

Visual Storytelling Analysis in the Film “Grusah Grusuh” About Misscommunication

Rozzy Aditya Octavianto¹, Nur Maghfirah Aeshtetika²

^{1,2} Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, Indonesia



DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/icoss.v2i2.421>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: April 15, 2025

Final Revised: May 01, 2025

Accepted: May 11, 2025

Published: May 24, 2025

Keywords:

Visual Storytelling

Film

Lack of Communication

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to examine how visual storytelling techniques in Paniradya Kaistimewan's short film *Grusah Grusuh* depict the theme of communication breakdown among citizens. **Method:** A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, analyzing 15 selected scenes using Bruce Block's framework of seven visual components – space, line, shape, tone, color, movement, and rhythm. Data were gathered through observation and documentation, with scene selection based on their thematic relevance to miscommunication and social tension. **Results:** The analysis reveals that visual elements such as the use of deep space, line closure, contrasting and saturated colors, dynamic tracking shots, and rhythmic repetition of audio-visual patterns effectively create narrative tension and convey the consequences of poor communication without relying heavily on dialogue. **Novelty:** This study contributes to the discourse on film and communication studies by highlighting the role of visual storytelling as a powerful medium for representing social issues. It demonstrates that the integration of cinematic techniques can substitute for verbal expression in illustrating the dynamics of miscommunication and its impact on communal relationships, an area rarely explored in prior research on short films.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is basically the process of conveying ideas and feelings from the communicator to the recipient. In general, communication is the process of expressing thoughts or feelings to others by utilizing symbols as a medium, such as language, writing, and others [1]. One form of media that continues to evolve in the modern era is film. Film is an effective means of conveying messages about certain issues, as the messages conveyed can easily reach a wide audience [2]. Films themselves are a form of mass media that convey messages in audio-visual format, utilizing dialogue and scenes in the storyline [3]. Meanwhile, Law No. 33 of 2009 on film defines film as a work of cultural art within the social structure and mass media that is created based on the principles of cinematography and then presented or shown to the public through the media [4].

