

**EXPLORING THE PROSE STYLE TECHNIQUES OF CHINUA ACHEBE IN
THINGS FALL APART (1958) AND ATHOL FUGARDIN TSOTSI (1980)
THROUGH A CINEMATIC LENS**

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RJ10M7/741

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF ARTS IN LITERATURE OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

June, 2024

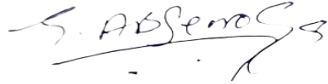


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DECLARATION

I, Geoffrey Abraham Bakiraasa Ssenoga, hereby do declare that this dissertation is a product of my own research and has never been submitted for a degree in this or any other university or institution of higher learning.



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DEDICATION

To Africa's wealth of creative minds whose works are yet to receive appropriate visibility and acknowledgement and to Isaaka Kaweesa and Dina Namirembe Ddamulira who triggered my interest in the didactical and transforming beauty and power of the word.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am eternally grateful to Mr. Moses Musingo, Mr. Peter Mugume, Dr. Gulere Wambi, who mentored and ushered me into the world of Academia.

To Prof. Timothy Wangusa (Uncle Tim of old) whose Professorial empathy encouraged me along: “Even a Drop is a Tear”.

To Peggy Noll who supported this research with resources not readily available here but available in the ‘first world’.

To Faustin Misanvu, my Literature, Television and Film mentor as well as big brother.

To Walusimbi Godfrey and George Sengendo, whose Uganda Film and Television Institute project led to all this.

To Illakut Ben Bella and Dr. Monica Chibita who urged me along.

To Dr. Mary Naula, Maria Gorette Akol (RIP), Mureithi Karugu, Michiel Oosterhaut, Joseph Magoba, Joel Serwano and Felix Nkurunziza for that invaluable intellectual and moral support.

To Abwooli Kajumba Ssenoga whose delicate nags enabled this accomplishment.

To Ibrahim Michael and Edith Senoga.

To Kote, Isaac, Judith, Adulfu and Maama Dennis as family.

And, finally, to my supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Angella Napakol, for her deep reservoir of patience in guiding and supporting this work, and Dr. James Taabu Busimba whose ideas on the trans-positioning of literature to multimedia gave fresh direction to this dissertation

And to God be the Glory

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ABSTRACT

The study is an exploration of prose style techniques through a cinematic lens of two African fiction writers. It specifically focuses on Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980). The major purpose of the study is to establish that though these are novels written in a traditional sense, the narrative techniques the authors use respectively, express cinematic technique. The study established that the cinematic prose style techniques not only concretises the story experiences in the novels but in the long run can be used to promote African literature in reconfiguration to film through a framework that rests on cinematic prose technique for its operation. The study recommends that this framework be applied to the reading of other African literary genres such as poetry, drama, oral literature and fiction for the purpose of creating more visibility for African literature.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the prose style techniques of two African creative works of fiction, Chinua Achebe's *Things Falls Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980).

The major aim of this study is to establish the film like narrative features the novelists employ to make the creative works attractive to readers but which also appeal to film producers and consumers cinematically. One motivation for this study is that these techniques I explored, are already evident in the film versions of the two novels: (Hood,2005) and (Orere ,1987).

1.2 Background to the study

This study focused on two African novels namely; *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980). *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is a seminal African novel by Chinua Achebe written at a time when post-colonial Africa was struggling for self-identity as it prepared for sovereign independence and reeling from the trauma of colonialism and its cultural effects. It tells the story of Okonkwo and his catastrophic adamant resistance to change brought about by a colonial invasion that threatened to tear apart the African way of life he knew and valued. The novel announced the emergence of the African novel in a style unique to African way of speech and spectacle. It has been translated into the world's major languages and continues to evoke a nostalgic world of precolonial Africa. Its subject and theme tap into popular film genres such as epic and adventure.

Things Fall Apart (1958) has been adapted into radio (Chinua Achebe started out as a radio producer) through textual readings, and there have been a few attempts at transposing it to film.

Tsosti (1980) is an only novel by South African playwright Athol Fugard which profiles the life of a South African gangster nicknamed Tsotsi (meaning "thug") during the apartheid

era; his brutal criminal life of murder, robbery, rape and violence in South Africa's ghettos and his eventual redemption in death. The novel was adapted to film where it has attracted interesting reviews.

Cinema, a modern medium has and continues to borrow heavily from literature creating a distinct category of film practice known as adaptation. It translates literary features describing sound and vision into film form. Cinema is attracted to literature because of the availability of ready content which has already been consumed and rated by an audience from which films can be made. Literature provides an already developed plot and characters of a story instead of creating a new one for the film.

On the other hand, cinema has influenced literature through its narrative style of showing what happens other than telling common in literary style. Cinematic prose style uses scenes with characters doing and speaking for themselves and the narrative unravels in the reader's mind as if witnessing real events (just like watching cinema) without a mediator. Joseph Conrad sets out deliberately to achieve this cinematic exposition in his novels when he states that "his task is to try to achieve, by the powers of the written word, to make the reader hear, to feel and before all, to make the reader see" (Bluestone, 1957).

This complementary relationship has been vigorously exploited by the Hollywood film industry where producers read and search literary works for film content. The prestigious Hollywood film Academy Awards known as "The Oscars set aside a specific category for films adapted out of literature. Gavin Hood's *Tsotsi* (2005) won an Oscar for best foreign language film while David O'Reilly's *Things Fall Apart* (1987) was warmly received by a wide audience.

So, while Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) are acclaimed African novels, I was intrigued by their narrative prose style that inspired the film versions. It is in this regard that I found it important that the African literary work of fiction should be widely and incisively studied with an aim of transposing it to the screen and to analyse how its narrative prose style functions cinematically.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the popularity of African narratives, the African film industry has not fully embraced African literature, unlike its European and American counterparts. This could be attributed to financial, technological, legal and cultural challenges of transposing the literature to film. Moreover, Individual narratives, particularly their cinematic prose style suitable for film adaptation, have not been systematically analysed and studied. Seminal African narratives such as *Things Fall Apart (1958)* and *Tsotsi (1980)* have scarcely been studied from this perspective.

By examining the prose style techniques through a cinematic lens of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart (1958)* and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi (1980)* this study aims to assess the potential of African literature for film adaptation and contribute to the growth of the African film industry by identifying suitable African narratives.

1.4 Research aim

1. To examine the prose style techniques through a cinematic frame employed by Chinua Achebe and Athol Fugard in *Things Fall Apart (1958)* and *Tsotsi (1980)*, respectively.
2. To examine the relevance of cinematic prose styles in African literature to film transposition.
3. To develop a literary- based framework for transposition of African literature to film.

1.5 Objectives

1. To explore and analyse the prose styles techniques through cinematic frame in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart (1958)* and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi (1980)*.

2. To compare cinematic prose techniques transposed from *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) to their film versions.

1.6 Research questions

1. What are the characteristics of prose style techniques in a cinematic frame?
2. What are the different cinematic prose styles in African literature as reflected in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) ?
3. How are the different cinematic prose styles in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) adapted into film?

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on exploring, analysing and examining the cinematic prose style techniques of two fiction texts *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) and their film adaptations: *Things Fall Apart* (1987) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (2005). The two novels were chosen because of their relevance to the elements being studied and have been transposed into film. They are also selected from an African writers' literary canon which has been subjected to literary scrutiny and their authors are widely acclaimed African writers.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Today narratives are taking advantage of modern media to reach out to wider and more varied audiences. Cinema has specifically seized this advantage as it transposes literature to the screen. In the industrial world of western cinema, literature has been deeply mined for content to feed the cinema machine. It has also provided narrative formula for cinematic transposition. Africa, a late entrant into filmmaking has slowly built up its film industry. However little content has been derived from the African

literary canon. This may be due to the laborious but critical assessment procedures required for identifying and selecting a novel for transposition, such as the creative prose style techniques employed in the novel that are attractive to the film media.

As new authors and their publications are critiqued for literary merit so should novels selected for cinema. This situation consequently justifies this study as one among many steps towards establishing formula for determining the transposition of much of Africa's rich literary heritage to cinema, a modern age popular medium. The two selected texts have received critical literary study and have also been transposed to cinema. As a researcher I found that literary studies have concentrated mainly on areas of theme and style while in the area of film studies have dealt mainly with cultural and film production values. A specific reading of the two novels' prose style techniques justifies this study as a possible trigger to the literature to film transposition process. This could offer a literature and film framework within which African literature and film can be studied.

1.9 Significance of the Study

This study enhances scholarly and African film industry appreciation of African literature as a source creative content for film adaptation. The framework chosen for close reading of the African text will guide the transposition of the literary text to film.

1.10 Definition of Key terms

Cinematic prose style: this is a style that is reminiscent of film/cinematic experience such as use of language that aims to show instead of telling, visual storytelling, scene painting, audio sensual descriptions akin to film sound, parallel plot storytelling etc.

Establishment shot: Usually a long (wide-angle or full) shot at the beginning of a scene (or a sequence) that is intended to show things from a distance (often an aerial shot), and inform the audience with an overview in order to help identify and orient the locale or time for the scene and action that follows.

Long-shot (LS): This is an image of an object from a considerable distance. It has variations in range such as the medium long shot, the medium shot and the extreme long shot which is also called a wide shot.

Master Scene: Refers to a continuous shot or long camera take that shows the main action or setting of an entire scene.

Mise en scène: Refers to all the elements placed (by the director) before the camera and within the frame of the film, including their visual arrangement and composition; elements include settings, decor, props, actors, costumes, makeup, lighting, performances, and character movements and positioning.

Montage: Refers to a filming technique, editing style, or form of movie collage consisting of a series of short shots or images rapidly put together into a coherent sequence to create a composite picture or suggest and convey meaning or a larger idea.

Objective shot: the most common camera shot, it simply presents what is before the camera.

Parallel editing: Editing that cuts between two sequences taking place at different locations and possibly different times.

Pan: Refers to the horizontal scan, movement, rotation, or turning of the camera in one direction (to the right or left) around a fixed vertical axis while filming.

Parallel action: Refers to a narrative device in which two scenes are observed in parallel by cross-cutting, alternating between them to create a sense of simultaneity.

Polysyndeton: This is the use of several conjunctions in close succession, especially where some might be omitted (as in “he ran and jumped and laughed for joy”). It is a stylistic scheme used to achieve a variety of effects, such as increasing the rhythm of prose, speeding or slowing its pace, conveying solemnity, or even ecstasy and childlike exuberance.

POV (Point of View): A reaction shot or a quick shot that records a character's or group's response to another character or some on-screen action or event.

Prose style : This is a writing style employed by an author to write prose narratives. It is mostly employed in the writing of novels or articles. It includes a deliberate choice of words, use of literary devices, narrative point of view, dialogue and syntax in a manner distinct to prose.

Rack focus: Refers to an on-screen film technique of focus change that blurs the focal planes in sequence, forcing the viewer's eye to travel to those areas of an image that remain in sharp focus; the focus changes from an object in the foreground to an object in the background or vice versa.

Shot: Refers to a single, constant, uninterrupted (by editing or cuts) take of a motion picture camera.

Voice over: Refers to recorded dialogue, usually narration, that comes from an unseen, off-screen voice, character, or narrator.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present literature that relates to literary creativity and film correlations, cinematic prose style techniques in African literature, and the novels *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980). To achieve a systematic and coherent flow, the literature review of literature is presented according to the following themes: Literature and film relations: Cinematic prose techniques in literature, Cinematic prose techniques in African literature and Cinematic prose techniques in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) and their deployment in the film rendition.

2.2 Literature and film relations: Cinematic prose techniques in literature.

The human race is endowed with the power of coherent speech, which has been the main medium of storytelling since known history. Later, mankind learned how to tell stories using written codes. For instance, the ancient Egyptians had their hieroglyphics scripted on papyrus reeds, while the ancient hunter-gatherer communities of tropical Africa drew pictures on their cave walls, telling stories about their way of life that modern man is struggling to understand and retell. Even the ancient Greeks, who many believe are the forerunners of modern Western civilisation, started out with the oral stories of Homer, which are the foundation of much of the Western world's literary canon (Corrigan, 2012).

This telling and retelling of the same stories across different mediums at different times by different tellers has spawned, in some scholarly circles and professional practices, a myriad of adaptation studies and practices.

In an interesting way, frameworks for studying literature and film have been conceived and cultivated in parallel with the concerns of different cultural, literary and film movements at different times, searching for fresh textual historiography, interpretation and analysis. These frameworks include the Feminist, the Psychoanalytic, the Marxist and the Semiotic. Rushton and Bettison (2010), for instance, reveal that canons of critical practice that apply to literary studies, such as Close Analysis of the New Criticism theory, were appropriated into film studies, with film texts being analysed for form, style, and themes of cinematic works. It is some of these ideas that provide the key guidelines in this study.

Andrew Dudley, in his essay on “Adaptation” (2012), points out that all discussion of adaptation introduces the category of matching, and it is a fact of human practice. He further argues that to use this framework, the analyst needs to probe the source of power in the original by examining the use made of it in the adaptation (Dudley, 2012, p. 67). In respect to this framework, Dokutum, citing Kamilla Elliot (2013, p.58), talks of the genetic model of adaptation, which describes a shared genetic substance between literature and film but different plot substances in their manifestation. Another Elliot adaptation model cited by Dokutum (ibid) that would be relevant to support Dudley’s

point is the ventriloquist model, where the movie is said to add the semiotic richness of moving images, music, props, architecture, costumes, audible dialogue, and more.

