



ISSN 2827-8151 (Online)
SRAWUNG (Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities)

<https://journal.ifpublisher.com/index.php/jssh>

Vol. 2, Issue. 3, (2023)

doi.org/10.56943/jssh.v2i3.382

Philosophical Meaning of Klana Udeng Mask Movie

Rina Yanti Harahap¹, Pande Made Sukerta², Santosa Soewarlan³

¹rina.yanti@ikj.ac.id, ²pandemadesukerta@gmail.com, ³santosaisisol@gmail.com

Pascasarjana Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Surakarta

*Corresponding Author: Rina Yanti Harahap

Email: rina.yanti@ikj.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the traditional art of masks from Indramayu can still be found in various art forms, such as mask dance and mask puppetry. In its development, the art of mask tradition was adapted to the medium of film. When adapted into the medium of film, the mask dance performance art changes its function to become part of the educational media and part of the cultural tourism promotion in fulfilling the need to maintain the existence of the traditional art of masks to remain sustainable. This research aims to see the changes that occur and the meanings that arise from the traditional art adapted from mask dance into a movie entitled Klana Udeng Mask and identify the philosophical meanings in the movie. To comprehend the changes and meanings from the traditional art adapted from mask dance into a movie entitled Klana Udeng Mask, the researcher uses qualitative research using visual semiotics. In this research, the movie Klana Udeng Mask is interpreted with a semiotic approach from Roland Barthes. The movie Klana Udeng Mask has a philosophical meaning about gratitude and maintaining the relationship between humans and God Almighty. This philosophical meaning is evident in the opening scene of the mask dancers praying to God Almighty and the closing scene of them performing grateful praying movements to God Almighty. Changes in semiotic meaning in the Klana Udeng Mask movie affect the visual signs of the elements in the movie.

Keywords: *Indramayu Klana Udeng Mask, Movie, Semiotics*

INTRODUCTION

Art is a basic necessity that may help people relax and escape from the problems they are experiencing. A more substantial function of art is to help people identify with themselves and give them a sense of purpose. People often use art to interpret their experiences in life. Humans can use the ability to recognize one's reflection in the work of art as a tool for self-improvement and prospective growth. The creation of art can fuel human creativity.

The traditional art of Klana Udeng Mask comes from Indramayu. In the past, the art of mask tradition had sacred spiritual value to become a medium for mask dancers to communicate with God Almighty. The traditional art of mask dance is a medium of communication between dancers and ancestors. The communication between dancers and ancestors starts from the beginning of the opening before the dancer starts the dance. In the beginning, dancers perform rituals by praying and burning incense. Dancers pray as an attempt to ask for the blessings and approvals of God Almighty so that God Almighty can give dancers blessings and strength.



Figure 1. Indramayu Klana Udeng Mask
Source: Courtesy of Rina Yanti Harahap

In its history, the traditional art of Klana Udeng Mask from Indramayu has undergone several developments. The development of the traditional art of Klana Udeng Mask is in accordance with the context of dance creations that developed with the creativity of the Indramayu mask dance maestro, Wangi Indriya. Wangi Indriya made the development of the Indramayu Klana Udeng Mask dance. In Topeng Klana dance, dancers usually use *sobra* (a property of a headpiece in mask dance made of natural hair). However, in the Klana Udeng Mask dance, dancers use a headband commonly referred to as *udeng*. The development of Klana Udeng Mask dance is an interesting phenomenon, where traditional art experiences creative developments that are adjusted to the context of the times, which are also developing. The development of dance creations is an interesting context to be observed more deeply in this research. This is inversely proportional to the

phenomenon where, at present, the phenomenon of traditional art is gradually diminishing. The change in aesthetic value from the past in terms of culture and spirituality has developed aesthetic value in the present, which has changed in the context of entertainment and audience satisfaction in enjoying the mask performance.

