

# When the Movie Screen Becomes An “Emotional” Narrative Within the Family (Film Analysis of NKCTHI)

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.47134/jbk.d.v3i1.5607>

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Received: 06/03/2026

Accepted: 13/03/2026

Published: 05/04/2026



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**Abstract:** *The film Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari Ini (NKCTHI), or We'll Talk About Today Later, depicts emotional communication within families through symbols, expressions, and visual atmospheres by revealing the denotative meanings, connotations, and myths in each scene depicting emotional communication within the family, as well as understanding how viewers interpret the messages conveyed in the film using a participatory approach with descriptive qualitative methods. Content analysis was conducted on ten scenes and supported by viewer interviews and literature reviews. The results of the study show that the film (NKCTHI) depicts the dynamics of emotional communication such as loss, inner pressure, conflict, and the healing process. The audience interprets each scene in the film differently, influenced by their respective experiences and emotional backgrounds. Films can be a medium that reflects patterns of emotional communication in modern families.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional, Film, Family, Representation, Semiotic*

## Introduction

Film is a form of communication that can show the social, cultural, and emotional realities of society through visual symbols and stories that can be deeply understood by the audience (Hamdanah et al., 2023). Films also have the ability to influence the way of thinking and change the mindset of their audience. In the digital era, films are not only entertainment but can also be a good means of conveying moral values and shaping a person's character. Films can be used to convey messages to the public through their stories as a form of art. Films have deep meanings created by their makers and conveyed to their audience. (Syifa et al., 2025)

This study focuses on the dynamics of modern families in Indonesia, which are characterized by changes in the way people communicate, especially when expressing their feelings. In a culture that values harmony and politeness, feelings are often hidden and not openly expressed, creating emotional distance between family members. This tendency is closely related to Indonesian cultural principles that emphasize social balance, emotional control, and respect in family interactions. (Subandi, 2011a). This phenomenon is clearly seen in the film “Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari Ini” (NKCTHI) by Angga Dwimas

Sasongko, which depicts a modern family facing internal conflicts, psychological pressure, and stifled communication behind smiles and silence (Haningtyas, 2022). The film serves as a social reflection on how families strive to maintain an appearance of harmony, even when there are unspoken feelings. (Faza & Soedarsono, 2022)

Based on the results of interviews accessed by researchers via YouTube during the film's press conference (NKCTHI) held on November 19, 2019, it was revealed that Angga explained that the idea for the film came from thousands of real stories submitted by the public through the NKCTHI Project. Out of the approximately six thousand stories collected, the majority actually focused on the relationship between children and parents, not romantic stories. He emphasized, "After analyzing over six thousand stories, the main issue was not love, but family relationships. That is why this film is a family drama." (Antara News, n.d.). He also said, "This film is very personal." It is an emotional portrayal of the role of family in dealing with imperfection and emotional wounds. He said, "I want to show how families should and as much as possible accept imperfection and find warmth in it." (Louvina Gita, n.d.) The director's statement provides insight into the creative context and background of the film (NKCTHI). In this study, the statement is used as contextual information to explore the creative intent and thematic direction of the film, but is not used as primary data in the analysis.

This study assumes that the film "Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari Ini" (NKCTHI) represents modern Indonesian families who tend to suppress their feelings in order to maintain a false impression of harmony (Koentjaraningrat 1985), but ultimately emotional openness is the key to healing within the family. The film debunks the myth of the ideal family that is always happy and replaces it with a new value that a healthy family is one that dares to acknowledge its wounds and heal them together. (Akca Koca, 2017).

