

Literature and Film: A Close Reading of Femi Osofisan's *Ma'ami* and Tunde Kelani's *Ma'ami*

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Abstract

Ideology and aesthetic of texts have been among the parameters adopted in the evaluation of artistic relevance of cultural products such as literature and film. More concerns, however, have been raised by literary and film critics about the convergence and divergence of the plot and themes of literary and film texts, most especially in the process of filmic adaptation. With the adoption of dynamic equivalence and intertextuality, the present study critiques the content, plot and the aesthetics of Femi Osofisan's *Ma'ami* and Tunde Kelani's *Ma'ami*. The novella was read and the film was seen to identify the points of convergence and divergence in their representation of plot and themes. Literature and film cannot enjoy absolute representation of plot and themes in the process of adaptation owing to some technological and sociological factors which contribute to the aesthetic and pedagogical evaluation of the texts. The current revolution in the cinematic mode of telling stories, filmmakers have been taking critical steps towards filmic adaptation of classical and contemporary literary texts across the genres of drama and novel.

Key words: Dynamic equivalence, film adaptation, Mainframe film and television, Tunde Kelani's films

Introduction

Much has been done on Nollywood studies and Nigerian film industry but with little attention to the cinematography of Mainframe Films and Television Production except in the recent time that scholars of neo-Nollywood studies have been writing on the unique aesthetics of Tunde Kelani's feature films and adapted stories from existing literary texts. Prior to this scholarly exercise, the few available researches and studies on films from the stables of Mainframe production engage the selected films from the perspectives of political, cultural and sociological ideologies. Murtada Ahmad's (2008, p. 176-182) research on *Koseegbe* interrogates the movie from a sociological perspective. Azeez Akinwumi Sesan's (2016, p. 45-60) research on *Saworoide* and *Koseegbe* examines how characterisation has contributed to the thematic construction of the two film texts from the stables of Mainframe Films and Television Production. There are also some critical studies on film adaptation. Oluwafadekemi Adagbada's (2008, pp. 183-197) research on transmutations of text from page to screen critiques some popular texts such as *Efunsetan Aniwura*, *Owo Eje*, *Bashorun Gaa* and *Ladepo Omo Adanwo* with no specific reference to the movies produced by Mainframe Films and Television production. Abiodun Olayiwola's (2016, p. 204-218) research on filmic adaptation of Mainframe's *Thunderbolt* and *Koseegbe* addresses some basic issues and tenets of filmic adaptation in literary and performance studies. The two film texts examined by Olayiwola is not representational of the adapted film texts by Mainframe Films and Television Production. This paper and the entire study engage adaptation aesthetics of Mainframe video film texts in

critical discourses from the perspectives of dynamic equivalence and intertextuality. This is done with the consideration of the plot, characterisation, language and the overall film gestalt. This observation, therefore, prompts the present study on the aesthetics and textual ideologies in the adaptation of Mainframe's *Ma'ami* from the novella of the same title by Femi Osofisan.

Mainframe Films and Television Productions, which was founded in 1991 by Tunde Kelani, has contributed greatly to film development and Nollywood discourses in Nigeria. Since its establishment, the film outfit has offered a new direction to Nigerian literature and film production through series of transmutations from script to screen and vice-versa, as the case may be. The catalogue of movies produced by Mainframe Films and Television Productions reveals the astuteness, creativity and resourcefulness of the director of the company. The first film of the company, *Ti Oluwa Ni Ile* (1-3) recorded outstanding success and this marked the beginning of the revolution in the burgeoning film industry of Nigeria.

At the turn of the twenty century Mainframe expands the scope of its film production with the adaptation of literary texts starting with Akinwumi Isola's *Koseegbe* (1981), a play which reflects and refracts corruption in the contemporary Nigerian society. The film adaptation of the novel became immediate success because of the fresh insights through which the director and cinematographer, Tunde Kelani, introduced to the interpretation of the novel. The immediate success recorded by the film adaptation of the drama text motivated Tunde Kelani and other Film makers from Yoruba extraction to embark on the film adaptation of literary texts. This development in the Nigerian film industry is as a result of the fact that "films no doubt permit a larger readership and pictures make it fascinating, even to the non-lettered and non-speakers of the language used in the film" (Oluwafadekemi Adagbada, 2008:184).

