

CONSTRUCTING PARENTLESS CHILDHOOD IN THE ANIMATED FILM *JUMBO* (2025): A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines how the animated film *Jumbo* (2025), directed by Ryan Adriandhy, constructs the discourse of parentless childhood through Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Parentless childhood refers to conditions in which children grow without parental presence due to death, separation, or socioeconomic circumstances. While previous studies have explored representations of childhood and family in media, limited attention has been given to how Indonesian animated films construct parentless childhood as a sociocultural discourse. The data corpus consists of selected narrative scenes, dialogues, and visual symbols representing parentless childhood. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional framework (textual analysis, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice), this study examines linguistic, visual, and contextual elements in the film. The analysis was conducted on selected narrative scenes, dialogues, and visual symbols representing parentless childhood. The findings show that visual cues, dialogue patterns, and character interactions emphasize emotional vulnerability, social exclusion, and the search for belonging among the characters Don, Atta, Mae, and Nurman. At the discourse practice level, the film functions as a social commentary on bullying, fatherlessness, and changing family dynamics. At the sociocultural level, it reflects broader realities of orphanhood, economic hardship, and shifting family structures in contemporary Indonesia. This study contributes to the growing scholarship on animation as a site of social discourse construction in contemporary Indonesia. Practically, the findings highlight the potential of animated films to foster social awareness and understanding of children's experiences in diverse family contexts.

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1. Introduction

Animated films play an important role as a medium of mass communication that functions not only as entertainment but also as a means of representing social realities, cultural values, and ideological meanings. As the Indonesian animation industry continues to develop, animated films have increasingly addressed complex social issues that closely reflect everyday life. One notable example is *Jumbo* (2025), directed by Ryan Adriandhy, which presents the social phenomenon of parentless childhood through a narrative centered on loss, friendship, and alternative family relationships. Beyond demonstrating the technical advancement of Indonesian animation, the film illustrates how animated media can serve as a platform for social reflection and cultural communication. As noted by Febriyanti (2023), mediated narratives play a significant role in shaping public interpretations of emotional experiences and social suffering, indicating that media texts actively participate in constructing social understanding.

The issue of parentless childhood has become increasingly visible within contemporary Indonesian society. Various social conditions, including poverty, economic inequality, divorce, labor migration, and parental death, contribute to situations in which children grow up without the complete presence of their parents. According to Romadhona and Wijaya Kuswanto (2024), the absence of parental figures may affect children's emotional development and self-confidence. Similarly, Irhamna and Faridy (2024) argue that the lack of a father or mother figure may influence the formation of moral values, social identity, and interpersonal relationships from an early age. Consequently, understanding how media represent parentless childhood becomes increasingly important, as media narratives influence public perceptions regarding childhood experiences and family structures.

The animated film *Jumbo* portrays the lives of several children who experience different forms of parental absence. Don, the main character, is an orphan who lives with his grandmother, Oma, after losing his parents. His friends, Mae and Nurman, also come from incomplete family backgrounds, while Atta lives with his older brother under limited economic circumstances. Throughout the story, family is represented not merely as a biological institution but as an emotional space constructed through empathy, solidarity, care, and mutual support. This portrayal offers an alternative understanding of family that extends beyond blood relations and highlights the importance of social bonds in shaping children's resilience and sense of belonging.

Although *Jumbo* has attracted public attention and academic interest, existing studies have primarily focused on educational values, moral messages, character development, audience reception, and the quality of animation production. These studies generally examine the film as a medium for entertainment and character education. However, limited research has explored how the film constructs discourse surrounding parentless childhood and alternative family structures. Furthermore, previous film studies commonly employ representation theory or semiotic approaches to analyze meanings embedded in visual and narrative elements. While these approaches provide valuable insights into symbolism and signification, they often pay less attention to the broader sociocultural and ideological dimensions embedded within media texts.

