

**NATURE OF PLOTS IN BEMBA NOVELS: THE CASE  
OF CHILANGWA'S *SHELI WA CITATU*,  
KASONKOMONA'S *UBUSEKO MU BULANDA*, AND  
LAUNSHI'S *UKUTANGILA TEKUFIKA***

**By**

**Shadreck Kondala**

**A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literature**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA  
LUSAKA**

**2013**

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the nature of plots in the novels written in Bemba with particular reference to Chilangwa's *Sheli Wa Citatu*, Kasonkomona's *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, and Launshi's *Ukutangila Tekufika*. The study is a literary analysis in Zambian languages fiction and it is a qualitative textual analysis. Literary scholarly study of the nature of plots in Zambian languages fiction specifically Bemba is nonexistent as most works that have been written have been based on history, culture, and other literary analyses that strongly lean on orality.

To investigate the nature of plots in the above-mentioned novels, the researcher has employed two main theories. That is, the *Freytag's pyramid* of plot analysis and the *Denise Paulme's model*. Literary and plot devices that were employed to propel the plot have also been highlighted. The findings of this research reveal that the novels that are written in the Bemba language are not all made of *traditional* plots (simple). Some authors adopt a *traditional* style while others adopt a *complex* one. *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* has a *complex* plot on the basis that the novel follows more than one major character, that is, Ronald and Webster and it is not strictly chronological. On the contrary, *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ukutangila Tekufika* have *traditional* plots that are mainly chronological and their plots follow strictly the story of the main character, that is, Sheli and Lucy, respectively.

The study concludes that works in the Bemba language are relatively impressive. They portray an appropriate use of plot devices and other literary devices. There are some whose plots can be *traditional* while others can be *complex*. Moreover, it has been observed that written literature is still pervious to oral literature as was indicated by the general employment of oral techniques and devices in all the books that were studied.

In line with the findings, the following recommendations were made. Firstly, there is need to intensify literary criticism in Zambian languages and Bemba language in particular. Second, there is need to conduct studies to determine the extent to which plots in indigenous languages can coincide with those of the folktale. Thirdly, there is need to conduct similar studies in other Zambian languages and other indigenous languages across the world. Moreover, that the Ministry of Education adopts many of these books because of their content of didacticism. Finally, that the government should invigorate the promotion of publication of many literary works in Zambian languages.

To all those individuals who treasure and promote indigenous languages.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to my principal supervisor, Mr. Bwalya Lombe Musonda, for his professional advice and accurate criticism. I have benefited greatly from his profound knowledge of, and experience with both Literature in Zambian languages and Literature in English. He was there to advise and share my excitement with the topic and thus enabled me to turn a challenge into a wonderful experience. I also thank Dr. Cheela Chilala whose invaluable advice, support and useful criticism helped sharpen this dissertation. He also provided some useful literature about my topic of study. I also would like to express my profound appreciation to Dr. Panwell Munatamba who eagerly ensured that the work was progressing smoothly and constantly reviewed the work quickly yet carefully despite his busy schedule. His input was illuminating and his comments were thought-provoking. He has been there to support, advise and point out ways to strengthen the text.

Special thanks also go to Mr. N.W Mundia who taught me on the programme. Thank you very much sir for being very helpful and informative. Moreover, I ought to acknowledge the guidance and encouragement that I received from Dr. John Simwinga. My other thanks go to Mr. Limbali Muyendekwa for his support and for providing a conducive work environment. I also thank all erudite members in the Department of Literature and Languages for creating a friendly enabling environment.

I am also thankful to my friends who through their encouragement and support made this project successful. I am indebted to Sani David Mwanza for his friendship and support during the stormy times before and during the production of this work. My other thanks go to Mrs Siame, Benson Mkandawire, Mukundwe Siame, Francis Musonda, Chalwe Daka, Florence Tembo Mpandamabula, Sakubita Kalembwe, Mwape Ng'andwe and Theresa Phiri.

Finally, a million thanks go to my family, my brothers and sisters, for their tolerance of my absence. I thank my brother Nicholas Mwila Kondala for his encouragement and I thank my sister Deophister Chintu Kondala for her spiritual support. My profound gratitude goes to Mr. and Mrs Mukuma for their financial generosity and bounty hospitality. I also thank Ms Rahab Mayobela Kandulu for her spiritual and moral support. Moreover, I thank all those people who made a contribution during the production of this work although their names have not been mentioned due to lack of space. Thank you very much and may God grant you all the good desires of your heart.



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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by providing its background information, elucidating the particular problem under study as well as enouncing the significance of the exercise. Other items in this chapter include, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical basis of the analysis of findings, an outline of the operational definitions, the scope of the study, and the structure of the dissertation. Finally, the conclusion of the chapter will be given to summarise the discussion.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

A novel is a fictional prose work that is usually read for pleasure by many people. They enjoy the narration of the story, the presentation of characters therein, the settings, actions, thoughts that are communicated by the narrator and the interaction of the characters. Nevertheless, few are probably aware of the fundamental elements of the novel that ensure its artistic and aesthetic value. These elements are, plot, characters, conflict, setting, and theme. These are all essential in varying degrees. It should be pointed out that this study does not aim to investigate all these elements. It focuses on one element only that has been isolated and deemed the most important, that is, the plot. In *Poetics* Aristotle (1974:13) considers plot (*mythos*) to be the most important element of drama. Plot portrays the actions of characters that determine their happiness or misery.

Abrams (1992:137) defines plot in a dramatic or narrative work as "...the structure of its actions, as these are ordered and rendered towards achieving a particular emotional and artistic effect." It is an established fact that plot is a crucial element in creative works. It is

obligatory that a plot has a point of focus. The commonest point of focus is the conflict (Musonda, 2002:17). All plots are fueled by the conflict of the story and thus there can be no plot without conflict.

In simple terms, a conflict is the problem faced by the character. Thus, the reader's interest in the story is directed at its resolution, that is, how the character solves his/her problem. All the actions that the character takes/ or the thoughts that he/she meditates on in order to solve his/her problem are part of the plot. Therefore, plots can be based on the events or thoughts that characters experience which include emotional reactions of characters and their efforts to communicate their feelings to others.

The conflict, being the problem faced by characters, can take many forms. Two kinds of conflict can be distinguished, that is, conflict of will (where a protagonist's will conflicts with that of society or that of another character) and the conflict within oneself (referring to illusion versus reality). These two kinds of conflict can take different forms such as a conflict between two characters, videlicet, the protagonist versus the antagonist; character and the circumstances between him/her and the goal he/she wants to achieve; and the conflict between the opposing forces in terms of values and desires within the character himself (Musonda, 2002: 16).

Therefore, the plot of a novel unfolds as the novel's characters deal with conflict. It may be physical, as in *Cekesoni Aingila Ubusoja* (1975) by Stephen A. Mpashi in which a young man named Jackson joins the army. A similar conflict is evident in *Red Badge of Courage* (1966) by American author Stephen Crane, in which a young man goes to battle during the American Civil War (1861-1865). The conflict may also be ethical and involve making decisions that affect other people as depicted in *All the King's Men* (1946) by the American novelist Robert Penn Warren whose focus is on the effect that an ambitious Southern

politician named Willie Stark has upon his assistant, Jack Burden, and others. The conflict in a novel may also be emotional as portrayed in *A Death in the Family* (1998) by American writer James Agee which is about a family recovering from the death of a loved one.

As earlier stated, many conflicts in novels occur between two characters. For example, *Les misérables* (1862) by French poet and novelist Victor Hugo is about an obsessive policeman named Javert who pursues the character Valjean. *Intruder in the Dust* (1948) by American novelist William Faulkner portrays a different nature of conflict between a small group of characters and the rest of local society. In this book, which is set in the American South, after a black man, Lucas Beauchamp, is accused of murder, a white boy, his black friend, and an elderly woman help Beauchamp prove his innocence.

Conflict between an individual and society is evident in Mphasi's *Pano Calo* (1956) where the characters Kampinda and Namukonda, in their individualistic dispositions, come to be in conflict with their society. Other books with similar conflicts are Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964) where the will of the protagonists, Okonkwo and Ezeulu, respectively, conflicts with that of their society. *Don Quixote* (1991) by Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes is yet another novel where the character is in conflict with his society. The novel is the comic story of a nobleman who continually misinterprets his encounters with other people and thus has a unique view of his society.

The above notwithstanding, conflict can occur within a character's own mind as that character struggles internally. For instance, *La chute* (1956; *The Fall*, 1957) by French-Algerian writer Albert Camus is about a lawyer who lives without questioning his actions until a moment of personal revelation sets him forever to doubting himself. Another novel that portrays a character with inner turmoil is *The Moviegoer* (1961) by American author Walker Percy in which the main character, Binx Bolling, is a stockbroker searching for

meaning in his life. *Madame Bovary* (1857) is yet another by French novelist Gustave Flaubert who traces Emma Bovary's problems in three relationships as her marriage degenerates and her two lovers betray her. Madame Bovary perceives life as being dreary and unexciting. Moreover, she is married to a country doctor Charles Bovary who she perceives as mediocre. Emma's perception of her husband as mediocre sprung chiefly from his failure to conduct a successful operation of the fracture case in which he accidentally cut a patient's tendon. This failure made a lot of people in the society to start laughing at him. This element of mediocrity begins to affect Emma who starts looking for a companion better than the husband. She wishes away her life by thinking about a better companion who can redeem her from the present suffering. Therefore, the life of Emma becomes a dream. There exists a conflict between Madame Bovary's romantic ideals about life and the realities of her middle-class existence.

In line with Aristotle's prescription that there should be beginning, middle and end in the story, most novelists draw the reader in by having the novel's conflict develop over time. The reader sees the situation that provokes the conflict, the development of the conflict from episode to episode, and then the climax and the resolution of the conflict. This plot must have unity of action. It must be perceived by the reader as an 'artistic whole'. It must be comprehended as a single, complete and ordered structure of events directed towards the intended effect in which all the incidents are necessary and are closely connected. In this connectedness an attempt to remove one incident will lead to the dislocation of the whole. As the tension builds toward the main conflict, the author may introduce subplots that create and resolve other points of conflict. Aristotle (1974:18) explains that as plot progresses, it should arouse expectations in the reader about the future course of events and actions including how the characters will respond to them.

However, some novelists reverse the reader's expectations by describing the aftermath of the story, then going back in time to reveal how the characters arrived at that point. These stories that start in the middle of the events or in the final can be said to be *in medias res*. The expression *in medias res* or *medias in res* is a Latin term which literally means "into the middle of things". This type of narrative technique involves beginning of the story at the mid-point or at the conclusion and it utilises the flashback to establish the setting, character and conflict. Its strength lies in the fact that it opens the story with dramatic action rather than exposition to set up characters and situation (Wikipedia visited on 02/10/2011). A classic example of such a work is Homer's *Odyssey*. Thus, *in medias res* plots differ from progressive plots which start with the beginning of the story and follow chronologically as events happen.

Along the lines of Aristotle's concept of unity of action, Forster (1927) touches on the connectedness of events in the story. This connectedness is clearly implied in his definition of plot as "narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality." Thus, plot is a series of events that depend on one another. It is not a series of unrelated episodes. Forster distinguishes between a 'story' and a 'plot'. This distinction is germane as it accentuates the crucial role of the plot in the story and thereby eliminates the possibility of using the terms 'story' and 'plot' interchangeably.

He explains that a story is a narrative of events arranged in their time sequence; it simply tells us what happened and in what order. It is the time sequence which turns a random collection of episodes into a story. However, the usefulness of chronological sequence only lies in the act of making the audience want to know what happens next. The only skill of a storyteller is his/her ability to wield the weapon of suspense. He/she makes the audience eager to discover the next event in the sequence.



Interestingly, a plot is also a narrative of events except that its emphasis falls on causality. The distinction is exemplified by Forster thus: ‘The king died and then the queen died,’ is a story. ‘The king died, and then the queen died of grief,’ is a plot. In this way, even though the time sequence is preserved, it is dominated by the sense of causality. Forster condenses the difference by the statement: “If it is in a story we say ‘and then?’ If it is in a plot we ask ‘why?’” ([www.storyinsight.com](http://www.storyinsight.com) visited on 27/05/2011).

Forster adds that a plot demands intelligence and memory on the part of the reader. It cannot be appreciated without intelligence. Intelligence enables the reader to remember incidents and create connecting threads between them. This justifies the novelist’s tendency to delay explanations and introduce human mystery to the narrative. Mystery is an essential element to a plot. The novelist can leave the reader’s mind behind, brooding, while he allows the other part to proceed ([www.storyinsight.com](http://www.storyinsight.com) visited on 27/05/2011).

It should be noted that Forster’s differentiation of story from plot is similar to the Russian formalist’s differentiation between *fabula*, that is a story, and *sjuzet*, that is plot. In this case *fabula* ‘story’ refers to the basic story-line of the narrative which comprises the narrated events themselves in their logical order while the *sjuzet* ‘plot’ refers to the organisation in the narrative process which includes changes in sequence, flashbacks, incidental comments and descriptions, and omissions that do not contribute directly to the dynamic chain of events (Elam, 2002:107).

Two types of plot can be identified, that is *traditional (simple)* and *complex*. *Simple* plots are usually episodic and chronologically arranged. An episodic plot features distinct episodes that are related to one another but can be read individually almost as stories by themselves. On the other hand, in *complex* plots the story builds on itself so that each episode evolves out of a previous one and produces another one.

Many of the earliest novels had episodic plots. For example, *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554; *Lazaro of Tormes*) is an anonymous picaresque Spanish novel that follows the adventures of a rogue. In picaresque novels the hero is generally adventurous and mischievous but he is still liked by the reader. The other Spanish novel with an episodic plot which became one of the world's best-known literary works is *Don Quixote* (1991) by Miguel de Cervantes which follows the travels of a Spanish nobleman who encounters adventures and misfortunes after he strikes out to combat the world's injustices. Although the novel has a plot, it is structured so that if the reader skips an episode, he or she can still follow Don Quixote's progress with little loss of understanding.

Mark Twain also uses an episodic plot in the novel *Huckleberry Finn* (1991). It is about a boy called Huck Finn who runs away from his hometown and voyages down the Mississippi River on a raft with an escaped slave named Jim. The episodes in *Huckleberry Finn* revolve around the points when Huck and Jim leave their raft and meet people in the towns and villages that border the river. In between these episodes, they retreat to their raft and contemplate their experiences as they drift south on the water.

It should be noted that the *bildungsroman* also follows a *traditional* plot. *Bildungsroman* is a type of novel about the early years of a person's life, or a person's moral or psychological growth. The term *bildungsroman* is a derivation from German and it means "novel of formation" or "novel of education," (Abrams, 1997:121). The *bildungsroman* is also known by another German term called *erzieherungsroman*. Abrams (ibid) comments that, "The subject of the *bildungsroman* and *erzieherungsroman* " ... is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, as he passes from childhood through varied experiences – and usually through a spiritual crisis – into maturity and recognition of his identity and role in the world." The *bildungsroman* does not trace adventures but stages of growth in the life of a

character. It should be noted that the *bildungsroman* tradition follows a strict chronology of the narration of events in the story. Thus, in this sense *bildungsroman* novels have *traditional* plots. Examples of novels of this type include: *Chaka* (1989) in which the South African novelist Thomas Mofolo presents Chaka's life from childhood misery, to his great fame and finally to his death. The other good example is *David Copperfield* (1850) in which English novelist Charles Dickens traces David's life from childhood misery to worldly success. Another novel by the same author, *Great Expectations* (1991) in which Pip's life is traced from troubled childhood in the midst of poverty to success at which point he finally becomes a gentleman, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (2003), in which Irish novelist James Joyce records Stephen Dedalus's emergence as a man and as an artist. Moreover, *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (1959) by American author Paule Marshall describes the teenage years of Selina Boyce, who grows up in Brooklyn, New York, as the child of immigrants from Barbados. In *All the Pretty Horses* (1992) by American author Cormac McCarthy, 16-year-old John Grady Cole and two companions travel from Texas to Mexico, where their adventures become rites of passage to manhood.

As indicated earlier, while some novels can have *simple* plots, others can have *complex* plots. A *complex* plot is one that follows more than one major character or has more than one major story line. An example of a novel with a *complex* plot is *War and Peace* (1995) by Russian writer Leo Tolstoy. This book is concerned with the histories of five families from 1805 to 1814 and with the Russian military campaign against the invading French army led by Napoleon I.

Furthermore, the subject matter that can be covered by novels with *complex* plot is virtually inexhaustible. For example, the novel *War and Peace* covers all segments of society. It covers aristocrats and peasants, officers and common soldiers, diplomats and courtiers, town

life and country life, flirtations, galas, hunting, and harsh realistic scenes of clashing armies. *War and Peace* (1995) is in contrast with the novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1957) by English author Jane Austen which covers a narrower subject matter. Although it is set roughly in the same period as *War and Peace*, it focuses on one upper-class family, the Bennets, predominantly on the Bennet daughters' search for husbands (Madden, 2008).

*Simple* plots have their own requirements just as *complex* ones. However, those novelists and playwrights who decide to experiment on plot tend to ignore these prescriptions. Some deliberately design their works to avoid the expectations that the reader has formed on *traditional* plots while others tend to omit a recognisable plot altogether. They can interrupt the main story with subplots, move back and forth in time, or merge fact with fiction, or refuse to provide a clearly definable beginning, middle and end to the story. An example of such writers is the English novelist Lawrence Sterne. In his work *Tristram Shandy* (1970) Tristram, the main character, is not introduced until well into the novel but the reader is provided with the opinions of Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy about the character. In defence of his style, Sterne has this to say:

Writing, when properly managed, (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a different name for conversation: As no one, who knows what he is about in good company, would venture to talk all—so no author, who understands the just boundaries of decorum and good breeding, would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding, is to halve this matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself (Madden, 2008).

In a similar kind of way, 20th century writers began to alter the flow of the plot more often. An example is the Irish writer James Joyce whose novel *Ulysses* (1966) is set in Dublin, Ireland, with a focus on the young writer Stephen Dedalus and the married couple Leopold and Molly Bloom. Joyce crowds his plot with details of Dublin life and the random thoughts of his characters. Ultimately, Joyce leaves several mysteries about his characters unresolved.

More to the point, he does not explain what happens to the two central characters, Stephen and Leopold.

Playing with the structure of time is yet another way authors experiment with plot. Ngugi wa Thiong'o in *A Grain of Wheat* (1968) plays with the structure of time through his use of flashbacks and sometimes flashback within flashback. Furthermore, American writer Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. experiments with time in a different way in *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969). This novel is about a man who comes "unstuck in time" and moves back and forth to different moments in his life. Moreover, in *Rayuela* (1963) by Argentine writer Julio Cortázar, the preface gives instructions as to the varying orders in which the parts of the novel can be read. It offers the reader several different possibilities in terms of plot. Dominican-born author Julia Alvarez also experimented with time but stayed within the bounds of realism in *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* (1991). In a similar manner, Alvarez applies reverse chronology in which she moves her plot backward through time rather than forward where each successive chapter describes an earlier point in the characters' lives.

Besides, playing with time, some novelists blur the boundaries between fact and fiction. This was done by the American author Truman Capote in his novel *In Cold Blood* (1966). Capote describes this book as a *nonfiction novel*. It provides an account of the murder of four family members. Other writers tell a story from several different points of view, drawing attention to the plot as an element at the whim and mercy of the author. Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier uses this approach in *El acoso* (1956; *Manhunt*, 1959), about a man trying to escape from his political enemies.

Experiments with plots are not only performed to physical texts but also to hypertext works. The origin of hypertexts is traced back to late 20th and early 21st centuries where authors

began to use computers to create works which are collections of separate computer files that are linked so that readers can easily move from one file to another. In a hypertext work the reader can begin with one file and then make choices about which links to access and read. A hypertext work allows the reader to determine the course of the story as it provides many possible choices at each stage. It has a great number of potential plot lines.

It is against this background that it becomes necessary to investigate the nature of plots in Chilangwa's *Sheli Wa Citatu*, Kasonkomona's *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, and Launshi's *Ukutangila Tekufika*; all of them being novels written in Bemba. Plots in the above-mentioned novels have not been investigated before by any scholar. This is the knowledge gap that needs to be filled. The criterion for selection of adopted books is based strictly on those fictional works which are categorised as novels by length and thematic focus. However, this was done with the acknowledgement of the fact that some fictional works straddle the definitional lines of the forms novella and novel. Thus, the terms are regarded as inexact rather than exact. It should be pointed out that most fictional works in Bemba do not qualify as novels in terms of length and thematic focus. Generally, most of them, just as in other Zambian languages, are novellas. Besides, the inclination by many a Zambian language author to produce a novella rather than a novel can be attributed to the following two reasons. First, the calibre of early writers in Zambian languages was low in view of the fact that most of them lacked formal training in the writing of books, particularly fiction. Second, most authors and publishers prefer novellas to novels for economic reasons as readership for works in Zambian languages is extremely poor. Many Zambians, both in the past and present, generally have a tendency to look down on indigenous languages (Kashoki, 1976; 1977; 1979; 1982; 1997 and Musonda, 1970).

It is also important to comment briefly on the language in which these works have been written. Bemba or Ibibemba is part of the Bantu language family spoken in the southern part of Africa. The total estimated number of Bemba speakers both within and outside Zambia is put between three and six million (Kashoki, 2009:8). It is used and understood over the whole of Northern province and adjacent areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), specifically in Shaba province; the southern part of Tanzania, specifically those areas that lie immediately along the border with Zambia; over much of the Central province and it is the *lingua franca* of the Copperbelt province; that is, it is the language that is used for communication between people not sharing a mother tongue (Wikipedia visited on 16/08/2011). Although varieties of the Bemba language are spoken by other related ethnic groups which include the Chishinga, Ushi, Lala, Lamba, Ng'umbo, Lunda, Swaka, Tabwa and Unga, among others, this study is based on the variety of the Bemba language that is considered as Standard Bemba which is also a variety spoken by the distinct Bemba group mainly found in the Kasama area, Chinsali and part of Mpika.

## **1.2 Operational Definitions**

In this study reference has been made to some literary terms which are likely to be misunderstood if the researcher does not take the initiative to contextualise the sense in which they are used.

### **1.2.1 Plot**

Plot in this study refers to the structure of the actions of the narrative work as these are ordered and rendered towards achieving a particular emotional and artistic effect.

### **1.2.2 Traditional plot**

The word ‘*traditional*’ in this paper does not refer to the ‘traditional’ Bemba. *Traditional plot* refers to the *traditional* ‘western’ plot where events in the story follow each other chronologically as they happen. In this dissertation *traditional* plots will also refer to *simple* plots.

### **1.2.3 Complex plot**

*Complex* plots will refer to two types of plot: first, where plots follow more than one major character or have more than one major story line. Second, to experimental plots in which the main story has been interrupted with subplots; moving back and forth in time, or merging fact with fiction.

### **1.2.4 Dénouement**

In this study the words *dénouement* and the *resolution* will be used interchangeably seeing that the two are usually closely tied together and it can be confusing to the reader in distinguishing between them. Strictly speaking, the *resolution* refers to the point in the story where the character solves his/her conflict or has his/her conflict solved by someone while the *dénouement* refers to the ending of the story. In the *dénouement* (French for ‘unknotting’) any remaining secrets, questions or mysteries which remain after the *resolution* are solved by the characters or explained by the author.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The analysis of the plots of literary works in the Bemba language, and Zambian languages in general, is apparently nonexistent. This is one aspect of study that has escaped the attention of many literary scholars in Zambia despite being important. Relying on the literature that has been reviewed on the subject so far, one can confidently state that nothing has been done to study the nature of the plots in the novels written in Zambian, languages and in the Bemba



language in particular. Although a number of scholars have written impressively about the Bemba people, their history and their culture and even their literature, there is hardly any documentation about plot analysis in Bemba literary works. There has been lack of serious scholarly attention to analyse literary works in Bemba, particularly the analysis of plots in novels. This is the knowledge gap that this research strives to fill. Stated as a question the problem reads as follows: ‘What is the nature of plots that have been employed in the novels written in Bemba with specific reference to Chilangwa’s *Sheli Wa Citatu*, Kasonkomona’s *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* and Launshi’s *Ukutangila Tekufika*?’