Since the fame of film adaptation of Akinwumi Isola's *Koseegbe*, Mainframe has embarked on film adaptation of some other literary texts such as Akinwumi Isola's *O le Ku*, Bayo Adebowale's *The Virgin*, Femi Osofisan's *Maami*, Yinka Egbokhare's *Dazzling Mirage* and in the recent time, Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel*. In the course of adapting a literary text to film, Mainframe introduces creative ingenuity. An evidence of this is seen in the adjustment of some of the titles and plot of the given texts. For instance, Bayo Adebowale's *The Virgin* becomes *Narrow Path* in its filmic mode while Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* becomes *Sidi Ilujinle* in its filmic mode.

In filmic adaptation of literary texts in any of the genres requires modification and alteration. These qualities are evident in the adapted films by Mainframe Films and Television Production. The modification and alteration are part of the creative ingenuity of the filmmaker with no negative impact on the thematic orientation of the source texts. In the light of this view, J. O. Asein (1994, p. 48) describes adaptation as:

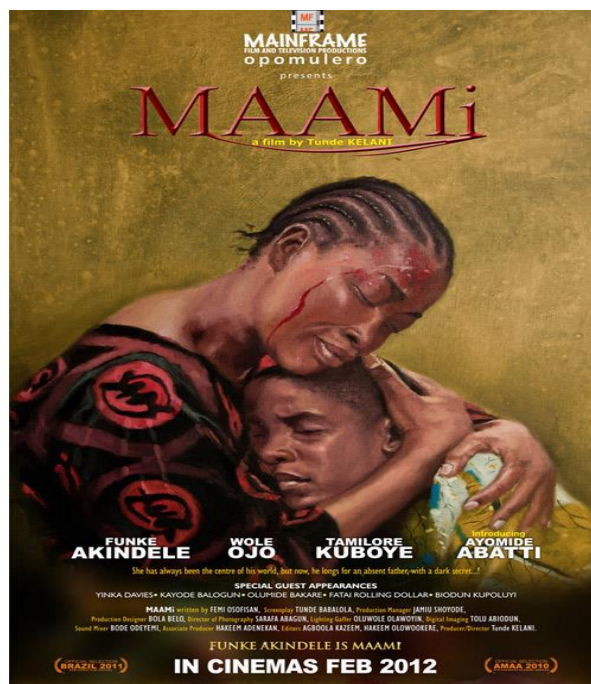
.... the modification of a pre-existing work from one genre to another and consists in altering works within the same genre to make them suitable for different conditions and exploitation, and may also involve altering the composition of a work.

Asein's description of adaptation points to critical ideals of adaptation – inter-genre adaptation as found from novel to film and intra-genre adaptation as found in drama to film. This study considers adaptation from drama to film as intra-genre because every film text comprises of

drama components and technical components. Mainframe Films and Television Production has engaged in both inter-genre and intra-genre adaptation.

Synopsis of the Film

The film, *Ma'ami* centers on the psychological and economic troubles of a single mother who separates with her husband. The film shows the bond between mother and son to the extent that one finds it difficult to separate from another. The mother, fondly called Ma'ami by her son, Kashimawo tries a lot of things and trades to ensure that she cares for her only son. Despite her suffering and poverty, she refuses to use her body for material benefits from men. Unfortunately, Ma'ami dies in an accident. The death of Ma'ami does not put a stop to Kaashimawo's attainment of fame and stardom. He returns to Nigeria to play for the national team. The film comes to a conclusion with Kashimawo's nightmare that he loses a fantastic goal that could have ensured a win for the national team.



