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**BOLE BUTAKE'S USE OF PEDAGOGIC TECHNIQUES AS ESPOUSING
AGENTS OF THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT IN CINEMA
FOR DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE IN CAMEROON: A CASE STUDY OF
*MUH (WATER), NGROUNG PALABA AND WANTED ANOTHER SON***



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ABSTRACT

As a means to demonstrate that Bole Butake's practice of Cinema For Development (C4D) in Cameroon fosters the Human Development (HD) ideals in target viewers, this paper examines how he uses specific pedagogic techniques to meet his broadcast objectives. C4D in Cameroon emerged as a product of the quest to widen Theatre For Development (TFD) audiences. The overarching aim of C4D reflects the original purpose of TFD: to use performing art forms to highlight obstacles to development and spur target populations to utilise their agency and take responsibility for their own wellbeing.

The paper case studies three Bole Butake's films (Muh (Water), Ngroung Palaba and Wanted Another Son) to highlight the varied pedagogic techniques that he uses to meet

his broadcast goals. His aims are generally achieved by fostering an engaged film viewing process where the viewer is transformed from a passive to an active observer and by assisting the active viewer to grow into an informed critic, an architect in the processes that shape the kind of lifestyles s/he values or has reason to value. The paper reports that repetition, cultural references and summary-making as teaching aids, and theme-song singing are all pedagogic techniques that Bole Butake employs to realise his objective of increasing the capability set of his target audience members.

KEYWORDS

Bole Butake, Cinema For Development, Human Development, Pedagogy

RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction

To fulfil the desire to improve the quality of life, people and communities turn to the human and natural resources at their disposal, and attempt to use them productively in the most maximal and efficient way possible. This, basically, is development. It is the pathway to the attainment of a healthier and easier life, and is the ultimate goal of basically all academic, economic and technological effort. Improving the quality of life is not limited to the betterment of economic standards of living, but also extends to the social, cultural and spiritual welfare of the individual, community and State. It is therefore a process that, as Hopkinson (1971) posits, “involves government, administrators, public and private enterprises, the nation as a whole, the local community and the individual”.

In the struggle to raise the level of development in less developed areas, fewer (if any) tools have as important a role to play as the communication, especially mass media. The role of mass media in instructing communities on development policy is critical (Champoux, 2007). Its potential to ignite reflection and discussion, to encourage innovation and to garner almost universal involvement in community projects, makes it stand out as a ready tool for development. Gupta (2015) maintains that “communication, as a stream of study and practice, is vital for human development.”

Film, a key mass medium, can contribute significantly to these communication processes. It can be an important tool in the hands of governments and development organisations that can enable them reach out to every stratum of the community (Sauer, 1992).

An attempt to use filmmaking for development as a tool to effect social change requires more than just a knowledge of filmmaking. It demands a conscious commitment to use it as a tool, as a means to an end and as a cock in the wheel of development. The filmmaker for development must become a student of the economic and social conditions that created the need for their services. Though it is true that all film genres can foster development, it is nonetheless true that the purpose and message dictate the style, method, technique and approach to adopt.

An understanding of C4D necessarily precedes discussions of Human Development in Cameroon.

Background

Cinema For Development (C4D) originated as a pragmatic extension of Theatre For Development (TFD). C4D was a product of Bole Butake's quest to reach a wider public. He literally abandoned theatre space unto the TV screen. The aim however remained unchanged: to use these performing art forms to highlight obstacles to development and encourage target populations to take responsibility of their own wellbeing. Bole Butake sought to empower community members by helping them realise the potency of their own agency; they too (not only government or external benefactors) can think, organise and realise worthwhile projects to foster their wellbeing. Most TFD workshops that have taken place in Cameroon used a similar methodology. It goes from data collection, data analysis and prioritisation, play creation, a public performance and a discussion session (Fofie, 2006).

Bole Butake's pragmatic extension to C4D was informed by the wider coverage TV offers and the possibility of replaying the digital format for the benefit of many other community groups that experience similar development challenges. An ideal C4D product uses every aspect familiar to a number of target communities as men as to arouse viewers' interest and engage them in development issues that concern them (Ngomssi, 2013).