There is a close relationship existing between literature and film made up of filmic equivalents although each needs to be judged in its own right (Bluestone, 1957).

Bluestone gives example of the novel's plots, which film depicts in characters involved in series of conflicts.

Similarly , (Corrigan, 2012, p.14) adds that cinema inherited narrative elements from the nineteenth- century novel, such as "a narrative linearity that progresses according to a cause-and-effect logic, propelled by the demands of primary characters, represented by an objective point of view and editing continuity." He also observes that the star system of cinema was related to this evolution (p.16).

When I return to Dokutum, I realise that he pinpoints that modern fiction also appropriated filmic elements, such as montage, shifting point of view, and close attention to visual texture. As he cites instances in Earnest Miller Hemingway 's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), which he says unfolds like a film and relies heavily on the cinematic technique also known as shifting chronology (p. 54).

Film maker Alfred Hitchcock is particularly acknowledged for his artistic directing of perception using this key element, as Driscoll (2014) notes:

Hitchcock is able to manipulate his audience members in choosing what they see, what they don't see, where they are included into the same world as the characters in the film, where they are reminded of their exclusion from that world, and even the emotion that they feel (most often suspense and the rise and fall of tension) (p.9).

It is interesting how Robert Stam draws on structural and post structural theories of literature and cinema to examine cinematic features in Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1856) ,a novel that was written before the advent of cinema proper and considered protocinema, from which he identifies a number of language and structural features, such as the "film script-like notation of precise gestures, artful modulation, a` la Hitchcock, of point of view, precise articulation reminiscent of camera set ups, the

kinetic, destabilised portraiture of characters as a kind of flowing composition in time, etc.” (Stam, 2000, p.86).

Then Tarkovsky (1987) describes rhythm as the key organism form of cinema, the dominant, all-powerful factor of the film image is rhythm, expressing the course of time within the frame. The actual passage of time is also made clear in the character’s behaviours, the visual treatment and the sound...(p113). But Tarkovsky, who is a film director, while acknowledging the importance of a writer in the making of a film downplays the role of literary elements to just mere pointers to “the emotional content of an episode, a scene, or even an entire film”. He states that: “a writer has to write, and someone who thinks in cinematic images should take up directing”.

He was able to arrive at this point of view through his own practical experience in film making, as partly shown in the following excerpt:

In the process of developing a script I tried to try to have an exact picture of the film in my mind, even down to the sets. Now, however, I am more inclined to work out a scene or shot only in a very general way, so that it will emerge spontaneously during shooting. For the life on location, the atmosphere of the set, the actor’s moods, can prompt one to new, startling and unexpected strategies... one should be able to depend on the feeling of the scene, and approach the set with one’s mind open (p.127).

In due course, I’ll demonstrate that these examples project a framework within which *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) could be studied as potential film material. Indeed, already there exists film versions of *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980), directed by David Orere and Garvin Hood, respectively.

2.3 Cinematic prose techniques in African literature

There is significant literature to show that African literature and film have been mainly studied, albeit within largely the historical post- colonial and social realism framework

(Diawara, 1989). Also, the need to address gender issues (especially of the feminist strand) has sprouted a vigorous framework (Dipio, 2014).

Such studies have continued to employ the New Criticism methodology of close study of the text examining the formal elements of the literary and cinematic narratives. Sembene Ousmane is one prominent African author and film director whose literature and films have underpinned the philosophical foundation of the study of literature and film in Africa, for instance, how his novels and camera describe the social issues he writes about. The other issue that has occupied many Ousmane Sembene film scholars is the economics and politics of adaptation (Dokutum, 2013).

Ukadike (1994) informs us that Sembene became “increasingly dissatisfied with literature as a forum for his ideas and began to question the effectiveness of the written word on a continent where the majority of people cannot read or write. This prompted him to turn his interests to cinema...” (p.73). He saw the power of images as a tool for social transformation, which was his objective as an author. Sembene's observation of cinema as a powerful image tool that resonates with an African audience and its economic circumstances ahead of the literary text is a key point in the need to turn African works of fiction into film.

Okioh writes in support of Sembene's point of view:

While words are abstract, pictures are concrete, a reality registered by the camera. Words are much derived of substance; pictures have the savour and complexity of reality-they are the presence of the object itself. Words have richer intellectual contents, pictures an emotional charge that is more important (Okioh, 1982, p.25-26).

As a literary writer and film maker, Sembene was in a privileged position to understand and make use of cinematic technique in his literature and to deploy it in the film narrative. One of them is *Xala* (1975), a satirical novel about a wealthy businessman who becomes impotent on the day of his marriage to a third wife.

By engaging in a close study of his literary and filmic narratives, the commensurate authorial logic underpinning the novel's cinematic features and their deployment in the

film is revealed; we can apply this mechanism to further study other African novels such as *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980).

Schmidt (1982) argues in support :

We must understand the creative philosophies of both writers and film makers in order to appreciate changes in plot and dialogue that are made in adapting literature to film. These philosophies will help us to understand the relation between films of literature and their written or acted counterparts. (p.520).

Schmidt 's arguments, as a I have quoted, could raise the critical mass of African literature studied in relationship to film adaptation, which would in turn help to increase the visibility of African literature. For example, Schmidt observes the limitation of African literature to the novel, while their visibility could be expanded through film reviewed articles, video commentaries, and journals, etc. She notes that films of African literature are rarely reviewed in literary journals or given attention in studies of African authors (Schmidt, p.519).

Some of the other titles of African fiction which have been studied as literature and adapted to film include Meja Mwangi's *Bushtrackers* (1979), whose writing style is acknowledged as suited to the paced popular film genre with its action and dialogue. But Jefferson (1984, p.63) notes that the novel and film adaptation of *Bushtrackers* are constructed to appeal to the western culture and its love of action and violence. He cites the provocative and intriguing plot and characterisation carried directly from the novel to the film.

Although this plotting and characterisation is close to the aim of this study , Jefferson is more concerned with whether the adoption of violence is appropriate for African films that show a genuine Africa. He is also interested in its appeal to a Black diaspora audience. He therefore does not delve specifically into the transposition of the filmic prose style in the novel to the film version.

He stops at a hypothetical relating of the literary elements, which is similar to the purpose of this study. This study goes further to show an intimate correlation of cinematic techniques in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980).

Wole Soyinka 's *Kongi's Harvest* (1967) and its filmic rendition *Kongi's Harvest* (1971) - which the author himself played a key role in-do not differ much in plot. The film, however, has a different and more violent ending. There are also variances in costuming and behaviour of the characters to reinforce the political themes of the film. Gugler (1997, p.34) points out that *Kongi's Harvest* (1967), like most of Soyinka's plays, is a play of performance rather than one of plot and character development. It is thus eminently suitable to be transposed to the screen. *Kongi's Harvest* is however a play not fiction.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o explains that "a good story teller in his child hood could tell the same story over and over again, and it would always be fresh... it lay in the use of words and images... the language, through images and symbols, gives us a view of the world, but it has a beauty of its own". (Ukadike, 1994, p. 23). Ukadike highlights the elements of convergence of cinema and storytelling namely camera work, image organisation, dialogue, voice over or off-screen narration, image sound relations and mise en scene. I therefore find it imperative to examine the efficacy that seems identical to the language of the novel and film in regard to *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980).

I have so far shown that there is need for a specific approach to reading the African literary text within the framework of multimedia storytelling, which is in vogue with today's means of consuming stories. The intention is to guide the reading of the African film text in light with adaptation suitability and cinematic trends. Until now , this has been done on a limited scale compared to what is done within the framework of literary features and social relevance of African literature.

As Metz (1974) argues, cinema is like language, so the same features can occur and function in film. The reading of *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1985) sets an important step in looking at African literature as source content for film and other multimedia. To achieve this end, I used specific methodologies as I demonstrate in the next chapter.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the formalist literary theory which lays emphasis on elements of form over content. In this case I was interested in the nature of cinematic prose style, how it is manifested in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1985) and the relationships between the novel and the film adaptation. The formalist theory was first developed in the early twentieth century by Russian writers and critics, namely Boris Echenbsum, Viktor Shklovsky and Yury Tynyanov, among others. The theory rejected earlier approaches to literary criticism that involved examining and understanding the text according to the author's biographical and the text's environmental influences and themes. Echenbsum et al. argued that literature should focus on the word's constituent parts, "its linguistic and structural features, and an analysis of the literary and artistic devices that the writer manipulates in creating a text" (Bressler, 2011, p. 49).

Formalism was embraced and further modified by John Crowe Ransom into the New Critical literary theoretical approach, which particularly suggests a methodology for analysing the formal elements of a text by close reading it (ibid.p.53). The New Criticism approach is suitable for this study because of the emphasis on the methodology of close reading of the structural elements of the text. The text is read closely as the critic examines literary elements found in the use of words and formal structure to make meaning. He /she searches for literary devises that aid meaning and "help the reader understand the dramatic situation" (Bressler, 2011 pg. 52).

Using a textual checklist of literary elements, I closely read *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) and sought correlations with cinematic prose style elements as the main force evident in the adaptation to film. I also deployed the structuralist film theory, a theory which developed from the formalist theory. It looks at the text in terms of language structural form. Structuralism was a movement that began in France and Russia as a systematic approach to studying linguistics.

The theory argued that language is a set of signs that signify certain meanings and are interpreted according to different linguistic systems. It focuses on looking at structures of the language systems to describe narrative content in linguistics. It was embraced in other disciplines such as semiotics which studies signs and their meanings. Semiotics, a

subgenre of structuralism, attempts to make meaning of narratives and how they are constructed.

Christian Metz (1974), a French film theorist, for instance, pioneered film semiotics, where he applied film theories of signification to the cinema. He argued that cinema is like language, and therefore the same semiotic signs and structures and their function as described in the oral and written language form do apply to cinema as well. Such codes are manifested in film elements such as mise en scene, characterisation, sound, plotting, etc., which appear in literary form. It is these manifestations that I studied in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980).

2.5 Conclusion

The literature review reveals that there is need for a specific approach to reading the African literary text within the framework of multimedia storytelling, which is in vogue today's audiences. Film as a medium and film making as a practice is popular with today's means of consuming stories. The intention is to guide the reading of the African text in light of adaptation suitability and trends. This has been done but on a limited scale compared to what is done in the framework of purely literary appreciation of African literature.

As Metz argued, cinema is like language, so the same features in literature can occur and function in film. The reading of these two key texts of African literature as a hypothetical film experience sets an important step in looking at African literature as source content for film and other multimedia.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the basic plan I used for the collection, processing, analysis, and presentation of data. I present the design strategy that I used to examine cinematic features in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi*, (1980). I also show the collected data, the sources from which data was collected, and the population sample of the study. The instruments that I used to collect data, how I controlled the variables to ensure collection of quality data, procedures of data collection, processing, and analysis, are also presented in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

I used descriptive and analytic research design. I approached it from the wider framework of literature and film but localised it on African literature and film, finally focusing specifically on the cinematic prose style features in the selected novels and how the said features were deployed in the film adaptation.

These features are described in a textual checklist, which I provide in the appendices at the end of this dissertation. The data I collected was non-numerical; therefore, I employed a qualitative approach, studying and analysing primary and secondary texts. Finally, I presented and discussed the findings with conclusions and recommendations.

3.3 Data collection

I used the qualitative approach in the collecting this data because the data I was interested in was non-numerical.

Primary and secondary texts for the research were studied against a textual checklist to identify cinematic prose style features drawn within established frameworks of studying literature of the formalist theoretical strand. I correlated the data with the prose stylistic features in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980).

3.4 Sources of Data

The two primary texts, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980), formed the source of the primary data. Secondary data came from relevant critical texts, literary and other scholarly journals obtained from libraries and the internet, accessed mainly at Uganda Christian University, Makerere University, and the University of Cape Town libraries.

3.5 Sample

The study sample consists of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) and the corresponding film adaptations *Things Fall Apart* (1987), directed by David Orere and *Tsotsi* (2006) directed by Garvin Hood. *Things Fall Apart* (1958) was selected based on the prominence of the author (Chinua Achebe) in African literature and because it has an adapted version that has received academic and professional reviews. Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) was chosen based on the prominence of Fugard as a published author, his interface with film production, and the fact that *Tsotsi* (1980) is his only novel, and its screen adaptation, *Tsotsi* (2006), have both received critical academic and professional reviews. The sample was also selected because of convenience, because studies on the two novels and their adaptations are conveniently visible (especially on the internet) which this researcher relied on, since the major resources available to me did not have much published and cinematic works within literature and film studies proper.

3.6 Data collection instruments

The data was collected using a textual checklist appended at the end of this report. This checklist was drawn and defined from literary and cinematic theory of the formalist strand and existing epistemological studies in the literature and film discourses.

3.7 Quality Control

For reliable and valid research, the researcher strictly studied the use of cinematic features using a checklist. The supervisors of the study double-checked the textual checklist for clarity, completeness and appropriateness.

3.8 Procedure for Data Collection

Two literary texts (*Things Fall Apart*(1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980)) and two adapted films were reviewed for data collection. The review started with the familiarisation reading, where the researcher read both texts for appreciation and understanding. Thereafter, the text was read several times using a close study methodology for coding against the checklist.