(The cover image of the film adaptation of *Ma'ami*)

Reading *Ma'ami's* Texts with Dynamic Equivalence

Although dynamic equivalence is a theory of translation, this study adopts it to do a comparative reading of *Ma'ami*, the novella and its film adaptation. This theory is adopted because of the fact that translation is one of the basic expectations of film adaptation of literary texts. A film adaptation deploys some of the translation principles while literary texts are being adapted into film. The modes, therefore, become imperative while considering dynamic equivalence in the criticism of film adaptation of literary texts. Modes, in the context of this

study, refer to the story and its narrative to be consistent with the artistic and aesthetic values of the chosen genre (s).

Since literary texts and their film adaptations have unique narratives that underline their modes in terms of plot, characterisation and subject matter, dynamic equivalence underlines the fact that the two texts cannot have exact sameness because of the differences in modes and textual ideologies. These differences in textual ideologies are premised on the fact that one text (the source text) predates the adapted text. In the context of this text, Femi Osofisan's *Ma'ami* (the source text) predates Mainframe's *Ma'ami* (the adapted text). Based on some sociological and artistic variables, the expectation is that the adapted text cannot have the exact reflections of the source text because of modal differences and narrative approaches.

The idea of narrative approaches is adopted here because of the facts that the two modes tell stories based on the expectations and quality of the audience. The adoption of dynamic equivalence in the criticism of the two texts starts with the opening "scene" of the Femi Osofisan's novella. It begins as follows:

IT is cooler in our old house and half dark, and I sit inside and wait patiently. The walls and shelves that are so familiar seem bare now. And then I see the battered old tin, high up on one self. I take it down and in a moment the memories come flooding back. I am a small boy again, bursting with exciting news ...
(*Ma'ami* 124)

It is interesting to note that the novelist adopts autobiographical narrative pattern. This autobiographical narrative pattern does not really suggest that the author is the protagonist of the story. The use of autobiographical narrative pattern is the attempt of the novelist to bring the aura of immediacy and defamiliarisation of the fictional feature of the text into the overall narrative. The argument here is premised on Mineke Schipper's (2010, p. 347) description of autobiographical narrative technique. He posits:

There are different types of narrators. The narrator is a device, a construction which is there to serve the specific needs of narration in a particular text. The first person narrative can be presented in such different forms as a letter, an epistolary novel, a real or fictional diary, an autobiography and many mixed or in-between forms. The narrator is an agent of the text which can be identical with the real author (as in the autobiography, for instance) or fictional.

In the context of Schipper's argument, the narrator in the literary text of *Ma'ami* is an agent of the text who is not the author. Thus, it is a fictional characters presenting the story with sense of immediacy through the author's creativity. The immediacy of the narrative is completed with the use of present tense. In prose narratives, the expected tense is past. In the case of this novella, the narrator makes use of present tense to sustain the immediacy of the narration. Besides, it argued that the whole narration adopts the cinematic language of present tense. This situation, perhaps, may inform the choice of the novella for a film adaptation. As an agent of the text, the narrator deploys sequence and detail description to present visually his childhood

experiences with his mother. These childhood experiences, however, are advanced in the film adaptation of the novella. The use of present tense in the novella gives the text a cinematic quality because film language is always present. This view is consistent with William Jinks' (1971, p. 17) that:

Technically speaking, all film time is present time; that is past, present, future or fantasy are all taking place now. The spectator, however, like the reader, accepts the film maker's method of representing time and, as Coleridge observed, 'willingly suspends disbelief'.

The audience of the film text willingly suspends their disbelief about the social, economic and developmental transformation of adult Kashimawo in the film. This is because camera, as a super narrator, does not give detailed description or narration of events and actions in a film text. It offers the audience the opportunity to fill in the gap of the narration. The dialogue of adult Kashimawo reveals that he is placed in motherless babies' home after the death of his mother. His whole transformation and journey to stardom, perhaps, begin from the motherless home. Similarly, the suspension of disbelief by the audience as well as the temporal and spatial difference between the novella and the film text is consistent with the view of Sesan (2017) that each of the literary and film texts demonstrate unique attributes in their respective plot and narrative strategies.

