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## **Interpretation of Mise En Scene Components in the Film "I Swarnangkara" As Reinforcement on the Moral Message**

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**Abstract**---This research is a study of the mise en scene component, which is an important part in building and presenting the story as a whole through a visual sequence. The visual information studied in this paper encompasses not only descriptive studies that describe visual information visible to the naked eye, but also the meaning constructed through visual information and confirmed by verbal information, thereby providing a clear interpretation of the film's message to the audience. The purpose of this research is to identify and explain the mise-en-scène component as a story-building aspect, providing an understanding of the film's message about the story presented to the audience. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach, with the object of study being a one-stop motion animation film based on the Balinese folk tale entitled "I Swarnangkara". The theory used is the Mise en Scene theory to classify aspects of the study of mise en scene components in the film I Swarnangkara, which is also elaborated with the theory of Semiotics by Pierce as a reference in the analysis of visual meaning through mise en scene components in the object of research, namely the film "I Swarnangkara". The results of this research show that the study of mise-en-scène components encompasses composition and layout, the use of colour and lighting, costume and makeup, as well as the placement and movement of characters and properties. The interpretation of visual information in the mise en scene found in the film has a strong influence in building a story that can help the viewer to understand the story well, even though the film "I Swarnangkara" is a one-stop motion animation film without using dialogue to convey the movement of the audience in the film's storyline.

**Keywords**---Animation, Film, Interpretation, Mise en Scene, One stop-motion.

### **Introduction**

Film is a propaganda medium that has a role in character building through the values offered as messages in films (Bordwell et al., 2004). Films have various types of genres with their respective strengths in the power of stories and styles of storytelling that vary greatly (Penuju, 2019). One of the interesting genres to be analysed is animated genre films that visually rely on the power of characters and other properties made based on the movement of images (Buchan, 2011). Animated films consist of animation supported by moving images with dialogue affirmation by the

characters that appear in the film, and also animation that only shows the audience's perception as a regulator of the storyline, known as one-stop motion animation films. The emphasis of one-stop motion animation is on manual, physical, and textured forms of animation. The resulting visuals have hand imperfections that create a unique aesthetic appeal and present emotional closeness (Wells, 2013).

The power of storytelling with a touch of emotional closeness in stop motion animation films by relying on the power of multiple images, is generated from the source of folklore in Bali, which is an important part of the process of artistic and cultural heritage that develops in the Balinese society. The process of inheriting folklore is done through the oral medium as entertainment and also as a means of education that instills moral, religious, and social values to the community, especially children. Currently, the film media with the genre of animated films is one of the media transitions of folklore transformation in oral form into a more contemporary medium (Desilla, 2012).

The contemporary medium of animated film has had a far-reaching impact on the way folklore is told, but it has also had a significant impact on the story structure, moral message, and communal experience presented by the storyteller. Animated films provide a wider appreciation space to reach a more varied segmentation, making them easily accessible and documentable, but losing the flexibility, improvisation, and strong cultural context that exist in the oral tradition (McLuhan, 1994; Ong & Hartley, 2012).

The study in this research will analyse the phenomenon through the research object of the animated film "I Swarnangkara", which is based on a Balinese folklore with the same title, "I Swarnangkara". The ability to interpret the message in the folklore, which is then retold in the form of one stop motion animation, will affect the survival of moral messages to anticipate the loss of flexibility, improvisation, and cultural context that exists in the Balinese folklore "I Swarnangkara".

The objectives of this study are: 1) Identify the mise en scene components in the film "I Swarnangkara" as aspects of building the moral message of the film, 2) Analyse the meaning contained in the mise en scene components of the film "I Swarnangkara" to compile the red thread of the message in the film.

This research offers novelty in terms of in-depth analysis of the mise en scene components in the film "I Swarnangkara" in its function to build moral messages in the film which is included with the affirmation of the meaning of each component so that it has a connection with moral messages conveyed only through character movement minus dialogue.

## Literature Review

The literature review used is related to changes in the media of Balinese folklore transformed into new media, not only in films but also into digital literary media that have significance for character education. The significance of character education becomes a story message that is also the strength of the story in the film "I Swarnangkara" so that the literature used in the study is considered to have a connection with the research domain.