This research seeks to address this gap by employing Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework. Unlike semiotic or representation-based studies, Fairclough's approach enables a comprehensive examination of how discourse is constructed through textual features, production processes, and broader sociocultural contexts. Through

its three-dimensional model text, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice Critical Discourse Analysis provides a framework for understanding how media texts participate in the construction and negotiation of social meanings. Therefore, this study offers a different perspective by examining not only what is represented in *Jumbo* but also how meanings concerning parentless childhood are produced, circulated, and connected to contemporary Indonesian social realities, Mao, M., Zang, L., & Zhang, H. (2020).

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on parentless childhood discourse within an Indonesian animated film using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis. While previous studies have largely emphasized educational content, symbolism, or audience responses, this research investigates how the discourse of parental absence, alternative caregiving, emotional vulnerability, and family reconstruction is systematically constructed through film narratives. In doing so, the study contributes to communication scholarship by demonstrating how animated films function as cultural texts that shape public understandings of childhood, family, and social belonging.

Based on the discussion above, this study aims to answer the following research question: How is the discourse of parentless childhood constructed in the animated film *Jumbo* (2025)? Using Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis, this research examines how the film represents children without parents, how discursive practices contribute to the production and interpretation of such representations, and how broader sociocultural contexts influence the construction of alternative meanings of family. Ultimately, this study is expected to contribute to the development of communication studies, particularly in relation to animated films, social discourse, childhood representation, and family narratives in contemporary Indonesian media.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary analytical framework. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research focuses on exploring meanings, ideologies, and social representations embedded within media texts rather than measuring variables quantitatively. Fairclough's CDA is particularly relevant because it enables the examination of discourse through textual features, discursive practices, and broader sociocultural contexts (Fairclough in Ghofur, 2017). The study is situated within the constructivist paradigm, which assumes that social reality is socially constructed through language, symbols, narratives, and interactions (Pingge et al., 2023). Accordingly, the animated film is viewed as a cultural text that actively participates in constructing social meanings rather than merely reflecting reality.

The material object of this research is the animated film *Jumbo* (2025), directed by Ryan Adriandhy. The formal object is the discourse of parentless childhood as represented through narrative structures, visual elements, character interactions, dialogue, and symbolic representations throughout the film.

Data Corpus and Sampling Strategy

The primary data consist of selected scenes from *Jumbo* that explicitly depict experiences related to parental absence, emotional vulnerability, caregiving relationships, family reconstruction, and social support. Using purposive sampling, scenes were selected

based on their relevance to the research objective and their contribution to the construction of parentless childhood discourse.

The selection criteria included scenes that: (1) portray the absence or loss of parental figures; (2) illustrate emotional responses related to grief, loneliness, or vulnerability; (3) depict caregiving interactions involving grandparents, siblings, friends, or other substitute caregivers; (4) demonstrate social relationships that function as alternative family structures; and (5) contain dialogue or visual symbols that reinforce meanings associated with family, belonging, and childhood experiences.

A total of 23 scenes were identified and selected as the data corpus because they directly represent the central discourse examined in this study. These scenes constitute the primary units of analysis.

Secondary data were collected through a literature review of scholarly articles, books, and previous studies concerning parentless childhood, fatherlessness, orphanhood, alternative caregiving, childhood vulnerability, family representation, animated films, and Critical Discourse Analysis.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques. The researcher repeatedly watched the film to gain a comprehensive understanding of the narrative structure and thematic development. Relevant scenes were identified, recorded, categorized, and documented through observation notes and scene descriptions. Dialogue transcripts, visual imagery, character expressions, narrative sequences, and symbolic elements were also documented to facilitate detailed analysis.

Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis followed Fairclough's three-dimensional model and was conducted through several stages.

Scene Identification

The researcher identified scenes containing representations of parental absence, caregiving relationships, emotional conflict, family reconstruction, and social support.

Coding Process

Selected scenes were coded according to recurring themes, including parental loss, emotional vulnerability, caregiving practices, friendship as family, social exclusion, resilience, and alternative family structures. The coding process enabled the organization and categorization of data before interpretation.

Textual Analysis

The first analytical dimension focused on textual features within the film. This stage examined dialogue, narrative structure, visual symbols, character expressions, camera framing, and other cinematic elements that contribute to the representation of parentless childhood. Particular attention was given to how language and visual narratives construct meanings regarding family, loss, and belonging.