The film adaptation of *Ma'ami* opens with the arrival of adult Kashimawo to play for the national team of Nigeria. This is a sharp contrast with the opening of the novella. In the light of this observation, the narrator is more an agent. Rather, the camera has assumed the role of a narrator. This situation is acceptable because dynamic equivalence does not emphasize exact sameness of the plot and subject matter of literary texts and their film adaptation. The variations observed in the novella and its film adaptation may be connected to the ideological and temporal differences between the novella and its film adaptation. The novella, perhaps, is primarily aimed to entertain the audience considering how the story begins and ends while the film adaptation of the novella has a more artistic values of didacticism. The overall reading of the film adaptation of text will reveal the ideology of womanism and motherism as upheld in African context. In fact, how the plot of the film text is presented to the audience, it is characterized by some polemics at private and public levels of interpretation.

Since camera eye of the film narrative is quite different from the point of view of the narrative in terms of engagement, there is a need for the dynamic variations in how the story is narrated in the film adaptation of literature. This view is consistent with William Jink's (1971, p. 32) that "in the film, point of view must always be synonymous with camera eye, for the viewer has no choice except to witness what the camera perceives". Camera eye, therefore, influences the perceptive and receptive approaches to the story of the novella and its film adaptation. The filmmaker is quick to understand the dynamism of the camera as a narrator and deploys all its possibilities to reshape the orientation of the story from the beginning. The manipulation of the camera to creatively repackaging the story of the novella is consistent with the idea of language and the habit of thought. This is presented because each of the genres of literature and film present the narrator's thought through the appropriate language which is

consistent with the genre. In the simple analysis of the novella and the film, the two modes of narration have been able to offer and sustain immediacy in their narration. These narrative approaches liberate the novella and its film adaptation from the monotony and tyranny of interpretation. The audience are able to creatively and critically engage the two texts with different interpretive apparatuses which may be informed by the immediate and remote ideological cum sociological variables. For this reason, the reading of the film adaptation of the novella does not present the novella as a closed text.

As an open text, the text of the film adaptation has undergone what is known as textual mutation (a change in form and narrative dynamics). A change in narrative dynamics which has occurred in the film adaptation of *Ma'ami* is connected to the number of professionals that are involved in its making. Since film adaptation of literature undergoes different processes because of their difference in mode of literary expression, film makers deploy film idioms and aesthetics in the creative use of camera for the narrative. In the line of this argument, Azeez Akinwumi Sesan (2016, p. 45) posits:

The basis of this argument is that characterisation in a film requires different interpretive powers of the filmmakers – the scriptwriter, the artistic director, production designer, director of photography and individual actors in the film. The interpretation of the characters is usually informed by the ideology envisioned by those (as mentioned earlier) involved in the characterisation of actors. It is within the ideology envisioned by the filmmakers that the theme (s) of the texts are made and communicated to the audience through the artistry and expertise of the characters in relation to the overall film gestalt.

The difference in narrative approaches of the film adaptation and its literary source informs difference in the aesthetic values that the audience have for the two texts. There are different ideologies of the texts because of the difference in subject matter and plot of the novella and its film adaptation.

The very instance of dynamic equivalence found in the film is at the opening of the film text. The simple narrative of young Kashimawo revealing the poverty of his mother in the novella has transformed to the heroism of adult Kashimawo who the whole of the country expects his arrival in the country. This approach achieves some film aesthetics for the film makers. The game of football, apart from performing the aesthetic function in the film, it is also a narrative on its own. The film maker creatively integrates the football game in the narrative to the extent that its removal will affect the meaning of the text. As a player of international fame, adult Kashimawo's reminiscences of his childhood are compelling and cathartic. These reminiscences do not have serious cathartic effect on the audience because of too much expectation they have for the football game. With this approach, it can be said that the film text of *Ma'ami* is a sort of *bildungsroman* (a novel of development). The ingenuity of the screen play writer and the film maker to include a game of football as central part of the film narratives, perhaps, is premised on the view that a game of football is "a particular field of cultural play" (Dele Layiwola, 2010, p. 2). A proper reading of the film text, therefore, can be read within the

background of football game. If there is no game of football, one may not have any encounter with adult Kashimawo whose fame surpasses that of his parents.

