

ANALYSIS OF VISUAL ELEMENTS AND DESIGN HIERARCHY ON THE MOVIE POSTER HOME SWEET LOAN (2024) IN PERSPECTIVE VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN

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Article Info

Article history:

Received June 21, 2026

Revised July 01, 2026

Accepted July 02, 2026

Keywords:

Film Poster, Visual Communication Design, Visual Hierarchy, Semiotics, Home Sweet Loan

ABSTRACT

A film poster is not just a promotional tool, it also serves as a narrative representation of the entire cinematic work offered to the public. This study aims to analyze the visual elements and design hierarchy in the poster for the film Home Sweet Loan (2024) by director Sabrina Rochelle Kalangie, produced by Visinema Pictures and Legacy Pictures. This study uses a qualitative approach with semiotic analysis and visual communication design analysis methods, starting from the theoretical framework of visual composition, typography, color, and the hierarchy of graphic elements. The results of the analysis show that the poster applies a systematic visual hierarchy through typographic arrangements, lighting contrasts, and the placement of figures that reflect the social dynamics and family relationships in the film's narrative. The dominant earth tone color palette, the composition of the dining table as a visual focus, and the contrasting expressions of the main character compared to other characters are effective communication strategies to convey the theme of financial struggles and family problems. Overall, the Home Sweet Loan poster successfully encapsulates the emotional complexity of the film into a consistent and communicative visual frame, while also showing the maturity of visual communication design practices in contemporary Indonesian films.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian films have experienced rapid growth over the past decade. This industry's development is marked by the increasing number of local film productions, the growing number of cinema audiences, and the increasing technical and narrative quality of the films produced, all of which contribute to their success. A complex marketing ecosystem exists, and one of the most crucial elements within it is the film poster. Before a film is shown in theaters, its poster has already greeted audiences on social media, on cinema walls, and distributed through various digital platforms. Film posters are visual-based media that are expected to convey information to audiences about the general overview of the film (Ningtyas & Priskila, 2024).

The film *Home Sweet Loan* (2024) is one of the works produced by Visinema Pictures adapted from a novel by Almira Bastari. Legacy Pictures also participated in the production of this film, which was released on September 26, 2024. This film raises themes that are very relevant to the lives of today's generation such as financial struggles, family dynamics, and the dream of having your own home. The thing that wants to be highlighted in this poster is the atmosphere of a dining table with family with intimate lighting, this poster immediately became the talk of the public who were considered successful in representing the emotional feeling of the film strongly. However, behind the visual impression that looks natural, there is a careful and structured design from a designer.

In every element of the poster, including typography, color, composition, lighting, and hierarchy of graphic elements, all are strategically selected and arranged to achieve certain communication goals in visual communication design (DKV) (Lupton, n.d.). The study of this film poster is an important result for DKV research because film is a combination of art, communication, and marketing strategy. However, academic studies that specifically analyze Indonesian film posters within the DKV framework are still very few compared to studies that analyze international film posters (Farikhin & Mediva, 2025).

The gap underlying this research is the lack of in-depth studies related to contemporary Indonesian film poster design practices, especially those related to technical design elements with the cultural and social meanings that surround them. Most existing studies tend to stop at surface descriptive analysis, without looking at how these design decisions work systemically to produce certain meanings and effects on the audience (Inaia et al., 2025). This research focuses on filling this gap with an in-depth and critical analysis of the *Home Sweet Loan* poster.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Visual Communication Design is a scientific field that positions design as a vehicle for conveying messages to specific audiences through visual media. (Dr. Hj. Hastin Umi Anisah SE et al., nd). In its development, DKV not only covers aesthetic aspects, but also psychology, sociology, and economics and visual communication. (Muallimah, 2022) Explains that visual communication design is the science of how to design a visual work that prioritizes the communication process towards the target audience. According to this definition, designers are more than just creating beautiful works of art. They are also responsible for communication related to the social impact of their work. One of the responsibilities of a film poster is to convey the essence of the film accurately and attractively to the audience.

The practice of graphic design (DKV) has been significantly transformed by advances in digital technology. Contemporary film poster design now involves various digital technologies in its creation process, but still requires an understanding of basic design principles as a foundation (Buulolo et al., 2025). The result is a complex and layered design, with communicative and technical considerations intertwined in every detail. Visual hierarchy arranges design elements in such a way that the viewer's eye is naturally drawn from one element to another based on how important the element is to the message being conveyed. Visual hierarchy produces a structured and meaningful reading sequence through variations in size, color, contrast, placement, and typography according to (Landa, n.d.)