The additional aspect in this moves from TFD to C4D and finally to C4HD is Human Development (HD). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development is:

the process of enlarging people's choices and improving human capabilities (the range of things that they can do or be in life) and freedom so they can live a long and healthy life, access education, and a decent standard of living, participate in their community and decision that affect their lives. (UNDP, 1990)

As reflected in the UNDP's perspective, HD is understood as 'a process of enlarging human choices.' It focuses on enlarging people's capabilities as well as the available opportunities for using those acquired capabilities. Put simply, teaching someone to ride a bicycle means increasing the person's capabilities, the things that individuals can do in life. Human Development advocates would then want that bicycles be not only available in number but that they be available at affordable prices. It is in this condition that the learnt riding skill could become an opportunity to use or exploit for survival. In effect, the new skill learnt as well as the

availability of affordable bicycles increase the capability set of what a given individual can choose being or doing in life. This thus explains the idea of ‘enlarging human choices.’ The result of possessing varied capabilities and having available opportunities to exploit those skills is that individuals have a range of things they can choose doing or being to live fulfilled lives. As a paradigm, HD is concerned with necessary conditions that grant access to human wellbeing. It is the same wellbeing that the UNDP defines in terms of life longevity, decent living standards, community members’ participation in community life and decisions that affect their lives. This explains why Jahan insists: “Income is an important part of human development, a necessary condition for human development, but not a sufficient condition. Income is a means to human development but not the end.” (Jahan. 2015)

Review of Literature

So much authoritative academic work has preceded the present paper in the field of pedagogic filmmaking, a conscious use of audiovisual material to enhance learning processes – be they in classical classroom contexts or otherwise. But, for the sake of concision, this paper shall limit itself to as few as three. These capture the article’s line of focus in terms of the filmmaking concept here concerned and its specific objective targeted in its practice.

Erik Zavrel (2016) concerns itself with pedagogic techniques that a TV show, *Myth Busters*, uses to communicate somewhat complex scientific concepts to audience members. As pedagogic methods used, he highlights the effective use of the programme’s website (serving as suggestion box) to achieve an active learning process. In addition, *Myth Busters*’ hosts avoid jargons and use repetition as means to imprint concepts in the minds of viewers.

Joseph Champoux’s (2007) paper on the topic also advances discourse on the subject concerned here in. In fact, he goes into specifics: showing how film can be used as an effective resource to ground theories and concepts in the minds of learners of management science. The paper looks exactly on how film, as a case, experiential material, metaphor, etc., can be effective tools to the theory and concept teacher.

Ihentuge and Maudlyn’s(2017) work goes further: how does Nollywood, the Nigerian film industry, is a Human Development advocate. They take on the storylines of four series (‘The Illiterate’, ‘Ekaette Goes to School’, ‘Adaure/Ada Mbanjo Series and Nkoli Nwa Nsukka)to demonstrate their point.

This paper is different to all aforementioned because it examines how Bole Butake's practice of C4D in Cameroon contributes in creating necessary conditions that foster HD ideals in target audience members.

Bole Butake's Use of Pedagogic Techniques

To demonstrate Bole Butake's use of diverse pedagogic techniques, we highlight and analyse specific places in each film that showcases the said skill.

Repetition as Pedagogic Technique: The Case of Muh (Water)

Synopsis

Muh (Water) is the product of a TFD workshop organised in Akeh (Fundong Sub-Division, Boyo Division, NW Region) in April 2003. This film connects the planting of some tree species to potable water shortages. The film argues that although the eucalyptus tree species has virtues, its undesirable effects on the communities that plant them range from soil infertility to unavailability of potable water.

Film's Relevance to Target Community

There are two main points that spell the film's relevance to its target group. First, the central thrust in *Muh (Water)*— as pointed out earlier — is very topical to its target community. Eucalyptus trees are common in Cameroon, especially in the North West region. In fact, specialists hold that:

Eucalyptus trees were introduced to Cameroon in the 1900's with an aim to solve a problem of wood shortage. ... They could serve as an important cash crop for both fuel wood and timber. In addition, the trees can develop under poor soil and water conditions. Unfortunately, the fast dissemination of this species became a threat to farmers (mostly women), whose land was increasingly being encroached, forcing them to cover very long distances to reach new farms. The local water supply authority also noticed a great reduction of water available in its catchments due to excessive water absorption from the soil by Eucalyptus trees. (Ndambi and Ndzerem, 2006)

These plant experts reveal that Cameroonians who embarked on the planting of this tree species were ignorant of its side effects. The fall of cocoa prices in the 60s pushed many in its cultivation, since these trees had attractive financial rewards (fuel wood, electricity and telephone cables poles, and timber). The results of their multiplication were two-fold:

- 1) People in general, usually women and children, had to go further each year to fetch water.
- 2) Water catchment areas were also harmed... there was generalised water shortages and low crop yields within the target area.(Ndambi and Ndzerem, 2006)

In order to buttresses the relevance of *Muh (Water)* in contemporary Cameroon, the same authors indicate that even AES-SONEL's (National Electricity Company) dams are not adequately supplied (2006).

The second point relates to the topical nature of Bole Butake's films: this grasps the attention of the target viewer, and then engages them in a discussion of their lived experiences in the topic concerned. It is in this wise that repetition is used as a pedagogic technique to achieve this HD goal.