Discursive Practice Analysis

The second dimension analyzed the production and circulation of meaning within the film. This stage explored how the discourse of parentless childhood is constructed through storytelling strategies, narrative choices, and audience interpretation. The analysis also considered the filmmaker's role in presenting social issues and promoting particular understandings of family and caregiving.

Sociocultural Interpretation

The final dimension connected the film's discourse to broader Indonesian social realities. This stage interpreted how the representations found in *Jumbo* relate to contemporary issues such as fatherlessness, orphanhood, poverty, alternative caregiving arrangements, and changing family structures in Indonesian society. The analysis further examined the ideological implications of portraying family as an emotional and social institution rather than solely a biological one.

Trustworthiness and Research Validity

To ensure trustworthiness, the study employed several validation strategies. First, triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from film scenes with relevant theoretical literature, previous research, and empirical discussions concerning parentless childhood and family representation. This process helped strengthen the consistency and credibility of interpretations. Second, peer debriefing was utilized by discussing analytical findings and coding categories with academic peers and supervisors familiar with qualitative research and discourse analysis. Feedback obtained through these discussions contributed to refining interpretations and minimizing subjective bias. Third, theoretical validation was applied by consistently aligning analytical findings with Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework as well as relevant concepts of parentless childhood, fatherlessness, alternative caregiving, and childhood vulnerability. This ensured that interpretations remained theoretically grounded and analytically coherent. Through these procedures, the study seeks to provide a rigorous and comprehensive understanding of how the discourse of parentless childhood is constructed within the animated film *Jumbo* (2025) and how such discourse relates to broader social realities in contemporary Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussion

Overview of the Research Object

Film is one of the most influential forms of mass communication, capable of transmitting messages, ideas, and social values to a wide audience. Beyond entertainment, film serves as a representational space where social realities are interpreted and conveyed through language, narrative design, and visual symbols. In this context, film can be read as a discourse-bearing text, as it contains perspectives and ideologies that aim to construct certain interpretations for the audience.

This research focuses on the animated film *Jumbo*, directed by Ryan Adriandhy and released in 2025. Through this film, the researcher explores how the discourse of parentless childhood is constructed and presented through narrative and visual storytelling. The selection of *Jumbo* as the research object is grounded in two main reasons. First, the film achieved significant success both in terms of viewership numbers and production quality, marking an important milestone in Indonesian animation. Second, the film carries moral and

social messages highly relevant to Indonesian society, particularly related to issues of family, compassion, and loss.

Film *Jumbo*

The animated film *Jumbo* is the result of the creative work of director Ryan Adriandhy, who also co-wrote the script with Widya Arifianti. The film was produced by Visinema Studios in collaboration with Springboard and Anami Films, and distributed by Visinema Pictures. *Jumbo* was officially released in cinemas on March 31, 2025, coinciding with the Eid holiday season one of the peak periods of family entertainment consumption in Indonesia. With a duration of 102 minutes, the film was developed for over five years and involved more than 400 local creators from various fields, including animation, visual design, music, and voice acting. This large-scale collaboration positioned *Jumbo* as one of the most extensive animation productions in the history of Indonesian cinema.

Textual Dimension: Representation of Parentless Childhood in the Animated Film *Jumbo*

Textual Analysis: Constructing the Discourse of Parentless Childhood in *Jumbo*

Based on Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, the textual dimension examines how language, visual elements, and narrative structures contribute to the construction of social meanings. In *Jumbo*, the discourse of parentless childhood is constructed through lexical choices, modality, evaluation, narrative positioning, and visual grammar that collectively represent the experiences of children growing up without parental figures (Tunziyah & Riaeni, 2019).

Lexical Choices: Constructing Vulnerability and Belonging

Lexical choices play a significant role in shaping how parentless childhood is represented in the film. Throughout *Jumbo*, several words and expressions repeatedly appear in dialogues related to identity, family, acceptance, and exclusion. Negative lexical expressions directed toward Don, such as "fat," "slow," and "always telling stories," function as labels that position him as socially inferior within his peer group. These expressions construct a discourse in which children who lack parental support are perceived as different and vulnerable.