Functional/dynamic equivalence is necessary in the comparative analyses of the literary and film texts because of their difference in aesthetics and narration. Close and formal translation of the novella will not offer the same effect in the film mode and for this reason, there is a need for dynamic/functional equivalence in the process of making the film. If there is no dynamic equivalence in the film mode of *Ma'ami*, it will affect the associative meaning of the entire narrative.

Since dynamic equivalence guides in the creative re-interpretation of the literary text of *Ma'ami* to its film mode, one expects that the plot of the two texts should not be exactly the same. They should demonstrate some uniqueness in terms of plot and characterization. The uniqueness of a film adaptation is guided by the functionality of the text. This is because a text is not made in a vacuum and that a text aims to achieve some ideological and philosophical ends. This argument is premised on Eugene Nida's (1993, p. 125) three principles of functional equivalence as follow:

- i. Functional equivalence is necessary if a close, formal translation is likely to result in misunderstanding of the designative meaning, certain changes must be introduced into the text of the translation.
- ii. Functional equivalence is necessary if a close, formal translation makes no sense, certain changes may be introduced into the text.
- iii. Functional equivalence is necessary if a close, formal translation is likely to result in serious misunderstanding of the associative meanings of the original text or in a significant loss in a proper appreciation for the stylistic values of the original text, it is important to make such adjustment as are necessary to reflect the associative values of the original text.

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An instance of dynamic equivalence is taken in the narratives and aesthetics of the novella and the film in the scene of 'visit' and escape of Ma'ami and young Kashimawo at Chief Bamsaiye's residence. Young Kashimawo has insisted that he wants to know his father and he wants to live with him. The mother refuses the offer based on her knowledge of the evils that Chief Bamsaiye always engages in for wealth acquisition. In the course of their visit, Ma'ami and young Kashimawo have to escape for their lives. In the novella, the account of the escape is given as follows:

We run round the small white building and Ma'ami pulls me through a gap in the banana fence. As we run on the grass towards the far end of the outer wall. I hear the barking of the dogs suddenly cease behind us, and change into low moans. They begin to wail now, as dogs usually do at night when, as the boys say, they see a ghost passing.

'Quick!' snaps Ma'ami. 'Behind the water tank!' There is a clothes line behind the tank, with some clothes hanging over it. Just behind one of the poles supporting the line Ma'ami reaches out and pulls at the wall. Five or six bricks fall out and there, right in front of us, is a rough round hole, where the bricks have been loosened, to make way to the street outside.

Ma'ami lifts me up with one hand and pushes me through the hole. Then she throws the bags in a heap at me. As I am not ready to catch them, they fall to the ground around me, spilling out their contents.

(Ma'ami 173-174)

The action of escape of Ma'ami, during their escape from the house, reveals her full knowledge of the landscape of the house. Ma'ami's escape from the house presents her heroism and dogged determination to protect her son, Young Kashimawo.

The mother and son's escape from the danger zone of Chief Bamisaiye's house takes a new narrative in the film mode because of the aesthetic expectations for rewarding audience perception. The escape of mother and son in the film adaptation takes a new dimension. The mother and son scale the fence for their escape.



Ma'ami and young Kashimawo scaling Chief Bamisaiye's fence for their escape

Photo credit: Nairaland Forum

The scaling of fence in the film adaptation of the novella is possible because both texts have similar and incidental features. This argument is consistent with S. Sarcevic's (2000, p. 238) near - functional equivalence (a term used in translation to describe that the source text and the target text have the similar primary and incidental features).

Based on the above, this study is of the view that the dynamic equivalence between the novella and its film adaptation is as a result of the economic factor and convenience. The complex means of escape as narrated in the novella is much for a woman – breaking of fence is not easy within the short frame of time for the escape of mother and son. The film text, however, adopts the scaling of the fence as a quicker and more convenient means of escape. Beside the matter of convenience, there is also a need for economic consideration. Scaling of the fence does not require any repair but breaking of the fence will require repair. All the same, the important message in the two texts is that mother and son escape being captured in Chief Bamisaiye's house.