STRATEGIC USE OF REPETITION IN MUH (WATER)

Repetition in *Muh (Water)* is artistic; artistic because the actors' voice is predominantly used to repeat the topic sentence at specific settings. Two dialogue extracts illustrate this repetitive artistry. For the sake of clarity, the said topic sentences below are highlighted.

Dialogue I holds between the village water project caretaker and villagers who, in their ignorance, accuse the caretaker of being the source of the unavailability of water in Akeh village.

VILLAGER 1. *...it must be the caretaker again. That man must be really wicked.*

CARETAKER. *Stop calling my name over there. Why are you wasting time here? There is no water.*

VILLAGER 2. *Are you not the cause? Why are you so wicked?*

CARETAKER. *When I was telling you people not to waste water you said I was wicked. I am coming from the tank. It is empty. Even the catchment is dry. **...there are trees like eucalyptus and cypress that must be cut down because they take much water. And then we must plant trees such as mangoes, pears, oranges, palm, and kolanuts and so on which conserve water.***

VILLAGER 3. *What are we going to do now?*

CARETAKER. *The only thing to do now is to summon the rest of the community to the water catchment where they can **cut down the bad trees and plant the good ones such as mangoes, pears, oranges, palm, and kolanuts and so on.*** (12:43 – 14:20).

Dialogue II features two town criers (one, Kom and the other, Mbororo). They are summoning the whole village to do community labour around the water catchment as suggested by the caretaker:

TOWNCRIER I. (*In Pidgin English*): *People of Akeh, there will be community work tomorrow at the water catchment. Do not forget to come along with machetes and hoes with which to cut down trees like eucalyptus and cypress that take much water. Also bring along your trees like: mangoes, pears, oranges, palm, kolanuts, bananas, plantains... to plant in the catchment area... Upon leaving your houses, no one should forget taking along trees like mangoes, pears, oranges, palm, kolanuts...* (14:26 – 14:54).

TOWNCRIER II. (*In Mbororo*): *People of Akeh, there will be community work tomorrow at the water catchment. Do not forget to come along with machetes and hoes with which to cut down trees like eucalyptus and cypress that take much water. Also bring along your trees like: mangoes, pears, oranges, palm, kolanuts, bananas, plantains... to plant in the catchment area...*(14:55 – 15:25)

TOWNCRIER I. (*In Kom; repeats the same point while stressing on the species of trees to cut down, and the kind to plant as well as the place to plant them*). (15:26 – 15:51).

The duration of the film is 17 minutes, 54 seconds. As evident in the preceding dialogue extracts, the names of the tree species that are good to conserve water as well as those to be cut down are severally repeated. In addition, the town criers' scene uses two actors, two authority members(not a leader and an interpreter as generally is the case in rural communities) and two languages to insist on the same thing. This, added to the scene's placement practically at the end, strengthens the idea of Bole Butake's use of repetition to attain a given HD goal. But which?

Cultural Reference as Pedagogic Technique: The Case of Ngroung Palaba I

Synopsis

The story (written by Bole Butake and studio-directed by Caroline Kilo B.) explores the plight of women who need pieces of land for varied purposes. Some want to build houses, others want land for animal husbandry whereas others desire to establish plantations. The Fon and his elders are in a dilemma – by the laws of the land, women do not own land, but, their plight is authentic. Although Bole Butake uses varied cultural elements in *Ngroung Palaba* to meet his overriding goal, for the sake of demonstration, the paper shall use only the Bamenda Traditional Regalia

that represents the Grassfield culture in general and the people of the North West in particular, to exemplify how this wear aptly plays the role of a teaching aid.

Strategic Use of the Bamenda Traditional Regalia as Teaching Aid

Writing on what teaching and learning resources (teaching aids) are, Rona Busljeta says:

In the context of classes as an institutionalised form of teaching and learning, teaching and learning resources could be defined as the instruments of presentation and transmission of the prescribed educational material. These include, amongst others: images, maps, photographs, sketches, diagrams, films, written material such as newspaper clippings or articles from scientific and technical literature. (2013)

Agreeing that *Ngroung Palaba* is a film, interest reasonably pivots towards how Bole Butake uses the Bamenda Traditional Regalia therein as an “instrument of presentation and transmission of the prescribed educational material.” In this direction, it must be noted that the regalia is used for several purposes as shall be discussed further. Before that, it should be noted that the Bamenda Traditional Regalia is a majestic and beautiful costume, an artistic and cultural hallmark of the vibrant people of the NW Region of Cameroon. Although some minor modifications have been made over time, its design has fundamentally been associated with the Region’s core cultural values as though it were what Mazisi Kunene, in his poem, ‘The Bond’, calls Masilela’s ‘grinding stone’; a relic that passes on from one generation to the other. Moreover, over time, the Regalia has been (and still is) a colourful and sumptuously decorated fabric. This Regalia is therefore a means par excellence to introduce the Grassfields people of the NW Region at any event across the world.