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this research was to evaluate the nature of plots that exist in the novels written in Bemba with particular reference to Chilangwa’s *Sheli Wa Citatu*, Kasonkomona’s *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* and Launshi’s *Ukutangila Tekufika*.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To investigate whether plots in the novels in Bemba language are *traditional*.
- ii. To establish whether there are novels in the Bemba language that employ *complex* plots and indicate them, if there are any.
- iii. To evaluate the various techniques used in the development of plots in Bemba novels.

#### **1.6 Research Questions**

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

- i. Are plots in Bemba novels *traditional*?

- ii. Are there any novels in Bemba language in which *complex* plots have been employed? Indicate them if there are any.
- iii. What are some of the techniques that have been widely employed in the development of plots in Bemba novels?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study, it was hoped, could contribute to understanding the nature of plots that are/or have been used in novels written in Bemba. This study might bridge a knowledge gap that exists in terms of the nature of plots used in novels written in Bemba and thereby contribute to the growth of knowledge on the Bemba literature. Moreover, it was hoped that a clear understanding of the plots that have been used in Bemba novels would also shed light on other fictional works that have been written in different Zambian languages. Given the presence of similarities between the works in Bemba and those of other writers from other Zambian languages, it was hoped that this study could serve as a model for analogous studies of fictional prose works in other Zambian languages such as Kaonde, Lunda, Luvale, Lozi, Nyanja and Tonga, among others. Thus, it was anticipated that the knowledge in this study would also be useful to writers in Zambian languages other than Bemba. The assumption was that it would provide them with information on existing plots, types and structures.

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

Seeing that all studies in literature of African languages are historical surveys (as will be discussed in the review of literature), none provides a satisfactory methodology which can be used to analyse the works of the authors under study. However, the acknowledgement of the universality of the elements of the novel, particularly plot, justifies the use of the *Freytag's pyramid*. Its strength lies in plotting the course of the conflict of the story.

Nonetheless, the above-mentioned theoretical basis, in solitary application, poses some limitations. It is incapable of exhausting various structural plot types. Hence, there is need for another theory to complement it in this task. This other theoretical basis will be derived from Denise Paulme whose work, the *Denise Paulme's model*, is significant in understanding the structure of the narrative in order to achieve artistic effect. The model is as a result of her extensive study of oral literature in Africa. It is important to say that it is not possible to understand African-language literature without understanding oral literature. The importance of oral literature and its influence on written literature in African languages cannot be overemphasised. Oral literature in this sense refers to oral prose which exists in form of myths (stories that illustrate what people believe in whether or not it makes sense to an outsider); legends (usually heroic stories told over and over for generations. They usually start as history which overtime is filled with fancy); and folktales (stories of ordinary people) which exist in various forms such as trickster narratives, monster narratives, dilemma narrative, fables, puzzles (Finnegan, 1970; and Okpewho, 1984).

### **1.8.1 The Freytag's pyramid**

The *Freytag's pyramid* is associated with Gustav Freytag (1816-1895), a German novelist and dramatist who developed this type of analysis of plot in his work *Technique of the Drama* (1863). The *Freytag's pyramid* is especially useful in plotting the course of the conflict from the beginning to the end. *Traditional* plots are relatively easier to plot than *complex* plots due to their sequential nature. However, the basic idea about plot and its progression that the *Freytag's pyramid* communicates can be traced back to Aristotle (384-322 BCE). The similarities and differences between Aristotle's and Freytag's conceptions of plot can be deciphered clearly by comparing their diagrams below:

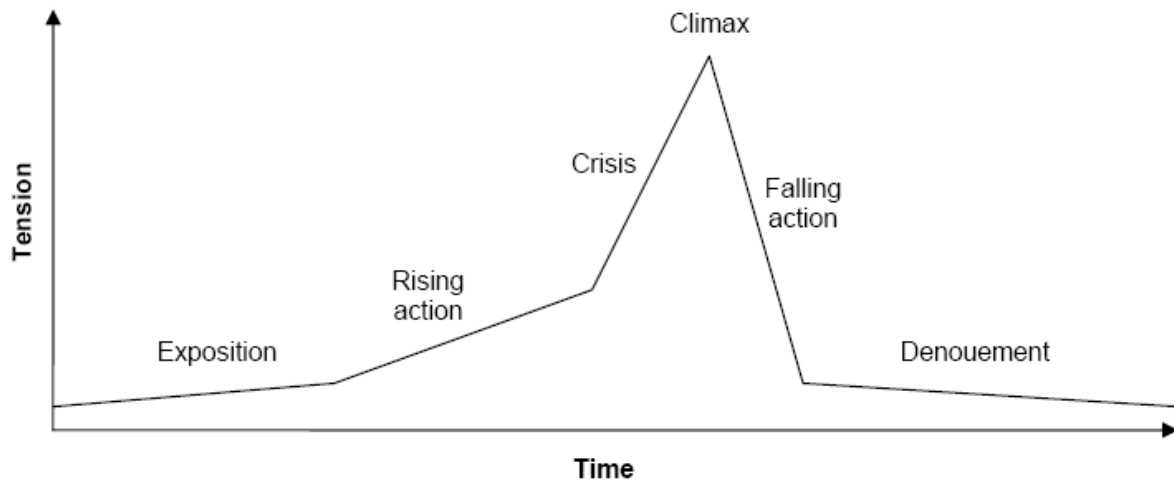


Figure 1.1. Aristotle's dramatic arc.

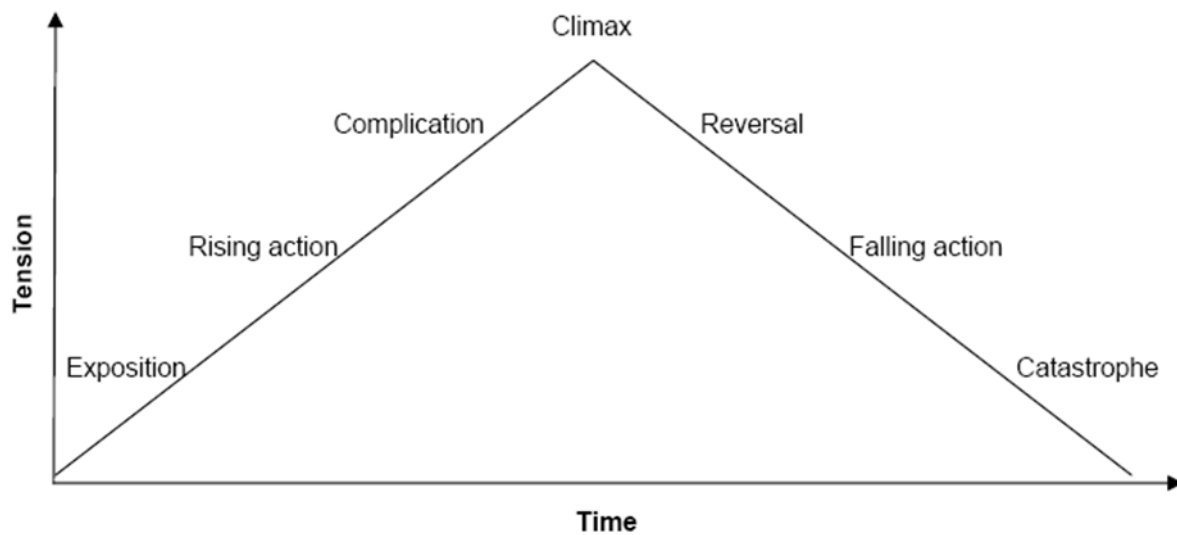


Figure 1.2. Freytag's pyramid.

It should be noted that the word *dénouement* which means ‘untying’ or ‘unknotting’ has French origins. It is derived from the Old French word *denoer* which means “to untie”. Thus, *dénouement* is the unraveling or untying of the complexities of a plot. It is obvious that the word was not used by Aristotle originally. Aristotle was Greek. However, over the years it has found its way into the Aristotle’s dramatic arc perhaps because of it being used interchangeably with the word *resolution* with which it shares meaning.

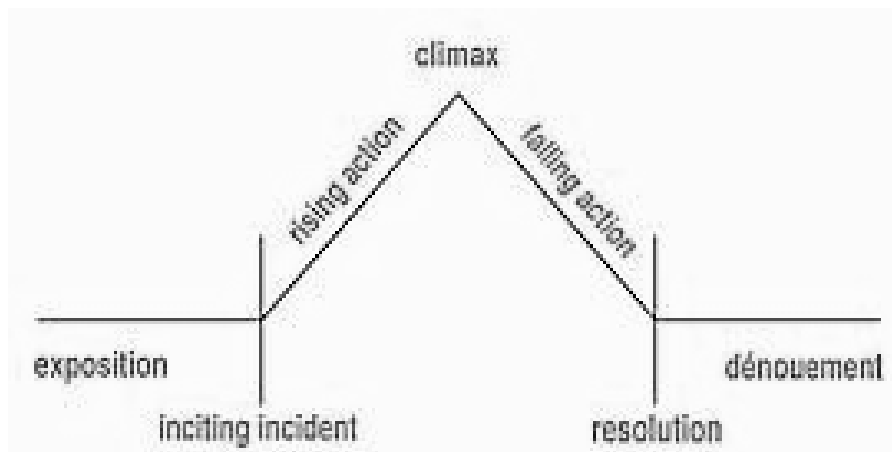
Aristotle (1974) mentions some fundamental ideas about plot in his definition of tragedy. He states that a plot must have the beginning, middle and the end. This is the same idea that is echoed by Gustav Freytag. Aristotle also argues that a plot must have a unity of action. The unity of action entails that all the incidents included in the story must be necessary; none of these necessary incidents can be omitted without affecting the meaning of the whole text. In this study Freytag is preferred to Aristotle since his pyramid is an improvement on Aristotle's ideas; and thus his pyramid manages to analyse plots more successfully. Therefore, Aristotle's dramatic arc will not be employed in the analysis of novels.

The *Freytag's pyramid* incorporates conflict in the process of analysing the plot seeing that plot and conflict are virtually inseparable. Pickering and Hoeper (1986:20) as quoted by Musonda (2002: 17) explain that "... a major function of the plot can be said to be the representation of characters in action." Hence, when plotting the course of the conflict what is followed is the character's progression in resolving the conflict he/she creates or finds himself/herself in.

As the plot unfolds, it goes through the following stages: *exposition*, *rising action*, *climax*, *falling action*, and *resolution*. In the *exposition* characters are introduced. The author can use it to set the scene, provide background information and establish the situation and date the action. The situation can be established by way of necessary descriptive information. The second main step is the *rising action*. However, before the *rising action* is propelled, something happens to begin the action; a single event usually signals the beginning of the main conflict. This event is called the *inciting incident* and it is sometimes called the *complication*. In the *rising action* the story builds up and gets more exciting. Besides, the conflict is introduced in this phase if it has been omitted in the *exposition*. Following is the *climax*, also called the *crisis*, which is the event that the *rising action* builds up to and that the

*falling action* follows. It is a point of emotional intensity and directly precipitates the *resolution* of the conflict. It is the moment of greatest tension in a story. In most instances, the *climax* is the most exciting event. For example, in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, the *climax* happens when Oedipus discovers that he has already committed mother incest and patricide. Next is the *falling action* which involves events that happen as a result of the *climax* and indicates to the reader that the story will soon end. Following the *falling action* is *resolution* which indicates directly to the reader how the conflict has been settled. In this phase it is shown how the character solves the main conflict or how someone solves it for him or her. Like the *inciting incident*, the *resolution* is quite brief. The *dénouement* (French for 'untying') comes last. In the *dénouement*, any remaining secrets, questions or mysteries which remain after the *resolution* are solved by the characters or explained by the author. However, it is worth mentioning that the *dénouement* can be the most difficult part of the plot to identify, as it is often very closely tied to the *resolution*.

Stages of the *Freytag's pyramid* mentioned above can be represented in the diagram below.



(Source: **English 250 Fiction Unit: The Freytag's pyramid** from

[http://users.aber.ac.uk/jpm/ellsa/ellsa\\_openboat3.html](http://users.aber.ac.uk/jpm/ellsa/ellsa_openboat3.html) visited on 29/05/2011)

### 1.8.2 Denise Paulme Model

This model is associated with Denise Paulme (1976:19-50). She identified seven structural plot types based on the events or actions that take place in the narrative. The first is *ascendancy* where at the beginning of this type of story, or specifically plot, there is *lack*. This is followed by *amelioration* (improvement) that ends with the liquidation of *lack* (*lack* is eliminated). There is a narrative progression of improvement. Setbacks are possible and likely but they do not change the essential movement of the plot.

Next is *descendance* which begins with a normal situation and then deteriorates into *lack*. The deterioration is triggered by the violation of a rule by the hero. The sequence that follows is permanent negative condition.

The third plot type is *cyclical* which starts from the one situation to the other and back to the first one. It is *cyclical* in that the actions go in a cycle. It ends with the situation that it started with. A *cyclical* plot can take one of the forms below. In one occasion, it can start with *lack*, then *amelioration*, and then due to the protagonist's violation of an interdiction, *lack* is restored. However, on another occasion it can start with the normal situation to *lack* then back to the normal situation. It combines the *ascendancy* and *descendance* structural types.

The fourth is the *spiral* type. The progression towards improvement in this type of plot suffers in the first round of *amelioration* but improves in the second round. The first round begins with *lack* which is then cleared through *amelioration*. However, later, usually, due to the action of an enemy, *lack* is restored or impending. The hero overcomes his adversary in the second round of *amelioration* and improves his condition as well as eliminates his opponent. This is the case in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* (1983).

The fifth type is the *mirror image*. This structural type involves two main characters taking equal sequence of tests but their actions are inversely related; one is good and the other bad. The positive character is rewarded while the negative one is punished. These two characters are usually friends.

The next type is the *hour glass* which is similar to the *mirror image*. However, while in the *mirror image* the actions of the two characters are parallel to each other, the actions of the two characters in the *hour glass* are in opposition to each other. The protagonist moves from *lack* to normal situation whereas the antagonist descends from normal situation to *lack*.

The final and the seventh is *complex* type. This type shares a similarity with the *hour glass* by having two characters opposing each other. However, its distinguishing characteristic is that, as opposed to the *hour glass* where the actions of the two characters occur simultaneously, the two characters occur in a sequence. There is an alternation of the central characters where the narrator commences with the positive character in the first part of the narrative and then moves on to the negative character in the second part.

### **1.8.3 Data Analysis**

After the novels had been read, analysis of this data followed. The plots were categorised chiefly in terms of *traditional* plots (that is, those novels whose events are chronologically arranged as they happen and their plots follow only one major character) on one hand and *complex* on the other. In the analysis of plots the following questions were be asked:

- a) What is the conflict on which the plot turns?
- b) What is the description of the plot in terms of *exposition, rising action, climax, falling action* and *resolution*?



- c) Is the development of the plot strictly chronological, or is the chronology rearranged in some ways?
- (i) Is the story presented chronologically?
  - (ii) If the story does not begin at the beginning, where does it begin? Why has the author chosen to begin at that point?
  - (iii) Does the story move us back in time to some earlier point in the story? If so, how often and for what reasons?
  - (iv) Are we ever taken into the future and if so how is it done?
  - (v) Are there any gaps or skips in the story?
- d) What are the chief episodes that make up the plot?
- e) Has plot unity been achieved? Do individual episodes logically relate to one another?

By answering the above-mentioned questions, the researcher revealed the nature of plots including the narrative techniques and literary devices used. The researcher also indicated the number of novels that exhibited *traditional* plots vis-à-vis those with *complex* plots.

To supplement the structural organisation of the plots, *Denise Paulme's model* of structural plot types was used. Novels were measured against the seven structural plot types discussed earlier.

The above theoretical orientations were very useful. First, the *Freytag's pyramid* was not only going to enhance understanding of the progression in terms of the stages that were followed but also highlighted the chronology of the plots of the works under study. Secondly, *Denise Paulme's model* was going to highlight the artistic beauty that arose from the structure of the plot.

### **1.9 Scope of the study**

This study was restricted to plots that had been used in novels written in Zambian languages and Bemba in particular. The findings of this research would not be generalised to encompass plots that have been employed in the fiction that has been authored by Zambians in English since it is primarily concerned with novels in Bemba. Appreciating the fact that the study concerned novels in a Zambian language, its findings could be generalised to apply to novels in other Zambian languages where appropriate. However, not all the novels in Bemba will be analysed but only those which had been selected by the researcher.

### **1.10 Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation comprises five chapters with the first chapter serving to introduce the study by providing background information to it, an elucidation of the particular problem under study as well as an enunciation of the significance of the exercise. It also includes statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the theoretical basis on which the findings had been analysed, an outline of the operational definitions of this study, and scope of the study. The chapter concludes with the statement about the structure of the dissertation.

The second chapter handles literature review. The chapter is segmented into three sections: the introduction, review of literature in African languages, both local and international; and the influence of oral literature in novels written in Zambian languages. The chapter ends with a summary of the literature reviewed.

The third chapter of this dissertation provides the synopses of the texts under study. The fourth chapter is based on the actual analysis of the texts under study while the fifth and final chapter focuses on the conclusion and recommendations.

## **1.11 Conclusion**

In this chapter a clear background of the study with regard to the nature of plots has been given. Other aspects included are the statement of the problem, the purpose, the objectives and the significance. In order to ease comprehension and avoid ambiguity as well as vagueness of any kind, the following have been done: definitions have been contextualised, scope indicated, and the structure of the dissertation has been provided.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

As a follow up to the preceding chapter, this chapter reviews related literature which has a direct bearing on this study. The review has been segmented into two main sections, namely, the review of African literature both local and international, and the influence of oral literature on the African-language literature. Thereafter, the conclusion serves to reiterate and tie up the major points of the chapter.

#### 2.1 African Literature

Africa has a long literary tradition. Notwithstanding, very little of this literature was written down before the 20th century. In the absence of widespread literacy (literacy in this sense being the ability to read and write), African literature was primarily oral and passed from one generation to the next through memorisation and recitation. It should also be pointed out that works written in African languages and traditional oral texts went virtually unacknowledged until the late 20th century after which they started to receive increased recognition to this day. Lutato (1980:1) aptly comments on this increased recognition of African languages:

Although critical interest in African literature has increased since the 1960s, most attention has been focused on the works written in European languages. Those works in various indigenous languages have largely been neglected. This has happened in spite of the fact that in Southern Africa, for example, African literature in the indigenous languages has a much longer history than that of written in European languages by Africans.

Earlier on, Darthone (1975:137) made precisely the same point as Lutato when he drew a comparison between African-language literature and literature written in European languages

by Africans. He reveals that by the end of the 20th century, Sotho and Xhosa writers had produced quite a sizeable body of works, both original compositions and renditions of oral narratives, while the first works in the European language in Southern Africa does not appear until the 1940s. In fact, Darthone (1975) argues that African literature in some areas has a longer history as evidenced by the literature in Hausa and Swahili which dates back to the 17th and 18th centuries, respectively.

Regrettably, most scholarly attention to the study of African-language literature has been historical surveys. Lutato (1980) sheds light on this nature of scholarly attention by alluding to Albert Gerard's study of Xhosa, Sotho, Zulu and Amharic. He argues that the express purpose of the said study was 'to trace, collect, record, and so as to preserve and make generally available, as much evidence as possible concerning the beginnings and development of written literature in selected parts of sub-Saharan Africa.' The study by Gerard (1971) is not the only historical survey because Lutato views the scholarly works of Darthone and much of D.P. Kunene to have similar aims.

Some scholars indeed bemoan the perceived low status of African languages. They wish to restore and reassure people about the usefulness of the said languages. One of these is Alain Ricard (2004) whose main disputation was the need to establish the intricate connection between language and literature. He explains (2004: viii): "One cannot separate the theories about literature from theories about language. The low intellectual estimation accorded to African languages is the product of ignorance and has had a profound impact on research in the oral tradition as well as on African literatures written in African languages." Ricard's above observation notwithstanding, his study creates a vivid impression to the reader that it is also a historical survey inasmuch as it primarily traces the beginnings and developments of literatures in some parts of Africa.

Most of Africa's written literature is in European languages, owing to European colonisation of the continent from the 16th century to the mid-20th century. However, the Amharic language is an exception as regards the colonial language dominance as it has been used in written form in the Horn of Africa for centuries and is an official language of Ethiopia. In nearly all African countries, European languages superseded African languages in government, education, business, and, to a great extent, in daily communication in the colonial times; these languages still dominate. Indubitably, the most widely used European language in African literature is English, followed by French and Portuguese, respectively.

It is worth mentioning that written literature in Africa came by dint of literacy programmes that were introduced mainly by missionaries. Africans started producing fiction after acquiring literacy skills, that is, reading and writing. A brief account of the introduction of literacy in Africa will, therefore, be important in order to highlight the development of African-language literature in African countries. To start with, literacy in Arabic came to Africa with the introduction of the Islamic religion into the kingdom of Ghana in the 11th century by the Tuaregs, a tribal people of the Sahara. As Islam spread into other parts of West Africa through *jihads* (holy wars), literacy spread as well. Islam depended on the Qur'an (Koran), its sacred scripture, and required converts to memorise passages from it. From the 7th century on, Arab influence was also prevalent on the east coast of Africa, where Arab traders and slavers were active. The Arabic script was eventually adapted into Swahili. Swahili serves as the *lingua franca* in Central and East Africa. It served as a language for trade and other cross-cultural communication.

The other avenue that facilitated the introduction of literacy to sub-Saharan Africa was Christianity. Christian missionaries became active on the continent in the second half of the 19th century especially after the abolition of the slave trade and the rise of interest among

Europeans in other types of trade. The schools that they established were intended to train local helpers for the missionaries. However, these schools later served European colonial administrations and commercial concerns by preparing low-level functionaries. It should be pointed out that in the countries where Muslims introduced literacy, the literature produced is mainly in African languages while in countries where Christian missionaries introduced literacy, the majority of literature is in English, French, or Portuguese (Owomoyela, 2008). Few books were written in African languages for the purposes of aiding the spread of Christianity. To lengthen the odds, few novels have been published in African languages as compared to those that have been published in English or other European languages.

Therefore, one of the strong points to come out of the above-mentioned observations is the assertion that African-language literature has received little scholarly attention, in part because of a Western bias in favour of literature in European languages. There are very few African languages that have comparatively substantial literature and whose literature has been analysed by scholars to some respectable degree. The best-known literatures in African languages include those in Yoruba and Hausa in West Africa; Sotho, Xhosa, and Zulu in southern Africa; and Amharic, Somali, and Swahili in East Africa. The literatures in the other African languages that have not been mentioned above are quite exiguous. It should be pointed out that this study, nonetheless, covers only African literatures south of the Sahara and excludes the literatures of North Africa principally because they share greater affinities with the Arab world than with sub-Saharan peoples and cultures.

It is important to consider the situation of African-language literature in specificity obtaining in different parts of the continent. In West Africa, missionaries were active in translating the Bible into African languages though their primary aim was not to provide the masses with some literacy but to serve the project of evangelisation (Ricard, 2004: 75). However, as

literacy skills were attained, some African writers started producing fiction in their mother-tongue languages. Very few languages in West Africa have a substantial production of literature. Among the few is the Yoruba language. Some of the prominent novelists in this language include D.O Fagunwa and Duro Ladipo. Literature in Yoruba only increased in the 20th century. Ricard (2004: 80) explains that “D.O Fagunwa’s *Ogboju Ode ninu Igbo Irunmale* was the second novel to be published in Yoruba in 1938 by missionary press (the first being I.B. Thomas’s novelette, *Itan Emi Segilola*, 1930). Translations of some works of fiction originally written in Yoruba into European languages have been done by few scholars. For example, Wole Soyinka translated Fagunwa’s text ‘*The Forest of a Thousand Daemons*’.

