**Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Studi Amerika** Volume 30, Number 02, 2024 pp. 31-41 P-ISSN: 1410-5411 | E-ISSN: 2685-4503 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/jbssa.v30i2.63784

# A Comparative Study of the Film Adaptation and the Novel Source in *Love, Rosie*

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#### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history: Received July 07, 2022 Revised January 02, 2025 Accepted January 02, 2025 Available online January 02, 2025

Keywords:

novel; film; comparative; signs; faithfulness



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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify the differences and similarities of the intrinsic elements between Love, Rosie novel and film adaptation and identify the signs and their meanings in Love, Rosie film adaptation. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, designating that the data were in the form of words, phrases, and sentences taken from the novel and the film adaptation, as well as pictures taken from the film. The data were collected through close reading, observation, and finding details in Love, Rosie's novel and film adaptation. The data analysis was conducted by comparing the novel and the film adaptation by finding the differences and similarities of the intrinsic elements between the novel source and the film adaptation, as well as analyzing cinematography and mise en scène in Love, Rosie film adaptation and decoding the signs that are shown in the film. Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation and Roland Barthes' semiotics are used to analyze the data. The findings suggest differences and similarities in the intrinsic elements between the film adaptation and its literary source. Furthermore, the signs in the film adaptation uncover the same theme as its literary source. The faithfulness of Love, Rosie film adaptation is established through the theme within the film through the narrative and the technical elements such as the cinematography and the film's mise en scène.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Film adaptations from novels are well-known among audiences, though many film adaptations also adapt from comics, plays, and operas. Romance film adaptations such as Kenneth Branagh's Cinderella (2015) and Rob Reiner's Flipped (2010) also have their audience. Romance is one of many genres in literature that primarily focus on love as the theme. Where Rainbows End, also known as Love, Rosie, is a best-selling romance novel by Cecelia Ahern, an Irish author, with a cliché love story between two best friends wrapped up in a frustrating yet emotional story. The story manages to control the audience's emotions as it covers common problems and uncovers the issues of friendships and love. In 2014, Love, Rosie was adapted into a film with Christian Ditter as the Director.

From novel to film adaptation, some changes inevitably or intentionally occur due to specific reasons. Certain intrinsic elements have been changed within the film adaptation, particularly the plot, characters, and setting, although it still keeps the same theme as its novel source. In making film adaptations, the auteur depicts the intrinsic elements from its novel source with technical aspects of the film to enhance the audience's engagement, such as the cinematography and the mise en scène. Many researchers have conducted studies about film adaptations. The concept of fidelity or faithfulness in film adaptations has been discussed by many critics for a long time (Vooght, 2018). The field of film adaptations is still haunted by the notion that adaptations have to be faithful to their source texts (Leitch, 2008). Being loyal to the story of the original work does not determine the quality of the film's artistic merit, but preserving the themes of the original work does because this requires skill and excellence of the adapter, which deserves our aesthetic admiration (Harold, 2018). Therefore, this research will specifically explore the faithfulness of the film adaptation of *Love, Rosie*, to its original work by comparing the intrinsic elements of the film adaptation.

## 2. METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, designating that the data were in the form of words, phrases, sentences and pictures that show more profound and more comprehensive meanings rather than in the form of numbers (Sutopo, 2006). This approach also presents a straightforward description of the phenomenon (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This research aims to describe the comparison analysis between the film adaptation and the source of *Love, Rosie*. The data in this research are the intrinsic elements, words, sentences, paragraphs, and dialogues of *Love, Rosie*'s novel by Cecelia Ahern, which was published in 2004, and the technical elements and the dialogues of *Love, Rosie*'s film adaptation released in 2014. The data were collected through close reading of the novel source, observation of the film adaptation, and finding details of the novel and the film adaptation.

Additionally, the data analysis began by comparing the differences and similarities of the intrinsic elements of the novel and the film adaptation of *Love, Rosie*. Furthermore, the changes between *Love, Rosie*'s (2014) film adaptation and its 2004 novel source were analyzed. In addition, the faithfulness of *Love Rosie*'s (2014) film adaptation to its 2004 novel source was examined with the help of Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation. Furthermore, the signs in the film adaptation way the film adaptation are examined by using Roland Barthes' semiotics. Additionally, the conclusions were drawn from whether *Love, Rosie*'s (2014) film adaptation is faithful to its adapted work and which elements it is faithful to.