The texts of the novella and its film adaptation present to us that mother and son do not reach home safely after their escape from Chief Bamisaiye's house. They are both involved in a motor accident which eventually claimed the life of Ma'ami. The events which lead to Ma'ami's death are captured in the novella as follow:

The bus has been slowing down, but suddenly it picks up speed. The driver accelerates and drives straight at the road-block. I look through the window of the bus, and I see the caps and guns of the policemen and the soldiers dancing in the sun as they leap out of the way. I see one of them raise his hand and shout something. But the singing in the bus drowns his voice and I cannot hear what he is saying.

The driver is laughing. 'Crooks! Cheats! Robbers!

Then there is a sudden explosion at the back of the bus. The singing abruptly stops. Almost at the same moment, the bus starts to turn over on its side, throwing everybody forward out of their seats. There is splintering of glass above the screaming voices, and the bus smashes with a thundering crash into a lamp post. I find myself flying through the window, with a piece of someone's clothing in my hands. (Ma'ami 180)

The narrative continues thus:

'They fired! They fired into the bus!' the voices are crying as they pull the bodies out.

'Yes! They said the driver refused to stop!'

'Oh God! Oh God! Look at the dead bodies!'

I am looking at Ma'ami, calling her name. But she is not answering back. I call again.
(*Ma'ami* 181)

Ma'ami and some other passengers do not survive the accident that followed the recklessness of the law enforcement agents. The event is an indictment of corruption against the men of the country's outfits. There have been reported cases of extortion and the eventual loss of lives of motorists as a result of stray bullet. Young Kashimawo's experience, particularly the death of his mother, in the hands of the country's agencies may prompt his reluctance to play for the country.

The film text, on the other hand, presents the accident scene differently. The accident scene is presented in a way that indicts the driver of the bus carrying Ma'ami and other passengers. This variation in the presentation of the cause of the accident may be informed by some ideological and sociological reasons such as the need to protect the integrity of the country's security operatives. Since the film has universal appeal and attracts attention more than literary medium, filmmakers should be careful with the representation of national image through the eye of video camera. The accident, in the film adaptation of the novella, is caused by the recklessness of the driver. He is drunk before driving. This is against the traffic rule which instructs that nobody should be under the control of alcohol before and while driving. The driver's non-compliance with one of the important traffic rules may instil fear of punishment in him when he sees the security operatives at the check point. Instead of him to wait to be checked, he speeds off and collides with a truck at the other end of the road. Below is the photograph of the accident scene which claims the lives of Ma'ami and other passengers. Despite the difference in the narration and presentation of the accident scene, the truth of the matter is that an accident occurred and Ma'ami and some other passengers do not survive. Adult Kashimawo's speech in the film provides another insight into the circumstances which surround the death of his mother, Ma'ami. At his visit to Chief Bamisaiye's residence, Kashimawo implies that Chief Bamisaiye is responsible for the death of his mother. He recounts the experience of their escape from Chief Bamisaiye's residence seventeen (17) years back. He praises the heroism of his mother for making him escape untimely ritual death while he indicts Chief Bamisaiye for not sparing the life of his faithful and heroic mother. Kashimawo's speech with Chief Bamisaiye, therefore, brings in spiritual factor as one of the remote causes of his mother's death.

Intertextual Representation in *Ma'ami's* Texts

Despite the instances of dynamic equivalence that are established in the parallel reading of the novella and its film adaptation, the two texts have intersection in plot and characterization. This intersection is taken care of by the principles of intertextuality. The intertextuality of the two texts is informed by the fact that one text is a precursor to the other. The film maker relies, to a greater extent, on the plot, subject matter and characterisation of the film text. The film adaptation has more coherence and completeness in its plot, characterization and subject, particularly with the integration of football game as an important element of the entire film narratives. The integration of the football game makes the film text enjoys some levels of

originality and independence from the novella. The structural difference in the novella and its film adaptation is only recovered with some intertextuality which the two texts share. This intertextuality is only possible with structural link – the possibility of the two texts (the source text and the adapted text) having some resemblance in plot, subject matter and ideological orientation. In the line of this argument, this study aligns its view with Hyginus Ekwuazi's (1991, p. 140) view that “the structure of one medium every so often becomes the content of another; the younger medium tends to explore its possibilities and limitations in the light of the older medium. In this instance, the younger medium (the film) explores the limitations of the narratives in the novella, particularly how the narrative ends with the death of Ma'ami. The death of Ma'ami in the novella presents it as a story with inconclusive end. In this light of this argument, the audience is left with different possibilities of how the narration should conclude.