The phenomenon of traditional mask dance today is experiencing changes. Changes that occur from social phenomena are caused by a shift in cultural values from the past, experiencing shifts and changes in values in the present. The traditional art of mask dance is currently experiencing a lack of public interest in the traditional art of masks. This is due to the reduced existence of the traditional art of mask dance, especially in Indramayu and in Indonesia in general. The reason for the reduced existence of the traditional art of mask dance in the present is due to the maestros of the traditional art of mask dance who have passed away. The next cause is that the deceased mask maestros do not pass on the knowledge of traditional mask art to the next generation, so regeneration is cut off, and the knowledge of traditional mask art is not perfectly channelled to the next generation. This is what happens a lot when the traditional art maestro passes away, and the traditional art becomes extinct with the passing of the maestro. This results in the existence of traditional mask art experiencing a reduction in its existence. In addition, another cause of the decline in the existence of traditional mask art is the need for more interest from the younger generation in traditional mask art. The younger generation, especially in the Indramayu, is less familiar with the traditional art of masks and needs to realize the importance of knowing to develop the traditional art of masks for the sustainability and existence of the arts and cultural ecosystem in the Indramayu. In the present, the traditional art of masks experiences a shift in values and a lack of attention from the community and government to the traditional art of masks. This social phenomenon is concerning because of the lack of community and government support for preserving the mask tradition in Indramayu. Young people tend to be less familiar with traditional mask dance. Young people are more familiar with and proud of dance originating from Korea, better known as Korean Pop, which is currently a trend among young people. This social phenomenon causes the traditional art of masks to experience extinction in modern times.

In a case study at Sanggar Mulya Bhakti in Tambi, Sliyeg, Indramayu, it is known that Sanggar Mulya Bhakti still exists with the development of traditional mask art until today. A maestro named Wangi Indriya is one of the maestros who fights for and preserves the traditional art of masks through Sanggar Mulya Bhakti in Indramayu. The traditional art of Klana Udeng Mask preserved by Sanggar Mulya Bhakti has existed for over forty-two years and still exists today.

Film adaptation is the process of transforming a pre-existing work, such as a book or play, into a film. It involves translating the content and themes of the original work into a visual medium while also making necessary changes to suit the

cinematic format. Film adaptations can be based on various sources, including literary works, comic books, and video games. The relationship between the original work and the film adaptation may vary, with some adaptations aiming for faithfulness to the source material, while others take a more transmedial approach. Film adaptations aim to bring the original work's story and ideas to a broader audience (Katerina, 2017). It is necessary to develop the meaning and philosophical aspects of the Klana Udeng Mask character, which has changed the meaning and added new meanings adapted to the film media.

Before proceeding to the research discussion, the researcher reviewed several research that have been conducted earlier with similar topic as this research, with the intention to find and identify the research gap that could be used as the problem statement of this research. Asyrafunnisa (2021) conducted a research regarding the function and symbolic meaning of Pakarena Dance in Bugis Makassar society, which is the dance movements represented the principal life. The research findings suggested that sign, idea, and object have relation to identify the symbolic meaning of Pakarena Dance. The next previous research related to the research topic is the one conducted by Chielotam (2015). Chielotam's research aims to comprehend the communicative potential of Iduu-Akpo dance movements, discuss the following semiotic-interpretive analysis of the dance performance, and also to help the natives to appreciate and understand the social, religious and economic status imbedded in the dance performance. The research findings identified that through semiotic-interpretation on indigenous dance, indigenes are helped to see their native dance as a communicative tool, a watchdog on their daily activities in the community, and a sustaining tool for upholding communal moral beliefs. The last related research with similar topic of this research is a research conducted by Nurhidayah (2017). Nurhidayah's research intends to identify whether the art of mask dance could be used as an alternate to the development of Islam religion. The research findings revealed that art mask dance is proven effective to be used as an alternate to spread the practice of Islam religion since it has been practiced a long time ago. Based on the several related research, the problem formulation that the researcher raises in this research is: what is the philosophical meaning found in the Klana Udeng Mask movie?