Research related to the study of the mise en scene component in animated films consists of research that suggests the power of animated films through the gesture of characters in the film and its impact on character education of the younger generation (Noviadji et al., 2024). Literature studies that are also considered to have a relationship in the study of the meaning of the moral message of the film "I Swarnangkara" which is identical to character education consist of: Balinese language preservation through digital fairy tale media for elementary schools (Yusa & Jayanegara, 2014), changes in Balinese oral literature into performing arts as part of the preservation of Balinese cultural education (Sudewa, 2014), media introduction and preservation of Balinese folklore through video games (Julianto & Sachari, 2016).

## Methods and Theories

This research is qualitative in nature with a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen because it allows to explore the meaning through the visual movement of the film "I Swarnangkara" to facilitate the audience in understanding the moral message conveyed through the storyline that is only based on the movement of the character "I Swarnangkara". Data collection was conducted by observing the mise en scene components found in the film "I Swarnangkara" using recording and note-taking techniques to facilitate the identification of each component, and continued with the process of analysing the visual meaning of each component. This is done to make it easier to decipher the moral message of the film, which is only presented through moving images without the affirmation of dialogue that is usually found in films (Tarno, 2023).

After the data was collected, the transformation was analysed, with the following steps: a) Content analysis by analysing the mise en scene components found in the film "I Swarnangkara" using Metz's theory (Metz, 1991). The focus was on the mise en scene components of camera composition and layout; use of colour; lighting; costumes and

makeup; and props. b) The interpretation of the mise en scene components to decipher the moral message in the film "I Swarnangkara" using Peirce's semiotic theory (Peirce, 1982). The process of identification and analysis is developed by applying the theory of media and technological change, which says that the media influences the messages conveyed (McLuhan, 1994). The implementation of this theory is used to make it easier to examine contemporary media in the form of non-dialogue one one-stop motion animated films that use image movement.

The results produced in the analysis process will be presented in the form of tables and descriptions, which are also complemented by visual data on the mise en scene components used as primary data in the research, to obtain accurate conclusions (Wang et al., 2011).

## Discussion

### *Swarnangkara: Guardian of the Forest as a Balinese Folklore as a Source of Film Idea "I Swarnangkara"*

Balinese folklore not only functions as an oral medium full of character education values, but also has a role in strengthening the mother tongue. Strengthening the mother tongue is one of the important ways to preserve cultural identity (Jorolan-Quintero, 2018). In addition, these folktales also serve as a strategy to achieve inclusive education and social justice in a multicultural society (Suárez et al., 2022). Custom-based knowledge and local wisdom, passed down through folklore, help maintain the continuity of traditional community values (Akinyemi, 2003; Madden, 2015; Nasner et al., 2022). These traditions are also an important tool in education and the preservation of history and the inheritance of social identity, connecting generations within communities (Simpson, 2007; Syam et al., 2024). In social relations, folklore also helps strengthen the bonds between community members through the telling of stories and shared experiences that give birth to values and norms to regulate moral order and character education (Egwemi & Salifu, 2022).

The values and norms contained in the folktale "I Swarnangkara" contain the awareness of responsibility possessed by a village youth who is an orphan. I, Swarnangkara, grew up as a young man who relied on the firewood he collected in the forest. The forest is a family to me, Swarnangkara, because my life comes from the forest, so I, Swarnangkara, am determined to always protect the forest well. One day, Swarnangkara received a fortune when he was given strength by a grandmother he helped. His good fortune turned out to make I Swarnangkara forget his responsibility to protect the forest, and eventually made the forest poorly preserved and maintained. Various disasters eventually arose because of I Swarnangkara's negligence in protecting the forest. This finally made Swarnagkara realise that he should not be complacent about his wealth, and return to his responsibility to care for and protect the forest, so that natural disasters do not occur that can endanger nature and other living things.