Functional Employment of the Bamenda Traditional Regalia in the Ngroung Palaba

Geographical Situation of Viewers

To avoid any form of confusion or ambiguity in viewers’ minds from the onset, the film exclusively uses Pidgin English to ascertain the reception of the information being put across. In addition, the first scene shows the village notable, *Ta’achi Tamanjong*, on his way to the palace, in this Regalia. Before *Ta’achi Tamanjong* answers the Fon’s summons to the palace, he visits his shrine – another way of urging viewers to understand that they are dealing with a culturally

faithful people. From this point, the Regalia makes of the film a cultural reference as it creates an open door through which the whole story is appreciated.

Meaningful Atmosphere Establishment

The attire denotes solemnity. The fact that it is worn during cultural festivals, ceremonial and other events where the people's culture is exhibited sustains the point. The fact that all the nobles and the Fon himself appear in this attire also renders the subject matter discussed very important. This way of dressing is thus an informational instrument used to meet a prescribed educational goal. It helps the audience understand that they are dealing with a group of people who can give serious considerations to matters related to injustice done to a fellowman.

Didactic Signs and Symbols

The Bamenda Traditional Regalia is beset with meaningful signs and symbols that are tightly related to the cultural values of the people that wear it. For example, the heart sign (love) signifies peace, mutual sympathy and respect lived in the community, the star stands for beauty, the sun in front of and behind the Fon's attire symbolises that their benevolent authority shines over the territory of their jurisdiction, with a generosity as mighty as that of the sun. As a teaching aid in this context, these signs and symbols on the regalia generate the need for learners (viewers) to go into research to get their true meanings.

Signs and symbols on the Bamenda Traditional Regalia also denote class stratification and consequently, the level of respect reserved to each social group. In *Ngroung Palaba*, nobles are dressed differently from ordinary men. *Ta'achi Tamanjong* is dressed differently from *Nzama*, his son; the wine distributor and the palace waiter are in mere shirts and trousers, which is not the case with the village nobles and the Fon. Hierarchy is clearly seen in actors' costume. Four nobles that are apparently of the same rank within the ruling class are similarly dressed. Although their attires are dissimilar in colour and few symbols, they nonetheless put on the same red-feathered black caps made of nylon thread. Further, the kinds of gowns and caps worn differentiate one noble from the other. Whereas the first group of nobles (four) have red-feathered black caps, the second group is differentiated by their woollen caps and gown design. As can be observed, the Fon's attire is completely different from all others' in design and colour. He alone has a thin and fine sceptre. The only noble who has beads as the Fon does is *Ndifor*,

who sits at the Fon's right hand. One thing is common to all except the Fon – the different coloured bags that they carry.

With these signs and symbols displayed on the traditional regalia in *Ngroung Palaba*, this fabric cannot but stand as a teaching aid through which a specific group of is presented in great details.

Show of Nobility and Respect in Conduct

The Regalia also show cases the dignified and respectful conduct of its wearer. The Grassfield community agrees that the attire is an expression of one's dignity, an indicator of one's cultural belonging and attachment. Therefore, in their conduct, the wearer is expected to exhibit dignity, discipline and gentility among comrades. If wearers of the regalia rather conduct themselves disgracefully, they would, in doing so, be disregarding the intrinsic cultural values that the NW Grassfield community upholds. The village nobles in the *Ngroung Palaba* likewise portray dignified conduct among comrades – displayed especially within the upper class that they represent. For example, when anyone comes in, he first bows toward the Fon's throne (still empty) before turning to greet the others on the scene. Among the nobles, the 'junior' nobles salute the entrance of 'senior nobles' by standing up. But all stand when the Fon appears. Further, the nobles do not take the floor to talk when they have not been authorised to do so. Even when the place is rowdy from discussions of an explosive issue, as soon as the Fon opens his mouth, everyone stops talking. When the Fon flares out in anger and stands up, everyone equally rises to show the respect due him. These are some major points of dignity in conduct that the wearers of the Traditional Regalia in the film display. In this sense, the Regalia still stands as a real instrument to present and talk about a given culture, about a people.

Elegant Traditional Dance Rhythm

The Regalia also highlights elegance during traditional dances. Even when high beats are played on musical instruments, the rhythm of dancers' footsteps stays majestic. When these majestic footsteps are then contrasted with this colourful and richly embellished traditional regalia, a graceful atmosphere is the resultant effect. This is what *Ngroung Palaba* demonstrates at the end. Even though the song sung at the end of the film sounds warlike, the dancing rhythm is nonetheless majestic – another way to say that the film is a cultural reference of a people.

