UTILIZATION OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DELINEATING HUMAN INTERACTION IN SELECTED DRAMA OF FRANCIS IMBUGA AND JOHN RUGANDA

KARIUKI FAITH WAMBUI (B. ED, M.A.)
(M88/24578/2010)

A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (THEATRE ARTS) IN THE SCHOOL OF CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS, FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 2018
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

Signature__________________  Date__________________

Name: Kariuki W. S. Faith

M88/24578/2010

Supervisors: This thesis has been submitted for review with our approval as University supervisors.

Signature__________________  Date__________________

Professor Wangari Mwai
United States International University-Africa

Signature__________________  Date__________________

Prof. John Mugubi
Department of Communication, Media, Film and Theatre Studies
Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

To my God, for so much grace. My Ebenezar. If you had not been on my side… Ps.124:1-2.

To my dear late mother, Anna Nyawira Ngari, for taking care of me, taking me to school and making me love the world of books. You are special to me, Mum.

To my beloved family starting with my husband, Nahashon Kariuki. Our children, Joan and Emmanuel plus little Pearl Joy, who lights our home with her innocent smile. Your patience during my many hours in the library is comparable to none. You are my gold.
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The journey to this end has been long and bumpy. Many times I felt like giving up but through the encouragement and support of many, I have managed to come this far.

First, I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of my two supervisors, Professor Wangari Mwai and Dr. John Mugubi. Thank you for your painstaking guidance and patience with my innumerable mistakes. Your encouragement has helped me come this far.

I want to acknowledge the support of Jicho Four Theatre Group for its support in terms of availing some video content and for allowing me to interview its actors and directors. Worth special mention are Mr. Patrick, Mr. Mbalamusoma, Mr. Eric chege and others not mentioned here.

I wish to appreciate the technical and moral support of many in the departments of Literature as well as Communication, Media, Film and Theatre Studies, (K.U.), beginning with Dr. Mbithi, Dr. Ndege, Dr. Zippy, Dr. Wallace, Dr. Oliver, Mwalimu Mulwa, Dr. Hongo, Mrs. Ann Mungai, Dr. Shikuku, Dr. Pomak, Esther and many others. Not to be forgotten is the Embu Campus fraternity for their support, led by the Director, Dr. Okello and others like Dr. Ikaria, Dr. Kula, Dr. Jesse, Dr. Madaji plus others not mentioned here.

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Worth special mention are my husband Nahashon, children, Joan and Immanuel, not forgetting little Pearl Joy. Thank you for bearing with my absence during my long hours of sitting in the library. You bore it all without complaint; So very special to me.

Worth special mention also are members of my family, starting with my late mother, Anna Nyawira, “You slipped away just before the long awaited prize came, Rest in Peace
dear Mummy, your legacy lives on in us ” My siblings: Richard, Muthungu, Papatua Wanja and Kariuki, thank you for encouraging me to soldier on even when I felt like giving up was the only remaining option. Special thanks go to my uncle Ambass. Ephraim Ngari, for your unfaltering support to this course in innumerable ways. To my other uncles and aunts, and especially Aunts Charity and Lydia, your love and labour for me is not forgotten.

Special thanks to Kenyatta University for sponsoring this course. Long live K.U!

Thanks to members of Deliverance Church (Kasarani), led by Bishop Dr. Jimmy Kimani, for spiritual support and especially Hope Ladies Group and Ephesians Home Cell for your unfailing prayers and encouragement.

To the many others who, in one way or another contributed to this work and who, due to limitations of space I have not acknowledged, I say, MAY GOD BLESS YOU!

Last but not least, I thank the almighty God for His presence with me and grace.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ................................................................................................................................. ii
DEDICATION ...................................................................................................................................... iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .................................................................................................................... iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .................................................................................................................... vi
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................................ ix
LIST OF PICTURES ........................................................................................................................... x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ............................................................................................. xiii
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................ xv

CHAPTER ONE .................................................................................................................................. 1
  1.0 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................ 1
    1.1 Background to the Study ............................................................................................................. 1
    1.2 Statement of the Problem ......................................................................................................... 5
    1.4 Research Questions .................................................................................................................. 6
    1.5 Research Assumptions ............................................................................................................. 6
    1.6 Justification of the Study ......................................................................................................... 7
    1.7 Scope/ Delimitation .................................................................................................................... 8
    1.8 Limitations ................................................................................................................................ 8
    1.9 Literature Review And Theoretical Framework ......................................................................... 9
      1.9.1 Literature Review ............................................................................................................... 9
      1.9.2 Theoretical Framework .................................................................................................... 16
      1.9.3 Conceptual Framework: Role of Dramatic Elements in Drama ....................................... 21
    1.10 Research Methodology .......................................................................................................... 22
      1.10.1 Research Design ............................................................................................................. 22
      1.10.2 Population and sampling ................................................................................................. 22
      1.10.3 Target Population ............................................................................................................ 22
      1.10.4 Sampling procedures ....................................................................................................... 23
    1.11 Data Collection ...................................................................................................................... 27
    1.13 Data Analysis ......................................................................................................................... 30
    1.14 Ethical Considerations ........................................................................................................... 31
    1.15 Validity and Reliability .......................................................................................................... 32
    1.16 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 32
CHAPTER TWO ........................................................................................................... 33

2.0 DRAMATIC ELEMENTS UTILIZED IN DELINEATING HUMAN INTERACTION IN THE SELECTED DRAMA .............................................................. 33

2.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................... 33

2.2 Plot as a Dramatic Element .................................................................................. 34
  2.2.1 Aminata ........................................................................................................ 38
  2.2.2 The Burdens ................................................................................................ 39
  2.2.3 Shreds of Tenderness ................................................................................... 41
  2.2.4 The Return of Mgofu .................................................................................... 49
  2.2.5 The Floods .................................................................................................. 52

2.3 Character as a Dramatic Element ........................................................................ 58
  2.3.1 Aminata ........................................................................................................ 62
  2.3.2 The Burdens ................................................................................................ 63
  2.3.3 Shreds of Tenderness ................................................................................... 64
  2.3.4 The Floods .................................................................................................. 65
  2.3.5 Betrayal in the City ....................................................................................... 68
  2.3.6 The Return of Mgofu .................................................................................... 69

2.4 Spectacle as a Dramatic Element ........................................................................ 71

2.5 Music as a Dramatic Element .............................................................................. 79

2.6 Dialogue as a Dramatic Element ......................................................................... 85

2.7 Theme as a Dramatic Element ............................................................................ 89

2.8 Conclusion ............................................................................................................ 91

CHAPTER THREE ........................................................................................................ 93

3.0 MANIPULATION OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DELINEATING FAMILY AND GENDER RELATIONS ................................................................. 93

3.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 93

3.2 Family Relations .................................................................................................. 93
  3.2.1 Relationships between Spouses ................................................................... 95
  3.2.2 Relationships between Parents and Children ............................................... 103
  3.2.3 Relationships of Children .......................................................................... 111
  3.2.4 Relationships among Extended Family Members ....................................... 117

3.3 Gender Relations .................................................................................................. 119
3.3.2 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................ 122

CHAPTER FOUR ......................................................................................................................................... 124

4.0 DRAMATIC ELEMENTS DELINEATING INTRA AND INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS ........................................ 124

4.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 124

4.2 Intra-community Relations .................................................................................................................. 125

4.3 Inter-community Relations ................................................................................................................... 133

4.3.1 Conclusion ....................................................................................................................................... 138

CHAPTER FIVE ........................................................................................................................................ 139

5.0 MANIPULATION OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DELINEATING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS RELATIONS ................................................................. 139

5.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 139

5.1.2 Political relations ............................................................................................................................. 148

5.1.3 Professional Class Relations ......................................................................................................... 155

5.1.4 Religious Class Relations .............................................................................................................. 165

CHAPTER SIX .......................................................................................................................................... 175

6.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ......................................................................... 175

6.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................................... 175

6.2 Summary of Findings and Conclusion ................................................................................................. 175

6.3 Recommendations for Further Studies ................................................................................................. 182

REFERENCES .......................................................................................................................................... 183

APPENDICES ......................................................................................................................................... 201

APPENDIX 1: Observation Check-list and Interview Guides........................................................................... 201

APPENDIX II: Consent Form ....................................................................................................................... 203

APPENDIX III: Interviews .......................................................................................................................... 206
LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.0 Freytag’s Pyramid................................................................. 2

Fig. 1.1 Conceptual Framework.................................................... 21

Fig. 5.1 Organs of Speech............................................................. 160
LIST OF PICTURES

PICTURE 1 Doga and Nina praying: (Note Doga’s white beards; makeup; B.i. t.C) …44

PICTURE 2 Odie waving hands (gestures; Shreds of Tenderness) ……………. …74

PICTURE 3 Wamala’s metamorphosis after wearing the teacher’s suit (costumes; The Burdens) ……………………………………………………………………………76

PICTURE 4 (props: coins in a plate at Adika’s grave; B.i.t.C) …………………..77

PICTURE 5 (set and costume: Odie and Stella’s expensively furnished living room (Shreds of Tenderness) ……………………………………………………78

PICTURE 6 Traditional dancers (Aminata)…………………………………………83
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this study, the following terms are used in the manner explained.

Actor
A male or female person who executes the role of a character in a dramatic performance.

Delineation
This means portraying something precisely. The term is used interchangeably with the term ‘rendition’ to refer to the portrayal of the theme of human/social relations.

Dialogue
A conversation between people in a play or film. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘diction’ and ‘language’.

Diction
A choice of words or phrases in a speech or writing. It could also mean enunciation in speech or singing. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘dialogue’ and ‘language’.

Drama
A play for the theatre or television. This term is used interchangeably with the term ‘play’.

Dramatic Elements
The term refers to the six Aristotelian elements namely: plot, character, thought, diction, melody and spectacle.

East Africa
The study has used the term East Africa to refer to the original East Africa, which included: Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

Human interaction
The term refers to the way people relate with one another based on such factors as class, family etc. The term is used in the same way with the terms, ‘human/social relations’ and ‘human/social relationships’.

Inter-community Relations
The term refers to interactions among people who regard each other as belonging to different community groups, especially based on language. It is used interchangeably with the term ‘inter-ethnic relations’.

Inter-ethnic Relations
The term refers to interactions among people who regard each other as belonging to different community groups, especially by virtue of using a different language. It is used interchangeably with the term ‘inter-community relations’.

Intra-community Relations
Refers to interactions within a community which shares the same mother tongue.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>The system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or area. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘diction’ an ‘dialogue’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melody</td>
<td>A piece of music or a song with a clear or simple tune. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘music’ and ‘rhythm’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘melody’ and ‘rhythm’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>A piece of writing performed by actors in a theatre or on a television.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-independence</td>
<td>This refers to the period from 1962-1999; the period that followed the acquisition of independence in Kenya and Uganda. Some plays on which this study was based were published during this period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-millennium</td>
<td>This refers to the period beginning year 2000 up to date (2000-2018), when some of the plays this study is based on were published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatists</td>
<td>This refers to people involved in the process of writing and production of plays, such as playwrights, directors and actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rendition</td>
<td>The performance of something, especially a song or play. The term is used interchangeably with the term ‘delineation’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>A strong regular repeated pattern of sounds or movements. The term is used interchangeably with the terms ‘music’ and ‘melody’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Relationships</td>
<td>It refers to the way people who are joined together by such factors as geographical proximity, religion, class and language group interact. The term is used interchangeably with the term human interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectacle</td>
<td>A sight or view that is very impressive to look at. The term is used interchangeably with the term ‘staging’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staging</td>
<td>The way in which a play is produced and presented on stage. The term is used interchangeably with the term ‘spectacle’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.i. t.C</td>
<td>Betrayal in the City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Central Business District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EALA</td>
<td>East African Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGDs</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.S.S.</td>
<td>International Slogan Syndicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWC</td>
<td>Journalist with Camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWM</td>
<td>Journalist with Microphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWN</td>
<td>Journalist with Notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LJ</td>
<td>Lady Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCSE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ke. S.</td>
<td>Kenya Shillings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KICD</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNLS</td>
<td>Kenya National Library Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNT</td>
<td>Kenya National Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS &amp; CNDF</td>
<td>Kenya Schools’ and Colleges’ National Drama Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Kenyatta University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEV</td>
<td>Post Election Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRB</td>
<td>State Research Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP</td>
<td>Very Important Person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study focuses on the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in six plays of Francis Imbuga and John Ruganda. The study is motivated by the perceived lacuna in the body of knowledge on the utilization of dramatic elements in the rendering of this thematic concern in the selected plays of Imbuga and Ruganda. The study seeks to investigate the intersection between dramatic elements and the way relationships in the society are presented in the six selected plays. This is deemed important because drama is a mirror of society and thus, a powerful tool of social change. The study takes cognizance of the fact that human interaction is an important social concept, and thus it is important to capture the voice of the creative writer, who is the mirror of the society, on the theme. The study seeks to identify the dramatic elements utilised in the delineation of human interaction in the selected drama. It also seeks to examine how dramatic elements are manipulated in order to unlock human interaction in the selected plays. Finally, the study investigates the themes that accrue from utilising dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in the plays. The study utilises two theoretical approaches namely: the Dramatic Theory and the Sociological Literary Theory. The Dramatic theory helps analyse how dramatic elements come into play, and with what functions during the performance of the plays. The Sociological Literary Theory also helps generate data on human interaction from the plays. The study combines field and library study. The study, which is qualitative in nature, adopts a triangulational approach. This comprises the use of the following research techniques: observation, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The research finds library study useful in reading, analysing and interpreting both primary and secondary data. The findings of our study are deemed insightful to scholars in drama and to practitioners in diverse fields that focus on human interaction. Such include: sociologists, theologians, psychologists, educationists and administrators.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and assumptions of the study. It also comprises the justification of the study, scope and limitations, literature review, theoretical framework and research methodology.

1.1 Background to the Study

As Aristotle observed in *The Poetics*, (Aristotle, 1935) drama is mimetic, meaning that it imitates reality. Consequently, it is a powerful medium of effecting social change. This is because as Sam Ukala rightly notes, “… it translates with greater immediacy than other creative genres and is accessible in performance to those who cannot or do not read” (Branham, Gibbs and Osofisan, 2001, p. 29). For this to happen with maximum success, a play must be performed on stage, in which case dramatic elements will help unveil the playwright’s message.

Dramatic elements are the building blocks that make up a play. In *The Poetics*, Aristotle (1935) argued that there are six major elements that make a play. These are: plot, character, thought, dialogue, music and spectacle (Gassner & Sweetkind, 1963; Madden, 1996).

Aristotle believed that plot was the most important element, followed by character then thought. These six dramatic elements, that have come to be accepted by scholars as the basic elements of drama (Schempp et al, 1995), bring out the content of a play. It is important to note that all these elements complement each other and therefore it is not easy to divorce any of them from a play. We now take a look at these elements.

1. According to Aristotle, **Plot** is the most important element of a play and it should have a beginning, middle, then ending. Plot is again sub-divided into what later came to be known as Freytag’s Pyramid (see Fig 1.0 below), comprising: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution (Schempp et al, 1995; Boynton & Mack, 1976).
Fig 1.0: Freytag’s Pyramid.


2. **Character**, another dramatic element, is important as the way a character moves and the expression s/he makes are directly influential on her/his behaviour (Laban, 1971). Arnold opines that central to every drama are its characters and the stories they tell through their actions (Arnold, 2001; Kernan, 1969; Kleberg 1993).

3. **Dialogue** refers to verbal communication between characters in a play and dialogue in drama includes not just what is said, but also gestures, props, costumes and even silence. It also includes such aspects as tone, enunciation, tempo as all these have a communicative role (Birch, 1991).