Figure 1. The moment Don is mocked by his friends while reading the storybook

In contrast, positive lexical choices emerge in interactions among Don, Mae, and Nurman. Expressions emphasizing friendship, cooperation, and mutual support contribute to the construction of alternative family relationships. The repeated use of collective pronouns such as “we” and “us” reflects a discourse of belonging that compensates for the absence of biological family structures. Through these lexical patterns, the film presents family not solely as a biological institution but as an emotional and social bond.

Modality: Expressing Uncertainty, Hope, and Responsibility

Modality refers to the degree of certainty, obligation, and possibility expressed through language. The film demonstrates different modalities that reflect each character’s social position and emotional condition.

Don frequently employs hesitant expressions and indirect responses, reflecting uncertainty and low self-confidence. His linguistic choices indicate limited social authority and illustrate how parental absence may influence a child’s sense of security. Conversely, Atta often uses stronger and more assertive language, indicating authority and emotional defensiveness. His speech reflects attempts to maintain control within difficult socioeconomic circumstances.

Mae frequently employs encouraging and directive expressions when interacting with her friends. Her use of supportive language demonstrates confidence and responsibility, positioning her as an emotional guide within the group. Through these varying modalities, the film illustrates how children respond differently to experiences of loss and parental absence.

Evaluation: Constructing Meanings of Family and Loss

Evaluation refers to the positive and negative judgments embedded within discourse. In *Jumbo*, the absence of parents is not represented solely as a tragic condition. While the film portrays loneliness, grief, and emotional vulnerability, it simultaneously presents alternative forms of care and support as positive responses to loss.



Figure 2. Atta and his brother conversing in the dining room

Characters such as Oma and Acil are consistently associated with positive evaluations. Their actions are represented as nurturing, supportive, and emotionally meaningful. Through their interactions with Don and Atta, the film constructs caregiving as an act of commitment and affection rather than a responsibility restricted to biological parents.



Figure 3. Oma advising Don

Similarly, friendship is positively evaluated throughout the narrative. Emotional support provided by Mae and Nurman is portrayed as equally significant to parental care. As a result, the film challenges traditional assumptions that family can only exist through blood relations.

Narrative Positioning: Representing Parentless Children as Active Subjects

Narrative positioning concerns how characters are placed within the storyline and how audiences are encouraged to perceive them. Jumbo positions parentless children not merely as passive victims of circumstance but as active individuals capable of adaptation and growth.

Don occupies the central narrative position and functions as the primary lens through which audiences experience themes of loss and belonging. Although he faces rejection and bullying, the narrative portrays him as resilient and capable of self-development. His storytelling activities symbolize efforts to reconstruct identity following parental loss.

Atta is initially positioned as an antagonist through conflict and aggressive behavior. However, the narrative gradually reveals his economic struggles and emotional burdens, encouraging audiences to reinterpret his actions with empathy rather than condemnation.



Figure 4. Mae preparing a strategy for the performance

Mae and Nurman are positioned as sources of emotional support and social stability. Their presence demonstrates that children can create meaningful support systems beyond biological family structures. Through these narrative positions, the film constructs parentless childhood as a condition involving resilience, adaptation, and collective support.

Visual Grammar: Visualizing Emotional Vulnerability and Alternative Family Structures



Figure 5. Nurman's wardrobe concept

The discourse of parentless childhood is also constructed through visual grammar, including camera angles, framing, color palettes, lighting, and character positioning.

Don is frequently depicted through close-up shots that emphasize his emotional reactions, particularly during moments of rejection and loneliness. Scenes involving his parents' storybook often employ softer lighting and intimate framing, highlighting emotional attachment and memory. In contrast, scenes of bullying frequently position Don separately from other children, visually reinforcing social exclusion.

Atta is commonly represented through darker color tones, layered clothing, and low-angle shots that communicate toughness and emotional defensiveness. These visual elements reflect the burdens associated with poverty and premature responsibility.

Mae is often framed at the center of group interactions, symbolizing leadership and emotional stability. Meanwhile, Nurman's bright costume colors and expressive body language communicate optimism and warmth despite economic limitations.