This research is necessary because there are still few studies that focus on emotional narratives as the center of communication within families through films. Most previous studies have focused more on visual aspects, cinematography, or social conflict, whereas emotions as a form of communication are actually the most fundamental aspect in building relationships between individuals. With increasing awareness of mental health and the importance of open interpersonal communication, film analysis (NKCTHI) has become important as a form of cultural and social reflection of Indonesian society today. (K. A. Gardner & Cutrona, 2004)

This research is novel because it focuses on emotional narratives within families as a form of communication that has rarely been studied in Indonesian film research. This study focuses on how emotions function as a language of communication in modern families through symbols and signs that appear in films (NKCTHI). The film NKCTHI was chosen because it is one of the most influential Indonesian family dramas, openly depicting the emotional struggles of modern families. The film also attracted significant public attention and reflects current issues related to mental health and communication between family members in Indonesia. Using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, this study reveals the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings behind the expressions, colors, and atmospheres that represent emotional relationships within families. (Roland Barthes, 1957).

To deepen the understanding of how audiences comprehend meaning in films, this study is supported by Stuart Hall's theory of representation, which explains how meaning is formed, created, and received through the process of depiction in the media. (Hall, 2013)

This study provides an understanding of film and communication by showing how emotional narratives function as symbolic communication systems. This can be seen in family relationships in Indonesian films. This study also describes the use of Barthes' semiotics to examine emotional meaning in films.

## Literature Review

This study refers to a number of relevant literature and previous research results on film analysis using semiotics theory and the representation of emotional meaning in families. These studies serve as a conceptual basis to strengthen the analysis, particularly in relation to how films act as a medium of communication that not only conveys visual messages but also shapes social and emotional perspectives in the context of Indonesian culture.

The first research by (Asri, 2020) Demonstrating how the film *Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari ini* (NKCTHI) functions as a medium of communication that conveys social and moral messages through a meaningful family story. Analysis shows that the film is able to depict the relationship between father and child in Indonesia's patriarchal culture, while also criticizing the dominance of male roles in the family. This film builds strong emotional communication between the characters and the audience through moral messages that are real and close to everyday life.

The second research by (Tjang et al., 2023) reinforces this view by using a visual storytelling approach in the film (NKCTHI). This study shows that visual techniques such as soft lighting, color composition, and visual symbols are used to represent the hidden emotions between family members. Through the narrative structure of "The Mountain" with the peak of emotional conflict in the middle. This film successfully portrays the dynamics of emotional communication within families, which is often hindered by norms of politeness and a culture of suppressing feelings. The results of the study confirm that open emotional communication is the key to family harmony.

The third research written by (Yoanda & Wahyuni, 2025) highlights how human psychological expressions and emotions can be visualized through an expressionist approach. This research contributes to the understanding that the representation of emotions in films is not always conveyed realistically but can be depicted symbolically through lighting, color, and visual space that symbolize the inner state of the characters. This approach is a creative means that allows the audience to empathize with the emotional experiences of the characters.

The fourth research, (Kevinia et al., 2024) Analyzing the Indonesian version of *Miracle in Cell No. 7* using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory shows how visual signs of body language convey emotions and human values through three layers of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. This study reveals how simple scenes such as hugs or eye contact convey messages of affection, sacrifice, and hope. In the context of Indonesian culture,

which prioritizes family values and empathy, this film illustrates the importance of expressing love and acceptance amid limitations.

The fifth research by (Ramayani, 2020) with the title *Analysis of Family Conflict Reception in the Film Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari Ini*. This study uses Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding theory to see how audiences interpret messages in films. The results of the study show that there are three positions of audience meaning reading, the first being dominant hegemony, the second being negotiation, and the third being opposition. Five viewers were in the negotiation position and two were in the opposition position. This study proves that audiences are active in interpreting film messages according to their respective social and emotional backgrounds.

In general, films serve as a medium capable of conveying emotional, social, and cultural messages. Films such as *NKCTHI* and *Miracle in Cell No. 7* portray emotions through visual and symbolic cues that touch the audience's experiences. The emotional communication within families depicted in films reflects social phenomena in Indonesian society, where expressions of feelings are often limited by values of politeness and harmony. In the context of Indonesian culture, the family is the center of values and morals, so that emotional reticence often causes conflicts that affect the balance of relationships between family members.

