Source: Channel YouTube Oppo Indonesia, 2021

showed that the film did not document a cultural object but used the object as a discourse sign, communicating the persistence of traditional power relations. Through the representation, the film showed how cultural heritage could function as a mechanism through which social values were preserved and normalized across generations.

Based on the description above, the scene became more complex through the inclusion of murals representing women on the surrounding walls. The visual elements formed a contrast between the monumental gate and the female images occupying public space. The murals could be interpreted as signs of how women were frequently positioned as visual objects in public culture from the perspective of Feminist Film Theory, particularly discussions of representation and the gaze (Arnold et al., 2025). Although the women were visibly present, the representation remained passive, decorative, and disconnected from positions of authority. The result reflected patriarchal discourse in which female visibility did not necessarily translate into social power. Relatively, women became symbols to be viewed, while authority continued to be associated with masculine institutions and historical structures represented by the gate (Do, 2025). The association between the powerful architectural form and the decorative female imagery showed the unequal distribution of symbolic power in patriarchal culture.

This research interpreted the use of low-

angle cinematography in the scene as a deliberate visual strategy that showed the operation of patriarchal hegemony. Interpreted through the concept of hegemony by Gramsci, the gate functioned as a cultural symbol that naturalized authority and social hierarchy, presenting both as legitimate and unquestionable. Similarly, the film subtly challenged the discourse by positioning Leila as the active observer rather than the observed object. Through the perspective of Leila, viewers were inspired to question the reason symbols of authority remained associated with masculine historical power while women continued to occupy marginal representational spaces. The low angle shot served a dual function by reproducing the visual language of authority that was characteristic of cinema and simultaneously showing gendered inequalities embedded in cultural memory as well as public space.

Another discourse sign identified in *You and Me in Low Angle* was represented through the visual presence of the kebaya, which appeared in several scenes, including the work of Leila as a costume stylist (approximately minutes 04:20–05:30). Through the recurring use of low-angle cinematography, the film elevated the visual significance of the kebaya outside the function of traditional clothing. At the textual level, the camera often framed the garment from below, prioritizing the details, texture, and symbolic presence in the narrative. In film research, costume was an aesthetic element and also an important sign system that

communicated identity, social position, cultural values, and ideological meanings (Baqir et al., 2025). Therefore, the kebaya operated as a discourse sign that connected the personal identity of women with broader cultural narratives concerning femininity, tradition, and social change.

The kebaya had historically been associated with ideals of womanhood, including grace, modesty, refinement, and social responsibility in Javanese culture, as shown in Table 3. As a cultural symbol, the kebaya represented the visibility of women in both domestic and public spheres. However, the visibility was often shaped by patriarchal expectations that defined how women should behave, dress, and interact in society. From the perspective of patriarchal theory, the kebaya could be interpreted as a cultural mechanism through which gender norms were reproduced across generations. The garment symbolized an idealized femininity

that was respected and simultaneously regulated by social expectations. The film acknowledged the historical context and presented the kebaya as a living cultural symbol rather than a static representation of female subordination. Consequently, the garment became a site where traditional gender values were both preserved and renegotiated.

Riri Riza positioned Leila not as a passive wearer of cultural identity but as an active interpreter of cultural identity. Through the profession of Leila as a costume stylist, creative agency was exercised over the meanings attached to the kebaya. The low-angle perspective reinforced the agency by visually elevating both Leila and the garment, transforming both into symbols of authority rather than objects of passive observation. As a result, the film challenged conventional cinematic representations in which traditional female attire was often associated with domesticity

Table 3 Kebaya

Unit analysis	Level
Camera shot and Textual	 OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza
Scene and Visual sequences	Scene 3 (minute 04:20–05:30)
Criteria for Scene Selection	Visibility of women within both domestic and public spheres.

Source: Channel YouTube Oppo Indonesia, 2021

or submission. Relatively, the kebaya became a medium through which women negotiated identity, professional competence, and cultural belonging.

