

**LOVE AS COMMODITY: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE
ANALYSIS OF CAPITALIST IDEOLOGY IN THE FILM
MATERIALISTS (2025)**

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
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THESIS

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the thesis entitled **"Love as Commodity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Capitalist Ideology in the Film Materialists (2025)"** is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection and claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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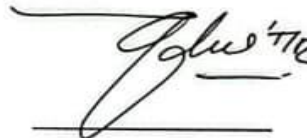
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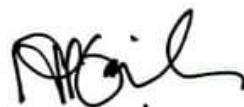
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MOTTO

“I can only tell you what I must repeat to myself daily; You are young, you do not know what the future has in store. You will rally, and you will be happy again.”

(Anne, Persuasion)

DEDICATION

I proudly dedicate this thesis to my beloved mother and father, who now rest beyond this world, yet whose love, sacrifice, and prayers continue to guide every step I take. Through you are no longer here to witness this moment, your presence lives within me, in my strength, my perseverance, and the person I have become today. And to my two beloved siblings, Imam Ma'sum and Rohmatul Fathiya, who stood beside me through every life storm, thank you for becoming the hands that held me when the world felt unbearably heavy. This thesis is a testament to all your love.

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ABSTRACT

Afida, Mila Nur (2026) *Love as Commodity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Capitalist Ideology in the Film Materialists (2025)*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature of Humanities. Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang. Advisor: Prof. Dr. H. Mudjia Rahardjo, M.Si.

Keywords: *Commodification of love, Critical Discourse Analysis, Capitalist Ideology, Film Materialists, Marx's commodity theory*

In romantic contemporary capitalist society, romantic relationships are increasingly shaped by market logic, where love is treated as an investment, couples are valued based on exchange value, and intimacy is packaged as a commodity. This phenomenon is reflected in popular films that reproduce the ideology of capitalism through romantic discourse. This study examines the reproduction of the ideology of capitalism in the romantic discourse of the film *Materialists (2025)* by Celine Song with a focus on the representation of love as a commodity. Although the commodification of love in popular culture has been widely studied in digital media and advertising, research based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on film as a cultural text is still limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the ideology of capitalism embedded in film discourse as well as identify the way in which love is represented as a commodity. This study uses a qualitative descriptive (quasi) approach with Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework which includes text analysis, discourse practice, and social practice. Data were obtained from 17 selected dialogues and stage directions in the film script which were analyzed using thematic techniques and contextualized through a semi-structured discourse with seven informants as a form of triangulation. The results of the study show three ideological patterns: the colonization of discourse through economic vocabulary, the historical naturalization of the commodification of marriage, and the internalization of ideology through the professional of identity of the main character. In addition, love in this film is represented through various forms of commodification that show the dominance of the logic of exchange in romantic relationships.

مستخلص البحث

عفيدة، ميلا نور (2026) الحب كسلعة: تحليل خطاب نقدي حول الأيديولوجية الرأسمالية في فيلم الماديين (2025). تخصص في الأدب الإنجليزي كلية العلوم الإنسانية. جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية، مالانغ. المشرف الأكاديمي : الأستاذ البروفيسور الدكتور ه. مودجيا راهرديو، ماجستير العلوم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تسليع الحب، تحليل الخطاب النقدي، أيديولوجية الرأسمالية، الماديون السينمائيون، نظرية السلعة لماركس.

في المجتمع الرأسمالي المعاصر، تتشكل العلاقات الرومانسية بشكل متزايد بمنطق السوق، حيث يعامل الحب كاستثمار، ويقيم الأزواج بناء على قيمة التبادل، ويتم تغليف الحميمية كسلعة. تنعكس هذه الظاهرة في الأفلام الشعبية التي تعيد إنتاج أيديولوجية الرأسمالية من خلال الخطاب الرومانسي. تفحص هذه الدراسة إعادة إنتاج أيديولوجية الرأسمالية في الخطاب الرومانسي لفيلم "الماديون" (2025) لسيلين سونغ، مع التركيز على تمثيل الحب كسلعة. على الرغم من أن تسليع الحب في الثقافة الشعبية قد درس على نطاق واسع في وسائل الإعلام الرقمية والإعلانات، إلا أن الأبحاث المبينة على تحليل الخطاب النقدي (AWK) حول السينما كنص ثقافي لا تزال محدودة. لذلك، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل أيديولوجية الرأسمالية المتجذرة في خطاب السينما وكذلك تحديد الطريقة التي يمثل بها الحب كسلعة. تستخدم هذه الدراسة نهجا وصفيا نوعيا (شبه شبه مميز) مع إطار AWK ثلاثي الأبعاد لفييركلوف الذي يشمل تحليل النصوص، وممارسة الخطاب، والممارسة الاجتماعية. تم الحصول على بيانات من 17 حوارا مختارا وتوجيهات مسرحية في نص الفيلم، والتي تم تحليلها باستخدام تقنيات موضوعية ووضعها في سياق من خلال خطاب شبه منظم مع سبعة مخبرين كشكل من أشكال التثليث. تظهر نتائج الدراسة ثلاثة أنماط أيديولوجية: استعمار الخطاب من خلال المفردات الاقتصادية، وتجنيس الزواج التاريخي السلعي، واستيعاب الأيديولوجيا من خلال الهوية المهنية للشخصية الرئيسية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يمثل الحب في هذا الفيلم من خلال أشكال مختلفة من التسليع التي تظهر هيمنة منطق التبادل في العلاقات العاطفية.

ABSTRAK

Afida, Mila Nur (2026) *Cinta sebagai Komoditas: Analisis Wacana Kritis tentang Ideologi Kapitalis dalam Film Materialists* (2025). Jurusan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Humaniora. Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Prof. Dr. H. Mudjia Rahardjo, M.Si.

Kata kunci: *Komodifikasi cinta, Analisis Wacana Kritis, Ideologi Kapitalisme, Film Materialists, Teori komoditas Marx*

Dalam masyarakat kapitalis kontemporer, relasi romantis semakin dibentuk oleh logika pasar, di mana cinta diperlakukan sebagai investasi, pasangan dinilai berdasarkan nilai tukar, dan keintiman dikemas sebagai komoditas. Fenomena ini tercermin dalam film populer yang mereproduksi ideologi kapitalisme melalui wacana romantis. Penelitian ini mengkaji reproduksi ideologi kapitalisme dalam wacana romantis film *Materialists* (2025) karya Celine Song dengan fokus pada representasi cinta sebagai komoditas. Meskipun komodifikasi cinta dalam budaya populer telah banyak dikaji pada media digital dan periklanan, namun penelitian berbasis Analisis Wacana Kritis (AWK) terhadap film sebagai teks budaya masih terbatas. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ideologi kapitalisme yang tertanam dalam wacana film serta mengidentifikasi cara cinta direpresentasikan sebagai komoditas. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif (quasi) dengan kerangka AWK tiga dimensi Fairclough yang meliputi analisis teks, praktik wacana, dan praktik sosial. Data diperoleh dari 17 dialog dan arahan panggung pilihan dalam skrip film yang dianalisis menggunakan teknik tematik dan dikontekstualisasikan melalui wacana semi-terstruktur dengan tujuh informan sebagai bentuk triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga pola ideologis: kolonisasi wacana melalui kosakata ekonomi, naturalisasi historis komodifikasi pernikahan, dan internalisasi ideologi melalui identitas profesional karakter utama. Selain itu cinta dalam film ini direpresentasikan melalui berbagai bentuk komodifikasi yang memperlihatkan dominasi logika pertukaran dalam hubungan romantis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the first chapter in the thesis, which contains a general explanation of the problems to be discussed. This chapter will discuss several subheadings such as background of the study, research question, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Love and interpersonal relationships are increasingly becoming more and more seen in today's society as commodities that can be bought, sold, and even marketed. In popular culture, social media, and entertainment media, where human relationships are viewed as commodities with exchange values within the capitalist system, in addition to being an emotional expression. Not only that, a lot of famous couples and influencers turn their relationships into commercial content to make money through ads, to gain financial benefits through advertisements, endorsements, and personal branding strategies. Markasović (2024) found that in the series *Ready, Set, Love*, bodies and romantic relationships are treated as resources in capitalist spectacle. Meanwhile, Gaber (2024) emphasizes that capitalist culture transforms love and marriage into transactions in consumer culture. This phenomenon shows that love has undergone systematic commodification and is often represented through various media.

Film serves an important medium that shows the construction of love within the framework of capitalism. Cinematic narratives often insert

certain ideologies that influence the audience's understanding of interpersonal relationships. Malinowska and Hu (2025) shows that technology in contemporary culture shapes love as data and transactions within the techno capitalist system. The phenomenon of love commodification is not exclusive to social reality alone but has also influenced popular cultural in number of media production, including cinema. The 2025 movie *Materialists* is chosen as the main subject of this study because it provides a vivid depiction of romantic relationships entwined with material wealth and financial success – qualities that make it especially appropriate for analysis through a critical linguistic lens.

This study uses the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how language and narrative structure within the film functions as vehicles for ideological propagation. To keep the research focused, this study used Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional framework, which includes three levels of analysis: (1) text analysis, which examines the choice of words, dialogue, narrative, and visual symbols in films that represent love as commodity; (2) discourse practice analysis, which looks at how films are produced promoted, and consumed in the capitalist entertainment industry; and (3) social practice analysis, which links film representations to the context of global capitalism, consumerist culture, and class ideology. This study analyses the cost and worth of love in the context of capitalism by linking CDA to Marx's concept of commodities, this study explores how the value and price of love are

constructed within the capitalist system. Yun (2024) argues that the value of media commodities is socially constructed within the framework of capitalism, while Zhao and Chen (2025) demonstrate that even private behaviors can be formed as marketable assets. These theories form the basis for examining how the film *Materialists* frames love as a commodity.

Building upon these theoretical insights, it is also important to review previous studies that have explored similar issues across different media contexts. Previous studies have highlighted the commodification of love and relationships in various forms of media. For instance, Markasović (2024) explored romantic relationships in the Thai television series *Ready, Set, Love*, where love and marriage as capitalist resources, while Gaber (2024) discussed how love and marriage become economic transactions in consumer culture. Similarly, Malinowska and Hu (2025) and Zhao and Chen (2025) revealed how technology and digital platforms transform intimacy into tradable assets within the logic of techno capitalism.

From a feminist and media perspective, Billah and Anzari (2023) show how capitalism co-opts emancipatory values in advertising for market gain. Meidiska and Hapsarani (2023) show how the short film *All Too Well* transforms personal relationships into marketable cultural products. Hidayati (2024) found that women's sadness on social media is produced as a commodity that creates the illusion of emotional closeness. Meanwhile, Yun (2024) emphasizes that the commodity value of media is not natural, but rather a social construction within the capitalist system. Studies by Ma

(2024) and Rubikon Journal (2024) support the idea that the discourse of love and relationships in popular culture is laden with capitalist and patriarchal ideology. Based on all of these studies, it seems that studies on the commodification of love mostly focus on social media, advertisements, or television series. There is still a lack of research that uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine feature films as cultural texts that construct love within the framework of capitalist ideology.

Despite these extensive discussions, few studies have specifically examined the representation of love as a commodity in feature films using a CDA perspective. Most previous studies have focused on digital media, advertising, or theatre (Gaber, 2024; Hidayati, 2024; Billah & Anzari, 2023). This study offers novelty by examining the film *Materialists* (2025) as a cultural text that contains capitalist ideology through the construction of love. Thus, this study not only fills a gap in critical linguistic studies but also broadens our understanding of how capitalism influences the representation of love in popular media.

Materialists (2025) was purposefully chosen as the main text of this study. This feature gives the movie unique significance as a topic for critical linguistic analysis since it allows scholars to track how dialogue, plot construction, and visual symbolism work together to generate capitalist-inflected discourses around love. *Materialists* offer an opportunity to see how capitalist ideology is portrayed in the more intricate medium of film,

both in terms of story and images, in contrast to earlier research that looked at digital media or advertising.

The concept that *Materialists* (2025) frames romantic love as intrinsically tied to economic logic and materialist value serves as the foundation for this study. The underlying premise is that by using CDA as an analytical instrument, the capitalist ideology ingrained in the story of the movie can be revealed in a variety of ways, including through spoken dialogue and character representation. Thus, this study positions film as a cultural text laden with ideological interests. The purpose of this research is to expose how love is represented as a commodity in the film *Materialists* (2025) and how capitalist ideology works through language and symbols in the film's narrative. Specifically, this study aims to analyze discursive practices that normalize the connection between love, consumption, and social status. By using CDA, this study is expected to contribute to critical linguistic studies of capitalist ideology in contemporary popular culture.

B. Research Questions

According to the previous studies offered, this research will focus on the following research questions:

1. What capitalist ideology is contained in the discourse of the film *Materialists* (2025)?
2. How is love represented as a commodity in the film *Materialists* (2025)?

C. Significances of the Study

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of critical linguistic studies, particularly in understanding how capitalist ideology works through representations of popular culture. This study also integrates Marx's theory of commodities with Fairclough's CDA framework, which is rarely applied together to analyze films.

Practically speaking, it is expected that the research's conclusions will improve viewers' media literacy and increase their understanding of the ideological undertones hidden in romantic cinema stories. Beyond this, academics and students working at the nexus of linguistic, media studies, and cultural studies, especially those interested in how language expresses and upholds capitalist values may find the study to be a helpful point of reference.

D. Scope and Limitations

The terms of scope, this analysis is delimited to Materialists (2025), examined exclusively through the lens of Fairclough's CDA framework. The analysis focuses on three dimensions: text, discourse practice, and social practice to uncover how capitalist ideologies shape the representation of love as a commodity. Therefore, this study excludes technical cinematic elements as it primarily concerns the discourse structures within the film text. Thus, these limitations keep the study focused on critical linguistic analysis and capitalist ideology in the construction of love versions.

E. Definition of Key Terms

1. Commodity

In Marxist theory, a commodity is an object or concept that has exchange value and can be traded in a capitalist system. A commodity refers to something that has value within a system of exchange. In this study, commodities are not limited to physical objects but also include social and emotional aspects that can be evaluated through capitalist logic. Love is considered a commodity when romantic relationships are represented based on measurable values such as wealth, appearance, social status, or personal gain. Therefore, this concept is used to identify how films transform emotional relationships into something that can be valued and exchanged.

2. Love

Love refers to the emotional relationship between individuals, including affection, attachment, and romantic connection. However, in this study, “love” refers to the representation of romantic relationships as constructed through the discourse of *Materialists* (2025). This concept does not focus solely on personal feelings or emotional attachment but examines how romantic relationships are represented and influenced by economic values and social structures. Love is analyzed as a commodity when romantic relationships are constructed through market-based evaluations, where factors such as material possessions, social status, and personal value influence the way individuals are perceived and chosen.

3. Capitalist Ideology

Capitalist ideology refers to a system of beliefs that prioritizes market values, economic success, competition, and consumption as important

measures of social worth and personal achievement. In this study, capitalist ideology is not understood merely as the presence of money or material possessions, but as the way market-oriented values influence the interpretation of human relationships and personal identity.