Therefore, this study was conducted to fill this gap by using Roland Barthes' semiotics theory and Stuart Hall's representation theory as supporting theories. In this study, Barthes' semiotics is used to analyze the layers of meaning within film scenes, while Hall's representation theory helps explain how those meanings construct social understanding about family emotions. This approach provides an in-depth analysis of how visual signs in films shape the image of family emotions and culture, as well as how audiences interpret these images based on Indonesian social and cultural factors.

Film is a form of mass communication that can convey social, cultural, and psychological messages through images and words. (Onong Uchjana Effendy, 2011), Films can be an effective way of learning about society because they show how people behave in everyday life. As a means of communication, films not only provide information but also shape meaning, as applied by (Tayebwa et al., 2022).

Emotional Communication in the Family, how to express and receive feelings between family members. (Akca Koca, 2017) A healthy family is one that can express feelings openly without fear. Conversely, families that do not show emotional expression tend to experience inner turmoil and emotional distance. Emotional Communication function as a communication mechanism that conveys psychological experiences and interpersonal relationships within the family.

Representation of Emotions in Films. Representation is a way of portraying social life through signs and symbols (Hall, 2013). Films not only depict reality but also shape new meanings about social life. In this case, feelings or emotions in films serve as a means of conveying cultural values, worldviews, and human relationships in society.

Roland Barthes' Theory of Semiotics (1991). Roland Barthes' Theory of Semiotics is a development of Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas about signs, which sees that every cultural

phenomenon can be understood as a system of signs that form meaning. Semiotics is the study of how meaning is constructed through signs in the form of language, images, sounds, and other visual symbols. Barthes also expanded the concept of semiotics by introducing three levels of meaning, namely denotation, connotation, and myth. In relation to this study, Barthes' theory is used to understand how the film (NKCTHI) displays emotional symbols such as crying, silence, distance between characters, or the color of the room that represents the psychological conditions and relationships between family members. Each scene in the film is analyzed as a sign that represents layers of denotative, connotative, and mythical (ideological) meaning. Thus, Roland Barthes' theory enables this study to explore how the "screen" becomes a means of emotional communication through symbols and visual narratives.

Stuart Hall's Theory of Representation. Representation is the process of creating meaning through language, images, and symbols used in the media. Representation not only displays reality, but shapes the way we understand reality itself. Hall believes that meaning is not fixed, but is produced through interaction between media texts and their recipients. Media such as films not only reflect reality but shape social meaning based on cultural codes familiar to society. (Hall, 2013). The dimensions of Stuart Hall's Representation theory are as follows: First, the process of meaning reception (Encoding and Decoding). Media communication is a two-way process consisting of encoding, which is the process of creating meaning by the message creator, and decoding, which is the process of meaning reception by the audience. Second, Stuart Hall's (1980) positions of meaning readers divide the positions of meaning readers by the audience into three main categories: first, dominant readers; second, negotiating readers; and third, rejecting readers. Third, the social and cultural factors of the audience. The audience is not passive, but meaning is greatly influenced by social, cultural, and ideological factors.

## Methodology

This study uses a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach with a descriptive qualitative method. The participatory approach was chosen because the researcher was actively involved in the process of observing and interpreting the emotional meanings displayed in the film (NKCTHI). Moleong (2017) explains that qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the subjects as a whole, by explaining them in words and language within their natural context using various scientific methods. This approach was chosen because this study sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of emotional communication that emerged in family interactions in the film (NKCTHI). The descriptive approach was used to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and relationships between the phenomena studied. (Nurjannah, 2018)

The research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth observation of the film (NKCTHI) by analyzing scenes that highlight emotional aspects and documents in the form of screen captures. In addition, primary data was also obtained from in-depth interviews with several viewers of the film

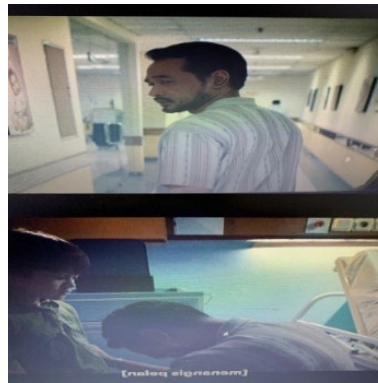
(NKCTHI). The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach in order to reveal the viewers' perspectives and emotional experiences in understanding the family relationships portrayed in the film. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected from literature such as communication theory books, academic journals, scientific articles, and online publications relevant to the study of semiotics, representation, and family communication.