# 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Where Rainbows End, also known as Love, Rosie, is a story about two best friends, Rosie and Alex, who have been together since their childhood. The book Love, Rosie (2004) is written in an epistolary consisting of letters, emails, and messages between Rosie, Alex, and other characters, while the 2014 film adaptation does not follow the book style. Nevertheless, the novel and the film explore the missed opportunities of the two main characters, Rosie and Alex when they make poor and stupid choices in life, but they are still part of each other's lives, and they are just in an ill-timing and wrong place. Within the film adaptation of Love, Rose (2014), some changes occurred, particularly to the plot, the characters, and the setting,. However, the theme and emotions are still correctly conveyed to the audience. Thus, this chapter has examined the data obtained from the observation of Love, Rosie novel and film adaptation; the description below is the results of the intrinsic elements in Love, Rosie novel and film adaptation as well as to explore the signs and their meanings in Love, Rosie (2014) film adaptation.

#### 3.1. Love, Rosie: Differences and Similarities between the Film Adaptation and Its Novel Source

About the novel and the film adaptation, intrinsic elements are essential in forming a story in literary work. This section describes the comparison of the intrinsic elements between the novel and the film adaptation of *Love*, *Rosie*, such as the plot, character, setting, theme, and point of View.

Intrinsic Element	Novel	Film Adaptation
a. Plot	Forward Plot	Flashback Plot
b. Character	1) Rosie Dunne	1) Rosie Dunne
	2) Alex Stewart	2) Alex Stewart
	3) Ruby	3) Ruby
	4) Greg Collins	4) Greg
	5) Bethany Williams	5) Bethany Williams
	6) Sally Gruber	6) Sally
	7) Phil	7) Phil
	8) Katie Dunne	8) Katie
	9) Alice Dunne	9) Alice
	10) Toby	10) Toby
	11) Stephanie	11) Dennis
	12) Kevin	12) Rosie's brothers
	13) Gary	13) Herb
	14) Brian	
	15) Ted	
	16) Andy	
	17) Josh	
	18) Ms. Casey	
	19) Divorced 1	

Table 1. The Differences and Similarities of the Intrinsic Elements of Love, Rosie Novel and Film Adaptation

c.	Setting	<ul> <li>20) Wildflower</li> <li>21) UnsureOne</li> <li>22) LonelyLady</li> <li>23) SingleSam</li> <li>1) Rosie's room</li> <li>2) Bar</li> <li>3) St. Patrick Primary School</li> </ul>	<ol> <li>Rosie's room</li> <li>Bar</li> <li>Beach</li> </ol>
		<ul><li>4) Office</li><li>5) Boston</li></ul>	<ol> <li>Computer classroom</li> <li>School Debs</li> </ol>
		<ul><li>6) Randy Andy Paperclip Co.</li></ul>	
			- )
		• •	7) Airport 8) Bubu'a Pharmanu
		8) Grand Tower Hotel	8) Ruby's Pharmacy
		9) Buttercup House	9) Boston
		10) Dubliners Internet Chat Room	10) Church
			11) Graveyard
			12) Wedding Venue
d.	Theme	Love and Friendships	Love and Friendships
e.	Point of View	First-Person Point of View	First-Person Point of View

## 3.1.1. Plot

A story cannot happen without a plot. Thus, a plot is essential in forming a story, considering that the plot is the sequence of events the writer decides (Mikics, 2007). Plots can be events that happen in a story or the creative arrangements of those events (Kennedy & Gioia, 1995). In this research, the researcher found that the novel and the film adaptation of *Love, Rosie* have different plots; the novel has a forward plot, while the film adaptation has a flashback plot. The film adaptation opens the sequence of events with a scene in which Rosie sits alone in a melancholic event, then moves to the flashbacks that lead to her situation in the early scenes.