Gestalt psychology is related to the concept of visual hierarchy. It explains how the human brain groups and organizes visual stimuli based on principles such as proximity, similarity, continuity, and closure (Mubarok & Kom, 2023). Designers use these principles to create

effective and engaging compositions . In movie posters, visual hierarchy typically refers to the importance of elements in a layout. The hierarchy is created in several steps , from the largest element to the second largest , and so on (Sutrisno & Ganesha, 2024) . However , this hierarchy is not rigid ; brilliant designers often use this justification to create surprising effects or reinforce the intended message . As a science that studies signs and meaning , semiotics provides a very useful framework for analyzing movie posters. According to Roland Barthes, there are two levels of meaning in photographic images : denotation (the literal meaning of what is seen) and connotation (the cultural , ideological , or emotional meaning evoked by the image) . (Nurjanah, 2024) . Semiotic analysis in the context of film posters allows researchers to explore deeper meanings and go beyond visual descriptions .

This theory is based on the view that every visual is a social text that has its own grammar , and can be analyzed through three main metafunctions , namely representational meaning (what is depicted) , interactional meaning (how the relationship between the creator and the audience is formed) , and compositional meaning (how visual elements are arranged to create meaning) (Peng, 2022) . This method is very suitable for the analysis of film posters because it involves a complex relationship between text , image , and audience . Semiotic analysis has been applied to Indonesian film posters in several previous studies . (Solicitor et al., 2024) examined the posters of Indonesian horror films released in 2022 , finding that dark colors and asymmetrical compositions function as effective markers for the horror genre . In addition , in a study (Jonauskaite & Mohr, 2025) found that warm lighting is a visual strategy used to convey positive emotions and hope.

Shape , line, space , texture , color , and typography are the basic components of graphic design that synergize with each other . (Lupton, nd) Emphasizing that a deep understanding of each of these elements and how they interact with each other is the foundation of effective design techniques . Each element is not just a technical component , but also contains meaning that contributes to the overall message of the composition . In the field of visual communication design , typography is considered both a linguistic and visual component . According to (Rahma & Utami, 2021) in their research , the font or typography used is very important in creating a concept for a film poster design in accordance with the concept of the story in the film and can convey the message well and clearly to the audience . For example , clean and minimalist sans-serif letters are considered modern and professional , while organic and irregular letters give an impression of authenticity , warmth , and connection to everyday life .

Color theory is a broad and rich field of study in graphic design . In their research (Mansoor & Nurmalita Zahra, 2024) explains that color is commonly used as an expressive message in conveying feelings . Warm colors , such as brown , cream , and golden yellow , are often associated with longing , familiarity , and emotional warmth , while cool colors are often associated as part of the composition of a poster, a photo has a unique ability to build an emotional bond between the film and its audience . In a photo , facial expressions , body language , and interactions between characters can convey richer emotional information than verbal text (Mansoor & Nurmalita Zahra, 2024) . Lighting in photography is very important to create a certain atmosphere and direct the viewer 's attention to the most important elements in the composition .

Film posters not only function as a promotional media , but also as a quick delivery and initial representation of narrative , genre and emotional atmosphere to the audience (Sirajuddin et al., 2025) . Therefore , the analysis of film posters does not only focus on aspects related to design

and style , but also on how the visual representation is integrated into the broader social and cultural context .

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative methodology that relies on descriptive-interpretive analysis tools . Film posters, as works of design and communication art , require in-depth understanding that cannot be measured , so a qualitative approach was chosen (Putri et al., 2022) . The purpose of this study is not to determine how effective the poster is statistically . Instead , the goal is to understand how certain design choices create and convey meaning . Two main methods used simultaneously in this study are semiotic analysis based on the " visual grammar " framework that has been widely applied to poster studies (Budiastono & Noverino, 2024) , and analysis of design elements and principles within the DKV framework developed by (Lupton, n.d.) and (Landa, n.d.) . The combination of these two approaches allows for an analysis that includes deeper aspects of meaning and representation , as well as technical aspects of design .