The visual representation of Oma and Acil further reinforces the discourse of alternative caregiving. Warm lighting, close interpersonal distance, and nurturing gestures symbolize emotional security and support. These visual elements collectively construct

family as an emotional relationship formed through care, empathy, and solidarity rather than biological ties alone.

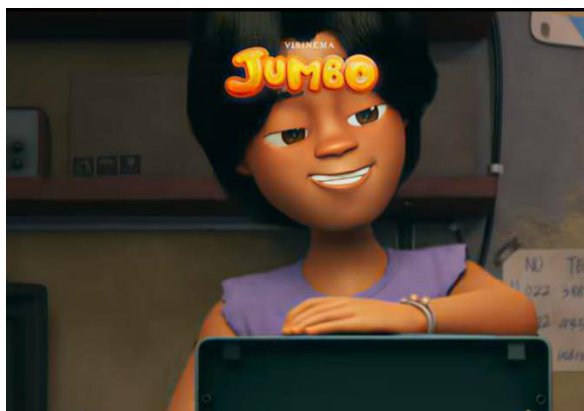


Figure 6. Acil working as a repairman

Overall, the interaction of lexical choices, modality, evaluation, narrative positioning, and visual grammar constructs parentless childhood in Jumbo as a multidimensional social experience. The film portrays parental absence not merely as a condition of loss but as a process through which children negotiate identity, seek belonging, and create alternative forms of family through social relationships.

Table 1.

CHARACTER	TEXTUAL INDICATOR	MEANING CONSTRUCTED
Don	Quiet behavior, hesitance, attachment to storybook	Emotional vulnerability, longing for security
Atta	Aggressive actions, economic limitations, simple home setting	Frustration, social pressure, sibling headed responsibility
Mae	Independent behavior, rational dialogue, balanced decision making	Institutional resilience, maturity, caregiver role adaptation
Nurman	Instability, exaggerated reactions, emotional disruption	Trauma, loss, identity disturbance

Source: Author's analysis

Discursive Practice Dimension

According to Fairclough, discursive practice concerns the processes through which discourse is produced, distributed, interpreted, and consumed. This dimension examines how meaning is negotiated between media producers and audiences within specific social and cultural contexts. In Jumbo, the discourse of parentless childhood is not naturally presented

but actively constructed through production ideology, distribution strategies, intertextual references, and audience meaning-making processes.

Production Ideology: Constructing an Alternative Understanding of Family

The production of *Jumbo* reflects a humanistic ideology that challenges conventional assumptions regarding childhood and family. Rather than portraying parentless children as passive victims, the film positions them as active individuals capable of adaptation, resilience, and emotional growth. Through Don, Atta, Mae, and Nurman, the film promotes an alternative discourse in which family is defined not exclusively through biological ties but through care, empathy, and emotional commitment (Renaldy, 2025).

This ideological position can be observed in the narrative structure of the film. The absence of parents is not represented solely as a source of suffering; instead, it becomes a starting point for the formation of alternative support systems. Oma and Acil function as substitute caregivers, while friendship becomes a form of emotional kinship. Consequently, the film challenges the dominant family discourse that equates family exclusively with the presence of both biological parents.

The production process itself also contributes to discourse construction. Ryan Adriandhy's personal experiences of social exclusion during childhood influenced the development of Don's character. These experiences were transformed into a broader social narrative concerning acceptance, belonging, and emotional recognition. Through this process, personal memory becomes collective discourse, allowing individual experiences to be interpreted as part of wider social realities.

Distribution Strategy and the Circulation of Discourse

The circulation of discourse in *Jumbo* extends beyond the film itself. Visinema Studios strategically positioned the film as a family-oriented cinematic experience through promotional materials, trailers, interviews, social media campaigns, and public discussions. The release during the Eid holiday period strengthened its association with family values, emotional togetherness, and intergenerational viewing experiences.

The marketing materials consistently emphasized themes of friendship, family, compassion, and emotional healing. Rather than promoting action or fantasy elements, promotional discourse highlighted emotional connection and social relevance. This distribution strategy guided audiences toward interpreting the film as a reflection on family relationships and childhood experiences.