After the literary texts were read and analysed, the researcher then embarked on the adapted films. These underwent the same process; they were watched for familiarisation and thereafter watched several times against a checklist. The intention was to identify the African literature cinematic prose styles adapted in the film, where I was the sole data collector.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

The analysis hinged upon narrative features as advanced by the formalist literary and structural film theory. It was inductive, as it moved from known literature and film

formalist analytical frameworks to define and explain the use of the cinematic prose style features and how they are employed in the novel and deployed in the filmic texts. The data obtained was systematically organised and analysed as per the checklist of cinematic features contained at the end of this report. It was scrutinized for elements in the novels that constitute cinematic features and how the respective authors employed them for greater effect.

3.10 Ethical considerations

In the course of collecting data, such as films and their reviews for analysis, issues of copyright and fair use arose. For instance, I downloaded copies of the video *Tsotsi* (2006)and *Things Fall Apart* (1980) from YouTube. I considered how to obtain permission to access and use this material in the course of my analysis without contacting the authorized people. I also thought about the intricacies and bureaucratic process of obtaining this permission, which would delay the progress of my study. I consulted a legal advisor, who informed me that since my work is for an educational purpose, I can be covered by the fair use clause, which allows for limited use of copyrighted material without express permission from the owners within the intellectual property law.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present and analyse the data I collected on cinematic prose style in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) and their deployment in the respective

filmic renditions. Cinematic prose style features were defined, identified, outlined, and explained. These features are: use of concrete words, visual writing, movement and rhythm, mise en scene, shifting camera viewpoint, cinematic light impressions, metaphorical language, and symbolism which can be reappropriated in cinema's multilayered communication, cinematic characterisation, cinematic plotting, and cinematic sound.

4.2 Cinematic prose style techniques

In the novels *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980), and their film adaptations, *Things Fall Apart* (1987) and *Tsotsi* (2006), the following elements emerged.

4.2.1 Concrete words

Things Fall Apart (1958)

Cinematic writing involves the use of language and style that is identified with film conventions. In cinematic writing, the verbosity of prose common to novelistic descriptions is avoided (Miller, 1998 p.254). Despite this, Achebe specifically employs the use of concrete words that aid his descriptive capacity and bring forth an aptness that makes meaning vivid and his writing interesting. Words which create an atmosphere that affects our emotions are evident in this excerpt:

The drums beat and the flutes sang and the spectators held their breath. Amalinze was a wily craftsman, but Okonkwo was as slippery as a fish in water. Every nerve and every muscle stood out on their arms, on their backs and their thighs, and one almost heard them stretching to breaking point ((Achebe, 1958, p. 3).).

While Achebe in common novelistic style, tells his story in the past tense, cinema provides an illusion of immediacy, as if we are watching an event unfolding right in front of our eyes. Therefore, the prescribed cinematic scriptwriting convention is to

describe the action in the present tense to reflect this immediacy (Miller, 1998, p.13). However, Achebe is able to capture the cinematic illusion of immediacy by the use of active verbs. One such example is at the end of chapter twenty- four, the moment when Okonkwo, who had been sitting at the edge of the yard where a crowd had gathered, spots the approach of the court messengers, whom he immediately confronts: "He sprang to his feet as soon as he saw who it was. He confronted the head messenger, trembling with hate, unable to utter a word. The man was fearless and stood his ground, his four men lined up behind him" ((Achebe, 1958, p. 144)).

To enforce the atmospheric effect further, the action verbs help immerse the reader into the action straight away just like film spectating. We are directly involved in a tense moment of expectation, waiting to see what happens next, by the use of action verbs such as "sprang," "confronted," "trembling," "utter," "lined up," which seem to convey urgency and gravity of the action, even if it is narrated in the past tense. These action verbs are aided by Achebe's use of many conjunctions in a sentence a literary feature known as polysyndeton, as in this example:

Nwoye did not fully understand. But he was happy to leave his father. He would return later to his mother and his brothers and sisters and convert them to the new faith.

As Okonkwo sat in his hut that night, gazing into a log fire, he thought over the matter. A sudden fury rose within him and he felt a strong desire to take up his machete, go to the church and wipe out the entire vile and miscreant gang (Achebe, 1958, p. 108).

The repetitive use of "and" pulls focus on the individual concepts mentioned, just like a cinematic montage. One sees family, the new faith, anger, and murderous rage in a snapshot. It also gives a cinematic tempo to the moment.

On the other hand, noun words like the Whiteman, Messenger, Amalinze the Cat, the Village crier, Evil Forest, and the use of Ibo noun words help solidify the image and describe the subject in a concrete character perspective of time and place, which is

similar to the concreteness of cinema, such as this description of the horrifying spectacle of the sacred spirits of Umuofia:

And then the egwugwu appeared. The women and children sent up a great shout and took to their heels. It was instinctive.

...each of the nine egwugwu represented a village of the clan. Their leader was called Evil Forest. Smoke poured out of his head. (Achebe, 1958, p. 63)

Tsotsi (1980)

Descriptions are kept to a minimum in *Tsotsi* (1980), as in cinematic scriptwriting practice. This is achieved through the use of key word signs like the 'dead city', 'the drained pavements', 'the exposed street lamps', and 'the dark shop windows' that make verbal representation of the situation. These capture the location of the scenes, the action and time of the event. These apt descriptions help in confining the author to sparse descriptions, as in screenwriting, rather than the verbosity common to novelistic descriptions.

Fugard like Achebe, tells his story in past tense, as in novel writing, but he occasionally brings the illusion of immediacy to his narration, as in the experience of cinema. He is able to do this by the use of active verbs and the use of polysyndeton, which conveys a timeless immediacy. Here below is one such example describing the main actor violently kicking his mate:

Tsotsi spun around and in a few quick steps was beside Boston again. With a kick at Boston's elbow, he sent him sprawling. This time Boston cried, and a second, and a third, and a fourth time as Tsotsi went to work on him with his shoes, using the heel and the toe, using everything he had learnt about pain (Fugard, (1980) p.27).

In another incident where the gang had murdered a man on a moving train, the author describes the situation using action verbs such as pulled, surge, battled which help to infer a strong presence of immediate action:

When the train pulled into the station the crowd made a surge for the door, as happened every night, and the few on the station who wanted to go further up the line battled their way against this flood to get into the coaches... (p.12).

The action verbs help immerse the reader into the action straight away and the concrete words focus the image and pinpoint activity creating an illusion of cinematic immediacy.

4.2.2 Visual writing

Things Fall Apart (1958)

Film maker, Alfred Hitchcock, cited in (LaValley, p.25) cited that the great art of the motion picture is by means of imagery and montage to create an emotion in the audience. To achieve this effect, Achebe uses words that have visual appeal. He combines these words to make sentences that create sensory prose. They aim to show and provide an auditory experience while creating an emotional connection with the reader. Take, for instance, this introductory description of his main character Okonkwo: "He was tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look" (Achebe, 1958, p.3).

He also makes a contrast picture of Unoka, the father of Okonkwo, describing a contradiction that sets up the conflict of character values that are important to driving the narrative and projecting the theme: "He was tall but very thin and had a slight stoop. He wore a haggard and mournful look..." (p.4). So, the son is hyped as a manly person, full of activity. He "breathed heavily" and could be heard snoring from the outhouses of his kraal when he slept, while his father, Unoka, comes across as delicate, sensual, a loafer, and a cheat. This is offers strong cinematic character presence.

Achebe creates vivid atmosphere of the setting and action as well. In describing an incident portraying Umuofia's justice system at work, he writes:

In the morning the market place was full. There must have been about a thousand men there, all talking in low voices. At last Ogbuefi Ezeugo stood up in the midst of them and bellowed four times, 'Umuofia kwenu,' and on each occasion he faced a different direction and seemed to push the air with a clenched fist. And ten thousand men answered 'Yaa' each time. Then there was perfect silence (p.8).

Achebe visually constructs what in cinematic terms is referred to as 'mise en scene' (the visual arrangement, composition of objects in the frame of a camera shot), and the reader encounters a visual picture of his world in photographic compositional narrative. A graphic example is at the end of chapter one when Okoye pays a visit to Unoka to ask for the money that he had lent him. Unoka laughs at the man when he states his purpose and explains graphically how he is unable to pay at that moment:

'Look at that wall,' he said, pointing at the far wall of his hut, which was rubbed with red earth so that it shone. 'Look at those lines of chalk;' and Okoye saw groups of short perpendicular lines drawn in chalk. There were five groups, and the smallest group had ten lines. Unoka had a sense of the dramatic and so he allowed a pause, in which he took a pinch of snuff and sneezed noisily, and then he continued: 'Each group there represents a debt to someone, and each stroke is one hundred cowries...' (p.6).

In those sentences, he gives us a picture of Unoka's interior décor (and, for a lazy man, it was kept clean as described)- "...the far wall of his hut, which was rubbed with red earth so that it shone."- and the artistic decorations on the wall, which also served a functional purpose of showing Unoka's book of accounts. It is also a statement of the fact that the man is an artist. In the same scene, we see the action of the characters (Unoka points, pauses, takes a sniff of snuff, sneezes and talks, while Okoye looks. This description gives us a cinematic sense of setting and arrangement of the characters and the props, as in the cinematic 'mise en scene' and visual design.

For each and every action, Achebe is careful to establish the setting and the action, like in a master scene. Establishment refers to when the cinematic storyteller takes you to the location of the action. He sets the scene for Ojiugo's beating in the two sentences describing how he went to her hut to check on her after waiting in vain for his afternoon meal: "After waiting in vain for the dish he went to see what she was doing. There was nobody in the hut and the fireplace was cold. 'Where is Ojiugo?' he asked his second wife, who came out of her hut to draw water from a gigantic pot in the shade of a small tree in the middle of the compound"(p.21).

We see the deserted emptiness of Ojiugo's house and the exterior of Obi's compound, the props used by the family (gigantic pot, the small tree that offered coolness to the water). Okonkwo and his second wife are positioned to dialogue in this setting. Within the space, Achebe reveals that all the three wives' huts are close to each other, while Okonkwo's hut is placed in the centre. This provides the backdrop and stage where Okonkwo will beat his wife, showing who is in charge of the home.

Another visual backdrop is at the beginning of chapter six, where he describes a scene where a wrestling match was taking place. The scene includes the dancing wrestlers, the drum beaters, the ecstatic cheering crowd, and the young men who kept order, all arraigned in a circle. (33)

The individual activity described in the scene comes across as snapshots or montage of different performers busy on the occasion. The scene is being told through visuals rather than dialogue which is cinematic narrative style. This chapter provides an entertainment interlude that brings relief to the reader, as if spectating at the village yard. It is perceived objectively like a camera view, a scene set up. It also offers an interesting atmosphere that unfolds the sub- story of how the community relaxes from the intense work in the fields and the travails of the home. A close- up to two characters, Ekwefi and Chielo, the priestess of Agbala, in dialogue brings us closer:

I did not know it was you,' Ekwefi said to the woman who had stood shoulder to shoulder with her since the beginning of the matches.

‘I do not blame you,’ said the woman. ‘I have never seen such a large crowd of people. Is it true that Okonkwo nearly killed you with his gun?’ ‘It is true indeed, my dear friend...’ (p.34).

All these are presented as images of simple people inclined to social entertainment irrespective of their serious functions.

Tsotsi (1980)

Athol Fugard ‘s descriptions have visual appeal equivalent to the observational camera style:

In a house across the street a party was under way. Tsotsi stood still and tried to see it. ... this and the light and the smoke from cigarettes was pouring out of the windows, and these were thrown open to their widest as if for fear the walls could not contain it all (Fugard, (1980) p.29).

Here is the experience of a vivid atmosphere of the setting and action. In another incident, he presents snapshots, like a roving camera, of the slum where Tsotsi’s gang lived, describing scenes of “busy women with empty hands, dogs that stood around on awkward legs, and old men dozing in the sun” (p.6).

4.2.3 Mise en Scene

The other visual feature that is prevalent in Achebe’s writing is the descriptiveness that is suggestive of the cinematic mise’ en scene. This is a compositional element that places the filmed objects within the scene and frame space we watch on the cinema screen. Film directors like Alfred Hitchcock, have told their narratives by directing the audience’s gaze using this compositional element.

In *Things Fall Apart* (1958) one discerns an artistic composition similar to drawing a mise en scene as the author describes scenes in the unfolding events, such as this one, which is written as would a master scene:

In the morning the market -place was full. There must have been a thousand men there, all talking in low voices. At last Ogbuefi Ezeugo stood up in the midst of them and bellowed four times, Umuofia Kwenu, and on each occasion he faced a different direction and seemed to push the air with a clenched fist. And ten thousand men answered 'Yaa' each time. Then there was perfect silence (Achebe, 1958, p.8).

Apart from presenting descriptions that show where all the action is taking place (master scene) hence serving as the mandatory cinematic role of establishment, and those which show the relative position of the subjects and the mood, Achebe fills in the descriptions of detail, which in cinematic terms are known as cutaways or B-roll. He zooms in on the gestures, the surrounding details, minuscule but significant objects, and the reactions of the characters, as in this close up: "There must be something behind it," he said, "wiping the foam of wine from his moustache with the back of his left hand" (p.15).