The object of this research is the official poster for the film Home Sweet Loan (2024), produced by Visinema Pictures and Legacy Pictures. This poster is the film's primary official promotional material . It features the main image , the film's title , tagline, the names of the actors , and information regarding the film's release date . This analysis focuses on a high -resolution version of the poster , which allows for a detailed examination of each visual element in the composition . Research data were collected through systematic visual observation of the film poster. Each visual element was identified , cataloged , and then analyzed based on its function within the overall composition . The analysis process followed a four - stage workflow (Hugo et al., 2024) :

1. a systematic description of all observable elements ,
2. identify relationships and patterns between elements ,
3. interpretation of meaning based on a predetermined theoretical framework .
4. critical reflection on the implications of the analysis in a broader context .

To ensure the validity of the analysis , this study adopted a theoretical triangulation strategy (Inaia et al., 2025) , namely confirming the analysis findings using more than one theoretical framework . If a finding can be consistently explained by semiotic theory , color theory , and the principle of visual hierarchy at the same time , then the validity of the interpretation can be considered stronger than if it is only supported by a single theoretical framework .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Poster



Figure 1. Home Sweet Loan poster

The Home Sweet Loan movie poster features a scene in a simple and warm kitchen or dining room . There are six figures in the composition , one of which is the protagonist (Kak Luna) who is in a central position , and the other four figures are around the dining table . In addition , another figure is seen in the upper left corner . The entire scene was taken from a low -angle shot that displays a dramatic and intimate impression . Warm light dominates the entire composition , creating an atmosphere that invites a sense of nostalgia and family intimacy .

The film title , “ HomeSweet Loan” dominates the top of the poster with large typography and expressive , organic characters . Below the title , the tagline “ For the warriors of life ” can be seen written in teal (bluish green) which looks contrasting with the warm background , This makes it a focal point for people who see it . Information is also visible such as the name of the author of the adapted source novel , director , cast and release date which are arranged hierarchically on various parts of the poster.

Typographic Analysis



Figure 2. Film title typography

The typography on the Home Sweet Loan poster is the most prominent and meaningful element . The typeface used in the film's title has a hand-letter script character , each letter appearing to

be individually written with a texture identical to brushstrokes or chalk . Values such as truth , authenticity , and connection to everyday life are expressed through these organic and imperfect letters . This typography effectively suggests that the story to be told is not a polished or idealized fairy tale ; instead , it will be an honest and personal story rooted in real experience (Lupton, nd) . In addition , the rough and uneven letters can function as a visual symbol of the struggle of life itself . Although irregular and imperfect , the letters are still beautiful .

The size of the main title , which dominates the poster's composition , reflects the application of a clear visual hierarchy (Landa, n.d.) . The difference in size between the very large title and the smaller additional information creates a clear and intuitive hierarchy of information .



Figure 3. Tagline

There is a tagline " for the life fighters " using a different typeface from the title , bolder , cleaner , and clear readability . The teal color chosen (bluish green) creates a contrast from the dominance of warm colors throughout the poster to create a high visual value in this tagline , this element stands out as a separate but complementary element . In meaning , this tagline functions as a statement of self -identification that attracts the sympathy of the target audience who are struggling in their daily lives , especially in the economic context and the need for shelter .

YUNITA SIREGAR DERBY ROMERO RISTY TAGOR FITA ANGGRIANI AYUSHITA NUGRAHA ARIYO WAHAB WAFDA SAIFAN

Figure 3. Player names

The names are arranged in a horizontal row in smaller typefaces , toward the bottom of the poster. This layout follows the convention of film posters, where the actors' names are used as supporting information but not as overpowering ones . No actor 's name is printed larger than the others, which is appealing .

Color Analysis

A warm spectrum of golden brown , cream , amber, and olive green forms the color palette on the Home Sweet Loan poster. It is not surprising that this color palette was chosen because earth tones are associated with values of familiarity , simplicity , authenticity , and closeness to the real world (Itten, n.d.) . This color palette is very appropriate to be used as a cultural marker in the context of the film's theme , which highlights the lives of lower- middle -class families facing financial difficulties . This film wants to show that this is about the real world , not a glamorous or idealistic life . In particular , the dull brown background of the room creates an atmosphere that has been lived in for a long time , filled with memories , but also a little tired and heavy . In small contrast , the table surface covered by a white tablecloth decorated with various dishes on it displays effort and hope amidst limitations . This analysis is in line with (Prasetya et al., 2022) who said that warm colors and dull nuances are often used in Indonesian cinema to show social realism and real working class life .