This research was conducted virtually and in the field. The research was virtual in nature because the observation of the film (NKCTHI) was conducted through digital platforms such as Netflix. In addition, the research was also conducted directly by conducting face-to-face interviews with viewers of the film (NKCTHI) on campus. This approach was used to obtain more in-depth data, both from the analysis of the film and from the viewers' perspectives.

The unit of analysis in this study is scenes that contain elements of emotional communication within the family, such as nonverbal expressions (glances, hugs, crying), verbal interactions (family dialogues), and visual symbols (colors, lighting, and room composition). These elements are interpreted as signs representing emotional communication in family narratives. Data analysis techniques were carried out through three main stages based on Roland Barthes' semiotic theory: First, the stage of denotation, which is the reading of the meaning of visible signs; second, the stage of connotation, which is the emotional and cultural meaning that emerges behind the signs; and third, the stage of myth, which is the revelation of social ideology about the concept of family and emotions reproduced by films. (C. Gardner, 2014)

## **Result and Discussion**

Film is a form of mass media that essentially conveys messages in visual form. Films not only present text but also contain signs that can be interpreted by the audience. Based on research findings that highlight the importance of understanding emotional communication within families, as depicted in films (NKCTHI). This film is seen as a place to convey feelings that sometimes cannot be expressed openly, but are implied through scenes in the film. Therefore, the researcher limited the focus to analyzing ten scenes that depict emotional communication within the family, because scenes one to ten carry the actual meaning. These scenes were selected because they represent key emotional turning points in the narrative and highlight important interactions between family members. Through this research, it can be seen that films do not have only one meaning, but films are a tool to enable the audience to understand the messages conveyed in the film. As follows:



**Figure 1.** The father walks around the hospital corridor and cried in front of her children (Source: Netflix)

**Table 1.** Scene 1

Scene 1	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:06:30-00:06:45) In the hospital hallway, the father walks sadly after losing his child and immediately enters the hospital room to hug his first child	The father was sad after his wife had a miscarriage, and he cried in front of his child.	The loss is felt not only by the mother who experienced the miscarriage, but also by the father and child, who are both grieving and comforting each other through body language.	A father's emotional expression is not a sign of weakness, but rather a form of affection that strengthens family bonds in the face of shared trauma.



**Figure 2.** Father and the child who grew in a loving family (Source: Netflix)

**Table 2.** Scene 2

Scene 2	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:09:41-00:09:55) They are a very harmonious family and always prioritize their children's happiness.	Father, mother, and children are enjoying their time together at home in a warm and laughter-filled atmosphere.	Depicting an open and warm family, love is not only spoken but also expressed through simple gestures.	The family is the primary space for shaping children's emotions and character. Warmth in the family is not just a backdrop but a symbol of emotional communication that builds love and support in everyday life.



**Figure 3.** Mother who always understand how Aurora feels  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 3** Scene 3

Scene 3	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:16:19-00:16:32) Aurora feels sad because her father does not appreciate her abilities and instead tells her to teach her younger sister so that she can be like her.	Aurora looked disappointed after talking to her father, and in the next scene, her mother approached her and whispered softly, "Good job, my child."	Aurora's disappointed expression shows that she needs validation from her father. The emotional communication gap between father and child.	Reinforcing that women (mothers) are the center of warmth, while men (fathers) tend to be symbols of emotional distance.