The common ideology which runs through the novella and its film adaptation is that Ma'ami and her son (Kashimawo) suffer from poverty and economic deprivation. The plot of the novella begins with the establishment of the poverty and economic deprivation that mother and son suffer. The narrative of the novella also closes with the sustenance of the tropes of poverty of mother and son. Through consistent use of flashback, Kashimawo establishes and sustains the poverty and deprivation of his mother as an important element of the film narrative. This observation is consistent with Lawal Abdulahi's (2012:51) view of structural analysis of intertextuality. In his view, he posits:

Daniel Chandler maintains that intertextuality is a major feature of a text and as well the 'contract' which reading brings forth between its author(s) and reader(s). He further stresses that there are some defining features of intertextuality which are as follow: reflexivity, alteration, explicitness, criticality to comprehension, scale of adoption and structural unboundedness. Reflexivity connotes how reflexive the use of intertextuality seems to be while alteration is the alteration of sources. Explicitness talks about the specificity and explicitness of references to other texts and critically to comprehension. It seeks to address how important a text is if a reader could recognise the intertextuality involved. Scale of adoption is the overall scale of allusion/incorporation within the text and structural unboundedness maintains the extent to which the text is presented or comprehended as part of a larger structure.

The structural unboundedness closely attaches the content, subject matter and some elements of the plot of the novella with its film adaptation. The filmmaker picks up the narration from where the novella ends. One cannot, however, overlook the fact that the film presents itself as the re-make of the novella. This, therefore, informs the view that some plot and subject resemblances of the two texts are instances of intertextuality. The subject matter of the film enjoys some reflexivity with the subject matter of the novella specifically with the characterization of young Kashimawo and his mother, Ma'ami.

The film adaptation does miss out any point about the closeness and bond between mother and son. The duo are inseparable from each other. After an encounter when Kashimawo requests to eat meat, the mother and son find logical means to resolve their differences and

misunderstanding. The following excerpt from the novella reveals the resolution of the disagreement between mother and son:

She wraps her arms around me again. ‘My little husband, you poor, poor thing!’

I throw my hands out, and I collapse on her lap. Only then does my heart stop thumping. Her arms are the only shelter I know. All my fears suddenly disappear in a moment.

‘My little son,’ she is saying softly into my ears, ‘please stop crying. Forgive me. I’m sorry. Ah poverty. It’s poverty, this always not having any money, that makes me act like this, saying such harsh words to my little darling. Poverty, and bitterness, the bitter memory that it was not always like this.

(*Ma’ami* 130-131)

At adult stage, as revealed in the film adaptation of the novella, Kashimawo still carries the fond memory of his mother in his (sub) consciousness. The filmmaker establishes this with the constant use of flashback to recall Kashimawo’s memorable moments with his late mother. In the film narrative, as revealed in the flashback, mother and son are inseparable from each other. Even at the sight of danger such as an encounter with armed robbers in a taxi, Ma’ami and Kashimawo are closely attached with each other with uncommon bond.



A scene in *Ma’ami* where mother and son have demonstrated fondness, love and bond between them

The uncommon bond between mother and son does not mean that they do not have their moments of differences as observed above. The bond and love between them make them forgive and forget all their differences.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the patterns and modes of adaptation in Mainframe's *Ma'ami* with the theoretical tenets of dynamic equivalence and intertextuality. These theoretical models establish the points of convergence and divergence in the literary and film texts of *Ma'ami*. This situation is connected to the fact that the two texts have different narrative modes and aesthetic values. The argument in this paper is that no medium of literary expression can displace the pre-existing one. A new medium of literary expression can only improve on the narrative potential of the old medium has found in the plot, characterisation and narratives in the literary and film texts.

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