In chapter five, he describes the beating of Okonkwo's second wife, leaving her and her only daughter weeping, but also captures the reaction of the other wives in the sentence: "Neither of the other wives dared to interfere beyond an occasional and tentative, 'it is enough, Okonkwo,' pleading from a reasonable distance" (p.27).

Achebe pulls a rack focus (focus to defocus cinematic photography) and a freeze frame cinematic effect such as in this composition, "In that brief moment, the world seemed to stand still, waiting. There was utter silence. The men of Umuofia were merged into the mute backcloth of trees and giant creepers, waiting" (p.144).

These details present cinematic precision in exposing the surrounding and the related action taking place in what would be defined as a cinematic mise en scene. They also

contain a description of a cinematic element that also guides cinematic perspective, known as shifting camera point of view.

Tsotsi (1980)

Fugard, like Achebe, constructs *mise en scene* equivalents as he plots his story. This is, perhaps, inevitable since Fugard is first and foremost a playwright. Playwrights, like screenwriters provide descriptions of settings, props and block the action. In the following paragraph he describes the interior of an eating house;

The room was furnished with long tables and flat wooden benches for seats. At one end was the counter. On it were two trays, the one holding the heavy, black slabs of pudding cake, the other piled high with slices of bread. ... The walls were a sombre, dark green and from the ceiling hung a few flypapers crusted over with the dry bodies of their victims. The only decorations in the room were a calendar advertising a lotion for straightening curly hair and a notice in grammatically bad Shangaan. It had been painted in black on a piece of cardboard by the same untutored hand of the menu. It read: 'this place knows no credit.' ((Fugard, (1980) p. 92).

And outdoors, he describes a part of the city which a hunted character was pondering as an escape route:

The small side street that would have brought him out near the eating house was an unanticipated and major problem. It was deserted and badly lit, its very shortness was its danger because even when people turned into it, they were out in a few seconds, and then it remained empty for a long time (p. 88).

These descriptions offer visual designs of the space where the action takes place, hence cinematically establishing the setting. For each and every action, we get a picture of the place within a cinematic frame. One of the places is Soekie's place, a drinking place, which he illustrates with bare walls and 'a piece of linoleum on the floor which counted for nothing because the floorboards were rotten' (p. 14).

4.2.4 Shifting Camera Viewpoints

Achebe writes at the beginning of chapter ten, describing a judicial clan session, beginning with a master scene, which he follows up with coverage or cut away shots: "It was clear from the way the crowd stood or sat that the ceremony was for men. There were many women but they looked on from the fringe like outsiders" (Achebe, 1958, p. 62).

This is a deep focus extreme long shot camera viewpoint. Here, he introduces the activity from a perspective of a wide-angle camera point of view. He then shifts viewpoint and moves closer when he describes the individual sets of the crowd: 'The titled men and women sat on their stools waiting to begin'(ibid). This perspective eliminates the larger crowd and brings into focus an isolated single group. The camera can decode this description as a Medium long shot or a Full shot that contains but a smaller group of people out of a larger group. From there he shifts focus to a row of stools in front of the titled men, on which nobody sat: 'there were nine of them'. There were three men in one group and three men and one woman in the other (p. ibid). This renders like a pan of the camera, a sideways movement that seems to study objects placed in a row. He then closes in on the individual: 'The woman was Mgbafo and the three men were her brothers' (ibid). He then shifts focus to the other party in a twoframe shot: "Uzowulu and his relative, on the other hand, were whispering together"(ibid). Achebe is manipulating our illusion of gaze by a roving description of the objects in the scene like a cinematic camera. These shifting viewpoints are applied to crowds, groups and individuals, such as in the sentence where he brings a seething Okonkwo into sharp focus during the aforementioned incident concerning his youngest wife, Ojiugo: "Okonkwo bit his lips as anger welled up within him" (p. 21).

This is a close-up camera perspective. Another close up occurs when the court messenger hits each head of imprisoned elders, back and forth: "Okonkwo was choked with hate" (p. 138). This would put the hateful face of Okonkwo alone in the

frame, a camera close-up on his face. Throughout the novel, Achebe builds his scenes by first describing the surrounding objects and then closes in on the object of particular interest, thus building visual sequences in the manner of cinematic storyboards.

Mimicking the camera's freedom of movement, we have shifts in expository description that serve to show us where we are and what is going on, like an establishing shot of camera. This shot serves as an exposition of the space where the event is taking place. There is a wide view of the place and the characters are revealed at the beginning of certain chapters where Achebe wants the reader to see the wider world and mass of people.

"Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond" (p. 3), is the beginning of chapter one and the set up. The mental visual impression captured here is that of a landscape of nine African villages. Chapter five, which talks about the feast of the yam, is also similarly introduced in a wider angle of view of Umuofia, one of the villages (p. 26). He describes what happens in Umuofia at this time in crowd focus. Crowds are captured in wide angle on a cinematic lens. Chapter six narrates events that happen around the village common ground with the village crowd, again another wide angle (p. 33).

Although Okonkwo's story is narrated by an omniscient narrator (which is an objective point of view), he narrates objectively the outer world and the subjective internal perspectives of his major characters, giving the illusion of seeing from the character's memory, as in the case of Okonkwo reflecting on what happened to his son Nwoye: "Okonkwo's eyes were opened and he saw the whole matter clearly.

Living fire begets cold, impotent ash" (p.109), and Obierika when he reflects on the justice of his ancestral values when he remembered how he had thrown away his wife's twin children: "What crime had they committed? The earth had decreed that they were an offence on the land and must be destroyed" (p. 87).

This magnifies the action and brings along intimacy and immediacy of the event to the reader, similar to a viewer's experience with a subjective camera angle positioning.

The reader enters the character's frame of mind and sees what the character is seeing. This confrontational scene between Okonkwo and the court messenger illustrates these varying perspectives: "He sprang to his feet as soon as he saw who it was. He confronted the head messenger, trembling with hate, unable to utter a word."

The action comes across from the character's viewpoint, Okonkwo's point of view (POV), then it shifts to the antagonistic party, which is a reaction/reverse shot point of view, first from the main antagonist: "The man was fearless and stood his ground..."(

p. 144). Then the description that follows in the phrase is that of a cinematic widening of a lens angle whose purpose is to contain the rest of the men in the shot: "his four men lined up behind him."

"All this action is against a backdrop of the assembled villagers of the Umuofia, but the author describes it like a cinematic rack focus, where the background is put out of focus: "The men of Umuofia were merged into the mute backcloth of trees and giant creepers, waiting" (p. 144).

Tsotsi (1980)

Fugard also presents visual shifts of camera. There are a variety of camera points of view, from the long distance (long shot) to closer viewpoints (medium close-ups, close-ups, and big close-ups). The viewer is made to see the action from the best points of view, since cinema enables us to only pay attention to one thing at a time.

Fugard, just like the cinematographer manipulates the reader's illusion of gaze with the use of appropriate visual descriptions. This is a shift between two characters, Tsotsi and Boston but at a very close range of view; close-ups and very big close-ups. Fugard's perspectives mostly occur in tight situations. The focus being on the relationship within the closely-knit group and the individuals within it: "Tsotsi opened his eyes wide and looked back at Boston. It was a red-eyed Boston. A wet-lipped, very serious Boston with his chin weighed down by his breath, so that you could see his pink gums between his teeth, and behind that, his pinker tongue" (Fugard, 1980, p. 19).

In fact, Fugard's writing is composed of numerous descriptions of close-ups. Here is another example of this closeness: "Marty had come so close to him that when she spoke, small drops of spit flew into his face" (p. 186). This is a description reminiscent of a very long shot of the horizon of the city of Johannesburg from Gumboot's point of view: "Then on a big day of the new world he was in, the brown, flat, unbroken world he had walked into, on a certain big day, topping a rise he saw the buildings of the Golden City in a purple distance. He even attempts to mimic the moving camera with a track like description of action. Here, like a moving camera, he tracks along with the action:"... tramping along the road with the unending veld stretching away unseen on every side, tramping through the clouds of dust left by the hurrying cars, always silent, very alone, but never without hope" (p. 9).

4.2.5 Cinematic light impressions

Things Fall Apart (1958)

Achebe, using words, paints a descriptive picture of a fictitious precolonial Africa, similar to the Hitchcock cinematic style; using light he describes a dark course in the village yards and forest, as in the case of when Chielo, the priestess of Agbala, abducted Okonkwo and Ekwefi's daughter, Ezinma, and carried her along dark village and forest paths on a frightful African night: "There were no stars in the sky because there was a rain-cloud. Fireflies went about with their tiny green lamps, which only made the darkness more profound" (Achebe, 1958, p. 73).

By the same manipulative descriptions of light, Achebe contrasts the bare but cosy inside of an African homestead at night, bringing special focus on Ekwefi and Ezinma's home. The world of a second wife: "Ezinma and her mother sat on a mat on the floor after their supper of yam foo-foo and bitter leaf soup. A palm oil lamp gave out yellowish light. Without it, it would have been impossible to eat" (p. 67). Achebe then steps outside and describes the entire homestead: "There was an oil lamp in all the

four huts on Okonkwo's compound, and each hut seen from the other looked like a soft eye of yellow half-light set in the solid massiveness of night" (p. 67).

Achebe sharply uses light to draw our attention to the detail and significance of the African world of his characters, as in the case of Okonkwo when he was telling gruesome stories about tribal wars to the young Nwoye and Ikemefuna: "He had stalked his victim, overpowered him and obtained his first human head as they sat in darkness or in the dim glow of logs waiting for the women to finish their cooking. And when the food was brought an oil lamp was lit" (p. 38).

Like cinema employs light to illuminate the state of development and modernisation, Achebe seems to use these descriptions of light texture to bring into sharp focus the irony of the African situation. From the light of a bare lamp, he illuminates all the possessions of a wealthy, very important man in precolonial Africa. Achebe on a different occasion lights up a happy scene at close-up view of Obierika's daughter dancing on her wedding night: "Her brass anklets rattled as she danced and her body gleamed with cam wood in the soft yellow light" (p. 18).

Throughout his book, Achebe brings light to illustrate not only the darkness of precolonial Africa and its contrasting sunny side but also the progress of the day. He uses the sun, as is typical in non-modern Africa, to show the progress of time. Millerson points out that light in visual story telling can be used to describe a time of day, a certain environment, or evoke a particular mood. (Millerson; 1991; p. 249).

This is shown in the incidence when Ikemefuna was being led away from Umuofia by the early morning killer party that had come to pick him up at Okonkwo's compound. He describes the progress of the party as it goes on what one of them called "a long way to go": "The sun rose to the centre of the sky, and the dry, sandy footway began to throw up the heat that lay buried in it (Achebe ,1958, p. 41).

As Millerson (1991) explains, that steep light is indicative of a midday sun, which is mostly associated with the tropics. This light can be powerfully oppressive, invigorating and exhausting. The moment of the killing of Ikemefuna took place in this "oppressive, invigorating and exhausting' time; perhaps Achebe chose this moment to

emphasize the gravity of the moment. The author like cinema's Hitchcock chose to use light to dwell on describing a natural fact of life, which, however, added another layer of symbolic meaning.

He describes the coming of the locust season vividly, using the image of the sun and its sudden eclipse by the swarm of locusts that shadows an afternoon in the after-harvest season, when Okonkwo and his two boys were busy working on the outer walls of his compound: "And then suddenly, a shadow fell on the world, and the sun seemed hidden behind a thick cloud. Okonkwo looked up from his work and wondered if it was going to rain at such an unlikely time of the year" (p. 39).

He devotes four paragraphs to describing a spectacle he defines as a "tremendous sight, full of power and beauty", that engulfs half the sky, and the solid mass broken by tiny eyes of light like shining star dust (p. 39). Achebe, here plays on the use of light and shadows to provide imagery to his narrative, just like cinema.

Tsotsi (1980)

Fugard uses lighting imagery to create the visual impressions of the story, just as in a stage play and cinema. In the following instance, the light description works like a surreal flash of montage images showing the confusion that was going on in Tsotsi's mind.

What is sympathy? If you had asked Tsotsi this, telling him that it was his new experience, he would have answered: like light, meaning that it revealed.

Pressed further, he might have thought of darkness and lighting a candle, and holding it up to find Morris Tshabalala within the halo of its radiance.

...But that wasn't all. The same light fell on the baby, and somehow on Boston too, and wasn't that the last face of Gumboot Dhlamini there, almost where the light ended and things weren't so clear anymore (Fugard, 1980, pp. 106-107).

Here, the author describes a changing state of light as would be applied cinematically to show action and the passing of time: 'The door to the Bantu Eating House was being bolted and locked. A second later the lights went out.' (p. 107)

The writer goes on to use light to sketch his character's movements like an observing camera: 'When he darkened the doorway, stepping out of the Saturday street and into the odorous world of Ramadoola, General Dealer, to stand quietly beside the bags of beans and mealie meal...' (p. 42)

Throughout the novel, Fugard consciously visualises his scenes, describing a place, action, and the characters truly set in Africa, with a keen emphasis on how light aids vision, as a cinema director employs light to direct the spectators' attention to the development of a story. Another example is this description of a silhouette: "Morris Tshabalala tried hard to see him, but because of the darkness there was only the shape of a man" (p. 114).