**Figure 4.** The mother cried on her husband's embrace  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 4** Scene 4

Scene 4	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:45:04-00:45:30) The mother cries in her father's arms. Losing her child makes her heart feel fragile.	A mother crying hysterically because she has not been able to come to terms with her trauma after losing her child, while being hugged by her husband.	The emotional journey of a family halted by grief reveals inner wounds that are not expressed verbally but visualized through objects and empty stares.	A mother's love never ends, even when her child is gone. The film uses the screen to narrate myths as a reminder that women's and mothers' emotions are not weaknesses but strengths in the form of honesty.



**Figure 5.** Awan and Kala chatting and eating on Stall on the side of the road (Source: Netflix)

**Table 5.** Scene 5

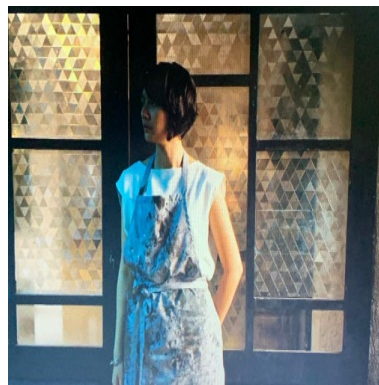
Scene 5	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:53:20-00:53:55) Kale tells Awan about the meaning of freedom, about the meaning of life and being yourself.	Awan and Kale talked in the mini metro about the meaning of freedom, then continued their time together at a simple eatery.	The mini metro became a symbol of freedom. The conversation between Awan and Kale depicted the phase where Awan began to open himself up to the outside world. Eating on the side of the road represented the freedom to be oneself, enjoying life and determining one's path without fear.	Awan builds a new myth about young women who define freedom through experience and the process of self-discovery.



**Figure 6.** Awan arrived home late and being reprimanded by his father (Source: Netflix)

**Table 6.** Scene 6

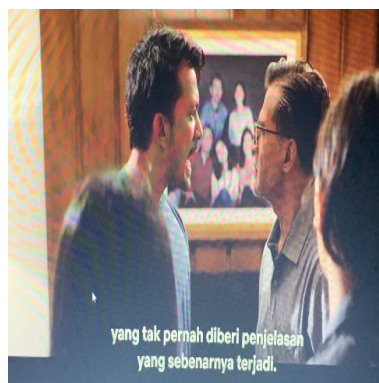
Scene 6	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:57:10-00:57:29) Awan spent time with Kale until he lost track of time. Their interesting conversation turned afternoon into evening, and Awan ended up going home late.	Father sat with an angry face and scolded Awan, who had just come home late and was still carrying his bag.	The father's reprimand depicts concern expressed harshly, with Awan's standing position signifying discomfort and emotional distance.	Fathers are positioned as figures who hold the authority to reprimand their children harshly in order to discipline them. Indonesian family myths interpret harsh reprimands.



**Figure 7.** Aurora stands in front of the door  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 7.** Scene 7

Scene 7	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (00:58:38-00:58:38) After hearing Awan and her father arguing, Aurora, who was in her study, felt disturbed.	Aurora stood silently in front of the door wearing a paint-stained apron, the dim light creating a tense atmosphere and revealing the emotional distance within the family.	The silence of Aurora symbolizes feelings of resentment and the habit of bottling up emotions. The door behind her symbolizes emotional boundaries within the family. Meanwhile, the cold color tone emphasizes stifled communication.	Reflecting a family culture that suppresses emotions in order to maintain peace, and portraying the role of women and older sisters who are often placed in a position of silence and submission.



**Figure 8.** The argument between Angkasa and his father  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 8.** Scene 8

Scene 8	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (01:18:55-01:20:20) Father and Angkasa argue because Angkasa is fed up with having to keep bottling up his feelings, which he has been forced to	A quarrel between a child and his father in the living room. Both are standing facing each other with tense expressions, while a family photo is visible behind them.	An argument that reveals hidden emotions. Their bodies leaning toward each other indicate an explosion of problems that can never be discussed. The family photo in the background suggests that this seemingly	This reflects the common perception in Indonesian families that problems are often kept hidden until they eventually explode later on. The father is seen as the most righteous figure, while the child represents a