Hilton (1987) further observes that it may seem odd to talk about the language of costume, gesture and movement, to say nothing of the language of silence, but that in theatre, all these non-verbal things have something to say. In addition, Styan (1975) opines that drama is not only made of words but a whole conglomeration of elements such as sights, sounds, stillness and motion, noise, silence, relationships and responses. The term dialogue is generally used in drama to refer to all the spoken words in a play.
and this includes such aspects as: monologue and asides. Dialogue is a very important element to playwrights since it is through it that the plot of a play unfolds, as the characters talk (Oscar, 1974; 1980).

4. Thought, which is the ultimate goal of the playwright, may be communicated directly through the title, dialogue or through spectacle. Through thought, we derive the message of the play, but it is the characters mainly who deliver this message through their dialogues (Beaty et al, 2002).

5. Music is another dramatic element that is used either directly or in the background to unveil the plot, theme or character. It can also add to the aesthetic value of the play as well as provide comic relief (Kebede, 1995).

6. Spectacle as a dramatic element includes all the visual aspects that are employed during a performance. These include: costumes, makeup, lighting, props and set design. Light for example, has both imaginative and practical aspects in a performance as it is a dominant source of theatrical imagery and one of the principal indicators of time (Hilton, 1987; Selden and Hunton, 1959). Hilton further observes that the primary function of stage lighting is to light the performers and to illuminate the performance space, while costume and makeup constitute the connection between the animate and the inanimate in performance.

Costume and makeup establish age, sex, rank, taste, identify special features, nationality, religion, social affiliation and become an index of character and personality. In a wider sense, both costume and makeup complement set and lighting in the way they offer concepts of shape, colour, time and style to the audience. Thus, they have partly the function of being mobile aspect of the setting (Hilton, 1987).

Props include such items as knives, guns, letters, rings, purses etc. and even when they change hands, either by design or accident, it is to advance the plot or enable its advancement. They also tend, as with weapons, crowns, musical instruments or tools, to establish what status or occupation a person has. Props are also decorative in function, contributing to the overall look of the performance (Hilton, 1987). In this whole
argument, Hilton (1987) very aptly summarises dramatic elements and their functions. In conclusion, we concur with Chambers (2005) who notes that a play is an event in two parts. The first appears on the page and the other on the stage. What this means then is that without performance, a play is incomplete. During a performance, dramatists manipulate dramatic elements in order to create desired meanings. It is through dramatic elements that the play is experienced in totality. Dramatic elements therefore act as a bridge between the playwright and the audience. The importance of dramatic elements in the delineation of a theme in a play cannot therefore be overemphasized.

In a nutshell, it is clear that dramatic elements have a variety of seminal roles that they play in communicating the content of a play. These include plot development, character development, style and even thematic development. Out of all these, thematic development is key because communication of thought is the core reason a playwright sets out to write a play.

Among the many thematic concerns that can be highlighted in a play is that of human interaction, simply because plays are about people. Human beings are social beings, with none being an island, meaning they will always seek relationships with other human beings. The notable thing about this is that these interactions, far from being haphazard, are governed by certain factors (Haralambos and Heald, 1980). These factors may come into play consciously or even spontaneously. The important question that comes into the mind then is what factors determine these relationships? This is an important question for the dramatist, who is the mirror of the society, because these relationships can generate both positive and negative results. A closer look at this issue will reveal that the factors that govern human interaction include: family, community, ethnic, class, gender, religion among others (Bujo, 2003). It is thus an issue that deserves scholarly scrutiny.

The two playwrights; the late Francis Imbuga and the late John Ruganda, whose works the study focuses on, have been leading dramatists in Kenya and Uganda respectively, where they dominated the dramatic scene for about four decades. While Imbuga has the largest number of published plays in Kenya (over ten), Ruganda also leads in the number of published plays in Uganda (about seven), by the time of compiling the
findings of this study. They are lauded not only in East Africa but in Africa and beyond, first for their unique style and dexterity in articulating pertinent socio-economic issues. Their fame again derives not just from the number of their published plays, but also from the fact that they were accomplished thespians, with dramatic careers dating from their student days and deep into their lecturing careers. Their subtlety and creativity in manoeuvring hostile political eras, by exploiting diverse dramatic techniques in articulating issues of societal concern, is still highly lauded. In this, they use seemingly ‘harmless tools’ like humour and oral literature, but which are heavily loaded with arsenal to fight evils in the society. Imbuga, for instance, is known for using humour and oral literature, while Ruganda is reputed for using both oral literature and the play within a play style. Consequently, one cannot discuss drama in East Africa without mentioning these two playwrights.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As noted in the background, drama is mimetic in that it mirrors the society, thus translating into a powerful socialization tool. Through their written plays, Imbuga and Ruganda have exploited this mimetic element of drama with the aim of communicating with the societies they mirror. For this to happen effectively, the complete cycle of communication in drama, which involves performance, has to take place. This is where dramatic elements come into play to unveil the thought of a writer.

Numerous literary studies have been done on the plays of Imbuga and Ruganda, focusing on such areas as style, theme as well as character analysis. Many of these look at plays as “texts” and thus analyse literary elements (Penfield, 1995). This leaves a gap in the arena of dramatic scholarship where plays are viewed as “productions” and performance of plays on the stage is found to be key. It is during performance that dramatic elements come into play to unveil the content of a work of drama. The literature review reveals that the utilization of dramatic elements in the rendering of human interaction in Imbuga’s and Ruganda’s plays has not been adequately addressed. Unfortunately, without employing dramatic elements to unlock the content, the study presupposes that the playwrights’ messages may have been eluding the audience. This lacuna can only be
filled by carrying out a comprehensive study of the contribution of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in their plays.

**Aim and objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the utilization of dramatic elements in the delineation of human relations in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Identify the dramatic elements utilised in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.
2. Examine how dramatic elements are manipulated in order to unlock human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.
3. Investigate the themes that accrue from analysing the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.

**1.4 Research Questions**

1. What dramatic elements are utilised in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda?
2. How are dramatic elements manipulated in order to unlock human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda?
3. What themes accrue from analysing the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda?

**1.5 Research Assumptions**

1. All the six dramatic elements are manipulated in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.
2. Several strategies are employed to manipulate dramatic elements in order to unlock human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.
3. At least five themes accrue from analysing the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda.
1.6 Justification of the Study

This study was motivated by the need to develop a comprehensive body of knowledge on the contribution of dramatic elements towards the delineation of the content of selected plays of Imbuga and Ruganda. An investigation of the role that dramatic elements play in this would help in the consumption of the content of the plays of Imbuga and Ruganda, which the study presupposes have previously only been partly consumed, without the incorporation of the role of dramatic elements in communicating meaning.

Since the two have established themselves as powerful dramatic voices and opinion shapers on many social issues in drama, their voice on this very important theme of human interaction needed to be fully examined. This could only be achieved through a scholarly exegesis of the contribution of dramatic elements to the rendition of the same.

In addition, it was deemed that an investigation of the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in selected plays of Imbuga and Ruganda would help to emphasize the importance of theatre and stage performances in contemporary East Africa. This is an area, which has received little critical attention in the past, largely due to competition from such genres as Film and Television. This will in turn increase viewership of stage performances, which will consequently create more jobs for theatre practitioners. Moreover, playwrights, directors and other practitioners in the field of drama will benefit from the findings of this study as they will help them improve the quality of productions and thus help theatre compete favourably with Film and Television media.

Being key East African dramatists, Imbuga and Ruganda have highlighted many socio-economic and political issues, affecting Africa in general and East Africa in particular. Such include corruption, dictatorship and tribalism. Numerous studies have been done on these themes making the duo very powerful voices in effecting social change. Unfortunately, little critical attention has been accorded to the contribution of dramatic elements towards extracting the messages of the playwrights on human interaction. The study assumes that the lessons we would have learnt as a society, for the purpose of effecting social change in the area of human interaction, have not been fully unearthed. A
critical analysis of the utilisation of dramatic elements in the delineation of this key concept therefore needed urgent attention, to be able to avail these lessons to the society. The study of the utilization of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in Imbuga’s and Ruganda’s plays consequently, was an attempt to fill this gap.

In summary, the findings of this study are deemed insightful to scholars in the area of drama and also to practitioners in diverse fields that focus on human interaction. Such include: sociologists, theologians, psychologists, educationists and even administrators.

1.7 Scope/ Delimitation

Out of the population of over seventy (as per the time of compiling the findings, 2017/18) stage plays from East Africa, the study restricted itself to six purposively selected plays from the writings of Imbuga and Ruganda. These are stage plays in which human interaction as a thematic concern is prominent. These are: *Betrayal in the City* (1976), *Aminata* (1988) and *The Return of Mgofu* (2011) by Imbuga. The other three are: *The Burdens* (1972), *The Floods* (1988) and *Shreds of Tenderness* (2001) by Ruganda. The plays were purposively selected on the basis of their relevance to the theme of human interaction.

1.8 Limitations

The study faced a lot of challenges, one of them being that it was very difficult to locate and/or even secure interviews with the experts who were supposed to provide the researcher the information needed for the research. Another problem that the researcher faced was time constraint, considering that the research work had to go hand in hand with the normal career responsibilities. The third problem that the study faced was the difficulty of securing recorded formats of the stage plays. This did not however compromise the quality of the research, as after persistent pleas, the researcher finally managed to get the content required for the research.
1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.9.1 Literature Review

This chapter looks at studies on utilization of dramatic elements in drama globally, in Africa and then in East Africa. It concludes the section by examining some works on utilisation of dramatic elements in the plays of Imbuga and Ruganda.

1.9.1.1 Utilisation of dramatic elements in drama: A global perspective

Williams and Williams’ (1898) journal article analyses some dramatic elements that are used in Indian drama, and which have parallels in the English theatre. The four dramatic elements analyzed are: play within a play as a method of plot development and restoration of the dead to life on the stage. The third is the employment of scenes of intoxication as a humorous device, and finally the utilization of letters as a device of complicating or unravelling the plot. The study then proceeds to draw parallels of the same on the English stage. Williams and William’s study is relevant to this research as it interrogates the use of dramatic elements in performance. Nevertheless, it differs from the researcher’s interest in that it is comparative in nature while this study focuses on the use of these dramatic elements for thematic development.

Bordman (1994) provides an analysis of American non-musical theatre from 1869-1914, which comprises all plays in the period covered. It goes on to chronicle the plot synopses, their principal characters, as well as describe the costumes and the scenery. The book also includes some play extracts to enhance the understanding of these plays. It contributes to this study in that it highlights such dramatic elements as character, plot and spectacle. However, it does not delve into a thorough exegesis of the elements or show their relevance in as far as thematic development is concerned.

1.9.1.2 Utilisation of dramatic elements in African Drama

Morgan (1994) interrogates traditional African drama against selected issues in theatre and performance criticism. The article approaches the topic from two perspectives, one of which is the idea of traditional drama as an aspect of social performance. The second
looks at traditional African drama specifically as an aesthetic activity. While noting the theatricality of African societies, Morgan observes that in traditional African societies, individual conduct and inter-group relationships were guided by what some role-theory sociologists have called a social script. He gives such examples as stylized gestures, patterned dances and symbolic movements and actions.

Morgan sees the orality of the cultures and interactive style of communication as the second element of traditional African cultures. He notes the seminal role played by such dramatic elements as the voice, facial expression, gestures, body movements such as kneeling and crouching, in communicating meaning. In addition, Morgan opines that other than the theatricality of general life in traditional societies, indigenous African theatre is a more formal and conscious activity, performed in sacred areas such as a sacred grove or a public square. The article is relevant to our research in the sense that it analyses dramatic elements. However, it does not show the relevance of these elements to the advancement of thematic content which is an important concern of this study.

Dosunmu’s (2005) thesis attempts an analysis of the utilisation of traditional music in Yoruba drama. His analysis is based on Soyinka’s *Death and the King’s Horseman* (1975). The study interrogates the extent to which the use of traditional music in modern Yoruba drama represents a cultural self-apprehension on the part of the dramatist. Dosunmu posits that even with the coming of new genres of drama, the music remained characteristically traditional. He notes the utilization of the elements of music, dance and miming which characterise traditional theatrical forms, such as, Alarinjo. It compares the techniques of dramatic development in traditional forms such as Alarinjo with those in Soyinka’s play. The study does a detailed analysis of traditional musical forms and how they have been utilised in Soyinka’s play, which enhances our understanding of this element. The study is relevant to our research in that it focuses on one of the dramatic elements: music, which is part of our interest. This study is different from Dosunmu’s in that it deals with all forms of music and not just the traditional. Again, the study does not show how music contributes to thematic development which is an important concern of this study.
Affia and Usuagwu (2012), address the issue of the ever, elusive search for a universal theory of African drama. They refer to the two schools of thought propagated with regard to African drama, in which case one denies its existence (Evolutionists), with the other affirming its existence (Relativists). The study examines the weaknesses of evolutionists who deny the existence of African drama and whose major preoccupation is ‘deindigenising’ and ‘detraditionalising’ Africa drama. ‘Deindigenisation’ is an anthropological term they use to refer to the process of making something foreign more native or local. They also borrow the term, ‘detraditionalising’ from social theory, to refer to erosion of tradition in society. The study affirms the need to continue with a search for a universal African theory through conceptualising and operationalising African drama. It further emphasizes the need to continue crystallizing and reiterating the defining characteristics of African drama. Though the study acknowledges the existence of dramatic elements in the indigenous forms of African drama, it does not delve into any comprehensive exegesis of the same or even how these dramatic elements can be used to relay meaning.

1.9.1.3 Utilisation of dramatic elements in East African Drama

Kabui (1997) seeks to establish the status of children’s theatre in Nairobi. While noting the forms that reveal children’s theatre in Nairobi, the study examines creative elements such as plot, character and style of plays performed for children in Nairobi. Though the study falls more into children’s literature and has a literary perspective of drama rather than a performative one, it is relevant to our research in that the creative elements it analyses are also dramatic elements.

Outa (2001), in a journal article investigates the portrayal of power and politics in postcolonial Kenyan drama. Basing his study on selected plays of Ngugi Wa Thiong’o and Francis Imbuga, he seeks to establish for instance how Imbuga was able to survive in a dictatorial environment, while Wa Thiong’o became a victim of political harassment, yet both wrote political material. The relevance of this article to this study is that it is partly based on the plays of Imbuga, one of the two dramatists whose works the research...
seeks to study. Again, the researcher’s study touches on dramatic strategies employed by the writers, an area closely related to dramatic elements.

Kinya (2008) focuses on the analysis of the dramatised narrative of the Kenya Schools’ and Colleges’ National Drama Festival. Her study interrogates the seemingly contradictory narrative and drama elements in the dramatised oral narrative. She sees the integration of both the aspects of narration and drama in the performance of the oral narrative within the KS &CNDF as a case of the oral narrative adapting itself to contemporary contexts. Though the study belongs to the genre of oral literature, it is relevant to this research in that it recognizes the place of dramatic elements in the dramatised oral narrative at the drama festival. These are aspects of performance that are a major concern of this study.

Were (2009) interrogates the utilisation of Brecht’s concept of alienation in Theatre for Development practices in Kenya. This study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of theatre for development troupes in interpreting and applying the conceptual frameworks that define theatre for development. The study is concerned with ensuring that what is practised is focused and systematic and most importantly, that the methodology does not contravene the set processes as commonly understood. Though this study did not so much focus on dramatic elements, it is relevant to this research in that it deals with Brecht’s concept of alienation, that is part of the theoretical concern of the study.