Furthermore, the circulation of discourse continued through digital platforms where reviews, audience reactions, discussion forums, and social media posts expanded the film's meanings beyond the original text. In Fairclough's perspective, discourse is not confined to a single text but continues to evolve through processes of distribution and public discussion.

Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

An important aspect of discursive practice is intertextuality, which refers to the relationship between a text and other existing texts, narratives, and social discourses. In *Jumbo*, the discourse of parentless childhood is connected to broader cultural narratives concerning loss, childhood vulnerability, bullying, family separation, and emotional resilience.

The film draws upon familiar social narratives frequently encountered in Indonesian society, particularly stories involving children raised by grandparents, sibling caregiving

arrangements, and experiences of parental absence due to death, economic hardship, or family breakdown. These social realities provide an intertextual foundation that allows audiences to recognize and relate to the characters' experiences.

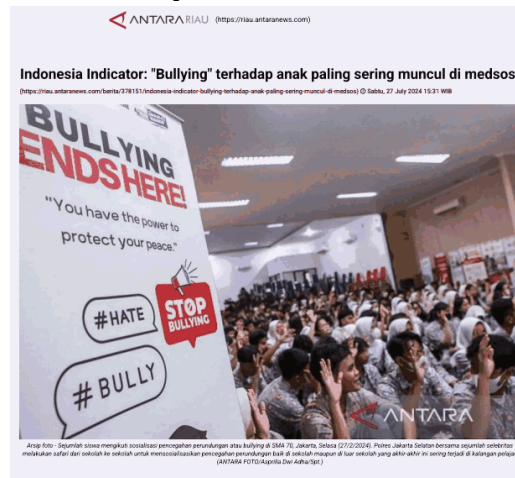


Figure 7. News coverage of bullying cases in Indonesia

The film also demonstrates interdiscursivity by combining multiple discourses simultaneously. Discourses of family, childhood, friendship, poverty, grief, bullying, and caregiving intersect throughout the narrative. As a result, parentless childhood is represented not as an isolated condition but as a social phenomenon shaped by broader economic, cultural, and emotional factors.

Audience Meaning-Making Processes

Within Fairclough's framework, audiences are not passive recipients of media messages but active participants in meaning construction. The discourse of parentless childhood in *Jumbo* is therefore continuously interpreted and reconstructed through viewers' personal experiences, cultural backgrounds, and emotional responses.

Children may interpret the film primarily as a story of adventure, friendship, and imagination. In contrast, adult audiences often associate Don's experiences with memories of childhood loneliness, parental loss, emotional neglect, or family struggles. These different interpretations demonstrate the polysemic nature of media texts, where multiple meanings coexist simultaneously.

Audience responses on digital platforms indicate that viewers frequently connect the film's narrative to their own experiences of grief, family separation, caregiving, and emotional recovery. Rather than simply consuming the story, audiences actively negotiate its meaning and integrate it into their personal narratives. Through this process, *Jumbo* functions as a discursive space where experiences of parentless childhood are collectively interpreted, shared, and emotionally validated.

Therefore, the discursive practice dimension reveals that the discourse of parentless childhood in *Jumbo* is produced through a humanistic ideological framework, circulated through strategic media distribution, connected to broader cultural narratives through intertextuality, and continuously reconstructed through audience meaning-making processes. The film ultimately operates as a site where dominant understandings of family are challenged and alternative forms of belonging are legitimized.

Social Practice Dimension

In Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework, the social practice dimension situates discourse within broader structures of power, ideology, and social inequality. At this level, *Jumbo* is not only interpreted as a reflection of Indonesian childhood realities but also as a cultural text that engages with issues of social class, family ideology, child welfare discourse, and institutional responsibility in shaping childhood experiences.

Structural Inequality, Social Class, and Parentless Childhood

The phenomenon of parentless childhood depicted in *Jumbo* cannot be separated from broader structural inequalities in Indonesian society. Parental absence is often closely linked to economic precarity, labor migration, divorce, mortality, and unequal access to welfare systems. In many cases, children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more vulnerable to experiencing caregiving instability due to limited access to healthcare, education, and social protection.