The process of adapting traditional mask dance to film media is carried out through the development of ideas and creative processes to produce a film concept. The development of the film concept into creative elements is interesting to create a creative work entitled Klana Udeng Mask. The creation of a film entitled Klana Udeng Mask has a high spirit of creativity to anticipate and become a solution to the social phenomenon that occurs, which is to preserve the traditional art of Klana Udeng Mask using film media. The author conducts the process of developing the idea of traditional mask art by making the development of audio-visual elements and technology. The author creates a movie with the development of audio and visual elements, including the development of traditional music in the mask

tradition, the development of mask faces, the development of the Klana Udeng Mask dance movement, and the development of audio-visual techniques.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Klana Udeng Mask

Klana Udeng Mask is an Indramayu traditional mask dance, originally created by Mimi Rasinah (Lasmiyati, 2013). In Cirebon mask performances, Klana Udeng is one of the dances that is usually performed in the final part. It is called Klana Udeng, because one part of the head costume of the dancer wears *udeng* or headband. This dance appears after the Klana mask dancer is finished dancing. The movements and musical accompaniment are different from the regular Klana mask. Among the many Cirebon mask styles, Klana Udeng is only found in a few styles, including Pekandangan, Tambi, Indramayu, and Cipunagara, Subang (Suanda, 2018). Other traditional mask styles, such as Gegesik, Kalianyar, Losari, Slangit, Palimanan, and others, have never performed this dance. This mask dance became very famous after it was performed in various stage performances, both in Indramayu, Cirebon and in other regions and abroad. This dance then even became one of the teaching materials in several mask dance studios in Indramayu. Unlike the regular Klana mask, some of Klana Udeng's movements are comically danced. Klana Udeng's dance movements sometimes mimic people who are drunk or are being funny.

Movie

Movies are audiovisual forms of entertainment and communication with a powerful influence on individuals and can be used as a tool for teaching and learning (Chrisa, 2015). Cinema, also known as movies, is an audiovisual medium that aims to entertain, inform, and teach. It is considered to be the most influential form of mass communication, as it has the power to pervade the consciousness of individuals. Movies combine realism with imagination and convey a lot of information in short timeframes. Movies have the potential to be a useful tool for teaching. Movies provide experiential learning, which goes beyond traditional classroom teaching and textbooks (Nikoubashman & Schmid, 2019).

Semiotics

According to Roland Barthes, semiotics is the theory and study of signs and symbols in various forms of communication (Nafiry et al., 2022). It involves analyzing the denotative (literal) and connotative (symbolic) meanings of signs and symbols. Barthes' semiotic analysis focuses on understanding the different layers of meaning conveyed through signs and symbols in various contexts (Iskandarsyah, 2022).

Semiotics can be used to analyze art by studying symbols and their communication functions. Semiotics provides a framework for understanding the

meaning and interpretation of art symbols (Huang, 2023). Barthes semiotics can be used to analyze art by examining the relationship between signifiers and signifieds, as well as the denotative and connotative meanings within the artwork. It provides a framework for understanding the symbolic phenomena of visual elements in art and design. Barthes' semiotic approach is applicable in analyzing abstract art, where it helps identify the symbolic meaning conveyed by the visual elements (Yudhanto & Risdianto, 2022). It can also be used to analyze implicit messages in a movie, exploring the level of signification and representation of these messages. Overall, Barthes semiotics offers a valuable tool for understanding the meaning and symbolism in various forms of art.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative research involves exploring and conveying phenomena that cannot be explained using quantitative methods, with a focus on the depth of exploration and description. Qualitative research designs include narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, historical research, and case study research (Rosairo, 2023). The researcher conducted research by staying at the informant's house at Sanggar Mulya Bhakti, Indramayu. Qualitative research requires a more intense approach between the author and the informant in dialogue, discussion and joint activities between the author and the informant. The author follows the informant's activities every day, both the informant's activities at home as a housewife and the informant's activities outside the house as a mask dancer. The author observed the informant's daily life when she trained her students to dance at the studio, when she took her students to a dance competition in Bandung and performed dances professionally with her students. The research was conducted by interviewing and recording pictures of the informant's activities according to the informant's schedule. The interviews were meticulously conducted and structured in accordance with previously developed interview criteria, and the outcomes were consistent with the topic of the research (Artha, 2023).

During the research process of producing the Klana Udeng Mask movie, the researcher conducted a long-term observation at the research location. In producing Klana Udeng Mask movie, the researcher considered the surrounding environment's artistic, social and cultural aspects. In addition, the researcher also considers the aesthetic aspects of the research object, the traditional art of masks originating from Indramayu. The basic principle of building the creation of a movie concept comes from the idea of mask tradition art to be adapted into film media. This fundamental principle of beauty can be abstracted in viewing concepts poured differently into a formulation of audio, visual, text, sign, and philosophical meaning concepts in the film.