## 3.1.2. Characters

Characters in adaptation are transferred from one text to another because they are important to the narrative and the performance to capture the audience's imagination, considering they are the focus of the adaptation (Hutcheon, 2006). To begin with, Rosie, as the female main character in the novel, is slightly altered in the film adaptation. In the novel, Rosie is described as a smoker, but the film adaptation does not portray Rosie as one. This variation does not impact the film adaptation because, both in the novel and in the adaptation, she still has the same leading personality, which is witty, caring, honest, perseverant, reckless, and stubborn. As the male main character, Alex has no difference in appearance and personality in both the novel and film versions. He is shown as a tall man with brown hair, fair skin, and caring, supportive, and hardworking characteristics. The difference between the novel and the film is his marital status. Alex is married twice; the first is to Sally Gruber, and the second is to Bethany Williams, but he divorces both. Meanwhile, in the film adaptation, Alex is presented to have been married to only Bethany Williams, then divorces her soon after. Several characters are changed in the film adaptation, as identified in Table 1. For instance, Rosie's siblings, Stephanie and Kevin, are removed and changed to two boys who do not play important parts in the film story; meanwhile, in the novel, Stephanie and Kevin play parts in Rosie's life, especially Stephanie as her compassionate and thoughtful big sister whom Rosie confides in. Then, the film version made a character named Herb, whom Sally cheats with and makes Sally pregnant with his baby despite the novel delivering that Sally is pregnant with Alex.

#### 3.1.3. Setting

The setting is the time and place of the story, including weather, in which, in some stories, weather is a crucial part (Kennedy & Gioia, 1995). In this research, it is found that the director of *Love, Rosie* film adaptation changed some of the settings; for instance, the setting that has been cut from the novel evokes particular atmosphere and impressions, such as in the event when Rosie describes her new working place, a Grand Tower Hotel, as having messy collections of former guests' hats, misty glasses, brown velvet curtains and white tablecloth that turned yellow which generate the sense of displeasure, dirtiness, unkemptness, and neglect.

# 3.1.4. Theme

According to Kennedy & Gioia (1995), the theme is the general understanding of the story or what they uncover or what the story is about. Hence, *Love, Rosie*'s theme, is clearly shown both in the novel and the film version. The story's central concept is about love and friendships between the characters. Therefore, the novel and the film focus on the character Rosie, who experiences love and friendships throughout her life that affect her judgements. The theme is *Love; Rosie* is related to understanding what the story exposes. Hence, the theme of love and friendship is regarded as the story's main idea, which influences the characters and their development.

## 3.1.5. Point of View

Point of View, as stated by Mikics (2007), is the perspective of the audience to see the events from the character's point of View to show their perspective. The novel has the same point of View as the film. The novel's narrative style is the first point of View developed by telling the story through the characters' diverse minds and intimate feelings, considering the novel is in the form of epistolary such as letters, text messages, and emails. Furthermore, the film adaptation also delivers the story from the first-person point of View through Rosie's perspective.

Even though some intrinsic elements changed in *Love, Rosie*'s film adaptation manages to accomplish a sure faithfulness to its novel source. The changes in the film adaptation include the omission and addition of some characters, such as the director omitting Stephanie, whose role is Rosie's big sister, who gives advice and is the person Rosie confides in. The director also adds Herb as a character who plays the role of Sally's illicit partner in the film. The director also changed the setting, such as removing the Grand Tower Hotel in the novel, in which the setting shows Rosie's struggles as a newly appointed employee. It is mentioned by Livingston, as referenced in Harold (2018), that no film can be faithful to its source because there is always change from the source. Moreover, according to Beardsley, as cited in Harold (2018), the film can be faithful to its original work as long as it maintains the themes of the source. Hence, the film adaptation and the novel source of *Love, Rosie*, have the same theme: love and friendships. The love and friendship theme becomes the focus in the film version and the novel source in the form of narrative and dialogue. Furthermore, according to Seger, as quoted in Hutcheon (2006), themes are the most important element in novels and films as themes must consistently deliver the story's action and emotions. Thus, *Love, Rosie*'s 2014 film adaptation is thematically faithful to its novel source.