Besides Yoruba literature is Igbo literature. Despite Igbo being Nigeria’s third most numerous ethnic group (after Hausa and Yoruba), its development of literary production has been dawdling. The development, however, progressed after the civil war as reported by Chukwuma Azuonye (1992), a professor of Igbo literature at the University of Nigeria at Nsukka.

In East Africa, a system of writing for the Somali language was not developed until the early 20th century, long after writing in Arabic had become widespread among Somali-speaking peoples. Literature in Somali is predominantly in verse. Its greatest figure is Sayyid Maxamed Cabdulle Xasan, who was born in the mid-19th century and died in 1921. He criticised the European colonisers and their native collaborators in such poems as “*Xuseenow caqligu kaa ma baxo idam Ilaahaye*” (*O Xuseen, God willing may good sense never leave you*). The short novel “*Qawdhan iyo Qoran*” (*Qawdhand and Qoran*, 1967), by Somali writer Axmed Cartan Xaarge, is about two lovers who cannot marry because a marriage for the woman had already been arranged. Although literature in Amharic, now the official language of Ethiopia, did not flourish until the 20th century, much earlier writings do exist,



including the anonymous 17th-century religious works *Mazmura Dāwit* (*The Psalter of David*) and *Waddaseē Māryām* (*Praises of Mary*), (Owomoyela, 2008).

Literature in Swahili dates back to the 17th century. Early writings, by Muslim scholars and clerics, consist largely of celebrations in verse of religious figures. Modern Swahili literature, in prose and in verse, only dates back to 1925, when the countries then forming British East Africa (now Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) adopted Swahili as the only African language for use in their schools. The first important modern Swahili writer was Tanzania's Shaaban Robert. He wrote in prose and verse to praise his traditional culture. Very different in subject and style is the later *Simu ya kifo* (*Phone Call to Death*, 1965), a police thriller by Tanzanian writer Faraji Katalambulla.

Other notable writers in African-language literature in East Africa include a Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o who dominated Gikuyu literature. There are very few writers in Gikuyu. About the scarcity of literature in Gikuyu language inspired by Ngugi's statement, Ricard (2004:94) comments that:

Ngugi insists that his novel, *Caitani Mutharabaini* (1982a, 1982b) [*Devil on the Cross*] was the first novel of that length published in Gikuyu, a language 'which did not have a significant tradition of novel or fiction writing' (Ngugi, 1986:74). While this statement inspires hope, it does not mitigate one's concerns for the future. Indeed the only increase in the Gikuyu literature corpus seems to come from Ngugi's own productions: *Ngaahika Ndeenda* (1980) [*I will Marry When I Want* (1982)], and several children's books: *Njamba Nene na Mbaathi-i-Mathagu* [*Njamna Nene and the Flying Bus*], and *Bathitoora ya Njamba Nene* (1982) [*Njamba Nene's Pistol*].

Another is Okot p'Bitek in Uganda who popularised Acoli literature. He wrote *Lak Tar* (*White Teeth*) which was the first novel to be written in Acoli, the central dialect of Luo. This

novel is about a young man from the north who is forced to go and look for work in the southern plantations to save up enough bride-price payment for the parents of his future wife. In the process, he works hard and he is subjected to a great deal of insults and prejudices. P'Bitek also wrote *Wer pa Lawino (Song of Lawino)*, which is about an abandoned wife complaining about the husband's behaviour and insults (Ricard, 2004:132).

In South Africa, as earlier mentioned, writing was introduced by missionaries who established themselves in the 1820s at Lovedale, near Alice (now in Eastern Cape Province). In addition to the Bible, one of the texts the missionaries translated for instruction was *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678 and 1684) by English author John Bunyan. This work provided the model for the first South African work of fiction, Thomas Mofolo's *Moeti Oa Bochabella* (1906; translated as *The Traveller of the East*, 1934). Like Bunyan's book, this Sotho-language work uses allegory to tell the story of a man's spiritual journey after converting to Christianity. Ricard (2004:105) asserts that Thomas Mofolo was not only the first Sotho novelist but also the first African novelist. Mofolo authored a book entitled *Chaka* that is widely recognised today in world literature. Also associated with the Lovedale mission is Samuel Edward Krune Loliwe Mqhayi, whose Xhosa-language novel *Ityala lamawele (The Case of the Two Brothers)*, 1914) recreates the legal proceedings he observed at the court of his great-uncle, a chief. He is also known for his poetry, which earned him a name *Imbongi yesizwe jikelele* (the poet of the whole nation) from his admirers. In the Zulu language, *Abantu abamnyama lapha bavela ngakhona* (1922; *The Black People and Whence They Came*, 1979), by Magera ka Magwaza Fuze, tells of Zulu history and presents an early plea for black unity in Africa.

Locally, the situation is quite alarming. Generally, there is not much literature in Zambian languages. The novelists are very few and the novels are rarely published. A number of the

existing novels were published shortly after independence. Most writers were not well-versed in writing fiction during this time. Thus, most of these books were characterised by stylistic inadequacy. Most of the works written have been folktales and novellas. Few novels exist for reasons discussed in the earlier chapter; economical and poor readership owing to the poor language status. The few prominent writers in the Bemba language who were better equipped comparatively to write fiction include Mpashi, Kapwepwe, and Kambole. One can also include the contemporary writer Chilangwa. However, the lack of substantial publication of novels in African languages is not a sufficient reason to justify the lack of scholarly attention paid to the study and analysis of the few available literary works.

It is unfortunate that indigenous-language literature, specifically Bemba, has suffered from the absence of sophisticated scholarly attention. There have been relatively few novelists, playwrights and scholars who have devoted their time to Zambian languages. The reasons for this sad situation can be many but they will not be discussed in this study since they fall outside its scope. Suffice it to say that works written about Zambian languages, and about Bemba in particular, can be categorised into two: first, those which discuss Zambian languages from the linguistic perspective; and secondly, those which discuss Zambian languages from the literary and cultural perspective.

Needless to say, those works that belong to the first category are mainly linguistic commentaries about the Bemba language and they have been conducted by various linguists who include prominent ones like Mubanga Kashoki, Michael Mann, and others. These have been linguistic analyses as well as descriptions of the Bemba language and other African languages. The focus has been mainly on linguistic aspects such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and sociolinguistics. As expected, Mubanga Kashoki and some other linguists have published extensively on the linguistic aspects of the Bemba language and

other Zambian languages in general. They have not published, based on the literature that has been reviewed so far, anything on literary aspects.

Works that belong to the second category are concerned with literature and cultural aspects. This group can be further sub-divided into poetry, prose fiction, cultural aspects, history of the people, and literary criticism. Regrettably, apart from the few fictional prose works and scanty poetry publications that exist in Bemba, most of the works that have been published about this language tend to have a strong focus on the Bemba as a people, their culture, and their history. Some of the scholars who have conducted studies about the Bemba are: Richard (1931), Corbeil (1982) and Roberts (1973) about the girls' initiation ceremony; the sacred emblems of the Bemba; and the history of the Bemba.

It should be noted that the case of Zambia is similar to that of South Africa. In both countries, literacy (and later written literature) was introduced by the missionaries. However, Zambia's literary production is not as successful as that of South Africa. Comparatively, there are extremely fewer novels and other creative writings in Zambian languages than in South African languages. Apart from works on culture and historical surveys of the Zambian people and their traditions, few authors have published creative works. Some of the prominent authors in Bemba, are, inter alia, Stephen Andrea Mpashi, Simon Kapwepwe, Paul Mushindo, and Kambole.

Despite the availability of the few fictional works that have been published in different languages, no serious and committed attention has been paid to analyse them from the literary perspective both locally and internationally. Internationally, there are relatively very few scholars who have devoted time and effort to literary analysis and criticism of works written in African languages. One of the few scholars who have touched on literary discourses on African languages is a South African literary scholar Kunene (1970) who has shed light on

the historical factors that have influenced South African and Zambian writers who write in indigenous languages. In this work, Kunene focuses on the content of the African works of literature and concludes that the African writers adopted a lot of missionary ideas and to some extent white prejudice as they were writing their works. He investigates the influence the missionaries had on the literary style of African writers who wrote their works in indigenous languages - especially the way these writers portray the characters in their works. Kunene analyses some South African works and some Zambian works such as *Uwakwesho Ubushiku* and *Uwauma Nafyala* by Stephen Mpashi and *Ako Usulile* by Edward Kabongo. This validates Lutato's (1980:2) assertion that the influence of the West on African-language literature has been quite extensively studied, with emphasis lying on the effect of Christian ideas, by A.C Jordan, D.P. Kunene and to a certain extent Albert Gerard and O.R Darthone, among others. However, it is important to point out that in his analysis, Kunene restricts himself to thematic analysis and characterisation. He does not discuss the plots of novels written in indigenous languages.

Auspiciously, few studies can qualify as literary criticism about certain aspects of literature in African languages. However, extremely few of these have focussed on written prose fiction as compared to those that have focussed on oral poetry and oral prose. Thus, various studies bordering on orality in this manner have been conducted by some scholars about diverse Zambian languages and cultures. These studies have concentrated on topics concerned with folk literature, proverbs, riddles, sayings and cultural aspects. Such studies were conducted by Siakavuba (1990) about Tonga narratives dealing with marriage and Mtonga (1980) about the Chewa drama. Others have studied the poetry of various ethnic groups in Zambia and these scholars include Chibalo (1983) about funeral songs of the Tonga; Kafimbwa (1994) about the Mwata Kazembe royal praise poetry of the Lunda; and Moyo (1978) about Ngoni

poetry. These studies have enriched the literature about the specific ethnic groups, their way of life, history and their poetry.

It is important to reiterate that the studies that have been discussed in the preceding paragraph all focus on oral literature. Scholars who conducted them utilised oral sources as primary in data collection. This underscores the crucial role that orality plays in African-language literature. However, it is important to discuss a study that can work to establish a link between the intricate tendencies of orality and written literature in African languages. The study by Lutato (1980) establishes this link. It reveals substantial evidence about the influence of oral traditions in the written fictional works in Bemba. Lutato's main aim is to investigate the nature and degree of influence of oral narrative tradition on the prose works of Stephen A Mpashi. He examines Mpashi's works in terms of the structure; communication of theme; characterisation and the narrative technique. However, he does not discuss the nature of plots in novels authored by different writers in Bemba simply because this is not part of the objectives of his research.

Irrefutably, orality in African literature is crucial to the understanding of African people and their literature, be it written or oral. Although Lutato focuses on Mpashi's works alone, it can be mentioned that, backed by his conclusions, African-language written literature has been greatly influenced by oral literature. What Lutato reveals in Mpashi's works can also be revealed in the works of other writers. This idea is based on the premise that Bemba writers make use of the same source of information and they utilise similar techniques and equipment of analysis - which is the Bemba culture and the Bemba *weltanschauung* - that is, the Bemba worldview.

## 2.2 Influence of Oral Literature on Written Literature

As mentioned in the above paragraph and as evidenced by Lutato's study about Mpashi's works, African-language literature is greatly influenced by oral literature. In fact, Africa's long tradition of oral artistry has remarkably influenced modern African literatures. Before the spread of literacy in the 20th century, texts were preserved in memory and performed or recited. These traditional texts served many of the same purposes that written texts serve in literate societies, that is, entertainment, instruction, and commemoration. Oral literature is indispensable inasmuch as written literature borrows a lot from it. This borrowing is diverse and it ranges from plot types, motifs, techniques, and style.

African writers, both those who write in English and in African languages, have unlimited access to oral traditions. Chinua Achebe, for example, borrowed a lot from Igbo literature in his works *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *Arrow of God* (1964), and *No Longer at Ease* (1960). In *Things Fall Apart*, a novel that is very popular and renowned, Achebe deals with Igbo traditional life. The book deals with the influence of British and Christian missionaries on traditional Igbo society.

Furthermore, it should be noted that although writing has influenced orality to some degree, it is orality that has largely influenced writing. The interplay between orality and writing can be traced back to colonial times. Granted, a larger part of Africa had no writing system before the coming of the Europeans, but this does not mean that Africa lacked literature. Africa still possessed oral literature.

Africa's oral literature takes the form of prose, verse, and proverbs. Texts vary in length from the epic, which might be performed over the course of several days, to single-sentence formulations such as the proverb. The collective body of oral texts is variously described as folklore, verbal art, oral literature, or as "orature" in modern times.

The stories created by people that are communicated by word of mouth are part of folk literature. Folk literature encompasses all the myths, legends, epics, fables and folktales which are passed down by word of mouth through the generations. The authors of folk literature are unknown since the stories have passed through many generations. Moreover, the same story can have variations arising from the storyteller's innovations, through the addition or removal of some details.

The myth is fundamental among forms in African literature. Myths typically explain the creation of the universe, the activities of the gods at the beginning of creation, the essence of all creatures, and the nature of their interrelationships. Myths and fairy tales usually manifest archetypes (Jung, 1975:5). Jung (1975) argues that people across all cultures share a collective unconscious. Collective unconscious refers to a common set of feelings, thoughts, and memories. He explains that myths could manifest the images of the collective unconscious, also called archetypes. Archetypes are a set of patterns in the unconscious mind that people in all cultures express through similar images and symbols; they are universally understood symbols and images. Jung (1975) adds that archetypes are innate, universal prototypes for ideas and they can be useful in the interpretation of observations.

Archetypes have been present in folklore and literature for many years. They can take various forms as hero, the wise old man, and the trickster, among others. Archetypes are crucial to oral literature and they have been identified as essential to both mythology and modern narratives, as can be seen in such works as *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949) by Joseph Campbell. In this work, Campbell explores the 'myth of the hero' and his conclusion is that there is a single pattern of heroic journey and that all cultures share this essential pattern in their various heroic myths (Wikipedia visited on 6th October 2011). It is possible that Campbell's theory, just like any other general theory, cannot apply to all myths.



However, his theory underscores the fundamental point that myths exist in every society since they are cultural manifestations of the universal need of the human psyche to explain social, cosmological and spiritual realities.

Myths have provided a wealth of material for the writers and artists since time immemorial. For example, the divine characters such as Zeus, Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Apollo, and Ares employed by Homer in his epics became the common property of poets throughout antiquity. Moreover, Greek tragedians such as Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides borrowed from the traditional body of myth to come up with characters such as Agamemnon and Clytemnestra by Aeschylus in *Oresteia*; Antigone by Sophocles in *Antigone* and Electra by Euripides and Sophocles each with his own distinct play *Electra* (Lansford, 2008).

The three tragedians mentioned above are not the only ones who borrow from oral sources. Many other writers in literature have borrowed mythological themes. For example, *Antigone*, centred on Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, a play popularised by Sophocles, which portrays the conflict between obedience to the laws of the state and the higher laws of the gods. In *Antigone*, the laws of the state, enforced by Creon who was the King, decreed that Antigone was not supposed to bury her brother Polynices since he had led a foreign invading army against his fatherland. In contraposition, the higher laws of the gods regarded the burial of the dead, especially that of a relation, as a sacred duty. Antigone defied Creon's decree and implemented that of the gods. A number of writers have used the theme from Antigone's life and these include: French playwrights Jean Cocteau (*Antigone*, 1922) and Jean Anouilh (*Antigone*, 1942) and the German playwright Bertolt Brecht (*Antigone*, 1948).

In a similar kind of way, the mythological Electra, the unhappy daughter of Agamemnon who seeks to avenge her father's murder, has worked as a subject of the play *The Flies* (1943) by

French playwright Jean Paul Sartre and the play *Morning Becomes Electra* (1931) by the American playwright Eugene O'Neil.

Next in importance is the legend. Legends are intended to enhance a listener's understanding of the constitution of the universe. Legends, which deal with events that occurred after the era of the gods, describe such heroic human feats as establishing dynasties or single-handedly preventing disaster. Likewise, writers have borrowed legends from oral traditions. Some of these legends include *The Odyssey* by Homer which gives an account of the Greek hero Odysseus's adventures and his ultimate return home ten years after the fall of Troy. He had to overcome a lot of obstacles along the way both abroad and at home. The other popular legend is *The Aeneid* of ancient Rome by Virgil which narrates the series of travels of the hero Aeneas and the Trojans, their arrival in Italy, and their victory over the Latins and Rutulians. Other European legends include that of Faust and Arthur King of Britons. The former is a reputed schoolteacher in various university cities in Germany and travels about performing tricks of magic and telling fortunes while the latter expels foreigners from Britain, brings peace to the country, and establishes a kingdom based on justice, law and morality. African legends include that of Sundiata and Shaka among others. The former is a founder and ruler of Mali Empire while the latter is a great warrior and military leader and king of the Zulu people. By the time of his demise, Shaka had the largest and the most powerful kingdom in South Africa. Thomas Mofolo wrote an extensive story about the legend of *Chaka* in Sesotho and it was translated into English by Daniel P. Kunene.

The folktale, another prose form, is usually told for nighttime entertainment. These feature human beings and animals, either separately or together. They are often employed for social commentary and instruction and they also operate as a potent means of affirming group values and discouraging antisocial behaviour. A popular type is the trickster tale, which

features a small but crafty animal that exercises its cunning to protect itself against much larger and more powerful animals. Examples of animal tricksters are *Kalulu*, a hare in the folklore of the Bemba people, Chewa people, and Nsenga people. The same animal trickster is called as *Shakame* among the Lozi people and *Sulwe* in the folklore of the Tonga people. The trickster figure is also called *Anansi*, a spider in the folklore of the Ashanti people of Ghana; *Àjàpá*, a tortoise in Yoruba folklore of Nigeria; and *Sungura*, a hare found in central and East African folklore (Owomoyela, 2008).

Another oral form of literature is the epic. Unlike other continents where there is a widespread consensus about the presence of epics, this is not the case with the African continent. The idea that the epic is not ubiquitous in Africa is quite controversial. The existence of the epic in Africa attracts some criticism as scholars are divided on this topic. Some scholars strongly maintain that the term epic should not be applied to African texts since epics in Africa are apparently not prevalent. Their disputation is that the African texts that are described as epics are mere extended celebrations of heroic figures. An example that justifies the latter argument is *The Mwindo Epic* (1969) of the *Nyanga* of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (Owomoyela, 2008).

The other essential components of oral literature are proverbs and riddles. Several African cultures possess a rich repertoire of epigrams such as proverbs and riddles. In many African societies, effective speech and social success depend on a good command of proverbs. These treasured sayings convey the demonstrated wisdom of the ages and, therefore, function as a reliable authority in arguments or discussions. Riddles, like proverbs, are based on principles of analogy that require the listener to decipher the intended meaning. Examples of such works on proverbs and sayings include Mphasi's book *Icibemba Cesu na Mano Yaciko*

(1965) in Bemba, Chitauka's *Mambila Mbali* (1958) in Tonga and Nthara's *Mau Okuluwika M'cinyanja* (1964) in Nyanja.

It is essential to make an assertion that most African literature still possesses a great deal of oral features despite the increase in literacy proficiency in African states presently. This is mainly because written literature, in isolation, cannot be cherished without some input from oral literature. About Africans and orality, Akivaga Odaga (1982:1), as quoted in Musonda (2002: 1), explains:

People use the spoken word to reflect on their everyday experiences and concerns. They create stories, songs, proverbs, etc., which expresses emotions that concern them .... Oral literature also expresses concerns beyond people's everyday life: people also create stories and songs about the origins as community, about their beliefs in supernatural powers, and about the things they value....Thus, from the oral literature of a particular people we may be able to learn a lot.

Writings in Zambian languages are also pervious to the influence of orality. Essentially, in terms of plot, most oral narratives have *traditional* plots in order to aid retention in the audience's minds for a long time. The plots are chronological. In chronological plots, episodes follow each other in their order of occurrence in time. Some of the fictional books with chronological plots in Bemba include *Uluse Lwalile Nkwale* (1974) by Chipungu, *Nkobekela Tecupo* (1974) by Kambole and *Pio na Vera* (1968) by Mpashi.

It should be noted that the conclusions drawn by Lutato from Mpashi's works are very important and useful. They underscore the centrality of oral influence in written fictional works. These conclusions can be generalised to apply to other writers who have published fictional works in Bemba. Moreover, this can also reaffirm the point that orality in African literature has firm historical roots, and Zambia is not an exception.

On the influence of oral traditions on written works, Lutato amplifies on the Bemba worldview in terms of their aesthetics (*Ubusuma*) with regard to the narratives. He states two important requirements in Bemba oral narrative traditions. Firstly, a narrative should communicate experience which promotes society's welfare, especially by imparting ethical knowledge. Secondly, a narrative should be entertaining. Lutato names the two requirements as *ubusuma bwe funde* (literally as the goodness of the morals) and *ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe* (literally as the goodness of the way of telling the story), respectively. The two requirements are meant to be tightly linked together and one should not be used in the absence of another to produce a good work. A good work should have the two important requirements in balance. *Ubusuma bwe funde* relates directly to the imparting of ethical knowledge while *Ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe* relates to the structural makeup of the work, and the effect it has on the audience. The study conducted by Chomba (1991) about didacticism in prose-poetry and narrative fiction of Simon Kapwepwe can shed more light on the prevalence of didacticism in Bemba works in general. It can be mentioned, however, that this study is primarily interested in *Ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe* as opposed to *Ubusuma bwe funde*.

Lutato (1980) observes that Mpashi satisfies *ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe* in his works by using harmony. Harmony in structural organisation is the most important feature of any object designed to be aesthetically appealing. Harmony in his works is enforced by repetition that is used to create patterns thereby creating balance. Repetition is also used to communicate themes. Thus, the influence of oral background is apparent in terms of narration, characterisation and the repetition of themes.

Lutato (1980) verifies that Mpashi's works have a strong influence of orature. He provides evidence when he advances the arguments that: first, all Mpashi's novels tend to be biased in

favour of themes that are very significant to the society. In this respect, his works show an influence from his traditional background in his selection of the nature of the themes he treats in them. Second, *ubusuma bwe funde* (also called didacticism) in Bemba narrative brings about the treatment of the themes with a social import. Social import involves the creation of characters whose moral standpoints point to the lesson. Moreover, narrators do not leave the judgement of an action or situation to the audience. He argues that the social import of the theme is cardinal to any serious imaginative oral narrative among the Bemba and related ethnic groups. Thirdly, the use of repetition is a key device in communicating the themes in Mpashi's works. This confirms the conclusion about oral influence since repetition is a major device oral narrative performers use to achieve the same goal. Fourthly, his narrators, without restrictions, remark upon and pass judgement on situations and on the actions of character, mainly on matters related to morality. This clearly indicates that Mpashi has been remarkably influenced by his oral traditional background where oral artists very commonly manifest such features.

Although Mpashi makes use of the conventional novelistic element of the anonymous third person narrator, he tries to destroy some of the anonymity through reassuring the reader of the narrator's credibility (by making him display profound knowledge of the Bemba culture) points to the influence of the traditional background in the use of this device. Mpashi seems preoccupied with trying to create, between his narrators and his readers, a relationship similar to the one which normally obtains between oral performers and their audiences (that is, one in which both the audience are aware of the integrity of the performer). In fact, given Mpashi's high level of audience consciousness and his lack of awareness that his accounts will reach the audience in written form, is displayed by his constant exhortation of the audience and his constant references to speaking and hearing whenever they exhort the audience. This device appears to be very strongly influenced by the oral background (Lutato, 1980).

