

Unveiling the Meaning of the Film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*: A Critical Discourse Analysis Approach"

Ita Rosvita^{a,1,*}, Nurfaedah^{b,2}, Bungatang^{c,3}, Ilma Rahim^{d,4}, Yusniati N. Sabata^{e,5},

^{a,c,d} Universitas Negeri Makassar, Jl. Daeng Tata Raya Makassar and 90224, Indonesia

^b Universitas Handayani Makassar, Jl. Adhiyaksa Baru No.1, Makassar and 90231, Indonesia

^e Universitas Muhammadiyah Luwuk, Jl. KH. Ahmad Dahlan No. 79/III Luwuk, Luwuk and 94711, Indonesia

¹ ita.rosvita@unm.ac.id*; ² nurfaedah@handayani.ac.id; ³ bungatang@unm.ac.id; ⁴ ilma.rahim@unm.ac.id; ⁵ yusniati.n.sabata@gmail.com;

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe how the media represents the social conditions of the Bugis-Makassar ethnic community in South Sulawesi in the film *Uang Panaik*. This research uses a qualitative method with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), employing the Social Cognitive Approach by Teun A. Van Dijk. Teun A. Van Dijk's discourse theory consists of three categories: text, social cognition, and social context. The content of the text focuses on the screenplay of the film. Social cognition discusses the outcomes of the events depicted in the film. Afterward, it refers to the social context by illustrating the values of the society. The results of the study show that the critical discourse analysis of the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L* in terms of the text category includes macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure. The social cognition category includes the creation of characters, language, and story conflicts. The social context category includes the representation of social phenomena, moral messages, and religious messages in the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*.

I. Introduction

The development of technology has had a significant impact on the social life of society. One of the biggest changes that has occurred is the ease of information dissemination through various media. Amidst the rapid flow of information, film has emerged as one of the most popular cultural forms. As a powerful visual medium, film offers society the opportunity to reflect on themselves by presenting depictions of reality that can introduce and shape their understanding of their lives.

Film, as a form of art that combines various visual, audio, and narrative elements, has the potential to convey deep messages and meanings to its audience. In addition to being a source of entertainment, films are also often used as a medium to convey ideologies, social values, and cultural norms that exist within society. This is especially evident in films that take on themes of social, political, and economic life, where films can portray social realities while simultaneously shaping the audience's perceptions of those issues. Film is not merely an art form or entertainment that stands alone but is a cultural product connected to a larger social structure. The text in a film, which is part of the narrative conveyed, does not emerge without context but is shaped through discursive practices and social discourse occurring in society [1]. As a communication medium, film delivers various messages—whether social, moral, or religious—to its audience. One of the strengths of film, whether shown on television or in theaters, is its ability to present a secondary reality of human life. The stories portrayed in films can show a version of life that is more beautiful than reality, or conversely, worse than the actual condition[2].

Film can reflect the culture of a nation and also impact that culture. Film functions as a historical or cultural process of a society, depicted through moving images. Through film, society can observe

in real-time the events that occur in a particular society at a specific moment. Film may also play an informative, educational, or even persuasive role. Film is one of the main factors that can shape stereotypes about a particular culture. A film can revive forgotten cultural values or even provide society with an understanding of the existence of a culture that was previously unrecognized or unknown. Film also has great potential as a propaganda tool because of its ability to reach a wide audience quickly. Unlike other media, film elements have greater appeal because they can combine entertainment with the delivery of a strong message. Film can effectively manipulate visible reality, conveying messages through images and sound without losing credibility, and can even enhance the authenticity of the message through the photographic techniques used[3].

One of the films that is interesting to analyze is *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*, a work that not only raises the theme of economics but also reflects the relationship between money, power, and traditional values in society. This film portrays the social dynamics occurring in a society divided between tradition and modernity, and how money becomes a tool with great power in determining the fate of individuals and groups.