The kebaya represented an arena of ideological struggle between dominant patriarchal values and developing forms of female empowerment from the perspective of the theory of cultural hegemony by Gramsci. Hegemony operated when cultural norms were accepted as natural and unquestionable. Historically, the meaning of the kebaya had often been shaped by male-dominated interpretations of roles of women in society. However, the film reshaped the symbol through the perspective of Leila, showing that cultural traditions could become resources for resistance rather than instruments of control. The analysis showed that low-angle cinematography played a crucial role in the reinterpretation. By visually magnifying the kebaya, the film transformed the garment into a symbol of dignity, resilience, and social agency (Khougar et al., 2024). Rather than portraying women as subordinate to masculine authority, the camera showed that women possessed the capacity to redefine cultural meanings while remaining connected to cultural heritage.

The third discourse sign in *You and Me in Low Angle* was represented through the image of a candle, which appeared in a low-angle composition during the reflective journey of Leila (approximately minutes 06:00–06:40). At the textual level, the candle functioned

as a symbolic object associated with hope, continuity, memory, and the future. The low-angle camera position magnified the presence of the candle, transforming an ordinary object into a visual metaphor for the aspirations and responsibilities of women toward future generations. In film research, symbolic objects frequently operated as narrative devices that communicated abstract ideas through visual language. Therefore, the candle represented an imagined future constructed through the experiences of women, particularly the role of women in nurturing, educating, and sustaining social life. The flame signified continuity between generations, connecting the identities of women with the future development of children in an increasingly technological society.

Considering the perspective of patriarchal theory in Table 4, the candle showed an important contradiction in the social construction of femininity. Women were often entrusted with the responsibility of raising children and maintaining family continuity. However, the contributions of women were frequently confined to the domestic sphere and undervalued within public life. Patriarchal systems celebrated women as caregivers and simultaneously limiting the participation of women in decision-making structures, political institutions, and positions of authority (Lu & Zhou, 2024). As a result, the candle was a symbol of both recognition and restriction. The candle recognized women as guardians of the future and exposed the unequal distribution of

Table 4 Image of candle and Leila

Unit analysis	Level
Camera shot and Textual	 OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza  OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza
Scene and Visual sequences	Scene 4 minute 06:00–06:40) Scene 3 (minute 05:20–05:30)
Criteria for Scene Selection	Particularly their role in nurturing, educating, and sustaining social life. Intersecting forms of domination that affect women's identity formation.

Source: Channel YouTube Oppo Indonesia, 2021

power that characterized patriarchal culture. The result showed that women were expected to explain the path for future generations but were rarely granted equal opportunities to shape the broader social and political environment in which prospective groups would live.

The discourse became more complex when examined through Feminist Film Theory. Rather than portraying women as passive objects of care, the film presented Leila as an active subject who reflected on identity, memory, and future possibilities. The low-angle cinematography

was significant because the cinematography elevated the symbolic value of both the candle and the perspective of Leila. Rather than being observed through a male gaze, Leila became the observer who interpreted the meaning of the surroundings. The visual strategy challenged conventional cinematic representations that associated women primarily with emotional dependence and domesticity.

The fourth discourse sign was embodied in Leila as an independent career woman navigating multiple cultural spaces in

Yogyakarta. Throughout the film, low-angle shots frequently framed the movement of Leila through environments influenced by Javanese, European, and Chinese cultural traditions. The analysis interpreted the visual strategy as a representation of intersecting forms of domination that affected the identity formation of women.

Leila occupied the public sphere as a professional costume stylist in Table 4 (scene 3) and remained emotionally vulnerable due to unresolved family relationships and the symbolic absence of the father. Considering the concept of cultural hegemony proposed by Gramsci, the film showed how patriarchal values continued to shape perceptions of the worth of women even when women achieved professional independence. Male characters, including artists, workers, and symbolic father figures, continued to occupy positions of authority and legitimacy in the public sphere. However, the film did not portray Leila as defeated by the structures. The search for identity became a counter-hegemonic journey through which Leila negotiated cultural expectations and redefined the position of Leila in society (Hegarty, 2025). Through low-angle cinematography, Riri Riza transformed the subject from a figure constrained by patriarchal discourse into a subject capable of questioning, resisting, and reconstructing the meanings imposed upon Javanese women in contemporary Indonesian culture.

The fifth discourse sign identified in *You*

and *Me in Low Angle* was represented through a series of low-angle shots that connected cultural symbols, technological objects, and social spaces to broader structures of power and hegemony. Appearing throughout the middle and final sections of the film (approximately minutes 07:00–09:00), the visual was shaped by Javanese traditions, global popular culture, and contemporary digital technology. At the textual level, low-angle cinematography elevated everyday objects such as batik-patterned kebaya, urban visual culture, photographs, smartphones, and digital media platforms. In film research, objects were decorative elements and signs that communicated ideological meanings.