As it stands, *Ngroung Palaba* uses the Traditional Regalia as a teaching aid in multiple ways. It is used to, among others, geographically locate viewers, paint a meaningful atmosphere in their

minds in relation to the subject matter and the signs and symbols used, regulate dance steps' rhythm, etc. These constitute reasons to justify the functional use of the fabric. The Regalia is used as a pedagogic instrument to present and convey very relevant information as to who the Grassfield people of the NW Region truly are.

Resume-Making as Pedagogic Technique: The Case of Ngroung Palaba II

Ngroung Palaba, again, masterfully showcases the use of summary-making as a pedagogic technique exploited to encourage viewers to recall main points. The aim is to transform them into real critics. Having discussed the bone of contention of the film in the preceding lines, may we proceed to how Bole Butake skilfully uses the resume-making technique to meet his broadcast goals.

Strategic Use of the Resume-Making Technique in Ngroung Palaba

The Fon authorises the four elders directly concerned to take turns in presenting their stories. At the end of each presentation, the Fon decides to summarise what his elder has lengthily said as though the others were absent-minded. He does this with the first speaker, *Ta'achi Tamanjong*. At the end of *Ta'achi Tamanjong*'s narrative, the Fon takes time out to recapitulate. He first renders gratitude to *Ta'achi Tamanjong* for what he has said, then continues to appreciate Bi as a good child. He goes ahead to observe that although Bi's character is worthwhile, the only aspect that makes her plea difficult to grant is the fact that she is not only a single mother but a mother of two girls. What particular aggravates her situation therefore, the Fon notes, is the fact that her children are girls – how could girls own land? Although *Ta'achi Tamanjong*'s story is explicit, the Fon summarises the whole narrative with one question – “How could women be given land in a patriarchal society?” (0:29:41 - 0:30:24)

The end of *Ta'achi Taniform*'s story about *Ngella'a* also provides the Fon another opportunity to use resume-making as a technique to keep *Ngroung Palaba*'s audience focused on the essential point. As a skilful pedagogue, the Fon reassures *Ta'achi Taniform* that he has understood him and then leads viewers to capture the main points raised. (0:33:50 – 0:39:53)

At the end of the fourth speaker, *Ta'a Biwara*'s, the Fon again summarily reiterates all four stories narrated during the sitting according to the order in which they were presented (0:43:13 – 0:45:28). It is at the end of all his presentations that he challenges his council of elders to put

hands together in finding a lasting solution to what they have heard. The story ends with him restating that a lasting solution to the women's plight must be sorted out.

Theme-Song Singing as Pedagogic Technique: The Case of Wanted Another Son

Synopsis

Wanted Another Son (written by Bole Butake and Studio-directed by Caroline Kilo Bara) tells the story of Fanla, a woman under pressure from her husband, who wants another son. Fieke is persistent in his demand although the doctor's report states that another birth would surely endanger Fanla's life. Dr. Kpuka, faced with similar situations sees the need to call for a family planning meeting that must be attended, he insists, by both partners. At the meeting, the doctor makes a revelation; men – not women – determine the sex of a child. As carriers of Y and X chromosomes, only men can pass on the Y chromosome to produce a boy child – bearer of XY chromosomes – since women carry only X chromosomes.

Wanted Another Son strives to address the issue of matrimonial conflicts related to husbands' desire to have male children in their families. Although many couples' primary wish is to have children, it is nonetheless true that husbands, especially, want boys. Many husbands do not only threaten to marry another woman when their wives do not bear sons, but go ahead to get concubines or become polygamous. Men's actions and/or reactions when faced with such a problem indicate that they generally consider women responsible for children's sex whereas the reverse is true. Bole Butake absolutely wants to correct this erroneous idea which is generally a centre of distraction to most couples. The film thus encourages couples to lay aside egoistic desires and tendencies, and rather unite to bring up their children. This is the key issue addressed in the film.

Strategic use of Theme-Songs in Wanted Another Son

As a pedagogue would fashion techniques to enhance learners' retention of essential points, this film ingeniously exploits two specially-composed songs to convey its main point. In order to realise the objective, the songs' lyrics are made intelligible and their theme-words are severally repeated. As was the case with *Muh (Water)*, the theme words shall be highlighted in the songs. The first theme-song is sung within the family planning forum that Dr. Kpuka convokes. While waiting for the medical doctor, the supposed animator of the forum, the whole group sings:

SOLO (the nurse). *My husband...*

CHORUS (all). *My husband and I*{2X}

We're planning together, to have children when we want,

We're planning together, my husband and I.

SOLO (the nurse). *My husband...*

CHORUS (all). *My husband and I*{2X}

We're planning together, to have a limited number,

We're planning together, my husband and I.

SOLO (the nurse). *My husband...*

CHORUS (all). *My husband and I*{2X}

We're planning together, to have a good health,

We're planning together, my husband and I.