The Signs and Their Meanings in Love, Rosie Film Adaptation

*Love, Rosie* is a film that portrays friendships and love between Rosie and Alex and their other characters. The film begins with a flashback-structured montage of the events narrated from Rosie's point of View. Before the scenes proceed to the flashback events, the earliest scenes show the protagonist, Rosie, who sits down alone in a party-like situation, showing unhappiness. In an attempt to give the audience clues, the champagne bottle and the bucket of white roses are presented in front of her. White roses and champagne are standard in a wedding. Thus, the white roses in the film might signify love and a new beginning. Therefore, the scene's setting is a wedding party, and Rosie's melancholy is related to the wedding. Then, the scene moves to show her a week after the event, in which the reason for her sadness has not been disclosed yet. The film uses a close-up shot to expose and engage the audience in her sorrowfulness. In this scene, the red hue is dominant in showing the mood of her state. In this scene, Red expresses her love, anger, and agony. The chaos in her situation triggers her to weep in isolation after a particular event happens. Therefore, the following flashback events explain what happened to her that led to her situation. From this point onward, colour is used to express the characters and their situation.



Figure 1. Rosie sits alone and shows melancholic expression (Ditter, 2014).



Figure 2. Rosie is in sorrow, with a dominant red hue in the frame (Ditter, 2014).

Next, the medium shot shows Alex looking at Rosie, who can be seen through the mirror. It shows that he fixes his necktie before attending school while Rosie is behind the wardrobe. The shot shows an asymmetrical composition, suggesting that Alex is having difficulty expressing his real feelings to Rosie after they kiss at the bar because she suggests forgetting everything that happened there. The figure of Alex in the mirror signifies his restriction from showing his true feelings and the secret of their kiss that has not been told to Rosie. He contains his romantic feelings and decides not to express them directly to Rosie. In this shot, the yellow colour is dominant, which might suggest the dishonesty and fear Alex feels. Alex is being dishonest with himself about his romantic emotions and his choice to go to Debs with Bethany. Meanwhile, the fear is concerned about what will happen to their friendship if he confesses to Rosie. In addition, the black suit also emphasizes his deceit. On another note, the white hearts on the wardrobe might suggest Alex's pure affection and intentions for Rosie and that he will always support her, whatever happens.



Figure 3. Alex's figure is seen through the mirror (Ditter, 2014).

The following narrative moment depicts Rosie sitting in front of her parents to tell them about her wish to study in America through the medium shot. The medium shot is used to show her emotions and the background set of the scene. The way Rosie dresses in blue connotes her positivity in persuading her parents and her future education in America. At the same time, the full coverage of clothing adds to her defence of her belief in studying abroad and her ability to handle herself when living alone abroad. The vertical line composition of the background also suggests her strong faith in her desire, and the red wall in the background expresses her intense excitement and passion that she can manage herself while studying abroad. Then, the following sequence is the scene that displays the three of them sitting. The scene uses long shots to frame the characters and the background. Rosie's parents sit in front of Rosie. In contrast, she sits in front of them formally, indicating a court-like situation where the judges, Rosie's parents, will determine if they will allow the defendant, Rosie, to study abroad. Additionally, how the parents sit connotes their characteristics: the mother, with her rigid posture, is more firm, and the father, with his loose posture, is more relaxed and laid back. Their clothing and the set background also indicate that the mother, with her red costume, expresses her worry and her conflict about letting her daughter study overseas. She worries about her daughter's well-being because she will live alone, and no one will help her because her parents are in a different country. The red blinds behind the parents, which are the same colour as Rosie's mother's costume, also accentuate Rosie's mother's conflict. Meanwhile, Rosie's father, with his blue attire, might signify his calm and passive disposition in the matter-the depiction of her father as being calm and passive while they discuss Rosie's wish. The blue wall background, which is the same colour as his, emphasizes his character. Only Rosie's mother speaks and voices her opinions during the discussion, while her father quietly listens and assesses the situation.

The red blinds in the middle of the discussion emphasize that the one who holds the most opinion is Rosie's mother, while her father will only propose his thoughts later when they are alone. In addition, the yellow cup her father holds might suggest the optimism and trust he has in his daughter. Later, he tells her that he trusts Rosie's decision and will support her in accomplishing her dreams.



Figure 4. Rosie persuades her parents to let her study overseas (Ditter, 2014).



Figure 5. Rosie and her parents discuss her wish (Ditter, 2014).