Fashua (2009), a journal article, investigates the principles of alienation and revolutionary ethos in two postcolonial East African plays. The two plays under exegesis are: The Trial of Dedan Kimathi (1976) and I Will Marry When I Want (1982). The paper demonstrates how dramatists in East Africa used drama as a tool of rebellion against colonial and postcolonial capitalist forces. It recognizes the role played by post independent African intellectuals and scholars in the struggles against colonialism and the subsequent neocolonialism that took root after independence in Kenya. It demonstrates how drama then became a tool to address the myriad socio-economic and political maladies that faced Africa after independence. This article is relevant to this study in that it deals with the role of scholars in highlighting societal issues, just like
Imbuga and Ruganda. This is in line with the Sociological Literary theory which this study utilizes.

Obiero (2010) attempts an analysis of Kenyan children’s response to selected plays by adult playwrights. The study evaluates the suitability of the plays to the child reader with reference to the synthesis of style, plot, characterization and themes. In doing this, the study employs the Reader Response theory. While the study is deemed significant to this research in the sense that it identified key dramatic elements, its departure from this study is that it adopts a literary rather than a performative approach. This is derived from the fact that it focuses on the ‘reader’ while this research focuses on the ‘audience’.

Karanja (2011) interrogates the utilisation of tragicomedy techniques in three plays by Kenyan playwright, David Mulwa. The three plays that are analysed are: Redemption (1990), Clean Hands (2000) and Glasshouses (2000). The study seeks to establish the impact of the use of tragicomedy techniques on communication and the aesthetic quality of the plays. Using Northrop Frye's theory of tragicomedy known as the ironic mode, the study focuses on such areas as thematic concerns, artistic techniques, plot and characterization as features of tragicomedy found in each play. The study is relevant to our research in that the tragicomedy techniques it interrogated are actually dramatic elements. Moreso, the study seeks to establish their utilisation on communication of meaning in the texts, a concern that is similar to that of this research. This study will thus prove insightful to our research though our study is wider in that it deals not just with tragicomedy techniques but all the six dramatic elements.

1.9.1.4 Utilisation of dramatic elements by/on the two playwrights

Obyerodhiambo (1990) analyses the symbolic aspects that Ruganda employs to bring out his thematic concerns. He notes Ruganda’s utilisation of African oral tradition in constructing these symbols. Such include Nalubale, the goddess of the lake and also Chief Ngoma and his daughter, Nyenje. The study focuses on how symbolism as an aspect of style aids thematic portrayal, thus making it related with our study. Though it focuses on thematic portrayal, it leaned more on oral literature and does not show how
dramatic elements can be used in the construction of the symbols for thematic enhancement.

Imbuga (1991) investigates thematic trends and circumstances in John Ruganda’s drama. He examined the main themes highlighted in the plays which include, domestic strife and dictatorship. The study thus provides useful insights on human interaction.

Ruganda (1992), explores Imbuga’s use of humour as a strategy to expose societal ills, while at the same time evading victimization by the political functionaries of the day. Dramatic elements are useful ingredients of creating humour and so the study provides useful insights on how the two intersect, and on how some aspects of humour have been used as dramatic strategies for thematic development.

Kyallo (1992) attempts a comparative study of the works of Imbuga and Ruganda from a socio-political perspective, and how this affects their thematic and stylistic elements. The study looks at the similarities and differences in the various dramatic techniques they employ to transmit their worldview. This study is significant to this research in that it is based on the works of the two playwrights who are also the focus of this research. It is important to mention here that there are numerous studies on these two playwrights individually or with other writers, but as far as the researcher has established, Kyallo is the only scholar who brings the two together in the manner the researcher does. Kyallo’s socio-political perspective in the interrogation of thematic and stylistic elements is also a point of convergence with this research because human interaction is a sociological element and moreso, because he analyses dramatic elements. It thus provides useful insights to this research. The research’s point of departure with this study however, is that while it generally focuses on socio-political issues, this research specifically studies how dramatic elements help to delineate human interaction.

Mugarizi (1996) examined the nature and purpose of the mode of absurd drama as portrayed in selected plays of Robert Serumaga, Francis Imbuga and John Ruganda. The study attempts to establish the relationship between the style of absurd drama and its
circumstance as shown by these playwrights. The study is regarded as significant to this research in the sense that it focuses on three dramatists, two of whom are the subjects of this research. However, while Mugarizi’s study is stylistic in outlook, focusing on absurd drama, this study combines thematic development and dramatic elements.

Olilo (2002) investigates the use of myths and rituals in Imbuga’s works. The study analyses how Imbuga employs the two as artistic tools to investigate the realities of contemporary Africa. The research focuses on cultural rites such as burials, weddings and circumcision. It provides some insights on some of the socio-economic and political issues that the writer deals with and their importance on the human interaction.

Waliula (2003) looks at gender relations in the plays of John Ruganda. The study interrogates the extent to which gender aspects influence form and content in John Ruganda’s six plays. It takes note of the close correlation between gender relations and characterisation in the plays. The study is useful to this study in the sense that gender relations comprise an important aspect of human interaction.

Kasigwa (2010) interrogates the concept of death as a running motif in John Ruganda’s drama. The study examines John Ruganda’s preoccupation with the theme of death and why death seems to be a gravitating focal point around which he builds his dramatic action. The study is significant to this research in the sense that it is a thematic study, partly like this one, which enriches the researcher’s understanding, and is based on a writer (John Ruganda) whose works this research is concerned with.
1.9.2 Theoretical Framework

In an endeavour to critically appreciate the topic under discussion, the study adopted two theoretical approaches namely: the Dramatic theory and the Sociological Literary theory. Dramatic theory deals with performance of plays on stage. The major proponents of the Dramatic theory include Aristotle (1935), Bentley (1964), Stanislavski (1936; 1989; 2008) and Brecht (Thomson & Sacks, 1994). In *The Poetics* (Aristotle, 1935), Aristotle focuses on performance of drama by actors and before an audience. He saw drama as the imitation of reality (mimesis). Aristotle laid the foundation of dramatic works by coming up with the six dramatic elements which he believed were the heart of every play. The six are: plot, character, thought, diction, melody and spectacle. In his analysis of Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, Aristotle outlined the six as important elements of a tragedy. He also came up with the concept of dramatic integrity which comprised a set of rules governing dramatic form. These came to be known as the three dramatic unities of time, place and action; specifying one plot, that takes place in one day in a single setting. Aristotle (1935) opined that tragedy is superior to comedy and must incorporate catharsis. He believed that the audience should be immersed in the drama in which case they would be purged of negative emotions during catharsis. During catharsis, the audience would experience pity and fear; pity for the protagonist who would undergo untold suffering in a tragedy, and fear that the same fate might also befall them. He also came up with the concept of ‘harmatia’ which referred to tragic flaw, which meant error of judgment on the part of the hero/heroine that brought about their fall. He privileged plot over character. Aristotle’s six dramatic elements became the springboard upon which the themes mirrored in the selected plays were communicated.

We also utilised the ideas of Constantin Stanislavski, a famous Russian actor, director, and teacher, who profoundly influenced the theater of the 20th century and beyond. Together with directors Alexander Fedotov and Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, Stanislavski co-founded the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898. Stanislavski, who is still one of the greatest influences in the world of performance today, developed his theories of "method acting" which are explained in his three books: *An Actor Prepares* (1936), *Building a Character* (2008) and *Creating a Role* (1989). Stanislavski created a system
for acting that enables actors to create truthful and believable characters. His method involved training actors to become their characters rather than to merely memorise and play a role (Brockett & Ball, 2004; Stanislavski, 2010). Hence, his method developed, revolutionising acting techniques throughout Europe, and eventually the world. One of the basic goals of the "Stanislavski System" was to portray believable, natural people on stage as opposed to the 19th century actors whose acting was very unnatural. In many ways, Stanislavski is the father of today's style of ‘Method Acting’, a process in which actors immerse themselves into their characters as much as possible. Major elements of the ‘Method’ are: the "Magic If", Re-education, Observation, Motivation and Emotional Memory (Brockett & Ball, 2004).

Under the “Magic If”, Stanislavski required actors to think of how they would react in various situations, while under Re-education. He demanded that actors find ways to portray true-to-life human nature, and still be able to project loud enough for audiences to hear. Stanislavski encouraged his students to observe people and also to decipher the motivation of the words and actions of characters on the stage. He also wanted the actors to immerse themselves completely in the emotion of the character, without being superficial. Stanislavski’s method is useful during interviews with actors and also when analysing the data on them. His ideas were useful in helping the researcher interrogate how the actors immersed themselves into their roles and also went about the process of becoming true to the characters they embodied.

While Aristotle was the earliest critic to formulate ideas that shaped the dramatic theory, it was Eric Bently in his work, *The Life of Drama* (1964), who came up with a systematic organization of the theory. Bentley’s dramatic theory focuses on the structure and effects of five genres of theatre, which comprise: tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, farce, and melodrama. He opined that art must rescue humanity from meaninglessness. While rejecting simple theories, he argued that artists must blend creativity and reason. Bently was known for covering practical, aesthetic and philosophical aspects of theatre. This meant that drama had to highlight problems in the society and try to give solutions. He challenged Aristotle’s and Stanislavski’s idea of catharsis. Ideas from Bently’s Dramatic theory which advocated for drama that coupled
entertainment with the giving of practical solutions to the society were employed both during the process of data collection and data analysis. This was especially with regard to the third objective where the study sought to extract themes that accrued from the selected plays. This was done during the watching of the DVDs, FGDs and interviews. The themes extracted helped bring out the practical and didactic element of theatre.

In many ways radical to both Aristotelian and Stanislavskian ideas, Bertolt Brecht came up with the Brechtian theatre techniques that included the epic theater and his alienation effect (Brustein, 1962; Worthern, 2007). This is a type of theatre genre that emphasizes the need for the audience to respond to issues highlighted in a play intellectually rather than emotionally. Epic theatre developed in Germany in the 1920s during the rise of expressionism (Brockett & Ball, 2004). On Aristotle’s idea of catharsis which required identification on the part of the audience, Brecht argued that theatre needed to be unemotional, detached and objective for it to be productive towards societal development, rather than just being a mirror of society. In branding his theatre as non-Aristotelian, Brecht was questioning the traditional formal categorization between epic and drama genres (Thomson and Sacks, 1994).

Whereas Stanislavski wanted his audience to leave the theatre having lost themselves in the characters and plot, having watched people live their lives as though unobserved, Brecht wanted his audience to leave the theatre having been moved to change the social and political make up of society, to redress the injustices and to demand a fairer, more egalitarian life. Brecht wanted to develop the means of entertainment into an object of instruction, and to change theatre institutions from places of amusement into organs of public communication. Brecht’s work and ideas were deeply influenced by the social, political and cultural events that surrounded him (O’ Brien & Sutton, 2012; Tengya, 2016).

Brecht’s practices are best built on the foundation that Stanislavki’s system gives. Brecht believed in using a number of experiences that are based on Stanislavski and adapts them in order to create characters that deliver a political and social message. The majority of the actors that Brecht would have used when working on his plays would have been
trained using the Stanislavski system. His primary aim was creating a political theatre that communicates and educates its audience. Brecht’s new technical aesthetics was based on a view of the audience that radically departed from the Wagnerian or Aristotelian style. His attempt to refunctionalise the theatre aimed to combine aesthetic pleasure or entertainment with teaching (Kleberg 1993).

Brecht opined that theatre should be experimental and dynamic and not just normative, reactionary and static. In contrast with the 'dramatic' approach which gets the characters and the audience caught up in the action, the 'epic' approach relegates both actors and audience into 'third-person' observers (Kleberg 1993). At the heart of the 'epic' approach is the element of detachment on the part the audience so as to analyse events and come up with ways of improving society in the future (Brockett & Ball, 2004). Brecht used the term V-Effekt or Verfremdungs to refer to the sum total of techniques required to produce the right atmosphere for creation of epic theatre and also for generation of desired audience responses. These basically involved creating of natural surrounding for the audience to experience the true picture. As part of his alienation effect, Brecht introduced some new conventions to the practice of theatre, such as: unmasking of lighting instruments, fragmenting of scenery, making musicians visible and projecting maps, captions and other images on the screen. All this was meant to remind the audience that they were in the theatre so that they could retain their critical faculties.

Contrary to Stanislavskian ideas, Brecht sometimes advised his actors to present rather than become their characters. Other methods he used in alienation included: his handling of theatrical elements and distancing the story either through time or place. Brecht had a strong didactic stance through which in Marxist terms, he intended to create on stage a dialectical society comprising forces that oppose one another. He aimed at provoking in the audience an attitude of criticism and enquiry (Pickering, 2005). While these conventions may portray him as heavily didactic, Brecht was keen on entertaining his audience (Brockett & Ball, 2004). The Brechtian approach was useful during FGDs, interviews with directors and actors and also during the data analysis process. Brecht’s idea of a didactic and political theatre which would help members of the audience leave the theatre not intoxicated with emotions but with their cognitive facilities alert and set to
seek for a solution to societal problems was utilized. This helped extract socio-political themes during interviews with theatre stakeholders, FGDs and also during the researcher’s own process of observation of the plays.

The other theoretical framework that the researcher utilised is the Sociological Literary theory whose original proponent was Hippolyte Taine in 1906. Though Plato, a Greek philosopher was the first to link literature and the society in his theory of mimesis, Taine, a French philosopher became the first to device a systematic framework of the relationship between literature and the society (Mugubi, 2003). The theory concerns itself with the relationship between creative works and the society. We utilised the ideas of Taine (1906), Plekhanov (1953), Ngugi (1981; 1986), Ngara (1985; 1990), and Finnegan (1977). The theory perceives the relationship between literature (creative works) and society as dialectical in the sense that while creative works influence society, they are also influenced by the society (Ngugi, 1981). This relationship may then be said to be symbiotic in that each needs the other.

While dismissing art for art’s sake, Plekhanov (1953) emphasizes the need for realism in a work of art whereby he argues that it should illuminate, arouse and convey matters of relevance to the society. Realism refers to the practice of reflecting a convincing picture of life in creative works as opposed to idealism. On commitment to societal issues, Ngara (1985; 1990) observes that committed African writers are very sensitive to the social problems of their day and they are always seeking to bring positive change. Finnegan (1977), in concurrence with Ngara (1985; 1990), notes that you cannot divorce creative works from the societies in which they are situated. From the above observations, it is clear that the Sociological Literary theory seeks to show the relationship between creative works and the society. This theory helped the researcher to analyse how occurrences in the society provide these creative writers with material for writing, in their endeavour to change the society. The theory was useful in helping the researcher interrogate the way Imbuga and Ruganda mirror the society in their creative works. During the watching of the DVDs, FGDs and interviews, in line with objective three, the researcher sought to find out how human interaction in the society was brought out.
1.9.3 Conceptual Framework: Role of Dramatic Elements in Drama

The diagram below is the researcher’s conceptualization of the idea propounded by Chambers (2005) that a play is an event in two parts; on the page and on the stage. Therefore, it must go through the two stages for its communicative ability to be fully realized. The cycle begins with the playwright who writes his/her ideas in a play script. At this level, the play is only available to those who are literate, ‘on the page’. In the second level, dramatic elements are utilized by theatre personalities to bring the play ‘on the stage’. This is the second and final level. At this performance stage, drama reaches its optimum level of communicative ability to the entire audience, regardless of whether they can read or not.

Fig 1.1 Conceptual Framework: Source: Researcher
1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter looks at the methodology employed in data collection and analysis. This is categorized under: research design, population and sampling and sampling techniques. The chapter also elucidates the research instruments as well as research techniques utilised.