SOLO (the nurse). *My husband...*

CHORUS (all). *My husband and I*{2X}

We're planning together, to educate our children,

We're planning together, my husband and I... (0:53:51 – 0:55:58)

It is significant that this song is preceded by a fight scene between the disagreeing Fieke and Fanla. The fact that the theme-song is placed after the fight scene orients viewers towards the right track to follow in such situations. The song's position in the film is thus timely; it comes at a point where viewers must be encouraged not to imitate actions in the previous scene but to practise the song's message.

The next theme-song comes up at the end of the family planning forum. After using scientific knowledge to correct men's erroneous thinking about children's sex determination, Dr. Kpuka tries to re-orient the course of reasoning in the family. A song is used to attain this goal:

DR. KPUKA. ... *so, you can see that when you have many girl children,
it is not the fault of your wives. Yes, it is not.*

*By the way, what's the difference between the male child
and the female child? A child is a child.*

A VOICE IN THE CROWD. *Pekin na pekin!*

DR. KPUKA. *Yes, pekin na pekin. So let us all thank God for giving us children,
male or female.*

A VOICE IN THE CROWD (tunes song). *Pikin na weti eh?* [Translated in English as, are both the female and male children not children?]

CHORUS (answers). *Ehh, ehhhh, pekin na pekin oohsheriwanda.* [Translated in English as, both are children.]

SOLO. *Pikin na weti eh?*

CHORUS. *Ehh, ehhhh, pekin na pekin ooh, sheriwanda*

SOLO. *Whether na boy ohh!*

CHORUS. *Na pekin oooh!*

SOLO. *Whether na girl ohh!*

CHORUS. *Na pekin oooh!*

SOLO. *Pikin na weti eh?*

CHORUS. *Ehh, ehhhh, pekin na pekin oh, sheriwanda*

SOLO. *Whether na man ohh!*

CHORUS. *Na pekin oooh!*

SOLO. *Whether na woman!*

CHORUS. *Na pekin oooh!* (1:04:26 – 1:07:35)

Again, the placement of the theme-song (at the end of Dr. Kpuka's discourse) is significant. It purposely fixates couples' attention on crucial issue. After *Dr. Kpuka* has used scientific facts to address targeted viewers, the film then proceeds to make them see reason with: "By the way, what's the difference between the male child and the female child? A child is a child..." and "Yes, pekin na pekin. So let us all thank God for giving us children, male or female."

The fact that this theme-song comes immediately after these words carries great importance in relation to the function of the song in the film. First, the song is performed in Pidgin English. The language used increases its reception by the film's target audience. Second, its wordings re-orientate from what is in essence a distraction to what is supposed to be the centre of importance for a couple.

Songs (music) have an advantage over spoken words because they are easily memorized, and retained longer than words. Functionally speaking therefore, the position of these two songs is strategic; they do not only capture viewers' attention better, but also enable viewers retain the

message sung for longer periods. By so doing, Bole Butake ingeniously uses songs in *Wanted Another Son* to enhance the retention of the main points in the memory of the viewer.

Operationalising the Human Development Approach in Bole Butake's C4D Practice

Agreeing that the objective of HD-spirited processes is to expand what people are able to do or be, it becomes crucial at this point to examine how the watching of the case study films contributes in increasing targeted audience members' capability set. It thus become relevant to consider the reason why these films were made. The overriding purpose of Bole Butake's C4D is to achieve two goals:

1. Fostering an engaged film viewing process whereby the viewer is encouraged to stop being passive and become an active observer.
2. Assisting active viewers to grow into informed critics, architects in the processes that shape the kind of lifestyles they value or have reason to value.

Operationalising the Human Development Approach in Muh (Water)

The subject matter that *Muh (Water)* puts across to its audience members (using repetition) is a potential source of empowerment to them, be they literate or not. The knowledge on tree-planting that the film's target audience gain enfranchises them. They understand that tree-planting should not be a hazardous exercise but a well-planned practice that should be tailored to achieve desired goals. Such knowledge in effect empowers its possessors. It enriches their capability sets.

Concretely speaking, after watching the film, a viewer can, for instance, decide to initiate and develop a project to transform a marshy zone to a residential area within a given time period. S/he may equally want to preserve high water levels in particular soils for the sake of gardening varied kinds of vegetables and of nursing fruit trees for commercialisation purposes in some near future. What the concerned needs to do is to choose specific tree species and plant so as to get the projects realised at least 50%. In addition, possessors of such knowledge can also choose to coordinate huge development projects in councils for the benefit of a whole community. This shows the level to which the viewers' set of choices have been enlarged.