In Bugis culture, prior to the wedding ceremony, several customary processes must be carried out. These include certain requirements and obligations that the prospective groom must fulfill, one of which is the giving of '*uang panaik*' (panaik money) as a gesture of respect toward the prospective bride. "As the Bugis people uphold certain core values—one of which is self-respect and dignity, known as *siri*'—the amount of *uang panaik* (bridewealth) is determined by several factors, including the physical appearance of the prospective bride, the social status of her family, and her level of education. The amount is typically estimated and set by the bride's family. In some cases, the high cost of *uang panaik* has led prospective grooms to cancel or withdraw from marrying the woman they love due to their inability to fulfill this traditional obligation (Nurul, 2017)[4].

The traditional marriage proposal process of the Bugis-Makassar people consists of several stages, one of which is called "*uang panaik*," referring to the amount of money that the prospective groom prepares to give to the woman he intends to marry. The custom of presenting *uang panaik* symbolizes the seriousness of a man in proposing to his chosen bride. *Uang Panaik* is a long-standing tradition that must be fulfilled. After this, the families of the bride and groom may continue their discussions regarding the marriage [5]. The tradition of giving money in Bugis society is a heritage passed down from ancestors that must be preserved. The *Uang Panai* tradition is an inseparable part of Bugis weddings, as a marriage will not take place without it [6].

The approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) allows researchers to explore hidden meanings within the film, which may not be immediately apparent on the surface of the narrative. By using critical theories, such as theories of hegemony, ideology, and representation, this analysis focuses on how the language, symbols, and narrative structure in the film shape and reflect a particular worldview. In this context, the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L* can be seen as a cultural text that not only depicts reality but also suggests how the interpretation of money and power can influence society.

Linguistically, discourse is understood as a complete unit of language that is communicated either orally or in writing, characterized by cohesion, coherence, integration, and representing the results of social interaction in a way that makes sense to the reader [7]. According to Wododo and Muhamad (2021), the highest level of language structure, larger than a sentence, is called discourse. Discourse can take the form of a long sentence consisting of multiple sentences, but it can also take the form of a single meaningful sentence with context. There is a strong relationship between discourse and the surrounding context [8].

Analysis involves examining the activities of an object by detailing its composition and reconstructing its parts for thorough study or examination [9]. Noor, as cited in Widodo and Muhamad, explains that analysis is an investigation of an event (such as writing, actions, etc.) to understand its true nature, causes, facts, and so on [7].

Discourse analysis is a method of critical analysis of a discourse, allowing this analysis to be applied in the field of education[10]. Discourse analysis and its understanding require context as a tool for analysis. Discourse has a text structure that is interconnected and marked by the presence of context. The existence of context indicates that a discourse contains complete and comprehensive linguistic elements [11].

Through the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis, this study aims to uncover deeper meanings in the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*, both explicit and implicit, as well as to understand how the film can influence the audience's perspective on social, cultural, and economic issues. This

research is also expected to contribute to the development of film and media studies, particularly in the context of Indonesian society, and to enrich critical discourse in cultural studies.

II. Method

This study uses a qualitative methodology with a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, based on the Socio Cognitive Approach by Teun A. Van Dijk. In Van Dijk's theory, discourse is divided into three categories: text, social cognition, and social context. From the perspective of text, this research focuses on the content of the film's script, while from the perspective of social cognition, the researcher analyzes how events in the film *Uang Panaik* are interpreted. Furthermore, in the social context, this study assesses how the film was produced and how it reflects the social values present in society, as well as how these values serve as a reference for the screenwriter.

In a film, the text refers to the story constructed through each scene conveyed by the actors. Discourse analysis from a social cognition perspective focuses on understanding the process of text or story production. In addition to analyzing the text itself, the researcher also examines how the text is formed. The process of text formation not only refers to the creation of the text itself but also to how the information used in the writing is selected and organized in a particular discourse. Therefore, to understand the events conveyed by the communicator, it is essential to conduct a social cognition analysis to explore the communicator's mental structure in responding to the events they create. Discourse analysis from a social context perspective is concerned with how discourse develops within society. Thus, intertextual analysis is necessary to examine how a text is produced and constructed in society.