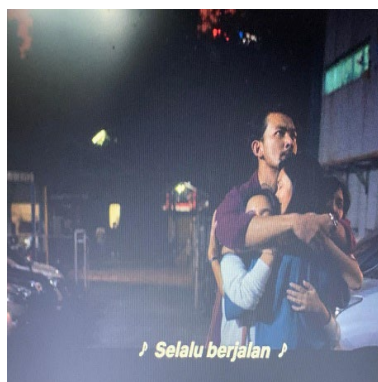
suppress all this time.		harmonious family is hiding wounds.	generation that wants honesty and openness.
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**Figure 9.** Mother looking at her child’s clothes  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 9.** Scene 9

Scene 9	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Duration (01:25:23-01:25:35) The mother stood silently, staring at the unworn clothes, her hands clasping them carefully, afraid to let go of the attachment that still lingered.	The mother held the baby's clothes and gloves while staring at them with a sad expression. She clutched them tightly as if she didn't want to let go.	Holding tightly to the baby's clothes and gloves gives the impression of longing and unhealed wounds, while the gentle yet heavy movements illustrate how deeply the loss of a child still lingers.	A mother always keeps her child's memories as a symbol of love that never fades. In Indonesian family culture, keeping quiet and holding on to objects is often seen as a way of maintaining emotional bonds.



**Figure 10.** The mother and both of her children embrace each other  
(Source: Netflix)

**Table 10.** Scene 10

Scene 10	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
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<p>Duration (1:55:22-01:55:28) After everyone felt better, they hugged each other and encouraged each other after the conflict they had gone through.</p>	<p>The mother and her children hugged each other tightly in the parking lot at night. Their faces looked emotional, as if they had just gone through a difficult situation.</p>	<p>A warm embrace and emotional expressions show relief and a sense of coming back together after being apart. Body language that shows mutual affection demonstrates a need for security.</p>	<p>The belief that family is always the place to return to after conflict. A hug is interpreted as a symbol of healing, showing that emotional closeness will always overcome distance and problems within the family.</p>
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The film (NKCTHI) depicts how families convey their feelings through scenes, each of which is not merely a plot filler but a symbol that illustrates the inner relationships, debates, and communication methods between family members. Therefore, this analysis aims to examine more deeply the meaning in each scene by relating it to Roland Barthes' theory, which is used to understand how denotation, connotation, and myth function in shaping the representation of emotional communication within the family as conveyed in the film.

#### Emotional Communication as Cultural Text

Scene 1 shows that the film (NKCTHI) builds an emotional narrative through experiences of loss and trauma, which form the basis of the family's emotional dynamics. Barthes explains that signs do not stop at denotative meaning, but rise to connotative meaning that describes emotions, relationships, and cultural values (C. Gardner, 2014) At the denotative level, the father experiences sadness after his wife suffers a miscarriage and cries in front of their child. This scene depicts the grief caused by the miscarriage and the loss of a family member. At the connotative level, the loss is felt not only by the mother who experienced it, but also by the father and child who are grieving and strengthening each other through body language. This can be seen through nonverbal expressions such as a tight embrace and a blank stare, which convey a much deeper emotional meaning. The father's tears not only describe a sense of loss, but also signify an emotional burden that replaces words without having to be spoken. Meanwhile, at the mythical level, the father's emotional expression is not a sign of weakness but a form of affection that strengthens the bonds within the family. This scene challenges the culture that often positions men as figures who must always be strong.

The same meaning is reinforced in scene 4, which denotatively shows the mother crying hysterically because she has not been able to come to terms with her past after losing her child and being embraced by her father. On a connotative level, the family's emotional journey, which is stuck in grief, is a sign of unresolved trauma. A mother's tears are not just an expression of sadness, but an emotional communication of deep inner wounds. The father's embrace is interpreted as emotional support that does not require verbal language. In Barthes' semiotics, the body and gestures become a second language in creating emotional meaning (Adilla & Sunarto, 2022). At the mythical level, a mother's love is never-ending. The film (NKCTHI) portrays mothers as the emotional center of the family and guardians of spiritual bonds. Barthes refers to this as a way for culture to speak about itself.