Within this context, the film implicitly reflects how class structures shape childhood experiences. Characters such as Atta, who grows up in economic hardship, illustrate how poverty accelerates the transition from childhood to adult-like responsibilities. Conversely, children who have access to stable caregiving environments are portrayed with greater emotional security. Thus, parentless childhood is not a neutral condition but is deeply embedded within class-based inequalities that influence emotional development, social mobility, and access to support systems.

Cultural Ideology of "Ideal Family" and Parenting Expectations

Indonesian cultural ideology strongly constructs the nuclear family consisting of father, mother, and children as the normative ideal. This dominant expectation often produces social stigma toward children raised in non-traditional family structures such as single-parent households, extended families, or orphaned caregiving systems.

Jumbo challenges this ideological assumption by presenting alternative caregiving arrangements as legitimate forms of family. However, this representation also reveals a tension within Indonesian cultural expectations: while emotional caregiving is valorized, structural absence of parents is still socially problematized. In this sense, the film negotiates between dominant ideology and emerging inclusive understandings of family.

The discourse of parenting in Indonesia is also shaped by moral expectations that position parents as primary emotional providers. When this role is absent, caregiving responsibilities shift to grandparents, siblings, or peers, indicating how cultural norms adapt in response to structural limitations rather than state intervention.

Child Welfare Discourse and Institutional Limitations

From a child welfare perspective, parentless childhood is not only a familial issue but also a matter of institutional responsibility. Ideally, the state through social welfare institutions, education systems, and child protection policies plays a central role in safeguarding vulnerable children. However, in many Indonesian contexts, child welfare

systems are often limited in reach, leading to reliance on informal caregiving networks such as extended family or community-based support.

Jumbo reflects this condition indirectly by foregrounding substitute caregivers such as Oma and Acil rather than institutional care systems. The absence of state presence in the narrative highlights how child protection in practice is frequently privatized within families rather than being fully supported by public institutions. This absence can be interpreted as a silent commentary on the limitations of formal child welfare structures in addressing emotional and social needs of parentless children.

State, Family, and the Privatization of Care

The film also reveals how caregiving in Indonesia is largely privatized within the family unit. Rather than being treated as a shared responsibility between state and society, care work is often transferred to families regardless of their economic capacity. This condition reflects a broader neoliberal tendency in which emotional and social reproduction is expected to be managed at the household level.

Within this framework, characters such as Oma and Acil symbolize how care responsibilities are redistributed within extended families as a response to structural absence rather than institutional support. This reinforces the idea that emotional survival of children is often dependent on familial solidarity rather than systemic protection.

Social Transformation and Ideological Implications

Through these representations, *Jumbo* contributes to the reproduction and contestation of dominant ideologies regarding childhood and family. On one hand, it reinforces cultural values of empathy, solidarity, and emotional resilience. On the other hand, it implicitly critiques structural conditions that produce caregiving inequality, especially those related to poverty and limited institutional support.

Thus, the film does not merely portray parentless childhood as an emotional condition, but also exposes how social class, cultural ideology, and institutional absence collectively shape the lived experiences of children. In this sense, *Jumbo* functions as a cultural text that opens space for rethinking family not only as a moral unit but also as a site where structural inequalities are experienced and negotiated.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the animated film *Jumbo* (2025) constructs the discourse of parentless childhood through narrative, visual, and sociocultural representations, which reveal not only experiences of loss and emotional vulnerability but also meanings of identity formation, resilience, and alternative caregiving in Indonesian society. Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, the study contributes theoretically by extending CDA application to animated multimodal texts, showing that discourse is constructed through language, visuals, and narrative strategies. Practically, the findings are relevant for filmmakers in developing socially meaningful stories, educators in using films for learning about empathy and family diversity, and child welfare practitioners in recognizing non-biological caregiving systems. However, this study is limited to a single film and does not include comparative analysis or extensive audience reception data. Future research is suggested to explore comparative film studies, audience reception analysis, and interdisciplinary approaches combining CDA with

psychology or media studies to deepen understanding of childhood and family discourse in media.

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