The folklore 'I Swarnangkara', which in 2023 was developed by Patra Sihombing as one of the winners of the Purwa Carita Campuhan Film Festival as a digital media drama film through a one-stop motion animation film (Bali Post, 2023). Changes in media from folklore to digital media certainly have an influence that has positive and negative potential that must be distinguished wisely. Changes in folklore media from traditional media to digital media have implications for cultural changes to utilise memory (Hutton, 2016). Changes in media will have an influence on the delivery process, and of course, the effectiveness required by the messenger to those who will be given the message. The comparison of message delivery between folklore and film "I Swarnangkara" in this research study will show the preservation of moral messages or even the potential for shifting moral messages due to the media transfer process that occurs.

### *Components and Meanings of Mise En Scene Components of "I Swarnangkara" Film*

The mise en scene components identified in this study use the theory of mise en scene proposed by Metz (1991), which will then be analysed about the meaning represented using semiotic theory (Peirce, 1982). The data used are data from scenes 1-7 that represent each mise-en-scène component to be analysed.

### *Composition and Layout*

Metz (1991), explains that camera composition and layout, known as camera blocking, is the placement and movement of cameras and actors, or objects in a scene. The application of camera composition and layout in one-stop-motion animation filmmaking is done manually and structured (Bordwell et al., 2004).



Figure 1. Scene 1 of the film "I Swarnangkara"  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The composition and camera placement in scene 1 of the film 'I Swarnangkara' shows 3 object placements in 1 scene, consisting of the main character, I Swarnangkara; property objects in the form of trees in the forest, and owls. The main character is placed in the centre of the frame with trees framing the space, creating a depth effect. The intended depth effect is the inner connection I Swarnangkara has with the forest, which is a place to grow up without his parents. Various life experiences are gained in the process of his life, both life lessons that provide good life lessons, and even bad lessons that teach him to be more responsible for his duties as a forest guardian.

The tree trunks in the foreground narrow the viewing space, creating a sense of tightness and a feeling of being trapped. This feeling is created to provide visual information that the main character feels guilty over the disaster in the forest caused by his negligence in taking good care of the forest. This is emphasised by the placement of the owl prop perched on a branch on the right side of the frame, providing an element of compositional balance and symbolism of the lurking danger. The choice of the owl prop is synonymous with the myth of the owl's appearance, which used to signal the emergence of events that should be watched out for.

The meaning of the composition and camera layout indicates the conflict of the story that leads the audience to believe that there has been a mistake made by I Swarnangkara as a forest guard. The mistakes made turned out to have a negative impact on the sustainability of the forest and caused disasters that affected other creatures.

#### *Color Use*

The use of colour in filmmaking is not only related to the beauty or aesthetics of the film, but also serves as a narrative tool in providing story dynamics. It can reinforce mood, convey emotion, and provide story information to strengthen the moral message in the film (Metz, 1991).



Figure 2. *Scene 2* of the Film “I Swarnangkara”  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The use of colours with tones identical to the dominance of dark, earthy tones and yellow-gold lighting reinforces the sombre and nostalgic atmosphere. The lighting contrast between the light colours of the characters and the axe against the dark background highlights the importance of the object in the narrative.

This scene gives the impression that the conflict that arises in the film occurs because of the contribution of the axe used to clear the forest, causing a natural disaster. The sombre mood arises from the regret felt by I Swarnangkara and evokes memories of the forest that was once green and comfortable to live in, but has now turned barren and dry due to deforestation.

### *Lighting*

Lighting in cinematography has a very important role in providing "illumination" in a scene and also plays a role in building atmosphere, conveying emotion, directing attention, and supporting the visual narrative [12].



Figure 3. *Scene 3* of the Film “I Swarnangkara”  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The scene in scene 3 in the picture above shows the use of naturally produced light in accordance with the time set which tells the time in the morning. The lighting appears soft and natural, giving a realistic yet sombre impression. There is no strong or dramatic light so the use of soft and natural light reflects the character's sense of loss and helplessness.

The meaning of the message in the use of realist light illustrates that I Swarnangkara's mood is still filled with regret because the forest that was previously well cared for and guarded, is now a deforested forest and the trees are cut arbitrarily by irresponsible people, as shown in Figure 4.3.