The idea of the mask is developed into a movie scenario by the researcher. The researcher adapts to the Sanggar Mulya Bhakti environment in order to fully comprehend the language of mask tradition that the researcher will transform into concept development and visual language. The researcher records any interesting events in the activities at Sanggar Mulya Bhakti to develop the story into a screenplay. The researcher carries out the idea development process by considering the needs of production management and the creative needs of the movie. The researcher discusses with the informants the development of traditional mask art that is transferred to the film media with an aesthetic approach.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The development of creativity into a visual style that enters the realm of thought, feelings, and imagination could be described in the form of a movie. The author's perspective in building a visual concept into a mask movie has a story structure that becomes the foundation in visualizing it. A movie can be considered a cultural products representing a particular national culture, ideology, and society, reflecting sociocultural and philosophical values (Bergesen, 2016).

In traditional art, the mask is known as *kedok*, which means mask in literal context. Dancers commonly use *Kedok* to cover the dancer's face when performing mask dances. *Kedok* has various types and colours tailored to the character of the mask dance that the dancer will perform. The mask has a function as a face cover. *Kedok* contains a philosophy as a medium of communication in the real world between dancers and the audience and can also be used as a means of dancers communicating with their ancestors. The researcher will raise the Klana Mask, which represents the character of Ravana from the Ramayana story.

The research interpreted the movie Klana Udeng Mask using Roland Barthes' semiotics approach. According to Roland Barthes, semiotics is the theory and study of signs and symbols in various forms of communication (Nafiry et al., 2022). It involves analyzing the denotative (literal) and connotative (symbolic) meanings of signs and symbols. Barthes' semiotic analysis focuses on understanding the different layers of meaning conveyed through signs and symbols in various contexts (Iskandarsyah, 2022). The semiotic model will reveal the philosophical meaning of the Klana Udeng Mask movie. The following table explains the meanings and philosophical aspects of the Klana Udeng mask:

Table 1. Meanings and philosophical aspects of masks

Masks	Denotative Meanings	Connotative Meanings
Klana Mask	The mask is a red-coloured face cover, big-eyed, with a moustache	The appearance of a person who is greedy, full of anger, unable to control his lusts
	Active and attractive dance movements	Mask dance movements depict laughter, excitement, drunkenness or anger
	Red-colored mask	The red color means emotional
	<i>Sobra</i>	Power
Klana Udeng Mask	Headband	Carrying out state duties without using power

In creating creative works of movies, it is necessary to understand the meaning contained in the traditional art of Topeng Klana. Researchers made observations regarding Topeng Klana, which has connotative meanings of a mature adult character with greed, ambition, strength, anger, and difficulty controlling lust. The character of Topeng Klana also has positive traits of bravery, enthusiasm, hard work and strength. Topeng Klana has a philosophical aspect of a powerful and greedy character who controls his power under his control without caring about the welfare of the people around him.

In the stages of art creation, an artist carries out a process within three stages. The first stage is research, where an artist attempts to brainstorm. This stage can also be called the stage of finding inspiration. In this inspiration stage, the artist needs to dialogue with the natural environment and the surrounding environment. In addition, the artist also conducts social relations with the community and acquaintances around the artist's environment. The artist also develops fantasies and imaginations that arise. Imagination that arises from the subconscious will provide good inspiration in the process of creating artwork. At this stage, the artist conducts research through various sources, including books, the internet, scientific journals and interviews with informants using a camera recording device.

The second stage is the idea development stage. In this stage, the artist observes the object that will be developed into a work. Idea development is done by deepening the object through field approaches, interviews, and observations.

The third stage is the realization of the artwork into visualization with a genuine medium. At this stage, the idea is finalized and ready to be realized. The completed idea development process will produce a scenario. The scenario that has been finalized will be taken to the next stage, the production preparation stage. The production preparation stage is carried out by analyzing the scenario and the scenario breakdown process. Afterwards, the next step is to find a location that will

be used for shooting. After the location search process is completed and location permits have been obtained from the location owner, the creative team will check the location together to observe the location conditions for identification from creative and production management.