Subsequently, in this frame, Rosie visits an apothecary to find medicines to cure her nausea and vomiting problems. The medium shot emphasizes the interaction between the character and the environment, which suggests that nature is powerful and Rosie is the subject of nature. The green hue that is dominating in this scene expresses fertility in which Rosie, after checking the pregnancy test, turns out to be pregnant and expresses misfortune in which Rosie has to face teen pregnancy and ruined future plans. The frame's symmetrical composition connotes nature's authoritative disposition, which is that nature always has the upper hand. It is often unexpected and signifies Rosie's struggle with the fact that she is pregnant. Following this, the next frame presents Rosie, who sits alone in her room, by also applying a medium shot to show Rosie's emotions through her environment. The asymmetrical composition in this frame signifies the calamity of Rosie's world, and the lack of light suggests Rosie's dire and depressing situation. From the moment she knows she is pregnant at a young age and has to support herself and her future baby, she deems her world as failing, and her future is bleak. The red hue is also dominant in this frame, which conveys her agitation towards herself as to why she did not go to Debs with Alex so that this accident would not have happened and towards the world why she has to be pregnant at a young age with no financial support except from her parents and her wrecked plans because of the pregnancy.

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Figure 6. Rosie is in an apothecary, and the frame's dominant hue is green (Ditter, 2014).



Figure 7. Rosie sits alone in her room with a red hue dominant in the frame (Ditter, 2014).

Then, in the next scene, Rosie and Alex meet at a restaurant and sit across from each other. Alex tells Rosie that he got admitted at Harvard University. The shot-reverse shot indicates that Rosie and Alex are in a harmonious relationship and show their close interaction as best friends. Alex's red clothing signifies his excitement and passion for his bright future in chasing his dream of becoming a proficient surgeon. The red background composition also emphasizes his great future. Meanwhile, Rosie is wearing a blue-coloured outfit with a blue background composition around her, which suggests her melancholy. At the same time, her full-coverage clothing also suggests that she is hiding something from Alex. The yellow candle in front of her that she touched before Alex arrived also indicates her dishonesty in not telling Alex about her pregnancy. She lies about not being accepted to Boston University. Furthermore, the composition of the vertical lines around Rosie signifies that her freedom is now restricted because she is pregnant and has to do something to overcome it.



*Figure 8.* The shot reverse shot sequence emphasizes Rosie and Alex in a complementary position to show their harmonious relationship (Ditter, 2014).



*Figure 9.* Rosie's and Alex's different background compositions and outfit colours emphasize their different situations and emotions (Ditter, 2014).

In the following sequence narration, Alex visits Rosie unannounced after hearing about Rosie from Bethany. Rosie is startled after the unanticipated visit from Alex and then faces him with the door half closed. The halfclosed door connotes that Rosie is hiding something from Alex, the secret related to her having a baby, and she does not tell Alex about it. Rosie's full coverage attire also suggests that she is defensive of her secret. Then, the scene moves to Alex and Rosie in the kitchen. In this scene, the medium shot displays the interaction between Rosie and Alex. No matter how hard Rosie tries to cover her secret, Alex eventually finds out. The considerable distance between Rosie and Alex insinuates that they are in conflict. Alex is upset that Rosie does not tell him about the crucial matter relating to her. The backlight on Alex also suggests that Alex has been in the dark about the issue relating to Rosie's pregnancy. Moreover, the symmetrical composition around Rosie implies the unfairness she feels about her situation and averted freedom because she chooses to raise her daughter. Rosie cannot escape the impacts of teen pregnancy on her, and she also hopes for her best friend, Alex, to see her as Rosie, not the teen mom Rosie. After telling Alex about her situation, the scene shows Alex inside a car, leaving Rosie and Rosie behind him, which is already far away. Looking back at Rosie, Alex indicates he is still attached to her. The revelation he gets affects his emotions, causing Rosie to become a mother and Alex to go back to America to pursue his studies and his career while he also wants to be there for her.



Figure 10. Rosie faces Alex with the door half closed, suggesting her secret concealment (Ditter, 2014).



Figure 11. The distance between Rosie and Alex after he discovers the truth (Ditter, 2014).



*Figure 12.* Alex's look back through the car window indicates that he is still caught up in Rosie's truth (Ditter, 2014).