Figure 4. Light spotlight

Besides functioning as a technical component of photography, lighting has symbolic meaning in this poster. The striking patterns of light and shadow (chiaroscuro) on the characters' faces are created by a light source that appears to come from above. This lighting technique, rooted in the European Baroque painting tradition and later adopted by cinematography, creates a hierarchy of visual attention and gives depth to the composition. Brighter faces are naturally more eye-catching (Kusuma, 2022).



Figure 5. Teal color in the tagline

By using teal in your tagline, you can add an interesting chromatic accent to your warm color palette. Teal is a combination of green and blue that is psychologically associated with confidence, calm, and hope (Jonaskaite & Mohr, 2025). The color choice for this tagline is not only visually strategic (providing contrast that makes the text easier to read), but also thematically meaningful; amidst a story of struggle filled with earthy colors, teal becomes a quiet but real whisper of hope.

Composition Analysis and Visual Hierarchy



Figure 6. Character composition

The Home Sweet Loan poster is composed using a modified bilateral symmetry principle , with the main character placed in the center of both the vertical and horizontal planes. The main character automatically becomes the focus or main point of interest of the composition because of this central placement (Landa, n.d.) . But the designer did not simply create a symmetrical composition ; other characters are arranged around the table to add a more complex and rich dynamic .



Figure 7. Picture of a table

As a compositional “floor” that stabilizes all the elements above it , the dining table that stretches horizontally across the bottom half of the poster serves as a ground line that divides the poster into two zones. The lower zone is communal and participatory (where other characters sit and interact), and the upper zone is individual and monumental (where the main character stands alone with a different expression from the others). This division of zones visually encodes the main conflicts in the film’s narrative , such as individual versus group , and personal expectations versus family pressures .

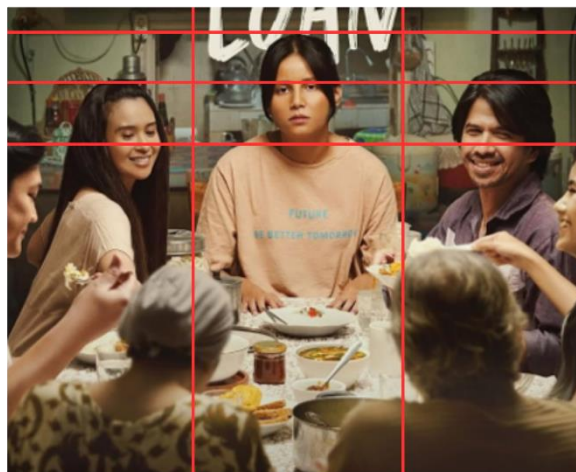


Figure 8. Position of the main character

The main character is positioned higher while the other characters are lower . In visual grammar , a higher position is usually associated with greater power , authority , or burden (Sanjaya et al., 2024) . However , the meaning of this poster is unclear . The main character standing may indicate his position as the sole bearer of the family's financial burden , or it may also indicate a time when he must make an important decision that will change the family's life .



Figure 9. Character expression

The elements play a role in being a strong differentiator in this composition, while almost all the characters appear with cheerful expressions and enjoy the atmosphere of the dinner table, the main character displays a gloomy expression, this creates a visual emotion that immediately communicates the film's dramatic conflict without saying a word. Among this happy family is bearing a burden that they are not aware of. According to Barthes, facial expressions and gestures are signs that convey meaning indirectly (Ningtyas & Priskila, 2024). *

Within the Gestalt theory framework, the position of the characters forming a circle around the table creates a strong closure effect so that the audience's eyes will naturally follow the imaginary curve that indirectly connects one character to another, then returns to the main character in the central part. This is in line with Gestalt theory which states that humans perceive a situation as a whole unit (Mubarok & Kom, 2023).

Analysis of Iconography and Cultural Context

As the main visual motif of this poster, the dining table has a significant cultural influence in Indonesian society. Eating together, especially dinner with family, is an important social event in Indonesian culture because it is a place where families gather, share stories, togetherness, and talk about various conflicts within themselves. The choice of a poster with a dining table background is a wise decision because it places the film in the context of Indonesian family life that is familiar to local audiences.