Within the discourse of *Materialists* (2025), capitalist ideology is examined through several manifestations that emerge from the film, including the evaluation of individuals based on market-related values such as wealth, appearance, and social status; the representation of romantic relationships through exchange and transactional logic; and the normalization of consumption as a symbol of affection, success, and relationship quality. This concept is used to analyze how the film's discourse reproduces capitalist values and contributes to the construction of love within a market-oriented society.

4. Commodification

The process of transforming something non-economic (such as love emotions) into an economic product or asset that can be bought and sold. Commodification is the process by which something that originally had social, emotional, or cultural value is transformed into something that can be measured, exchanged, or consumed. In this study, commodification explains how love and intimacy are represented through economic logic, in which romantic relationships can be evaluated based on benefits, status, and material value.

5. Critical discourse analysis

An approach to discourse analysis that reveals power relations and ideology in language and text. This study used Fairclough's three-dimensional model. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach used to examine how language constructs meaning, power relations, and ideology. In this study, CDA refers to Fairclough's three-dimensional

model, which consists of text, discourse practices, and social practices. Text analysis focuses on linguistic features such as word choice, metaphors, and sentence structure; discourse practices examine how discourse is produced and interpreted; while social practices link discourse to broader social structures, particularly capitalist ideology.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter discusses the main framework and also reviews some related theories concerning the current study. For this purpose, the reviews of some related theories are critical discourse analysis, Marxist theory of commodification, capitalist ideology in media popular culture, and representation of love commodities.

A. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach that explores the relationship between language, power, and ideology. Norman Fairclough (1995) proposes a three-dimensional framework that includes text, discourse practice, and social practice, which together uncover how discourse constructs and reflects social realities. CDA views language not merely as a communicative tool but as a form of social practice embedded within structures of domination and inequality (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Within the domain of media and film scholarship, CDA equips researchers with the tools to trace how choices in language and sign systems serve to reinforce ideological positions and perpetuate dominant power arrangements (Fairclough, 2010). Because it focuses on how common discourses make economic and social structures appear normal and inevitable, its application is particularly appropriate when examining capitalist ideology ingrained in cultural products.

The main analytical foundation of this research is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which views discourse as a social activity that both shapes and is shaped by power relations rather than as an abstract or neutral phenomena. Discourse analysis research emphasizes that discourse should be viewed as a social practice that actively produces meaning, identity, and power rather than as simple language use. This viewpoint presents media materials, including movies, as dynamic spaces where ideology is created and made to seem natural rather than as clear windows onto reality.

A logical tool for revealing ideological processes that could otherwise go unnoticed is Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, which integrates analysis at the levels of text, discursive practice, and social practice. This perspective is directly relevant to the current study, which examines how capitalist ideology influences how romance is portrayed in *Materialists* (2025). Importantly, CDA aims to explain how the formal characteristics of text actively support larger sociocultural ideological formations, going beyond the descriptive role of language analysis.

The previous CDA framework, which combines text analysis, discourse practice, and social practice, provides a structure for uncovering hidden ideological operations. Studying commodified love requires a discourse theory foundation, because the meanings circulating in society, especially through films, are not neutral linguistic forms, but rather products of social practices. Gee (2014) emphasizes that Discourse (with capital D) is "a way of being a certain type of person" (p.5). This concept disproves

the oversimplified notion that discourse is just words and emphasizes how speech develops people's identities within a certain social context.

Gee goes on to explain that discourse serves as “a way of coordinating language, actions, values, and beliefs” (2014, p.6). This expansion shows that discourse extends beyond verbal expression to include the organizing of more general behavioural patterns and the processes involved in meaning-making. Combining these two conceptualizations reveals discourse as the process by which social identities such as what it means to love, desire, or be viewed as a “valuable” partner are created and disseminated throughout society.

This conceptual foundation is important because movie images of love actively create standards about what sorts of relationships should exist and what kinds of desire are socially acceptable rather than serving as objective representations of romance. This identity shaping process becomes intricately linked to consumer ideals and market logic in a capitalist setting. It is for this productive analytical space, one that demonstrates how the film distributes particular identity configurations such as the “successful romantic couples,” the “desirable women,” or the “worthy lovers”, through capitalist signifiers including wealth, lifestyle choices, objects, narrative, and visual symbols as ideological tools. Film turns into a cultural engine that dictates to viewers who to adore and how to feel. It has long been recognized in the field of discourse studies that the creation of meaning is inextricably linked to the mechanisms of power.

B. Marx's Commodity Theory

A critical understanding of how capitalism systems convert social relations into market relations can be gained from Karl Marx's theory of commodities. Marx describes in *Das Kapital* (1867) that commodity fetishism is the process by which products and even human emotions acquire trade value that obscures their utility value under capitalism. Social ties appear to be relationships between objects as a result of this fetishism. Marx's commodity theory sheds light on how closeness, love, and care are examples of non-material concepts that can be sold as goods in capitalist societies. A fuller comprehension of how capitalist ideology shapes emotional life as a marketable and consumable experience is made possible by applying this theory to film discourse (Illouz, 2007).

Hochschild (2012) expands on this idea by showing that feelings can become a form of "emotional labor," that is, emotional work that is commodified and exchanged like a product. Thus, expressions of love can also be assessed based on their market value whether they are attractive, profitable, and can be sold as part of one's identity or social performance. Meanwhile, Banet-Weiser (2018) shows how personal identities, including romantic relationships, are increasingly treated as "brands," creating conditions in which intimacy becomes a cultural asset that can be exchanged for recognition or symbolic gain.

By describing how data capitalism turns relationships and intimacy into commodities evaluated by visibility, engagement, and algorithms,

Fuchs (2022) offers a digital viewpoint. In other words, inside the platform ecosystem, emotional closeness can likewise be viewed as data with economic worth. All things considered, these modern intellectuals demonstrate that Marx's logic of commodities extends beyond actual items to include human relationships and emotions. Capitalism's status as a system that permeates even the most intimate human experiences is reinforced when love, intimacy, and relationships become spaces where economic value, symbolic value, and social value converge.

C. Capitalist Ideology and the Commodification of Love

The development of capitalism has not only transformed systems of production and consumption but also influenced how emotions and personal relationships are understood in modern society. Illouz (2012) refers to this phenomenon as emotional capitalism, a condition in which an individual's emotional lives are increasingly intertwined with economic rationality and consumption practices. Within this framework, love is no longer understood solely as an affective experience, but also as an arena where values, choices, and preferences are shaped by market logic.

Certain ideals about romantic lifestyles, ideal mates, and ways to show affection are imposed by capitalism. Expensive presents, unique experiences, and symbols of luxury are frequently offered as proof of the depth and caliber of relationships. In keeping with the idea of commercialization derived from Marx's theory, this illustrates how love may move from emotional worth to exchange value (1976). In this case, the

logic of exchange in which love is valued according to the tangible and symbolic advantages it provides may help explain interpersonal relationships.

Marx's theory of commodity fetishism, which conceals interpersonal relationships as relationships between objects, is similarly connected to this occurrence. When it comes to love, the significance of emotional connections can be "translated" through things way of life. When it comes to love, the significance of emotional connections might be "translated" through things, way of life, or social standing, making displays of affection seem to be ingrained in tangible symbols. Love may therefore be reduced to something quantitative, interchangeable, and displayed within a framework of consumption.

This phenomenon is also related to Marx's concept of commodity fetishism, where social relations between people are disguised as relations between objects. In the context of love, the meaning of emotional relationships can be "translated" through objects, lifestyle, or social status, so that expressions of love appear to be embedded in material symbols. Thus, love has the potential to be reduced to something exchangeable, measurable, and exhibited within a framework of consumption.

In media culture, romantic representations often reinforce neoliberal values such as individual success, financial independence, beauty standards, and social mobility (Gill & Scharff, 2011). Love can be normalized through

frequent portrayals as a component of a self-improvement endeavour strongly associated with social and financial capital.

D. The Film *Materialists* (2025) as Cultural Text

Film is a popular culture that serves as a platform for the creation and dissemination of social meaning in addition to providing entertainment. According to Hall (1997), media representation is a process of creating meaning. Movies influence viewers' perceptions of the world in addition to reflecting reality. Film spread specific social beliefs and ideologies through story, dialogue, and imagery. One way to interpret the 2025 movie *Materialists* is as a cultural text that explores the relationship between capitalism, love and consumption. The film, which is set in a cosmopolitan urban setting, shows a romantic connection that is strongly associated with achieving social standing, living an opulent lifestyle, and pursuing financial goals.

In its portrayal, love is linked to the possession of social and financial resources rather than being solely an emotional experience. This portrayal is consistent with Illouz's (2007) paradigm of emotional capitalism, which holds that interpersonal connections are impacted by market logic, and it represents the commodification process as defined by Marx (1976). The story and characters in the movie illustrate how relationship selection, relationship dynamics, and romantic conflict are intertwined with economic considerations.

Analyzing this film through Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework allows researchers to identify how dialogue and narrative elements construct ideological messages that naturalize capitalist values. The language used by characters, the way success is defined, and the symbols of luxury displayed play a role in shaping the audience's understanding of love and happiness.

As a cultural artifact, *Materialists* provides a space to explore how popular media reinforces or potentially challenges dominant socio-economic ideologies regarding love and personal fulfilment. While numerous studies have addressed romance in media, relatively few have analyzed feature films by simultaneously combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Marx's commodity theory. This makes *Materialists* a relevant and contextual object of study for examining how capitalist ideology infiltrates representations of intimate relationships through film discourse.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains procedures of how this research is conducted. It includes research paradigms, research approach, method, data sources, data collection techniques, and research instruments.

A. Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a set of assumptions, beliefs, and values that are considered “true” for conducting research based on a particular point of view (Rahardjo, 2025). Paradigms function as the foundation that underlie scientific activities and ways of thinking, and they guide researchers in understanding and interpreting social reality. In general, there are two main paradigms that are known, namely positivism and interpretivism (Basuki, 2006). These two paradigms have developed into various types of paradigms, one of which is the post-positivism paradigm used in this study.

This study adopted a post-positivistic paradigm. This paradigm criticizes the positivist assumption that researchers can discover absolute and objective truth (Rahardjo, 2023). This paradigm serves as a bridge between positivism and interpretivism, which argue that truth cannot be achieved absolutely due to limitations in data collection and analysis (Rahardjo, 2023). In this context, this study will align with efforts to analyze the perpetuation of capitalist ideology through the representation of love as a commodity. Data collection in this study is not based solely on textual or

narrative truths that appear in film but also considers the social and cultural context. However, post-positivistic still views truth as an important aspect that places researchers and objects in an epistemological relationship, even though this truth cannot be achieved absolutely (Rahardjo, 2023). Therefore, this study will analyze the film *Materialists* (2025) based on visual and auditory observations of the dialogue, narrative, and discourse representation that appear in the film.

This study focused on analyzing the representation of love as a commodity and how capitalist ideology is reproduced through discourse in the film *Materialists* (2025). Using a Critical Discourse Analysis approach, this study examines language patterns and discursive practices while considering the social and cultural context. Within this framework, the post-positivist paradigm combined with quasi-qualitative approach positions theory as the main foundation guiding the analytical process.

B. Research Approach

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach (quasi) with a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of meaning, language, and context within the film text (Rahardjo, 2023). Meanwhile, CDA provided a structured framework to examine how language is used to reproduce ideology and power relations (Fairclough, 2010). This combination of approaches enables researchers to not only describe the textual features but also critically interpret their social implications.

In its application, the quasi-qualitative approach in this study was carried out in several stages. First, the researcher determines the research problem based on the social phenomenon represented in the film, namely the tendency to commodify love in capitalist society. Second, the phenomenon can be examined using the *Critical Discourse Analysis* framework to identify language patterns and discursive practices that reflect the logic of capitalism. Third, the research object is determined, namely the film *Materialists* (2025), which will be analyzed as a discourse text.

Next, data collection conducted using documentation techniques, focusing on the film's dialogue and narrative. The researcher compiles notes and transcripts based on visual and auditory observations of the film, paying attention to what is seen, heard, and contextually represented. Fourth, the data obtained analyzed using thematic techniques to identify discourse patterns that represent the commodification of love and capitalist ideology. Fifth, the research results reported through publication as a form of academic accountability.

C. Method

This research uses a textual study method with a *Critical Discourse Analysis* (CDA) approach, specifically following Fairclough's three-dimensional model (text, discursive practice, social practice). Textual study is a form of data analysis that examines texts in depth in terms of content and meaning, as well as the structure and discourse that construct them (Rahardjo, 2018). This method differs from field studies, which involve

direct interaction with research subjects. Therefore, text study is chosen because the research objects are film dialogues and narratives, while CDA is used as an analytical framework to examine how discourse represents capitalist ideology and power relations in the construction of love. The analysis conducted in depth on the film dialogues, paying attention to the explicit and implicit meanings contained therein. Each linguistic element analyzed to see how love is represented as a commodity through word choice, sentence structure, and narrative flow. Thus, this study focuses on revealing discourse patterns that reflect power relations and capitalist logic in the representation of love in films.

In order to demonstrate how the discourse of love as a commodity and capitalist ideology is produced in the text, this study also concentrates its analysis on the linguistic style and structure employed in the dialogue of the movie. This textual analysis demonstrated how character communication reflects the power dynamics and capitalist ideals at play in the portrayal of love. The recurring motifs, word choice, and literary devices that legitimize capitalist logic were all examined in this analysis. Using this method, the study demonstrates how the movie might serve as a social representation tool that could influence viewer's perceptions of love in modern culture.

D. Data Collection Techniques

This study employs secondary data in the form of film and stage directions from the film *Materialists* (2025), accessed through the official Netflix streaming platform. Several predefined processes are used in the data collection process for this investigation. The speech and narrative structure of the film serve as the main source of data for this study. Informants are only used as supplementary sources to offer thoughtful viewpoints that aid in placing the discourse's interpretation in context. Initially, the researcher gathered information from the official Netflix platform in the form of speech from the movie *Materialist* (2025). Second, the researcher pays close attention to all of the speech in the movie, paying particular attention to exchanges that illustrate how capitalism and love are constructed.

The researcher used the English original language subtitles from the movie to guarantee data accuracy. Third, in order to correctly capture every dialogue, the movie was replayed 7 times. The investigator then transcribes the chosen conversations depending on the process of observation. In addition to providing details on the characters speaking and the conversation's context, the transcription process concentrates on dialogues that are pertinent to the study's goals. Time stamps, verbatim conversation, and supporting comments when needed are all included in the structured method used to arrange the transcripts. The gathered data was ready for the analysis phase thanks to these procedures.

In addition, this study also involves informants as supporting sources to enrich the interpretation of the film's discourse. The informants selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance to film studies and film consumption. This study involved seven informants, consisting of one lecturer in film studies, two film studies students, three university students who actively consume films, and one university student who is a member of a film fan community.

The criteria for selecting the informants include having academic or experiential knowledge related to film analysis or appreciation, being familiar with contemporary films, and being able to provide reflective insights related to the representation of love and capitalist values in film narratives. The informants' perspectives are used as complementary data to support and validate the textual study, rather than as primary data. The data obtained from informants later be utilized to strengthen the analytical interpretation and triangulation of findings.