4.2.6 Movement and Rhythm

The visual descriptions of stationery objects imitate photography's description; however, cinema is a dynamic medium, and *Things Fall Apart* (1958) contains elements of movement and rhythm to fit the medium beyond the photographic snapshot descriptions. The cine- camera captures movement where we see dynamic settings and action.

Achebe captures movement in the performances of dance, wrestling, and character movements. In chapter six, Obierika's son threw down his opponent in the flash of a moment, and an agitated Okonkwo involuntarily sprang to his feet and quickly sat down again (p. 34).

Another movement is seen when "the egwugwu appeared and the women and children sent up a great shout and took to their heels...Even Mgbafo took to her heels and had to be restrained by her brothers" (p. 63). These snippets capture part of the dynamism in Achebe's prose, perhaps the most memorable being this description of

the movement of Okonkwo, the main character: “When he walked, his heels hardly touched the ground and he seemed to walk on springs, as if he was going to pounce on somebody” (p. 3).

In Chapter twenty-four, the author describes the tense scene of the confrontation between Okonkwo and the court messenger in static and dynamic terms. He talks of “the world standing still”, which is reflected by descriptions of “as a mute backcloth of men, trees and giant creepers”, (a static backdrop) in that brief moment when the two men first confront each other. The tumult that follows after Okonkwo slaughters the man is described in terms of the static backdrop coming to animated life: “The waiting backcloth jumped into tumultuous life” (p. 144).

The other movement structure is characterized by a kaleidoscope of rituals that indicate social cultural progression. We move from one ritual to another; the rituals of marriage, death, social justice and political organisation, which are interspersed throughout the entire story. In the course of these events, Achebe weaves in song and dance performances. These performances add a cinematic structural element to the story, for they bring along rhythm, which is associated with movement within the plot, from the simplest form of a scene to the sequences of the chapters and the entire novel.

There is a pace in each scene and chapter, not only seen in the arrangements of these motif elements but also in the sentence, paragraph, and chapter.

Action sequences are carried in shorter text (chapter 10 and 13) while it is more drawn out in sections of exposition (Chapter 19).

Then there is change and forward movement in the scenes and the chapters. The last paragraph of chapter one, which carries the set-up, ends by foreshadowing the story.

When Unoka died, he had taken no title at all and he was heavily in debt. Any wonder that his son Okonkwo was ashamed of him? Fortunately, among these people a man was judged according to his worth and not the worth of his father. Okonkwo was clearly cut out for great things...And that was how he came to

look after the doomed lad who was sacrificed to the village of Umuofia by their neighbours to avoid war and bloodshed. The ill-fated lad was called Ikemefuna (p. 6).

Achebe, in chapter one, has introduced the story and, at the end, shows that the story will move on to a 'juicier' experience that he tantalises us with. The other example lies in chapter fifteen when Okonkwo has been banished to his mother's clan village and is in a melancholic mood. His uncle gives him a ponderous talk about life:

Have you heard the song they sing when a woman dies?

“For whom is it well, for whom is it well?

There is no one for whom it is well.” I

have no more to say to you (p.95).

The writer moves the story forward from the arrival of the banished melancholic Okonkwo and his family and prepares us for the period of exile but also suggests the ominous times ahead. Like cinema, he makes sure there is not only completeness in his units but also a propelling forward of the plot.

Tsotsi (1980)

Fugard descriptions visualise both stationery and dynamic objects. Fugard unfolds this movement in his descriptions of character action and movement of objects, such as this one:

...ahead was the night and the four men passing that moment were harbingers of the night ,that moment gone now because they had passed and rooms were suddenly grey and cold and mothers calling their children off the streets where the shadows were running like rats after the four pipers (Fugard,1980).

He describes the kinetic nature of cigarette smoke billowing out of a party room: ‘and the smoke from cigarettes was pouring out of the windows,’ (p. 29) and shows us the small drops of spit flowing into Tsotsi's face. (p. 186).

Movement and rhythm are also brought out by his frequent use of polysyndeton, bringing on an effect of continuousness, such as described here:

And Tsotsi knew it, knowing it not only as a fact as big as the brave men who stepped aside to let him pass, and the shopkeeper who hurried out to board up his windows and bolt his door, or as small as fatherless children and the whispers of hate that scuttled away down the alleys... (p. 7).

Even when Fugard is describing sound, he embellishes it with motion, for example, in describing the whistle like engine sound of a train: “An engine whistle blew out like a white ribbon in the wind.” (p. 121). The simile brings on a sense of visual movement.

4.2.7 Metaphorical Language and Symbolism; which can be reappropriated in cinema’s multi layered communication.

Nobel literature laureate Ernest Hemingway is said to have learned early as a short story writer how to write leanly, and as Baker explains (cited in Gonzo, 2010), he learned how to “get the most from the least, how to prune language, how to multiply intensities, and how to tell nothing but the truth in a way that allowed for telling more than the truth.”

This is the work of figurative language, and it suggests Hemingway’s mastery of the use of figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, and personification, which can provide an added advantage to the depth of a narrative. In this, the author gives the sense of sight and allows the reader to hear. The story is directed through the reader’s multiple senses of hearing, smell, taste, feel etc., using figurative words such as similes and metaphors, which make the story livelier.

One common metaphorical feature of Achebe’s writing style is the prevalent use of proverbs throughout the story. In fact, *Things Fall Apart (1958)* is a narrative built on proverbs, or as the Ibo people of the story would put it, “proverbs are the palm wine with which words are eaten.” Proverbs add colour and evocativeness to literary expression. However, Classical Hollywood cinema finds proverbs difficult to render on the screen, basically because Cinema presents picture and auditory concreteness,

while the proverb communicates the philosophical. In spite of this organic dichotomy, the proverb has been reappropriated to cinematic reproduction, especially that which strives to reflect the African situation. Film Studies' scholar James Monaco explains that film can draw on all the other arts (such as painting, poetry, music, orature, etc.) for various effects simply because it can record them. Thus, all the connotative factors of spoken language can be accommodated on a film sound track (Monaco, 1981). That's how the highly connotative written/spoken language proverb has become a cinematic motif of African cinema used for important symbolism in the narratives.

To depict the real picture of Africa, African metaphorical language has now become identified with African cinema, particularly the Nollywood model. African film scholar, Lindiwe Dovey, explains that African cinema is in itself dialogic, noting that, "The African cinema is at once phenomenological and experiential as well as spiritual and philosophical..."(Dovey, 2009).

The dialogic character that Lindiwe points out has made proverbs part and parcel of the African film genre, which gives it a unique, crisp, and rich idiomatic character, hence turning this oral feature into an organic African cinematic motif .

Achebe is particularly adept at appropriating and deploying these spoken/written proverbs to lend visual crispness and cultural identity to his narrative. Through the proverbs, Achebe's themes are revealed, but at the same time, a visual illustration of precolonial Africa is rendered through a metaphorical symbolism. For example, in symbolizing the disintegration of traditional African society, Achebe uses a demonstrative metaphor during a conversation between Obierika and Okonkwo in Mbanta. Obierika, who had visited his friend in exile, was telling him about how the white man had affected their community of Umuofia, and in a single proverb, illustrated how Umuofia was no longer the unified, fiercely independent cultural community he knew, but one which had submitted to the authority of the invading white man: "He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart" (Achebe, 1958, p. 125).

Monaco says that because film is a product of culture, it has resonances that go beyond what the semiologists call its diegesis. (Monaco, 1981), so metaphor can be deployed to render symbolic significance.

The eating of Kola nut and drinking of palm wine when people gather for a visit, and the rhetorical salutations in the village yard, are highly symbolic of Ibo culture in *Things Fall Apart* (1958). Achebe uses these as metaphors to communicate the oneness, identity, and culture of the people without indulging in long-winded description. This is, for example, seen on the occasion when a suitor came to bargain for Obierika's daughter's hand in marriage: "They sat together, bargained and conversed, ate and drank as cited here, As the men ate and drank palm wine, they talked about the customs of their neighbours" (p. 51).

At the same time, however, he uses these physical cultural events, costumes, and props to recreate scenes of what could constitute a cinematic diegesis of the African situation, which a masterful director would render with cinematic conventions such as camera shots that imply these symbols to bring forth the unity and continuity that gives the unique African narrative in a film emanating from the book.

Similar symbolic metaphors are repeated throughout the novel to increase the significance and symbolic power of the events, costumes and props. This power is what cinema captures from the novel to convey the cinematic connotative meaning that Monaco attributes to the resonance capacity of film as a product of culture and composes what Lindiwe terms the dialogic nature of African Cinema.

Darkness, for instance, is employed as a symbolic metaphor in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) beyond the mere fact of nature. It can be deployed cinematically to symbolize different aspects of life in Achebe's fictitious world. At one point, on the night when the town crier calls an assembly in the morning upon Mbaino's transgressions of Umuofia, the narrator reveals the significance of darkness for the pre-colonial African setting that constitutes the world of Achebe's narrative: "Darkness held a vague terror for these people, even the bravest among them" (p. 7).

In fact, Western Cinema has used darkness to hype adventurous and horror cinematic symbolism. Renowned Hollywood film director Alfred Hitchcock is particularly credited with manipulating lighting as a cinematic storytelling technique, which Driscoll examines here in his article on Hitchcock:

Using darkness in visual mediums allows the artist to use many techniques to manipulate the audience's viewing perspective. Often darkness will be used to set a mood. Where sunlight "epitomizes light and openness," darkness is "concealing, and has overtones of mystery or treachery" (

The darkness in low-key lighting creates similar tones, conveying a "heavy, tragic quality," or again tones of mystery and the sinister . Dark backgrounds can give a "closed-in effect" . Darkness allows the creator to "prevent the audience from seeing the surroundings clearly," to "hide information" from the audience, "to intrigue," "to mystify," "to enhance" certain objects or characters, or to "threaten

[or] create surroundings in which danger may lurk" (Driscoll, 2014)

Night and day are facts of life separating time. This separation, which is determined by light, is highly symbolic and is often used metaphorically in storytelling. Day, is when the people would till their land, prepare home activities and interact socially. Daylight implies activity. Night, brings along rest from the day's work and sleep. Nightfall brings along diverse things too. An uncanny experience, albeit spiced with passion, is the incident of Ekwefi's elopement to Okonkwo: "She went and knocked at the door and he came out. Even in those days he was not a man of many words . He just carried her into his bed and in the darkness began to feel around her waist for the loose end of her cloth" (Achebe, 1958, p.76).

On the other hand, most of the macabre events in *Things Fall Apart* (1958), such as Chielo, the priestess of Agbala 's abduction of Ezinma, Ekwefi and Okonkwo's favourite child, occurred at night. The announcements of emergencies, such as a looming war with Mbaino , the death, of Ezeudu, and Okonkwo's flight into exile, take place in the dark night. This darkness is symbolic of the mysterious profundity of the

African precolonial experience, both physical and psychic: "The night was very quiet. It was always quiet except on moonlight nights. Darkness held a vague terror for these people...children were warned not to whistle at night for fear of evil spirits. Dangerous animals became even more sinister and uncanny in the dark" (Achebe, 1958, p.7).

4.2.8 Cinematic characterisation

Things Fall Apart (1958)'s central character, Okonkwo, fits the Hollywood cinematic star model. Madsen says that in cinema, characters must appear cinematically as flesh and blood human beings who are interesting to watch as they act and react to the turmoil and conflict in the story. ((Madsen, 1990).

Right from the start Okonkwo is projected as spectacular. Achebe in an introductory description of his main character provides a snapshot of his eccentric protagonist Okonkwo:

He was tall and huge, and his busy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look (p.3).

He reinforces this picture by juxtaposing Okonkwo with his nemesis, Unoka:

He was tall but very thin and had a slight stoop. He wore a haggard and mournful look... (p.4).

His actions are hyperbolic. He 'breathed heavily' and snored heavily. His 'heels hardly touched the ground' as if he was going to pounce onto somebody. He was quick to beat someone if angry; and he actually beat people more than once, as well as committing unpremeditated murder three times in the book. He had no patience with unsuccessful people (he calls one man who happens to contradict him a woman, because he had taken no titles) and, in particular, he had a haunting detest for his father.

Okonkwo defines and moves the story; his motivations are outwardly clear, albeit with intrinsic conflicts. His actions are outwardly visible and help to support the cause-

and effect cinematic plot. This is reiterated in the resolution with the District Commissioner's musing observations:

The story of this man who had killed a messenger and hanged himself would make interesting reading. One could almost write a whole chapter on him. (p.147-148).

This is a dominant central character that fits the Star model of Hollywood of cinema but is at the same time built on African character traits .

***Tsotsi* (1980)**

Tsotsi (1980) is a novel driven by a central character, as is common with classical Hollywood cinematic stories. The story is told in a cause-and-effect plot structure, giving us insight into the character through his motivations. The themes are revealed through his actions. The reader can follow the character clearly from the beginning up to the very end, while his central actions unfold in front of us. Fugard creates people that we can see with our eyes, set in Africa, with African character traits.

In the first chapter, right on page one, the central character is revealed as cold, calculating and fearsome. He is memorable because he is intriguing. He is the youngest of the four gangsters, but his authority over the others is clear. Fugard does not reveal him in violent physical hype, as typical of a gangster, but in silent observable behaviour cues. He barely talked but listened to the other three till they talked themselves out of words:

...the one they called Tsotsi, leant forward and brought his slim, delicate hands together, the fingers interlocking in the manner of prayer. The other three looked up at him and waited (Fugard, 1980, p.1).