1.10.1 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative approach and this was used with regard to data collection, interpretation and analysis. The qualitative approach observes research specimen in their natural environment with an interpretivist orientation (Punch, 2009; Phelps, 1980; Blaxter et al, 1997). Qualitative research involves such data collection techniques as observation and interviews as a way of triangulating results. This in turn helps to get a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Daly, 2007). This is contrary to what happens in quantitative research which basically involves numerical analysis of data collected. This study sought to investigate the utilization of dramatic elements in the delineation of human relations in selected plays of Imbuga and Ruganda. The researcher employed varied sampling strategies in a bid to interrogate a cross-section of theatre practitioners who were deemed to have useful information that could help shed light on human interaction. During the process of data collection, the researcher began to code the data into categories as they arose. Daly (2007) opines that this involves choosing a word or creating a phrase that serves to indicate the meaning of a segment of data. We coded the data into the recurrent phrases that appeared under the umbrella of the terms: “dramatic elements” and “human interaction”. This proved to be very useful later during the process of data analysis as data was already under categories which made the process manageable.

1.10.2 Population and sampling

1.10.3 Target Population

The study targeted practitioners in the field of drama, mainly directors and actors as well as general members of the audience who watch performances of staged plays. These were
based in Nairobi. These mostly comprised: university lecturers in literature and drama departments, theatre arts students, directors of professional theatre groups, actors and some general members of the public.

1.10.4 Sampling procedures

To ensure validity of data collection and analysis, the study utilized three types of sampling procedures, namely: Purposive, Snowball and Random sampling.

1.10.4.1 Purposive Sampling

In order to sample plays that were relevant to the topic of study, the researcher read about fifty randomly selected plays from different literary backgrounds of the world. This was for the purpose of getting a glimpse of the dramatic scene globally. The East African dramatic scene boasts over seventy (as per the time of compiling this thesis) published plays arising from a population of more than twenty playwrights. Many other unpublished plays exist, for example those presented at such fora as the annual Kenya Schools’ and Colleges’ National Drama Festivals (KS&CNDF), but the researcher chose to focus on the published ones as they are the ones in wide circulation (Shikuku, 2008). Most of these are written in English, others in Kiswahili while a few others are in vernacular languages. The researcher chose to focus on English plays as they are accessible to more people than Kiswahili ones. Vernacular plays were left out as they would introduce technicalities of translation which was not part of the study’s interest.

Out of a population of about twenty playwrights, the researcher purposively sampled Imbuga and Ruganda who had the largest body of published plays in Kenya and Uganda respectively, by the time of doing this study. Apart from the size of their repertoire, the two have been acclaimed not only for their dexterity in highlighting issues of social significance, but also for their unique style of delivery (Kyallo, 1992; Atwoli, 2012). Another reason for sampling Imbuga and Ruganda is that they wrote relatively within the same period. The researcher thus wanted to see how they rendered the theme of human interaction, considering that each of their three sampled plays has a partner from the other, written relatively within the same period.
Purposive sampling was further employed to select six plays from their repertoire, which
give prominence to the theme of human interaction in diverse environments. These
comprise three from Imbuga’s ten and three from Ruganda’s seven published stage plays
respectively (by the time of doing this study). The six selected plays are: *Betrayal in the
City* (1976), *Aminata* (1988) and *The Return of Mgofu* (2011) by Imbuga. The other
three are: *The Burdens* (1972), *The Floods* (1988) and *Shreds of Tenderness* (2001) by
Ruganda. They are among the plays of the two playwrights that have received public
acclaim for highlighting issues of social significance in a unique style (Kyallo, 1992).
The characters in the drama cut across the social cross-section in terms of age, gender,
class, education level and even religion.

The other factor that guided the researcher in sampling was the period of publishing of
the plays. The researcher selected the plays based on two historical periods. First, there
were the post-independence plays that give the study the picture of human interaction in
diverse environments from the time of acquisition of independence in Kenya and Uganda
respectively, to the end of the millennium. Then, there are the post-millennium plays that
availed to the researcher a picture of the human interaction in diverse environments from
the onset of the new millennium to date (2018).

In addition, purposive sampling was employed to select Kenya Institute of Curriculum
Development (KICD) as the study’s main data source because KICD prepares videotaped
plays as teaching support material, and so it was deemed a ready source of data. KICD
was preferred over theatre groups in Kenya (which were deemed the study’s alternative
data source) because they concentrate on performing plays on current KCSE school
syllabi. Thus, the researcher foresaw the danger of only being able to get data on
*Betrayal in the City*, alone, since it was the only one on KCSE literature syllabus then.
The videotaped plays were preferred because it is not easy to get live performances of
such plays when they are not on the KCSE syllabus.

The directors of each of the plays were also purposively sampled for interview. In
interviewing the directors, the researcher focused on such variables as their attitudes,
motivation and experience when directing the plays (Diang’a, 2013). This is because
this has been found to have an implication on the product that comes to the audience. This largely derives from the fact that the director, though working within the framework of the written text, is responsible for such choices as that of actors, the set design, which undeniably contributes to the final product (Ommaney & Schanker, 1972; Archer, Gendrich & Woodrow, 1999).

Actors are important in a performance as they are the ones who deliver the content of the play. Linell (1985) sees the actor as a responsible instrument who should know what the character is doing at each moment of the play. The researcher set out to interview two major actors (a male and a female) of each play because these are mainly the ones who carry the message of the play. The researcher sought to find out from them their understanding of their role in delivery of the message of the play, their motivation, as well as their individual strategies in delivery of content. The researcher also sought to find out if they had utilised ideas from dramatic theorists. The researcher interviewed a total of eleven actors, seven males and four females. The only actors the researcher was unable to get were ‘Tinka’ (The Burdens) and Aminata (Aminata). In the case of The Burdens, the one who had taken the role was said to be deceased and the alternative who had at one time taken the role in another production could not be traced. Aminata in (Aminata) could not be traced also. This deficit was to some extent made up for by interviewing an extra actor for The Return of Mgofu. Thus seven male and four female actors were interviewed. Among these, some had training in theatre while others had not. This enriched the research in the sense that it was able to draw both from experts and ordinary people.

In addition, the researcher held two Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) sessions with a group, comprising nine students from the Department of Film Technology and Theatre Arts’ playwriting class (2014/2015) of Kenyatta University. The class was also purposively sampled for FGDs as they had a good understanding of dramatic elements and their functions, from their theatre classes (Gentile & Robinson, 2002). Since they were theatre students studying playwriting, acting and even directing, this was within their scholarly interests and would bring a symbiotic dimension, as watching the plays would also enhance their knowledge. Having been their lecturer, the researcher sampled
students who performed well in the units mentioned above and who were committed in
class attendance. This was complemented by another FGD comprising four young
members of the public, which was supposed to provide a neutral voice to the discussion
since, without theatrical training, it was hoped that they would give objective views on
the plays.

1.10.4.2 Snowball Sampling

Snowball sampling, which was originally referred to as interactive sampling (Denzin,
1978, p. 89), is “a non-probability sampling strategy whereby referrals from earlier
participants are used to gather the required number of participants”. This may be carried
out in two ways, one of which is to make initial contact with key informants, who in turn
point to information-rich cases. The second is to begin with an initial participant who,
through the process of interview and observation will point out characteristics and issues
that need further inquiry. In the case of this study, the first method was used to locate
directors and actors who were difficult to locate, and who were not easy to locate, owing
to the technical nature of the information that the researcher sought to get.

As noted by Oyugi (2012), snowball sampling which is considered by some accidental
sampling, is appropriate when the members of a special population are difficult to locate,
such as homeless individuals. In snowball sampling, the researcher collects information
on the few members of the target population s/he can locate, then asks those individuals
to provide the information needed to locate other members of that population whom they
happen to know. The researcher used this method to locate ‘a Wamala’ (The Burdens)
and both Jusper and Regina (Betrayal in the City). People who knew they had taken
these roles helped to locate them.

1.10.4.3 Simple Random sampling

This sampling method is used when each subject of the study has an equal chance of
being considered. This method was used in the case where a play had for instance several
major characters of one gender, out of whom the researcher needed to interview one. This
is because the researcher wanted to interview one male and a female actor. Such was the
case with *Shreds of Tenderness* where the choice was between Odie and Wak. In *The Burdens*, the choice was between Wamala and Kaija. Since they are major characters, each had an equal chance of being selected (Abrahamson, 1983).

### 1.11 Data Collection

The data collection process involved both primary and secondary data where this involved both field and library study. Field study involved interviewing people, holding FGDs, and the researcher’s watching of DVDs. Library study involved reading printed material.

#### 1.11.1 Primary Data

The study involved field study. Here, the researcher studied various characters as they interacted in the selected plays. For this, the study adopted a triangulational approach, which is the use of multiple research methods, data collection strategies and data sources in order to get a more complete picture of what is being studied, and to cross-check the validity of information (Gay et al, 2006). Thus, the study acquired data from the researcher’s watching of the DVDs, views from experts whom the researcher interviewed and those from Focus Group Discussions.

#### 1.11.2 Secondary Data

Library research was used to gather secondary data for the purpose of augmenting primary data. The researcher among others utilised the K.U’s. Post Modern Library, KNLS together with other institutional, public and even private libraries deemed to have useful information. Library research involved reading, analysing and interpreting relevant information from such sources as books, journals, publications and e-sources that were deemed relevant to the study. Under this, the researcher did thorough reading of the six written plays sampled for study, which complemented observation. In concurrence with Styan (1960), Penfield (1995) opines that in the best of all possible worlds, one would probably study drama from both reading and watching so as to be able to read a play and see it produced on stage by professionals. The written scripts revealed the word for word content which sometimes evaded the researcher while watching the plays. Thus, the
researcher was better equipped to extract meaning. The researcher made notes during this process, typed and stored them electronically, awaiting data analysis.

1.12 Data Collection Instruments

Data was collected through a combination of research instruments namely:

1. Observation check-lists (see appendix 3{i}) - The researcher viewed the video plays selected for study guided by a check-list, and made notes on them. The check-list was useful in revealing the role of dramatic elements and how they came into play in communicating meaning. Free observation helped to note useful information that had not been captured in the observation check-list. Participant observation on its part was employed when the researcher was watching the performed scripts together with members of the Focus Group Discussions. Here, the researcher benefited from some views of the other viewers during the viewing period. Moreso, the researcher was keen on the role played by dramatic elements in content delivery during the performance.

2. Interviews guides - The researcher had two separate sets of interview guides; one for directors and another for the actors. The importance of the semi-structured interview guides was to keep the interview in control as during interviews, the temptation to digress is real. This was however conducted in such a way that it did not limit the interviewees from giving information freely (Daly, 2007). The researcher conducted interviews with directors and also with major actors of the selected video plays.

a) Semi-structured interviews with directors of the selected video plays (see appendix 3(ii)) - Interviewing a director is important since s/he is the one who interprets and makes the product that gets to the viewers. Through KICD, the researcher had hoped to contact the directors of the video plays but unfortunately this did not work very well since it is a long time since most of the plays were performed and except for some, it was very difficult to get their contacts. In cases where it was difficult to get the directors, the researcher looked for alternatives. We were however careful not to compromise the validity of the results by ensuring that the alternatives were acclaimed practitioners in drama performance matters. The researcher interviewed a total of five directors since
Shreds of Tenderness and Betrayal in the City were directed by one director. These were: Dr. Emmanuel Shikuku (The Return of Mgofu), Mr. Evans Mugarizi (Aminata), Mr. Tyrus Gathu (The Burdens), Ms. Vigilance Atieno (The Floods) and Mr. Eric Chege (Betrayal in the City and Shreds of Tenderness). The researcher scheduled two interview sessions for the director of Shreds of Tenderness and Betrayal in the City, one for each of them. This was because even the same director directs a play as a unique entity and not necessarily the way s/he does another. The researcher sought to generate information on conscious and/or unconscious manipulation by the director to create a certain meaning. The researcher had an average of one two-hour interview sessions with each director which in most of the cases was sufficient to enable the researcher garner enough primary data. In some cases, however, the researcher had to solicit for more data mostly through phone calls. This data was then transcribed, typed and stored electronically for analysis later during the research process.

b) Semi-structured interviews with actors of the selected video plays (see appendix 3{iii}) - The researcher interviewed two major actors from each video play. Interviewing the actors is also important in that they are the ones who deliver the final product on the stage. The researcher sought to also generate information on, among other things, conscious and/or unconscious effort they put to create certain meanings during acting. The researcher also sought to find out about their understanding of their roles towards meaning delivery. The semi-structured interviews were meant to ensure a balance between the interviewees providing information in a free way, and guarding against undue digression. This was for the purpose of enhancing objectivity of the data collected.

3. Focus Group Discussion schedules (see appendix 3{iv}) - Three Focus groups discussion sessions were held, two with a group from Kenyatta University’s Department of Film Technology and Theatre Arts playwriting class of (2014/2015). The other one was held with a group of young people who are members of the general public. A focus group operates like a group interview but is superior to interview in that with a focus group, the synergy of group interaction enhances the depth of the results generated (Wellington, 2000). Each of the two Focus Group members watched the plays which was then be followed by a two-hour Focus Group Discussion session, after a break. Use of
Focus Group Discussions as a method of data collection was purposively sampled because of the many advantages it has over interview in that it is cheaper, faster, and also because the synergies of group interaction generate more data in a freer atmosphere (Daly, 2007). In addition, the researcher also engaged a research assistant who is well versed in matters of drama.

1.13 Data Analysis

This also adopted the qualitative approach, in concurrence with the data collection process. After collecting the primary and secondary data, the study adopted the theoretical model of thematic content analysis. As noted in Kebaya (2016), Creswell (2014) opines that this should be based on identifying, analysing and interpreting of data on the basis of the emerging patterns vis-à-vis the topic under study. Using ideas from the Dramatic and Sociological Literary theories and in synch with the objectives of the study, the researcher coded the data under the broad categories of “dramatic elements” and “human interaction”. This called for thorough and systematic reading of the data to be able to detect the categories and themes. The Sociological Literary theory which says that literature (read drama) borrows from society and vice versa was also used. This is highlighted in the title of the research which seeks to examine the utilization of dramatic elements in delineating human relations. From human relations which is the major theme, the researcher generated about eight subthemes which were coded as follows: Family Relations (FR), Gender Relations (GR), Intra-community Relations (INTRA), Inter-community Relations (INTER), Religious Relations (RR), Political Relations (PR), Economic Relations (ER) and Professional Relations (PF.R). Aristotle’s six dramatic elements whose manipulation helped unlock the themes listed above were also coded as follows: Plot (PL), Character (CH), Theme (TH), Music (MU), Dialogue (DI) and Spectacle (SP).

The notes made when watching the videos alone comprised noting the types of human relationships highlighted in every episode and writing it in coded form as explained above. The same method was applied when watching and with FGD members. During the discussion, they were asked to point out any human relationships noted.
Panton (1990) observes that coding is an important element in the initial stages of data analysis. This is necessary due to the voluminous amount of data generated through the different research instruments, for the purpose of organisation and analysis of the data (Mugenda, 2013). Through thematic content analysis of the transcribed data, the researcher was able to identify different kinds of human relations from the societies reflected in the plays, draw parallels as well as divergences. This helped the researcher generate discourses and arguments and finally make interpretations which helped in preparing the thesis.