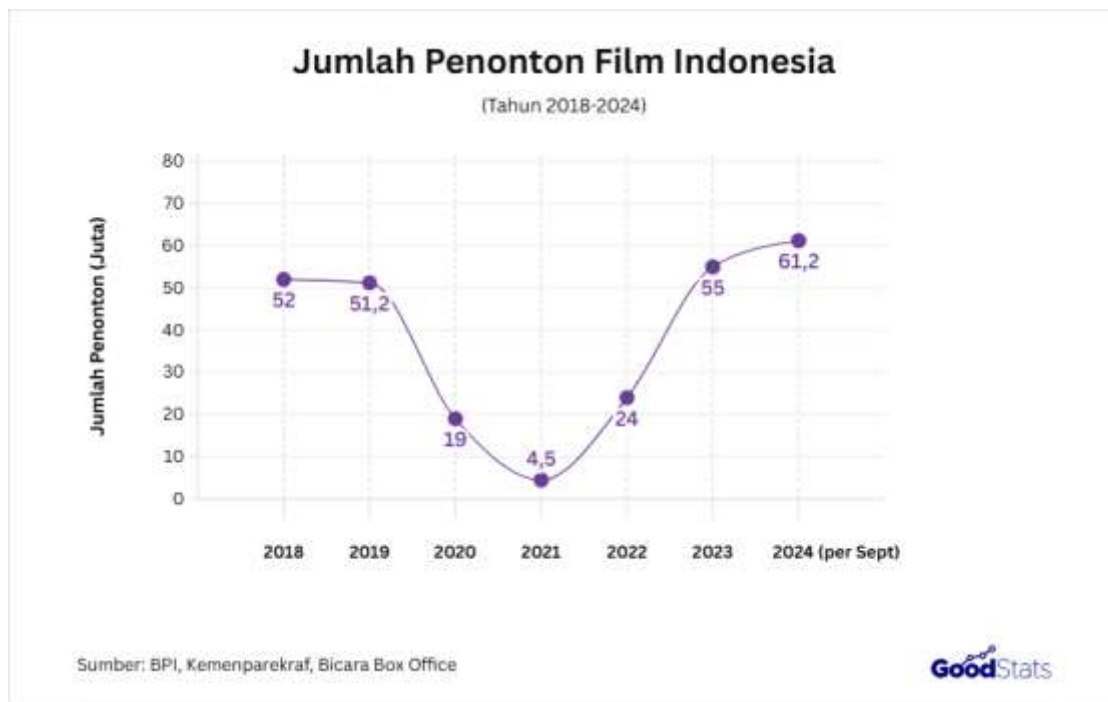


Figure 1. Number of Movie Viewers in Indonesia

Data from GoodStats in Figure 1 shows the trend in movie attendance in Indonesia from 2018 to 2024. Initially, the number of moviegoers was fairly stable at 52 million in 2018 and 51.2 million in 2019. However, 2020 was a drastic turning point, with the number of moviegoers plummeting to 19 million, then falling further to 4.5 million in 2021, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the number of viewers jumped to 24 million, then continued to increase rapidly to 55 million in 2023. As of September 2024, this figure has improved further, reaching 61.2 million viewers. This data shows that films remain an important part of Indonesian society [5]. The Indonesian film industry is increasingly influenced by Westernization, which can be seen in the style of dress, manner of speaking, and storylines that prioritize Western culture over local culture. In a film, there is one important thing, namely visual storytelling, which is the ability of images to convey the meaning of a story in depth. Images with meaning are not produced by chance, but through careful planning, where every element, from visual elements and colors to shadows, has emotional, symbolic, and connotative meaning. Every detail in an image is arranged with a specific purpose to convey a message or narrative effectively [6] [7] [8]. Storytelling is a form of communication in conveying events, both real and fictional, through media such as images, audiovisuals, and sound. This art can also be interpreted as a way of describing life stories, which include ideas, beliefs, personal experiences, or lessons learned, in the form of a story [9].



Figure 2. Number of Views and Thumbnails for Grusah Grusuh Movie

One film that is interesting to study from the perspective of visual storytelling about the lack of communication is Paniradya Kaistimewan's film entitled "Grusah Grusuh". The film was aired on Paniradya Kaistimewan's YouTube channel, uploaded on December 30, 2024, and has been viewed 97,922 times and received 1.1 thousand likes. This film is based on social reality, telling the story of Javanese culture, namely "mawa tata," which means that Javanese people have rules for living, that being overly suspicious brings misfortune, and that not thinking things through leads to misfortune.

The film begins with Tumini wanting to go to Mrs. Broto's house. Halfway there, Tumini calls Mrs. Broto because she has forgotten the way to her house, but Tumini's cell phone suddenly dies. Tumini continues her journey and is still confused about finding Mrs. Broto's house. Tumini sees Gantari playing with dolls and asks her about Mrs. Broto's house, who eventually asks Gantari to take her to Mrs. Broto's house. At that moment, Ndaru sees Gantari with a stranger, Tumini. Ndaru immediately reports this to Gantari's father, Pak Mintarjo, saying that Gantari has been kidnapped. The news spreads to the residents, who eventually find Tumini. The residents take the law into their own hands without hearing Tumini's explanation. Drajat witnessed this. Drajat separated the residents who were judging Tumini and began to question Tumini and Gantari. It turned out that Tumini had only asked Gantari to take her to Mrs. Broto's house. The film highlights social issues such as the lack of good communication between residents and how easily people are provoked by information that may not be true.