As it stands, the use of repetition as a pedagogic technique in *Muh (Water)* meets two objectives: Firstly, the use of this technique fosters an engaged film viewing process: the passive viewer becomes an active observer. Secondly, it transforms that active viewer into an informed

development agent, an architect in the processes that shape the kind of lifestyles people value or have reason to value for themselves. In this way, Bole Butake uses repetition as a pedagogic technique to espouse the Human Development pursuit in his practice of C4D in Cameroon.

Operationalising the Human Development Approach in Ngroung Palaba I & II

Bole Butake uses the Grassfield Traditional Regalia in *Ngroung Palaba* primarily to encourage viewers' engagement in film narrative. This Regalia suitably plays the role of a teaching aid in a traditional classroom setting where a teacher uses something picked from learners' real life situation or environment as a means to attract learners' full attention and engagement in the lesson being taught. As in the case of *Muh (Water)*, Bole Butake wants his viewers to stop being passive and become active observers and critics of those issues that contribute to their very wellbeing, their own development.

By reason of the target population's identification with the Traditional Regalia, the Regalia plays two main functions in them. These functions are realisable because the fabric in the film possesses two major implications for target population: The first concerns the ideology purported in the film. Since the screen community is a representation of theirs, the ideology put forth (*property cannot own property*) is theirs by implication. The second has to do with the social tension that their ideology has occasioned. Insofar as the philosophy of the on-screen community is being cross examined to unveil real hinderers of the effective socioeconomic development of the screen community, the implication is that their (the targeted viewers') philosophy is being challenged. In fact, their patriarchal belief that a woman is man's property and as such cannot own land, is in the court room. These two implications cannot but engage target population in the film discourse.

At this point, it must be mentioned that Bole Butake enjoys a huge advantage when his target viewers get engaged in film discourse. This explains why he employs another pedagogic technique – resume-making –in the same film. With the intention to reinforce the degree of viewers' engagement, the Fon chooses to summarise what his elders say as if he alone possesses the ability to understand what they can say. This is an intentional technique used to keep viewers focused on important points in the film. Moreover, the Fon does not only select stories to summarise, but he also varies the techniques used to recapitulate the stories told. Watching the film, one realises that while the Fon alone recaptures the main points in *Ta'achi Tamanjong's*

story, he uses a kind of question and answer session to get *Ta'achi Taniform's* plight mapped out clearly. In order to ensure that viewers forget little or nothing, all four stories are chronologically retold at the end. As it is, the two pedagogic techniques used here serve to heighten the intensity of viewers' engagement since it plays a critical role in meeting the Human Development pursuit in the film.

In effect, the degree of viewers' engagement in the film initiates a critical thinking process about their previously upheld beliefs. In real life, targeted viewers start being critical of traditional practices enshrined in cultural beliefs. Hence, viewers become advocates of processes that rethink hitherto inherited cultural beliefs. As it stands, Bole Butake's employment of a cultural reference in *Ngroung Palaba* achieves an HD value in that it transforms hitherto passive persons to active participants in "their community and decision that affect their lives" (UNDP 1990).

As for the resume-making skill showcased in *Ngroung Palaba*, it kicks off a critical thinking process on the ways that traditional practices hinder what Amartya Sen(1999)describes as effective freedoms. According to Amartya Sen, (ibid) leaders, represented here by the Fon and Elders, should strive to expand people's capability, their real freedoms, as opposed to hollow promises or wordy speeches, so as to promote or achieve what they value doing or being.

Operationalising the Human Development Approach in Wanted Another Son

Bole Butake uses the theme-song singing technique in *Wanted Another Son* to engage target viewers so as to meet the Human Development mission in his practice of C4D in Cameroon.

Commenting on the importance of songs as a pedagogic instrument, Rajaa Aquil (2012), quotes Conrad et al:

The potential for popular songs to be a rich instructional resource is abundant. Songs provide authentic material in the classroom. Combined with prior experience, cultural background and knowledge of the content of the situation in the song, a situated-scaffolding classroom becomes available, which helps learners at all levels of language and cultural proficiencies. (Conrad, 1991; Kramsch, 1993; Orlova, 2003; Spicher and Sweeney, 2007)

This position resonates with the perspective espoused in Kong's (1995) paper as: "A song can also be a form of resistance against state policies and some social-cultural norms. In fact, songs are instrumental in the construction of social movement culture".

The message that *Wanted Another Son* passes across – that not women, but men are responsible for the sex of their children is capital; it empowers especially women in the targeted audience who have gone through the wringer in marriage because of similar problems. In cases of the absence of male children, the *always* guilty party, accused by self and others, stops holding herself responsible. Since she has become empowered by a new understanding—the yesterday’s downtrodden becomes the today’s respected –simply because she knows her real function in a given context. The bare fact of her empowerment relieves the female audience of societally imposed feelings of guilt and inadequacy. This enables the boosting of her wellbeing, which is a Human Development pursuit.