### **2.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter a critical review of the literature that has bearing on this study, both international and local, has been done. It has been indicated that although there is increased interest in African-language literature in the 20th century, much of such studies conducted have a strong bias towards historical surveys about African languages' beginnings and developments. Other studies have focused on the impact of the West with regard to Christian ideas. Generally, there has been lack of serious scholarly attention paid to serious literary study; a fact that points to the general neglect of African-languages literature. Principally, it has been confirmed that scholarly studies about plots and structures of plots in fictional books in Zambian languages, and Bemba language in particular, are not extant.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SYNOPSIS OF THE TEXTS

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter will provide the essential background information about the texts under study and it will also provide the synopses of the same texts. The texts are *Sheli Wa Citatu* by Wilfred Bwalya Chilangwa; *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* by Chongo Kasonkomona, and *Ukutangila Tekufika* by Mwila L. Launshi. Considering that the novels are written in Bemba and some readers barely read material in this language with appreciable comprehension, the summaries presented below have been loaded with substantial detail with regard to the main story line of each novel to ease its accessibility. It should be mentioned that analysis of the texts will not occur in this chapter but is reserved for Chapter 4.

#### 3.1 Sheli Wa Citatu

*Sheli Wa Citatu* is authored by Wilfred Bwalya Chilangwa and it is a sequel to *Sheli Wacibili* seeing that the story of Sheli is one that is periodically improved upon. *Sheli Wa Citatu* continues a story that was begun in the previous works of *Sheli Wa Mwabi Ailetelela* and *Sheli Wacibili*, written by the same author. Although *Sheli Wa Citatu* is the latest expansion of Sheli's story, the author has made a statement at the end of the book that the story will be extended in the next publication of Sheli. Sequentially, *Sheli Wa Mwabi Ailetelela* was first to be published in 1961 by Heinemann Publishers while its revised edition was published by the National Educational Company of Zambia Ltd (NECZAM) in 1971. Following it was *Sheli Wacibili* which was published in 1991 by the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation and it was reprinted in 2008 by the Zambia Educational Publishing House (ZEPH). The latest is *Sheli Wa Citatu*, published in 2009 by Longman Zambia Ltd.



Strictly speaking, *Sheli Wa Mwabi Ailetelela* introduces the story of Sheli and it ends with Sheli's arrest - when he is about to be sent to Kamfinsa prison in Kitwe. It narrates Sheli's activities that happen immediately after the demise of his parents, that is, the adversity he experiences in the 'hostile' Democratic Republic of Congo, then Zaire, and how he overcomes it, and his disguise as a gorgeous damsel. *Sheli Wacibili*, on the other hand, builds on *Sheli Wa Mwabi Ailetelela* by recounting Sheli's prison sentence for the crimes he committed, his release from prison, and his subsequent culinary job at Roma Secondary School in Lusaka. *Sheli Wa Citatu* develops the story in which Sheli quits his culinary job in order to trace his uncle Teddy in Luapula Province. The focus falls on his journey from Kitwe to Mwanabombwe via the 'hostile' Democratic Republic of Congo again in which he, due to his errant disposition, briefly plunges himself into hardships yet is lucky to be salvaged before great harm can be done.

Structurally, *Sheli Wa Citatu* is devoid of textual demarcations that indicate earlier versions of the story in order to present the story in an integrated manner. It incorporates the prequels smoothly into its own chapters to make one novel. This is the perspective that this study attempts to embrace in which *Sheli Wa Citatu* is viewed as a unified work that incorporates *Sheli Wa Mwabi Ailetelela* and *Sheli Wacibili* into one complete novel.

Essentially, the story revolves around the life of the protagonist called Sheli (also called Mary when disguised). The story spans over a period of about 7 years including Sheli's unspecified stay in prison. The story is set in various Zambian localities, namely Mwekera, Kabwe, Kitwe, Lusaka, and few localities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Third person omniscient point of view has been employed as the angle of narration. The narrator is able to reveal thoughts of any character he chooses – both major and minor characters.

The story opens with the narrator's account of Sheli's childhood, his birth place Kabwe. His father is a miner. Sheli has always had such attractive feminine looks since childhood that many a person takes him for a beautiful girl. He is currently a young man pursuing teacher education at Nkrumah Teacher's Training College. However, calamity befalls him after the tragic expiry of his father, the sole breadwinner, in a mine accident. Subsequently, Sheli's mother decides to relocate to the Northern Province to her relatives with her son. Sheli will have to continue his education at Kasama College of Education, as the principal of the said college is Sheli's former teacher. Therefore, they embark on a journey to Kasama.

However, this journey also turns out to be catastrophic when the bus they are travelling on has a tyre burst around Kapiri Mposhi. The bus overturns. This results in Sheli's mother sustaining severe injuries. Fortunately, Sheli survives without any injury. His mother, whilst in agony, gives him some money and passes away soon after. When the paramedics reach the accident scene, they find that she is already dead. They take away her body. Sheli no longer has any parent. He instantly becomes a homeless orphan. Sheli then calls off the journey to Kasama probably because of the following reasons. First, he does not know the name of any specific relative in Kasama. Secondly, he does not know the exact location of his relatives there. Luckily, he has a vague idea of his uncle's place in Ndola; hence, he resolves to go to Ndola so as to track him down. Because he wants to save all the money his mother has given him, he creeps into a goods train after his conviction that its destination is Ndola. Unnoticed, he lies in the train carriage carrying mealie-meal and falls asleep during this journey. Sheli is right that the train is going to Ndola. However, his information is not fully accurate since the train's final destination is Congo. The train reaches Ndola in daytime with Sheli's cognisance but he is unable to sneak out of the carriage due to the dread that guards will see him. Accordingly, he sleeps once again and hopes to wake up at night so as to sneak out under cover of darkness. This is a miscalculation because the train proceeds on the journey to the

Congo while he is asleep. He fears to disembark from a fast-moving train into some unfamiliar wilderness when he awakens; he remains in the carriage until it reaches the Congo.

Workers offloading mealie-meal from the carriage in Congo discover the hungry and drained Sheli. They feed him and plan to send him back to Ndola. Nonetheless, the local guards popularly known as '*bakaboke*' thwart the implementation of their plans much to Sheli's disappointment. It occurs that at this material time the guards are indignant at Zambians after one Zambian smuggler duped them; therefore, they arrest and thrash Sheli. They command one guard among them to take Sheli to the lockup. On the way, Sheli overpowers the guard and escapes by utilising his martial arts skills to render the guard unconscious. Before he runs into the wild, he puts on the uniform of the guard for camouflage. Inwardly, he fears that he has killed a person. He also dreads the thought that the other guards will discover his escape; and hunt him down and possibly kill him.

Disguised as a guard, Sheli passes through a security checkpoint without any difficulties. After covering some considerable distance, he hears a lorry coming from behind and quickly moves out of the road to hide in the nearby bush. The lorry is carrying Congolese guards who are probably looking for him. Consequently, Sheli starts to walk through the bush, to ensure his safety, rather than along the road that predisposes him to capture.

Masquerading as a guard, Sheli captures and punishes four smugglers, one Congolese and three Zambians. He slaps them, confiscates their food and merchandise (mainly clothes) and then releases them. Among the clothes is the dress that he later finds useful in his masquerades as a gorgeous damsel known as Mary. He sleeps in the bush at night and subsequently loses his sense of direction when he awakens in the morning mainly due to his unfamiliarity with the wilderness. He is unable to distinguish his point of origin from the

point of exit in this particular location. He has another problem now - finding the way to Ndola. Thus, he gambles about the direction and continues to walk. A continuous walk for two days renders him exhausted, starved and faint for some time. When Sheli revives, he is still too weak to walk even though he has heard the roaring of lions in the distance. Motionless, he spends another night under a tree. Sheli has been in the wilderness for four days now.

Still motionless, Sheli notices the presence of two ferocious lions the moment he opens his eyes in the morning. He resolves to maintain his stationary position backed by the belief that lions do not habitually devour an animal or 'person' that is found dead. Hence, he feigns death. Suddenly, he hears a loud noise of struggle and slowly opens his eyes. He catches the sight of a python that has suddenly encircled one of the lions in a deadly squeeze. The lion struggles to break free while the other lion remains motionless. A few moments later Sheli hears gunshots at close range and notices that both lions have been shot by forest rangers, as he learns later. The rangers discover the presence of the starved Sheli and immediately feed him. Filled with sympathy, they listen to his account of how he lost his way and take him to their Mwekera office. They also find him a job to work as a servant of the Chief Forest Ranger whose wife is in desperate need of one.

He works for five years with honesty and dedication after which his character changes. He becomes an offender. He becomes a transvestite. Habitually, he asks for permission from his employer Mr Mundia to visit Kitwe and then he disguises himself as an attractive young lady when granted permission so that he can manipulate men for his gain. Parsimoniously, he saves all the money Mr Mundia gives him for bus fares and pocket money but exclusively relies on the money, beer, lifts and favours from the men who fall prey to his feminine charms - especially those men driven by promiscuity. These men never recognise that Mary is a man. Sheli's misdeed is akin to homosexuality as he kisses fellow men despite the

absence of anal intercourse of course. Various men fall prey to Mary's beauty. However, the debauched Teddy stands out among them because he does not just admire Mary (Sheli) but he also becomes 'her' regular boyfriend. Teddy loses many fights in an attempt to stop other men from making advances to Mary despite the fact that he is married.

Later in the story, this man turns out to be Sheli's uncle. In fact, Teddy is also the guard Sheli had overpowered in Congo to escape. After Sheli had escaped, Teddy was fired and he started working in Zambia. He is married to Christine and has three children. His wife is at Chipata College of Education while their children are being kept by their relatives. During his affair with the supposed Mary, Teddy avoids inviting his wife home during her vacations.

Being in a stable relationship in Kitwe from which Sheli receives both alcoholic and financial benefits, he increases the trips to Kitwe. To lengthen the odds, he starts to use expensive clothes, shoes, bras, and other garments belonging to Mrs Mundia, especially when the Mundia couple is away on their regular weekend holidays in Mongu. He brings the clothes back to the wardrobe unwashed. The couple discovers this act of theft and secretly reports to police. They are unable to confront Sheli due to lack of evidence.

Mr Mundia advises the police about the right time to ambush Sheli seeing that the latter's behaviour is predictable. He knows that Sheli's mischief prevails during his absence, usually when he is in Mongu. Therefore, the couple goes to Mongu once again in order to allow the police to uncover Sheli's mischief. As expected, Sheli transforms into Mary. He does not know that he is under surveillance. He hikes a public bus that is driven by an elderly man called Makoofi Sikazwe. Makoofi also proposes to Mary and the two agree to meet at Edinburgh Hotel in the evening to talk. Mary reaches Edinburgh Hotel first to fulfil 'her' prior appointment with Teddy. 'She' finds Teddy and they start to drink and talk. A few hours later Makoofi comes and finds Mary with Teddy. Makoofi proceeds to talk to Mary and

this angers Teddy. A fight erupts. Teddy is beaten since Makoofi, as his name suggests, is very good at punches. In retaliation, Teddy pulls out a knife and threatens to stab his opponent. He starts to approach his rival but before he can reach him, Makoofi throws a bottle full of beer at him. The latter quickly dodges it and it hits Mary on the forehead since 'she' is standing right behind Teddy. Mary faints soon after.

Mary sustains a deep cut. 'She' is rushed to Wusakile hospital to the theatre to stitch the wound and thereafter is taken to the female ward. While Sheli is still asleep, the doctor instructs the nurses to bathe him. It is at this point that Sheli's mischief is known to the medical personnel. Nurses discover that the supposed Mary is a man. They immediately transfer him to the male ward where he belongs. Sheli wakes up in a male ward at dawn and realises that his secret has been uncovered. He runs away from the hospital back to Mwekera at once. Nevertheless, more is in store for him since he is unaware that two detectives in Mwekera are waiting for him near the spot where he changes clothes. Detective Joshua Munene and Henry Chaamba have prepared an ambush for him.

When Sheli gets to the spot where he changes clothes, the detectives stop him and start interrogating him. He mumbles and fails to give some reasonable responses and so they arrest him. Nevertheless, before the two handcuff him, Sheli fights them and flees from Mwekera back to Kitwe. Detectives pursue him. Sheli takes refuge in Teddy's house in Nkana East. In this fugitive state, he confesses to Teddy that he is a man. At this point, he also realises, after Teddy narrates his life history, that Teddy is the man he had fought in Congo and that the same man is the uncle. However, only Sheli knows that he fought his uncle in Congo but Teddy does not notice this fact. Apparently, Teddy is the brother to Sheli's mother. When he heard about the accident, he thought both his sister and nephew had died. The revelations of the facts on both parties make them ashamed and repentant of their debauched ways. This marks the turning point for Teddy. He resolves to assume a morally acceptable life and to

resume responsibility over his family. Before sunset, the detectives locate Teddy's place and arrest Sheli. The latter does not resist this time.

In court, Sheli is found guilty and sent to Kamfinsa prison in Kitwe. Sheli serves his sentence as a decent man. He does no harm to other people. In fact, he defends the oppressed and promotes morality. He salvages his inmates from the homosexual bully who consumes other prisoners' rations and then forces those he admired to sleep with him. Granted, during Sheli's earlier disguises as Mary, he had kissed other men's lips, but he slept with none the way this bully was doing. Accordingly, he beats the bully and then reports him to the prison officials who in turn rebuke the bully and transfer him to another prison. The inmates and prison officials, especially the latter, praise and commend Sheli for his courage and moral fibre. He becomes popular among the inmates.

Sheli continues to display impressive maturity in prison. He advises and guides a lot other prisoners who include Binwell and Kanjani, the latter being the close friend he met in the Kitwe cells. This positive display of virtuous behaviour proves to be rewarding since it contributes to his early release from prison. In fact, the warden arranges a job for him to work as a cook at Roma Secondary School prior to his release. As soon as he is released, Sheli embarks on the journey to Lusaka to report for work and does so successfully. At the school, Sheli continues to display positive moral behaviour that wins him the respect and trust of many people - pupils and the members of the school administration inclusive. Girls come for advice to him on various issues that trouble them.

After working about a year or two, Sheli resigns from Roma Secondary School. He no longer has interest in the job. He goes to Kitwe to track down his Uncle Teddy. He knows that the uncle had plans of going to Luapula Province, specifically Mwanabombwe. He does not

know the exact place in Luapula. He decides to go and ask Teddy's neighbours in Kitwe. The neighbours then give him the direction to his uncle's place in Mwansabombwe.

The same day Sheli starts off for Mwansabombwe. To move from Copperbelt Province to Luapula, the bus has to pass through the Congo using the Pedicle Road. Sheli is afraid to use it as he remembers his earlier narrow escape in the Congo. He dreads detection by the guards as a person who had resisted arrest and assaulted their man. The journey to Luapula unsettles him especially after his contemplation of the idea that his uncle plans to lead him into an arranged marriage, as was reported by his uncle's neighbour in Ndola. The arranged marriage repulses Sheli as he does not want to marry any time soon. Besides, he is uncertain as to whether he will love the woman chosen for him.

The bus hardly covers much distance along the Pedicle Road when it breaks down around Mikambo area. The driver sends one person back to Mufulira to buy the spare part. When the man returns, many of the passengers are not aboard as they have gone to nearby bars to enjoy some Congolese beer, namely Simba and Tembo. Sheli is among them. Eventually, the bus is repaired and the driver honks to call the passengers back. All the passengers come back except Sheli. Kind passengers go back to the bars to check for Sheli but all their attempts prove futile as Sheli is apparently far. They spend about 30 more minutes waiting for him. A lot of them get tired and frustrated and exert pressure on the driver to start off. They argue that they have to catch a pontoon at Cheembe in time lest they spend a night in the Congo. No passenger wants to spend a night in the Congo, as everyone detests the cruelty of the guards (*bakaboke*) in this country. The driver is eventually convinced to start off after one passenger reports that Sheli is drinking in the company of a notorious prostitute at Mikambo known as Kabuumbu wa Kabuumbu. Even though this prostitute looks beautiful outwardly, she is known by the local people to harbour numerous dangerous diseases.



Apparently, Sheli overdrinks the local brew to the extent that he loses his self-control. He and the prostitute leave the bar to her house to sleep. Sheli wakes up and discovers that he is lying in a shackled shabby house and the woman is lying a few metres away. He is blank about the events of the previous night. He wonders whether he had slept with the woman. This thought scares him. However, his mind comes to rest when he reasons that if he had slept with her, he would be naked. But he still has his clothes on which implies that he had not slept with her. He also worries when he fails to find his money in the pocket and suspects that it has been stolen. Luckily, he finds this money later because he had hidden it in his underwear the previous day.

As Kabuumbu wa Kabuumbu is still asleep, Sheli sneaks out of the house and runs to the station; nobody is there. He fears waiting lest the prostitute comes looking for him since he has left without her consent. Worse still, he fears that she might come in the company of the dreaded Congolese guards. He starts to walk along the road towards Mansa. He is still cautious and hides whenever he sees or hears a vehicle coming lest the Congolese see him. He resumes his walk when each vehicle passes.

Unfortunately, one person in a car sees Sheli before he can hide and stops the vehicle. He gets out of the car, uproots Sheli from his hideout, and takes him to his friends in the car. Sheli knows instantly that these are Congolese as they are speaking Swahili. As soon as they discover that he is Zambian, they throw him out of the car, take him to the nearby bush, and batter him. Since he is physically incapacitated to fight back, he strategically feigns death. They stop assaulting him when they get the impression that he has died but still they strip him naked, except for some pants and socks. They sprinkle his body with spittle and urine then insult the 'corpse' as they leave. After they disappear from sight, Sheli discovers that he still has the money he thought had been stolen from him inserted in the underwear.

Hours after the beating, Sheli gathers the energy to continue his walk. This time he does not walk along the road lest other Congolese find him and kill him in the real sense of the word. He walks in the bush that is metres away from the main road. This bush is thorny, it makes his feet and legs swell. When he can no longer bear the pain, he stops to rest for a while under a tree but he falls into deep slumber because he is very tired. He awakes and proceeds into the bush until he stumbles upon a community celebrating in the night. The local people, who speak Bemba, suspect him to be either a thief or a notorious wizard considering that he is naked. They chase him. In fleeing from them, Sheli is compelled to go back to the feared main road.

No sooner has Sheli come closer to the road than he hears the tyre burst of a car. Like before, Sheli hides behind some bush. The people in the car also stop to change the tyre. In the meantime, one of them goes to the nearby bush, very close to Sheli's hideout, to answer the call of nature. He has diarrhoea and he is unaware of Sheli's presence. Sheli fails to endure the odour and emits an involuntary explosive sneeze in spite of much effort to suppress it. The man answering the call of nature is alerted and frightfully runs towards his friends in the car while screaming loudly in Bemba. He suspects the presence of some ferocious animal. He alarms the hunters in the car. They come out of the car with guns to shoot the ferocious animal that has nearly attacked their friend Mwewa but Sheli comes out quickly before they shoot. They sympathise with him after he tells them his sad story. They are kind. They give him clothes to wear and water to clean himself.

A few moments later, Sheli sees the bus that had left him at Mikambo approaching and stops it. He thanks the hunters for their hospitality. He then boards the bus. Apparently, the bus delayed as it broke down once more just after covering a short distance. The mechanic had to work on it the whole night until it was repaired. The journey resumes. They reach Mansa. Move on to Mwense but then stop at Chief Lukwesa's village where the driver insists that

they spend the night. The driver is alleged to have a girlfriend at this village. Passengers go to nearby bars to drink and dance just as they had done earlier at Mikambo. Sheli refrains from drinking this time. He remains in the bus to listen to the wise words of one elderly man called Chintu Chafukuma.

In the morning, the driver looks exhausted and bruised due to the drinking binge the previous night. He is unable to drive and so allows the conductor to drive. They reach Mwansabombwe where Sheli finds his Uncle Teddy, the aunt, and his little cousins waiting for him at the station. They receive him hospitably. The story ends with Teddy telling Sheli about the marriage arrangements he has made. Sheli wonders what he will do if he does not like the girl that his uncle has arranged for him. Inwardly, he resolves that he will not marry a woman that he does not love.

### **3.2 Ubuseko Mu Bulanda**

*Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, which literally means ‘joy in sadness’ was published in 1983 by the National Educational Company of Zambia Ltd. This is the version that will be used in this study. The story is an amalgamation of a love story and a detective story. The setting is Kawambwa, though some space is devoted to recount Ronald’s journey from Mufulira to Kawambwa. It takes place during the freedom struggle but shortly before independence. Like *Sheli Wa Citatu*, the story is narrated from the third person omniscient point of view.

The book opens with the day that Rebecca is expecting her fiancé Ronald to arrive in Kawambwa from Mufulira. Rebecca works at the office of the District Commissioner as a clerk. Since she is eager to see him, she knocks off early in order to wait for him. Rebecca is already at the station by 17:00 hours though Ronald has earlier communicated that he would

arrive around 19:00 hours. These lovers met years ago in Kawambwa at Ng'ona Bridge in 1960 when Rebecca was a pupil in Form 4 (Grade 11). Ronald was a kind and a shy man who passionately wanted to propose love to Rebecca. After understanding that shyness was an obstacle to Ronald's impending proposal, Rebecca assumes remarkable tolerance towards the man she liked. Ronald finally launches his proposal which is readily accepted. Their romance develops with a sudden spontaneity and they make marriage arrangements soon after. Ronald then goes to work on the Copperbelt as a miner to raise money for bride-price.

Presently, Ronald is on the journey to Kawambwa with the prime reason of marriage. He wants to come back to Mufulira with a wife. He has prepared adequately for this journey and has bought some presents for his fiancée. Ronald is sure to find his fiancée awaiting him at the station. However, the road they are travelling on has potholes. This partly explains the delay of Ronald's arrival. Lovely thoughts about Rebecca enable him to endure the potholes on the road. Among other things, he fantasises some mansion that he and Rebecca will occupy one day. All he needs to do is to work hard so that he can be promoted and be allowed to occupy the good houses presently occupied by the white settlers. The bus arrives in Mansa around 16:00 hours, just about the time that Rebecca is leaving the office. However, it delays as goods are to be weighed, and the bus is to be serviced in Mansa before it proceeds to Kawambwa. It leaves Mansa but again stops at Chipili Mission for a considerable time. Rebecca is still waiting at the station.

When the bus arrives in Kawambwa, Rebecca is now tired of waiting and has left. It has delayed by about two hours. Before Rebecca leaves the station, she tells the woman who owns a shop there that she will be back after she prepares a bath for Ronald. She lives a little distance away from the station and she has to pass through the bush. She is alone. It is dark. She reaches home safely but she is attacked while returning to the station. A man called Spinks Maikange stabs her to death. This man hates Rebecca simply because she works for

the District Commissioner and he suspects her to be an informer. He knows that on this day she is waiting for Ronald. He sees it to be perfect for ambush. He gets this information from his girlfriend Maggie, Rebecca's sister, who unwittingly tells him about Rebecca's activities. He does not really love Maggie, but he keeps the facade for the sake of obtaining information.

When Ronald disembarks, he does not find Rebecca waiting for him. He proceeds home despite his hunch against using the path. Since it is the only path available, he continues. When he looks ahead near the hill, he sees something across the path that turns out to be his fiancée's corpse. She has been brutally murdered. Her underwear also has been taken. Notwithstanding the shock, Ronald manages to take the corpse to Rebecca's family and becomes depressed thereafter. Maggie comforts Ronald and advises him that he should find joy in sadness. Maggie is equally beautiful but opportunistic.

Mourners are suspicious about Rebecca's death; the main suspect being Ronald. Burial takes place two days later. Rebecca's family is kind to Ronald. His depression is worsened by the villagers' suspicions that he is the murderer. The villagers argue that there is no way Ronald's arrival in Kawambwa can coincide with the murder. They suspect that he was inspired by witchcraft: so that he could be promoted at work; second, that he can concoct charms by transferring Rebecca's true love for him to some other girl he has in the city. This perception by the villagers, however, pleases Spinks as it incriminates Ronald exactly as planned.