The informants were selected through purposive sampling, a non-random sampling technique in which participants are deliberately chosen based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Snape & Spencer, 2003). This technique was considered appropriate for this study because the research does not aim to generalize findings to a broader population, but rather to obtain reflective and contextually grounded perspectives that can enrich the interpretation of the film's discourse. Using purposeful selection, the researcher was able to carefully choose participants

whose experiences and backgrounds were most likely to yield insightful information about how capitalist ideology is portrayed and the movie *Materialists* (2025) depicts the commercialization of love.

The following criteria were used to choose the informants. First, before or during the data collecting time, informants had to view the complete movie *Materialists* (2025) so that their direct interaction with the text served as the foundation for the responses. Second, in order to ensure their ability to critically evaluate the film's narrative and representational choices, informants were asked to have either a long-standing personal interest in cinema consumption or academic expertise with film analysis. Third, in order to capture a variety of viewpoints on the film's ideological content, informants were chosen to reflect a range of cinema involvement levels, from scholarly research to passionate fandom belonging to a community of movie enthusiasts. These criteria led to the selection of one cinema studies lecturer, two film studies students, three university students who actively watch movies, and one university student who belongs to a community of film enthusiasts as the final informants. Their viewpoints were employed as supplementary sources to triangulate and contextualize the textual analysis's conclusions rather than as primary data.

E. Data Analysis

This research data in this study is analyzed using theme analysis approaches. Because of its versatility in recognizing and comprehending, this method is frequently employed in social sciences, especially

sociolinguistics. A qualitative method called thematic analysis seeks to find, examine, and summarize patterns or themes that appear throughout the data through a process of systematic coding and theme development (Rahardjo, 2017).

While Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model serves as the primary analytical framework for interpreting the relationship between text, discursive practices, and social practices, theme analysis is employed in this study as an operational approach to organize data. Thus, thematic analysis serves to identify language patterns, while Fairclough's CDA used to examine the ideological meanings and power relations contained in the discourse.

The data analysis process was carried out in several stages. First, the researcher reads and understands the transcript data of the film *Materialists* (2025) dialogue repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data content. At this stage, the researcher notes language patterns and terms related to the representation of love and the logic of capitalism. Second, the researcher selects parts of the dialogue that are relevant to the research focus and group them manually. Third, the researcher carries out a coding process to identify discourse units that have similar meanings. Fourth, the codes grouped into larger themes based on similarities in pattern and meaning. Fifth, the themes that formed were analyzed using Fairclough's CDA framework by examining the dimensions of the text (word choice, metaphors, and sentence structure), discursive practices (production and

consumption of discourse), and social practices (capitalist ideology and power relations). Sixth, the results of the analysis are then compared and contextualized with previous research findings to strengthen the interpretation and maintain the validity of the analysis. Thus, thematic analysis and Fairclough's CDA will complement each other in revealing the representation of love as a commodity in the film *Materialists* (2025).

To simplify the data analysis process, researchers formulate research indicators as guidelines for identifying manifestations of capitalist ideology in film texts. These indicators are qualitative in nature, in the form of characteristics or signs that appear in dialogue, scenes, or narratives, which represent the research concept. The indicators are derived from two main concepts in this study, namely capitalist ideology and love as a commodity.

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Second, love as a commodity. Indicators used include: love measured through material possessions or profit, as seen in scenes or dialogue that emphasize that love can be bought, sold, or exchanged through goods, gifts, or social status; gifts or wealth as a measure of love, which is

when characters judge the quality of a relationship based on the material things they receive or give; and personal or social gain in relationships, where characters make romantic decisions based on economic, social, or status gains, rather than purely on feelings.

No.	Main Concept	Indicators	Operational Description in Film
1.	Capitalist ideology	Emphasis on social or material status in a relationship	Dialogue or scenes in which characters judge a partner based on their wealth, lifestyle, prestigious job, or possession of luxury goods
		Competition and transactions in relationships	Romantic relationships are described as involving an exchange of values (material goods, amenities, social access), or competition for a “high value” partner
		Normalizing consumption as proof of love	Consumption behavior (buying expensive gifts, treating others to lavish treats, financing a lifestyle) is positioned as a normal and expected form of affection
2.	Love as commodity	Love is measured through material goods or benefits	Love is represented as something that can be “bought”, “exchanged”, or valued in terms of the economic and social benefits it provides
		Gifts or wealth as a measure of love	The quality of a relationship or the sincerity of feelings is measured by the value of gifts, money spent, or luxuries given
		Consideration of personal or social gain in relationships	The decision to enter or maintain a relationship is based on financial gain, increased social status, or access to certain networks

These indicators were used as a guide in the data coding and categorization process, then analyzed using Fairclough's three-level approach, namely text analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. With these indicators, the process of identifying patterns of capitalist ideology and the commodification of love in films becomes more focused and systematic, so that the analysis results can be more accurate and in-depth.

F. Research Instruments

This study places the researcher as the main instrument in the data collection and analysis process. In qualitative research, the researcher plays an active role in observing, interpreting, and making sense of the research data (Rahardjo, 2023). Therefore, the researcher's sensitivity to context, language, and discourse is an important factor in producing relevant and accurate data. To support the researcher's role as the main instrument, this study uses documentation as a data collection technique. Documentation carried out by manually compiling dialogue transcripts based on the dialogue in the film *Materialists* (2025). The transcription process is carried out by watching and listening to the dialogue through the official Netflix platform, either through the application or the website.

To improve data accuracy, the researcher uses the original subtitles (in English) provided by the Netflix platform. Furthermore, the dialogue transcripts compiled in table format using Microsoft Word so that the data is presented systematically and facilitates the analysis process. Thus, the

researcher as the main instrument supported by tools that help maintain the accuracy and regularity of the research data.

G. Data Triangulation

In order to increase analytical depth and lessen interpretative bias, this study employs theoretical triangulation, as suggested by Mudjia Rahardjo (2020), which entails analyzing a research topic from multiple theoretical perspectives. Since ideological meanings frequently function implicitly within language and discourse practices and may not be fully represented by a single theoretical lens, theoretical triangulation is especially pertinent in Critical Discourse Analysis.

This study uses two primary theoretical frameworks to guarantee the reliability of the analysis. First, the construction of love as a form of exchange value within capitalist ideology is examined using Marx's theory of commodification. This theoretical approach allows the researcher to recognize how the movie *Materialists* (2025) depicts emotional relationships as commodities that are created, consumed, and assessed according to market logic.

Second, Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis framework (2010) was used to examine the ways in which capitalist ideology is ingrained in three interrelated dimensions: discursive practices, textual elements, and more general social practices. This approach enables the researcher to look at the social circumstances that influence the discourse as well as the meaning-production processes and language patterns of the conversations.

By combining these two theoretical stances, the researcher can examine language as a social construct as well as a literary structure practice that reflects power relations and ideological domination. By combining Marx's concept of commodification with Fairclough's CDA framework, the analysis remains systematic, theoretically grounded, and aligned with the research objectives.

To further strengthen the credibility of the findings, the researcher conducted academic consultation with Prof. Dr. Mudjia Rahardjo, M.Si., an expert in qualitative research methodology and discourse analysis. His role as an academic supervisor provides critical guidance in validating the relevance of theory selection, the consistency of analytical procedures, and the interpretation of emerging discursive patterns. This combination of theoretical triangulation and expert judgment is expected to ensure that the research maintains methodological rigor and academic credibility.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of an analysis of Celine Song's film *Materialists* (2025) using Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework. Based on the post-positivistic paradigm that underlies this study, theory is not treated as a tool for verifying assumptions, but rather as a framework that guides the researcher in identifying, organizing, and interpreting discursive patterns in the data. Marx's theory of commodities and Fairclough's CDA theory thus precede the interpretation of the data and determine what is considered significant in the film's script.

The analysis focuses on two research questions: (1) what capitalist ideologies tend to be embedded in the discourse of the film *Materialists* (2025), and (2) how love is represented as a commodity in the film. The interpretations in this chapter are acknowledged as the result of a theory-based reading and are not claimed to be the only possible interpretation, in line with nature of knowledge within the post-positivistic paradigm, which views truth as something that can be approached but not absolutely attained.

The film *Materialists* follows Lucy, a professional matchmaker in New York, who is torn between two choices: John, her poor but sincere

longtime boyfriend, and Harry, a wealthy client who offers her a life of luxury. From the entire script, 17 key data points relevant to the research focus have been identified. To strengthen and contextualize the interpretation of the analysis, this study involves semi-structured interviews with seven informants who have watched the film independently. The informants' perspectives are positioned as a source of triangulation, not as a primary data; thus, their insights are integrated into the discussion to enrich the depth of interpretation.

1. Capitalist Ideology in the Discourse of Materialists (2025)

Based on an analysis using Fairclough's CDA framework grounded in Marx's commodity theory, this section analyses eight instances that tend to reproduce capitalist ideology within the film's discourse. The ideology in question includes: the evaluation of individuals based on their market position, the normalization of competition and transactions within romantic relationships, and consumption as a marker of the legitimacy of relationships.

Datum 1

D-01	Scene 5	This datum is taken when Lucy enters the frame and approaches a french bistro on the corner, she's there to meet her client Sophie, who is sitting inside already. Lucy spoke with James on the phone. (James turned down Sophie as a client because she didn't meet the physical standards).
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D-01	Scene 5	<i>JAMES (O.S): “I thought you were gonna set me up with high quality women.”</i> <i>JAMES (O.S.) (CONT’D): “I said: a fit woman in her 30s with a nice smile. She’s 40 and fat.”</i> <i>LUCY: “She’s 39.”</i> <i>JAMES: “39 is not 30s, that’s 40. I would never swipe right on a woman like that.”</i>
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a. Text Analysis

In the first dimension, through the lens of Marx’s commodity theory and Fairclough’s CDA framework, the phrase “*high-quality women*” in James’s dialogue can be understood as an example of what Fairclough (2010) refers to as the *colonization of discourse*, that is the process by which vocabulary from the domain of romantic relationships. The word “*quality*” in this context does not refer to Sophie’s character or emotional dimensions as a human being, but rather to physical attributes that can be objectively measured, much like product specifications such as age and weight. The underlying presumptions in James’s sentence suggest a number of implicit but widely held beliefs: that women can be categorized according to quantifiable attributes; that these standards can be conveyed to service providers as specification; and that Lucy serves as a procurement agent who did not complete the order. By taking inspiration from algorithm-based dating services, which naturally present human connection as a customer’s choice from a product catalogue, the metaphor of “*swipe right*” strengthens this reasoning. In terms of modality, James’s statement “*I would never swipe right on a woman like that*” uses a declarative sentence without

hedging, suggesting that his standards for quality are viewed as objective facts rather than personal preferences (that a 39-year-old woman with particular body type is a defective product).

b. Discourse Practice

This conversation occurs during a standard phone call between a paying customer and a matchmaker. Because James is a premium customer of the Adore matchmaking service, he has the discursive ability to specify the particular attributes he looks for in a spouse. As a result, the consumer-product discourse is not an oddity but rather the system's operational logic. Lucy's remark, which does not contest James's framing: by simply correcting the age number, "She's 39" she indirectly acknowledges the idea that women may be excluded due to their age. This demonstrates how the discourse of commodification has become so internalized that even attempts at defence take place within the same framework.

c. Social Practice

In the dimension of social practice, the emergence of this discourse can be understood through the expansion of market logic into personal relationships. In a capitalist society, the concept of value is commonly constructed through processes of measurement, comparison, and selection. Something becomes valuable when it meets certain standards and provides social or economic benefits. Originally applied to economic exchanges, this logic has gradually influenced other aspects of life,

including the way individuals understand identity, attractiveness, and romantic relationships.

Within digital capitalism, romantic relationships are increasingly shaped by systems of evaluation, where individuals are encouraged to present themselves as desirable according to socially recognized standards. Therefore, characteristics such as appearance, age, income, and social status become forms of symbolic and economic value that influence how individuals are perceived in the dating environment. This condition reflects what Banet-Weiser (2018) describes as the branding of the self, where individuals are encouraged to manage and improve their personal identity as a form of value production. In this context, women and men are not only seen as emotional subjects but also as individuals who possess certain market values that can increase or decrease depending on social standards.

The representation in Materialist (2025) reflects this social practice through Lucy's evaluation of clients based on height, salary, appearance, and age. These criteria demonstrate how capitalist ideology operates by transforming human qualities into measurable indicators of value. The discourse does not simply show personal preferences in choosing a partner but reveals a broader social condition where romantic relationships are influenced by competition, optimization, and market-based evaluation. This phenomenon is related to Illouz's (2012) concept of emotional capitalism, where economic rationality influences the way individuals

perceive value, identity, and social relationships. Therefore, the discourse in the film reflects capitalist ideology by normalizing market-oriented evaluation as a way of understanding human worth.

Datum 2

D-02	Scene 10	This datum is taken when the matchmakers are drunk, smoking on the fire escape at the Adore office. They are all talking shop, gossiping about their clients and trading anecdotes. Lucy is smoking with Daisy.
D-02	Scene 10	<i>LUCY: "She's okay attractive, makes okay money, okay educated, okay personality – but there's no real standout quality."</i> <i>DAISY: "She's not competitive in the mainstream market, and there is no niche market for her."</i> <i>LUCY: "Exactly. And if there's no specialty appeal, there is no place for her in any market."</i> <i>DAISY: "That's tough."</i>

a. Text Analysis

This dialogue tends to be the most systematic example of market discourse applied to individuals in the entire film. Lexical analysis reveals a series of marketing terms used without quotation marks, without distancing, and without irony where competitive, mainstream market, niche market, and specialty appeal are all terms from market segmentation that have been fully repurposed to describe a human individual. The deliberate repetition of the word “okay” – “okay

attractive, okay money, okay educated, okay personality” constructs an image of a person as a mid-tier product lacking a unique selling proposition. The most linguistically significant closing line is “*if there’s no specialty appeal, there is no place for her in any market*”; this is a spatial metaphor that simulates the market as a physical landscape where a person without market value (having no place) is literally excluded from social space – this is exclusion based on exchange value.

b. Discourse Practice

This dialogue takes place within the context of a casual professional conversation between two matchmakers. This is noteworthy because it shows how the rhetoric of commodification has become an internalized working language; Lucy and Daisy speak with the natural ease of persons discussing a company inventory rather than warily or defensively. According to Fairclough (2010), one of the best ways for ideology to spread is when ideological speech turns into professional common sense, or something that is accepted as normal by experts in a certain subject without needing to be justified.

c. Social Practice

In the dimension of social practice, the emergence of this discourse reflects the influence of capitalist ideology in shaping how individuals understand personal value. In a market-oriented society, value is commonly produced through processes of comparison, competition, and

differentiation. Products gain higher value when they possess specific qualities that distinguish them from others; similarly, this logic can be extended to individuals, who are increasingly evaluated based on their perceived advantages and social competitiveness.

This condition reflects the broader influence of neoliberal and capitalist values, where individuals are encouraged to continuously improve, promote, and differentiate themselves to remain valuable within social spaces. As a personality are transformed into measurable indicators that determine an individual's position and desirable. In Materialists (2025), this ideology is represented through Lucy and Daisy's use of market terminology such as "competitive," "mainstream market" and "niche market" to evaluate a person. The dialogue demonstrates that capitalist logic does not only operate in economic transactions but also shapes social perception by creating standards of value and categories of inclusion and exclusion. Individuals who do not meet dominant standards are not perceived as lacking within the system itself, but rather as lacking personal market value. Therefore, this discourse reflects capitalist ideology by normalizing the idea that human worth can be measured through competitiveness, uniqueness, and market position.