1.14 Ethical Considerations

The study addressed some ethical considerations since it had a fieldwork component, which involved dealing with human beings. The first issue along this line was the need to seek for a research permit from the Ministry of Education, which is a national requirement for all researchers doing research involving field work. The researcher successfully applied and acquired a research permit. After this came the need to contact bodies and individuals deemed to have the material needed for the research. Among these were scholars and practitioners in the area of theatre as well as members of the general public. This was for the purpose of either interviewing them or involving them in FGDs. The researcher went ahead and requested either for information or participation in interviews or FGDs. For the bookshops which had the video plays, it was easy to get them but for bodies like KICD, a lot of suspicion arose and the researcher had to go an extra mile to convince them that the material was only required for educational purposes. It proved very difficult to get the videos but through a lot of persistence, the researcher finally got the content. Two major bodies that the researcher interacted with in this area were KICD and Jicho Four Theatre Group and for each of them, the issue of confidentiality in terms of the information secured as well as the promise to use the material exclusively for educational purposes were strict prerequisites for them to release them to me. This was caused by suspicion that the researcher could have been a mole of business competitors masquerading as a researcher.
For those involved in interviews and FGDs, the researcher either met them personally and requested for participation or called to request for the same. The researcher also requested to record the interviews/FGDs and also take photos. The recorded interviews were meant for use later during the process of data analysis while the photos were for record purposes. For those who accepted, they were each required to sign a consent form indicating their willingness to participate in the research. The consent forms had the name and contact of the researcher, those of the supervisors, plus that of Kenyatta University (the sponsoring institution) so that if the participants needed to ascertain the validity of the researcher’s allegation they could easily do so.

1.15 Validity and Reliability

As far as the validity and reliability of the data collected was concerned, this was assured by the fact that data was collected from a fairly wide cross-section of theatre stakeholders. The first category of these comprised experts who had been practising this art and who had wealth of experience to share. These included experts like Dr Mugarizi (who directed a lecturers’ performance of Aminata, Mr. Tyrus Gathu (who has directed many plays at KNT) and others like Mwalimu Mulwa who is a veteran playwright and thespian. The data collection exercise also involved one FGD from general members of the public in order to get the layman’s experience, thus providing a balance between the theoretical and the practical. Moreso, accredited data collection instruments like FGD, interviews were used (Mugenda, 2003). Validity and Reliability of data analysis came from the fact that the process used accredited tools like thematic content analysis which in turn involved such methods as coding of data, with the help theories in the whole exercise.

1.16 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the background, statement of the problem, aim and objective, research questions and assumptions of the research. In addition, it also looked at the literature review, theoretical framework as well as the research methodology. In the next chapter, the study focuses on identifying the dramatic elements.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 DRAMATIC ELEMENTS UTILIZED IN DELINEATING HUMAN INTERACTION IN THE SELECTED DRAMA

2.1 Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with objective one of the study which seeks to identify the dramatic elements that have been utilized in the performance of the six selected plays. Watching the performan the selected plays reveals that the elements are utilized differently, with some using certain elements more, while others use them less. This study deals with the dramatic element of thought as a major theme – human interaction – and it has in turn generated sub themes. The sub themes that accrue from this major theme include: family, gender, class, intra and extra-community relations, and they are expounded on later in the study. We now look at the five other dramatic elements which are: plot, character, dialogue, spectacle and music, as they are used in different plays.

Gassner and Quinn (1969) concur with theatrical scholars such as Leach (2008) and Schempp et al. (1995) that the early history of drama was heavily influenced by the Greek scholar and philosopher, Aristotle, as expounded in his writings, *The Poetics*. In it, Aristotle outlined the principles that should control poetry and drama, based on his analysis of Sophocles’ tragedy, *Oedipus the King*. Aristotle took tragedy to be the purest form of drama and he outlined six components which he believed to be the basic dramatic elements, (Leach, 2008; Schempp et al. 1995). Most scholars agree with his six elements while some others differ slightly, with some talking of three, five and others even seven. Even among the scholars who talk of six elements for instance Leach (2008) and Schempp et al. (1995), the wording differs slightly in most cases, with an element like dialogue being referred to as language or diction. On its part, music is sometimes called melody, rhythm or even poetry. Spectacle is also called staging or performance while theme is also called thought. Some scholars refer to plot as action though it is clear this is something the scholars presume exists at the back of every play.

On the whole, regarding the six Aristotelian elements, it appears that scholars seem to differ slightly, especially with regard to lexical choices but basically, whatever their wording, they all agree on the need for events (plot) that are consciously presented as
well as on the need for people to execute them (characters). The other notable thing is the need for a message in these events (theme) which is largely brought out by the people who act through their words (dialogue). All this is actualized through a performance (staging) which many times involves some form of melody (music). This is quite evident in the performance of the six plays analysed in this study, where all the six elements are utilized.

2.2 Plot as a Dramatic Element

Aristotle placed plot first in terms of importance in drama, among the other dramatic elements (Schempp et al., 1995). For Purves et al. (1997), plot refers to the action as it is organized around a conflict and builds through a complication to a climax, followed by a resolution. According to Encyclopædia Britannica (2017), plot in fiction, which is the structure of interrelated actions consciously selected and arranged by the author, involves a considerably higher level of narrative organization than normally occurs in a story. It further notes that according to Forster (1927), a story is a narrative of events arranged in their time-sequence, whereas a plot organizes the events according to a sense of causality. This fact about plot is not only true for fiction but also for plays.

Most scholars of drama, notably Cohen (2008), Wilson (2007) and Schempp et al. (1995), observe that it is important to differentiate “story” and plot in drama, since this is confusing to many people who assume they are synonymous. Cohen (2008) posits that, story is simply a narrative of what is seen to happen in the play as might be described by someone who has seen it, whereas plot refers to the mechanics of story-telling, including the sequence of the characters’ comings and goings; the timetable of the plays events; and the specific order of revelations, reversals, quarrels, discoveries, and actions that take place on stage as in ‘furthering the plot’. Wilson (2007) puts it even more clearly where he sees a story to be a full account of an event or a series of events usually told in chronological order. In contrast, he observes that plot is a selection and arrangement of scenes taken from a story for presentation on stage.

Two things here stand out with regard to the distinction between story and plot; that story is simply the narrative told chronologically, whereas plot has the element of the conscious selection and arrangement of events in the story by the playwright for the
purpose of performance on the stage. The other factor is about cause and effect which is emphasized more in the plot than the story. Plot is thus a product of the story. From the foregoing, plot may be defined as the conscious selection and arrangement of events in a play showing cause and effect. Story on the other hand refers to the chronological order of events that take place in a play without necessarily showing cause and effect.

Encyclopædia Britannica (2017) posits that in the history of literary criticism, plot has undergone a variety of interpretations where in *The Poetics*, Aristotle assigned primary importance to plot (*mythos*) and considered it the very “soul” of a tragedy. Later critics tended to reduce plot to a more mechanical function, until, in the Romantic era, the term was theoretically degraded to an outline on which the content of fiction was hung. Such outlines were popularly thought to exist apart from any particular work and to be reusable and interchangeable. They might be endowed with life by a particular author through his development of character, dialogue or some other element. The publication of books of “basic plots” brought plot to its lowest esteem.

Encyclopædia Britannica (2017) further observes that in the 20th century, there have been many attempts to redefine plot as a movement, and some critics have even reverted to the position of Aristotle in giving it primary importance in fiction. It further argues that these neo-Aristotelians or Chicago School of critics, following the leadership of critic Ronald S. Crane, have described plot as the author’s control of the reader’s emotional responses, his arousal of the reader’s interest and anxiety and the careful control of that anxiety over a duration of time. This approach is only one of the many attempts to restore plot to its former place of priority in fiction.

On dramatic structure, Wilson (2007) observes that every work of art has some kind of structure which may be loosely connected or tightly knit. He adds that in theatre, structure takes the form of plot and it is generally based on a story. In concurrence with Wilson (2007), Beaty et al. (2002) view plot as an aspect of structure, and they regard it as the invention, selection and arrangement of the action. Like Diyanni (2004) and Wilson (2007) they note that plot involves conflict. Beaty et al. (2002) observe that there are different types of conflict namely: one character versus another, a group of characters
versus others, the values of an individual versus those of a group or society or nature, or one idea or ideology versus another one.

Wilson (2007) argues that in creating a plot from a story, the playwright begins the action and sets the tone and style for everything that follows in the opening scene of the play. This signals whether the play will be serious, comic or even affairs of everyday life. The playwright introduces a problem for the main character which creates a state of inequilibrium, and this in turn compels them to respond. This generally occurs just before the play begins or immediately it begins. Wilson (2007) notes that the characters then move through a series of steps alternatively between defeat and achievement, despair and hope in a pattern in which the moment they achieve one goal, certain factors or events arise to upset the balance and set the characters on another path. These may be obstacles or complications which introduce new twists in the plot. Resulting from conflicts, obstacles and complications, characters get involved in a series of crises before getting to the final one. The final and the most significant crisis is the climax which marks the main showdown between the protagonist and the antagonist. After this the conflict is resolved either happily (as in a comedy), or unhappily (as in a tragedy). The progression of action through to the resolution of conflict comprises what came to be known later as the Freytag’s Pyramid, (Diyanni, 2004).

On dramatic forms, Wilson (2007) singles out two main plot types or combinations of the two. In addition, he notes the existence of several other forms. The first form is the climactic plot in which there is a minimum number of characters, covers a short span of time and the action takes place in a limited space. Here the plot is linear with few subplots. The second is the episodic form where the plot begins early in the story, covering an extensive period of time. This form has several plotlines and numerous scenes. There are numerous characters and several locales. The basic difference between the episodic and the climactic form is that the former emphasizes broadness while the other emphasizes compression. Other dramatic forms noted by Wilson (2007) include: the ritual, pattern, serial, segments and tableaux.

The two major plot types referred to by Wilson (2007) have been utilized to certain extents. Ruganda for example, seems to adopt the climactic type of plot in his three plays
analysed in this study, though not without some variations. The three plays, exhibit great
economy in terms of the number of characters with both *The Burdens* and *The Floods*
having four characters each. *Shreds of Tenderness* on its part has three characters. The
locales covered by the action are also very limited where most of the action takes place
indoors, in fact in the sitting rooms of houses. It is only in *The Floods* where some
action takes place outdoors, where for example, the Headman is calling people to board
the boat.

The plots of the plays are also largely linear though they are disrupted by such elements
as flashbacks and plays within plays where for instance, in *The Floods*, the story has to
do with Bwogo’s attempt to eliminate Nankya. This is done through the false radio report
that seen the herding of many of the islander into what is thought to be a rescue boat but
which turns out to be their deathbed. *The Burdens* on its part focuses on domestic
problems that bring the collapse of the Wamala family, while *Shreds of Tenderness* is
based on the effects of war that generates sibling rivalry.

Imbuga’s three selected plays seem to utilize the episodic plot type to a large extent. Each
of them has over ten characters. The action also keeps shifting to different locales, where
in *Betrayal in the City* some action takes place in a garden, a prison room, a meeting
room and even in Kafira’s palace. In *Aminata*, some action takes place in Ababio’s
home, Jumba’s home and even in Membe’s meeting place. In *The Return of Mgofu*,
some action takes place in Mhando’s palace, in Mndika and even in Nderema. Imbuga
seems to use subplots, where for instance in *The Return of Mgofu*, we have two
developing stories, one in Mndika and the other in Nderema. In *Aminata*, we have two
developing stories one in Membe and the other in Mulemi’s home. In *Betrayal in the
City*, we have the story of the virtuous characters as seen through Jusper, Jere and
Mosese, while there is the one of the accomplices in the evil that includes such characters
as Tumbo, Mulili, Nicodemo and Boss. Thus, it is clear that these two playwrights adopt
different plot types. The study will now discuss the plotlines of the plays guided by the
five stages represented in the Freytag’s Pyramid (see Fig 1.0 on p. 2).
2.2.1 Aminata

The plot unfolds quite smoothly beginning with the exposition. The exposition begins with the grave dressing scene, where we find Jumba talking with the masons, as they (masons) wind up the work. Conflict is introduced where Nuhu, upon completion of the work asks for his money but to everybody’s consternation, Ababio does not have the money. This sets the stage for the rising action where the standoff between Aminata and Mama Rosina on the one side, and Jumba and Ababio on the other side begins to take shape. The middle of the plot grows with the differences between the two divides widening further. The exposition ends quite fast and the middle continues to reveal other factors that drive the plot. Such factors include tradition and its die-hard supporters, women empowerment and the resultant assertiveness and religion among others. As the plot progresses, the battle for supremacy between Jumba and Ababio on one side and Aminata and Mama Rosina on the other intensifies.

With further unfolding of the plot, more complications arise with each side getting more supporters. The side of Jumba gets more support in Part One Scene Two with Aunt Kezia coming to see Dr. Mulemi, Aminata’s husband. While pledging her support for the Jumba divide, she lectures Dr. Mulemi on his inability to clip Aminata’s wings. Earlier on in Part One Scene One, we see Ababio’s taunting of Aminata and then later, we see the elders of the stool coming to lecture Jumba on his lopsided leadership and support of Ababio’s cause. All this time, tension is building with the complication getting tighter. By now the stage is set for the final contest which pits Jumba as the headman on one side and Mama Rosina and Aminata on the other, with the elders of the stool throwing their weight behind Aminata. There is a flashback in the plot where we see Ngoya’s religious life before his demise, followed by another that shows him bequeathing his daughter the piece of land in question. The complication in the plot is so tight that Jumba offers to surrender his seat to Mama Rosina. Jumba does this when he realizes after his discussion with the elders that there is no turning back as far as giving Aminata her piece of land is concerned.

By this time, the pace of the plot is gathering momentum as it heads towards the climax, which is meant to culminate with the handover of the land to Aminata. The handover is
preceded by a rehearsal, during which we see Agege, the newly appointed information officer, ushering people to the meeting. The climax comes during the final meeting that is the handover ceremony. By now, everything has been planned and Mama Rosina is just about to preside over the handover of the land to Aminata, assisted by Mbaluto, who represents the male members of the family. The climax is witnessed when Agege rushes in with a loud cry announcing the death of Ababio through suicide. The play almost ends at the climax but there’s a very short denouement with Jumba uttering the historic words: “What have we done? (Imbuga 1988, 81).

2.2.2 The Burdens

In The Burdens, the Freytag’s Pyramid comes out quite clearly where the exposition is revealed in the first scene. In the opening scene, Tinka is seen weaving a mat late at night while waiting for her husband, Wamala to come back home. When Kaija comes from bed citing discomfort on grounds that Nyakake, his sister and bed-mate has wet the bed again, a conversation ensues between him and his mother. This helps to reveal the poor economic situation of the family after it is revealed that Kaija, who is a boy of fourteen years, shares a bed with his nine-year-old sister. Kaija reiterates his great yearning to his mother, which is to get a bed of his own. Tinka promises to buy Kaija a bed with the proceeds of her next mat, after she pays fee balance with the proceeds of the current mat. After Kaija requests for some food, his conversation with the mother continues, whereby Tinka queries Kaija on why he has been sulky in the recent past. It is revealed that mother and son have a very close relationship, which is made even stronger by the stories that Tinka tells her son. Kaija then prevails upon the mother to tell him one of the stories, after much coaxing on his part. Tinka is however unwilling to sing the song in the story and she instead chooses to recite it.

The exposition takes quite some time, revealing also the insecurity which the family has to contend with as there are prowling thieves (kondos). At one time, Tinka is almost screaming but Kaija assures her that it is only a dog. Conflict is introduced when Tinka is about to finish narrating the story. Wamala’s voice is heard off-stage, as he is thanking someone who has helped him carry a bed. Tinka, sensing that her plan has been disrupted, sends Kaija to bed in a huff, but Kaija is hesitant, especially having heard the
mention of the object of his desire; a bed. From here there is the rising action with its numerous complications, resulting from the stormy marriage of the two. One of the complications in the rising action is where Wamala is calling Kaija to come and see his ‘bride’, which Tinka will hear none of. Tinka insists that Kaija cannot be woken up but Wamala, who is beaming with pride, cannot wait to see Kaija see his bed, which he refers to metaphorically as his ‘bride’.