Bruce Block, in his book entitled *The Visual Story: Creating The Visual Structure of Film, TV, and Digital Media*, states that there are seven basic visual components, including Space. Space in visual narration encompasses how an image or scene is arranged, both in two dimensions (2D) and three dimensions (3D). This space can be divided into several categories, namely deep space, flat space, limited space, and ambiguous space. Lines are used to create emotions and meaning. Straight lines are often associated with stability and formality, while curved lines reflect softness or movement. Shapes are visual elements found in visual space, both flat and deep. Shapes are divided

into two types, namely two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Examples of two-dimensional shapes include circles, squares, and triangles, while examples of three-dimensional shapes include spheres, cubes, and pyramids. Tone refers to the level of light and dark in an image. High tone contrast can menciptakan ketegangan, sedangkan nada yang seragam menciptakan rasa damai. Color is a powerful tool for creating emotions, setting the mood, or conveying information. For example, warm colors such as red and yellow are often used to depict energy or passion, while cool colors such as blue reflect calmness, sadness, or despair. Movement includes everything that moves on the screen, whether it be the subject, the camera, or changes in the visual composition. Movement naturally attracts the audience's attention and can be used to guide their gaze or create dynamics in the story. Rhythm is an element that is easy to feel but difficult to explain. According to Bruce Block's theory, rhythm in film can be conveyed through what is seen, heard, and felt [10]. Researchers will use these seven basic components to analyze the storytelling in the film *Grusah Grusuh*, which shapes the narrative style with the aim of revealing how an object wants to be received by its target audience through text, images, or sound [11].

This study refers to a previous study by (Trisakti & Alifahmi, 2018) entitled "Destination Brand Storytelling: Narrative Analysis of the Ministry of Tourism's Video The Journey to A Wonderful World." The study aims to examine the application of the storytelling approach in tourism promotional videos produced by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism. The main focus was to understand how narrative elements were used to build the identity of tourist destinations and to evaluate the emotional impact on the audience. The results revealed that storytelling in these promotional videos was very effective in shaping the identity of the destinations. The narrative elements used not only succeeded in attracting the audience's attention but also increased their emotional attachment to the destinations being promoted.

The second study was conducted by (Martilova et al., 2024) with the title "Storytelling of Kaesang and Erina's Wedding Visual Communication on the Instagram Account @Thebridestory." This study shows that the visual narrative of Kaesang Pangarep and Erina Gudono's wedding was successfully conveyed in an interesting way through a series of photo and video posts on the Instagram account @Thebridestory. The narrative structure used refers to Gérard Genette's narrative theory, covering elements such as sequence, duration, and frequency. The wedding story was presented in a way that created an emotional connection with the audience, as seen from the high level of interaction in the form of likes and views. Additionally, this study identifies that the use of the hashtag #KaesayanganErina and the selection of key moments in the wedding successfully enhance visual appeal and marketing effectiveness. This makes the account a successful platform for promoting wedding photography and videography businesses in Indonesia.

The third study was conducted by (Sulistiyawati, 2019) with the title "Analysis of Basic Visual Components of Cinematography in the Live Action Film *Green Book*," which discusses how visual elements support the film's narrative. This study aims to

analyze basic visual elements such as space, lines, shapes, colors, rhythm, and movement with reference to the theory proposed by Bruce Block. The study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach through observation of scenes in the film *Green Book*. The results of the analysis show that this film uses visual elements effectively to support the narrative and convey emotions. For example, deep space and limited space are used to create visual depth, while horizontal lines and line closure help build a neat compositional structure. Soft monochromatic colors, such as yellow, create a warm atmosphere, while contrasting colors such as red are used to highlight the main character's role. Camera movements, including tracking shots and panning, provide a smooth visual flow, while rhythm is displayed through the repetition of elements such as lights and chairs in concert scenes. This study concludes that the mature use of visual elements can improve the quality of visual narratives in audiovisual media, making it an important reference in the study of visual storytelling.