Considering the perspective of patriarchal theory in Table 5 (scene 6), the cultural symbols showed how power was reproduced through different ideological formations. Javanese patriarchal traditions prioritized social hierarchy, family authority, and gendered expectations regarding the behavior of women. Similarly, European-influenced modernity and contemporary consumer culture introduced new standards of femininity, beauty, and professional success. Chinese commercial culture, which had historically shaped the economic and social landscape of Yogyakarta, added another dimension to daily social interactions. Rather than functioning independently, the cultural forces intersected to create complex expectations regarding the role of women. The film showed that women were positioned in overlapping systems of domination where

5 Connect cultural symbols and painting

Unit analysis	Level
Camera shot and Textual	 OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza  OPPO Cinefinders You and Me In Low Angle by Riri Riza
Scene and Visual sequences	Scene 6 minute 07:00–09:00) Scene 7 minute 09:10–09:50)
Criteria for Scene Selection	The combination of traditional and modern symbols. Leila’s ongoing search for identity within a social environment structured by patriarchal expectations.

Source: Channel YouTube Oppo Indonesia, 2021

traditional obedience, modern attractiveness, and economic productivity were simultaneously demanded. The low-angle perspective showed the structures by visually prioritizing the cultural signs that shaped the understanding of Leila regarding personal position in society.

Hegemony operated when dominant values became accepted as common sense and were reproduced through cultural institutions rather than direct coercion. In the film, batik kebaya, popular media imagery, and digital technology functioned as hegemonic tools

that circulated ideas about gender, identity, and social legitimacy. Following the idea of discussion, the signs also became resources for resistance. This research argued that the epistemological dimension of the film was visible in the effort to interpret and question the meanings attached to the cultural symbols. The axiological dimension appeared through the search of Leila for values that allowed the subject to negotiate a position between tradition and modernity (Arendt, 2023). Meanwhile, the ontological dimension was reflected in the

continuity of the experiences of women across generations, regardless of the contributions of women often being marginalized or treated as secondary in dominant historical narratives. The film presented culture as a contested space where patriarchal ideology was continuously reproduced and challenged.

The most important aspect of the result was in the relationship between gaze and representation from the perspective of Feminist Film Theory. The narrative was constructed through the experiences of Leila, and several visual signs showed how women continued to be interpreted through masculine frameworks. The low-angle frame formed an interesting tension, where the frame empowered Leila by granting visual authority to Leila as the central observer. Additionally, the frame exposed the persistence of a male-centered worldview that defined women as complements rather than equal social actors. Considering feminist critiques of the male gaze, this research interpreted the film as a negotiation between patriarchal representation and female subjectivity. Through visual language, *You and Me in Low Angle* showed that women were passive recipients of cultural meanings and active interpreters capable of questioning, resisting, and reconstructing the ideological structures shaping the lives of women.

The sixth discourse sign in the film was represented through a painting (table 5 scene 7) showing a woman riding a motorcycle, observed from the perspective of Leila

through a low-angle camera composition (approximately minutes 09:10–09:50). At the textual level, the painting functioned as an iconic and connotative sign that communicated ideas about movement, independence, and transformation. In semiotic terms, the image was iconic because it directly resembled a woman engaged in purposeful action, while the connotative meaning extended beyond literal representation to symbolize female agency and self-determination. The low-angle framing improved the visual significance of the painting, enabling the painting to appear powerful and aspirational. In film research, these visual compositions often elevated symbolic objects into ideological statements. Consequently, the painting became more than an artistic element in the setting, it operated as a discourse sign that reflected the ongoing search for identity in a social environment structured by patriarchal expectations.

The image of a woman riding a motorcycle challenged conventional assumptions regarding gender roles in Javanese society from the perspective of patriarchal theory. Patriarchal culture had historically associated women with domestic responsibilities, emotional labor, and dependence on male authority. Consequently, mobility, autonomy, and public visibility were frequently connected to masculine identities, and the motorcycle symbolized a departure from traditional restrictions. The analysis interpreted the image as representing the idea that becoming a woman was a biological

condition. Additionally. Becoming a woman was also a social position that was continuously negotiated and contested. The visual sign showed that female identity was actively constructed through education, experience, self-awareness, and participation in public life. In this process, the film portrayed womanhood as a process of becoming rather than a fixed cultural category.