In as much as the boosting of a targeted population’s wellbeing constitutes Bole Butake’s immediate concern, the information or lesson taught goes further than that. It negotiates an atmosphere of peace in troubled matrimonies. A husband’s consciousness that he is the cause of the “problem” when male children do not come, quenches all possibilities of quarrels and fights around that issue. Serenity around such a potentially explosive issue fosters a peaceful atmosphere. Peace in the home is pivotal to human wellbeing pursuits. Its significance becomes more evident when considering the difficulty of talking about any enlargement of capability sets or of the gaining of effective freedoms and so forth, amidst conflict, especially within homes.

To expatiate on the capital role of peaceful environments to the quest of the development of human beings, a consideration of Mahbub Ul Haq’s (1990) thinking is necessary. As a propounder of the Human Development approach, he qualifies the human being as follows:

People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. This may appear to be a simple truth. But it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth. (UNDP 1990)

The real wealth mentioned above takes root in the family. How could any nation harness any wealth and riches from its people when the basic unit of its community, the family, is in a constant tussle because there is no male child or not enough male children therein? How could parents create enabling environments for their offspring to enjoy any degree of long, healthy and creative lives if they fail to agree so that they can together contribute in giving their children the quality education they need to get their own capability sets enlarged?

As can be seen, the role of theme-song singing in *Wanted Another Son* is capital. Again, Bole Butake uses it to meet HD pursuits in his practice of C4D in Cameroon.

Operationalising Additional Human Development Pursuits in the Three Case Study Films

Having considered the ways through which the films under study encourage target community members to become and to do, it may be observed that the films do more than just encourage the audience to be this or that. They are, by themselves, demonstration centres par excellence of those skills in question. *Muh (Water)* virtually shows its viewers what it means to use repetition as a communication technique; *Ngroung Palaba* showcases a practical example of how to apply the resume technique in communication such that the listener or reader is not bored. The same *Ngroung Palaba* is also a practical demonstration platform of what it takes to confront a group of persons with challenges that their inherited culture poses to the socioeconomic development of the same people for whom those practices were setup. As for *Wanted Another Son*, it illustrates how to use songs to imprint main ideas in communication processes. All these skills learnt enlarge viewers' capability sets. Hence, they can choose, among others, to handle a classroom, to coordinate either community or team work, or again, play other roles that necessitate the intervention of good communicators.

Conclusion

This paper considers the ways in which Bole Butake's approach of Cinema For Development (C4D) in Cameroon contributes in creating necessary conditions that promote Human Development (HD) ideals in his target communities. To make its point, it case studies Bole Butake's three films, *Muh (Water)*, *Ngroung Palaba* and *Wanted Another Son*, so as to examine how he uses varied pedagogic techniques to meet his broadcast objectives. In effect, he focuses on repetition in *Muh (Water)*, explores cultural references and resume-making as teaching aids in *Ngroung Palaba*, and holds on theme-song singing in *Wanted Another Son* to increase the capability set of his target community members. In his practice of C4D, Bole Butake wants to meet two broadcast objectives: Encourage an engaged film viewing process such that a passive viewer becomes an active observer. Strive to transform the active viewer into an informed development agent, an architect in the processes that shape the kind of lifestyles they value or have reason to value for themselves. It is thus established that his desire to meet these objectives leads him to use repetition as an effective pedagogic technique in *Muh (Water)* to put across

important information on the effects of hazardous tree species planting to human development endeavours. This information turns out to be a potential source of empowerment to the film's target population. The hitherto ignorant and weak viewer in matters of man's influence (to his advantage or demise) on his environment, suddenly gains varied capabilities to change the course of his life. This is what the Human Development concept aims at. In *Ngroung Palaba*, Bole Butake uses cultural reference (Bamenda Traditional Regalia) and resume-making as powerful pedagogic techniques to heighten the degree of viewers' engagement towards the film's subject matter. The heighten degree of viewers' engagement plays a capital role in initiating a critical thinking process about some upheld traditional beliefs in viewers. Bole Butake strives at ensuring that viewers start being critical of cultural practices enshrined in cultural beliefs: viewers are led to become advocates of processes that rethink hitherto inherited cultural beliefs in real life situations. As concerns the contribution of theme-song singing in *Wanted Another Son*, it breeds peace in target audience members' homes. The role of a serene atmosphere for children upbringing cannot be overemphasised. If it is agreed that any enlargement of real or effective freedoms (capability sets) cannot be thought of in contexts of conflicts, especially around trivial issues, then this film actively promotes the Human Development ideals. As it stands, Bole Butake's use of repetition, cultural reference, resume-making and theme-song as pedagogic techniques in the three case study films, denotes his move to espouse Human Development ideals in his practice of C4D.

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