The method of creating the movie Klana Udeng Mask contains an explanation of the steps or procedures carried out in the process of creating a movie work. It explains the methods and elements that are carried out in creating a movie, including the following steps:

1. Story brainstorming
2. Creation of characters in the movie
3. Scenario
4. Scenario analysis
5. Scenario breakdown
6. Search for a location that fits the scenario
7. Location permitting
8. Location check with the production team
9. Making director shot list.
10. Preparation of shooting equipment
11. Pre-production final meeting
12. Shooting
13. Collecting shooting materials
14. Selecting shooting materials that will be featured in the movie
15. Categorization of materials and search for the suitable materials
16. Material processing techniques
17. Development of audio-visual materials
18. Creating experimentation on audio-visual materials
19. Editing
20. Online
21. Adding music and effect
22. Mixing
23. Finishing process of Klana Udeng Mask movie

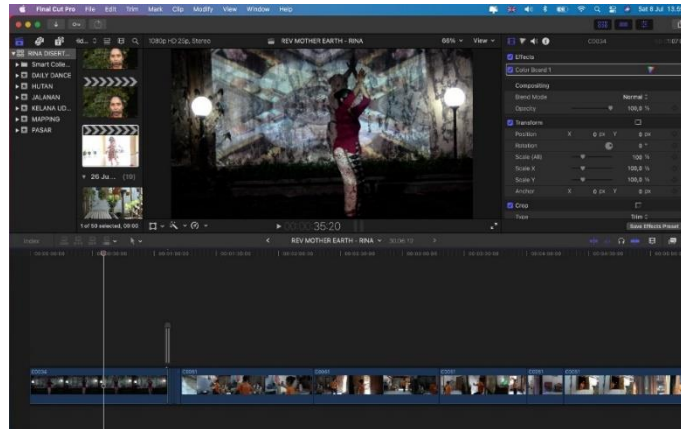


Figure 2. The Praying Dancer Scene
Source: Personal Documentation

In the Klana Udeng Mask movie, there is a philosophical meaning contained in the movie scene. The following is a scene in Klana Udeng Mask where the dancer performs a standing scene and raises both hands. The philosophical meaning in the scene of the dancer standing by raising both hands is a ritual performed by the dancer with a prayer movement to God Almighty. Dancers pray first as a spiritual meaning, as an attempt by dancers to ask for blessings and the pleasure of God Almighty. The movie Klana Udeng Mask opens with a scene of dancers praying to God Almighty. The following is a picture showing the scene of dancers praying to God Almighty.

In the scene shown in the picture above, it can be seen that the dancer moves slowly when raising both hands. This has a philosophical meaning in the Klana Udeng Mask movie, namely that the dancer concentrates on communicating between the dancer and God Almighty. Dancers who perform dance movements lifting both hands slowly and gently illustrate the meaning of a communication attempt that dancers are building to ask for strength and approval from God Almighty.



Figure 3. The Klana Udeng Mask Dancer
Source: Personal Documentation

The scene above shows the scene of the dancer dancing the Klana Udeng Mask. In the movie, it is seen in the scene where the dancer is performing the Klana Udeng Mask dance movement; there is a blue light in the middle of the dancer, meaning *qolbu* or the human heart. Blue light means *qolbu*, or the heart owned by humans and greatly influences humans. The philosophical meaning contained in the amount of blue light in the middle of the dancer illustrates that the good or bad of a human being depends on the contents of the *qolbu* or the contents in the heart owned by the human being. Technically, the blue light that has the meaning of *qolbu* is created by the reflection of the projector onto the screen. As for the two images combined into one, the meaning contained in the two images together illustrates the integrity possessed by Klana's character, who has integrity in carrying out the duties of the State with enthusiasm and strength to do the task well. Technically, the two images are merged into one using the double exposure technique.

The Klana Udeng Mask movie contains various philosophical meanings. This philosophical meaning may provide education for the audience to get the diversity of meanings contained in the Klana Udeng Mask movie, which is the creation of the transfer of traditional mask art to the film medium. The symbols in the Klana Udeng Mask movie have continuity with the *mise-en-scene* elements in the film.