The painting placed the female figure at the center of the visual field, disrupting traditional cinematic conventions in which women often occupied peripheral or decorative positions. This research observed that the placement of the woman in the composition created a symbolic Nirmala space, a conceptual space of possibility and transformation where women became agents of change. Rather than being defined by relationships with men, the female figure occupied the frame independently, embodying autonomy and personal agency. The low-angle perspective reinforced the interpretation by granting visual authority to the image, inspiring audiences to perceive women as actors capable of shaping social reality rather than responding to social reality. The significance of the discourse sign could also be understood through the concept of cultural hegemony proposed by Gramsci (Ribas, 2025). Patriarchal ideology maintained the influence of patriarchal ideology by presenting traditional gender roles as natural and unquestionable. However, the painting introduced a counter-hegemonic narrative that challenged the assumptions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of the six low-angle discourse signs in *You and Me in Low Angle* showed that the advertising film directed by Riri Riza functioned as more than a promotional narrative. The advertising film operated as a cultural text that negotiated patriarchal ideology, female identity, and social change in contemporary Javanese society. The results showed that patriarchal values were expressed through multiple symbolic forms, including historical architecture, traditional clothing, family memories, technological objects, and artistic representations. The Plengkung Gading signified the persistence of authority and social hierarchy, while the kebaya reflected the ongoing negotiation between tradition and the agency of women. The candle symbolized the responsibility of women for social continuity and future generations. Meanwhile, the character of Leila embodied the challenges faced by women navigating intersecting cultural influences and male-dominated social spaces. The network of cultural and technological signs showed how patriarchal ideology was reproduced through daily practices, and the painting of a woman riding a motorcycle offered a counter-hegemonic vision of autonomy and self-determination.

The results provided answers to the central questions guiding this research. First, patriarchal discourse was represented through male figures and family structures, cultural symbols, as well as social expectations that continued to shape the identities of women. Second, the representation

of women in the film surpassed domestic and emotional roles. Through the perspective of Leila, women were portrayed as active subjects who interpreted, negotiated, and challenged dominant gender norms.

Acknowledgement: FKDK Universitas Budi Luhur, Jakarta. DRPM Universitas Budi Luhur, Jakarta. Riri Riza (film director)

Author Contribution: Conceptualization, A.T., N.G.A.K.K., and J.M.; Methodology, A.T., J.M., and R.W.P; Formal Analysis, A.T., and J.M.; Investigation, A.T. and J.A; Writing-original draft preparation, A.T. N.G.A.K.K.; writing-editing and review, A.T., N.G.A.K.K. and R. W. P; Project administration, J.A., J.M.

AI declaration: The authors hereby declare that no Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were utilized in the preparation, writing, analysis, or editing of this manuscript,” and confirm that no AI tools were used at any stage prior to publication.

Ethical clearance: Ethical approval for this study: Letter of Consent to the Usage of Personal/Group Digital Data; Riri Riza (Film Director) 25/20/2024

Data availability statement: if the data is not available publicly, the author can write: “The data is available by request to the author”

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.”