Tsotsi means thug in South African township lingo, and that is the name he gave to this feared youngster with the slim delicate hands. Fugard profiles all the other members of the gang and we only await to see them in action. It is like an audition

profile for thug parts in a cinematic script. Tsotsi, Boston, Die Aap and Butcher are engraved on the senses of the reader as they would on those of the spectators of cinema: Tsotsi, mean with words, crime is his name and game. Boston, a garrulous character but in whom Tsotsi detected fear; Die Aap a big guy with a slow brain, and Butcher who has " little supple bones, small dangerous eyes and a pendulous lower lip".

Fugard reveals his characters indirectly in this description of Tsotsi's inner thoughts as he observed them:

Tsotsi saw it all. The smile that hid fear, the eyes that hid hate, the face that hid nothing. You I can trust, he said to himself. Looking at Die Aap. You I must never turn my back on, and it was butcher he looked at. And you Boston, you smile at me and your smile hides fear (p.4).

Cinema also works to exteriorise characterisations of an implicit nature. We read meaning in suggestions and connotations provided by the implicit descriptions, such as thoughts and subtexts of the descriptions. From the aforementioned descriptions, we are left in no doubt as to the meanness of this outfit, who is the boss, and who is capable of doing what on a mission. When subsequently the crew is observed going to work and in action, the descriptions given before help to foreground their brutal way of life, just like the exposition scene setting of cinema. All Fugard's characters in Tsotsi are revealed in this way.

4.2.9 Cinematic Plotting;

Things Fall Apart (1958) is, at a first chronological reading, seemingly told in a linear dramatic structure. But it is, in fact, a loose frame narrative, obliquely told as a flashback by the white district commissioner. Achebe seamlessly structures a plot that withholds critical plot details until the inevitable moment as is typical of cinematic plotting of the classical cause and effect model, as McMahan et al say: "Many, many films follow the traditional dramatic structure: exposition, complication, climax, falling action, and denouement" (McMahan et al; 1988)

The first thirteen chapters contain exposition and progression to a high point of conflict, which may be mistaken for the climax. Here, we are introduced to Umuofia before the coming of the Whiteman. Its central character, Okonkwo, is seen as a man who embodies the values of this community and loyally followed the culture, in spite of his tragic flaw. Ironically, the values of this community are unforgiving, and he is condemned into exile by the very system he espouses because of an unpremeditated circumstantial fatal accident. This is a cinematic cause and effect plot, as the author builds complication after complication, even at a point when one thinks he has reached the climax at the time when Okonkwo's gun goes off and kills a clansman: this could be taken as cinema's obligatory scene.

The obligatory scene is the dramatic event the viewers are led to believe will be the climax. If viewers are not presented with an obligatory scene in addition to the climax, they may leave the film dissatisfied (Madsen, p. 19).

This shows the flair of the author, who unifies his action and theme tightly, but weaves in the complexity that withholds something all the time, yet still propels the plot forward. The next five chapters serve as a subplot set in a different geographical setting of the story, as if to bring about a comparative picture of life away from Umuofia, in one of the other nine villages of the story's setting. It is also a contrast picture of the female side of humanity.

Mbanta the land of Okonkwo's mother represents the feminine side of Okonkwo. The events that occur here prepare the reader for a final confrontation when Okonkwo, his central character, would return to his fatherland, which, unknown to him, had inexorably changed. The last five chapters serve the climax and resolution when Okonkwo, who expected to reverse the change that had taken place upon his return to Umuofia brought about by the coming of the Whiteman, is instead sacrificed by the change when he kills a court messenger who represents the new order.

Okonkwo had hoped to rekindle the warlike spirit of old Umuofia, but is instead abandoned to his fate. He commits suicide and is ironically buried like a dog, just like his father. Audiences want to see both the cause and effect of every action such as

the killing of Ikemefuna and the accidental shooting of the deceased Ezeudu's son, which brings on the suspense. Similarly, the final climax of the novel occurs in equal suspense when Okonkwo kills a court messenger.

The resolution itself comes with a much slower pace but intriguingly too, as seen in the exchange between Obierika and the District commissioner. The District commissioner is inquisitive and probes to know more about the dead man, while Obierika, in spite of his grief and anger, is subdued and submissive. He finally cannot control himself anymore and erupts into accusation. The court messenger unnecessarily censures him, while the white man has assumed another role; he has switched to the submissive role of the anthropologist learner. Even in the very last scene, Achebe does not spoon-feed the resolution to the reader. He endows it with suspenseful tension and conflict, a common feature of cinematic plotting. It is this exchange and the district commissioner's internal thoughts that neatly tie up the story, following the traditional dramatic structure that appropriate to cinematic practice.

Things Fall Apart (1958) is both a plot and character driven story. The Character motivations clearly explain their actions. What makes character driven stories cinematic is what Glebas describes thus:

Movies show people in action. We watch people to see what people do- what they do under pressure-extreme pressure -and why they do it. So characterdriven stories are about characters taking action to get what they want" (Glebas Francis , 2009, p. 22).

Okonkwo a man who was haunted by his family heritage, a weak, unsuccessful father, and a struggling beginning, strives to emancipate himself in the value system of his community, Umuofia. A strong adherent to the meritocratic, male centred, valiant values and traditional belief system, he sees himself as its embodiment and champion of its values. The Whiteman is an invader who comes with a new religion that represents contrasting values and aspires to colonise Okonkwo's community in the guise of civilization and Christian values. This sets the stage for a confrontation.

Okonkwo, as the key protagonist, is set against the Rev. James Smith, the missionary, and the District commissioner, on the other hand. At a subplot level, Okonkwo is pitted against his son, Nwoye. This is a character confrontation between a chauvinistic, intolerant, violent, and murderous, brass, traditional father versus an effeminate and reflective son. It is the actions of these major characters that drive the story, rendering it cinematic.

Many exchanges/scenes come across as cross cutting /parallel cutting /montage. An example is the confrontation in chapter twenty-four (pp. 144, 145), between Okonkwo and the white man's agents, in this cinematic reading:

a sight of the court messengers a few paces from the crowd, (a cut) to Okonkwo sitting at the edge of the crowd who springs to his feet as soon as he saw them and the confrontation;(a reverse cut) that shows the man as fearlessly standing his ground, the brief dialogue exchange (that works as interactive intercuts) between Okonkwo and his adversary, the draw of the machete, the crouch of the messenger to avoid the blow, the swift blows from Okonkwo's machete and then (cut)to the head that lay beside the uniformed body, the static backdrop coming to life as the villagers broke into tumultuous panic, and then (cut to) Okonkwo coolly wiping his machete and walking away.

Literature and film scholar, Ugochukwu (2014), in his essay *Things Fall Apart- Achebe's Legacy from Book to Screen*, conducts an incisive close examination of the novel and film, contrasting the two and commenting on the advantages and disadvantages of the use of different choices of plot development by the film maker. He observes, "While Achebe moved his readers from place to place e.g., from Okonkwo's town, in part I, to Mbanta, the film adopts a quicker step, constantly transporting viewers from one town to the other and back again. This faster pace helps audiences to consider local events from a wider perspective." He points out chronological shifts in the film, unlike in the novel, especially with the flashbacks and omission of some chapters. The director chooses, for instance, to render the experiences of Okonkwo's history and character in the elders' conversations at a meeting instead. The director's choices could be influenced by practical factors that come up in the course of filming, such as

economics of production, crew and logistics management, etc., over a faithful fidelity to the novel's plot.

Tsotsi (1980)

Tsotsi (1980) is a psychological story of redemption for a hardened gangster. Fresh from a murder and a robbery on a train, the eponymous character Tsotsi is angered by one of his gang who challenges his horrendous killing schedules that drive the gang's activities and its way of life. He turns his violence onto Boston, who dares to ask him whether he has any soul in him. (Fugard, 1980, p. 26). A lonely Tsotsi, in the aftermath, is henceforth set on a psychological journey of self-discovery, whereupon he begins retrieving repressed memories of a brutal childhood on the streets after his mother's imprisonment. He cobbles his history back into place and compares his situation to that of the helpless baby who was thrust into his arms by a woman who abandons the child. He then acquires an almost psychotic obsessive possessiveness toward the baby, wanting to protect him by all means. He dies when a collapsing wall from ruins, which were being razed, falls onto him while he is trying to rescue the baby, whom he had kept in the bowls of the collapsing wall.

.In spite of the book carrying the narrative detail that goes with novel writing and the complicated shifts of interior perspectives of the character's journey that are introspective, it is nevertheless propelled by a cinematic cross-cutting plot development. We shift from Tsotsi and his gang to his chosen victims- Gumboot Dhlamini, Morris Tshabalala, Boston, etc.; film lends itself extremely well to such alternating presentations, a flowing montage of events and characters in motion embedded with cinematic plot features such as a hyped plot activity achieved by a cinematic dramatization of the cause and effect plot structure. A man is killed on the train gruesomely in the first chapter.

The incident is described in a shifting chronology exposition that sets the killers and their prey. Afterwards, one of the killer gang members, Boston, is brutally assailed by the gang leader Tsotsi. This is the narrative's inciting moment. This is caused by Boston's guilt about the murder and subsequent pry into the ethos of Tsotsi, a man who can order such gruesome killings without any compunction. These serve like the

cinematic story beats, major plot twists and turns which build conflict that hypes our interest like the experience of cinema.

Another major story beat occurs when a child is abandoned in Tsotsi's hands. This follows Tsotsi's search for isolation from the gang after being extricated from his victim. This story beat is also an emotional beat for Fugard's main actor. The baby leads him to question his life and finally discover redemption in a heartless world. The other major story beat occurs when Tsotsi, a heartless and mindless animal of prey encounters Morris Tshabalala, a cripple who has been physically and soulfully mauled by the unfeeling social system. There is an expectation of a repelling explosion when these two extreme bi-products of the social system meet. But Tsotsi is emotionally struck by the cripple's situation and is rendered inactive, where he himself wonders how he fails to kill the guy. This is another height of Tsotsi's emotional beat and a reversal where he starts to rethink his motivations.

Even if the character's struggle is internal, it manifests itself externally as the author describes his engagement with other characters, such as Boston, the woman who abandoned the baby, the cripple, his childhood street partners, and so forth.

This exterior unfolding of action allows for a dramatic performance of the story, which goes with cinema's ability to dramatise actions and movements. The events of the novel occur in a temporal period of four days. Cinema compresses time to fit its temporal medium, often forty-five minutes to three hours. This compression is perceived in the novel through the employment of these story beats, which are suggestive and connotative of dynamic activity. Here, Fugard employs the use of dynamic verbs, such as those found in the scenes of the murder on the train, the altercation between Tsotsi and Boston in a bar, and the pursuit of Morris Tshabalala on the streets, which describe the physical activity.

Other such cinematic plot techniques include scene pace, as seen in short length of the scenes and dialogue, and the moments of intense action, which are broken with quiet moments. Fugard's chapters are not long, averaging ten pages, but are pithy.

One of the key requirements of cinematic storytelling is that it must grab and hold the audience's attention, just like any fiction. This is what provides the thrill of moving action and its intrigues. This thrill is triggered by suspense and surprise. In suspense, our attention is ignited and maintained as we watch out for what could happen next, as in the case of Tsotsi's pursuit of Morris Tshabalala, the cripple, while surprise keeps the story unpredictable and not boring, as in the case of when Tsotsi finally corners Morris, and we wait for the kill. Surprisingly he does not kill him.

The case of when Tsotsi accosts a woman in a remote dinghy space, and we hold our breath, expecting the inevitable rape and murder. We are surprised when suddenly a baby's cry lets out of a shoebox she was carrying in her hands. Even Tsotsi, the hardened thug, is surprised while we hold our breath about this new piece of disturbing information. Then, the woman abandons the shoebox in his hands, which contains the baby and the surprising events that follow are completely unpredictable from what we had come to know of Tsotsi. Fugard builds his story around these suspense and surprise touchstones, which in the end, justify the redemption theme he is conveying in the narrative. Fugard employs irony to build up suspense, but a suspense that, to a small scale, involves the reader's realism.

4.3.0 Cinematic sound

Authors imbue a literary text with descriptions of sound elements: the dialogue of the actors, the music often performed in some parts of the action, and the sound of the environment. Miller points out, " As you visualise a scene, listen to the sound. What special sounds might the scene contain? How can the sound complement or counter point other scenic elements?" (Miller, 1998)

Things Fall Apart (1958)

Things Fall Apart (1958) is a story full of sound. Achebe describes the action in omniscient narration. In cinematic terms, this narration would be realised by what is

technically known as voice over sound, sound running over pictures while explaining what we see. This voice over is the sound of the narrator added later to the events captured on camera. But the world he talks about is represented fully with diegetic sound, which is sound captured from the original setting being filmed. In his case, Achebe uses non-words to represent sounds made by instruments, objects and animals, the eerie voices of spirits and unnatural activity. He also uses dialect speech in song and refrain to create an authentic African sound atmosphere. In other words, Achebe imbues cinematic image space with ambient sound to realise verisimilitude.

In chapter one, Achebe talks of “drum beats and flutes singing as the spectators held their breath” (Achebe,1958, p. 3) when describing the wrestling contest between Amalinze the Cat and Okonkwo which gives it a multi-layered sound structure and a filmic presence. The story, therefore, begins on an animated note that serves well as an audio-visual hook.