In this study, the data used consists of primary and secondary data. The primary data includes the VCD recording of the *Uang Panaik* film itself. This data was collected through in-depth viewing of the film, taking notes on symbols, dialogues, and significant scenes deemed relevant for analysis. This study focuses on understanding the meanings contained in each text element within the film. The secondary data includes references from books and scholarly articles discussing Critical Discourse Analysis theory, as well as writings related to the social and cultural context present in the film.

III. Results and Discussion

This study aims to unveil the meanings contained in the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L* using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach according to Teun A. Van Dijk. Through analysis focused on three main dimensions—text, social cognition, and social context—this research successfully identifies several key themes that reflect the ideology, social values, and meanings intended to be conveyed by the filmmakers. The following are the results and discussion of this study:

A. Text Analysis: Film *Uang Panaik*

Macro Structure

Theme

The theme addressed in the film *Uang Panaik* is romance. The film tells the love story of Ancha and Risna, both of whom come from the Bugis-Makassar ethnic group. The data from this study can be seen in the following conversation:

- Risma : “Kenapa saya nda’ bisa buka perasaanku’ untuk orang lain.”
“Saya tauji qt pergi kejar mimpita, tapi apakah saya bukan sebagian dari mimpi ta? (“Why can't I open my feelings for others?” “I know you're chasing your dreams, but am I not a part of your dreams?”) ”
- Ancha : “Kita’mi, kita’mi mimpi yang selama ini saya kejar” (“You are the dream that I have been pursuing all this time.”)

Through the film *Uang Panaik*, which explores the theme of romance, Halim Gani Safia seeks to convey the message that in order to achieve something truly desired, one must put in sincere effort.

Moreover, when considering a person's background and how they hold steadfast to their culture, this struggle becomes proof that the person deserves to attain something valuable.

Superstructure

Schematic

Risna and Ancha, as the main characters in the story, are accompanied by various other characters such as Tumming, Abu, Risna's father and mother, Ancha's father and mother, Farhan, Mita, Hasna, Ancha's boss, and others. These characters play a role in conveying the message or purpose intended in the film *Uang Panaik*. For example, the characters Abu and Tumming. These two, with their humor, demonstrate solidarity and a willingness to help their friend, Ancha. When Ancha is about to go home, it is Tumming and Abu who accompany him. Likewise, when Ancha faces a problem regarding the insufficient uang panaik, Tumming and Abu help Ancha by raising funds. Furthermore, when Ancha's family representatives come to propose to Ancha, Tumming and Abu also provide Ancha with information about the conversation between Risna's side and Ancha's family.

Semantics

Several settings are used in the film *Uang Panaik*. For example, the setting of the place at Risna's house, Ancha's house, the harbor, the office where Ancha works, namely at the Kalla Group Company. Kalla Group is a large company in the South Sulawesi Region. In addition to those mentioned, an interesting setting that appears in the film *Uang Panaik* is Losari Beach. Indirectly, this film shows one of the icons of Makassar City, namely Losari Beach. All the settings used in this film move from one place to another, in line with the development of the film's storyline. In addition to the setting, the time setting such as morning, afternoon, and evening also supports the links of events in the film. In addition to the setting, the social setting is also discussed. The story in this film depicts the traditions that apply in the Bugis-Makassar region. First, when a man loves a woman, the form of seriousness that is done is to propose, and agree to the amount of dowry that has been determined by the woman's family. Second, at the time of the proposal, a *panrē ada* or someone who is good at words is sent to represent the woman. The person sent is usually clever and fluent in rhymes, and also in negotiating.

In addition to what has been mentioned previously, the use of Makassarese and Indonesian with the Bugis-Makassar dialect also become markers of the social background in the film *Uang Panaik*. Several aspects discussed in this semantic area serve as a basis that supports the text in the film *Uang Panaik*.