The fourth study was conducted by (Tri Adi Prasetyo, Dyah Arum Retnowati, Latief Rakhman Hakim, 2018) with the title "Building Visual Storytelling with Dynamic Composition in the Cinematography of the Fiction Film *Asmaradana*." The purpose of this study was to explore how dynamic composition in cinematography can be used as the main medium in building effective visual storytelling. The results of the study show that the use of dynamic composition in the cinematography of the film *Asmaradana* successfully conveys the disharmony between characters through the dominance of the size and position of the main object in the frame. Visual elements such as framing, lighting, color, and perspective are used strategically to build the atmosphere and emotions that support the narrative. In addition, this study confirms that every visual element in a film must be consciously designed to convey a deeper meaning to the audience, in line with the visual storytelling theory proposed by Bruce Block. Based on previous research and the background described above, the research question in this study is: How does visual storytelling in the film "Grusah Grusuh" depict a lack of communication? With this research question, the main objective of this study is to analyze the application of visual storytelling in the film "Grusah Grusuh" in depicting a lack of communication.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methods. According to N. Harahap, qualitative methods objectively and participatively observe social phenomena to understand various symptoms that arise in a particular context [12]. Qualitative research begins with the reality or phenomena that occur in the social environment, rather than based on samples or populations [13]. The data sources for this study refer to information obtained by the researcher and then analyzed to find answers to the research questions [14]. This film has a total of 15 scenes. However, in this study, the researcher selected scenes using purposive sampling techniques, choosing scenes based on depictions of a lack of communication in society, and selected 2 scenes. The data source in this study was the film "Grusah Grusuh," which was watched on YouTube. Data collection was carried

out through documentation and direct observation of the research object. The observation was conducted by repeatedly watching and listening to the content or story of the film "Grusah Grusuh", then taking screen captures of each relevant scene for analysis. Data analysis used a descriptive approach based on Bruce Block's seven basic visual components, which include space, line, shape, color, movement, story, and rhythm. This analysis was used because Bruce Block's theory is able to break down the visual elements in films in a detailed and systematic manner, thereby supporting the research objective of understanding the construction of visual meaning in films. After conducting the analysis, the researcher drew conclusions by describing the results of the analysis in a detailed and structured manner to provide a clear understanding of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

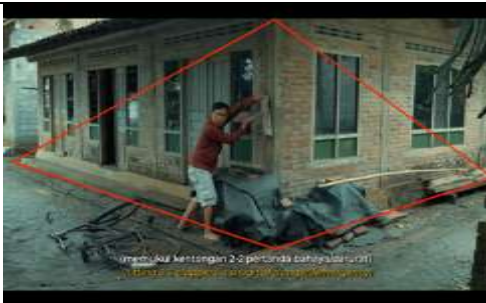
Results

In revealing how visual storytelling depicts the lack of communication in the film Grusah Grusuh, researchers collected data from relevant scenes regarding the lack of communication in the film. The researchers watched the film repeatedly while making observations, then categorized the data based on the analysis concept used, namely Bruce Block's visual storytelling theory. This analysis method was carried out by analyzing seven basic visual components, namely space, line, shape, tone, color, movement, and rhythm, to understand how the visual elements in the film depict a lack of communication.

Scene 9		
Element	Image Fragment	Analysis
Space		Showing Ndaru watching Gantari being carried by Tumini. Visually, the scene shows deep space with a one-point perspective, seen from the wall of plants on the right and the plants on the left that lead to a vanishing point, directing the audience's focus to Ndaru, who is surprised to see Gantari being carried by Tumini, a person he does not know.

Figure 2

Line		Showing Tumini talking to Gantari. The scene shows the presence of a Line component, namely Line Closure, which directs Tumini's gaze to Gantari, directing the audience's focus to the two characters who are interacting.
Shape		Showing Gantari playing with dolls in front of her house. The scene has a Shape element in the form of squares that are clearly visible in the structure of the doors and windows of Gantari's house.
Tone		It shows Ndaru looking suspicious as Gantari talks to a stranger, Tumini. The tone element in this scene is reflective control, which creates a balance of light between the object and the background. There is also a use of coincidence of tone in this scene, namely the contrasting color of Ndaru's shirt, which remains the main focus of the audience.
Color		Showing Gantari being asked by Tumini to take her to Mrs. Broto's house, Tumini's anxious expression makes the audience suspicious as to whether Tumini is really going to Mrs. Broto's house or not. This scene has saturated colors, adding to the dramatic effect.

