

Verisimilitude in Nollywood Movies

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Abstract

Nollywood has over the years made successful attempts at defining and redefining the Nigerian culture through her movie productions. Movie makers in their bid to satisfy their audience and make profit have devised means of arousing and sustaining the interest of their audiences through the use of certain camera angles, particular sound, lighting and editing techniques. This article looks at how movie makers are able to showcase Nigeria's rich and diverse cultures and to create a semblance of reality using the various elements and techniques at their disposal. It employs a semiotic approach in analysing select Nollywood movies, looking at how each element is related to what comes before and after it as in steps of a plot – *syntagmatic relationships* and the enduring principles and rules that organize the movies – *paradigmatic relationships*. The article suggests that movies are largely fictions and that the best a movie can do is to appear to be real – the reality here is usually constructed based on signs and symbols that are familiar and frequently used by members of a given culture or society and that even though movies are largely fictions, and seek mainly to entertain viewers, there should be a strong connection between what happens in the mediated world and the real world.

Keywords: Verisimilitude, Nollywood, Movies, Semiotics, Paradigmatic, Syntagmatic, Culture.