Infuriated, Ronald resorts to suicide to react to the villagers' accusations. The following day before anyone wakes up he takes an axe and goes to the graveyard where Rebecca is buried to hang himself. He wants to join Rebecca wherever she is. He locates a tree, sets the rope, pulls it, and starts to hang and gasp for air. This suicide is, however, interrupted by the forest rangers who have apparently seen him. They rush to stop him before he dies. One ranger

named Webster Chisha recognises Ronald but the latter does not recognise anything initially. The two had gone to the same school. Ronald then narrates his motive for suicide to Webster. The latter successfully dissuades Ronald from committing suicide. Now that suicidal thoughts are over, Ronald remembers the words of Maggie that one should find *joy in sadness*. Then it dawns on him that Maggie is just like Rebecca in many respects in terms of beauty.

The problem, however, arises when one of the rangers named Mateleshi Macuusha, who is motivated by the prospects of a pay rise whenever they apprehended someone, insists that they arrest Ronald since he is in possession of an axe in a restricted forest. None of the fellow rangers is interested in Mateleshi's argument. Mateleshi proceeds to arrest Ronald but Webster stops him. He cannot allow Mateleshi to arrest his friend. Then a fight ensues between the two. Mateleshi knocks Webster out. This compels Ronald to join in the fight. Ronald throws one punch at Mateleshi. The latter hits his head on the rock as he falls and dies instantly. Ronald is arrested.

When the villagers learn about the death of Mateleshi, they confirm their earlier suspicions that Ronald is a murderer. For them, Ronald has committed two murders. Webster pities his friend. Mateleshi died accidentally. Webster does not tolerate the accusation that Ronald killed Rebecca. He plans to help Ronald out of these cases. Webster tries to speak in favour of Ronald so that he could be released. However, police Inspector Detective Banda explains that Ronald could only be cleared if the murderer of Rebecca is found; or if there are reports of similar cases. That is murder and that of taking away of women's underwear during the time Ronald is held in custody. Inspector Banda says that would clearly indicate that someone else is perpetrating them. Webster finds a loophole in the latter explanation. However, he also resolves to carry out a personal investigation to uncover the murderer. He even suspends his plans to marry his fiancée Angela in the meantime.

Webster capitalises on the loophole in Detective Banda's statement to have his friend released. One day after knocking off from work, he sees Maggie swimming in the pond and she has not seen him. He takes away her underwear, then disguises himself, and chases her threateningly with a machete as she is running away. When she disappears, he burns her underwear and throws the ashes into the river and then he goes to report to the police from the standpoint of village gossip. Moments later Maggie comes to report the same case. The police are convinced and they release Ronald.

However, the murderer of Rebecca is still a mystery and villagers are still bitter with Ronald. Ronald is happy that he has the protection of his father-in-law from the wrath of the villagers and starts courting Maggie whilst the police are carrying out investigations. During this period when Ronald is released, Webster assumes the duties of a self-appointed private investigator. He even challenges the police inspector that he will find the murderer before the police do. Although Webster has managed to get Ronald released, he does not want him to know it. In fact, Webster embarks on an undercover operation as part of the plan. He identifies men who seem cruel enough to commit murder, particularly Sontalingi and Aitontiwale, and befriends them. In the presence of these men, he pretends to hate Ronald. He slaps Ronald before their eyes. He is stricken later by a guilty-conscience of inflicting pain on an innocent person. This trick, although apparently cruel, wins over the trust of Sontalingi and Aitontiwale. The two start talking to him later and unwittingly give him information about Spinks Maikange, the murderer of Rebecca.

Spinks is not pleased with the release of Ronald. He then sets another trap for him. With the help of Sontalingi and Aitontiwale, Ronald is tricked to buy clothes for his father-in-law and Maggie. These clothes have been stolen from a local shop. Few hours later, the police show up and arrest him together with his father-in-law and Maggie. Though the police release the father-in-law and Maggie soon after discovery that it is Ronald who had bought the clothes,

the father-in-law is angered and loses trust in Ronald. Maggie, however, does not lose trust in Ronald. She visits him in prison against the will of her father and to her humiliation in the eyes of the villagers.

Spinks lives with Bob Mwendapole. He is a bully while Bob is a weakling; no wonder he does not reveal Spinks' murder to anyone. In fact, Spinks forces Bob to bury Rebecca's bloodstained underwear on the floor of their house. As the pressure mounts, Spinks feels his secret is unsafe. He hatches a plan to eliminate Bob. He hires Aitontiwale and Sontalingi to execute this job. This time Bob is very weak. He is overcome by chronic depression after his girlfriend Vailet (sic) had rejected him. Ostensibly, Spinks sends Bob to stay with his mother so that he would receive proper care. To avoid suspicions, he even goes out of town to allow Sontalingi and Aitontiwale to operate in his absence. The two finally find Bob and burn him.

Fortunately, Bob does not die right there despite the severity of burns. He is rushed to the hospital. Nevertheless, he continues to mutter something about his love to Vailet and about the underwear that Spinks forced him to bury before he dies. Webster's fiancée named Angela is the nurse on duty and she is aware that her fiancé has been preoccupied with the case involving underwear. She tells Webster about this patient. Webster in turn utilises the information to locate Bob and Spinks' place. In the evening he breaks into Spinks' house looking for the spot where the underwear has been buried. As soon as he identifies the spot, Spinks also enters the house. A fierce fight ensues between them. After the fight, Spinks knows that he has been discovered and runs to the mountains.

In prison, Ronald is still depressed and once again entertains suicidal thoughts. He feels that no one wants him, Maggie included. He hallucinates about Rebecca. In his desperate attempt to reach to Rebecca in these hallucinations, he hits his head into the prison walls. He does this



repeatedly and subsequently sustains serious injuries on his head until he passes out. He is then rushed to the hospital - the same hospital where Webster's fiancée works.

Neighbours of Spinks report the fierce fight between Webster and him to police in the morning. Inspector Banda and his men go to the crime scene, Spinks' house. They have come to arrest the people who were fighting the previous night but they have not found them. Spinks has fled to the hills. Webster also manages to go home in pain. This morning Webster also goes to the same house where he had been the previous night as soon as he discovers that Inspector Banda and his men are there. He takes horns for divining with posing as a witchdoctor. He does this to conceal his foreknowledge that Rebecca's underwear is buried in that house. He finds them and acts like divining until he reaches the spot he had identified the previous day and indicates to the police that they dig. They do so and find Rebecca's underwear buried there. They are sure now that Spinks is a murderer. Inspector Banda, however, is not fooled by Webster's trick. He warns him right away. Webster apologises.

As they are leaving the place, Webster invites Inspector Banda to a party that his fiancée is organising. Webster also invites Sontalingi and Aitontiwale later on. On the agreed day, all the invited people arrive. Inspector Banda comes with Constable Mulibambi while Sontalingi comes with Aitontiwale. Sontalingi and Aitontiwale satiate themselves with much beer. They are mixing Castle lager with brandy. The two subsequently get very drunk. Aitontiwale then sleeps right there while Sontalingi becomes violent. The latter starts a fight with Constable Mulibambi. Constable Mulibambi with the help of Inspector Banda manages to handcuff Sontalingi to stop his violence. When Aitontiwale awakens and notices his friend in handcuffs, he misinterprets the situation and starts to reveal their mischief, which include their breaking into the shop to implicate Ronald, and their burning of Bob following Spinks' attempts to cover up his murder of Rebecca.

With this turn of events, the police now focus on Spinks' whereabouts. The following day they learn that Spinks is hiding in the mountains and they rush there. Most villagers also follow, including Webster, Ronald (already discharged from the hospital and released from the prison) and a boy, a younger brother to Maggie, called Harry. Spinks is spotted on the mountaintop holding a sharp knife. One constable aims the gun at him but Harry tells him to save the bullet. The boy then uses his catapults and a stone. The stone hits Spinks on the head and he falls from the mountaintop and accidentally stabbing himself in the process. He lands just near where Ronald and Webster are standing. Webster lifts a huge stone to smash Spinks' head so he can finish him off but Ronald stops him. He is merciful. Peace is restored in the village. Spinks dies at his own hands. Ronald marries Maggie. Webster is to marry Angela in a few days since the case that was delaying him is now solved.

### **3.3 Ukutangila Tekufika**

Mwila L Launshi has authored *Ukutangila Tekufika*, which literally means 'being first to go does not mean being first to arrive'. The book was published in 1991 by the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation. This is the version that will be used in this study. Like *Sheli Wa Citatu*, *Ukutangila Tekufika* focuses on one character, a girl called Lucy. This work traces the life of this character for a number of years. It is a *bildungsroman*. It starts when Lucy is in Grade 7 and ends when she is a fully-grown woman with two children. The story takes place in different parts of Zambia that include Kasama in Chanda Mukulu village, Mpika at Lwitikila Secondary School, Kitwe, Ndola, and Lusaka. In terms of time, the story is set in the few years after independence as can be deciphered by the presence of many expatriate teachers at Lwitikila Secondary School.

The story is similar to *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* in that it also deals with love. However, while in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* there is no betrayal or rejection by the loved one, in *Ukutangila Tekufika*, Lucy rejects the love of Joseph Mutale, the boy who loved her in Grade 7. She rejects him on grounds of his lower educational attainments and opts to fall in love with one who has equal education attainments as her. Lucy prefers Kingsley Nsofwa, a fellow Form 1 (Grade 8), to Joseph, a Grade 7 dropout. However, Nsofwa and Lucy eventually fail to proceed to Form 3 (Grade 10) and stop school. They marry prematurely, trap themselves in abject poverty; they eventually divorce. Joseph on the other hand continues school and completes successfully and has a prosperous career.

The story is very chronological. It opens when Lucy is in Grade 7 and she falls in love with Joseph Mutale in the village Chanda Mukulu in Kasama. They sit for Grade 7 examinations and start awaiting results. During this time, the love between Joseph and Lucy grows. Joseph engages Lucy; their parents start preparing their marriage. Joseph is eager to marry and he is fully devoted to work for his in-laws as the custom demands. Lucy is equally doing the same. She sweeps in Joseph's room every morning and prepares his bath in the evening.

However, the problem springs out when the Grade 7 results are published. Lucy has passed to go to Lwitikila Girls School. Initially, Joseph and Teresa, Lucy's best friend, have not received their results yet. While Lucy's father does not want his daughter to go to school because of the forthcoming marriage, Lucy wants to go. Lucy's father cannot allow her to go to school without Joseph's approval. Thus, Lucy has to convince Joseph first. She beseeches Joseph to allow her to go to school and argues that after all Joseph is also going to pass. In her argument, she adds that it is wise to marry after they have attained some further education. Joseph agrees. When Lucy's father privately asks his opinion on the matter, Joseph explains exactly as Lucy wants it; that they have agreed to go to school before they

marry. Lucy's father then tells his daughter to prepare for school since Joseph has agreed. Lucy's grandmother, however, maintains that the girl should not go to school.

A few days later, family, friends, and others escort Lucy to the station while Joseph and Teresa have not yet received their results still. Lucy feels bad that she is leaving Joseph and is very sad on the bus because of it. A man sitting beside her notices her sobs and comforts her. He tells her that he has a daughter of the same age and suggests that the two girls can be friends. They can start writing letters to each other. He gives her his address and that of his daughter. He explains that his daughter is well behaved and calm and is also in Form 1 at Fatima High School in Ndola. Before Lucy disembarks from the bus, he ensures that Lucy is introduced to other girls going to the same school and gives them money. Lucy is also given. These girls are to guide Lucy and protect her from bullies seeing that many Form 1 pupils experience bullying and mockery when they first report. Luckily, the head girl, Forster Nanyangwe, is among them. Subsequently, Lucy is not bullied at school as she is considered as the cousin to the head girl. Forster introduces her as such and she is treated accordingly. She also advises Lucy on how to conduct herself at school for her own safety.

Lucy is greatly impressed with the clean surroundings, magnificent school buildings, and teachers of foreign origin such as Indians and whites. Initially, she has challenges to comprehend their accents but later gets used to it. Moreover, she quickly makes a friend called Priscilla Kolala who she comes to trust much as she does Teresa in the village. With the favours from Forster who gives her tasks to supervise her fellow classmates, Lucy eventually stands out as a leader and the teachers recognise her.

While she is at school this term, Lucy exchanges letters with people in the village and the Copperbelt. A month after reporting in Form 1, she receives a letter from Teresa which states that Joseph and her could not be selected to Form 1 and their consequential repeat of Grade 7.

She also mentions that Lucy is the only one accepted to Form 1 in that village that year. Lucy is devastated and ashamed by her fiancé's failure. When Priscilla asks her who Joseph is, she lies that he is her brother. Later she receives another letter, this time from Joseph, about the same subject as that from Teresa. She also receives a letter from the daughter of the man that she had met in the bus. This girl is named Betreace (sic) Chisela.

At the end of Term 1, Lucy goes to the village. She is still in love with Joseph despite his failure and she even spends a night in his room. This act goes against her mother's advice that it is not good manners for a woman to spend a night at her fiancé's place before she is formally married. When school reopens in Term 2, Lucy receives a congratulatory letter from her brother named Dennis who lives in Kitwe. She seizes this opportunity and asks if she could visit him at the end of Term 2. She craves to experience and enjoy the pleasures and luxuries that city life can offer. He agrees.

As soon as Term 2 ends, Lucy embarks on the journey to Kitwe to visit her brother in Chimwemwe Township and her pen pal Betreace Chisela in Wusakile Township. Her brother and his kind wife hospitably receive her. The following day she proceeds to see Betreace and thereafter the two girls become good friends during this holiday. Apparently, Betreace is a modern girl, acquainted with town life as well as secretly spoiled. However, her parents do not know that she is spoiled. She takes alcoholic beverages and flirts with men. She introduces Lucy to alcoholic drinks and wanton behaviour. The desire to enjoy city life complemented by peer influence from Betreace impels Lucy to embrace all the vices without selection. Girls' families know that the girls are morally upright yet this is a façade. When the girls discover that their families are distant relations, they come to exploit this kinship. Both girls lie to their respective families that they have slept at the other's place when in fact they were at some young men's place.

Lucy goes back to school when Term 3 starts. Her concentration on school work begins to wane because she is often preoccupied with happy memories of her last holiday in Kitwe with Betreace and their boyfriends. In spite of this, Lucy still has some feelings reserved for Joseph although she has become morally loose. She receives a letter from him a few days later. The letter informs her that he is not going to school because he has accidentally injured himself on the knee with an axe. This injury probably accounts for his second failure to qualify to Form 1.

At the end of term 3, Lucy is invited to go to the Copperbelt again. This time she does not go to her brother's in Kitwe but Ndola to visit her maternal uncle named Kampamba. She informs the people in the village not to expect her. Currently, Lucy prefers town life to village life in order to avoid hard labour. Her holiday in Ndola is similar to the Kitwe one in that in both she is morally loose and enjoys alcoholic beverages. Lucy befriends another promiscuous friend called Matildah with whom she chases after married men. The same friend also introduces her to a classmate called Kingsley Nsofwa. Coincidentally, Kingsley's father lives in the same village where Lucy comes from. She loves Kingsley instantly. Kingsley stays with his uncle in Ndola and he is in Form 1 at Masala Secondary School.

The holiday ends and Lucy goes back to school. She is now in Form 2 (Grade 9). Surprisingly, she has performed well in the end of term tests. The teachers promote her to Dining hall captain. The frequent visits she has made to the Copperbelt also translate in her having many expensive clothes. She becomes popular at school in terms of her duty and her dressing. Her popularity increases when she challenges and beats the bully Lombwe publicly similar to the way Sheli did when he was in prison.

When Lucy receives a letter from Joseph to inform her about his second failure, she becomes very sad. Soon after this letter, she receives another letter from her father requesting her to go

back to the village and marry because her fiancé has failed once again. He argues that marriage should not wait any longer. However, after Lucy contemplates the issue, she resolves to terminate her relationship with Joseph but she does not tell him immediately. She has changed her mind and now desires someone with the same level of education as hers or better. She has Kingsley Nsofwa in mind. Then she reassures herself that the boyfriend to replace Joseph should be Kingsley. She recalls that he had plans to visit his parents in the village the following holiday and sees this as an opportunity to ‘capture’ him. Lucy resolves to go to Kasama mainly to meet Kingsley although she no longer finds rural life pleasurable. This is the time she will reject Joseph conclusively. Granted, Lucy admits that both Kingsley and Joseph are very handsome, but she thinks Kingsley is better than Joseph for two main reasons: he is more educated than Joseph, and he is a town dweller rather than a villager.

Immediately, Form 2 Term 1 holiday starts, Lucy goes to Kasama in Chanda Mukulu village. She discovers the village now looks different and dirty. She can hardly believe that she used to sleep in the thatched houses prior to her admission to Lwitikila Secondary School. Moreover, she is horrified to sleep in a thatched house alone, and she no longer enjoys nshima prepared with millet meal. This marks the transformation of Lucy, albeit questionable, from a villager to an urbanite. Her tastes and perceptions have been intoxicated by metropolitan influences. She rejoices when Teresa also arrives from school and immediately invites her to share her bedroom in order to have her as company and to avoid horrific experiences. Teresa had qualified to Form 1 unlike Joseph who failed the second time.

Lucy sticks to the plan to reject Joseph. She ignores him and does not go to greet him or to sweep for him. When her mother insists that she does the chores as expected of a fiancée, she feigns sickness. However, she cannot advance illness as a façade forever. She finally reveals her thoughts through the explosive verbal release to her grandmother who has pressured her

in the presence of her mother. Like Webster in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, who suffers from a guilty-conscience after beating the innocent Ronald, Lucy does the same after she realises that her rudeness has offended her mother. Angry with herself, she leaves home, goes towards the bush, and experiences a trance while there.

Similar to Ronald in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* who loses his mind at one time, Lucy does the same. Ronald hallucinates about Rebecca while Lucy insensibly runs to the bush and faints. She sees a vision while fainted. This is crucial in that it foreshadows later events. In this vision, Lucy argues with a strange man who tells her to desert her husband who is a drunkard and with who she has children and go back to Joseph who loves her. When she wakes up, she experiences shock for three days. The vision comes to reality when Kingsley marries Lucy. He becomes a drunkard and an irresponsible father of two children.

During this time she is in shock, her uncle Kampamba comes to spend his leave in Kasama. He comes with Kingsley. Lucy quickly executes her plan to have Kingsley as boyfriend. Uncle Kampamba knows Joseph as Lucy's fiancé and he is not happy that he is not in school. He then finds him a school place at Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School with the help of a friend who works at this school after being transferred from Ndola to Kasama. Joseph starts school in Form 1; Lucy, Teresa, and Kingsley are in Form 2.

The holiday ends. Kingsley and Lucy go to their respective schools. The two lovers board the same bus as they depart Kasama and when the bus reaches Mpika, Lucy is hesitant to come out. She does not want to leave Kingsley. He then assures her that he will write his parents to make the payment of bride-price in the village. Lucy then reluctantly disembarks from the bus. At first, Lucy questions her own act of deserting Joseph for Kingsley on the premise of educational qualifications and indirectly asks her friends' opinion on the matter. She is



reassured when they all approve that it is wise for a woman to desert a man with lesser educational qualifications than hers.

Lucy spends her Term 2 holiday in Kitwe though she also visits Nsofwa in Ndola. She is happy that her brother does not blame her for leaving Joseph. One morning she lies to her brother that she is going to see her friend Betreace in Wusakile. To strengthen the lie, she passes through Betreace's place to inform her of the clandestine visit to Ndola. Upon reaching Ndola, she is told that arrangements about the payment of bride-price are in progress and that Joseph's relationship with her is officially over. She is very happy. All that Lucy is required to do now is to ask her father, through a letter, to receive the payment of bride-price from Kingsley's family. Lucy spends this night at Kingsley's place and they agree that the moment either of them fails to qualify for Form 3, then both should stop school and marry. Nevertheless, if both pass, they should continue until such a time that one of them fails. Lucy goes back to Kitwe in the morning to see Betreace and their boyfriends. This time Lucy is not reckless as regards her behaviour. She agrees to go to the movie but refuses to partake of alcoholic beverages. However, when she discovers that the boys have other girlfriends, she vows never to go there again.

When school reopens, Lucy's concentration is further diminished because she is preoccupied with thoughts about Kingsley and the marriage in the pipeline. She plans to fail deliberately in order to marry soon. Concerned teachers notice the decline in Lucy's academic output and talk to her but she proves impervious to counsel. Moreover, she no longer listens to Priscilla who advises her to reconsider her decision about Joseph. To justify her decision, Lucy lies to Priscilla that Joseph is still in Grade 7 when in fact she knows that he is in Form 1.

As soon as Lucy writes her Form 2 examinations, she proceeds to the Copperbelt. She starts with Ndola to see Kingsley. She proceeds to her brother's place in Kitwe where she stays to

await her results. While in Kitwe, she receives two letters one from her father and the other from her younger brother Kaluba. In her father's letter, she learns that her family has received the payment of bride-price from Kingsley's family. In Kaluba's letter, she learns with surprise that Joseph has qualified to Form 3. Kaluba explains in the letter that teachers were compelled to move Joseph from a Form 1 class to a Form 2 one just after two weeks immediately they realised that his extraordinary intellectual faculties befitted a higher grade. Lucy regrets her earlier decision of leaving Joseph after reading this letter but she fails to reverse it.

A few days later, Lucy receives the news that she has been expecting for a long time, that she has failed. She also receives a letter from Kingsley inviting her to join him in Lusaka immediately as his wife a few weeks later. He explains that he works in the bank, though he omits the fact that he works as a cleaner there. Apparently, he has also failed to qualify to Form 3. Lucy agrees and embarks on the journey to Lusaka. Though she lies to her brother that she is going to Ndola, she tells the truth to her father. The two lovers flout marriage procedures to avoid delay of their union.

Kingsley meets Lucy at the station in Lusaka and takes her home. She thinks he is a banker and expects him to occupy a decent house. To her astonishment, he rents a small one roomed house in George compound. The only property in this room is an old second-hand bed with no mattress on it. Lucy endures. It is a new marriage flavoured by immense love. When she asks to visit his workplace, Kingsley gives excuses to prevent her from visiting. However, Lucy finally discovers the truth. One day when she goes to post letters in town, she meets a man wearing the same uniform as her husband. She asks where he works. He shows her. Lucy goes there and sees, through the window without her husband noticing since his back is facing the window, him sweeping the floor in the bank. After this discovery, Lucy no longer

inquires about his work. She wants him to tell her on his own. In spite of this, he maintains silence on the issue even after the birth of a baby girl, called Mpafya.

Marital problems start after the birth of Mpafya. Most of these problems can be attributed to Kingsley's frustration because of financial inadequacy to provide necessities out of his meagre salary. He resorts to alcohol and squabbles. Moreover, there is perpetual hunger in the home and his excessive drinking exacerbates it. When Lucy suggests that she finds a job in order to help, Kingsley interprets this as an attack on his pride and authority, and picks up a fight. During the exchange of bitter words, Lucy cannot help but to rake over the coals about his secret that he is a cleaner at the bank. This irritates the husband who then chases her. She, however, refuses, as she has nowhere to go. Lucy is stuck in her unhappy marriage. She is ashamed to go back to her relatives since she just eloped.

Fortunately, a few days later, Lucy goes to the market. Whilst there, she meets Teresa. Apparently, Teresa has come to Lusaka to pursue computer studies. She is staying with her uncle. She is the one who updates Lucy about Joseph's progress. Lucy learns that he is now at Munali doing Form 4. Teresa realises Lucy's suffering and encourages her to visit but Lucy is ashamed to do so regularly at her uncle's place. She is held back because Teresa is not the owner of the house. Kingsley, on the other hand, never improves his behaviour. In fact, he becomes worse in terms of squabbles and the inadequate provision of necessities.

As Lucy is struggling with life and an irresponsible husband who at one time seemed promising, Joseph progresses in academics. He completes his studies with flying colours. He has two options: studying at the University of Zambia or becoming a trainee manager. He chooses the latter and the employers are about to send him abroad for further studies. As a trainee manager and as a bachelor, he drives a company car and lives in a decent house. Lucy learns all these details, though with regret, from Teresa. She also tells Lucy that Joseph's love

for her is intact and that he is very sympathetic about her suffering. By this time, Lucy has a second child, a son called Chiselebwe with the same imprudent husband.