The entire Chapter thirteen, which comes with the inciting incident in the plot, unfolds like a crescendo of the earlier sounds. Go-di-di-go-go-di-go. It was the ekwe talking to the clan. One of the things every man learned was the language of the hollowed-out instrument: Diim! Diim! Diim! boomed the cannon at intervals (p. 84).

Cinema uses the sounds of music for both narrative and dramatic function. The moment when Okonkwo’s gun goes off and kills a clansman; pandemonium is further described in a cacophony of sounds.

The drums and the dancing began again and reached fever heat. ...guns fired the last salute, and the cannon rent the sky. And then, from the centre of the delirious fury, came a cry of agony and shouts of horror (p. 86).

Achebe does not only make us hear the sound in his descriptive language, but also determines how it is heard. The reader imagines the sounds as heard from a long distance, and then he describes the sound as it closes in on the distances, typical of the way cinema represents reality. He even describes the mute moments with auditory effectiveness:

It was always quiet except on moonlight nights. ...and so on this particular night as the crier's voice was gradually swallowed up in the distance, silence returned to the world, a vibrant silence made more intense by the universal trill of a million forest insects (p. 7).

Again, this absence of sound is felt at the height of an action moment when the bellicose Okonkwo confronts the hated court messengers:

In that brief moment the world seemed to stand still, waiting. There was utter silence. The men of Umuofia were merged into the mute backcloth of trees and giant creepers, waiting (p. 144).

Miller explains that dialogue for the screen should be done in "the most economical way possible, do more implying than explaining and work in sub textual meaning." (Miller, 1998). Achebe's dialogue is crafted simply and economically, delivered sparsely but with loaded meaning as seen in the conversations that take place between his characters, like in the climatic incident between Okonkwo and the Court messenger:

The spell was broken by the head messenger. 'let me pass!' he ordered

'What do you want here?'

"The white man whose power you know too well has ordered this meeting to stop.' (Achebe, 1958, p. 144)

Even after Okonkwo had killed the man, and the 'waiting backcloth of the men of Umuofia jumped into tumultuous life', Achebe keeps the spoken lines to one significantly uttered phrase: "He heard voices asking: 'Why did he do it?' (p. 145)

Tsotsi (1980)

Fugard describes snippets of sound at a party that fit a cinematic description of diegetic sound at this event:

The noise of it, the music and laughter, and droning undertones of talk, big talk, small talk, love talk, or just the babble of a drunk," (Fugard, 1980, p.29).

The diegetic sound descriptions bring forth atmosphere, which adds another layer of dramatic characteristic to the scene. This builds the reader's imagination, akin to a cinematic experience. Another such example is presented here:

"His wife disappeared into the back room, where he heard her call all the children together. Then there was a series of door slams and business with keys as she retreated into the deepest room of the house" (p. 45).

Dialogue is another key component of cinematic sound intended to represent real- life conversation audibly. Fugard's novel displays clipped dialogue, which, nevertheless, is loaded with meaning and aims at imitating ordinary conversation, typical of cinematic dialogue:

Their meeting was wordless. They didn't need them. Into a few silent seconds they crowded the intimacy of a lifetime, so that when Tsotsi did speak it was as if they had known each other forever.

"What do you feel?"

"Nothing. "His voice was hoarse, the words rushing like wind through a leafless tree, dead from drought.

"Nothing."

"It's over. Feeling is over."

"What did you feel?"

"A fear of death "

"No more "

“No more” Morris Tshabalala leant back against the ramp. (p. 110)

Most of the dialogue attributed to Fugard’s characters in *Tsotsi* is sparse throughout the novel. But he allows Boston, Tsotsi’s nemesis, to speak a little more as a form of characterisation in contrast to the reticent Tsosti:

He looked at Boston and Boston looked at him, and Tsosti felt a palpable movement in his stomach and lightness in his heart.

‘What is it to you Boston?’

And Boston who was drunk and deaf to the new sound in Tsosti’s voice pressed on regardless. I am older than you Tsotsi. Ja man. Older by a few good years.’

‘So what’s that to me?’

‘To you?’

‘Yes. You know what I wanted to be when I was your age, Tsosti?’

I don’t know. I don’t want to know about you.’

A teacher. I studied. I titcha-boy Tsosti. I wore a tie. Ja man, with dots and stripes, like that big one tonight. It’s because of my decency’ (p.21).

Cinematic dialogue takes a clipped form, imitating real-life conversation while giving pace to the action.

Lindiwe Dovey (2014) describes the plot and symbolism of Fugard’s writing style, then comments that his writing style is much better suited to theatre and film than to prose fiction. She cites (Spaanderman, 1982 and Hogg, 1978) critics who point out the author’s use of dramatic technique in the novel, such as scene setting and exposition. She observes: “Fugard’s prose narrative is dramatic in that it offers, or strains towards offering, the tale without the teller”. She also points out the influence of Fugard’s roles as theatre and film actor, theatre director, and screenwriter on his

novelistic art. But she spends little time on this, preferring to concentrate on the effectiveness of the author's delivery of the message of violence and redemption.

Turning to the film, she observes that while it maintains the morality in the novel, it is rescued by the aural and visual power of the medium and narrative style. She notes that the film is dialogic (which she attributes to African film style) in its attempts to engage realities:

The emphasis is not on portraying violence in all its gruesome realities as Hollywood does, but in contextualizing scenes of violence within an accurately audio-visualized social environment (ibid, p. 152).

On the practical adaptation of the book, *Tsotsi* (2006)'s film director, Garvin Hood, explains his experience of adapting the novel:

The one thing that Fugard's novel is really beautiful at is the inner journey of Tsotsi. So much of a novelist voice is what the character is thinking, but in film you have only two things at your disposal -what your characters do and what they say. Tsotsi doesn't say very much so you have to focus on what he does... The trick in writing a screenplay is how to write the visual beats, literally from wide shots to close ups-up to generate the inner journey without ever saying a word (Archibald, 2006, p. 45).

Hood reveals here the attractiveness of the author's prose style but mentions that the aspect of translating interior action in the key character's head exteriorly, as the film medium requires, poses a challenge in adapting the novel to the screen and explains how he rendered the message cinematically. This explanation is in line with the objectives of this study. But, whereas Fugard writes primarily in an omniscient voice, one experiences these shifts in point of view in the camera like descriptions that provide the setting, characters and action.

4.3.1 Conclusion

The language and style of a prose literature are important in studying its filmic rendition. Cinematic prose style features such as the ones identified and interpreted in the authorial style of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1985) and Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980), could be influential in attracting a film director to the novel. Their texts reflected features such as: use of concrete words, visual writing, and use of cinematic camera like perspectives and lighting; plotting, sound and characterisation based on cinematic form.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The findings in Chapter Four demonstrated that the language and structure of cinema can be perceived within the prose style of a literary text; confirming the correlation between literature and film. Works of African literature can be read within a cinematic framework, just like their Western counterparts. Using the New criticism theoretical framework's close reading methodology, Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) were scrutinised for cinematic prose style in the narratives. These findings are suggestive of the potential of the source text's narrative power and its potential for cinematic adaptation.

From the analysis of data presented in Chapter Four, the main cinematic aspects that stand out in Achebe and Fugard's work are: the use of concrete words, visual writing, mise en scene, shifting camera viewpoint, cinematic light impressions, movement and rhythm, cinematic characterisation, cinematic plotting, metaphorical language and symbolism which can be reappropriated in cinema's multi layered communication; diegetic and non-diegetic sound. This is consistent with the ideas of Metz as illustrated by Cohen (1979. p 4), that the " story can be the same if the narrative units (characters, events, motivation, consequences, context, viewpoint, imagery, and so on) are produced equally in two works.

In the discussion of findings, while comparing the cinematic prose style techniques identified in the novel with the deployment viewed in the filmic rendition, I find that the film maker either faithfully employs these elements, partially makes use of them, tampers with them, or outrightly ignores them. This raises questions as to whether African literature is given its due value in the adaptation process or downgraded by its filmic rendition.

The findings are grouped in the following three categories:

5.2 Cinematic Visualisation

This category includes concrete words, visual writing, mise en scene, shifting camera viewpoint, cinematic light impressions, metaphorical language and symbolism, which can be reappropriated in cinema's multi layered communication. Achebe and Fugard employ these elements in their narratives, which in turn provide a powerful sense of reality of the imaginary world and characters they have created. Imagery powers the source text. *Tsotsi* (2006)'s film maker Garvin Hood confirms this powerful influence by acknowledging that Fugard uses minimum dialogue, images and interaction between characters so well. This is what he strived to achieve in his filmic rendition despite the challenge of exteriorising the interior thoughts of the main character into what is seen on the screen. He talks about how he used the cinematic techniques to achieve this:

“The trick in writing a screenplay is how to write the visual beats, literally from wide shots to close ups-to generate the inner journey without ever saying a word” (Archibald, 2006, p.45).

The filmmaker also makes use of light, as suggested in the novel, seen in the contrast and the atmosphere created in the various scenes (like the lighting of the scenes of the streets when Morris the cripple crosses the road) as *Tsotsi* stalks him. This shows a faithfulness to the visual writing of Fugard.

Things Fall Apart (1987) is guided by Achebe's visual descriptions, despite film director's Orere's liberties, that had plot shifts, omission of scenes, etc. Wachuku and Ihetunge comment about these:

The film is done in a combination of the theatrical and realistic modes of filming. The director's choice of these two modes has two advantages. First it enables him to stay as faithful as possible to the novel. it also enables him to represent many aspects of traditional Igbo culture, including the architecture, agricultural methods, daily life style, various ceremonies, festivals, and the music and dances that accompany them. However, the disadvantages of this

choice are detrimental to the film. For instance, there is a tendency towards too much detail. (Wachuku, Ihetunge, 2011 p.129).

These choices are the prerogative of the adapting author, who is sometimes influenced by "background, education, prejudices, artistic taste..." and in Orere's case, based on a desire to highlight or showcase Igbo traditional culture. (*ibid* pp.128-129).

This researcher is of the view that the director's choices seem to turn the story into an anthropological and touristic spectacle. Achebe's story carried more than a social cultural display; it was a suspenseful story of a fascinating character's struggle, one set in an exotic world told in pithy imagery. This gives it the pace and thrill of fiction cinema, unlike the documentary-like exposition of the film.

This researcher's view is that the expansion on the verbal visualisation provided by the novel rendered the film theatrical and mere coverage, and therefore slower and less cinematic. If the film maker had been faithful to the visual cues provided in the novel, the film would have been more riveting. For example, the *mise en scene* created by the author (such as the interior *décor* of Unoka's house when Okoye came to ask for his debt) was lost in the director's choice of an outside shot of the hut without the contrast and closer perspective of the wall paintings given in the novel. Also, the cinematic lighting spectacle described in the swarm of locusts darkening and eclipsing the sun was ignored altogether, which robbed the film of a cinematic spectacle (one that plays with light for symbolic purposes and the conveying of atmosphere). The cinematic lighting descriptions carried in the event of the killing of Ikemefuna are also not deployed. All these raise questions as to how the novel's prose style influenced the film adaptation, whose key features, in the opinion of this researcher, are not well utilised in *Things Fall Apart* (Orere, 1987), the adaptation.

In Achebe and Fugard's fictions, the authors draw verbal pictures of the world of their story, propelled by the settings, scenes, and characters in action. They both describe light in a cinematic sense, where it is shown not just to light the objects and the set but to create mood and atmosphere that activates our emotions and interest. Fugard

is particularly adept at using light to direct attention to the movement of the action, just like a cinematographer.

5.3 Cinematic plotting

Hood makes a significant change to the novel's plot. In the novel, the central character Tsotsi, after viciously beating up his thug friend Boston, runs off to a grove to be alone and perhaps to reflect on the meaning of his brutal action, where he is interrupted by a woman with a baby in a shoe box. He confronts her, and before he takes any action on her, he is distracted by a child's cry from the shoebox. She seizes advantage of the distraction and abandons the shoebox and the baby in his hands and makes her escape. In the film, after beating up Boston, he steals a car at gunpoint from a woman whom he shoots and injures before driving off. He discovers that the woman had a baby in the car when he pulls to a lonely stop, looks back at the back seat and notices it. What follows is a parallel storytelling about what happens in Tsotsi's world and that of his parents.

In the end, Tsotsi returns the baby, and after handing over the baby to the parents, he is commanded by the police to give himself up. The film ends at that hanging point, while the novel's Tsotsi is killed, trying to save the baby from a house undergoing demolition. These are significant plot shifts (again brought about by the prerogative of the author/ film maker who is influenced by other factors beyond the source text, in Hood's case, a quest for social relevancy to issues in post-apartheid South Africa was an influencing factor).

However, most of the novel's plotlines are maintained (such as the complicated flashbacks, which Hood finds challenging to render on to film, which form the interior journey of memory that compel Tsotsi to recall his forgotten childhood). In spite of the plot shifts, Hood's Tsotsi (2006) is clearly influenced by the prose style of the novel.