Datum 3

D-03	Scene 10 - continuation	This is a continuation of the previous scene; in this scene, they are discussing height-enhancement surgery.
D-03	Scene 10	<i>Daisy: "It costs like 200K."</i> <i>LUCY: "6 inches can make a man double in value on the market. If you have the money to do it, definitely worth an investment."</i> <i>DAISY: "What's the saying? You're not ugly, you just don't have money."</i> <i>LUCY: (agreeing) "Right."</i>

a. Text Analysis

The human biological body is viewed as an asset that may be altered to raise its market worth in this discussion, which takes the logic of commodification to a more radical level through the prism of Marx's theory of commodities. The expression "double in value on the market" uses a financial metaphor – usually used to describe stocks or real estate – applied to the human body. A return on investment calculation is indicated by the terms "worth" and "investment" in "definitely worth an investment": The following closing aphorism is anticipated after spending \$200,000 in bodily modifications: "You're not ugly, you just don't have money" a claim that eliminates the distinction between financial riches and aesthetic excellence while also attributing physical deficiency to poverty rather than criticizing it as a result of structural inequality.

b. Discourse Practice

The adage “*You’re not ugly, you just don’t have money*” has unique discursive qualities because it has already gained popularity outside of the movie. The movie appropriates popular discourse as common knowledge, legitimizing and repeating it as a taken-for-granted truth by posing the question, “*What’s the saying?*”. This is an example of interdiscursivity in Fairclough’s sense: the borrowing of discourse from the context of pop culture into film dialogue to reinforce the naturalization of ideology.

c. Social Practice

In the dimension of social practice, this discourse emerges from the influence of capitalist ideology that encourages individuals to understand themselves through the logic of investment and value enhancement. In a market-oriented society, value is not considered fixed but something that can be increase, improved, and optimized through certain strategies. This principle, which originally operates within economic activities, is extended to the human body and personal identity.

Within contemporary consumer culture, physical appearance becomes one of the resources through which individuals construct social value. The body is no longer understood only as a biological aspect of human identity but also as a form of capital that can be modified and improved to gain social advantages. Through this logic, beauty,

attractiveness, and physical features become measurable qualities that influence how individuals are positioned within society.

In Materialists (2025), Lucy's statement that height can "double in value on the market" represents the internalization of market logic in evaluating human worth. The use of economic terms such as "value," and "worth," and "investment" demonstrates how capitalist discourse transforms personal characteristics into assets that can generate higher social value. Furthermore, the statement "you're not ugly, you just don't have money" reflects an ideology that connects appearance with economic capability. Rather than questioning social standards of beauty or in equability in access to resources, the discourse frames personal improvement as an individual responsibility through consumption and financial investment. Therefore, this data represents capitalist ideology by normalizing the idea that human value can be increased through economic resources and market-based self-improvement.

Datum 4

D-04	Scene 13 - Bridal room	This data is taken when Lucy and the bridesmaids rushed into the bridal suite, where all preparations to get Charlotte ready for the wedding ceremony had come to a halt. Charlotte was drinking and had just been crying, Lucy tried to calm her down.
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D-04	Scene 13	<i>CHARLOTTE: "My parents spent so much money on this wedding. We spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on this wedding just so that I can feel like a fucking woman." LUCY: "Charlotte, marriage is a business deal — it's always been from the very first time two people did it. So you can always walk away, if the deal isn't good. As the person who introduced you to Peter, I'll walk out of here with you. So tell me: do you not want to get married today?"</i>

a. Text Analysis

This is arguably one of the most ideologically explicit statements in the entire film. A modal analysis reveals the critical function of the phrase *"it's always been"* in Lucy's statement: it constitutes a historical universalization – the claim that marriage has always been a business transaction ever since humans first entered into it. This strategy functions as a historical naturalization that makes the commodification of marriage appear as a universal human condition, rather than a product of a specific economic system. The *"deal"* metaphor is consistently maintained: *"if the deal isn't good, you can walk away"* a business idiom for rejecting an unfavourable contract. Charlotte's earlier comment, "a hundred of thousands of dollars just so that I can feel like a fucking woman," is similarly rich in text. It links excessive

consumption to the formation of gender identity, as though femininity could be purchased with sufficient funds.

b. Discourse Practice

In her role as a professional matchmaker – an authority Charlotte acknowledges in romantic matters – Lucy communicates this definition. This stance has a lot of discursive weight because Charlotte views the business deal framing as professional counsel rather than as a provocation. Talking about love, trust, or commitment doesn't help Charlotte during an emotional crisis; instead, she reframes marriage as a business contract that can be cancelled. This demonstrates how capitalist discourse on love can function therapeutically within a system that has internalized it.

c. Social Practice

In the dimension of social practice, this discourse emerges from the influence of capitalist rationality in shaping how social institutions are understood. In capitalist societies, relationships and social interactions are often interpreted through concepts such as exchange, benefit, value, and investment. Although marriage has historically involved economic and social arrangements, contemporary consumer culture further strengthens the tendency to evaluate relationships through economic logic.

This condition demonstrates how capitalist ideology expands beyond the economic sphere and influences personal institutions. Marriage, which is commonly associated with emotional commitment and social bonds, becomes increasingly understood through concepts of transaction and evaluation. The use of business-related terms suggests that relationships can be assessed based on whether they provide sufficient value or benefit for the individuals involved.

In Materialists (2025), Lucy's statement that "marriage is a business deal" reflects the normalization of capitalist discourse within intimate and social relationships. Her statement does not present marriage merely as an emotional connection but as an arrangement that can be evaluated based on whether the "deal" is beneficial or not. This reflects a capitalist ideology where social relations are interpreted through principles of calculation and rational decision-making. Furthermore, Charlotte's statement about spending "hundreds of thousands of dollars" to feel like a woman illustrates how consumer culture connects identity and social recognition with economic expenditure. Femininity and marital status are represented as something that can be achieved and validated through consumption. Therefore, this discourse reflects capitalist ideology by showing how economic value and consumption become dominant frameworks for understanding personal identity and social relationships.

The definition of marriage as a business transaction reflects a true social reality and is not just a rhetorical device. In fact, marriage has

historically served as a political and economic institution that involves capital transfers, familial ties, and property exchanges. Lucy's assertion is ideological not because it is historically accurate but rather because it serves to justify the state of affairs as normal and unavoidable. According to Gaber (2024), consumer capitalism turns marriage into a consumption show whose worth is determined by the amount of money spent. According to Charlotte, earned "*hundreds of thousands of dollars just so that I can feel like fucking woman*" through materialism rather than genuine connections. This condition is supported by the interviews, where informants characterize love in the movie as something that is negotiated rather than just a formulation that naturally reflects Lucy's business deal framing. The informant's and the movie's characters' linguistic agreement indicates that transactional talk concerning marriage has permeated the way audiences understand and articulate romantic relationships.

Datum 5

D-05	Scene 13 - continuation	This scene is a continuation of the previous one, in which Lucy tried to uncover Charlotte's motivations.
D-05	Scene 13	<i>CHARLOTTE: "He makes my sister jealous... She thinks Peter's better than her husband. Better job, better-looking, taller. And it makes me feel... like I've won."</i> <i>LUCY: "I see. So this is about value. Peter makes you feel valuable."</i> <i>CGARLOTTE: (tearfully) "He does. He really does."</i>

a. Social Practice

A theoretically important diagnostic point is captured in this conversation. A rich, multifaceted experience is condensed and repackaged in the language of exchange value when Lucy converts Charlotte's complex emotions into a single economic variable value. This is an example of discursive transformation. The competitive nature of Charlotte's experience is revealed in her own word: "*better job, better-looking, taller*" is a list of qualities that can be ranked. The phrase "*like I've won*" clearly applies the logic of market competitiveness to the married experience. The term "*valuable*" in Lucy's statement is ambiguous and might refer to both highly valued and emotionally cherished in the eyes of the social market that reflects how capitalism blurs the boundaries between intrinsic value and exchange value.

b. Discourse Practice

In this instance, Lucy uses discursive reframing as a therapeutic technique. Charlotte's acceptance of the value diagnostic as a freeing realization rather than as something dehumanizing illustrates the complete integration of capitalist ideology within the character's subjective experience, which is most illuminating. By accepting the dominant framing as true, the dominated party validates the efficacy of hegemony in Gramsci's view.

c. Social Practice

Rather than representing value as an inherent personal quality, this discourse demonstrates how capitalist ideology encourages individuals to understand their worth through social comparison and external indicators. Within a market-oriented society, value is not only produced through possession but also through recognition, ranking, and distinction from others. This principle allows social relationships to become influenced by competitive evaluation, where individuals seek validation through signs of achievement and superiority.

In this context, social status function similarly to symbolic capital, where certain characteristics such as career, physical appearance, and social position become resources that increase a person's perceived value. Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital helps explain how social advantages are transformed into forms of recognition that determine how individuals are valued within a particular social environment. This condition is represented through Charlotte's understanding of Peter's qualities "better job, better-looking, taller." These attributes are not presented merely as personal characteristics but as indicators of social advantage that create a sense of winning over others. The phrase "like I've won" reveals how capitalist logic enters personal identity, where relationships become connected with achievement, competition, and social comparison.

Therefore, this discourse reproduces capitalist ideology by normalizing the idea that personal worth can be obtained through

possessing socially valued attributes. The film shows how individuals may internalize market-based standards, measuring their own value through external recognition, status, and comparative advantage.

Datum 6

D-06	Scene 14 - Wedding party	This data was collected as Harry approached the singles' table and saw Lucy sitting in the seat reserved for her. Harry then analyzed Lucy's business strategy
D-06	Scene 14	<i>HARRY: "Your sales pitch is perfect, because you make it feel like it's their idea... you're saying: 'You could do this on your own, but if you're lucky enough to be able to afford me, why not?' You're a luxury good. And then they really do feel like they need you, just like they need every other luxury in their lives. Once you get your first four-hundred-dollar haircut, you can't go back to SuperCuts, can you?"</i>

a. Text Analysis

Harry literally categorizes Lucy as “*a luxury good*,” a classification that places humans within the taxonomy of premium products. A structural analysis of this dialogue reveals three sequential rhetorical stages: first, an analysis of Lucy’s marketing technique – “*your sales pitch is perfect, because you make it feel like it’s their idea.*” Second, the reconstruction of the value proposition he offers to the client: “*You could do this on your own, but if you’re lucky enough to be able to afford me, why not?*”. Third, the conclusion of the product categorization: “*You’re a*

luxury good.” The subsequent analogy of the \$400 haircut is a metaphor for luxury addiction – the idea that luxury consumption creates a point of no return. Once someone becomes accustomed to premium services, their standards are recalibrated upward, and they can no longer be satisfied with the ordinary – the same mechanism applies to the search for love.

b. Discourse Practice

The potent discursive irony at work here is that Harry gives Lucy this information under the pretense of friendship and praise rather than criticism. Lucy willingly accepts the phrase “*luxury good*” rather than feeling reduced. The degree to which commodity ideology has infiltrated society is demonstrated by the fact that even the objects of commodification are fully identified with that framing. According to Gramsci, successful hegemony occurs when the oppressed actively support the spread of the prevailing ideology.

c. Social Practice

This discourse presented in this data reveals how capitalist ideology operates by transforming social relationships into systems of economic exchange. In a capitalist framework, value is often determined by ownership, purchasing power, and the ability to access desired resources. When this logic is applied beyond economic activities, individuals may also become evaluated based on the forms of value they possess, including financial resources, social status, and desirability.

This perspective reflects a broader social condition where economic power influences social positioning. Individuals who possess greater financial capacity are often placed in a more advantageous position, while others become valued based on their ability to attract or provide certain benefits within the social system. As a result, relationships are shaped by unequal access to resources and power. In Materialists (2025), Lucy’s statement “men are the currency” represents the idea that economic capability becomes a source of social power. The metaphor suggests that men are valued through their financial capacity, while the statement “women are the product” reflects the positioning of women as objects that are evaluated and selected. These metaphors reproduce capitalist ways of thinking by applying market categories to human relationships.

Rather than simply describing individual attitudes, this discourse reflects a wider capitalist ideology in which human value is constructed through exchange, possession, and economic advantage. The dialogue demonstrates how market logic can influence social perceptions by creating categories of value and reinforcing unequal relationships based on economic power.

Datum 7

D-07	Scene 14	This scene takes place when Lucy and Harry start slow dancing, and Harry asks what kind of partner Lucy is looking for. Meanwhile,
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		John, dressed in a water's uniform, is watching the two of them.
D-07	Scene 14	<i>HARRY: "So what kind of a person does a matchmaker want to marry?"</i> <i>LUCY: (deadpan) "My non-negotiable is that they're rich, and my nice-to-haves is that they're mind-numbingly, absurdly, achingly rich."</i>

a. Text Analysis

This brief dialogue is the most concentrated example of the commodification of love criteria. Lucy's choice of terminology is highly specific: "*non-negotiable*" and "*nice-to-haves*" are terms from requirement specifications in project management and business negotiation used in human life that are organized using the same framework as the technical specifications of a business contract. The intensification in the phrase "*mind-numbingly, absurdly, achingly rich*" uses three hyperbolic adverbs to emphasize that wealth is the only criterion that truly matters. The choice of "*achingly*" – which literally means painful – ironically borrows the vocabulary of romantic longing to describe financial aspirations.

b. Discourse Practice

Lucy uses a flat, lifeless expression that is indicative of dark comedy when delivering this "deadpan." This strategy offers plausible deniability: viewers who find it unpleasant may see it as a joke, while other who can relate to it may find it to be refreshingly honest. "*Are you*

hitting on me?” Harry arks, grinning at the comments and even seeing it as flirtation. The discourse’s consumption normalizes riches as a legitimate condition for love, even making it romantically appealing.

c. Social Practice

This discourse illustrates how capitalist ideology shapes the way individuals understand major social institutions, including marriage. Within capitalist societies, economic capability often becomes a significant factor in determining access, stability, and social recognition. As a result, personal decisions are increasingly influenced by considerations of resources, security, and practical benefits rather than being understood only through emotional values. The emergence of this discourse can be connected to the broader social condition where financial stability becomes associated with individual success and life achievement. In this context, relationships are not separated from economic realities because individuals are encouraged to make choices based on long-term security, compatibility, and available resources. This reflects how capitalist rationality influences personal decision-making by emphasizing calculation and practicality.

In Materialists (2025), Lucy’s statement that “the people who get married are the ones who can afford it” represents the normalization of economic reasoning within romantic and social relationships. The word “afford” positions marriage as something that requires financial capacity,

suggesting that economic resources influence one's ability to participate in certain life experiences. Furthermore, the statement that marriage is about finding someone whose "life fits" reflects a rationalized approach toward relationships, where individuals evaluate compatibility through practical considerations. Therefore, this discourse represents capitalist ideology showing how market-oriented values such as calculation, efficiency, and resource management, influence the way individuals perceive personal relationships.