Subsequently, in this scene, Rosie is pictured standing alone, giving her best woman speech at Alex and Bethany's wedding. Rosie wears a gold-coloured dress, which might signify her courage in confessing the romantic love she harbours for Alex indirectly to Alex at his wedding. The dress itself has a similar yellowish tone to Rosie's wedding dress when she marries Greg in previous scenes in the film. This also indicates her wishful thinking that she has a chance with Alex before Alex and Bethany's wedding ceremony. The vertical lines in the background might imply that Rosie is being put in order and restricted from following her heart desires, considering Alex and Bethany are already wedded. In addition, the big and high buildings behind her might insinuate that nature is again controlling their timing. Following this scene, the scene in which Rosie is standing alone crying is shown by using a close-up shot to emphasize the emotional turmoil that she is late and Alex and Bethany are already married to each other. The close-up shot is utilized to make the audience empathize with her. The blue hue in the scene also emphasizes Rosie's melancholic state, which is that she cannot do anything about herself and Alex and is compelled to move on. In the last scene, Alex and Rosie are reunited after Rosie builds her hotel, and Alex divorces Bethany. The scene displays Alex and Rosie standing in front of each other at an extremely close distance, which suggests that their hearts are on the same page; they love each other romantically. In addition, their red attires signify their love and passion for each other after being reunited not as friends but as individuals who have a crush on each other. The yellow hue in this scene also connotes happiness and hope for their love story after confessing to each other. The blue sky in the background indicates unity between Alex and Rosie and nature, which always controls human timing. Moreover, white lily flowers are painted in the background. In Britain, the white Lily is associated with the festivity of the return of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. Thus, the flower signifies the return of happiness (Kirby & Diffenbaugh, 2011). On another note, the Lily symbolizes purity and rebirth (Loewer, 2018) and great beauty, womanhood, and majesty, which many ladies will pose with a lily in their engagement photograph (Kirby & Diffenbaugh, 2011). Therefore, the white lily flowers painted in the background might signify the new beginning of Alex and Rosie's relationship as best friends and as lovers.



Figure 13. In her gold-coloured dress, Rosie gives her best woman speech at Alex and Bethany's wedding (Ditter, 2014).



Figure 14. The close-up shot in this frame shows Rosie's apparent emotional turmoil (Ditter, 2014).



*Figure 15.* The yellow hue dominates in this frame after Rosie and Alex reunite and confess their love (Ditter, 2014).

By the end, the audience is being implied that life consists of a sequence of many opportunities, including missed or taken opportunities. The theme of love and friendships in the film is presented through the signs in the film through mise en scène, such as colours and compositions in the film adaptation. Moreover, the red colour, which signifies love in the film, is one of many signs of expressing the theme besides the narration. Nevertheless, the cinematography enhances the characters' emotions and relationships to enhance the film's love and friendships. In addition, themes are perhaps the most straightforward adaptable story element that can be transcoded across media or genres (Hutcheon, 2006). Nonetheless, *Love, Rosie*'s film adaptation faithfully presents the theme of love and friendships through the film's narration, cinematography, and mise en scène. Thus, the signs and the narration presented in the film adaptation show that the film is thematically faithful to its novel source, with love and friendships as its theme.

## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

*Where Rainbows End*, widely known as *Love, Rosie*, is a popular novel. It was published in 2004 and adapted into a film adaptation in 2014. Shifting from the telling mode (novel) to the showing mode (film) can change the adaptation work. The changes in Love, Rosie film adaptation, can be found in the intrinsic elements such as the plot, characters, and setting. The director creates addition, reduction, and some alterations in the film adaptation that create differences between the source and the film adaptation, although the director stays true to its themes.

*Love, Rosie* film adaptation has signs and meanings in the film scenes. The signs are shown through the mise en scène of the film. Mise en scène is important in the film adaptation and the camera work, especially the colours. For instance, red and blue colours are dominant in the film, signifying both positive and negative emotions; the different meanings of character placements in the film in which close and far distance between characters in the scenes suggest their power relationship and their closeness, as well as the symmetrical or asymmetrical compositions which imply the association of the character and their environment.

Subsequently, the film adaptation has thematic fidelity in that it is faithful to the theme of love and friendships as in the original work. The director displays the themes correctly through the narrative, cinematography, and mise en scène of the film. Signs such as colours are mainly used to express the themes of love and friendship in the film, such as red to signify love and passion and yellow to signify joy and hope.

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