Finally, Kaija who has been peeping behind the door all this time, comes over but the mother, much to the disappointment of Wamala, sends him back to bed. Another complication that is revealed in the rising action is the struggle for resources that comes after Tinka’s refusal to give Wamala some of her enguli (liquor), even after he offers to pay for it. This culminates into a violent scuffle in which Tinka falls and injures her elbow. Wamala then proceeds to dress her amidst her protesting remarks.

By this time, the plot is already in the middle. After Kaija goes back to bed, Wamala manages to get Tinka into a conversation. This is in spite of her initial snub, where she insists on knowing where he was the previous night. Wamala manages to calm her down after sharing with her some of the money he had earned during the night. Wamala reveals to Tinka that he had earned the money from one Vincent Kanagonago, who is eyeing a parliamentary seat in the upcoming elections. Apparently, Wamala had managed to partially sell to him the idea of using slogans, dubbed the I.S.S, in his campaign. Wamala is supposed to go and see him over the matter and he has a suit that he has borrowed from the teacher, to wear when going for the meeting.

This brings us to the first play within a play, where Tinka helps Wamala visualize his visit at Kanagonago’s place. Tinka plays the role of Vincent and Wamala the role of himself. This ends again with a scuffle in which Tinka and Wamala nearly fight, with ‘Vincent’ finally dismissing Wamala for coming to his house in a borrowed suit that half fits him. After this, Tinka, tries to encourage Wamala to go see Vincent but Wamala, who had fallen into a reverie refuses, saying that it was the drink that had been doing the talking.
Upon wearing the suit, Wamala slips into a reverie, where he tries to replay his earlier role as a cabinet minister. In another play within a play, Wamala imagines himself addressing his fellow politicians. This helps to reveal his past social position as a rich politician. In a later scene, Kaija comes into the house asking where the father is. By now, Tinka is busy packing things. Kaija who looks very tired, begins to narrate to the mother a dream he allegedly had the previous night. Often he keeps asking the mother whether the father came home the previous night, after the public fight they had had, much to Kaija’s shame. Using a mixture of factual and dreamy modes, Kaija narrates the events of the previous night which proves very traumatising for Tinka, who suspects that had Kaija witnessed her killing of Wamala the previous night.

The fight between Wamala and Tinka at the public swimming pool marks the climax. The conflict is then resolved when Tinka stabs Wamala to death ending the perpetual pandemonium that was their marital relationship. The denouement comes with the sound of the siren as the police come for Tinka. The children, Nyakake and Kaija who are very much opposed to going anywhere without the father, huddle around the mother as the sound of boots increases. The denouement is short. We now move to Shreds of Tenderness.

2.2.3 Shreds of Tenderness

The director who I interviewed (Mr Eric Chege), revealed that though he was not aware of the existence of the dramatic elements as espoused in the Aristotelian sense (by the time of directing), he had come to realize that he had used all of them in directing the play. This came after the researcher gave him a glimpse of the elements, during the interview. Having directed the play mainly for the literature syllabus of K.C.S.E, he revealed that he had tried as much as possible to stick to the plot as written by Ruganda. The plot begins with exposition where the audience gets to be informed of the current status of the relationships among the siblings. At curtain rise, the first part opens to a sitting room with a large table where Odie is carrying out his experiments with termites. When Stella comes to the sitting room, Odie shouts at her saying that he hates it when people, especially women shout. All this time, he is engaged in a monologue directed at the
termites. Stella begins to talk with Odie especially enquiring as to the purpose of his experiments which, she claims, he started with the return of Wak from exile.

The conflict is introduced with Stella’s mention of Wak, whom the audience is made to learn is their step brother. Henceforth the plot moves to the rising action with more information being released about the rivalry that exists among these siblings. Odie continues with his mockery of “His Highness” the king of termites, which indirectly seems to refer to Wak. Stella expresses her displeasure and worry over this behaviour, saying she suspects it refers to Wak. The complication in the rising action continues with Odie spitting venom directed at a brother whom he refers to as “step-brother”. Tension continues to rise with Odie openly saying that Wak should be taught a lesson for being a traitor.

There is a flashback that reveals more about how at one time, Odie put Wak’s photograph in the dailies as a plot to have the family estate get to his name. She then reveals amidst Odie’s protest, how Odie received Wak with hostility upon his return from exile. Stella even suggests that Odie sees a psychiatrist to check on his sanity. In his self-defence against Stella’s scathing attacks, Odie starts to attack Stella on account of a relationship she is said to have had with one general Mohamed Ali. This of course hits Stella like a thunderbolt and she crouches on the sofa set, heartbroken.

Odie continues with his verbal attack on the ‘King of Termites’. His alliterative language reveals his obsession with war words. He cites the war between the incumbent and guerrillas, in which the international community is seen not to intervene, despite the responsibility it has to do so. Part One ends with Stella scaring Odie by telling him that there is an insect crawling down his chest, which drives him to remove his shirt in a huff, and just as he is trying to unzip his trouser, Wak enters from right and finding Odie almost naked, enquires as to what is happening. Wak even insinuates that some immoral affair may have been going on between the two.

The complication in the rising action continues to get tighter as Odie and Wak’s rivalry is played out in the open, right in front of their sister. At some point, Odie openly insults his brother, calling him a traitor, and Stella on the other hand continues with her tireless effort to reconcile the two brothers. Odie is particularly opposed to Wak’s use of such
domestic resources like tissue paper and drinks. Stella then serves them with drinks while reprimanding them for their rivalry, and then also presents them with an opportunity to reconcile through playing the primer game.

Tension rises sharply during one of the complications that nearly degenerates into a violent fight, over the chairmanship of the primer game. Odie violently forces his chairmanship, despite the democratic win having gone to Wak. Tension falls with the reluctant acceptance of Wak and Stella, which enables the game to take off. There are a series of other complications in the rising action, with frequent showdowns between Odie and Wak. In all this, Stella continues playing an arbitrative role in which Wak emerges as the sober one. All this time, the primer game which involves creating words, reveals the deep-seated rivalry that exists between the two brothers.

Odie, who continues to use very despicable language towards his brother Wak, openly accuses him of having returned from exile for monetary reasons. Wak on his part dismisses him telling him that he did not come to lay claim on the family property, which he associates with Odie’s hostility. At one point in the rising action, Wak, who is by now very agitated with Odie’s continued insult pulls out a pistol and threatens to shoot him. Odie freezes with fright, as Stella frantically tries to calm Wak down with pleas that Odie is a mental case. Then follows a play within a play, in which Wak plays the role of an immigration officer, and Odie that of a constable, with Stella taking that of a female refugee. This is followed by another play within a play involving Stella as Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour”, who attacks some refugees.

All this reveals the plight of the refugees. Later, an explosion takes place which scares all and mostly Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour”. This is another play within a play which symbolizes the insecurity in the land, that is characterized by bombings, and coup de tats. Thereafter, follows a flashback that gives more information on the genesis of the existing sibling rivalry, showing the circumstances under which Wak went to exile. In a dramatic move, Odie makes a call ostensibly reporting his brother Wak to the authorities, which makes Stella try to call a physician to check on Odie’s sanity. The climax comes when Wak takes on the offensive, this time putting Odie on the defensive, and attacking him violently. This brings Odie to a point of surrender. The conflict is resolved with Wak
giving Odie fire for fire. The denouement reveals Odie’s repentance accompanied by emotional weeping. The play ends with the reconciliation of the two brothers after Stella succeeds to pacify the two.

2.2.4 Betrayal in the City

At curtain rise, the scene opens to Doga and Nina at a graveside which the audience soon learns is of their late son Adika. There is the sound of dirges in the background and the two really seem saddened by what Doga calls the shadow of that evil. Doga is digging around the grave and there is a bowl with some silver coins in it. Doga and Nina are rather in disagreement about issues like reporting the matter to the sub-chief. All the time, they keep wondering about Jusper’s whereabouts. At some point, they sing a song, “Trust and obey …” before Nina leads a prayer (see picture 1 ahead). Soon after, Jusper appears spotting a red gown which prompts the mother to plead with him to change and wear a clean shirt.

Picture 1: Doga and Nina singing, praying: note Doga’s white beards (makeup) in Bi.t.C

Source: Jicho Four Dvd

This scene provides the exposition of the play where we learn that the couple’s son, Adika had been killed during a students’ demonstration. We also learn that some people had been trying to interfere with his grave on the eve of the shaving ceremony day, which takes place one year after one’s burial. The scene that is revealed at curtain rise thus explains why the two are this bitter. Jusper’s dialogue with his parents reveals that
he has killed Chagaga, but his parents who have not fully understood the matter think it is just mere talk. While Doga and Nina are still by their son’s graveside praying, Mulili and Jere march in ostensibly with orders to intercept the imminent shaving ceremony. The two, (Doga and Nina) who are already saddened by their present discovery, are stunned by even more attacks from the two soldiers, who have come to stop the ceremony. Nina even threatens to strip naked.

The coming of Jere and Mulili marks the point of attack that introduces the conflict, which in turn sets the rising action in place. While Jere is diplomatic about implementing the order to stop the shaving ceremony, Mulili is not only blunt but also provocative. He even tells the old couple that instead of bothering about Adika, they should bother about Jusper, who has been put behind bars for killing Chagaga, the sub chief’s brother. It is soon revealed that this is Jere’s home village and Doga even recognizes him, as Kaleka’s son. Thereafter, a disagreement arises between Jere and Mulili, with Jere being willing to allow the shaving ceremony to go on, while Mulili insists it must stop. The scene ends in the early stages of the rising action, with Jere firing at Mulili, after he stubbornly refuses to cooperate. Even Nina’s stripping threats are greeted by Mulili’s disrespectful rejoinders. After Mulili runs away, Jere goes to the graveside, offers a coin and says a prayer. Lights fade at this point.

The second scene opens to a prison cell where Jere and Mosese are, under the security of an askari. The conversation of the two amid threats of corporal punishment from the askari, reveals why they are behind bars. Mosese on his part claims that even after fronting all the mitigating circumstances, he was arrested after attending Adika’s burial ceremony. It is further revealed that a framed up charge had been levelled against him claiming that he had opium in his car. Amidst several threats from the askari, Mosese and Jere continue to strengthen their rapport. The askari offers Mosese tea with milk, which he refuses to do for Jere. Meanwhile Jere and Mosese continue to discuss the many evils in Kafira. Soon after Mosese retires to sleep but again goes into a trance that makes Jere cover him with a blanket. Upon finding Jere covering Mosese, the askari gives Jere a dressing down for allegedly causing noise, and also threatens him with dire consequences, should he be found on the wrong side of the law again.
While in the presence of the askari, Mosese goes deeper into the trance where he speaks with invisible voices. Jere wisely sums up Scene Two, which is part of the rising action, by saying: “When the madness of an entire nation disturbs a solitary mind, it is not enough to say the man is mad” (Imbuga 1988, p. 33). A discussion between Jere and Mosese on the injustice in the prison and the entire Kafira society contributes to building the complications in the plot. Mosese at some point comments that Regina is too soft for a prisoner’s sister.

Scene Three opens to a small room that the audience soon gets to know is Regina’s room. Regina (sister of Mosese and Jusper’s girlfriend) enters by the kitchen door while afterwards, Jusper enters through the main door, tip-toeing towards her, clad in his red academic gown. He shocks her by mimicking the sound of gunshots which earns him a reprimand from her, for scaring her. After this, a discussion ensues between the two, with Regina questioning Jusper’s habit of wearing the red gown, remarking that it will only brew more trouble. Jusper begins to talk about Adika, his late brother whom the students wanted to commemorate by putting a picture in the press with a caption carrying the word, “THANKS” on it. They continue talking about the situation in the country and Regina reveals the news about the impending visit of a head of state. She claims to have learnt this from her landlord, Tumbo, whom she claims is thirty minutes late on his appointment with her.

Soon after, Tumbo enters and upon finding Jusper in Regina’s room, expresses doubt about whether he is in the right place. Jusper assures him that he is, adding that he is willing to call Regina, ‘his cousin’, whom he has also come to visit, for him (Tumbo). Tumbo immediately reprimands Jusper for the red gown he is in, adding that he associates it with the Red Guards, which to him refers to rioting university students. Thereafter, a discussion between Tumbo and Jusper ensues with Regina offering to make coffee for them, which Tumbo counters with an offer of cold drinks. Tumbo goes ahead to congratulate Jusper for his prayer which Jusper claims was for the nation, asking God to help people change their Christian names. Jusper proceeds to claim that Boss has set an example by replacing his name with a name that is difficult to pronounce. In their dialogue, Tumbo condemns university students for allegedly drinking too much and also
for engaging in empty talk, instead of contributing to nation building and fighting for their own individual needs. He cites his own example claiming his individualism has helped him build the two blocks of flats he owns. Jusper offers to go for the drinks but insists on going in his red gown, something Regina is displeased about, leaving the two talking about him.

Regina divulges to Tumbo that Jusper is a philosophy student but who loves writing playlets. This immediately raises Tumbo’s interest, upon which he reveals that he had been appointed the chair of the entertainment committee, which was supposed to prepare a play to be performed during the imminent head of another state’s visit. Tumbo adds that Boss is not so bad after all, only that he gets scared easily, has some bad advisors, makes hasty decisions and has a weakness for women. This makes Regina express reservations about seeing Boss personally, concerning her brother’s release. Tumbo proceeds to encourage her, assuring her that all will be well and that he has already booked an appointment for her. After Jusper returns, the discussion again shifts to the idea of Jusper writing plays. Upon being asked, whether any of his plays are published, Jusper replies that publishers keep rejecting them on grounds that they are too open.

Tumbo informs Jusper that he needs a play that will outline the achievements of the nation and the words “progress” and “achievement” should be on every page. He also adds that there is some money that has been set aside for organizing a competition but that will not be necessary and he will just pick Jusper’s ‘prize winning’ play. With this, Tumbo declares Jusper’s the prize- winning play claiming it is not necessary to waste entries sent, Jusper is the one that has won, without actually carrying out the competition. Jusper and Regina are promised a third of the six hundred pounds set aside to finance the competition, while the other two thirds will be used to put records straight. Sensing unfairness in the whole matter, Regina begins to protest but Tumbo dismisses this by telling Jusper to tell her about the current way of life. By now the plot is right in the middle part, with rising action growing through the tension of the twists and turns being introduced.

In Act Two, the scene opens to a meeting room where we see Kabito dozing, when Nicodemo walks in and proceeds to wake him up. Upon the entry of Tumbo who is the
chair of the committee, the entertainment committee meeting commences, with Tumbo outlining the agenda and the reason for their appointment. Immediately Nicodemo and Kabito begin their inquiry on how much they stand to earn and how they can make the ‘potato’ even bigger. Mulili, Boss’s cousin, who is said to have been included in the committee with Boss’s order, enters and immediately gives an excuse that he has come late because he was pursuing the matter of his milk tender to the university, which had been awarded to someone else. Soon after, when discussing other matters, a disagreement arises between Mulili and Kabito over the issue of whether or not children should line up along Airport Road to welcome the visiting head of state. Another matter that brings a disagreement is that of producing the play by prisoners, which some feel should be done by the drama department of the university. In his broken English, Mulili insists that the university students should be forced to act, despite Tumbo’s feeling that they may not co-operate, since they are opposed to the visit. With every disagreement in the meeting, tension continues to build until a break of one hour is given to cool off steam. By now there is open hostility between Mulili and Kabito, which makes them exchange hostile words as they leave the meeting room.