### *Costume and Makeup*

Costumes and make-up in filmmaking have very important functions related to character identification, markers of time and place, supporting plot and character changes, creating mood and visual style and also as a reinforcement of visual symbolism [12]. Important aspects in the use of costumes and make-up must prioritise the orientation of interests that represent the character's background (cultural, economic and psychological); the emotional state of the character and the transformation experienced by the character over time according to the story in the film [1].



Figure 4. Scene 4 of the Film “I Swarnangkara”  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The scene in scene 4 presents visual information on the costumes and makeup used by the main character, the red monster, and the water element. The costume used by the main character is a blue-grey outfit that shows his connection to the water element. The costume used by the Red Monster character in black and white could indicate that he is a land creature that is closer to the earth or fire element. The costume depiction of the water element as a character that appears in scene 4, depicted as a faceless water figure that gives the impression of a mystical creature, with a design like water that is constantly moving and difficult to understand.

The visualisation of the three objects in the scene in scene 4 shows that the relationship between life-forming elements such as earth, water, and air is an integral unity that will maintain the balance of the world. The representation of the coexistence between the three characters in the depiction of a scene could be a message for the audience to always respect anything and anyone who makes a positive contribution to the sustainability of our lives.

### *Character Placement and Movement*

The placement and movement of characters in a film is part of blocking and the placement of space and time, which are two important concepts in the visual language of cinema. Proper placement and movement of characters will make it easier for the audience to feel emotions, relationships between characters, and the film's storyline (Metz, 1991).



Figure 5. Scene 5 of the Film “I Swarnangkara”  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The placement and movement of the characters in scene 5 shows the mutualism that occurs between the protagonist, the trees in the forest, and the Red Monster. The protagonist is on a swing that moves back and forth, showing agility and freedom. The red monster stands tall, pushing the swing, giving the impression of a supportive friend. Large trees and roots surround them, reinforcing the sense of protection and attachment to nature.

The interpretation of the placement and movement of the characters through scene 5 shows a visual meaning that is almost the same as the meaning analysis in study 4.2.5; namely, related to the emotional connection between the main character and the objects of the trees in the forest, and also the character of the Red Monster.

#### *Property*

Properties in filmmaking are an important part of the mise-en-scène component that is displayed in each frame of a scene. Property is not just a complementary tool of a scene, but also functions as a narrative, symbolic, and functional tool in supporting the story and characters (Metz, 1991).



Figure 6. Scene 6 of the Film “I Swarnangkara”  
(Source: Dwiyani, 2025)

The use of the axe property is an important element that always appears as a representation of the source of conflict in the film. Other properties that also appear in the visualisation of scene 6, apart from the axe, are yarn and soil. The axe looks old and slightly worn, suggesting that this tool may have a long history before it gets into the hands of the main character. The thread used to depict water provides a unique textural effect, creating a distinctive visual look

that sets the film apart from conventional animation. The rough texture of the ground and the scattered leaves give a more organic, natural feel that is not too clean or artificial.

The meaning of the properties that appear as visual information in the scene in Figure 4.6 is an illustration of the initial problem sequence related to the deforestation carried out using an axe that results in the emergence of natural disasters; followed by the use of yarn with a greyish-white colour that represents water as a source of energy that survives due to the strength of trees in the forest and the soil that is visualised with a rough texture appearance due to the deforestation. The moral message presented in this scene is the need for wisdom in utilising something so that it will not cause losses through natural disasters that can damage life.

## Conclusion

This study still uses a limited research object because it is not possible to analyse the entire mise en scene component in every scene of the film "I Swarnangkara" which consists of 13 scenes. The selection of scenes studied represents 7 mise en scene components chosen randomly to adjust the results of the study in accordance with the formulation of the problem.

The results of the identification of the mise en scene components and the meaning of each scene show the contribution and interrelationship in building a moral message about the importance of maintaining our collective awareness and responsibility to take good care of our nature.

Understanding the moral message in one-stop-motion animated films, especially in "I Swarnangkara" which does not use dialogue at all, requires effort through understanding the context and meaning in the mise en scene components consisting of camera composition and layout; use of colour; lighting; costumes and makeup; camera placement and movement, as well as props.

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