Funding: FKDK/DRPM Universitas Budi Luhur, Jakarta: S/UBL/FKDK/000/292/10/24

REFERENCES

- Anwar, R. K., Mu'yidarrak, A. A., & Winoto, Y. (2025). Trends and structures in film criticism research: A bibliometric review of scientific literature. *ProTVF*, 9(2), 170–190. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v9i2.59077>
- Arendt, F. (2023). The media and democratization: A long-term macro-level perspective on the role of the press during a democratic transition. *Political Communication*, 41(1), 26–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2023.2238652>
- Arnesson, J. (2023). Influencers as ideological intermediaries: Promotional politics and authenticity labour in influencer collaborations. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(3), 528–544. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437221117505>
- Arnold, S., O'Brien, A., Kaminskaitė-Jančorienė, L., & Šalaj, J. (2025). “I never thought about how much of a juggle it would be”: Motherhood and work in contemporary Lithuanian and Irish creative industries. *Feminist Media Studies*, 25(5), 1245–1261. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2359494>
- Baqir, A., Chen, Y., Diaz-Diaz, F., Kiyak, S., Louf, T., Morini, V., Pansanella, V., Torricelli, M., & Galeazzi, A. (2025). Unveiling the drivers of active participation in social media discourse. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 4906. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-88117-x>
- Batrancea, L. M., Balci, M. A., Akgüller, Ö., & Nichita, A. (2024). The impact of social media discourse on financial performance of e-commerce companies listed on Borsa Istanbul. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1411. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03894-6>
- Benson-Allott, C. (2023). Greta Gerwig's Girlhood Trilogy. *Film Quarterly*, 77(2), 67–72. <https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2023.77.2.67>
- Bossetta, M., Segesten, A. D., & Bonacci, D. (2023). Reconceptualizing Cross-Cutting Political Expression on Social Media: A Case Study of Facebook Comments During the 2016 Brexit Referendum. *Political Communication*, 40(6), 719–741. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2023.2222370>
- Bull, A. (2024). Complacency and misogyny, or positive changes that add up to a movement? How the UK screen industries are addressing sexual harassment in the workplace. *Feminist Media Studies*, 25(2), 495–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2356538>
- Cheng, L., Xu, M., & Ma, G. (2023). Tempo-

- spatial construction in human-law-society triangle from the perspective of cognitive semiotics. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 851. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02374-7>
- Chukwuma, E. C., Afolabi, O. O. D., Okonkwo, C. C., Olamigoke, O. O., & Okonkwo, C. E. (2024). Application of geospatial technology and decision model in the development of improved food security index. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 30204. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-77845-1>
- Do, S. N. (2025). This Barbie has melancholy feminism: Framing empowerment and grievable lives. *Feminist Media Studies*, 25(3), 799–805. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2372016>
- Haugsgjerd, A., Karlsen, R., & Steen-Johnsen, K. (2023). Uninformed or misinformed in the digital news environment? How social media news use affects two dimensions of political knowledge. *Political Communication*, 40(6), 700–718. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2023.2222070>
- Hegarty, A. Q. (2025). Gendered framing and representation of women in Irish political television programming during the 2020 formation of the government of Ireland. *Feminist Media Studies*, 25(4), 898–916. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2024.2328077>
- Heřmanová, M. (2023). Authentic cult: media representations of cultural consumption and legitimization of cultural hierarchies. *Media, Culture & Society*, 46(3), 518–533. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231203880>
- Jermyn, D., & R. Weber, B. (2025). Desperately seeking satisfaction: Hotel sex and the (older) single girl in Good Luck to You , Leo Grande (2022). *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 23(1), 6–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400309.2025.2467094>
- Keller, K. O., Guyt, J. Y., & Grewal, R. (2023). Soda taxes and marketing conduct. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 61(3), 393–410. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222437231195551>
- Khougar, A., Ahadi, P., & Ahadi, M. (2024). A critical feminist study of mothers raising a child on the autism spectrum in Iran. *Npj Women's Health*, 2(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44294-024-00025-z>
- Kubler, K. (2023). Sellers, shifters, sharers & science communicators: The initial beliefs and positions of fitness influencers and creators on Instagram. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(6), 1119–1134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231155576>
- Larsson, A. O. (2023). The rise of Instagram as a tool for political communication: A longitudinal study of European political parties and their followers. *New Media & Society*, 25(10), 2744–2762. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211034158>
- Lev-On, A. (2023). Making sense of murder: Characterizing stories in social media groups. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(8), 1708–1719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231202151>
- Lu, Y., & Zhou, T. (2024). A critical discourse analysis of Chinese diplomatic speeches on China-US relations. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1674. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-04193-w>
- Marghitu, S., & Smyth, S. L. (2024). Roundtable on women's authorship and adaptation in contemporary television. *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 22(1), 416–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400309.2023.2263691>
- Michael, K., & Ahlborg, H. (2024). A conceptual analysis of gendered energy care work and epistemic injustice through a case study of Zanzibar's Solar Mamas. *Nature Energy*, 9(8), 947–954. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41560-024-01539-1>
- Mohamadpour, F., Askarian, A., & Askarian, M. (2024). Picture analysis of billboards and infographic graphics advertising COVID-19 on promoting preventive behaviors and taking vaccination against the Coronavirus disease pandemic. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 6310. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-56758-z>
- Mwangi, V. N., Cocker, H. L., & Piacentini, M. G. (2024). Stakeholder perspectives