Figure 10. Background

The long - lived home of a lower - middle - class family , full of memories but also bearing limitations , is depicted in detail with rich backgrounds, such as dish racks , worn walls , and household knickknacks . This representation serves as a realistic signifier that makes viewers from similar backgrounds feel represented in the film . On the other hand , for viewers from different backgrounds , this representation serves as a window into social realities they may not have known (Prasetya et al ., 2022) .



Figure 11. Writing on the main character's clothes

The main character's attire , a casual t -shirt with the words "Future: Be Better Tomorrow," contains a sharp irony . The irony lies in the contrast between the burden radiated from his facial expression (trapped in the current stressful condition) and the aspirations written on the t-shirt (hoping for a better future) . In the poster's visual design , this small detail shows a very precise narrative level . Even the small writing on the t - shirt is carefully chosen to enhance the main message , as explained (Vojkovic, 2020) textual elements and details embedded in the film function as semiotics to communicate the character 's emotional and psychological state to the audience .

Analysis of the Relationship between Text and Images

The relationship between verbal text and visual images in semiotic theory can be described as a relation (the text clarifies or narrows the meaning of the image) or anchoring (the text and image complement each other to form a meaning that neither could achieve alone). The Home Sweet Loan poster utilizes both effectively (Afriyanti & Fine, 2025) . The title , "Home Sweet Loan" itself is a great play on words : they take the idiomatic phrase "Home Sweet Home," which is very popular among Indonesians , and then change the word "Home" to "Loan," which means loan . This word shift simultaneously creates a semantic surprise , brings up the main theme of the film (loans or credit as a way to get a house), and adds a somewhat sad comedic element to depict the financial difficulties that many Indonesians face today . This is the anchoring function of the text of the title because no image can convey all this from a play on words .

The tagline " For the Warriors of Life" helps clearly identify the audience . Rather than providing a description of the film's content , it directly addresses the audience and invites them to become part of the depicted community . This tagline creates a powerful connection effect when combined with the image of a familiar family dinner table . The image provides emotional context , while the text provides communal identification , transforming the poster from mere advertising to a form of recognition and solidarity (Afriyanti & Fine, 2025) .

Synthesis : The Effectiveness of Posters as a Communication Instrument

Combining all the analytical findings above , it can be concluded that the Home Sweet Loan poster is an example of effective and mature visual communication design . The organic design

and typography decisions, from the earth tone color palette, the asymmetrical placement of the characters in the composition to the details of the iconography rich in cultural meaning, work coherently to convey the essence of the film to the intended audience. This poster successfully solves the main problem faced by every film poster designer: how to convey the narrative complexity of a film that is more than ninety minutes long into a small, static composition. In this case, the strategy of "visual condensation" is the answer. This means choosing a moment or situation that has the greatest meaning, such as a family dinner table with all its dynamics and tensions, and then depicting it most accurately (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

The Home Sweet Loan poster exhibits several advantages compared to the Indonesian film poster design trends identified by (Danishara et al., 2025). It offers a better balance between visual elements and text, the use of more cinematic and high-quality photography, and a more consistent ability to integrate the film's visual identity with its visual narrative. This poster can be considered a prime example of contemporary Indonesian film posters.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

This study has analyzed the visual elements and design hierarchy of the Home Sweet Loan (2024) movie poster in depth from the perspective of visual communication design. From this analysis, several main conclusions can be drawn, including the following. First, the Home Sweet Loan movie poster successfully creates a systematic and effective visual hierarchy through the use of large title typography with organic fonts, a composition that places the main character in the foreground, and contrasting colors in the slogan. Thanks to this hierarchy, the most important information is conveyed effectively to the audience without sacrificing the overall visual composition.

Second, the cinematic lighting and the choice of warm earth tones create an atmosphere of sincerity and emotion, effectively conveying the film's main themes: simplicity, family intimacy, and the hardships of life. Color is not just a stylistic choice, but also a tool for conveying complex meanings. Third, the composition of the dining table and the contrasting expressions of the main character versus the other characters are clever visual strategies in transforming the complexity of the film's narrative into a communicative frame. This strategy brings dramatic success that attracts the audience's curiosity and attention without giving away any spoilers.

Fourth, the integration of visual and text elements, particularly in the play on words in the title and the question in the tagline, demonstrates a level of narrative awareness in the process of designing this poster. The relationship between image and text works together to create a richer meaning than each element would have on its own. The overall Home Sweet Loan poster is a mature, structured, and effective visual communication design object, a testament to the advancement of design quality in the contemporary Indonesian film industry.

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