Micro Structure

Syntax

The syntactic elements found in the text of the film *Uang Panaik* are cohesion and coherence. In this case, a word or sentence is structured in such a way that it forms a unified meaning. Coherence refers to the relationship between words or sentences, which can usually be observed through the use of conjunctions or linking words. There are many instances of conjunctions and pronouns used in this film that indicate its cohesion and coherence.

Mama Risna : *"Inimi saya panggilki ke sini karena besok keponakanta ada yang mau lamarki."* ("I call you here because tomorrow your niece has someone who wants to propose.")

Utusan Keluarga Risna : *"120 juta kita sepakati bersama, tetapi bukan berarti jajini"* ("We agree on 120 million together, but it doesn't mean it's guaranteed.")

Language Usage

According to Yani (2024) the dialogues and interactions within the context of the *uang panai* ritual and marriage in Bugis culture demonstrate a strong interrelation between language and culture. In the practice of *mammanu'-manu'*, linguistic politeness and the use of metaphors not only maintain formality and respect in communication but also reflect cultural values such as honor,

wisdom, and harmony. This process involves negotiation that extends beyond material considerations, emphasizing the cultivation of strong social and familial bonds, ensuring that both parties feel valued and respected. Through language, these cultural values are expressed and transmitted, making the ritual not merely a material exchange, but a profound embodiment of Bugis identity and tradition.”[12]

The use of language in the film *Uang Panaik* is very interesting and evokes its own unique sense of humor. From terms derived from acronyms to sentences that include foreign expressions, examples can be seen in the points below.

a) *Selamat datang di welcome* (Ancha's mother)

When Ancha arrives, her mother greets her by saying, "*selamat datang di welcome*" "(welcome to welcome)". Ancha's mother's statement is redundant. In fact, simply saying "*selamat datang*" or "welcome" would already convey the greeting. However, the language deviation made by Ancha's mother creates a unique sense of humor when the audience follows the film.

b) *Sebatas teman tanpa kepastian* (sebastian) (Risna)

Mita as Risna's younger sister, asks about the relationship between Ancha and Risna. Risna then answers "sebastian." "Sebastian" is an acronym derived from certain letters of the phrase *sebatas teman tanpa kepastian* (just friends with no certainty). The acronym used eventually becomes familiar to the audience and is sometimes adopted in everyday use.

c) *E Ancha, durhakako, kukutukko itu jadi batu tawas* (Ancha's mother)

The interesting thing about the sentence spoken by Ancha's mother is the addition of the word 'tawas' at the end of the sentence. The sentence that is usually heard is 'I curse you to become a stone (without using alum stone).

B. Social Context Analysis: *Uang Panaik* Film

From a social context perspective, the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L* is a depiction of the social reality that occurs in a particular society, which is fragmented by differences in social and economic status. This film depicts a society that is divided into two conflicting classes: those with financial power and those who are marginalized.

1. Representation of Social Phenomena in the Film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*

Uang panai' is a mandatory hereditary tradition that must be fulfilled. Only after this obligation is completed can the families of the prospective groom and bride proceed with further discussions regarding the marriage (Yansa et al., 2017). The costliness of the *uang panai'* is the aspect that receives the most attention during the wedding ceremony process among the Bugis-Makassar community. It is no longer a secret that *uang panai'* becomes a topic of public discussion concerning the couple about to be married. When a couple intends to marry, the primary question asked is, 'How much is the *uang panai'*?' The high amount of *uang panai'* does not arise arbitrarily but is influenced by the social status of the Bugis-Makassar woman. Her social status can be observed from her family background (noble lineage), education, economic standing, physical attributes, and occupation (Yansa et al., 2017) [5].