- on fairness in the marketplace: Empirical evidence from the Kenyan alcohol market. *Marketing Theory*, 24(4), 643–662. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14705931231207684>
- Napitupulu, F. (2025). Film as an emancipation project and alternative justice communicative action in Indonesia. *ProTVF*, 9(2), 191–207. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v9i2.57326>
- Neiger, M., Meyers, O., & Ben-David, A. (2023). Tweeting the Holocaust: Social media discourse between reverence, exploitation, and simulacra. *Journal of Communication*, 73(3), 222–234. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqad010>
- Page, J. C., Atkinson, S., & Graham, C. (2023). Using the story completion method to explore Australian parent and child responses to online risk. *New Media and Society*.
- Patki, S. M., Gandhi, P., Walawalkar, A. P., & Goyal, A. A. (2024). Perceived social support, self-esteem, and depression among Indian trans men with and without sex reassignment surgery. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 772. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03270-4>
- Poorghorban, Y. (2025). “The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name”: Gorrie and Osborne adapting The Picture of Dorian Gray (1976). *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10509208.2025.2480405>
- Proust, V. (2023). By sharing our loss, we fight: Collective expressions of grief in the digital age. *Media, Culture & Society*, 46(2), 393–403. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437231207760>
- Puorideme, D., & Diedong, A. L. (2023). A socio-cultural discourse study of cultural-political elites’ stances on LGBTI+ identities and practices in Ghana. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 772. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02309-2>
- Puspitasari, L., Bajari, A., Hidayat, D. R., & Cho, S. K. (2024). Regional film in the dynamics of the national film industry. *ProTVF*, 8(2), 116–132. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v8i2.54275>
- Restianty, A., Khang, N. T., & Mahameruaji, J. N. (2024). The intersection of film, teaching, and inclusive education. *ProTVF*, 8(2), 217–235. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v8i2.55183>
- Ribas, D. (2025). Home, family, and violence: The films of João Canijo. *Studies in European Cinema*, 22(2), 143–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17411548.2024.2358674>
- Santori, P. (2023). Careocracy or isocracy? A feminist alternative to the neoliberal meritocratic discourse. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 515. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02029-7>
- Smith, M. (2025). Precarity, Liminality, mobility: Childhood in the cinema of the Dardenne Brothers. *Studies in European Cinema*, 22(2), 128–142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17411548.2024.2333130>
- Tan, H., & Yu, Y. (2024). A study on identification of youth identity through a gender lens in network buzzwords: A critical discourse analysis. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 130(11). <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-024-02618-0>
- Timilsina, R. R., Joshi, H. P., & Rahut, D. B. (2025). Enhancing food and nutrition security in Himalayan foothills with neglected and underutilized millets. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 3182. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-85090-9>
- Toni, A. (2025). A Semiotic Analysis of Marketing Communication in Advertising Film: The Case of Riri Riza’s Work for OPPO Indonesia. *Studies in Media and Communication*, 13(2), 306. <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v13i2.7507>
- Walsh, J. P. (2023). Digital nativism: Twitter, migration discourse and the 2019 election. *New Media & Society*, 25(10), 2618–2643. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211032980>
- Wang, J., & Tong, M. (2025). Shanxi province food security evaluation research. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 897. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-85090-9>

- org/10.1038/s41598-024-84725-1
- Wei, A.-N. (2025). Portrayals of the Shero: A critical discourse analysis on the representation of Wonder Woman and Captain Marvel. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 34(6), 821–832. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2024.2360499>
- Yang, Y., Cao, J., Wen, Y., & Zhang, P. (2022). Multiturn dialogue generation by modeling sentence-level and discourse-level contexts. *Scientific Reports*, 12(1), 20349. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-24787-1>
- Zunaidi, A., Fadhilah, C. T., & Gumay, E. A. Z. (2024). Princes and Warrior: A comparatives study of Snow White’s characterization in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs storybook with and the Hunt Man film. *E-Journal of Cultural Studies*, 17(3), 35. <https://doi.org/10.24843/cs.2024.v17.i03.p03>