In relation to Indonesian culture, motherhood is spoken of as a symbol of emotional loyalty and strength of character. (Niken Razaq Sandi Prastiwi et al., 2025)

The interpretation of the informants, based on their positions, such as dominant, negotiated, and oppositional. In the dominant position, three viewers saw the family's grief as natural and loving, while in the negotiated position, five viewers agreed but criticized the father's emotions in the film. The oppositional reading emerges from five viewers who view the family in the film as unhealthy and capable of creating emotional distance between family members. Thus, the film not only displays emotions but also shapes how viewers understand family grief in the context of Indonesian culture.

#### Representation of Warmth and Family Harmony

Scene 2 depicts a harmonious family, full of laughter and togetherness. Semiotically, this scene is a representation or denotation, such as a father, mother, and children enjoying togetherness in a house that depicts a harmonious family. However, at the connotative level, an open and warm family is not only spoken but also expressed through body language. This warmth is a form of depiction that families often use to maintain an image of harmony. Barthes explains that this is the Myth of Harmony, a cultural ideology that defines the ideal family as one that always appears happy (Cazan-, n.d.). At the mythical level, the family becomes the primary space for building children's emotions and character. Barthes' theory explains that myths work by simplifying reality into narratives that seem natural. The film (NKCTHI) uses this as an ideological backdrop shaped by emotional conflict, so that the audience understands that harmony is a social construct, not a complete emotional state.

The alignment between the film's representation and reality in the field is evident in the interview results, which show that three viewers felt it was relevant to their family dynamics (Fujiah, 2025), However, two audience members stated that they did not feel the imagery in the film was vivid enough. (Rosdiana, 2025)

#### Emotional Inequality in Families

Scene 3 depicts the emotional injustice between father and child, especially between Aurora and Awan. Through Barthes' analysis, it can be seen that the father reprimands and responds harshly, which illustrates the denotative meaning. Aurora looks disappointed after talking to her father, and her mother offers support by saying, "My wonderful child." At the connotative level, Aurora's disappointment shows her desire to be validated by her father. Her mother's gentle response indicates a different emotional role, that of the mother. In the sign system, the difference in response creates an unequal emotional meaning. This is in line with patriarchal cultural norms, where fathers are often portrayed as the ones who maintain discipline and find it difficult to express affection verbally. (Subandi, 2011). The myth reinforces the idea that women are the center of warmth, while men tend to create emotional distance. This myth is described as emotional injustice within the family.

Scene 6 at the denotative level shows the father sitting with an angry face and scolding the child for coming home late. The father's harsh tone and body language are signs of emotional dominance. At the connotative level, the scolding is depicted as a form of uncommunicated concern. Barthes' semiotics explains that anger is a signifier that masks other emotions, such as fear of loss and anxiety (Agisa et al., 2021). At the mythical level,

fathers are depicted as figures who have the power to use anger as a disciplinary tool. This myth justifies emotionally unbalanced communication with emotional distance between parents and children.

#### Repressed Emotions: Cultural Representation

Scene 7 depicts how family members, especially Aurora, often choose to remain silent when faced with emotional pressure. Silence, dark spaces, and physical distance are visual cues that convey emotion. In Indonesian culture, especially Javanese culture, expressions of anger or disappointment are often considered impolite and are therefore best kept to oneself (Difa & Setyawan, 2024). Meanwhile, Barthes explains that signs such as closed doors and cool tones create the Myth of Emotional Restraint, which is the belief in showing maturity and maintaining family harmony. (Lestari & Suryanto, 2025)

Levels of meaning Denotation Aurora stands in front of the door wearing a paint-stained apron, the dim light creating a tense atmosphere. At the connotative level, the silence depicts feelings of annoyance and the habit of bottling up emotions. Silence becomes a sign of pent-up emotional communication, while the door serves as a symbol of emotional boundaries, and the dim light signifies a depressed inner mood. This is a reflection of the cultural myth of families who often suppress their emotions in order to maintain peace, and of women and older sisters who are expected to be quiet and submissive. This indicates that silence is the key to maturity.