Movement		Showing Ndaru rushing over when he sees Gantari riding on Tumini's motorcycle. The movement element in this scene is a tracking shot, where the camera follows the object as it moves. In this scene, the object moves to the right, and the camera tracks the object to the right.
Rhythm	-	-
Scene 10		
Element	Image Fragment	Analysis
Space		Showing Ndaru ringing the doorbell of Pak Mintarjo's house (Gantari's father). Visually, the scene shows an element of deep space with a two-point perspective, seen from the angle of the shot at the corner of the house, which creates two vanishing points on the right and left sides of the frame, directing the viewer's focus to the object in the center of the frame.
Line		It shows Ndaru talking hurriedly with Mr. Mintarjo, because Ndaru sees Gantari being taken away by Tumini, which leads Ndaru to speculate that Gantari has been kidnapped. The scene shows the Line component, namely Line Closure, which directs Ndaru's gaze to Mr. Mintarjo, causing Mr. Mintarjo to panic.

Shape		It shows Ndaru hurriedly knocking on Mr. Mintarjo's door after seeing Gantari being scolded by Tumini. This scene has a Shape element in the form of squares that are clearly visible in the structure of the doors and windows of Mr. Mintarjo's house.
Tone		Showing Ndaru reporting to Pak Mintarjo that Gantari has been kidnapped. This scene has an element of tone coincidence because the contrasting colors of Ndaru and Pak Mintarjo's clothes remain the main focus of the audience. The color element in this shot shows that the surrounding colors are darker than the colors of Ndaru and Pak Mintarjo's clothes, which is done to keep the audience focused on the objects.
Color		
Movement	-	-
Rhythm		Showing Ndaru ringing the kentongan with a 2-2 rhythm, signaling that there is a thief in the village. This scene contains elements of rhythm, namely visual repetition due to the 2-2 pattern of the kentongan sound, which creates an audio rhythm, as well as the repetitive movement of Ndaru's hands as he strikes the kentongan.

Discussion

Broadly speaking, the short film *Grusah Grusuh* tells the story of a lack of communication between residents, which causes a simple situation to turn into a prolonged misunderstanding. This is depicted through a series of scenes that show the characters' expressions and body language, which are filled with suspicion, anxiety, and haste. In the shot where Tumini gives Gantari a ride, Tumini's anxious expression arouses Ndaru's suspicion. Without direct confirmation, Ndaru immediately concludes that Gantari is in danger.

The use of visual elements such as tone, color, movement, and line reinforce the narrative. Contrasting and saturated colors, especially in the characters' clothing and surroundings, direct the audience's focus and create visual tension that supports the atmosphere of misunderstanding. Ndaru's hurried movements, reinforced by tracking shot techniques, show unfounded panic that seems convincing because there has been no prior communication.

The image above shows how a conclusion drawn without further dialogue or explanation can trigger a chain reaction of suspicion, panic, and alarm. The overall visuals of the film emphasize that the main message of the story is not only about the individual characters, but also about the weak social communication system in the environment where they live.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The analysis of *Grusah Grusuh* demonstrates that visual storytelling, through the consistent use of space, line, shape, tone, color, movement, and rhythm, effectively conveys the theme of miscommunication and its role in generating social tension without relying on extensive dialogue. **Implication :** This highlights the potential of cinematic visual composition as a medium to represent complex social dynamics, offering audiences not only narrative engagement but also reflective insights into the significance of communication in everyday life. **Limitation :** However, this study is limited to an analysis of a single short film and relies solely on Bruce Block's framework, thus restricting broader generalization and the inclusion of alternative theoretical perspectives. **Future Research :** Further studies should expand the scope to include comparative analyses of multiple short films or cross-genre works, integrate audience reception studies, and explore interdisciplinary approaches that link visual storytelling with communication theories to enrich the understanding of how films construct and deliver social messages.