Datum 8

D-08	Scene 44-45 (Luxury restaurant)	When the dinner was over, Harry paid the bill with one graceful gesture. His movements were so smooth, elegant, and effortless that Lucy later described Harry as a "unicorn".
D-08	Scene 44-45	<i>LUCY: "In my line of work, I meet hundreds of highly-desirable high-quality men but you're what we call in my industry 'a unicorn' — an impossible fantasy... You're the platonic ideal. You're smart. You have ideal income, ideal education, ideal lifestyle, ideal height, and you're good-looking with a great body, and you're charming. You were born rich, raised rich, still rich. You own a penthouse in Tribeca, and you can take a girl to a restaurant like this when it's not even a special occasion. You don't have a drug habit or a call girls' habit. You even know how to cut your hair, how to dress, and you have good taste. You're 10 out of 10 on every category — a complete package."</i>

a. Text Analysis

This is the longest and most ideologically dense dialogue in the film. Its rhetorical structure follows the pattern of a product specification sheet, a series of attributes that are systematically evaluated and summarized in a single tagline. The repeated use of the word “*ideal*” five times: “*ideal income, ideal education, ideal lifestyle, ideal height, ideal body*” – paints a picture of a person as a product that meets all the standards set by the market, rather than as a whole human being with all their complexities. The matching industry’s word “unicorn” also functions as a venture capital metaphor for firms worth more than \$1 billion, fusing romantic and investment discourse. The tricolon “*You were born rich, raised rich, still rich*” confirms that of all Harry’s possessions, wealth is the most reliable and valuable, “*A complete package*” is marketing jargon used to describe a human being.

b. Discourse Practice

Here, Lucy’s use of her expert pitch deck on a man she personally likes is the most fascinating discursive scenario. The distinction between her personal and professional identities has totally vanished, and she can only express her appreciation and interest in the language of her industry. The fact that corporate discourse and romantic discourse have merged into a single linguistic system illustrates the highest degree of ideological internalization.

c. Social Practice

The representation in this data reflects a broader social condition in which personal relationships are increasingly influenced by rational and market-oriented ways of thinking. In contemporary capitalist society, individuals are often encouraged to make decisions by considering efficiency, benefits, and future outcomes. This way of thinking does not only operate in economic activities but also shapes how people evaluate important aspects of their personal lives.

From this perspective, the discourse emerges because capitalist ideology promotes the idea that choices should be optimized through careful assessment. Similar to market practices where options are compared based on their advantages, individuals may also evaluate relationships by considering whether a partner can provide stability, compatibility, or social value. This process creates a framework where personal decisions become connected to calculation and evaluation.

In *Materialists* (2025), the characters' way of discussing relationships demonstrates how market-oriented reasoning becomes normalized within romantic contexts. The evaluation of partners is not presented only as an emotional process but also as a decision-making process influenced by standards and expectations. Such representation shows how capitalist ideology operates by encouraging individuals to perceive value through measurable and comparable qualities. Therefore, this discourse reveals the influence of capitalist rationality in shaping social perception. The film does not merely portray individual choices

but reflects a wider ideology in which human value and personal decisions are increasingly understood through principles of assessment, optimization, and social value.

2. The Representation of Love as a Commodity in the Film *Materialists* (2025)

This section analyses seven instances that directly represent love as a commodity or something that has a price, can be traded, measured, and evaluated according to the logic of exchange. Unlike RQ1, which focuses on capitalist ideology in general, RQ2 focuses its analysis on specific moments in which love itself becomes an object of commodification. The following interpretation is grounded in the established theoretical framework and enriched by the informant's perspective as a form of triangulation.

Datum 9

D-09	Scene 45 - (continuation) Luxury restaurant	This datum is a continuation of the previous scene, in which, after Lucy called Harry a unicorn, she began to doubt her own standing in the dating scene.
D-09	Scene 45	<i>LUCY: "I was born poor, raised poor, and even though I work I have debt. I'm a college dropout and a failed actress. I have no dowry. If anything, I have a negative dowry... Given your place in the marketplace and given mine, I'm not a girl you marry — I'm a girl you go home with one night and then never call again."</i>

a. Text Analysis

According to Marxist theory, this exchange is the most straightforward illustration of alienation in a romantic setting, where Lucy is cut off from her own inherent worth since the market's yardstick is her only means of self-evaluation. The idea of a "negative dowry" is an ideologically significant lexical creation: Lucy uses accounting terminology to suggest that she arrives within liabilities rather than assets. A dowry is a concept based in the tradition of economic exchange inside marriage. The most straightforward expression of class position awareness within the logic of capitalism is "my place in the marketplace." The contrast between "*the girl you marry vs the girl you go home with for one night*" illustrates two categories of goods in the romantic market: disposable goods and high-end items that are bought. Lucy deliberately puts herself at the bottom of the hierarchy.

b. Discourse Practice

Lucy shares her worst worries with the guys she loves in this conversation, which is created in an environment of remarkable emotional vulnerability. This is a form of confession rather than a cold commercial analysis, and that is exactly where discursive power resides: Lucy has no vocabulary outside of the framework of exchange value to define herself, even in her most vulnerable times. This indicates that commodity ideology has become deeply ingrained.

c. Social Practice

This discourse in this data demonstrates how romantic relationships are represented through a commodity-oriented framework, where love is no longer constructed solely as an emotional connection but also as something that involves evaluation and exchange. In a consumer-oriented culture, commodities gain value through specific qualities, desirability, and the ability to fulfil certain expectations. This same logic is transferred into romantic relationships when individuals begin to assess partners based on particular standards.

Within this representation, the partner is positioned as an object of selection rather than only as an emotional subject. The process of choosing a partner resembles a consumer practice, where individual compare available options and select the one considered to have the highest value or compatibility. In this film, the evaluation of potential partners through attributes such as appearance, income, age, and status illustrates how romantic value is constructed through measurable qualities. These criteria show that love is represented within a market framework, where attraction and relationship potential are influenced by socially recognized forms of value.

This representation relates to Illouz's (2012) concept of emotional capitalism, which explains how modern intimacy becomes shaped by economic rationality. Therefore, the film portrays love as a commodity by

showing how romantic relationships are organized through processes of valuation, comparison, and selection similar to those found in market exchanges.

Datum 10

D-10	Scene 46 - continuation (Luxury restaurant)	This data is a continuation of the previous scene; Harry responded to Lucy's doubts about her self-worth.
D-10	Scene 46	<i>HARRY: "I don't want to be with you for your material assets — though I think you're underselling them by a significant margin. Material assets are cheap, and they don't last. I want to be with you for your intangible assets. Those are good investments. They don't degrade. They only get sharper. And, besides, I've got enough material assets for the both of us. I see a lot of potential here. I think you and I could be great partners. I hope you agree." [Beat.] LUCY: "Because you make me feel valuable." HARRY: "You are valuable. That's what I'm trying to tell you."</i>

a. Text Analysis

This conversation seems to offer a romantic antithesis to the logic of commodities at first glance. A closer reading of the text, however, shows that Harry's rejection of "material assets" only changes the arithmetic from one kind of capital to another and does not go beyond the framework of capitalism. The distinction between tangible and intangible assets, such as brand values and intellectual property, originates solely from accounting discourse. The next statements "*good investments*," "*they*

don't degrade," "they only get sharper," and "I see a lot of potential here" further support the investment discourse. This is not the vocabulary of a person falling in love; rather, it is the language of an investor assessing a business. The closing line, *"I think you and I could be great partners,"* definitively replaces romantic vocabulary with that of a professional partnership. Lucy's response *"you make me feel valuable"* rather than *"loved"* or *"cherished"* confirms her full acceptance of this framework.

b. Discourse Practice

This dialogue is presented as a romantic climax, the emotional peak built up throughout the film. The fact that this peak is expressed entirely in business language is a likely intentional commentary by screenwriter Celine Song on the state of contemporary capitalism. The reception of this discourse is bifurcated: viewers internalized with capitalist discourse are likely to accept this dialogue as romantic; more critical viewers may perceive it as hollow due to it is entirely economic linguistic framework.

c. Social Practice

The representation of love in this discourse reveals how intimacy can be expressed through the framework of economic valuation rather than purely emotional connection. In contemporary capitalist culture, value is often understood through the language of assets, investment, and potential growth. When this logic enters romantic relationships, individuals may

begin to express affection by identifying the “value” that a partner possesses rather than focusing on emotional attachment.

This condition reflects what Illouz (2007) describes as “cold intimacies,” where emotional relationships remain meaningful but are increasingly communicated through the rational language of economics and exchange. Intimacy is not necessarily removed; instead, it is reorganized through concepts commonly associated with business, such as investment, partnership, and long-term value. In this film, Harry’s statement demonstrates this transformation when he described Lucy through the terms “intangible assets,” “good investments,” and “potential.” Although Harry appears to reject the idea of valuing Lucy through material possessions, he replaces one form of valuation with another by evaluating her emotional qualities as another type of asset. Therefore, Lucy is still positioned within a framework of value assessment.

The response “Because you make me feel valuable” further shows that emotional validation in this relationship is connected to the idea of worth. Rather than representing love only as acceptance or affection, the dialogue constructs love as a process of recognizing and confirming value. Thus, this discourse represents love as a commodity because romantic intimacy is shaped through the same principles used in market relations: valuation, investment, and perceived return.

Datum 11

D-11	Scene 29 - Expensive restaurant	This data is the stage direction that is taken when Lucy is on the phone with her client (Sophie) outside the restaurant and Harry brings a bouquet for her.
D-11	Scene 29 - Stage Direction	<i>STAGE DIRECTION: Harry arrives, holding a bouquet of flowers. It is clearly one that's worth hundreds of dollars, and it should contrast the bouquet that the young caveman brought his sweetheart in the opening scene.</i>

a. Text Analysis

Although not dialogue, this stage direction is a highly significant discursive act because it is meta-discursive; the playwright, Celine Song, explicitly encodes a sense of contrast and guides the interpretation. The instruction “*it should contrast the bouquet that the young caveman brought his sweetheart in the opening scene*” is an intertextual directive that constructs a visual argument about the commodification of love: wild Stone Age flowers picked by hand, given in sincerity without a price tag, are contrasted with flowers worth hundreds of dollars selected from a premium shop. The note “*it is clearly one that’s worth hundreds of dollars*” indicates that the financial value of the flowers must be clearly visible to the audience; luxury is part of the message and not merely a backdrop.

b. Discourse Practice

This stage direction is produced by Celine Song as a conscious authorial discourse; Song does not merely tell a love story; she makes an argument about how capitalism transforms expressions of love. The film's title *Materialist*, itself contains deep irony: it refers to materialism in two overlapping senses – the prioritization of material things over emotional ones, and the philosophy of materialism that understands social reality as a product of material conditions. The visual contrast between wildflowers and luxury flowers is the most direct cinematic representation of this argument.

c. Social Practice

The commodification of love in this data is represented not through direct verbal expression, but through the transformation of affection into a material symbol with economic value. In consumer culture, emotions are often communicated through objects that carry certain meanings, where the price, exclusivity, and quality of an item become associated with the intensity of feeling behind it. As a result, affection can be expressed and interpreted through acts of consumption. This condition reflects Hochschild's (2012) idea of the commercialization of emotional labor, where emotional expressions are increasingly shaped by industries that package and sell experiences of care, romance, and affection. Instead of being produced solely through personal effort or spontaneous action,

expressions of love can become something that is prepared, purchased, and displayed through commercial products.

This film stage direction emphasizing that Harry's bouquet is "worth hundreds of dollars" constructs a contrast between two forms of romantic expression. The expensive bouquet represents a commodified expression of affection, where the monetary value of the object becomes part of the message of love itself. The comparison with the simple wildflowers from the opening scene highlights the tension between sincere personal gestures and luxury-based expressions of affection.

Therefore, this discourse represents love as a commodity by showing that affection can be transferred into a purchasable form. The value of love is no longer communicated only through emotional sincerity but also through the ability to provide meaningful consumption experiences. In this representation, what is given becomes a symbol of how much someone values another person.

Datum 12

D-12	Scene 35 - Penthouse Harry, Tribeca	This datum takes place after the first kiss scene between Lucy and Harry, Lucy then asks about the price of Harry's apartment and she is impressed.
D-12	Scene 35 - Dialog/ Stage Direction	<i>LUCY: "So how much is this apartment?" HARRY: (frankly) "12 million." [Lucy is impressed.] HARRY (CONT'D): (coy) "Do you like it?" [Lucy laughs and nods. Of course, she fucking does.]</i>

a. Text Analysis

In summary, the ideological complexity of this dialogue contrasts sharply with it. Lucy starts her question, “*So how much is this apartment?*” with the word “*so,*” which serves as a discourse marker indicating a logical continuation that follows an intimate moment. This implies that being aware of the space’s monetary worth is a natural part of the process of evaluating the relationship, rather than an interruption of it. “*12 million*” is Harry’s “frankly” response; he doesn’t think the inquiry is odd or improper. Then he asks, “*Do you like it?*” “*It*” could be a reference to his \$12 million apartment or the apartment itself. Harry is aware that his apartment’s monetary worth contributes to its allure in the context of their relationship. Discursively relevant is the narrative in parenthesis, “*Of course she fucking does.*” The narrator remarks on Lucy’s inevitable response with a tone of bitter self-awareness, suggesting that the screenwriter is aware of what is being conveyed but chooses not to conceal it.

b. Discourse Practice

A purposeful dramaturgical decision was made to juxtapose the kissing moment with the inquiry on property pricing. According to popular love movie traditions, this change is usually accompanied by sensitive conversation or a show of love. Instead, Song decides to utilize a real estate query, which is meant to reveal that this is how Lucy and the system that

shapes her actual function rather than as a purposeful anticlimax. The same narrative has been assimilated by audiences who take this for granted

c. Social Practice

The discourse in this data illustrates how romantic relationships are constructed through the logic of exchange, where intimacy is connected to expectations, benefits, and personal value. In a consumer-oriented society, commodities are not only exchanged because of their existence but because they are expected to fulfil certain needs or provide particular forms of satisfaction. A similar pattern can appear in romantic relationships when emotional connections become associated with what individuals gain from each other.

This representation reflects the changing nature of modern intimacy, where love is negotiated through considerations of compatibility, contribution, and personal fulfilment. Rather than being understood only as an emotional bond, relationships are presented as arrangements where individuals evaluate whether their needs and expectations are being met. In this film, the discourse in this data reflects this condition by portraying romantic relationships as something that requires evaluation and negotiation. The relationship is not constructed as completely separate from practical considerations; instead, it is shaped by the question of what each individual can offer and receive. This creates a representation of love that operates similarly to an exchange system.

Consequently, the film presents love as commodity by showing that romantic relationships can be organized through principles commonly associated with market interactions, such as value assessment, exchange, and satisfaction. Love remains an emotional experience, but its meaning is influenced by a system where relationships are understood through the logic of what is gained, offered, and valued.