Scene 8 shows a scene with a denotative meaning, such as an argument between a child and his father in the living room, where both are standing and facing each other with tense expressions. Real events about arguments within families at this stage allow viewers with similar experiences to interpret this scene as a form of unspoken emotional communication, where silence serves as a means of conveying pain that is difficult to express verbally (Sabila, 2025). At the level of connotation, the argument displays pent-up emotions, with the bodies moving closer together depicting an explosion of problems that can never be expressed. The tense posture of the bodies in space is a sign of suppressed feelings. The family photo in the background serves as a symbol depicting the image of a harmonious family, neatly framed and contrasting with the reality of emotional turmoil. At the level of cultural belief myths within Indonesian families, problems are not discussed openly in order to maintain harmony.

Barthes' perspective is that myths work by naturalizing power, as if it were normal for fathers to control communication and children to suppress their emotions. However, the film (NKCTHI) indirectly illustrates this view by showing the negative impact. (Damanik, 2022)

#### Emotional Openness in Family Relationships

Scene 9 at the denotative level shows the mother putting on the baby's clothes and gloves while staring with a sad expression, showing that simple activities without dialogue create real events that describe sadness that is still felt and unresolved. At the connotative level, the mother keeps her child's memories as a symbol of love that will never fade. In Barthes' view, inanimate objects become active emotional signs because they are no longer mere clothing, but an emotional language that communicates grief without words.

(Fadliansyah & Bustam, n.d.) Meanwhile, at the mythical level, it depicts a mother's belief that she will always cherish memories of her child as a form of affection. In this scene, the mother's action of holding her baby's clothes is normalized as a very natural expression of love.

Scene 10 shows the most emotional moment when the family finally opens old wounds and forgives each other. Denotatively, the mother and her children hug each other tightly in the parking lot at night. Their faces look emotional, as if they have just gone through a difficult situation. There is no long dialogue, but the hug happens suddenly and tightly. The hug, tears, and warm lighting convey a sense of calm, while the connotative meaning of the tight hug and emotion depicts a sense of relief. Body language replaces the words that have failed to be expressed. At the mythical level, there is a belief that family is always a place to return to and a space for emotional healing. Hugs are interpreted as a symbol of all-encompassing love, like the meaning of healing, acceptance, and emotional return, because the myth is that family is a place to return to. (Yemima et al., 2023)

This moment is depicted based on the film audience (NKCTHI) based on their experiences to assess their emotional relationship with their families. For viewers who have had similar experiences, this scene is understood as a form of emotional healing, while for viewers who have not had similar experiences, it is only understood as an idealized depiction of how a family should resolve its emotional issues. This is reinforced by the results in the field, where three viewers stated that this scene was relevant to their family experiences (Wulandari, 2025). Meanwhile, two other viewers admitted that they did not feel a strong connection to the scene (Safitri, 2025). This scene confirms that the process of interpretation is diverse and greatly influenced by the background experiences of each viewer.

## Conclusion

The depiction of emotional communication in films (NKCTHI) through signs such as facial expressions, body language, atmosphere, and relationships between characters is interpreted at the denotative level as a real representation of the emotions displayed. From the ten scenes analyzed, it can be seen that loss, the way parents express emotions, the habit of bottling up feelings, and the process of mutual forgiveness are important parts of the family story seen in the film, which at the connotative level depicts emotional conflict and communication distance. The audience interprets each scene differently according to their own experiences, thus forming diverse connotative meanings. This film not only depicts the reality of how families often communicate emotionally, but also creates a myth about families that are considered harmonious. Further research is recommended to expand the analysis to other films and use different methods or involve more viewers, so that the results are more diverse and comprehensive.

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