All this time Lucy gets the details about Joseph, she has never met him because of shame. Eventually, she overcomes her shame and decides to see the place Joseph inhabits but she does not find him home. She is impressed with his habitat and yearns for the manifest affluence in his house. She finds a young woman at the house and suspects that she is Joseph's girlfriend. The young lady, however, tells Lucy that she is just a caretaker and addresses her as Joseph's fiancé. Lucy is struck with disbelief and leaves immediately; she experiences some psychological torment.

Kingsley on the other hand maintains the status quo of fights and squabbles and finally chases Lucy from home. He divorces her as informally just as he had married her. He has already found another girl to replace Lucy. Having nowhere to go, Lucy goes to stay with Teresa at her uncle's place. She does not hesitate to stay there as Teresa's uncle is out of town temporarily. Before Teresa's uncle comes back, Lucy finds a job as a barmaid at the town centre and subsequently rents a small house where she settles with her children since Kingsley has refused to keep them.

Joseph completes his studies abroad and returns. He gets promoted, buys his own car, but maintains the same house. One day as he is driving home from work he meets Lucy who is apparently hiking. When she gets in the car, she notices that Joseph is driving. She apologises to him and asks for forgiveness right away. Reassuringly, he tells her not to be self-critical about the past as such is the nature of life. The story ends with a seemingly cliffhanger. It ends without unknitting explicitly as to whether Joseph finally marries Lucy or not. However, despite an omission of a direct affirmation of Joseph's matrimonial disposition

towards Lucy, the text in many areas vividly indicates Joseph's unconditional love for Lucy. Therefore, it is no groundless statement to say that Joseph marries Lucy eventually.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The prose summaries of the texts under study have been presented in this chapter. Their analysis, however, has not been done, as this will come in the next chapter. The novels whose summaries have been given are *Sheli Wa Citatu* by Wilfred Bwalya Chilangwa; *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* by Chongo Kasonkomona, and *Ukutangila Tekufika* by Mwila L Launshi.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the plots of *Sheli Wa Citatu*, *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, and *Ukutangila Tekufika*. *Freytag's pyramid* of plot analysis and the *Denise Paulme's model* will be employed. Since the *Freytag's pyramid* demands the systematic analysis regarding the progression of events, it will be necessary to highlight some of the literary devices existent in the above-mentioned texts to come up with a particular type of plot. As earlier mentioned in the first chapter, plot in this study is defined as the structure of actions as they are ordered and rendered to achieve a particular emotional and artistic effect (Abrams, 1992).

#### 4.1 Sheli Wa Citatu

*Sheli Wa Citatu* is a picaresque novel. Although Sheli commits some mischiefs, the reader still likes him probably because he has been pushed to do those extremes owing to the lack of better choices seeing that he has just lost his parents and he is homeless. The novel adopts the third person omniscient point of view in which the narrator reveals the thoughts of any character he chooses in the novel. For example, the narrator reveals the thoughts of the men, minor characters, that Sheli had captured when he had disguised himself as a guard that: “*Cilya abalumendo baleeya, baalaatoontoonkanya pafyabacitikile.*” (Literally as, ‘As the men were walking, they started thinking about what had happened to them’) p.23. The other minor character whose thoughts are revealed is Mwansa Kapaipi on page 102.

The main conflict in *Sheli Wa Citatu* is Sheli's striving for better life amidst calamity. After losing his parents, his home, his stability, and his centre, Sheli wants to regain stability and a home. He desires to improve his situation but the methods he adopts further complicate his

situation. The plot commences with the demise of his father and, shortly after, the demise of the mother shortly afterwards. The demise of the mother particularly, the only one Sheli relies on to lead the way to her helpful relatives in Kasama, leaves Sheli in a precarious situation. As things stand now, he is unable to seek help from anyone apart from his mother's brother in Ndola whose exact residence he does not know. In spite of this, he has a firm conviction that he can trace his uncle and thereby a home. This spurs him to embark on a journey. He is cautious about spending the money that his late mother gave him moments prior to her expiry. He cannot spend this money on bus fare since his future is quite uncertain. This probably explains why he resorts to sneaking into the goods train that is going to Ndola. However, the entanglements of fate render it impossible for him to sneak out at the appropriate destination; the guards are near and so he postpones it for the night and in the meantime he falls in deep slumber. He oversleeps and is unaware that the train is scheduled for the Congo as its final destination.

#### **4.1.1 Freytag's Pyramid**

The *Freytag's pyramid* postulates that the series of the events lead to the resolution of the conflict. The book *Sheli Wa Citatu* has three episodes. Each episode has its own *exposition*, *rising action*, *climax*, *falling action*, and *resolution*. Thus, the book has three plot progressions. All these episodes collectively add up to one overriding conflict, that of Sheli striving to find a home, stability, and security. Each episode hints on this overall conflict and exhausts a part of it. The first episode concerns the experiences of journeys of Sheli to and from the Congo up to the time he survives these hardships, the time the rangers find him a job. The *exposition* presents background information about Sheli and introduces the conflict that has been initiated by the death of his father and mother. The demise of Sheli's parents is the *inciting incident* in that it signals the beginning of the main conflict, that is, Sheli's striving for better life amidst calamity. The *rising action* includes Sheli's journey from Kapiri

to Ndola and his accidental arrival in the Congo. It reaches *climax* when whilst in the Congo the guards, popularly called *bakaboke*, arrest him and instruct one guard to take him to the cells. This is the point of great emotional intensity. Sheli attracts many sympathies when perceived as an orphan and destitute who by misadventure finds himself in a foreign country, the Congo, where he is about to be held in custody. This misadventure springs from his probable psychological confusion that is ignited by the sudden loss of a father one day and the mother the following day in succession and thereby becoming an abandoned child. It should be noted that like most abandoned children such as the biblical Moses, Homeric Oedipus, and the Masarwa girl in *Maru*, they are eventually salvaged from their bleak situations by some unknown *helper*. For example, the infant Moses is placed in the basket and set afloat on the waters of Nile River but he is eventually rescued and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter. The infant Oedipus with his feet pierced is abandoned on the mountain to die but he is eventually saved by a shepherd and later adopted by King Polybus of Corinth (Sophocles, 1970). In addition, the abandoned Masarwa baby is found by the roadside by the missionaries who have come from England (Head, 1971). In a similar way, some *helpers* that Sheli does not even know will save him later. In the *falling action*, Sheli overpowers the guard who is assigned to take him to the cells and escapes into the bush. It also includes the experiences he goes through while in the bush. Finally, *resolution* occurs when the help comes in form of Zambian forest rangers who rescue Sheli from the bush. The rangers take him to their Mwekera office where he is given a job as a servant for the Chief Forest Ranger, Mr Robert Mundia.

The second episode includes Sheli's stay with Mr Mundia, his masquerades and subsequent imprisonment, and his work at Roma Secondary School in Lusaka until he resigns in order to trace his uncle in Mwanabombwe. In the *exposition*, the convivial environment of Mr Mundia's house is hinted at; Mr and Mrs Mundia treat Sheli well. *Rising action* involves



Sheli's masquerades as an attractive young lady to deceive men who fall for his charms. It includes the discovery of Sheli's mischief by the Mundia couple who also reports it to the police. At the *climax*, the detectives ambush Sheli and start to interrogate him. In the *falling action*, Sheli takes to flight from these detectives back to Kitwe to Teddy's house as soon as he realises that their questions are incriminating him. It also includes the chase. In the *resolution*, Sheli is finally arrested and subsequently sentenced.

Like the first, the third episode concerns the experiences of the journey of Sheli from Lusaka to Mwanabombwe via the Congo. In the *exposition*, Sheli loses interest in his work at Roma Secondary School and resigns. The *rising action* involves the boarding of the bus and the journey on the way to Mwanabombwe through the Pedicle Road, and its breakdown at Mikambo where Sheli, along with other passengers, goes to drink in the nearby bars until he goes to farther bars in the company of a local sexual worker named Kabuumbu wa Kabuumbu. The *climax* is marked by Sheli's awakening to the realisation that the bus has left him. This time he has overslept due to much drinking. Sheli walking along Mansa road where he suffers attacks at the hands of the Congolese marks the *falling action*. In the *resolution*, Sheli finally manages to find the bus that had left him and boards it again. It takes him to Mwanabombwe where his Uncle Teddy and the wife readily receive him.

The book largely follows a strict chronology. It starts with the *beginning of the event* and then flows steadily. Flashbacks are used sparingly and usually about minor characters. The only flashback about the main character is a very brief recollection in which Sheli remembers his father's advice that a lion does not habitually devour the carcass found dead (p.32). There are no skips in the story. Everything seems closely tied to the strict chronological progression of the events as they occurred.

Other flashbacks focus on minor characters. These flashbacks do not make a significant contribution to the plot apart from serving the purpose of didacticism also called *ubusuma bwe funde* (Lutato, 1980). Examples of such flashbacks about minor characters are that of Gillian Musopelo and Binwell Chitambo who narrate their stories about their earlier life to Sheli. The personal recounts by Gillian and Binwell only add to the moral content of the book as these characters regret their earlier behaviour(s) whose negative consequences they are facing today. Binwell was a thief who is now in prison while Gillian was a very beautiful able-bodied lady who was in an affair with a married man but is now disabled as a result of the accident she and the married man were involved in. Poetic justice helps to reinforce these morals. Both characters with negative behaviours face the harsh consequences. Moreover, the story Sheli narrates about the three prisoners Gavameenti Lungwebuungu, Bihisi Mwewa and Elephant Mabvuto Phiri whose attempted prison escape failed also reinforces didacticism.

The book does not only utilise flashbacks but it also utilises foreshadowing. While flashbacks take the story to an earlier event, foreshadowing hints at events that will occur later in the story. The encounter with lions that Sheli experiences is foreshadowed in:

*Naangu aasendeeme ifyo mu cibote, uluceelo lwaleemuloleela. Nalo lwali naukumuleetela amacuushi ayo aali na ukuba nayo eeka, mu mpaanga, umo mu mapooli, mu malila-nkalamo, umo ashaishibe na kwishiba (p.25).*

(Literally translated: ‘Although he slept peacefully, the following morning was awaiting him with its own package of hardships that he alone was to face in the wilderness where lions roared; the place he was not familiar with’).

This foreshadowing enables the reader to anticipate the plot structure as it unfolds; that Sheli will have an encounter with lions.

Furthermore, the repetition of the journey motif contributes to the artistic effect of the book. The book starts with a journey and ends with one. In both these journeys, Sheli faces adversities in the Congo and his character improves morally after overcoming each adversity. Congo in this sense represents the *liminal*. That is, the place of conscious awareness. He realises the faults of his behaviour whilst in this place. On the essence of journeys, Lubungu (2011:23) quotes Mortimer (1990) who emphasises that:

On the journey, the protagonist makes discoveries about him or herself as well and growing into a better, stronger, and self-assured person. These stories are well known and they are actually woven into the fabric of every culture. Literature abounds with journeys to the end of the world, to the underworld, into the labyrinth or journeys backwards into the past or forward into the future. In the end, they are all journeys of self-discovery.

It should be noted that the archetypal hero journey involves: departure, trials, epiphany (sudden realization), and return as witnessed in Mpashi's *Cekesoni Aingila Ubusoja*. An archetypal hero pattern involves the transformation of the character's conscience through trials and revelations (Diller, 1974 and Guerin, 2005). However, in *Sheli Wa Citatu* there is absence of return. There is just destination. The protagonist goes through self-discovery during the journey and by the time he reaches his destination, the hero is a changed person.

While on these journeys, the character learns from his mistakes. There exists a cyclical interplay of Sheli's misdeeds and his attainment of moral uprightness. Moral uprightness comes out of the realisation of the adverse impact of his error of judgement. Each instance of mischief is followed by a wise realisation and consequential moral uprightness that is stimulated by the consequences of his error of judgment. We witness the first instance of mischief being followed by wise realisation when Sheli illegally sneaks into a goods train from Kapiri Mposhi to Ndola without the knowledge that the train's final destination is the Congo. He experiences many hardships as a result. Luckily, forest rangers find him in the

bush, rescue him, and secure a job for him to work as a servant for the Chief Forest Ranger. Equipped with the wisdom gathered from his recent journey, Sheli performs his duties honestly and responsibly for the period of five years. It is unfortunate that moral uprightness in this case is temporal and wanes after a particular period.

Sheli's moral uprightness wanes at Mr Mundia's house when he becomes a transvestite. He starts wearing feminine garments in order to lure men. This act later leads to his imprisonment. In a masquerade, Sheli could make trips from Mwekera to Kitwe mainly to satisfy his alcoholic cravings and to satisfy his desire to visit the town. His arrest ignites wisdom and expiation that is especially useful during his sentence and earns him an early release from prison. In prison, Sheli displays positive behaviour, counsels other prisoners, and protects them from bullies. It should be pointed out that during his time in prison, Sheli becomes a surrogate author. The counsel he offers his inmates is the author's attempt to achieve didacticism or *ubusuma bwe funde* and thereby effecting *self-insertion*. However, to investigate whether the author did this intentionally or unintentionally lies beyond the scope of this study.

When Sheli is released and starts working at Roma Secondary School, he maintains his sagacity and wins the respect of everyone at the school, including the girls who frequently rely on his counsel, until he resigns with the reasonable purpose of tracing his uncle, Teddy. He, therefore, embarks on the journey. As before, his sagacity is swayed during the journey and alternates with recklessness as demonstrated when he partakes of alcoholic beverages in excess. While other passengers drink with moderation and return to the bus on time during the time the bus has broken down, Sheli fails. This results in him being left by the bus at Mikambo in the Congo. Once again, Sheli goes through hardships in Congo, the same place where he was almost killed by the Congolese in his earlier misadventure when he had sneaked into a train. After he survives, he learns from his error of judgment and thereby

attains moral uprightness. For example, a similar incident happens during this same journey when the driver allows the passengers to go out to drink alcohol in nearby bars. Sheli refrains from the urge to drink and remains in the bus to listen religiously to the words of wisdom from an elderly passenger. This is an improvement in comparison with his earlier disposition when Sheli is unable to resist the urge to partake of alcohol, loses his self-control, and finds himself in the house of a notorious prostitute named Kabuumbu wa Kabuumbu. Sheli overcomes the temptation this time and maintains self-control until he reaches Mwansabombwe where his uncle informs him that he has arranged marriage for him.

It should be noted that the repetition of incidents and motifs is a technique characteristic of African oral literature. Repetition of incidents promotes didacticism in works, creates harmony and contributes to the overall artistic effect of the work that enriches plot. One such repetition is the tendency for people to arrange jobs for Sheli. The rangers arrange a job for Sheli to work as a servant in Mr Mundia's house while the prison warden Mr Sefa Chikululu also arranges a job for Sheli to work at Roma Secondary School immediately he is released.

The other type of repetition, as earlier mentioned, is that which involves the journey motif. Some incidents are repeated about the journeys in the Congo (the *liminal* – the place of education). In both journeys, Sheli finds himself in trouble because of an error of judgment. In the first journey, Sheli's error lies in the act of sneaking into a goods train and falling in deep slumber therein. In the second journey, the error lies in excessive drinking of alcohol and oversleeping. In both journeys when he wakes up, he is already steeped in trouble. In the first one, he finds himself in the wild and fails to disembark until the train reaches the Congo. In the second one, he finds that the bus has already left him.

Moreover, the incidents in both journeys are similar. Both journeys include an incident where Sheli prefers to walk through the thicket to avoid attacks from the Congolese in the main

road. In the first journey, he manages to avoid guards known as *bakaboke* who had tortured him moments ago whereas in the second one he does not manage to avoid them as he stumbles upon cruel Congolese men who batter him. He also experiences other hardships such as starvation and vulnerability to lions. Moreover, in both cases he feigns death when he encounters a situation in which he is physically incapacitated. In the first journey, he feigns death during an encounter with lions. In the second journey, he feigns death during an encounter with cruel Congolese men. The trick of feigning death works especially in the second journey where the men who are battering him stop once they realise that he is 'dead'.

In addition, in both cases *helpers* redeem the situation. Propp (1968:79) comments that the spheres of actions of the *helper* include the spatial transference of the hero, the liquidation of misfortune or *lack*, rescue from pursuit, the solution of difficult tasks and the transfiguration of the hero. It should be noted that Sheli's first journey has two *helpers*, that is, a python that encircles the lion and blocks the lion's attack thereby rescuing him in part, and the rangers who shoot both lions thereby rescuing him completely. The rangers also liquidate his misfortune or *lack* by taking him with them and finding him a job. In the second journey, the *helper* comes in form of a group of hunters who find Sheli and rescue him from what he perceives as the pursuit from the Congolese. In addition, the composition and the actions of these *helpers* are similar. Both groups of men possess guns – that is, the forest rangers in the first and the hunters in the second. However, each group has a coward among them who alerts the others to the presence of something. This, in both instances, leads to the discovery of Sheli. In the first incidence, the coward is Kabiki Maleembeka who is touched by Sheli on the heel and thinks that he has been bitten by something. He screams. In this way, he alerts the other forest rangers. Apparently, when the rangers shoot the lions, they have not yet discovered Sheli who is too exhausted and hungry to speak. He feebly touches the heel of Kabiki Maleembeka who goes into a frenzy of fear.

In the second situation, the coward is Mwewa. During a break down of the hunters' car, Mwewa goes out to answer the call of nature just close to Sheli's hideout. The offensive odour of Mwewa's excrement stirs an involuntary explosive sneeze from Sheli. Like Kabiki, this man conceives a presence of some dangerous animal and screams. This alerts others who then come to verify. Only to find that it is the defenceless Sheli. It should be emphasised, therefore, that the repetition of these similar incidents in the plot contribute to the artistic and harmonious effect of the book. The repetition of similar incidents in different episodes also simplifies the comprehension of the story thereby making it accessible even to children. It should be noted that repetition in orature also serves to highlight the values and the vices.

Oral influence in the work is not restricted to the employment of the technique of repetition to create harmony but also the use of onomatopoeia, that is, the imitation of sound in words. Onomatopoeic words have been used extensively such as "... *baleemupaamaula amapi, na mpaa, mpaa, mpaa,*" (p.21). (Literally as: 'They were slapping him *mpaa, mpaa, mpaa*'). *Mpaa* as an onomatopoeic word refers to the sound that is heard when one slaps the other. Other uses of onomatopoeia are found on pages 17, 28, 67, 70, 81, 137, 139, and 140.

Besides onomatopoeia, there is use of *direct address* also called 'breaking the fourth wall'. *Direct address* occurs when an author or character addresses the audience directly. There are two types of *direct address*. The first type acknowledges to the reader or audience that what is being presented is fiction while the second type seeks to extend the world of the story to the audience to provide the illusion that they are included in it (Wikipedia visited on 02/08/2011). *Sheli Wa Citatu* manifests both types. The first type is found in the beginning and the end of the book where the author explains that it is fiction. The second type is found in the rest of the book as exemplified in, "*Sheli apo aenda, aendamwe...*" (p.17). (Literally as 'Sheli walked and walked I am telling you!'). Other instances of *direct address* are present on

pages 31 and 211. In these instances, the narrative style mainly tends to be oral as if intended for the ears of the audience.

While it is true that the plot of *Sheli Wa Citatu* is relatively appealing with a progression of events that generally creates an artistic effect, the book has its shortfalls that negatively affect the plot to a considerable degree. It contains one incident that provokes criticism in terms of *probability of action*. Musonda (2002: 39) comments that, “Probability of action is by definition what might be, not what was; it is about human nature.” Therefore, in this sense the author must ensure that his story is plausible or possible. However, the handling of incidents about death in *Sheli Wa Citatu* is insensitive and somewhat implausible. Generally, in many, if not all, societies in Zambia, people mourn and then bury their dead. Nevertheless, in *Sheli Wa Citatu* mourning is omitted after the death of the father. Sheli and his mother immediately leave for Kasama. The same is repeated when the mother dies. Sheli does not mourn or attend to the corpse to bury her. He proceeds immediately to Ndola leaving his mother’s corpse around Kapiri Mposhi in the hands of paramedics. He does not bother to take part in the burial of the mother and this appears to be quite implausible seeing that Sheli is an adult and a college student for that matter. The other incident that questions plausibility is the accident where Sheli’s mother dies but Sheli survives without any injuries. The incidents outlined above are implausible insofar as they highly unlikely to simulate reality.

The above-mentioned incidents manifest implausibility clearly. However, there are two incidents whose plausibility is dependent on the viewpoint. The first viewpoint is realism. This is the viewpoint that this study adopts. Realism attempts to describe human behaviour and surroundings or to represent figures and objects exactly as they act or appear in life. The second is from magical realism in which magical elements blend with the real world (Wikipedia visited on 5th March 2012). Magic realism is very prevalent in folktales. Incidents whose plausibility depends on viewpoint are: first, a python encircling a lion with a



deadly squeeze, and second, the dual-staged coincidence of Sheli and Teddy. Teddy, the uncle that Sheli has never met before, proposes Mary (the disguise his nephew has embraced) and later turns out to be the guard that was assigned to take Sheli to the cells in the Congo. From the realist point of view, the python encircling the lion with a deadly squeeze is quite out of the ordinary.

The second incident that lacks the veracity of possible events with regard to human nature in terms of realism is a dual-staged coincidence of Sheli and Teddy. Sheli beating Teddy, the uncle he does not recognise, in Congo is the first coincidence. Teddy proposing Mary, the disguise his nephew has embraced, in Kitwe is the second coincidence. This type of coincidence can hardly happen in real life. Two different actions, that is, a fight and romantic overtures, happening in two different places, that is, Congo and Kitwe (Zambia) can hardly happen to the same pair of people. This occurrence of two coincidences to the same pair of people is hardly plausible. It comes out as an unexpected twist of fate that baffles the reader especially that no preparation was made in advance, such as by use of foreshadowing, repetitive designation or Chekov's gun plot devices, to prepare for such twists. It appears the author employs it in an attempt to reinforce *ubusuma bwe funde* that is inherent in the idea that a wrongdoer cannot avoid discovery and the idea that vice is repaid by vice from another. Teddy's vice is that he prefers his girlfriend Mary to his wife and later realises that his vice does not pay. Worse still, he discovers that Mary, the perceived beautiful lady is Sheli, a fellow man and his own nephew. His vice, of unfaithfulness, is countered by another vice - deception by Sheli. Moreover, he becomes disgraced when he realises that his involvement is akin to homosexuality and incest as justified by the act of kissing albeit the absence of carnal knowledge. On the other hand, Sheli learns that one cannot get away with mischief, as the world is too small to hide from the people on whom we inflict pain. He beat Teddy in the Congo but he meets him in Kitwe. Moreover, he tortured the smugglers and confiscated their

goods, Mwansa Kapaipi among them. He meets this man in Kitwe during the trial. That is why after this turn of events Teddy and Sheli become morally upright. Sheli stops mischief and quits deceiving people. Teddy also stops promiscuity and devotes his life exclusively to his family.

As already mentioned, the above two incidents are not plausible from the viewpoint of realism. However, they are plausible from the viewpoint of magic realism. Magic realism is an important feature of folklore as already been said that the author borrowed a lot from orature. Suffice it to say that magic realism or magical realism is an aesthetic style or genre of fiction in which magical elements blend with the real world. The story explains these magical elements as real occurrences, presented in a straightforward manner that places the “real” and the “fantastic” in the same stream of thought (Wikipedia visited on 5th March 2012). Bowers (2004: 22) amplifies that magical realism “... relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real. It relies upon realism, but only so that it can stretch what is acceptable as real to its limits.” Thus, it is possible that the python can encircle the lion with a deadly squeeze. The dual staged coincidence of Teddy and Sheli is also plausible.