The next short scene shifts to Boss, whom we see sitting outside his palace, pulling out grey hair from his head. Mulili enters and immediately begins to accuse Kabito before Boss, even claiming he is a green grass in the snake. Mulili adds more and more false accusations against Kabito, prompting Boss to instruct him to go and immediately silence him, and then report to him it is done. Mulili exits and the next short scene goes back to the meeting room, where Jusper reports to Tumbo that he cannot proceed with the production of the play, after what is reported in a flashback that Boss had attempted to rape Regina, prompting her to escape through a ten-foot -high window. When the meeting resumes, it emerges that Kabito has already died in a road accident, just within that one hour’s break. Mulili also joins them, feigning shock at Kabito’s sudden death, due to what he calls ‘drunken driving’ but the others know only too well that it is a stage managed accident. Tumbo, the chair then calls off the meeting but not before Nicodemo enquires if they will receive allowances for that day.
The last scene comprises the rehearsal for the play. As the scene opens, we see Jusper as the director putting the final touches to the stage, together with Tumbo who is very anxious about staging the play successfully. This, he claims has to do with the fact that Boss is in a very bad mood. He adds that Boss loves the arts and is very much interested in watching the play. Tumbo then informs Jusper that should Boss ask for the synopsis of the play, he will point at him, which Jusper responds that he will try to give, but Tumbo tells him he has to do it, and not just say he will try. Tumbo tells Jusper that Boss is in such a bad mood that apart from locking his wife in the palace cell, he nearly slapped him (Tumbo) for saying that they did not have all the props. Boss then comes in unexpectedly enquiring if everything is okay. Upon being informed that the actor who was to act the role of the Chief of staff is unwell, Boss offers to read his part. On being informed again that the carpenter who was supposed to make guns did not, Boss orders the soldiers to provide their live guns for the rehearsal.

Soon after, Jere and Mosese are brought in handcuffed and Boss orders that they be untied. The play then commences and as it turns out, Jusper had planned to kill the perpetrators of injustice. Sooner than later, Jere points a live gun at Boss and Mulili supports the idea that Boss be killed for the evils he has caused Kafira. Boss then requests Jere to shoot him, to which he objects, instead informing him that he would not have anything to gain by killing him, for they need everyone to build Kafira. The conflict is resolved through the killing of Mulili.

2.2.5 The Return of Mgofu

The play begins with a prologue where at curtain rise, the scene opens to a market where there are buyers and sellers. Thori, an old man is pushing a woman (Thoriwa) on a wheelchair and the two are said to be messengers from the ancestors. They intend to address the people in the market but Thori is rather hesitant. After some discussion and coaxing by Thoriwa, Thori agrees to address the crowd, and he goes ahead to introduce Thoriwa and himself as a former couple and keepers of the shrine then. That was before the first madness broke out, which saw neighbour fight, burn and kill neighbour. He proceeds to narrate the goings-on that saw Mgofu Ngoda, themselves and many others burnt to death, which consequently transferred them to the kingdom of ancestors, from
which they have now been sent as messengers. This chronicle by Thori assisted by Thoriwa, serves as an exposition to the plot, letting the audience know that at some point, there was tranquility that was spoilt by the fighting that brought the current state, where there are exiles at Nderema, who originated from Mndika.

In Scene One, the action moves to Kadesa’s shrine where we see Mude, very early in the morning, sitting on a stool outside Kadesa’s shrine. In a prayerful mood, Kadesa walks to a nearby mound and begins to commune with unseen spirits. The discussion that ensues between Kadesa and Mude introduces the conflict, where Mude reports to Kadesa that he has been sent to warn them that the second madness has broken out in Mndika and therefore the camp needs protection. The rising action is set in motion by the entry of Bizia, Kadesa’s son and keeper of the shrine, where the prevailing insecurity is portrayed by the interaction between him and Mude. Bizia, who has a spear in hand looks suspiciously at Mude, demanding to know who he is, while on the other hand, Mude draws a pistol. The tension that had built up with this incident cools down with Kadesa’s introduction of the two to each other.

After this, Bizia introduces a twist to the plot with his report that his brother Matia and fellow keeper of the shrine, is leading two strangers, a man and a woman to the shrine. Some tension again begins to build with Bizia’s idea that they should be stopped from coming into the shrine, an idea that Kadesa immediately opposes, (with a smile) instead ordering Bizia to go and bring them to the shrine. Bizia’s belief is that bringing a pregnant woman into the shrine will amount to defiling it. The man, Adonija, also reinforces Mude’s message by reporting that the fighting is on again. This prompts Mude to urge Bizia and Matia to be more careful as the fighting may trickle into the shrine. Just as they are talking, the cry of a newborn is heard coming from the shrine and Adonija announces that Mgofu Ngoda has come back, reincarnated in the new born, through his second wife, Nora. Mgofu Ngoda himself is said to have died soon after crossing the border. The first scene ends with a flashback by Adonija, in which he reveals details of a meeting where inter-tribal fighting was being planned. The flashback reveals among other things, preparation of weapons and planned use of vernacular media to preach
hostility between tribes. At curtains fall, Kadesa is making arrangements to bury Mgofu Ngoda.

Scene Two opens with a revisit of Thori and Thoriwa still pushing one another on a wheel chair where Thoriwa continues to give a flashback of the history of the community. It is now another generation and the child that was born at the shrine (Mgofu Ngoda) has grown up in Nderema and become a seer like his father before him. In his address to the audience, Thori urges them to listen to Mwami Mhando, their new young leader so that he guides them to heal the wounds brought by their ancestors. He also warns them to close the doors that might trigger the recurrence of such fighting. With this, curtains fall on Scene Three with the departure of Thori and Thoriwa.

Act Two, Scene One opens to Mwami Mhando’s consultation chamber, where he has just received two scouts, who are back from an errand to Mgofu Ngoda. They report that he has two children, a daughter and son, and that he is respected throughout Nderema. They also report that the son is the personal assistant to the prime minister of Nderema and that daughter, who has just completed studies in International Relations, is very keen on visiting Mndika. The scene closes with Mhando’s proposal to invite Mgofu Ngoda and his daughter to their Remembrance Day festivities.

Act Two, Scene Two, which is part of the plot’s middle, opens to a meeting of Mhando and some two elders at his consultation chamber. Mhando proceeds to raise some issues that need to be addressed and changed. They discuss such issues as changing the title elder to Suja, problems facing Mndika vis a vis other nations and the issue of inviting Mgofu Ngoda to come back to Mndika. Another issue that they discuss is that of the proposal by the people of Mndika to have Mhando continue to stay in leadership.

Act Three, Scene One opens with dawn breaking at Mgofu Ngoda’s shrine, where two emissaries from Mndika, Mtange and Mnavi, are waiting. The shrine is a great improvement to the Kadesa one. This setting symbolizes the beginning of a new era of hope and good governance. Mgofu Ngoda talks to them after his communion with spirits. His daughter, Nora U who has just returned from studies abroad is there as he talks with them. They have come to request Mgofu to return home as well as update him on other leadership matters. As the scene ends, Mtange and Mnavi are informed by Mgofu about
the death of Mama Enos, the wife of Mwami Mhando. He promises to respond to the issues they raise after the mandatory fourteen days of mourning are over.

The last scene, Act Three Scene Two, marks the National Remembrance Day ceremony and the leaders who include the elders and Mhando plus Mgofu and his daughter Nora U are sitted at the dais. Members of the public are in attendance too. There is an enactment of a scene of two creatures tied by a rope but pulling in two different directions. They only get the totem they each want after they have unity of purpose. After this, Mwami Mhando invites Mgofu to address the crowd followed by his daughter. They both give very inspirational speeches and this marks the climax of the plot.

This marks the resolution of the conflict where Mndika has been able to get back its hero. Mgofu however, falls down during his address but not before making his point. The play ends with comments by Thori and Thoriwa warning people to learn from experience that the wheelchair was not part of the original plan.

2.2.6 The Floods

At curtain rise, the scene opens to the headman’s passionate call to the islanders to enter the boat. Soon after it is revealed to the audience that the reason for the call to the people to enter the boat is the imminent flood that is expected to submerge the island. This scene gives us the exposition, which moves quickly, driven by the urgent and frantic calls of the headman. The countdown of minutes given and which is quickly dwindling gives tempo to this opening scene, as it moves from ten minutes down to eight and seven minutes. Several people who include Kyeyune, the fisherman and others are seen rushing in. The pace of the exposition however slows down with the ensuing discussion that takes place between the headman and Kyeyune. The entry of Bwogo on the stage winds up the first scene as we see him urgently enquiring about Nankya, and whether she has boarded the boat.

The second Wave opens to an abandoned bungalow, which is still in some reasonable state. At curtain rise, the audience is treated to an urgent radio announcement that warns residents living on the island to vacate due to imminent floods. Nankya is however unmoved by this urgent call and continues to listen to the bulletin but this is interrupted by the entry of Bwogo onto the stage. He questions why Nankya is not boarding the
evacuation boat and everybody else is frantically running to do so. Nankya remains mute to his talk. The point of attack introduces the conflict which in turn triggers the rising action. It is revealed that Bwogo has been a boyfriend of Nankya but their relationship seems to have gone to the rocks. The rising action moves quickly with Bwogo talking to an unwilling Nankya, who, it is revealed, is a target of destruction by Bwogo. It is revealed that Bwogo is the SRB boss and this explains her rebuff of him. Bwogo is forced to change tact in order to get her involved in dialogue with him by reciting a poem – “Being Fulfilled”. Nankya however remains adamant, her only words being those of condemning him for this obscene poem.

At this point, it is important to mention that the plot is heavily punctuated by several plays within plays. To get Nankya to talk, Bwogo gets into the first play within a play where he first acts as a chief judge of a contest, announcing the results. He then steps down from the rostrum and proceeds to give the winner, Nankya, a congratulatory handshake which is unfortunately rebuffed with a slap on his face. This continues to slowly build tension with Nankya’s continued rebuff of him. This builds suspense on the part of the audience and the question on their minds is: Why is Nankya continuing to reject Bwogo, who seems, well intentioned? After this, the play within a play continues, with the ‘entry of three other journalists’, whereby Bwogo transforms himself into several roles beginning with the journalist with notebook (JWN). He then progresses to journalist with microphone (JWM) then journalist with camera (JWC) and finally lady journalist (LJ). Each journalist makes attempts to interview Nankya on her newly-won award, and which has ten thousand dollars to its credit. They each make attempts to interview her with little or no success, and it is only lady journalist who succeeds in getting some information from her.

Complication after complication continues to emerge especially now with Nankya’s revelation to the lady journalist that she will arm her people for war. This invites a host of disapproving remarks from the journalists, who with one verdict condemn her. Meanwhile, Bwogo falls back to his real character and the discussion shifts to reveal that Nankya is expectant, with Bwogo frantically trying to get her mind on the discussion this time round. By this time, the movement of the plot has slowed down as compared with
the exposition when the headman was hurrying everyone into the boat. Dialogue between Bwogo and Nankya continues into the middle section, much of it based on the topic of marriage and gender issues.

Bwogo is no longer talking about the floods and at some point Nankya has to remind him that he is not talking about the floods anymore. Then follows a dialogue based on accusation and counter accusations of unfaithfulness from both Nankya and Bwogo. As Nankya is accusing Bwogo of having sexual affairs in his office, Bwogo on his part accuses Nankya of having an affair with Rutaro. By this time, the plot is moving sluggishly with Bwogo mentioning the coming floods, expected in two hours’ time only occasionally. Meanwhile, their dialogue is dominated by Nankya’s condemnation of the evils of the regime, with Bwogo on his part trying to defend the system or divert her focus. Their dialogue is interrupted by Kyeyune’s excited entry, which causes, the-now alarmed Bwogo to fire at him. Fortunately, the bullet misses him narrowly, prompting Nankya to go offer him comfort amidst protest from Bwogo, who does not know him. As Nankya continues decrying the bloodshed on the island, perpetuated by the current regime, Bwogo suddenly bangs the table hard, which makes Kyeyune start from his shock, sending him into a fit of supplication to Kagoro, lord of the sky. Afterwards, Nankya shakes him vigorously to bring him back to reality and he immediately lapses into a soliloquy in which he begins to recount the grisly and traumatising experiences he has witnessed on the island. All this time, Nankya is trying to jolt him back to reality with Bwogo on his part enquiring about who he is. In an indirect way, Kyeyune reveals information about the attack and consequent drowning of the people who had boarded the boat in the first Wave, which explains the reason for his traumatised state. Bwogo and Nankya now start a cross-purpose talk with Nankya decrying the mass killings on the island by agents of the regime. Bwogo on his part continues to blame Christians and guerrillas for the current pandemonium on the island.

After this, Bwogo gets into a second play within a play, but Nankya is still in a flashback of the killing of the twins; Kato and Nyakato together with their mother, Nnalongo, in the boat accident. Bwogo who is by now mad with her, almost shooting her for her persistence in her revenge talk, finally manages to ‘drag’ her into the play within a
The play within a play majors on religious discrimination where Bwogo claims Muslims are whisked to jail or killed by guerrillas or Christians while Nankya believes the SRB are to blame. The play within a play is interrupted by the sound of gunshots, which thoroughly scares Bwogo. Nankya increases his trauma by cheating him that retaliatory forces have come to punish the SRB boss. Bwogo who is thoroughly scared tries frantically to hide but Nankya, who is really enjoying the sight of a scared Bwogo, continues to fire up his fear. The ‘floods’ rise higher and higher leaving him lost for options, except to duck and swim. After Bwogo recovers from the nightmare, he decides to go out amidst warning from Kyeyune not to go out, while Nankya pleads with him not to leave them there. He finally exits as Kyeyune breaks into another session of prayer at the end of the second Wave.

The middle part of the plot is very long and tension is by now high due to the sound of waves lapping against the shore and the whistling of the wind. The third Wave starts with Kyeyune’s prayer to the irresistible one, as he finishes wiping the kitchenware. The setting is the same as it was in the second Wave. Kyeyune engages in this monologue of a prayer for quite some time. This translates to be not just a prayer but an oral narrative that involves Nalubale, the daughter of the lake, who was trapped in Nyamgondho’s net. The narrative turns out to be a legend that reflects the happenings in the political arena of the country, to a large extent explaining why there is disaster in the country.

Afterwards, Kyeyune and Nankya continue in a dialogue that focuses more on the whereabouts of Bwogo. In the Nalubale allegory, the period of the regime is compared with the nine months of a pregnancy which culminates with the push of birth. In this case, this push is seen to bring disaster because the daughter of the lake was defiled by human beings. This metaphorically refers to defiling of the land through the evil deeds of the regime. All this time, Kyeyune keeps talking about the man with the three nails, who beckons people to their death. He believes that Bwogo’s going out of the house despite his warning might bring about his death, as a result of a beckon from this man. Kyeyune sees the disaster as retribution from Nalubale for the sins of the people.

Tension continues building with more whistling being heard, which prompts Nankya, who is by now very scared to tell Kyeyune that they should leave the house. This comes
soon after Nankya has had a short flashback on her mother’s history. Kyeyune, who is also very scared will hear none of this, as he is convinced that she, like Bwogo is under the itch of death from the patron of the lake; the man with the three nails in his skull. Tension soars even higher with increased whistling, that nearly drives Kyeyune berserk. He ends up in frantic antics of closing the door, the windows and even trying to barricade the door with tables and other paraphernalia. Kyeyune who is very scared, believing that the end is near, kneels down to pray, while Nankya, who has maintained her calm, goes into a flashback about Bwogo’s history. The prayer of Kyeyune runs concurrently with Nankya’s flashback for some time.