Datum 13

D-13	Scene 72 - Highway	This data takes place while they (Sophie and Lucy) are on the street; Sophie stops and Lucy stops behind her. They have a brief argument, and Sophie confronts Lucy about that bad date.
D-13	Scene 72 - Dialog/ Stage Direction	<i>SOPHIE: "Here I was thinking you worked for me, but the whole time I was working for you: worthless merchandise to pawn off to anyone who'd take it." [Beat.] SOPHIE (CONT'D): "But I am not merchandise. I'm a person. And I know I deserve love."</i>

a. Text analysis

This dialogue is the only moment in the film where the logic of commodification is explicitly rejected from within by the subject most directly subjected to commodification. Sophie uses the terms “*merchandise*” and “*pawn off*” to describe how the matchmaking system treats her. Both terms are drawn from the discourse of second-hand or surplus goods items with little market value that people simply want to get

rid of. By using this terminology to describe how the matchmaking system treats her, Sophie appropriates the system's own language to expose the system itself. The central declaration "*I am not merchandise. I am a person*" employs a sharp contrast between the categories of object and human. It should be noted that the closing statement "*I know I deserve love*" still operates within the logic of meritocracy; the word "*deserve*" implies that love is something one must be worthy of, even though it is spirit opposes commodification.

b. Discourse Practice

This is the film's emotional climax from Sophie's perspective, a character who has been marginalized as a subplot throughout the narrative. Lucy has no argument against Sophie: she can not deny that the matchmaking system treats clients as merchandise. Lucy's inability to respond substantively is an implicit acknowledgement of the truth of Sophie's accusation. However, structurally, this counter-discourse does not change the system: Sophie leaves in anger, Lucy continues with her life. The counter-discourse exists, but it is not systematically effective.

c. Social Practice

Unlike previous representations that normalize the exchange-based understanding of love, this discourse presents a moment where the commodification of intimacy is directly challenged. The emergence of this counter-discourse demonstrates that when romantic relationships are

organized through market principles, individuals who fail meet certain standards may experience themselves as objects that are evaluated, categorized, and exchanged.

In consumer society, commodities are commonly assigned value based on their usefulness, desirability, and position within a market system. When this logic is applied to human relationships, individuals' risk being reduced to their perceived market worth rather than being recognized as complex human subjects. Sophie's statement reveals the consequences of such a system, where she understands herself as being treated as "merchandise" that can either be accepted or rejected.

However, Sophie's rejection "I am not merchandise. I'm a person" creates a resistance against the commodifying discourse by separating human identity from market categories. This moment exposes the tension between two opposing understandings of love: one that views relationships through evaluation and exchange, and another that recognizes love as a human experience beyond economic measurement.

Nevertheless, this resistance still exists within the influence of the dominant system. Her statement "I deserve love" challenges the idea that people are objects in the market, but the word "deserve" also suggests that love is something that must be justified or earned. Therefore, the discourse reveals that even attempts to resist the commodification of love are still shaped by the broader social logic that defines worth and value.

Datum 14

D-14	Scene 55 - Adore Office	This data is taken in Violet's office (Adore Office). Lucy and Violet are silent, then Lucy tells Violet about the true nature of the matchmaking industry.
D-14	Scene 55 - Dialog/ Stage Direction	<i>LUCY: "We are a scam. We don't give them what they're paying for, do we? We promise them love, but we give them bad dates with morons and criminals."</i>

a. Text Analysis

One of the most discursively honest scenes in the movie is this sentence. *"We are a scam"* is a straightforward statement that Lucy uses without hedging or euphemisms to admit the underlying paradox of her industry. *"We promise them love, but we give them bad dates with morons and criminals,"* she says, exposing the dichotomy of the commercialization of love. the matchmaking industry offers love as though it could be mass-produced or guaranteed to be of high quality, despite the fact that love cannot by using *"we"* rather than *"I,"* Lucy shows that she is a part of the flawed system; this is a group admission rather than an externalization of responsibility.

b. Discourse Practice

Discursively, the production context is most important: Lucy says this in private to Violet, her supervisor; she does not say it to clients or the general public. This crucial conversation is structurally limited to a private

setting. This is an illustration of a “hidden transcript” in Fairclough’s definition, a story that takes place behind the scenes and contrasts with the public narrative that consistently promotes matchmaking services as a way to find love. Dramatic irony that both encourages compassion for Lucy and condemnation of the system is created when viewers who “hear” this private chat through the camera have privileged access that clients do not.

c. Social Practice

The discourse in this dialog exposes the institutional side of commodification of love by revealing how romantic intimacy is transformed into a commercial service. In capitalist societies, commodities are produced, marketed, and exchanged based on promises of values and satisfaction. When applied to romantic relationships, love can be packaged as something that can be offered, accessed, and delivered through professional services. Unlike representations where individual personally evaluate partners through market criteria, this data reveals the existence of an industry that directly commercializes the search for love can be managed and provided through a paid service, similar to other consumer experiences.

Lucy’s confession “We promise them love, but we give them bad dates,” demonstrates the contradiction between the emotional meaning of love and its commercial representation. Love is presented as the product being promised, while dates function as the service delivered. This

distinction reveals that intimacy is treated as something that can be packaged and solid, even though emotional fulfilment cannot be guaranteed.

Therefore, this discourse represents love as commodity by showing how romantic desire becomes incorporated into market exchange. The film reveals that within a commercial system, love is no longer only experienced as an emotional connection but also as a product that can be marketed, purchased, and evaluated.

Datum 15

D-15	Scene 55	This is a continuation of the previous scene, in which Violet justified the problematic behavior of clients and redefined the matchmaking.
D-15	Scene 55 - Stage/ Direction	<i>VIOLET: "They give us thousands of dollars. They're entitled to some regression." [Later] VIOLET (CONT'D): "We work with their loneliness and rejection — the kind that makes someone get naked for a stranger. We're the real deal. That's why they tell you more than they would tell their therapists, and why they take risks with you."</i>

a. Text Analysis

Two interconnected ideological elements are revealed in Violet's dialogue. *"That give us thousands of dollars – they are entitled to some regression"* is the first clear transactional principle. This directly correlates authority with capital by tying eligibility to the sum of money paid. The

term “regression” adds a psychological element where the client’s vulnerability is justified as a purchased right rather than just acknowledged. A more profound commodification is revealed in the second section: “*we work with their loneliness and rejection.*” Two of the most agonizing emotional experiences for people are loneliness and rejection, which are recognized as the foundation of the matchmaking industry. According to Violet, matchmakers are therefore more significant than therapists because “*they tell you more than they would tell their therapists.*” This assertion, however, has sinister ramifications because if clients trust matchmakers more than therapists, it is not because matchmakers are more knowledgeable or moral; rather, it is because the client-matchmaker relationship is a consumer-service provider relationship in which “good service” (such as confidentiality and empathy) is a component of the purchased product.

b. Discourse Practice

Violet speaks as an experienced head matchmaker to Lucy, who is beginning to experience burnout. Violet’s position of authority lends institutional weight to her framing. Most importantly, Violet genuinely believes what she says; she is not being hypocritical. This is an example of an ideology that has successfully internalized itself: the system’s agents believe in the system’s legitimacy. Discourse that is authentic and unrecognized as ideological is actually more powerful than a conscious lie.

c. Social Practice

At a deeper level, this discourse reveals that the commodity form of love does not only appear through the evaluation of partners but also through the commercialization of emotional vulnerability itself. In a market system, commodities are created from resources that can generate economic value. Within the matchmaking industry represented in the film, feelings such as loneliness, rejection, and the desire for connection become resources that can be transformed into a service.

This condition reflects the broader development of emotional capitalism, where personal emotions are increasingly connected to professional systems and commercial exchanges. Emotional needs that were previously considered private experiences become something that can be managed, accessed, and facilitated through paid services. Violet's statement, "we work with their loneliness and rejection," is significant because it frames emotional suffering as the foundation of the matchmaking business. The clients are not only paying for introductions or dates; they are paying for access to emotional support, understanding, and the possibility of finding love. Therefore, intimacy itself becomes part of a consumer transaction.

Furthermore, the statement "they give us thousands of dollars" reveals that financial exchange determines the relationship between the client and the matchmaking service. The ability to pay creates a connection

between economic investment and emotional entitlement. Thus, this discourse represents love as a commodity by showing how romantic desire and emotional vulnerability are packaged into a service that can be purchased, consumed, and evaluated.

Datum 16

D-16	Scene	This scene takes place during a client meeting between Lucy and Patricia. The scene follows a series of earlier scenes in which Lucy has been navigating the tension between her professional role as a matchmaker and her growing personal involvement with Harry, making this moment significant as it forces Lucy into an unusual position: for the first time, she becomes the one pushing back against the transactional logic she normally operates within.
D-16	Scene	<i>CLOSE ON the terrifying two-page list of qualities (race, height, income, age, frequency of attending gym, food preference, astrological sign, etc.) that Patricia is looking for in her next boyfriend and incoming husband. The font is too small, and the list of demands is endless. It looks more like a legal document than a description of a lover.</i> <i>PATRICIA: "I know the list looks long, but I deserve someone who fulfils all my criteria. I really do. I mean look at me. I'm a catch."</i> <i>Lucy puts the list down and turns her penetrating gaze at Patricia.</i> <i>The warmth that we've seen in Lucy before when dealing with her clients has slipped away, and she is cold and apathetic:</i> <i>LUCY: "Patricia, I know that every year you go without having a husband</i>

		raises your expectation for him exponentially. But it doesn't mean you're due to get one, and it doesn't mean you can customize - because this is not a simulation. If the service I'm providing you is building you a man, I can build you someone with everything on this list, but I can't, because this is not a car or a house. We're talking about people. People are people are people are people. They come as they are, and all I can hope to find for you is a guy you can tolerate for the next fifty years who likes you at all.
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a. Text Analysis

Through Fairclough's CDA framework, this data reveals a dimension of commodification does not present in previous data: romantic partners are not only evaluated based on market value but are literally customized like made-to-order products. The stage direction describing Patricia's list as something that *"looks more like a legal document than a description of a lover"* is a meta discursive comment by the playwright that explicitly encodes the contrast between contractual legal logic and affective logic. The word *"terrifying"* in the stage direction indicates that even from a narrative perspective, this list is treated as something shocking yet is still presented as part of the normal operations of the matchmaking industry.

Patricia's statement, *"I deserve someone who fulfils all my criteria"* uses the word *"deserve"* in a linguistically striking way: she claims a right

to a perfect partner based on a calculation of her own self-worth “*look at me, I’m a catch*”. This is an example of self-commodification operating in the opposite direction from D-09: while Lucy devalues herself below market standards, Patricia conversely, overvalues herself as justification for demanding extreme specifications. Both are different sides of the same coin, both measure love’s worth through the logic of exchange value.

Patricia’s list of criteria race, height, income, age, frequency of gym visits, food preferences, zodiac sign is an extreme example of what is referred to in CDA text analysis as enumeration as ideology by listing human attributes in a lengthy, structured format, this list textually transforms a person into a configuration of variables that can be optimized. The analogy is to software technical specifications or a procurement form, not a description of someone who wants to be loved.

b. Discourse Practice

This dialogue takes place within the context of a professional meeting between a matchmaker and a client, yet what is most revealing is Lucy’s response. For the first time in the film, Lucy explicitly rejects the logic of customization “*This is not a car or a house. We’re talking about people.*” This is the moment when Lucy steps outside her own professional discourse and asserts the ontological boundary between humans and products.

However, Lucy's response must be read carefully. She does not reject the matchmaking system as a whole; she merely rejects the extremes of the system. In other words, Lucy accepts that clients may have criteria, she simply rejects the idea that those criteria can be as extensive as a legal document. This is a limited form of resistance: she is negotiating the boundaries of the system, not rejecting the system itself. Patricia's consumption of this discourse which appears to have left her unaffected shows that even a counter voice from within the system is not strong enough to alter the client's logic

c. Social Practice

The discourse in this data highlight a more advanced form of commodification, where love is not only evaluated through existing qualities but imagined as something that can be designed according to consumer preferences. In contemporary consumer culture, products are often personalized to meet individual demands, creating the expectation that what people desire can be modified, optimized, and delivered. This logic is extended into romantic relationships when individuals begin to approach partners as customized outcomes rather than unpredictable human beings.

This representation reflects how market-oriented thinking influences expectations toward intimacy. The desire to find a partner with specific characteristics is not presented merely as a personal preference, but as a

process similar to selecting features from a product catalogue. Through this framework, love becomes connected to consumption practices where individuals expect a relationship that perfectly matches their predetermined criteria. In this film, Patricia's extensive list of qualities including race, height, income, age, gym habits, food preference, and astrological sign that constructs a partner as an object that can be specified and ordered. The comparison made by Lucy, "this is not a car or a house," directly challenges this consumer logic by revealing the contradiction between treating human beings as customizable products and recognizing their complexity as individuals.

Therefore, this discourse represents love as a commodity by showing how romantic relationships are shaped by expectations of customization, perfection, and consumer choice. The film suggest that when market logic enters intimacy, love is no longer approached only as a mutual human connection but also as something that can be selected, optimized, and designed according to personal demands.

Datum 17

D-17	Scene	This scene takes place during a heated argument between Lucy and John in the middle of a street, following a conflict that began inside John's car. The argument erupts after a series of tensions surrounding John's financial limitations, including an earlier scene in which Lucy is visibly uncomfortable when John's card is declined, and he cannot afford to take her somewhere she wants to go.
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		Unlike the preceding scenes in which Lucy's dissatisfaction with John's financial situation
D-17	Scene	<i>LUCY: "I don't want to hate you because you're poor, but right now I do, and it makes me hate myself."</i> <i>John looks so hurt by this.</i> <i>JOHN: "Do you know how hard it is to make you happy?"</i> <i>Beat.</i> <i>JOHN (CONT'D)</i> <i>I want you to be happy. And I'm trying. I really am.</i> <i>LUCY: "I know. It's almost enough to make me happy."</i>

a. Text Analysis

The discourse in this data reveals the deepest internalization of commodity logic within romantic relationships. Unlike previous data where market value is explicitly discussed through professional matchmaking or economic metaphors, this moment shows how market-oriented thinking enters the emotional experience of the individual itself. In capitalist society, value is often associated with measurable resources such as wealth, status, and achievement. When this logic influences intimacy, emotional affection may no longer be considered sufficient on its own; instead, love becomes evaluated alongside economic capability and the ability provide a certain lifestyle.

Lucy's statement, "I don't want to hate you because you're poor, but right now I do," demonstrates the conflict between genuine emotional

attachment and internalized market values. Her rejection of John is not caused by the absence of love, but by the belief that poverty decreases his ability to fulfil the expected value of a partner. The phrase “it’s almost enough to make me happy” further reveals that love is positioned as necessary but insufficient when it lacks economic support.

Therefore, this discourse represents love as commodity by showing that romantic satisfaction is measured through both emotional and economic value. This film suggests that capitalist logic does not only influence how people choose partners, but also shapes how individuals experience, judge, and even doubt their own feelings.

b. Discourse Practice

This dialogue takes place in the context of a street argument, a public setting that in narrative conventions is typically reserved for the most honest emotional moments. This context of production is crucial because Lucy is not speaking in her professional capacity as a matchmaker, is not analyzing others and is not strategically employing business language. This is a spontaneous expression of the deepest internal conflict and even in the most spontaneous of circumstances, what emerges is the realization that economic status determines the worthiness of love.