The characters of Ancha, Risna, Tumming and Abu

Ancha is a young man of Bugis-Makassar blood who has a slightly indifferent, childish, funny and down to earth nature. But behind that he has a responsible, persistent nature, and has high prestige. Meanwhile, Risna who has a motherly nature, likes to hide her feelings, and is caring, loves Ancha very much and wants Ancha to propose to her soon. Ancha took that desire seriously as evidenced by Ancha's arrival at Risna's house for *mammanu'-manu'*. The term *mammanu'-manu'* is used by Bugis-Makassar people when the man makes an inquiry to the woman's parents, not the mother or father but the man himself or a family representative. Ancha's desire is thwarted by the high *Panaik* Money requested by Risna's family. Tumming and Abu, Ancha's friends who are funny and cute but very caring towards their friends are concerned about Ancha's situation and do everything they can to help their friend so that he can complete his intention to propose to the girl of his dreams.

The phenomenon experienced by Ancha reflects a social condition that has been and continues to emerge in Bugis-Makassar society. This condition has led to social problems. Many couples have canceled or postponed their weddings due to issues related to the *uang panaik* (dowry). What initially began as a noble and courageous intention—to marry—has turned into something less pure, sometimes resulting in elopement. The term *silariang* (elopement) has then been seen as a solution for couples who love each other. However, what is considered a solution actually creates new problems. In addition to *silariang*, one of the impacts of the high *uang panaik* is that many women end up "becoming" old maids. This is later countered by Ancha's determination in the film. He proves that he is a responsible man, capable of proposing to Risna according to her family's request. As a result, there is no more *silariang*, and Risna in this film does not become an old maid.

2. The Moral and Religious Message in the Film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L*

According to Apyunita (2023) the presence of religious moral values depicted by the author in the film *Uang Panai' Maha(r)l* aligns with the concept of literary sociology as proposed by Ian Watt. The scene illustrates this when Ancha recites *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim* (In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) before approaching a businessman to offer a car being sold by the company where he works [13].

The circumstances or conditions of the surrounding environment more or less influenced the making of the romantic comedy film *Uang Panaik*. It can be seen from the moral message that the director wanted to convey. The first moral message is that *uang panaik* which is one of the requirements in Bugis-Makassar culture in the course of a marriage has changed its essence. Giving as a form of appreciation from the man to the woman has changed into a matter of prestige. It can be seen from the dialogue excerpt below.

- Ayah Ancha : *"Begitulah zaman sekarang, kita sendiri yang buat susah diri kita, dulu itu yang namanya uang panai adalah bentuk penghargaan kita kepada calon mempelai wanita, nah sekarang, angkanya pun harus disebut."* ("That's how things are nowadays — we make things harder for ourselves. Back then, *uang panai* was a way to show our respect to the bride-to-be. But now, even the exact amount has to be stated.")
- Mama Ancha : *"Itu mi tetta, tiap tahun naik terus, nikah makin mahal, jadi ajang gengsi mi kurasa."* ("That's how it is, Tetta. It keeps going up every year — getting married is becoming more and more expensive. I feel like it's turning into a matter of pride or social status.")

The next moral message is the responsibility of a man of Bugis-Makassar descent, depicted in the main character of the film *Uang Panaik*. The character Ancha represents the figure of a fighter, where the struggle and relentless effort are carried out by someone determined to achieve their goals. This desire is proven to come true because the efforts made have led to success.

- Ancha : *"Om saya akan buktikan om kalau saya ini orang Bugis Makassar, Taro ada Taro Gau. Saya tidak kembali ke rumah ini om kalau tidak bawa Uang Panai yang kita minta"* (Uncle, I will prove to you that I am truly of Bugis-Makassar descent. "It's not just talk, there's action too". "Uncle, I won't come back to this house unless I bring the *Uang Panai* you asked for.")

This is then proven by the main character, who truly brings what was requested by the family from the woman's side to be fulfilled. After it is fulfilled, Risna's father also acknowledges Ancha's persistence in taking responsibility for his words. It's not about how much it is, but about proving that *Taro ada Taro Gau*, a Bugis-Makassar man.