REFERENCES

- [1] A. D. Khafi and P. Febriana, "Analisis Semiotik Video Sal Priadi Mesra-Mesraannya Kecil-Kecilan Dulu," *J. Bhs. Drh. Indones.*, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 18, 2024, doi: 10.47134/jbdi.v1i1.2710.
- [2] B. Kristianto, M. Leba, and A. M. Elvina, "Analisis Naratif Todorov Film Story of Dinda Narrative Analysis of Todorov Film Story of Dinda," *J. Public Corner Fisip Univ. Wiraraja*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 1-14, 2022.

- [3] F. A. Rauf and R. Agusta, "Representasi Pesan Moral dalam Film Topi Tindak Tanduk Subasita Karya Paniradya Kaistimewan," vol. 7, no. 02, pp. 242–251, 2024, doi: <https://doi.org/10.25008/wartaiski.v7i2.279>.
- [4] M. A. Zainiya and N. M. Aesthetika, "John Fiske's Semiotic Analysis About Body Shaming in Imperfect Film," *Indones. J. Cult. Community Dev.*, vol. 11, pp. 1–13, Mar. 2022, doi: 10.21070/ijccd2022773.
- [5] M. A. Fikri Irhamni, "Jumlah Bioskop Masih Minim, Bagaimana Harapan untuk Perfilman Indonesia?" [Online]. Available: <https://goodstats.id/article/jumlah-bioskop-yang-masih-minim-harapan-untuk-perfilman-indonesia-UeaiX>
- [6] F. Syarief, J. Jamalullail, and F. Napitupulu, "Representasi Makna Persahabatan Kata Jancuk Dalam Film Yowisben 2 (Analisis Semiotika Ferdinand De Saussure)," *J. Media Penyiaran*, vol. 3, no. 01, pp. 17–28, Jul. 2023, doi: 10.31294/jmp.v3i01.1773.
- [7] M. Septiani, "Representasi Pesan Moral dalam Film Merry Riana Mimpi Sejuta Dollar," *J. Chem. Inf. Model.*, vol. 53, no. 9, pp. 1689–1699, 2019.
- [8] T. A. Prasetyo, D. A. Retnowati, and L. R. Hakim, "Membangun Visual Storytelling dengan komposisi dinamik pada sinematografi film fiksi 'Asmaradana,'" *Sense J. Film Telev. Stud.*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2018.
- [9] D. Wardiah, "Peran storytelling dalam meningkatkan kemampuan menulis, minat membaca dan kecerdasan emosional siswa," *Wahana Didakt. J. Ilmu Kependidikan*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 42–56, 2017.
- [10] B. Block, *The Visual Story Creating the Visual Structure of Film, TV, and Digital Media*, Second Edi., vol. 7, no. 2. Oxford: Elsevier Inc, 2008.
- [11] F. A. Trisakti and H. Alifahmi, "Destination Brand Storytelling: Analisis Naratif Video The Journey to A Wonderful World Kementerian Pariwisata," *J. Komun. Indones.*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2018, doi: 10.7454/jki.v7i1.9692.
- [12] N. Harahap, "Penelitian kualitatif," 2020.
- [13] H. Ardial, *Paradigma dan model penelitian komunikasi*. Bumi Aksara, 2022.
- [14] H. Salim, *Penelitian Pendidikan: Metode, Pendekatan, dan Jenis*. Kencana, 2019.
- [15] W. Prihatiningsih, "Motif penggunaan media sosial instagram di kalangan remaja," *Communication*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 51–65, 2017.

Rozzy Aditya Octavianto

Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Email: adityarozzy@gmail.com

*** Nur Maghfirah Aeshtetika (Corresponding Author)**

Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, Indonesia

Email: fira@umsida.ac.id