CONCLUSION

In its early days, the traditional art of masks had spiritual and sacred values and became an art that had the function of a communication medium between dancers and God Almighty. The adaptation process of traditional mask art to the film media changes the elements that make up the value of traditional mask art experience changes in meaning according to the film medium and its interests. The meaning in the Klana Udeng Mask movie changes from denotative to connotative. For example, the shape of the Klana Mask has big eyes, a moustache, a beard, a headband, and a red face colour, which has a denotative meaning as a mask that covers the dancer's face has changed in the film Klana Udeng Mask. As for the connotative meaning, there is a depiction of someone greedy, ambitious, angry and has great curiosity and power but acts as a commoner in carrying out state duties. The movie Klana Udeng Mask has a philosophical meaning about gratitude and maintaining the relationship between humans and God Almighty. This philosophical meaning is found in the opening scene of the Klana Udeng Mask movie when the dancer prays to God Almighty, and the movie ends with the scene of the dancer making a gesture of prayer and gratitude to God Almighty. Changes in semiotic meaning in the Klana Udeng Mask movie affect the visual signs of the elements in the movie. Changes in form and visual signs in the film Klana Udeng Mask are adjusted to the form and style of the film.

REFERENCES

- Artha, G. W. (2023). Social Stigma and Construction of Educated Unemployment: A Case Study in Surabaya. *Srawung: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.56943/jssh.v2i2.372>
- Asyrafunnisa. (2021). Symbolic Meaning in the Traditional Dance of Bugis Makassar, Pakarena Dance (A Semiotic Study). *Tamaddun Life: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Budaya*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33096/tamaddun.v20i1.86>
- Bergesen, A. J. (2016). How to Sociologically Read a Movie. *Sociological Quarterly*, 57(4), 585–596. <https://doi.org/10.1111/TSQ.12151>
- Chielotam, A. N. (2015). Dance Beyond Movement: A Semiotic Metaphor of Iduu Akpo Indigenous Dance Performance. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(20), 40–49.
- Chrisa, G. (2015). Cinema and Personality Disorders. *Journal of Psychology & Clinical Psychiatry*, 3(4). <https://doi.org/10.15406/JPCPY.2015.03.00146>
- Huang, Y. (2023). Symbols, Artistic Creation and Aesthetic Appreciation: on Susanne K. Langer's Art Semiotics. *Art and Performance Letters*, 4(3), 56–62. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.23977/artpl.2023.040311>
- Iskandarsyah, S. (2022). Semiotics Analysis in The Betawi Traditional Wedding "Palang Pintu": The Study of Semiotics Roland Barthes. *International Journal of Linguistics Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijls.2022.2.1.1>
- Katerina, P. (2017). Film Adaptation as an Act of Communication: Adopting a Translation-oriented Approach to the Analysis of Adaptation Shifts. *Meta: Translators' Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1040464AR>
- Lasmiyati. (2013). Rasinah: Maestro Tari Topeng Indramayu. *Patanjala*, 5(3), 475–488.
- Nafiry, K., Wijaya, S., & Safiirah, Z. N. (2022). Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis in Tokopedia Advertising Ramadhan Special. *Jurnal Spektrum Komunikasi*, 10(4). <https://doi.org/10.37826/spektrum.v10i4.233>
- Nikoubashman, A., & Schmid, F. (2019). The Molecular Lego movie. *Nature Chemistry*, 11(4), 298–300. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41557-019-0243-8>
- Nurhidayah, Y. (2017). Kesenian Tari Topeng sebagai Media Dakwah. *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 11(1), 21–52. <https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v11i1.1526>
- Rosairo, R. (2023). Narrative Approach in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Agricultural Sciences - Sri Lanka*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/doi:10.4038/jas.v18i1.10094>

Suanda, T. A. (2018). *Klana Udeng*. Dinas Pariwisata Dan Kebudayaan Provinsi Jawa Barat. <https://web.archive.org/web/20180729185046/http://www.disparbud.jabarprov.go.id/wisata/ensiklo-det.php?id=69&lang=id>

Yudhanto, S. H., & Risdianto, F. (2022). The pragmatics and Semiotics Analysis of Vinyl Record Cover Art They Fell From The Sky's Album DECADE. *Journal of Pragmatics Research*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18326/jopr.v4i2.167-178>