The other notable shortfall in the novel that negatively affects its plot is *digression*. There are instances where the narrator departs from the main character to the character whose story does not directly contribute to the plot. This *digression* is apparent with the female character Chaalwe who Sheli meets on the bus during his journey to Mwansabombwe. When she disembarks at Mansa, the narrator continues to give accounts of Chaalwe, her parents and the parents’ neighbours whose children have neglected them. The author digresses to effect didacticism – that is, to encourage people who are working in cities to look after their parents in the village. Notwithstanding the above, the story of Chaalwe distorts the focus of the story.

Overpopulation of characters is yet another aspect that negatively affects the plot. Characterisation is crucial to plot. Every character that is introduced must serve a purpose. However, in *Sheli Wa Citatu* there is overpopulated characterisation to the extent that some of them are merely named even though they do not make a direct contribution to the progression of the plot. This is a flout of good characterisation (Madden, 2008). It appears the author has firmly embraced a system common in the traditional Bemba society in which everyone in the village is known by name even though that person does not make any significant contribution to the welfare of the village. Other instances of this type of characterisation where the narrator simply names them are found on pages 41, 47, 49, and 117. In other instances, the narrator mentions the name of the character prior to his/her introduction as in, “*Aawe nga filya, mootoka imo iisuma saana, yafika, yaisaiminina na apaali ‘cikashaana’ Sheli. Muli ka motooka ako, mwaisafuma na cilumendo uweshina lya Washeni Muzumara, uwalebomba incito yakwensha ba Town Clerk abaku Luanshya,*” (p.41). (Literally as, ‘And a very beautiful car stopped by close to where ‘lady’ Sheli was standing. From this car emerged a young man named Washeni Muzumara who worked as driver for the Luanshya Town Clerk.’)

#### **4.1.2 Denise Paulme’s Model**

*Denise Paulme’s model* is composed of seven structural plot types based on the events or actions that take place in a narrative. The structural plot type of *Sheli* is *cyclical* albeit double. In the first cycle, there is *lack*. This involves Sheli losing his parents and a home thereby becoming vagrant. In this situation of *lack*, he reaches Congo and faces many hardships which include torture by the guards, hunger and spending nights in the bush. Fortunately, this *lack* is eliminated when Sheli is rescued by the forest rangers who ensure his

stability by organising a job for him to work as a servant for the Chief Forest Ranger at Mwekera. Sheli ceases to be a vagabond; he has a place to stay with the kind-hearted Mundia couple. However, because of his irrationality inspired by the desire to deceive men for easy money by masquerading himself as an attractive young lady, *lack* is restored in the form of imprisonment after his mischief is finally discovered. This is after the scene of stealing Mrs Mundia's expensive clothes that he was using to effect his masquerades to sway promiscuous men's attention and thereby gain their money and other favours.

The second cycle starts with *amelioration*. That is reached as a reward for Sheli's remarkable and impressive conduct in prison leading to his early release and an arranged culinary job at Roma Secondary School in Lusaka until the time he resigns so as to embark on a journey. However, his excessive drinking habits and debauchery bring about *lack*, again, as the bus leaves him at Mikambo in the Congo. He does not notice because he is preoccupied with a local prostitute. He becomes a vagabond once more and vulnerable to danger. Fortunately, *amelioration* is restored when some kind-hearted Zambians discover him in the Congo and take care of him. Shortly afterwards while he is with these people, he sees the bus that had left him and boards it once more. The bus successfully reaches his destination where he joins his family in Mwansabombwe. Thus, in terms of the *Denise Paulme's model* the book *Sheli Wa Citatu* has been broken down into two *cyclical* plot types. In the first *cyclical* plot, there is *lack - amelioration - lack*; and in the second *cyclical* plot there is *amelioration - lack - amelioration*.

#### **4.2 Ubuseko Mu Bulanda**

The main plot of *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* surrounds Ronald's desire to marry while the subplot is the investigation that is conducted to uncover the murder of Rebecca, Ronald's fiancée.

Therefore, the amalgamation of a love story, that of Rebecca and Ronald, and a detective story about the unearthing of the murderer of Rebecca. The two stories complement each other. The love story primarily concerns Ronald while Ronald's friend called Webster mainly propels the detective story. Even though the police inspector Banda also carries out the investigations, it is Webster's private attempts that uncover the murderer. The police only come in to arrest the murderer and the accomplices.

Ronald lives in Mufulira. He has a fiancée in Kawambwa. He came to this town to work in the mines so that he could raise money for bride-price. He embarks on the journey to Kawambwa as soon as he has raised enough money. He plans to settle down with her in Mufulira. Sadly, he reaches Kawambwa and stumbles on his fiancée's corpse. In this text, Ronald's desire to marry is the main conflict. Webster's attempt to uncover the murderer is the subplot. The subplot is intricately intertwined in the main plot and essentially contributes to the overall resolution of Ronald's conflict, that of marriage. His discovery of the body just upon arrival stirs great suspicion among the villagers. They accuse him of murder. This leads to his detention. Although Rebecca's sister is willing to marry him, he cannot do this because he is constantly detained by the police. The detentions and arrests worsen with the rising schemes of Spinks and his minions Aitontiwale and Sontalingi who ensure that Ronald is perpetually incriminated in crimes and kept in custody.

Webster strongly believes that Ronald did not kill Rebecca. Apparently, the murderer had also taken her underwear. Webster strives to prove to the police that his friend is not the murderer. His first success is to prove to the police Ronald's innocence. He executes a similar crime by secretly taking the underwear of an unsuspecting woman. He chases her afterwards. Webster does this during the time Ronald is held in custody. This indicates to the police that the genuine murderer of Rebecca is out there. Ronald is released from gaol but the murderer is not uncovered. Webster finally manages to uncover the murderer.

#### 4.2.1 Freytag's Pyramid

This pyramid is one that plots the course of the *conflict* from the beginning of the story to the end. The plot of *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* is made up of two episodes. The first is the journey from Mufulira to Kawambwa up to the time Ronald discovers that Rebecca has been murdered. The other episode is the investigations of the murder of Rebecca by Webster and Inspector Banda. Both these episodes are connected and unified and effectively contribute to the plot. The point of view is strictly third person omniscient. The narrator is able to reveal the thoughts of every character that he talks about - both major and minor characters. He reveals the thoughts of Ronald, Rebecca, Detective Banda, Bana Willie Bulanda, Webster, Angela, Spinks, Bob, and Bana Bob, among others.

Despite the book having two episodes, the plot progression in terms of the *Freytag's pyramid* is just one. The progression is based on the main conflict and its resolution. The first episode is composed of the following incidents: Ronald's psychological disposition with regard to his zeal about the impending marriage to Rebecca, and the stories that are told in the bus by some passengers. It also includes the events that Ronald experiences, together with other passengers, as they are travelling such as the accident they stumble upon and the delays and stops that the bus makes; Ronald's eventual arrival and discovery of his fiancée's murdered body. The second episode on the other hand is composed of the following incidents: the funeral and mourners' accusation that Ronald is the murderer; his suicide attempt; his arrest, the initiation of Webster's schemes to have him released; and Maggie leaving Spinks for Ronald as a boyfriend. It also includes Spinks' schemes to implicate Ronald and to cover up his crime which leads to the murder of Bob Mwendapole; and Webster's schemes to uncover the slayer Spinks and its success leading to the apprehension of Spinks.

As earlier mentioned, *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* has one unified plot progression unlike *Sheli Wa Citatu* which has three plot progressions. There is a smooth integration of the two episodes to

effect a coherent plot progression in the resolution of the main conflict that is about Ronald's marriage. The *exposition* presents background information about the love affair between Ronald and Rebecca and it also introduces the conflict that is Ronald's desire to marry. The *rising action* includes the delays of the bus and continues to the point when Ronald disembarks from the bus and proceeds home albeit with reservations because his heart is not at ease. It should be mentioned that the book starts *in medias res*. The book opens with Ronald already in motion. He has a premonition that something bad will happen along this dark path he is using. It reaches the *climax* when Ronald discovers that his fiancée has been murdered. *Falling action* occurs when Webster accumulates crucial leads that point to Spinks as the murderer of Rebecca. Webster capitalises on Bob's mutterings about underwear, the essential evidence, right before he dies to prove that Spinks murdered Rebecca. Further proof about Spinks' murder of Rebecca and his other crimes meant to implicate Ronald comes from the revelations by Aitontiware. *Resolution* occurs when Webster and the group of police officers verify that Spinks is the murderer of both Rebecca and of Bob. They pursue him in the mountains where he has been hiding. They find him. Eventually, Ronald's name is cleared. He marries Maggie.

Unlike *Sheli Wa Citatu* which mostly follows a strict chronology, there is absence of strict chronology in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*. The *beginning of the work* does not coincide with the *beginning of an event* owing to the use of flashbacks. It starts *in medias res*. According to Gray (1975:359) *beginning of the work* refers to 'first moment-by-moment account that appears' while the *beginning of an event* refers to 'the chronologically first moment-by-moment account wherever it may appear.' The *beginning of the work* commences with Ronald's journey to Kawambwa on a quest to marry Rebecca. However, information about how Ronald met his fiancée, that is the *beginning of the event*, is revealed through a flashback. Thus, the book does not begin with the initial events. The story does not start with

the *beginning of the event* but begins slightly after the initial events in terms of chronology. Chronologically, Ronald met Rebecca before he went to Mufulira but the work begins when Ronald is on the journey coming from Mufulira going to Kawambwa. The author has chosen to begin with the journey perhaps to emphasise the immense love that Ronald has for Rebecca. In this journey, Ronald's devotion to Rebecca is revealed. The reader's prior understanding of Ronald's love results in intense sympathy when Ronald later discovers that Rebecca has been murdered. It is cathartic. Therefore, the reader is inclined to fathom the depression, suicidal thoughts and anguish that Ronald experiences before and after the burial of Rebecca.

Through various flashbacks, that occur with both major and minor characters, the story moves us back in time. Flashbacks have been used in two ways. Firstly, they are employed as mere recollections about past events to provide background information about the character. Secondly, they are intertwined with suspense to complete the story where the narrator left it hanging. The first type of flashbacks include, the information about how Ronald met Rebecca (p. 3); the preparations that he had made the previous night (p.10); Aitontiwale and Sontalingi's revelation of their mischief that was engineered by Spinks to frame Ronald (p.132); and the contrasts of Ronald's experience before the murder of Rebecca and after (p.49). Moreover, later on Ronald meets his former schoolmate Webster. The information about how these spent time together in school and Ronald's school days with regard to discipline is given through flashback (p.197).

Other flashbacks include:the philosophy of Bana Willie Bulanda, a minor character and shop owner (33); how Webster met Angela, which also provides more information about the character of Webster (p.74); Webster's perceptions of Aitontiwale and Sontalingi (p.125); Inspector Banda's motive for his refusal to release Ronald because of the fear that he has about mob justice when he remembers an incident in which two policemen were once killed



by the mob after a misunderstanding (p.59); and Bob Mwendapole's upbringing (p. 158-161) and how he met his girlfriend who later rejected him and thereby leaving him in depression. The latter flashback sheds more light on the genuine love that Bob has for Vailet and this helps the reader to understand why Bob becomes depressed when he is finally rejected by her. Equally important, the main clue to the murder of Rebecca is given through a flashback where Spinks, after murdering Rebecca, comes home and forces Bob to bury the bloodstained underwear of Rebecca on the floor and convincing him that by performing such an act he is an accomplice.

Before discussing flashbacks that are intertwined with suspense, it should be noted that in the initial stages, the book starts with a lot of suspense. The gaps of information are filled in by the use of flashbacks. Suspense is exhibited in the unknown murderer of Rebecca. The mention of the murder of Rebecca comes shortly after a few pages in the book. This acts as a narrative hook. This technique of opening with a narrative hook captures the reader's interest as one tries to find out who killed Rebecca and how Ronald is going to react. The narrator later on supplies this essential information through flashback, that is, how Spinks murdered Rebecca and later on with another flashback, the narrator fills in information about the motive behind Spinks' murder of Rebecca (p.106). All the gaps that initially existed have been effectively patched up by the careful employment of flashbacks.

Suspense is complemented by the occurrence of skips in the narration of the story. For example, the narrator merely declares that Rebecca has died and describes the sad situation in the village before Ronald discovers the body and before we know that it was Spinks who had committed the murder and equally before we know other details about the murder. The skip in the story stimulates interest in the reader and poses as suspense to the question 'How did she die?' The narrator also skips in narrating about Ronald's discovery of the body. He declares that Ronald found Rebecca dead but again this stimulates the question 'How did he

find?' Hence, the reader is hooked to the story. Moreover, there is another skip about Ronald's arrest. We learn this by implication when Webster asks Inspector Banda to release him.

Other incidents of suspense backed by flashbacks include: the leopard's attack of Maggie, Rebecca's sister (p.172). In this case, the narrator ends with the statement that the leopard caught Maggie in the dress. The story does not continue about what happened whether Maggie survived immediately after the encounter with the leopard. The narrator starts narrating something else not about Maggie, thus leaving the reader in suspense. When Maggie is later mentioned, she is with Spinks on page 178. Therefore, the suspense that was created as to whether she survived or not is answered on the mentioned page. Similarly, the suspense of the fight that happened between Webster and Spinks is left on page 218 where the narrator describes a situation when Spinks brings out his knife and sits on top of Webster about to stab him. The reader having known Spinks and how he has stabbed Rebecca is inclined to think that in a similar manner, Webster will be stabbed to death and wants to find out what followed. But the narrator stops here for a while and leaves this hanging - is Webster stabbed or not? It is after a number of pages and after talking about other things that he comes back to Webster when he is at home on page 220 and fills in the details about how Webster managed to survive Spinks' knife on page 222 through the use of a flashback.

Besides flashbacks, the book also employs foreshadowing. Foreshadowing as a literary technique springs from the tendency of hinting at events that will occur later in a story. It should be noted that the murder of Rebecca is foreshadowed not only by the use of figurative expressions such as "*imfimfi yamumina*" (darkness swallowed her) (p.20), but also by Ronald's journey to Kawambwa. During this journey, Rebecca's death is foreshadowed by the comments made by a passenger sitting next to Ronald about the accident that they have just come across where one priest has died. Stimulated by the sad accident, another passenger

tells one sad story about how one guard in the Congo forced a child to disembark from the bus because the latter did not have a ticket. The child was left alone in the bush and was later discovered beheaded. All these events and frightening stories make the same passenger sitting next to Ronald tell him that, '*Uko tuleeya kwati takuli bwino. Uyu muupamba twatola.*' (p. 15). (Literally, I think there is some misfortune where we are going. This is an evil omen). Ronald does not pay attention to this man. However, Ronald's discovery of his fiancée's corpse when he reaches Kawambwa validates the man's prediction that misfortune awaits them. Rebecca has been murdered.

In a similar manner, the author employs surrealism to foreshadow Maggie's subsequent marriage to Ronald. Surrealism explores aspects that are associated with the imagination and the mind, and in particular it attempts to express the 'inner life' and psychology of humans through art. It seeks to express the sub-conscious, unconscious, the repressed and inexpressible (Wikipedia visited on 5th March 2012). This explains why Maggie fails to express the dream. All she says is:

*O, cilya cilooto! Ba Ronald balishuka saana. Tataliileloota icilooto camusango ulya pa mwaume umbi .... Atille mukapoopo: 'It's now or never ... Babwana Mutale nine bakoopilamo. Tabakaye kumbi iyoo... I am Mrs Maggie Ronald Mutale. Mrs M. R. M. Supa!' (p. 36).*

Literally as: 'Oh, what a dream! Mr Ronald is very lucky. She had never had a dream like that before about any other man ... She said in a whisper 'It's now or never ... Honourable Mutale will marry me instead. He will not marry anyone else ... I am Mrs Maggie Ronald Mutale. Mrs M. R. M. Super!''.

*Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* has also borrowed some techniques from oral literature. One such borrowing is the tendency to employ *direct address* also called 'breaking the fourth wall'.

Similar to *Sheli Wa Citatu*, both types of *direct address* prevail in this book. The narrator indicates to the reader that it is fiction and he also addresses the audience directly. The narrator reminds the audience that it is fiction and thereby violating *suspension of disbelief* when he/she says, ‘*Mu bantu baleikala mu caalo ca ici citabo Spinks Pimbilamaano Maikange ewakwetefye ubuseko bwampamfu epela*’ (p. 155) (Literally as: ‘Of all people in this fictional world, only Spinks Pimbilamaano Maikange was proud of his strength’.) Similarly, instances of the other type of *direct address* are witnessed on pages 3, 4, 9, 17, 95, 115, 156 and 157. Two examples, out of many, can serve to verify its occurrence. First, when the narrator is talking about the origin of the name Samfya he states, “*Nakwebako, yewe; nangu inshikwishibe,*” (I have told you my friend even though I do not know you.) Secondly, when the narrator is talking about Ronald’s shyness he says, “... *bushe mwalicimonapo?*” (p. 6). (Literally as, ‘Have you ever seen anything like that before?’).

Other oral devices employed in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* include the use of onomatopoeic words as evidenced on pages 2, 11, and 19. One example is, “*Apo peene aumfwile umutima wakwe walatunta na ndu ndu ndu.*” (Literally as, ‘Immediately, he felt his heart pumping *ndu ndu ndu*’). *Ndu* denotes the sound that the heart makes when it is pumping in a person’s chest. The book is also influenced by oral narrative style and diction as on pages 10, 27, 35, and 198. For example, ‘*Akeene saana saana saana kabili saana saana saana.*’ (Literally as: ‘He refused very very very much and very very very much’). This oral technique can be justified by the idea that it was suited for the type of audience. It is part of the traditional Bemba way of telling a story that Lutato refers to as *ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe* (manner of narrating).

Like in *Sheli Wa Citatu*, in which repetition reinforces didacticism, in *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* there is a repetition of the motif of *ubuseko mu bulanda* that refers to ‘deriving joy from sadness’. An example of this motif, among many, can be obtained from statements Maggie makes to soothe Ronald during bereavement that, “*Mwalishiba ukuti mu caalo mwaba*

*ubusuma no bubu, ubuseko no bulanda. Teeti kube ubuseko ukwabula ubulanda. Eico kumuneni ifilamba fyenu ukufuma ku mutima wenu. Ubulanda eebuseko bwine”* (p.25).

(Literally as: ‘You know that in this world there is good and bad, joy and sadness. There cannot be joy without sadness. So wipe your tears from your heart. Sadness is joy itself.) Many characters use this expression of *ubuseko mu bulanda* which serves as the title of the book. This expression is recurrent and it is distributed in various incidents and different characters mention it such as Maggie, Ronald, Bana Willie Bulanda, among others. Its repetition contributes to the story’s coherence and it reinforces a lesson to sink into the mind of the reader.

The above techniques both oral and written have been employed to enrich the plot of the book. However, the book has its own share of shortfalls. Notable among these is the narrator’s tendency to provide lengthy discussion and analysis of the character’s motives. While other authors, who include George Eliot, Thomas Hardy and Henry James, also state the motives of the characters, they do not delve into the detailed analysis of characters’ motives in order to avoid overstating them (Musonda, 2002: 40-41). The narrator’s detailed analysis of the characters and guidance about how the story should be interpreted falls short of one notable requirement of plot that it should require some intelligence on the part of the reader to decipher it on his/her own (Forster, 1927). The reader must not receive already processed information but must digest and synthesise the contents of the book on his/her own. The narrator in this book commits this fallacy by analysing the character of Bob’s feeble consciousness and comparing it to that of Spinks on pages 115-122, and 155-163. The narrator subjectively argues that even though the acts of Spinks depict him as being braver and stronger than Bob, Spinks is not in any significant way stronger and braver than Bob as he resorts to the use of drugs particularly marijuana.

More on the shortfalls, plausibility is questioned about the development of the love affair between Rebecca and Ronald that happens in a day. Their romance develops too soon and to be believable. This plausibility again is questioned about the love affair that develops between Rebecca's sister and Ronald that happens during the funeral. It is also too fast to be true to human nature again especially that Ronald had just lost his fiancée and Rebecca her sister.

#### **4.2.2 Denise Paulme's Model**

In terms of *Denise Paulme's model*, the structural plot type of *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* is spiral. This type of structural plot entails that the progression towards improvement suffers in the first round of *amelioration* but improves in the second round. The first round begins with *lack* which is then liquidated through *amelioration*. However, *lack* is restored or impending later usually due to the action of an enemy. The hero overcomes his adversary in the second round of *amelioration* and improves his condition as well as eliminating his opponent (Musonda, 2002).

*Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* starts with *lack*. The time Ronald does not have a fiancée. This *lack* is ameliorated when Ronald finally wins Rebecca. He plans to marry her. However, due to the action of an enemy, Spinks Pimbilamaano Maikange, *lack* is restored when Rebecca is murdered. Ronald's plans to marry are thwarted. Finally, Ronald manages to overcome Spinks and his minions Aitontiwale and Sontalingi with the help of his friend Webster and improves his condition and then marries Maggie, Rebecca's sister who is equally very beautiful. Spinks and his accomplices, Aitontiwale and Sontalingi, are discovered as the malefactors before Ronald marries - Spinks as a murderer of Rebecca and a master mind of other crimes such as the murder of Bob Mwendapole and the perpetuator of crimes to frame Ronald. Spinks accidentally dies immediately he is apprehended. Aitontiwale and Sontalingi are also arrested for being accomplices in the crimes engineered by Spinks.

### 4.3 Ukutangila Tekufika

*Ukutangila Tekufika* is a *bildungsroman* novel insofar as it is concerned with the education, development, and maturation of a young protagonist named Lucy. Essentially, a *bildungsroman* traces the formation of a protagonist's maturity (the passage from childhood to adulthood) by following the development of his/her mind and character (Wikipedia online visited on 10/11, 2011). While *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* adopt third person point of view, *Ukutangila Tekufika* adopts a first person point of view; readers can only hear, see, taste, smell and feel through Lucy's senses. This point of view tends to be very subjective since the protagonist is the narrator. This shields the narrator from criticism by his act of indicating the impending flashbacks as in '*Ukubwelela kunuma cinoono*' (p.160) (Literally as, 'To go back in the story a little bit'). In contrast, the third person point of view cannot be spared from criticisms by use of such expressions.

Although it traces Lucy's life from the time she was a little girl until she is an adult, it focuses on her search for happiness specifically to marry a man who is both reliable and educated. Lucy's desire to marry an educated and a reliable man is the main conflict in this book. Early during her primary school years, Lucy falls in love with a childhood boyfriend called Joseph Mutale. Initially, both Lucy and Joseph are in the same grade. Joseph is not only handsome but he is also very intelligent. Lucy firmly believes that this boy possesses every quality she looks for in a man. She reasons that since Joseph is intelligent, he will pass the Grade 7 examinations and proceed to Form 1 and other higher grades thereby making him the right person to marry. She has high hopes in Joseph such that even when he fails to pass the first time while she proceeds, she does not lose hope. She still believes that Joseph will pass when he repeats. However, Lucy's hopes are shattered when Joseph fails a second time. She is ashamed of her would-be husband and although she is already betrothed to him, this time Lucy decides to cancel all those arrangements. She finds an equivalent to Joseph in terms of

appearances but better in terms of the level of education in the boy called Kingsley Nsofwa. Thus, she rejects Joseph and opts to go for Kingsley Nsofwa purely on educational grounds. However, her expectations in Kingsley as the right husband are thwarted after she marries him. He is not only poor but he is also an irresponsible husband who batters her frequently. Kingsley finally divorces her making her go back to Joseph who still has the same unconditional love for her. This time Joseph is very educated and earns a stable income.

#### **4.3.1 Freytag's Pyramid**

The book has one continuous plot progression and it is made up of three episodes. The first episode concerns Lucy's childhood life in the village Chanda Mukulu in Kasama and her primary school life. During this episode Lucy falls in love with Joseph. She is immediately betrothed to him seeing that even the parents show keen interest in the matrimonial union of these two teenagers. The episode also establishes the firm grounding of the friendship between Lucy and Teresa. The time Lucy is in the village, she is not only intelligent but also morally upright in line with the customs and traditions of her land. This episode concludes with an incident where Lucy passes her Grade 7 examination. She qualifies for Form 1 at Lwitikila Girl's School.