This reveals something deeper than internalization of ideology: capitalist ideology has become so integrated into Lucy’s affective system that she can no longer separate what she feels from what the system

dictates her soul feel. She isn't pretending that she genuinely hates John for his poverty and genuinely hates herself for it. This ambivalence is the film's strongest evidence of how ideology operates not through coercion, but through the shaping of desire itself.

c. Social Practice

This data directly illustrates Illouz's (2012) concept of emotional capitalism at its most personal and painful level. Illouz explains that in emotional capitalism, economic rationality does not influence decisions, it influences feelings themselves. D-17 is the most concrete cinematic representation of this condition, where Lucy does not rationally decide not to love John because he is poor. She feels it, a hatred she does not want but cannot control, because the value system she has internalized has shaped her desires not just her thoughts.

In a broader social context, this data reflects the actual conditions identified in sociological research on class endogamy, the tendency for people to choose partners from the same or higher economic class. But what makes D-17 more than just a representation of class endogamy is Lucy's dimension of self-awareness: *"it makes me hate myself."* She knows that what she feels is a product of the system, she knows it is unfair to John, and she knows it demeans herself, yet she cannot change it. This is alienation in Marx's deepest sense: a person who has lost control over their own desires because the system has shaped them first. The perspective

emerging from the interviews reinforce this finding: informants identified that limited economic conditions not only create practical barriers but also foster an internalized sense of unworthiness, a direct resonance with Lucy's acknowledgment that John's love is "almost enough" yet never truly sufficient.

B. Discussion

Based on an analysis of 17 data points using Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA, grounded in Marx's commodity theory and enriched by the informants' perspectives as a form of triangulation, three ideological patterns can be identified that tend to operate consistently in the film *Materialists* (2025). These patterns are the result of theory-guided interpretation and are thus understood as plausible readings grounded in textual evidence not as an absolute, singular truth.

The first and the most pervasive pattern is the consistent use of economic and market vocabulary within the context of romantic relationships, spanning from scene 1 to scene 10 (market, value, assets, investment, deal, quality, competitive). This naturalization operates through two mechanisms: Lucy's profession legitimizes business language within the context of romance, while other characters not working in the matchmaking industry also employ the same framework, indicating that this is a broader cultural language, not merely a professional one. Informants' perspectives consistently confirm this pattern: from describing

the film as an uncomfortable yet honest mirror of how economic considerations influence romantic choices, to spontaneously using stock market metaphors to describe the dynamics of contemporary dating – all of which indicate that the naturalization of market language within romantic discourse identified in the film resonates with social conditions informants recognize in real life.

The second most significant pattern is that the commodification of love in the film does not function as something imposed from the outside onto the characters, but rather as something that has been fully internalized by the characters. Scene 9 is the clearest example of this, where Lucy applies market logic to herself without any external force compelling her to do so. In Gramsci's terms, this constitutes effective hegemony: those most harmed by the system actively reproduce it because they have internalized it as common sense. Lucy is the subject most disadvantaged by the logic of the romantic market (born poor, lacking high market value), yet she is the most active agent in reproducing that logic. The interviews confirm that similar internalization also occurs outside the film's text, when informants acknowledge that continuing a romantic commitment requires adequate economic conditions, they demonstrate that the same logic has permeated their own understanding and articulation of the requirements of a relationship.

The third and most ironic pattern is that even attempts to resist commodification (Data 13-14) do not fully succeed in breaking free from

the framework of capitalist discourse. Sophie rejects the label “*merchandise*”, yet her slogan “*I deserve love*” still operates within the logic of meritocracy. Lucy acknowledges that matchmaking is a “*scam*” yet continues her work. Violet redefines exploitation as a meaningful premium service. The existing counter-discourse is individualistic and not systemic. In the interviews, informants questioned whether one is truly free to choose love or is actually insufficient to confront larger discursive structures – a condition acknowledged not only in the film’s text but also in the way informants reflect on their experiences.

The commodification of love in film operates not through external imposition, but through a deep internalization within the subject. This is the finding of the most enriched existing theory, and D-17 provides the strongest evidence for it. Previous studies, such as those by Billah & Anzari (2023), tend to position commodification as something imposed by the system upon the individual, manipulative advertisements, media that shape expectations, and an exploitative industry. The findings of this study reveal a deeper dimension in D-17, Lucy is not manipulated by external parties. She genuinely hates John because of his poverty “I don’t want to hate you because you’re poor, but right now I do” and genuinely hates herself for it.

This is not a logical choice affected by the system; rather, it is a desire that has been so profoundly formed by the system that Lucy is unable to discern between her actual feelings and what the ideology dictates. This is an important development of Gramsci’s theory of hegemony: desire

itself is hegemonic, not just thought. The most accurate verbal expression of this circumstance is found in the line “It’s almost enough to make me happy”: affection for John is recognized as genuine and significant, but it is reduced to “necessary but not sufficient” since it lacks financial support. This was corroborated during the interview: the informant mentioned that Lucy’s internal turmoil is directly reflected in her restricted economic conditions, which not only present practical challenges but also nurture a sense of unworthiness.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

This chapter presents a summary of the overall research findings as well as recommendations formulated based on the results of the analysis. In accordance with the post-positivistic paradigm that serves as the foundation of this study, the conclusions are understood as a summary of the most robust interpretations based on the available.

Based on Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA analysis grounded in Marx's commodity theory, applied to 17 data points from the film *Materialists* (2025), this study concludes the following two points in accordance with the research questions established. First, in response to research questions 1 the film *Materialists* (2025) tends to reproduce capitalist ideology through it is romantic discourse via three interrelated mechanisms. The first mechanism is discourse colonization: economic and market vocabulary such as market, value, investment, quality, deal, and complete package are consistently used in the context of intimate relationships, so that the language of romance in the film has been completely replaced by the language of the market without feeling like a metaphor. The second mechanism is historical naturalization, the statement "marriage is a business deal – it has always been that way from the very first time two people did it" projects the conditions of contemporary

capitalism onto the entire history of humanity, making the commodification of marriage appear as an unchangeable universal condition. The third mechanism is internalization through professional identity: Lucy's professional as a matchmaker brings business language into the personal domain, and more significantly, the same language is adopted by other characters who do not work in the industry – indicating that this ideology operates as broader cultural discourse. Together, these three mechanisms create a situation in which capitalist ideology no longer appears as an ideology, but rather as realism.

Second, addressing research questions 2 love in the film *Materialists* (2025) tends to be represented as a commodity through four dimensions. First, self-commodification: Lucy conceptualizes herself as a “*negative dowry*” with a low “*place in the marketplace*” – a condition of alienation where one no longer possesses a language to assess oneself other than the language of exchange value. Second, the commodification of expressions of affection, expressions of love have shifted from personal acts to acts of consumption, as seen in the cinematic contrast between wildflowers and flowers costing hundreds of dollars, as well the inquiry about the price of an apartment following the first kiss. Third, the commodification of emotional vulnerability, loneliness and rejection are identified as the raw material of the matchmaking business, exposing perverse structural incentives where the industry has an interest is not systematically resolving loneliness. Fourth, limited resistance: the only explicit resistance to

commodification in the film is individual rather than systemic, it challenges specific applications of commodity logic but does not transcend the logic itself.

Theoretically, this study makes two contributions. First, to Fairclough's CDA framework: this study demonstrates that stage directions in film scripts constitute ideologically charged discursive acts worthy of inclusion as analytical data, thereby advocating for an expansion of the concept of "text" in CDA to encompass cinematic elements beyond verbal dialogue. Furthermore, this study shows that the third dimension of CDA needs to pay greater attention to how ideology operates through internalization from within the subject, not merely through external imposition. Second, regarding Marx's theory of commodities, this study identifies what might be termed "self-fetishism" a condition in which individuals view themselves through the lens of exchange value as an elaboration of commodity fetishism within the realm of self-identity. This study also confirms and elaborates on Illouz's (2007) concept of *cold intimacies* at the linguistic level that this condition occurs not only at the relational level but also the linguistic level, where characters no longer possess a vocabulary outside the framework of capital to express intimate feelings.

B. Suggestions

The following recommendations are formulated based on the results of the analysis and tailored to the scope of this study. First, for future researchers interested in CDA studies of film, this study recommends expanding the corpus to include more comprehensive cinematic elements such as background music, cinematography, costume choices, and production design as semiotic data that help reproduce ideology. This expansion will yield a more comprehensive analysis in line with the development of multimodal CDA. Second, for researchers in the fields of media studies and popular culture, this study recommends comparative studies of romantic films from various historical periods and diverse national cultural context. Such comparisons will strengthen or test the extent to which the patterns of the commodification of love identified in this study are specific to the context of contemporary American capitalism, or whether they are more universal within global capitalism.

Third, for stakeholders in the fields of education and media literacy, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for developing critical discourse analysis teaching materials that use popular films as texts. Given that the discourse of the commodification of love identified in the films corresponds to the informants' own ways of understanding and articulating romantic relationships, the enhancement of critical media literacy becomes relevant as an effort to provide space for audiences to not merely accept popular representations as natural realism.

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APPENDIX

Informant Interview Guidelines

A. General Understanding of the Film

1. What are your impressions after watching *Materialists* (2025)?
2. In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?

B. Capitalist Ideology in the Film

1. Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?
2. How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?
3. Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?
4. In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?

C. Love as a Commodity

1. Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form? How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?
2. Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?
3. Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?

D. Connection to Social Reality

1. Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?
2. Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?

INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee: Dita Shafa
 Date: Friday, March 20, 2026
 Time: 10:46 AM
 Education: Student of English Literature (actively consume films)

No	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching <i>Materialists</i> (2025)?	This movie feels a bit suffocating but also realistic like seeing something we know exist but is rarely discussed honestly. There's sense of emptiness that's intentionally left hanging, as if the movie is trying to say that not all relationships are warm, sometimes they just feel "good enough"
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	In my opinion, this film aims to show that there are other factors at play in defining love itself: status, comfort, security. That's what makes us ask: is love alone enough?
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	Its definitively there and very strong. The film illustrates that partner selection is often heavily influenced by "what they bring to the table" rather than just "who they are." So, love is clearly something that's negotiated, not just felt.
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Money here is like a second love language, something the characters show their affection through gifts and lifestyle.
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	There are moments when the characters prioritize stability and status over emotional connection, a choice that's "reasonable" but not "sincere."
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional	Focusing more on material things is what makes the relationship feel cold, lacking in emotional attention, and not deep enough.

	attention or through material things? Why?	
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	Yeah, it's sad that love is judged by what can be given, not by presence or sincerity.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	So, like the "proof of love" in this movie, love that's too wrapped up in luxury can lose its true meaning.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	Some relationships feel like a "barter" you give this, I give that. It's not wrong but it feels lacking... life is just like that.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	It's a mix, but it leans toward self-interest. It makes us question the authenticity of that relationship.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	It's so relevant, a lot of people unconsciously consider practical factors in relationships. The movie is like a mirror: uncomfortable but honest.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	This movie made me wonder: are we truly free to choose love, or are we actually influenced by a sense of security, status, and social expectations? As someone who values emotional connection more, it's honestly sad to see how love can be "pushed aside" like that. It feels like this movie is about love that's slowly being replaced.

INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee Zainal Arifin
 Date Monday, April 6, 2026
 Time 10:00 AM
 Education Student of Film Studies

No	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching Materialists (2025)?	Watching Materialists really opened my eyes to the fact that there are women out there who are truly materialistic, it's not just something that happens in my friend's stories loh ya... Some are even this materialistic just to choose whose worthy of being a life partner. However, I was also struck by the ending, where Lucy realizes that love isn't measured by material possessions but by sincerity.
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	Universally speaking... yes... but from certain perspectives, it's not just about romance, it's about how one views love itself... such as Lucy's material ambitions versus true love.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	Okay, let's look at the economic aspect of Lucy's past relationship. First, John, Lucy's ex-boyfriend... he was poor and didn't have much wealth, which is made Lucy angry and caused her to act unprofessionally in her relationship with him because he couldn't buy the things she wanted or help her achieve her goals. This is what led Lucy to end her relationship with John for a while. If we look at it from an economic perspective, and since Lucy initially viewed love as a material thing, it's perfectly understandable that she chose to leave John because the love that she desired wasn't the kind of economic stability that John possessed. Meanwhile, Harry is a wealthy, established man (the opposite of John yeah) romantic, charming, and able to control his emotions... but he was taken aback by Lucy because Harry was forcing himself to pursue a

		woman despite his leg surgery. Because of this, Lucy views Harry as insincere and someone who imposes his own will, so Lucy feels torn between choosing a partner like John (who is financially struggling but sincere) or Harry (who is wealthy but forces her to love him).
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Money and wealth in this film serve as a third factor in determining whether they can be together or not. However, the role of money in this film isn't always straightforward just because you can buy anything doesn't mean you can treat women as you wish and as you want... there are other factors that can influence a person's feelings.
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	Yes, for example when John was with Lucy he was poor, he chose to accept the reality that Lucy preferred to leave him.
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	Most of it is about emotional needs, for example, Sophie, whom Lucy set up with a man. Her only criterion was that she just needed to be loved sincerely, but there are also those who prioritize material things, like Lucy herself before she realized the true nature of love.
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	It cannot be measured by material things alone, but by sincerity, care, and the depth of love that grows between each couple.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	Material possessions can alter a person's desires when they view love not with their heart, but that doesn't always mean they'll be tempted by wealth... for example like Lucy, who upon learning that behind all of Harry's wealth lay something he shouldn't have done, stopped loving him.

9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	There is.. for instance Lucy's job as a matchmaker helping people find partners, this is a new phenomenon where a job involving someone's emotions is exchanged for money paid to Adore.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	Since feelings exist, certain benefits exist as well.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	Yeap. That happens a lot.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	Absolutely right, lol... but I don't care what other people say, because love is an effort, says Lucy.

INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee Zahidan Yudianto
 Date Monday, April 13, 2026
 Time 18:00 PM
 Education Student of Film Studies

No	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching <i>Materialists</i> (2025)?	After watching this film, I have a more realistic perspective, even though I've always had a realistic view of material things.
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	The main message of this film reminds us that love cannot be bought with money, even though we still need money to live. Romantic relationships are not built solely on material things, but also on the emotional connection between the two partners.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	Romantic relationships, economic conditions, and social status are interconnected. Often, women seek partners with good economic standing and social status. Although love doesn't require conditions, maintaining a commitment to love requires money and social status.
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Money isn't a prerequisite for falling in love. It merely serves as a tool to smooth out various challenges in a couple's life.
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	There are times when a woman notices the wealth other possess. She realizes she doesn't want a relationship with a poor man. She has trauma from a previous relationship.
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	The male character tries to win over the female character by any means possible. However, the female character realizes that what the rich man offers mostly comes from his wealth. The rich man always relies on

		what he possesses. Meanwhile, her ex-a poor man always made time for her.
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	Love can be measured and judged by how much her or his partner strives. Striving in any way he can, not necessarily just in terms of wealth. Love can be sustained through mutual effort.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	Gifts, money, or luxury serve as tools used to make women happy.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	In my opinion, there isn't any, because a wealthy man provides all the wealth and necessities a woman needs, he's willing to do anything for her. However, there's no genuine affection from that wealthy man.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	In this film, no character exploits another for personal gain. Each character has their own way of pursuing love. No one feels wronged in the relationship.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	Such portrayals of love occur in real life. We can observe a couple's social statues, and we predict how they will behave in society. This film has strengthened my belief that love can indeed happen spontaneously, without any reason. However, sustaining it requires many things. It requires effort in the form of wealth, status, and privilege to continue the relationships. But what must be remembered is that genuine love is often foundation for building a relationship.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	This film has strengthened my belief that love can indeed happen spontaneously, without any reason. However, sustaining it requires many things. It requires effort in the form of wealth, status, and privilege to continue the relationships. But what must be remembered

		is that genuine love is often foundation for building a relationship
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INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee Rijal Arif
 Date Wednesday, April 15, 2026
 Time 18:00 PM
 Education Student of English Literature (actively consume films)

No	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching <i>Materialists</i> (2025)?	This film feels honest as a romance that is not just about excessive sweetness. It is like a reflection of modern day dating and high standards. It is a bit more relatable.
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	Romantic love that prioritizes feelings alone cannot be separated from material factors such as social status and money, especially in today's economic climate, however... this does not mean that membuang perasaan in relationship. Feelings are also necessary; in fact they serve as the foundation for a relationship to thrive. Finding a balance between emotional connection & material considerations is what we must manage. This film highlights the reality that love alone is not enough if there is nothing else to offer, in this context money and status.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	It's very visible. Lucy views people as products with market value (height, salary, appearance, age, etc.) She herself decodes that she only wants to marry a wealthy person for financial security. Her relationship with Harry (wealthy, charming and stable) feels logical and comfortable, while her relationship with John (poor, struggling actor) is full of but also full of conflicts over money.
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Money is portrayed as the primary currency in the dating market. Lucy treats people as non negotiable commodities. Harry represents stability and wealth, while John represents struggle and poverty.

5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	The scene where Lucy explains her “math” of matchmaking to her client or to Harry is very clear (height, salary, lifestyle) are the main points. Also, when Lucy says she only wants to marry someone who can “buy anything” she wants. The dating scenes and the comparison of lifestyles between Harry (luxury) and John (modest) further reinforce this. The film shows that in big cities, material lifestyle often serves as the first filter before emotions come into play.
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	The characters demonstrate this through a mix of traits, but the film emphasizes their differences. - Harry: focuses more on material possessions and luxury (gifts, lifestyle, stability). His affection feels “practical” and gentlemanly but sometimes lacks deep emotion. - John: more through emotional attention (old memories, honesty, support even when broke). His affection is messy but authentic. Lucy initially leans toward the material but slowly realizes that emotional attention (a sense of comfort, being able to be herself) is more enduring. Why? Because the film wants to say that material things can be bought, but true emotional connections cannot.
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	Yes, love is mostly portrayed as something that can be measured by economic, physical, and social checklists. Love becomes like an investment or a market transaction. But the film also challenges this notion, suggesting that true love defies such measurements and often goes against market logic. It shifts from a transactional form (matchmaking) to something more intuitive and riskier.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in	Gifts and luxury become the main symbols of “love” in the materialistic version (expensive dinners, luxurious apartments,

	demonstrating love in this film?	lifestyle). For Lucy, that's the way to demonstrate value and commitments. But the film shows the limitations of luxury that it can make people feel "well treated," but not always feel "deeply loved". There's a strong contrast with how John shows affection without luxury.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	Her relationships often feel like business deals. Even Lucy's relationship with Harry has an element of "mutual benefit" (she gets luxury, Harry gets a "suitable" partner). There's a very dark subplot involving a client that makes it clear this "exchange" can be dangerous if emotions are ignored. The film portrays modern dating like the stock market (value fluctuates based on assets).
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	It's a mix, but the film honestly shows that most people (including Lucy at first) have a mix both. Lucy chose Harry more for the practical benefits (stability, status) while her feelings for John were more purely emotional. Harry also had his own motives (he wanted a partner who understood "value"). John was more driven by his feelings.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	Very much, so even too real. In the era of dating apps, people often use filters: income, height, lifestyle, education. Many say "love is important," but in practice, economic considerations weigh heavily, especially in big cities. The subplot about the dangers of matchmaking also reflects the risks of modern dating. This film is like a veiled documentary on how capitalism shapes romance.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	Yes, this film has made me more aware that we all have a materialistic side, but if we let it take over we can lose the essence of a relationship, emotional intimacy, acceptance, and the encourage to choose what doesn't make sense on paper. In

		today's society, where the cost of living is high, money is indeed important as a foundation, but the film reminds us that a foundation alone isn't enough without genuine love. Overall, Materialists isn't a film that offers black and white answers. It says money is important but don't let it become everything. The love that endures is the kind that can honestly balance both.
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INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee Ingrid Yayulita Ningrum
 Date April 23, 2026
 Time 11:03 PM
 Education Student of English Literature (member of film fan community)

No	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching <i>Materialists</i> (2025)?	My impression yeah...haha... the world of romance is actually so complicated, isn't it? wkwk Even just to "love" someone, you have to meet those ridiculous requirements. JUST FOR LOVING SOMEONE. There are so many adorable moments. Not just from the main character, but even from the side characters (Lucy's clients) they're just so darn cute!! (Simply because, why do you set so many requirements for finding love?? Does that mean you don't love yourself, doesn't it???)
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	It's better to love yourself first before you try or want to love someone else. It costs nothing if you can't accept your own worth first.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	It's very evident. Even though someone can love without a reason, in this movie, unfortunately, economic conditions or social status actually hinder two people from being together based on love. (Like, you can't love someone just because you LOVE him/her. Love can't feed someone's kids, bro; you need something that guarantees you future together)
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	It feels like a quid pro quo. Simply put, if you like me (in a romantic way), what do you have to offer that makes you worthy of liking "someone" like me??
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material	Oh, there is one. The moment when Lucy and John argue overpaying for parking. Because of John's poor economic situation, he creates

	things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	atrivial conflict with his girlfriend, Lucy, which makes Lucy question whether John truly loves her (?) that's basically it.
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	To be honest, there are two key differences between these two characters (Harry and John). - Harry tends to focus more on material things (money, his job, designer clothes, and even taking Lucy on dates to expensive restaurants). But strangely, Lucy doesn't feel Harry's "love" (she's even confused, does she really love Harry or not??) - John can't offer the same luxuries as Harry (he's poor, after all. He barely has enough for food and a place to live). But he loves Lucy just as she is, for no reason at all (the moment when Lucy is overwhelmed by her problems, instead of confiding in Harry as her boyfriend, she confides in John, which proves that Lucy can also feel John's "love")
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	I don't think so. Precisely because it's not something that can be measured, love is the purest form a human can offer.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	As branding or value. As a tool to sell oneself and present oneself well in front of a potential partner.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	I'm a bot fuzzy on this, but in the moment Lucy decided to refuse going to Iceland with Harry, simply because she felt they weren't compatible as a couple.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out	More because of feelings. Lucy, who is indeed a matchmaker, truly knows what she should want if one day she decides to start a relationship

	of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	with someone. Harry and John also seem to prioritize feelings; unfortunately, they like the same person, and each brings out a different side of their charisma as well.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	That could be true. In fact, it seems like most people check out what their potential partner has to offer before they take the relationship further.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	I guess so, hehe.

INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee: Muhammad Haikal Patria Buldan
 Date: Monday, April 4, 2026
 Time: 10:57 PM
 Education: Student of English Literature (actively consume films)

NO	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching Materialists (2025)?	My impression after Materialists is that I was quite struck by how the dynamics of a relationship are also influenced by a person's economic n social circumstances.
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	Not really. The message I took away was actually about how we can live with our partners by accepting their flaws.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	Absolutely, I could see that when Dakota was in a relationship with Chris Evans, they constantly argued over financial issues, which caused their relationship to fall apart early in the film. Contrast when Dakota was approached by Pedro Pascal, who comes from a very affluent background, their relationship felt secure n stable bcs of Pedro's wealth n status.
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Imo, the portrayal of wealth in this film has a significant influence on ppl hoping to a form a relationship with someone, we can see that many ppl have the standard that their partner must earn a "six-figure" income or more. In this film, money is also used by the characters to make their partners feel valued n appreciated.
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are important considerations in choosing a partner?	Yes. When we see the scene with Dakota's matchmaking clients, it becomes an important consideration in the nature of a relationship.

6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	Every character is different. There are characters like the one played by Pedro, who shows his love by spending money on flowers, fancy restaurants, n vacations abroad so he can create moments to express his affection. This contrasts with Chris Evans' character since he lacks material wealth, he shows his love by being there when she needs him. He tries to be present when problems arise n works to calm Dakota down n help her as much as possible.
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	In this movie I realized that love is abstract n unpredictable. The way things are measured n judged in this movie is just based on what feels right in your heart. What makes love grow isn't material things, time, or physical presence it's the feelings you have for your partner.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	It's incredibly helpful to express your love for your partner. Seakan feels valued by her partner when she can give all of that.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	There's a scene with Dakota's client again. They're looking for a relationship but there are specific requirements that must be met. There's another scene where Dakota n Pedro are in the dating phase, we can see the couple in that relationship as just business partners, so yeah...the relationship they're in is merely a give n take transaction between two ppl.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	Imo they enter the relationship for a specific purpose, we can see the relationship between Dakota n Pedro. Dakota was hesitant at first, but during the courtship phase, she saw the benefits that she can gained from being with Pedro, so we can say that she felt valued for the first time.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	Ask for Dakota n Chris, at the beginning of their relationship it really framing a situation that's quite common among working-class ppl in today's modern world... where

		someone like Chris is seen as unattractive, poor, n lacking resources in a relationship. But the scene where Dakota has to choose between Chris n Pedro is actually rare happen. In a world where material possessions n stability are considered important in today's era, I'm sure that ppl over there would choose Pedro over Chris.
12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	This film has expanded my perspective on how materialism is used in romantic relationships in this capitalist world, particularly in NY where the film is set. Dakota n Chris's relationship is just an anomaly imo, it exists but the majority thinks otherwise.

INTERVIEW RESULTS REPORT

Interviewee: Moh Mahrush Ali
 Date: Tuesday, May 5, 2026
 Time: 10:57 PM
 Education: Lecturer of film studies

NO	Question	Answer
1.	What are your impressions after watching Materialists (2025)?	Ya film nya tentang drama romance ya? Menarik sih, cuman..ya gak cuman ya, kesan nya si Lucy itu dia comlangin pasangan-pasangan sementara dia sendiri belum punya pasangan. Jadi, kaya sebuah anomaly haha Kesannya ini film layak ditonton lah
2.	In your opinion, what is the film's main message about romantic relationships?	Hubungan romantis kan hubungan yang selalu dilandasi dengan kasih sayang, artinya kalo di film itu kan Lucy dikenal sebagai orang yang misterius, ambis dan materialistis ya.. jadi menurut saya romantisme dalam film ini itu sebagai kebohongan perasaan dari Lucy yang sebenarnya cinta John tapi dia bergejolak dengan pikiran bahwa dia harus menikah dengan orang yang mapan serta jelas masa depan nya.
3.	Do you see a connection between love and economic conditions or social status in this film? Can you explain?	Jadi memang ada hubungannya ya, ya itu dibuktikan dengan Lucy yang tetap bersikukuh dengan tujuan nya untuk menikah dengan orang kaya.
4.	How does the film depict the role of money or wealth in the characters' relationships?	Ya sesuai dengan judulnya ya, artinya mesti ada kaitannya dengan uang itu, walaupun kita mempertanyakan ulang ya makna cinta itu. Apakah cinta itu soal perasaan atau soal uang, atau memang bagian dari sebuah strategi. Film ini mencoba menggambarkan dunia zaman ini seperti apa.
5.	Are there any scenes that you believe indicate that material things or lifestyle are	Ada, itu sebagai bentuk relasi terhadap seseorang. Barang itu ditunjukkan sebagai impressi pertama pada seseorang yang itu dikemudian hari akan membuat keputusan

	important considerations in choosing a partner?	apakah ini berlanjut atau tidak. Misalnya John itu keadaannya sebagai pelayan gitu ya...yang strata sosial nya rendah, dan dia melihat barang-barang yang dipakai Lucy mewah gitu, ya secara ga langsung dia akan merasa minder tetapi perasaannya gabisa dibohongin. Jadinya lebih realistis
6.	In your opinion, how do the characters show affection, is it more through emotional attention or through material things? Why?	Dua-duanya, jadi perhatian kasih sayang nya iya kemudian barang itu kan sebagai simbolnya (bahasa cinta). Kayanya ini akan terus terhubung.
7.	Do you think love in this film is depicted as something that can be valued or measured? In what form?	Kalo di film ini kan cinta kaya digambarkan atau dipengaruhi oleh rasionalitas ekonomi, dan logika pilihan. Artinya masa depan nya jelas, kemapanan hidup, kenyamanan hidup itu juga perlu dipikirkan. Jadi bukan lagi cinta yang murni.
8.	How do gifts, money, or luxury play a role in demonstrating love in this film?	Ya Harry ya paling keliatan menunjukkan semuanya, apapun yang dia punya selalu diberikan. Jadi peran semua itu sangat mengartikan makna cinta itu seperti apa.
9.	Are there any moments where the relationships in the film seem like transactions or exchanges? Can you describe them?	Iya ada, jadi di beberapa adegan itu sangat terlihat, dimana hubungan timbal balik itu sangat ditonjolkan, jadinya kan gaada yang benar-benar murni, ada rasa realitas ekonomi logika hidup itu nanti seperti apa.
10.	Do you think the characters enter relationships more out of feelings or for some sort of benefit?	Nah itu digambarkan oleh 2 karakter (John dan Harry) ada cinta yang menguntungkan dan ada cinta yang tulus. Dan Lucy diantara dua-duanya itu akhirnya memilih bimbang di era seperti ini itu tidak mungkin mengesampingkan masa depannya nanti.
11.	Do you think the depiction of love in this film also occurs in real life today?	Iya, sangat.

12.	Does this film make you rethink the relationship between love and material things in society?	Jelas ya, kalo dilihat di ending nya ya (open ending) apakah akan langgeng atau engga, bahwa sebenarnya tidak ada pilihan yang benar benar murni...tapi cinta yang tulus kan tetap gaada dalam struktur sosial ekonomi juga kan? Dan kalua dikaitkan dengan fenomena masa kini (konsumerisme, komodifikasi) cinta sekarang kadang dikomodifikasi atau dijual yang ditunjukkan lewat variety show, iklan dan lain lain membuat semuanya bisa dikaitkan.
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CURRICULUM VITAE



Mila Nur Afida was born in Malang on October 13, 2001. She graduated from MA Al-Ittihad Poncokusumo, Malang. During her study at the Senior High School, she actively participated in Student Council (OSIS) and journalistic community, which fostered his interest in the world of communication and writing. After graduating from high school, she had a career as an employee at a pet shop for approximately one year, training her discipline and interpersonal skills. She also had experience as a teacher before deciding to continue her education to a higher level. In 2022, she continues her studies at the English Literature Study Program, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. With a diverse background in the fields of organization, education and the world of work, she continues to develop herself academically and professionally and is committed to making real contributions in her field.