Lindiwe Dovey (2014) undertakes a close analysis of the key scenes concentrating on the divergences in plot strategies and symbolisms between the novel and the film aimed to deliver the message. She argues that these strategies are instead employed

to side step delivery of the other important prevalent violence in *Tsotsi's* film. Director Garvin Hood is faithful to the novel, which implies that the author's style greatly influenced his own narrative. This is noted by Leslie Felperin in the review of the film:

It's evocative, economical storytelling: the first scene tells us with just a few lines of dialogue over a game of dice everything we need to know about Tsotsi and his gang (Felperin, 2005).

This researcher had the same observation about this exact scene in the book (albeit without the game of dice, which was added in the film scene).

The one thing that Fugard's novel is really beautiful at is the inner journey of Tsotsi. So much of a novelist voice is what the character is thinking, but in film you have only two things at your disposal -what your characters do and what they say. Tsotsi doesn't say very much so you have to focus on what he does... The trick in writing a screenplay is how to write the visual beats, literally from wide shots to close ups-up to generate the inner journey without ever saying a word (Archibald, 2006, p.45).

Hood reveals here the attractiveness of the author's prose style but mentions that the aspect of translating interior action in the key character's head exteriorly, as the film medium requires, poses a challenge in adapting the novel to the screen and explains how he rendered the message cinematically. This explanation is in line with the objectives of this study. But whereas Fugard writes primarily in an omniscient voice, one experiences these shifts in point of view in the camera-like descriptions that provide the setting, characters, and action.

In *Things Fall Apart* (1987), film maker Orere exerts his poetic license a bit more. He cuts, compresses, and expands on the plot. He retains Achebe's central character in name and key struggle; he is the driving factor of the film, just like the novel. Cinematic story telling is driven by dramatic and memorable characters who particularise the story, carrying the audience along with them as they embark on their

action-packed adventure and, at the end of the story, leave them with a sense of having experienced an exceptional life. The protagonist is memorable because the cinematic features affords him the qualities that are easy to visualise and formulate a mental cinema.

Okonkwo's physical build and temperament are animated through the cinematically visual and sound descriptions.

Like the novel is structured by sentences, paragraphs, and chapters to make coherent meaning of a story, so is the cinematic text tied together by frames, shots and sequences. The researcher established that *Things fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) are compressed plots that can lend easily to the temporal cinematic time medium. Although the stories occur over a chronological span beyond the normal three hours given to feature film, they unfold seamlessly in the novel and the passing of time is cinematically rendered by shifting chronology. *Things fall Apart* (1958) takes place over a period of time in a man's life while *Tsotsi* (1980) is the experience of four days. Wachuku and Ihentuge (2011, p.129) and Ugochukwu (2014, pp.173-176) acknowledge the novel's influence on the film, pointing out its faithful adherence to Achebe's text, even word for word in some scenes.

The film, however, takes creative liberties on the novel's plot. Ugochukwu (2014, p.174) points out that chapters three, five and six of *Things Fall Apart* (1958) are removed; so we don't see the flashback to Okonkwo's youth, the new yam festival, the arrival of the locusts and other passages. The last paragraph which has the District Commissioner's thoughts, is also eliminated. However, he notes the film's "respect for Achebe's text" and he counts the pages that have been built into the film from the novel as 34 "...ensuring that it is securely grounded in its source text." (*ibid* .p175).

I am of the opinion that those creative liberties cut out vital parts of the plot. The film maker also expanded on the dialogue, trying to provide background to the actions in which Achebe was silent, hence expanding the cause and effect. This downgraded the novel's pithy nature and slowed the plot down in the film. The cinematic pithiness

is lost in the rumbling debates on the merit of Okonkwo as an eligible member of the *ndichie* (the elders' council).

5.4 Cinematic Sound

Sound is richly encapsulated in the two stories. The authors describe what is taking place and provide an auditory atmosphere and verbalisation of the characters activities and places where the events take place in the two texts studied. Sound provides the rhythm to the story while at the same time unfolding the story through the dialogue and narrator's voice. It is also used to support dramatic structure. This is done by transitions formed by sound devices. Fugard employs concrete sounds to link the chapters, and this works effectively for cinematic sequence transition. In one chapter, he opens with a dialogue; in another, he opens with a whistle sound. Another chapter uses a hum sound, while one employs the clang of a bell. Sound often introduces action in a scene and sequences in cinematic narratives and provides atmosphere that helps to establish the setting. This provides the cinematic transitional movement and continuity of the storytelling in spite of the shifting chronology. Hood makes use of these sound cues from the novel to represent the atmosphere of his scenes. He also makes use of the key lines that appear in the original plot of the novel.

Things Fall Apart (1958) is equally endowed with sound atmosphere. There is sound of the communication system and process of Umuofia (the town crier and his talking drum), the sound of the speeches of the immortal (the Egwugwu and their guttural voices), the sound at the political spaces (the sweet voices of the persuasive spokesmen against Okonkwo's abrasive tone), the music played out at the social gatherings, even the environment, such as the forests, are filled with sound, which sound, which is also designated to different times of the day.

Dialogue is a key component of his sound. Achebe's characters are confined in the omniscient narrator's voice but are also left to express themselves in action and their own words. This is however done at a limited scale. This constriction is akin to cinematic dialogue, which is thin on speech and broad on action. However, the film maker gives the key characters more talking (reflected in the lines) which renders the

film talky, just like theatre. Ugochukwu says that while the film keeps to the spirit of the novel, it adds details that facilitates the viewer's understanding of events. He points out a part where Okonkwo asks his friend Obierika, "is it a crime to stand up for this land? Is it a crime to protect my people? ...The Whiteman's ways are not our ways." and before his suicide, Okonkwo calls his ancestors: "let my cause remain alive! Let Umuofia remain alive! Let my people be allowed to live their own way!" This researcher is of the view that while this choice of rendering the novel serves the purpose for which Ugochukwu says, it also makes it less cinematic. Miller explains that this kind of dialogue known as on the nose dialogue is overdone:

On the nose is a derisive phrase that refers to dialogue that is too blunt, direct, and explicit. While this may seem like a good way to get a point across, it can restrict audience participation in identifying what is going on behind the words... your dialogue will be stronger if you consciously try to avoid writing on the nose dialogue (Miller, 1998 p. 178).

This researcher is of the view that the film maker would have employed visualisation to illustrate his point (the talking picture, mise en scene), and the cues had been given already in the cinematic prose techniques contained in the novel itself. McCarthy (1985), for example, acknowledges that *Things Fall Apart (1958)* was a very good novel powered rhythmically by its simple mode of narration and equally simple prose style. He attributes this to African oral tradition, which Achebe attempted to reshape in English.

5.5 Limitations

I was limited by a paucity of relevant literature in the African literature and film discourses on the subject of film adaptation of African literature to film. Resources available to me, such as library books, videos, internet, and digital sources, were limited: specifically, literature about films adapted from African literature, including films adapted from African literature and reviews about them. I was able to obtain and watch a clear video copy of *Tsotsi (2006)* (courtesy of Mrs. Peggy Noll), but was unable to get a good technical quality (the copy had blurs at certain parts) film of

filmmaker Orere's *Things Fall Apart* (1987). Nevertheless, I watched low video grade downloads of the film from the internet, which, however, affected an accurate assessment of the film's visual and sound elements.

I was further constrained by inadequate taught knowledge of film theory, irrespective of my advantages in practical film production skills, a limited film theory on the practice of film making attained from short production courses (specifically limited to documentary film and general film production), and a long-time experience in video production. This confined me to reading the books from a practical perspective, just like one would a film production script guide. This has the effect of excluding factors like the social and cultural factors at play in African fiction and film adaptation. These factors affected the scope of the study, the energy devoted to it, and consequently the timely completion of the study.

5.6 Conclusions

The study was able to identify and analyse cinematic features in the two texts: *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Tsotsi* (1980) which were categorised under visualisation, plotting, characterisation and sound. Achebe and Fugard's use of cinematic techniques, as analysed in this study, provide the cinematic director with artistic direction. They open up the possibilities without curbing/limiting the film director's creativity. Painting pictures and making sound with words is the first step for a director to go into the dream world of turning words into moving pictures with actual sound. The novels have prominent main characters who can be construed as "stars"; major characters common to cinematic model. The literary texts, therefore, offer the cinematic director who strives to adapt the literary text to the screen the opportunity to be faithful to the spirit of the text.

In relation to the film, the film makers did take their due creative license, but with varying results as analysed in the findings. The study found that a cinematic prose style reading of the source text is useful in the process of adapting the novel to film. It could offer formal cues to the film production choices themselves other than the

ideas of the story and themes ,which are the most common adaptation influencing factors.

5.7 Recommendations for further study

The study identified patterns that could constitute a framework in which African literature could be read, interpreted, adapted, and enjoyed; cinema as a medium tells the story through sound and visuals. If a text is read as audio and visual cues that trigger a mental cinematic experience, then the processing of literary content for multimedia would be accelerated and standardised. This would increase the quality and volume of content available for an emerging film industry, with the use of a ready-made sieving formula to assess the work of validated writers and writings, for suitability for cinematic transposition.

This standardised framework with a checklist can serve as a production guide for the adaptation of the African text into film, just like a shooting script would function. A film maker would not have to take time creating original criteria in order to decide how to transpose a text into film or whether a particular African novel can make a good film.

The film maker would decode sounds and images from the words and sentences in the text and know how images would be composed; shots framed and motion expressed, scenes lit, colour tones and texture added, dialogic sounds picked up, and non-dialogic sounds added to tell the cinematic African story using this checklist during the exercise of reading the book.

This framework, by which rich African literary heritage in the form of poetry, drama, oral literature, and fiction would be adapted to film, encapsulates the rendering of the African story's atmosphere. Film makers often do surveys to familiarise themselves with a story's world. They note the atmosphere, which is relayed by the sound and visual signals of the scenery. Since authors create this world in their fiction,

it is important to identify pointers to how it is concretised from a checklist of these cinematic pointers.

If African literary texts are transposed to the film medium, it would widen the distribution of the texts by targeting audiences that are attracted more to motion pictures than reading. The content would also be usable digitally across social media platforms that are popular with young audiences today.

It is my recommendation that this framework be applied to all reading of African literary genres such as poetry, drama, oral literature and fiction in formal school literary study and informal readings of the texts. I further recommend a practical cinematic adaptation of an African literary text based on a cinematic prose style analysis of the source text as a test of the hypothetical ideas.

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The researcher employed a textual checklist to examine the following features of cinematic writing:

1. The novels were explored for use of Concrete words. Concrete words are a feature of visual language that aims to show than to tell. *Things Fall Apart* and *Tsosti* make use of concrete words for description.

2. Cinematic style that makes use of visual writing which triggers mental images in the descriptions of events, places and characterisation. These were activated by language that resonated with the following impressions:
 - a) Motion and rhythm: Cinema creates an illusion of motion as seen in the action seen in the shot frame and a combination of the frame shots knitted together to tell the story just like a cinematic storyboard. A sense of rhythm is also implied as the motion takes place. The two texts were studied for these impressions and how they are described.
 - b) Mise en Scene is the arrangement of objects in the scene for filming just like a painter/photographer would arrange objects for visual description. The texts were close read for such an impression.
 - c) Shifting Camera Viewpoint: this is the change of camera angles to give varying image perspectives. This is reflected in the descriptions of settings and action set ups in the two novels. The two texts were closely studied for this cinematic effect.
 - d) Cinematic light impressions: this is light reminiscent of cinema , light that imitates and conveys the mood of the moment and atmosphere. There are incidents where one gets this impression in the writing of both authors.
 - e) Metaphorical Language and Symbolism: these are word images common to African story telling technique. Achebe and Fugard make use of this visual storytelling technique in their prose style.
3. Cinematic characterization: cinema makes use of central characters to drive the story. This is especially true of the Hollywood cinematic style that elevates the central character to a star status. *Tsosti* and *Things Fall Apart's* central characters Okonkwo and Tsosti rise to star status in driving the text's narratives.
4. Cinematic Plotting; where the narrative arc is set up, rises and climbs to a climax then falling action and resolution mainly following a cause-and-effect narrative course. The two texts were examined for this pattern.
5. Cinematic sound: sound that recreates reality. Sound that describes the scene and its atmosphere in an African setting. The two texts were examined for descriptions that evoked this auditory sense.

APPENDIX II Recommended framework

African texts can be read closely for cinematic style searching for impressions of audio and visual cinematic design. This would call for an examination of the narrative structure looking at how it corresponds to the cinematic cause and effect storyline following setup, beat/crisis point, rising action and corresponding beats/crises, climax, falling action and resolution narrative arc.

A narrative style that foreshadows a main African character in action as happens in genre cinema where the star is pitted against ever emerging obstacles, temporarily overcoming or sidestepping them until a critical point of taking action.

The text could also be examined for visual writing where descriptions suggestive of the cinematic mise en scene (arrangement of objects in the scene) reminiscent of Africa; composition, framing of the shots (mise en shot), metaphors and symbols that evoke a visual African sense are present in the narrative style.

The descriptions of lighting impressions that trigger mood and describe African atmosphere such as seen cinematic lighting; and a narrative style that gives impressions of a filmed world as seen from shifting camera points of view of the African world just like cinematic storytelling.

As cinematic conveys motion and rhythm in the story, the framework could include descriptions where a sense of motion and rhythm suggestive of cinematic audio is present in the words, phrases and sentences.

Finally, the use of words and phrases that evoke a sense of sound of the African atmosphere in the narrative.