The religious message conveyed in the film *Uang Panaik* is that marriage should be considered as a means of worshiping Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala. The issue of marriage is a religious matter, and it is the parents' duty to marry off their children. If the parents raise the dowry and inflate the amount of *uang panaik*, it means they are hindering their own responsibility as proper parents. Regarding religious matters, what is obligatory is the dowry. The dowry referred to here is not the *uang panaik*. This is what is regulated in Islamic law. Marriage is one of the Sunnah practices. This message is clearly conveyed when Risna's father's friend speaks to him.

“Annikahu sunnati man raghiba’an sunnati falaiza minni ‘Nikah adalah sunnahku. Maka barang siapa yang membenci sunnahku, maka ia bukan golonganku’.” (“Marriage is part of my Sunnah. Whoever dislikes my Sunnah is not among my followers.”)

C. Social Cognition

Social cognition refers to the perspective, understanding, and mental awareness of the text producer that shape the construction of a text. It is the study of how individuals analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from social information present in their environment. This includes the ways in which we process, store, and apply information about other people and social situations. According to Baron and Byrne, social cognition also involves how we interpret, analyze, remember, and utilize information about the social world.

1. Social Perception of the Uang Panai

The male protagonist, Anca, is confronted with strong social expectations regarding the high value of *uang panai* (bridewealth). The bride's family perceives the substantial amount as a form of respect for the woman's social status, educational background, and family honor.

In this context, a process of social perception occurs from both sides: how the bride's family views the prospective groom, and how Anca interprets these expectations as a form of social pressure.

2. Social Attribution of Intent and Status

The bride's family engages in dispositional attribution, assuming that the capability or sincerity of the prospective groom can be assessed by the extent to which he is able to provide the *uang panai*. This reflects a collective value system that evaluates an individual's worth based on their ability to meet cultural standards.

Language and culture are intrinsically linked in the *uang panai* ritual, where language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a guardian of harmony between both parties throughout a process that is often lengthy and intricate. Furthermore, the use of language rich in metaphors, symbols, and cultural values illustrates the depth and complexity of meaning embedded in marriage negotiations between the groom's and bride's families

3. Social Norms

The film highlights how its characters adapt to prevailing social norms—specifically, that marriage must adhere to local cultural traditions. As the main character, Anca is compelled to work hard to meet these expectations, even though he may not fully agree with them on a personal level.

Art, aesthetics, and meaning serve as fundamental benchmarks in filmmaking—for instance, in Indonesia, the film *Uang Panai* exemplifies this by portraying the Bugis-Makassar culture [14].

According to Andina (2022), *Siri'* in Bugis-Makassar culture positions cultural values as a central issue in the film. *Siri'* represents one of the core cultural values related to the social life of the Bugis community. In the daily lives of the Bugis-Makassar people, *siri'* functions as a system of social, cultural, and personal values that serves as an institutional mechanism for defending human dignity and personal honor, both as individuals and as members of society. This value system influences every aspect within it, allowing viewers to understand the role of dignity and honor within the Bugis-Makassar culture, particularly as it is portrayed in the context of marriage in the film [15]

IV. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that the message Halim Gani Safia wants to convey through the film *Uang Panaik Maha(R)L* is that in Bugis-Makassar society, there are social issues that have developed. The essence of *Uang Panaik*, which originally symbolized the male party's respect for the female party in marriage, has changed. *Uang Panaik* has now become a matter of prestige, with a specific amount that must be stated, often accompanied by bargaining processes until an agreement is reached. This has led to the impression that the female party is treated like an item being sold. The impact of the increasing *Uang Panaik*, which rises every year, has become a social problem, resulting in many cases of elopement and young women who are delayed in marriage because they cannot meet the high demands of *Uang Panaik*.

This research is expected to provide insight to the public that the culture we follow should not have its essence changed merely due to factors of prestige or an individual's desire to show off. Marriage is not just about seeking happiness, because happiness is built through decisions and choices made. Although material wealth can help realize happiness in marriage, it is not the main factor, especially not for the sake of prestige. Therefore, it is hoped that society will be wiser in responding to these cultural changes. Religious values or teachings should remain the foundation in making decisions about all matters, including marriage.

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