The second episode concerns Lucy's exposure to the modern world that is different from her rustic village setting. It includes her adventures at Lwitikila Girls School and incidents such as Lucy's regular visits to Ndola and Kitwe where she interacts with other men apart from Joseph. During school holidays, she makes trips to Kitwe to see her elder brother and her friend Betreace Chisela and in Ndola to see her uncle and later on to see Kingsley. During the first visit in Ndola, Lucy meets Kingsley and she falls in love at first sight. Falling in love with Kingsley when she is already betrothed to Joseph becomes an obstacle to Lucy which results in her decision to reject Joseph in order to concentrate on Kingsley. She falls in love with Kingsley without his knowledge and waits for an opportunity to make him propose to



her. Currently, Lucy and Kingsley are in Form 1 while Joseph is in Grade 7. The opportunity comes at the end of Form 1 academic year holiday when the two meet in Kasama. They immediately become lovers who intend to marry. On the other hand, Lucy starts to ignore Joseph but does not reject him explicitly. Lucy later learns that Joseph has failed again. Before schools reopen, she rejects him.

In the third episode, Lucy fails and unites with her fellow dropout lover Kingsley in Lusaka where he works as a cleaner at a local bank. Perhaps Lucy's decision to reject Joseph for Nsofwa is not very wrong in that she wants someone with a substantial educational level. However, her tragic flaw comes when she deliberately decides to fail in the examination so that she could marry Kingsley. This is a flaw because she puts her life in the hands of the man who fails to live up to her expectations later; she expects him to be financially stable and caring. Conversely, suffering commences immediately they start staying together though she endures and manages to bear two children. He continues to mistreat her and finally manages to chase her even though she is very hesitant to leave since she is ashamed to go to her family because she just eloped with Kingsley. The third episode ends with a seeming cliff hanger in which the divorced Lucy meets Joseph, the man who still loves her, and apologises. It is not indicated directly whether Joseph went ahead to marry her or not. This is a technique of a short story (Madden, 2008). He does not tell everything so as to recognise the intelligence of the reader. He attempts to involve the reader. This technique promotes the interaction between the reader and the text. The reader has to rely on insinuation to arrive at the meaning – that is, whether the two married or not. Besides, he does not tell everything so that different readers can arrive at their subjective meanings. This will in turn stimulate discussions and shield the author from criticisms about the way he ends the story.

In terms of the plot progression, it should be noted that the *exposition* presents background information about Lucy's life in Chanda Mukulu village as a Grade 7 pupil, but does not

introduce the conflict yet. In the *rising action*, the conflict is introduced, that is, her desire to marry an educated man. This is in spite of her being in love with Joseph already. In the same *rising action* Lucy passes. She goes to Form 1 and reaffirms her desire to marry someone with the same educational attainments as her or better. This is the criterion that gradually makes her look on Joseph with disfavour when he fails twice. The *rising action* culminates into *climax* when Lucy finally manages to reject Joseph and replaces him with Kingsley. Following the *climax* is the *falling action* that occurs after she marries Kingsley. In this marriage, Lucy realises that Kingsley is not the man she thought he was and regrets her act of rejecting Joseph. It pains more with the knowledge that Joseph has surpassed them in terms of educational attainments. While the couple fails to proceed to Form 3, willingly or unwillingly, Joseph passes with flying colours and later secures a well-paying job. On the other hand, Kingsley finally divorces her and she accepts to leave. The *resolution* occurs when Lucy meets Joseph and apologises with a motive of being married to him. This time Joseph fits in her criteria of men since he is very educated and he has a comfortable lifestyle.

The story starts at the beginning and it is largely strictly chronological. The author adopts a traditional way of story-telling by starting with the beginning of the story itself. Chronology is maintained and the story employs very few flashbacks. These flashbacks are mere brief recollections of earlier incidents involving the protagonist. Some of the flashbacks used in the book are: Lucy's first sensual encounter (p.12); Lucy being bitten by a snake and fainting only to find herself at home. The details about what happened and how she was carried by the friend to safety including how Teresa killed the snake is given in the flashback (p.18); Lucy's revelation of her love for Joseph (p.28); the childhood days of Joseph and Lucy (p.48); more details about the Kitwe experiences (p. 136, 157); and the fight with Lombwe (p. 160).

Similar to *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, foreshadowing has been employed in *Ukutangila Tekufika*. To start with, the title itself '*Ukutangila Tekufika*' with the literal

meaning that, 'being first to go does not mean being first to arrive' serves the function of foreshadowing. It is a fact that Lucy is the first one to be accepted to Form 1 while Joseph and Teresa remain behind in Grade 7. Actually Joseph remains further in Grade 7 even when Lucy proceeds to Form 2. However, due to luck, Lucy's uncle negotiates a school place in Form 1 for Joseph even though he has failed to pass Grade 7. In Form 1 Joseph becomes extremely intelligent such that in two weeks' time the teachers make him skip to Form 2 - this time the same Grade as Lucy. Joseph is probably strengthened by his desire to prove Lucy wrong. While Lucy is preoccupied with an impending marriage with Kingsley, Joseph continues with his excellent performance until the final examination. He passes whereas Lucy and her new lover fail. Therefore, although Lucy was leading in academic circles initially, she does not go very far in that she fails to proceed to Form 3 and marries a fellow Form 2 dropout while Joseph continues and completes at Munali with the eventual brilliant passes that earn him a job as a trainee manager immediately.

Other instances of foreshadowing include the vision that Lucy has when she is in a state of confusion. The author resorts to surrealism to effect this foreshadowing. In this vision some unknown man reproaches her. He tells her to leave her drunkard husband with whom she has two children and go back to Joseph who truly loves her. This clearly foreshadows future events. The hallucinations occur moments after Lucy is just from declaring rudely to her grandmother in the presence of her mother that she has rejected Joseph. It happens before she marries Kingsley. It is prophetic in that later on in their marriage, Kingsley becomes a drunkard and becomes an irresponsible father of two children. Moreover, when he chases her, Lucy finally agrees to leave and go to Joseph who loves her unconditionally. Further instances of foreshadowing can be deciphered in the characters' questions and their corresponding responses. For example, Priscilla, Lucy's best friend at Lwitikila, asks Lucy the same question that Teresa also has hitherto asked about what she would do if Joseph

failed again; in which she gives a response that she would reject him. Joseph fails and she rejects him (p.70, 198, and 200).

Similar to *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, *Ukutangila Tekufika* borrows from oral literature. Even though it does not employ onomatopoeic words like the other two books, it makes use of *direct address*. Instances of *direct address* are witnessed on pages 17, 105, and 130, among others. One instance of *direct address* is “*Nga mwalyendapo nomweni kuncende imo uwo mwabeleshanya nankwe, ninshi kuti mwaishiba amepusho yepushiwa mu musango ngoyu wiine,*” (p.105) (Literally as: ‘If you have ever travelled with a friend to a place he/she has never visited before, you would know these questions that are asked in this way.’) This *direct address* occurs when Lucy is on the journey from Mpika to Kitwe for the first time. She is constantly asking the passenger sitting next to her every time she sees town lights if they have arrived in Kitwe. At each turn, the other passenger is not frustrated but continues to answer all her questions about the towns along the way such as Kapiri Mposhi and Ndola.

#### **4.3.2 Denise Paulme’s model**

In terms of the *Denise Paulme’s model*, the structural plot of this book is *cyclical*. The plot starts from the one situation to the other and back to the first one. It is *cyclical* in that the actions go in a cycle; it ends with the situation that it started with. A *cyclical* plot can take one of the forms below. In one occasion, it can start with *lack*, then *amelioration*, and then due to the protagonist’s violation of an interdiction, *lack* is restored. However, on another occasion it can start with the normal situation to *lack* then back to the normal situation. *Ukutangila Tekufika* takes the latter pattern. It does not start with *lack* but with a normal situation and ends with the same normal situation. Lucy starts with a normal situation in which she has Joseph as a loving fiancé. However, due to her desperate need to marry someone who has the same level of education as her or better, she ends up rejecting Joseph.

She marries Kingsley who turns out to be a hostile and impoverished husband. *Lack* is restored when he chases her. Eventually, Lucy attains a normal situation when she goes to Joseph who presumably accepts her.

At the end of the book, it is not directly indicated whether Joseph married Lucy or not. However, the book has implicitly clarified Joseph's unconditional love for Lucy. Even after he starts work as a trainee manager and goes for further studies abroad, he still considers Lucy as his wife as attested by Teresa and his housekeeper during his absence. Moreover, Kingsley chases Lucy and refuses to take responsibility of the children. He backs out completely and the children fall under Lucy's solitary care. Joseph loves Lucy unconditionally. Therefore, it is not an overstatement to project that after meeting, Joseph proceeds to engage Lucy in connubial bliss.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has analysed the texts *Sheli Wa Citatu*, *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* and *Ukutangila Tekufika* using the *Freytag's pyramid* and *Denise Paulme's model* in uncovering the nature of plots that is extant in the above mentioned books.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the texts, it can be concluded that the nature of plots in Bemba novels can be *traditional* and *complex* depending on the book under analysis. *Traditional* plot in this study is used to refer to a *simple* plot which follows one major story line following a strict chronology of events in terms of narration. It should be noted that the terms ‘*simple*’ and ‘*complex*’ in this study are not absolute terms but relative. Thus, they are regarded as falling on a continuum with some novels falling at one end where it is very *traditional* and others at the other extreme opposite end which is very *complex*. Although none of the novels in this study follows a very strict chronology, those novels that follow strict chronology to a large extent have been categorised as *traditional*. Therefore, on this continuum with a scale running from *traditional* to *complex*, *Ukutangila Tekufika* and *Sheli Wa Citatu* belong to the *traditional* side of the continuum for two main reasons. Firstly, they are *traditional* insofar as their plots follow a strict chronology to a large extent with a sparing use of flashbacks. The flashbacks these two books employ are mainly brief recollections of certain facts or statements that were uttered in the past. Secondly, they are *traditional* insofar as their plots follow only the major character - their plots are simple.

*Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* on the other hand exhibits considerable traits of a *complex* plot by its structure of events both by the fact that it follows more than one major character and does not stick to strict chronology. It does not start with the beginning of the story but it starts slightly towards the middle of it; in *medias res*. Moreover, its flashbacks possess considerable level of sophistication, detail and dialogue. They are not just mere recollections but interjections of scenes that happened earlier not only of the protagonist but also of other main characters

whose stories contribute to the overall plot. Hence, the categorisation of plots into *traditional* (simple) and *complex* is dependent on the book under study. Generalisations that all fictitious works in Bemba belong to only one category are bound to be fatal. The fact that some plots in Bemba novels can be *traditional* others *complex* challenges the assumption that Zambian literary works are all amateurish and that their plots are all *traditional* and wearisome. This assumption is held by many people. It has been revealed that even if authors do not employ all the techniques that are available in English literature but utilise some techniques from African oral literature, the general impression of the book that comes out is positive; works are good in terms of the structure of their events and unity of their plots. The works achieve emotional and artistic effect on the reader though in varying degrees.

As earlier mentioned, *Ukutangila Tekufika* and *Sheli Wa Citatu* have *traditional* plots. They follow a strict chronology to a large extent and their plots follow only one major character, that is, Lucy in *Ukutangila Tekufika* and Sheli in *Sheli Wa Citatu*. In contrast, *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* is *complex* inasmuch as it departs from a strict chronology, starts in *medias res* (in the middle of things), and that it follows two major characters - Ronald and Webster - with similar intensity. It should be clarified, however, that *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* is not a double plot book because the focus on Webster is a subplot that has effectively contributed to the main plot about Ronald, the protagonist.

These texts utilise a number of literary techniques such as flashbacks, foreshadowing, self-insertion, and figurative language to ensure their aesthetic quality in narration. In the case of *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda*, and since it frequently departs from chronology, it also contains some instances of suspense that are intricately intertwined with flashbacks in furthering its aesthetic quality and emotional impact. It should be mentioned that these books have also used some techniques that are purely oral. One such a technique is *direct address* and it occurs in all the three books that have been studied. The other technique is the repetition of some particular

motif which occurs in *Sheli Wa Citatu* in the form of the journey motif and *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* in the form of ‘*ubuseko mu bulanda*’ literally as ‘deriving joy from sadness’. Onomatopoeia is prevalent in *Sheli Wa Citatu* and *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* but it is omitted in *Ukutangila Tekufika*.

Besides, the above traces of oral literature, particularly folktales are manifest in the structure of some incidents in *Sheli Wa Citatu*. This strict adherence to orature compels the author to not only use oral narrative techniques but also to use the structure of the tales as can be seen by the uniformity of events and incidents in the different episodes including the occurrence of the *helper*, that is, a person or creature that salvages the protagonist from trouble. These similar incidents in *Sheli Wa Citatu* correspond to Propp’s functions in a folktale which have constants and variables (Propp, 1968:20). The fact that Sheli will be rescued by some *helper* when in trouble is a constant whereas the questions as to ‘what’ or ‘who’ will save him is a variable. In both journeys, he is saved by different *helpers*. In the first journey he is saved by the python and rangers whereas in the second journey he is saved by the hunters. Thus, the occurrence of the *helper* is a constant but the nature and the type of *helper* that will do the saving is a variable.

Apart from the formal techniques that have been sourced from orature, the tendency to produce works loaded with didactic content is also a characteristic of oral literature that has been used. The combination of good formal techniques and didacticism abound to bring about a book that has *ubusuma*, that is goodness. Hence, in Bemba narratives the goodness of the work of art does not lie in good narrative styles only but also in the message that can be learnt. This is all packaged in the concept of *ubusuma* ‘goodness’. Lutato (1980:21-22) explains that, “There are three basic aspects of *ubusuma* which elicit aesthetic appreciation, goodness of form, goodness of effect, and goodness of substance. (For narrative both



goodness of form and goodness of effect are subsumed under the expression *ubusuma bwa mishimikilwe*; while goodness of substance is *ubusuma bwe funde*)."’

The point here lies in the fact that didacticism is very prevalent in Bemba books because it is viewed as a fundamental element in a Bemba narrative. The author does not only try to narrate his/her story in an interesting way but he/she ensures that his novel embeds enough morals to be communicated to the audience. This point emphasises the need for every author to incorporate morals in the work of art. Chinua Achebe (1976:59) refers to this type of art as ‘applied art’. It is the kind of art that must teach someone some morals besides the need to entertain. Comments from Achebe underscore the idea that didacticism is not limited to Bemba narratives only but also applies to other African narratives. Achebe is communicating to the modern African novelist that the useful ingredients of orature, specifically didacticism, should be extended to written literature.

Apart from the fact that writers in Zambian languages have oral sources at their disposal, it is also likely that most of them, if not all, must have been sensitised on the need to produce didactic novels by one major literary figure in Bemba literature named Mpashi in his book *Ifyo Balemba Amabuku* (1962) which outlines certain tenets to follow when writing a novel. The latter book was published long before any of these writers in this study published their books. In this book Mpashi (1962:16) explains that:

Mu mabuku ya milandu yakwelenganya fye cilingile ukwibukisha cimo, icakuti ibuku nangu lyakwelenganyafye lili no kukwata cimo ico lingafunda abantu ... Tekuti ciwame ukulemba ibuku ilyakuti nga abelenga apwa, no kuti omfwemo kamo akakumwingila kumutima nakalya, ninshi umulemfi afilwa. Ibuku lya lyashi lyakwelenganya fye pamo pene nga filya fine tushimike nshimi. Washimiko lushimi aumfwamo kamo.

(Literally as; ‘In writing fictitious books, one thing must be remembered that although the book is a product of imagination, it must have at least one thing to teach the people... It would not be good to have a book which when a person finishes reading it, he/she learns nothing from it; this would mean that the novelist has failed. A fictitious book, similar to the way we tell folktales, at the end of a narration one must learn something.’)

Lutato (1980:30) in his study of Mpashi’s works, observes that didacticism “... is one of the major roles that oral narratives played in traditional Bemba society.” Mpashi would like to see this didacticism to be extended in written literature (Lutato, *ibid*). The observation by Lutato has been verified to be true in the present study. The novels in this study employed didacticism. In *Sheli Wa Citatu* one of the fundamental lessons likely to be obtained by the reader is that a morally upright lifestyle rewards an individual while mischief and recklessness only lead to destruction. The author with the use of social import in some areas, that is, creation of characters whose moral standpoints point up the lesson, and self-insertion comes up with characters such as Sheli, Gillian, Teddy and Binwell to impart different morals in the reader. Lessons include; one who commits a crime cannot go unpunished; one must not take advantage of the host’s kindness as Sheli does with the Mundia couple; also that young people with good jobs in the city should not forsake their parents in the village. Parents suffer emotionally and physically when neglected by their children.

Similarly, *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* also inculcates morals where the same theme about crime and its negative consequences is hinted at as can be seen in Spinks. He thinks he will be able to conceal his secret of the murders. Much to his disappointment, all his crimes are revealed with the passage of time. Moreover, the narrator does not leave the judgement of an action or situation to the audience but analyses it in detail with considerable subjectivity to achieve his objective the way he does about Spinks and Bob. He shows that although Spinks was perceivably stronger than Bob, the reader should not emulate his way of life. Besides,

Kasonkomona strenuously argues that Spinks is a coward as he resorts to drugs frequently. Moreover, the long passages about life and the motif of *'ubuseko mu bulanda'* is also a fundamental lesson that one must learn from the novel. Manifest in this motif is the lesson that one must find a way of seeing opportunity in sad events and see how to move on rather than be steeped in disappointment and depression when something bad happens. For example, with the passing of Rebecca which is bad, Ronald ends up marrying Maggie. Furthermore, forgiveness is also hinted at; the book ends with Ronald telling Webster to forgive Spinks, the man who has caused much suffering in the lives of many people.

Equally important, *Ukutangila Tekufika* also manifests a number of moral lessons. The overall lesson of *Ukutangila Tekufika* is encapsulated in its proverbial title of the novel which carries a literal meaning that, 'being first to go does not mean being first to arrive'. Musonda (2002:45) defines proverbs as, "... the didactic condensations or logical summing up of everyday life." The point here lies in the didactic function of proverbs as they are linked with wisdom in the society. The proverb is in line with the story and it communicates the fundamental lesson that people should not be haughty and vain when they have a relatively better start in life than others. One should not look down on those who are challenged or less privileged because life is fickle akin to the 'butterfly effect' where a seemingly small influence can exert great change in the life of someone. Life has got its share of ups and downs. One can be on top today but when the wheel of fate turns those who were on top come down and vice versa. Therefore, one should not look down on others, the way Lucy does in the novel when she turns out to be the only one in the village selected to attend Form 1. She looks down on Joseph, as not being educated enough for her standards. She also looks down on her own people's habitat claiming that it is dirty. Nevertheless, the wheel of fate changes when she fails in Form 2 and Joseph overtakes her. He completes senior secondary

education brilliantly. Moreover, when she gets married, her habitat in a shanty compound in Lusaka is worse than the rustic village setting.

It should be noted that in the spectacles of modern literature, novels in this study display their own share of stylistic inadequacy. They do not have great literary techniques that are characteristic of *complex* plots that are common in modern literature in English. However, it can be mentioned that in the spectacles of Zambian literature, specifically Bemba literature, these novels are fine and the perceived inadequacies such as *direct address* and *onomatopoeia* can be seen as strengths because these are cardinal in most oral societies. It will be advisable to consider the time at which these works were published. That is the context. During that time, very few people in Zambia had acquired literary skills. The audience had low education standards. Many authors too, if not all, had low education standards. For instance, Mpashi, a major figure in Bemba literature had only gone up to Standard 6. Chilangwa's first publication of the story of Sheli was initiated in the 1960s, Kasonkomona's *Ubuseko Mu Bulanda* in 1983, and Launshi's *Ukutangila Tekufika* in 1991. During the time, audience, mostly teenagers and elderly men, were quite unfamiliar with written fiction and its techniques. In some cases, one person had to read for others. Thus, the literary skills that had to be employed at that time were to be in line with the spoken discourse. The leaning on orality was therefore necessary. It was appropriate for the audience at that time. The leaning on orality can be said to achieve the same function presently since a substantial number of Zambians have not attained appreciable literacy in indigenous languages in spite of being sufficiently literate in English.

Over the years, many Zambians have tended to embrace a great deal of English texts and shun texts in Zambian languages, though they speak the language as can be attested by many studies conducted by Kashoki, among others. Therefore, the audience for these writers was not the educated man, let alone the university graduate who had literary abilities readily

available but it was the school going children mainly on the Copperbelt province and some elderly people, especially those who could barely read texts in English. The focus on the average Copperbelt teenager sprung from the writers' desire, Mpashi among them, to inculcate traditional Bemba mores approved in Northern Province and consequentially to preserve the Bemba culture (Lutato, 1980). This explains why most of Mpashi's works are taught in primary schools and secondary school.

In consideration of the intended audience, Bemba novelists, like other Zambian language authors, do not depart from orature. They take advantage of the intertextuality of orality that lies between them and the audience. During the publication of all the books in this study, people were much closely tied to orature in terms of folktales, proverbs, riddles, myths and legends. To lengthen the odds, the few literate ones among the intended audience were not even acquainted to sophisticated modern literary techniques to enable them enjoy complicated literary techniques and plots. Written literature was in its infancy in Zambian languages. That is why the authors felt the need to ensure effective communication with their intended audience. That is why complex narrative techniques befitting erudite university academicians are apparently nonexistent in Bemba writings.

The aforementioned reason about the intended audience justifies the three authors' adherence to certain oral techniques. Despite their uniform appreciable consideration of the audience, Chilangwa and Launshi have been very straight forward in their works with simple characterisation and *traditional* plots that are easily comprehensible even to children. However, Kasonkomona employs some techniques of a *complex* plot. The techniques he employs actively engage the reader's intellectual faculties while maintaining its aesthetic quality. As a novelist, Kasonkomona, through his novel, displays a profound knowledge of narrative techniques and wide exposure to English literature as can be deduced from his quotations of William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw in the novel. That is probably

why he uses narrative techniques very characteristic of English literature. Moreover, he manages the investigative aspect of story successfully. Perhaps he was acquainted with the James Hardy Chase fiction of which was popular during his time. This is not to say, however, that Kasonkomona has just borrowed everything from English literature because there is a lot of oral influence and Bemba aesthetics in terms of narration. He is successful in his eclectic blending of the Bemba oral techniques with the modern English narrative techniques to produce a fine book that achieves both emotional and artistic effect.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The study was restricted to the exploration of plots in the works written in Bemba. In achieving this aim the study touched on other areas that might need to be invested further and these are presented below.

First, there is need to intensify literary criticism in Zambian languages and Bemba language in particular as it is evident from the findings of this study that there is sufficient skill and expertise. There are novels which have been well written in Zambian languages but they are all 'dumb' since there is no criticism about them. Moreover, literary criticism in Zambian languages should also touch on other aspects of the elements of the novel apart from plot such as characterisation, setting, conflict, and theme.

It is also recommended that a whole new study be conducted specifically to determine the extent to which plots of works in indigenous languages coincide with those of the folktale in orature and thereby determine the pervading affinity that lies between written literature and orature.

Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that similar research be conducted in other Zambian languages as well so as to have a balanced view of the nature of plots in the said languages as well.

Moreover, seeing that most of the books are didactic, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education adopts some of these novels in the senior secondary literature as justified by their thickness and their rewarding thematic content. Schools should not only focus on teaching novellas but also some of these relatively thick novels.

It is further recommended that the government should invigorate the promotion of publications of many literary works in Zambian languages. Currently most writers are perhaps discouraged to write novels because private publishers are hesitant to publish their novels and other literary works in Zambian languages seeing that the readership is quite erratic and thus are deemed unprofitable.

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