At one time, Nankya’s mention of the word ‘corpse’ jolts Kyeyune into a trance as he reminisces about the killing of the people on the boat, by SRB forces. He talks endlessly about the man with the three nails in his head. Henceforth, Nankya and Kyeyune go into a cross-purpose talk, with Nankya majoring on the Queen Mother and hypocrisy while the latter continues to pray for protection against evil forces. As Nankya is recounting about the expected gun salute, Bwogo comes knocking at the door, which thoroughly scares both Nankya and Kyeyune. Bwogo continues to shout in his characteristic harsh way, quarrelling both Nankya and Kyeyune about the disorderly state of the house. Thereafter, Bwogo demands for a drink, an order which is first ignored before he is finally brought one by Kyeyune. Thereafter, Nankya reveals Bwogo’s plan (through her long narrative) of how he had planned the death of Nankya and her mother together with others on the boat. Bwogo (whose face shows much guilt) tries to invoke the name of Nankya’s mother in a bid to stop her from more revelations. To stop her finally, he throws her to the ground and a struggle ensues between the two, finally bringing the two on their fours. This makes Bwogo realize he is going a bit too far, which makes him apologise to Nankya. Nankya then proceeds to give a flashback of her background to Bwogo which reveals that Nankya’s mother used to work for Bwogo’s family and was living in the servant’s quarters. Nankya openly reveals the evil of Bwogo’s father and by the time she is through, Bwogo is very apologetic, but Nankya rejects that apology assuring him it was not his fault. Bwogo is stunned by the amount of suffering Nankya has been through. After this, Bwogo tries to make friends with Nankya but upon realizing
her stubbornness towards this offer, he diverts the discussion towards Nankya’s supposed pregnancy and her expected promotion to Chair of her department.

What follows are accusations and counter accusations, with Nankya accusing Bwogo of being immoral and a murderer while Bwogo accuses her of having extramarital affairs. All this time, Bwogo is trying to mock Nankya about what her pregnancy may do to her ambition of becoming the Chair of her department. He further accuses her of being an academic fraud and finally reveals Nankya’s own hypocrisy in trying to pose as a fighter for the poor, yet she enjoys the life of the rich and even benefits from them.

Bwogo goes into a flashback, reminding Nankya of her having acted the role of Medea, in a play which earned her the Best Actress award. He re-enacts this in a short play within a play. This is followed by another play within a play when Bwogo and Nankya re-enact their first meeting at a zebra crossing. Through this play within a play, they relive the memories of the good times they had in the past and Nankya also reveals very painful details to do with her birth and early background. After this, Bwogo revisits the topic of the good times they had for six months, but which were unfortunately interrupted by the entry of Rutaro into the scene.

Nankya responds that it was not Rutaro that spoilt the relationship but Bwogo’s sexual affairs with ladies on his Afghanistan carpet. This ushers them into a blame discourse. The discussion then shifts to the matter of Nankya’s pregnancy which Bwogo keeps using to hit out at her. He alleges that Nankya is trying to blackmail him to take responsibility of the pregnancy due to his financial muscle, and also so that he may save her the stigma of an unwanted pregnancy, yet anyone could have done it. Nankya on her part tells Bwogo that if he is not willing to take responsibility, it is not a big deal because there are many options. Nankya keeps Bwogo guessing that she could as well have procured an abortion, a possibility which Bwogo is opposed to.

All this time, Bwogo keeps pleading for a return to their old romance but Nankya protests claiming there is still the old wall that stood between their servant’s quarter residence and Bwogo’s father’s mansion. Bwogo proposes they get bulldozers to demolish the wall, which symbolically means removing all the barriers that lie between their relationship.
Nankya on her part goes into a reverie where she sees herself climbing up the wall with her mother frantically trying to pull her down. Finally, she claims it is falling.

What follows after the reverie is another exchange of romantic words, where they foresee a big wedding and happy times ahead. This marks the climax where they both have a reunion but this is cut short by the entry of soldiers who arrest Bwogo so as to account for all the evil deeds of SRB as the head of the organization. This marks the section on plot summaries of the plays, after which we now proceed to look at character.

2.3 Character as a Dramatic Element

Characters are very important in a play as they are the ones who actualize the play on the stage (Diyanni, 2004). A play could have very good thought, language and even spectacle, but without people to actually bring this live on the stage, it is all useless. Through their words and actions, they give drama that edge that sets it above all the other forms of creative art (Branham, Gibbs and Osofisan, 2001).

Beaty et al. (2002) define character as someone who appears in a work, noting that the same word is used to refer to those qualities of mind, spirit and behaviour that make one individual different from every other. They further agree with Diyanni (2004) that the creation of an imaginary character is always based on some conception of human character and of individual difference. Beaty et al. (2002) delineate about three major categories of characters, namely: leading, major and minor characters. They note that leading characters are sometimes referred to as hero and heroine and they are usually larger than life, stronger or better than most human beings; almost godlike.

A more neutral term for the leading character is protagonist, whose opponent is the antagonist. In modern fiction, just like drama, the hero or heroine is ordinary just like the rest of us. Such a character is sometimes called antihero, not because of opposing the hero but because s/he is not heroic in stature or the ‘good guy’. The major characters are the ones we see more or over a long period of time. We learn more about them and think of them as more complex and so more realistic. These can grow and change, acting unpredictably based on what had been indicated about them earlier.
Beaty et al. (2002) see minor characters as figures who fill out the story and who though seemingly less prominent, are just as important as the major characters. This they argue is because they often play a key role in shaping our interpretation of and our attitudes towards the major characters and in precipitating the changes that major characters undergo. Under minor characters, they posit that there are those that act as foils to the major characters in the sense that they serve as contrasts, throwing into relief the traits that distinguish and define them.

Beaty et al. (2002) note that characterization can also be done based on what characters require of those who act them, based on such factors as demanding roles, juicy parts and dull routine ones, roles for stars, character actors, comedians and novices. This kind of categorization appears to be more commonly used in film and television rather than in stage plays. In addition, they note that characters can be categorized by their cultural identities such as Jewish mothers and Romanian raven-haired beauties. The two playwrights do not seem to employ this much.

Beaty et al. (2002) add that these sometimes verge on stereotypes which refers to characters based on conscious or unconscious cultural assumption that sex, age, ethnic or national identification, occupation, marital status and so on are predictability accompanied by certain character traits. They also talk of round characters, who can surprise convincingly and flat ones who are not very complex and do not change in surprising ways. They however observe that round and flat ones, just like hero and heroine are not absolute or precise, but designate extremes or tendencies and not pigeonholes.

Murfin & Ray (2003) on their part see character as a figure in a literary work who need not be human though most are. Characters may be nonhuman, animals or even nonliving entities, provided the author gives them attributes of human beings. They quote Forster (1927) who talks of round and flat characters. Here, flat characters are seen as types or caricatures defined by a single idea or quality whereas round ones have the three dimensional complexity of real people. Characters may also be divided into static and dynamic where static characters do not change significantly over the course of a work no
matter what action takes place. Dynamic characters on their part change for better or worse in response to circumstances and experience.

*Wilson and Goldfarb* (1999) observe that in drama, as opposed to a novel or a short story, everything must be transformed into dialogue and action and therefore the task of crafting characters in a play is more challenging. They note that this is because the novelist or the short story writer has such aids as description which s/he can use to bring out characters. They single out seven categories of characters who include: extraordinary, representative (quintessential), characters with a dominant trait, minor, narrator or chorus and non-human characters. They, just like Beaty et al. (2002) observe that heroes and heroines are larger than life and that they also represent some extreme level of human behaviour. They note that historically, this category has comprised members of the nobility. The quintessential character, who is a new type of main character in drama, is three-dimensional and highly individual.

Quintessential characters are outstanding in that they are typical of a large sector of the population. Stock characters are neither complete nor three-dimensional but symbolize one outstanding characteristic of human behaviour to the exclusion of everything else. These are mostly found in comedies and melodrama. Closely related to stock characters are characters with a dominant trait where one aspect of such a character dominates all other, making for an unbalanced, often comical personality. *Wilson and Goldfarb* (1999) posit that minor characters play a very small role in the overall action and generally appear briefly, serving chiefly to further the story or support more important characters. They also note that the narrator speaks directly to the audience, while the chorus was used in Greek drama to comment on the action through song and dance. In their last category of nonhuman characters, they observe that in many primitive cultures, performers portrayed such nonhuman characters as birds and animals. They however note that these should have human personalities.

On their part, Schempp et al. (1995) single out four categories of character hierarchy which comprise: major characters, supporting characters, minor characters and extras. In this, the major characters comprise the protagonist and the antagonist. Supporting
characters though not the main ones play important roles in plot development. Minor characters are like messengers and guards with very small roles. Extras have no speaking lines and they include characters like the ones found in crowd scenes.

From the above analysis, different scholars display minor discrepancies in the categorization of characters but on the whole, it seems the common categories are the leading, major and minor characters as well as stereotypes and stock characters. Both Imbuga and Ruganda have utilized a wide range of character types. For Imbuga, the protagonists of his three play are ordinary characters who would pass for what Wilson and Goldfarb (1999) refer to as representative characters. In Betrayal in the City, the protagonist is Jusper, a university student who has virtues but also registers a lot of weaknesses in his character, which makes him a very ordinary character.

For Aminata and The Return of Mgofu, the protagonists are Aminata and Mgofu Ngoda respectively. These two display a higher level of extraordinariness than that of Jusper in that they almost pass as larger than life. While Aminata seems to have an answer to almost every problem in Membe and in her home, Mgofu Ngoda is that much-longed-for seer, who is the missing link in Mndika’s social affairs. They have highly virtuous characters and possibly this contributes to the wide followings they command in their communities.

Similarly, for Ruganda, his three plays’ protagonists would pass for representative characters in that they are ordinary characters with virtues but also vices, which qualifies them to represent a large percentage of the population in East Africa. In The Burdens, the protagonist is Wamala who is a jobless drunk but who shows a sense of responsibility. In Shreds of Tenderness, Wak who is the protagonist is a former exile and has a likeable character. In The Floods, the protagonist is a university lecturer by the name of Nankya, who is battling accusations of using her sexuality to gain professional mileage. More discussion on character follow under individual plays but on the whole, it seems that the two have crafted a wide range of the character types highlighted by the scholars. We start with Aminata.
2.3.1 Aminata

The play utilizes about ten characters. The major characters include Aminata and Jumba who are at the top of the conflict in question. Aminata emerges as the protagonist while Jumba is the antagonist. She is highly virtuous and appears to have a larger than life personality in that she is intelligent, generous, humble and helpful, qualities that make her the darling of Membe. Jumba on the other hand is her key opponent and has a harsh, hateful and critical character. Jumba would also be categorized as a round or dynamic character since he is well developed to qualify as a three-dimensional personality and again he surprises us when he changes his tactics and decides to relinquish his position to Mama Rosina, getting everyone unawares.

Another dynamic character is Agege in that while everyone dismisses him as the village clown, his arguments are extremely intelligent and even Jumba finds it difficult to cheat him. At one time when Jumba tries to cheat him with a coin, he surprises him by telling him that Aminata had given him five of such. It is then not surprising when he is promoted to the position of the Information Officer. Under supporting characters, we have Mama Rosina, Pastor Ngoya, Ababio, Agege, Dr. Mulemi and Aunt Kezia. All these have very close relationships with the above two and therefore, play a key role in developing not only their (Aminata and Jumba) characters but also the plots. Out of these, Pastor Ngoya, Ababio and Dr. Mulemi can pass for representative characters because they represent a big percentage of the population of people of their social standing. Under minor characters, we have Nuhu, Amata, Midambo and Abade. Under extra characters, we have dancers and members of the congregation at Pastor Ngoya’s church service.

In line with Stanislavski’s Method Acting which recommends truthful and believable characters, the actors who played the roles, fitted into their characters well. The role of Ngoya was played by a man with a strong personality and a fatherly/priestly figure. His white-haired head gave the impression of a man with the experience and wisdom that come with age. His loving voice and facial expression brought out the picture of a father and priest. Jumba’s role on the other hand was played by a strong energetic man with an authoritative voice. This demeanor rhymed well with Jumba’s position as the headman,
which is a position of authority. Aminata’s role was played by a confident, young-looking lady who cut the image of a youthful professional. Her dressing, comprising mostly executive skirt suits, helped to enhance her personality as a young lawyer.

Mama Rosina’s role was played by a mature-looking woman, mostly clad in kitenge outfits and headgears. The fact that she looked a little older than Aminata helped to enhance the mother figure that she was. Agege’s role was played by a middle-aged man who was able to bring out the village-clown character. The actor wore a happy, relaxed facial expression that easily brought out the village-clown character. Ababio’s role was played by a middle-aged man who cut the image of a perpetual drunk. This was brought out by the tendency of the actor to stagger most of the time. In the church scene, Ngoya wore a white gown and a rosary to create the impression of a true priest. Agege later wore a uniform that had the initials I.O, printed on it to show his new rank as information officer. We now move to The Burdens.

**2.3.2 The Burdens**

The play has only four characters out of whom Wamala is the protagonist. He also comes across as a round character in that the playwright develops him well enough to qualify to be a three-dimensional character. His round character is brought out by the fact that though highly publicized as a hopeless drunk by Tinka, he surprises us by coming home with a bed for his fourteen-year-old son, proving to all and sundry that he is a responsible father. He is the tragic hero of Aristotelian principles, whose tragic flaw of drunkenness partly contributes to his fall in Tinka’s hands. This is derived from her threat, after the enguli scuffle, that he will one day pay for his action.

The audience in my FGD expressed pity for him because clearly, the punishment was too severe. They also feared that such a fate could befall them for what looked like a minor domestic conflict. Tinka, who is the antagonist on the other hand passes for a flat character in that she does not change and remains hostile, suspicious and nagging. She is also a stereotype of that jealous and possessive woman who does not wish her husband or son to associate with people of the opposite sex. Kaija is a supporting character whom the playwright develops to be a round character. While the parents take him to be a child, he
is well aware of their differences and even tries to mediate in their fights. He has even noted the mother’s deterioration in mood and he even surprises her by telling her that he has friends of both genders, which displeases her as she who would wish to possess the son. This is seen in the warning she gives the son against having girlfriends, saying they will take him away from her.

Nyakake is a minor character but she also comes through as a dynamic character in that though she has all along been portrayed as a weakling, she comes out very strongly, together with her brother in saying that she is not going anywhere without her ‘Papa’. The video had actors playing the roles of Wamala, Tinka, Kaija and Nyakake and they were all convincing in the way they portrayed their characters, in line with Stanislavski’s Method Acting. The actor who played the role of Tinka was a middle-aged woman who wore a wide pleated dress that befitted a low class woman. She spotted short white-spotted hair and her face suggested that she had been through enough difficult times.

Wamala’s role was played by a middle-aged man who wore cheap-looking clothes, which suggested that he was a man who was financially challenged. His heavily-bearded face too enhanced the image of a man who was on the lower side of the society’s economic divide. Kaija was a teenage boy who wore a pair of torn shorts and shirt and this helped to reveal poverty in the family. His rather slim body suggested a certain level of malnutrition. This especially came out clearly, when after coming from sleep, Kaija begged for some food from the mother in the first scene. Nyakake’s role was played by a small girl of about nine years, who kept on coughing, to bring out the sickly state she was in. We now move to *Shreds of Tenderness*.

**2.3.3 Shreds of Tenderness**

Again, in Ruganda’s characteristic style of employing economy of characters, the play has three characters. The major characters and who represent the protagonist and antagonist respectively are Wak and Odie. The two brothers are dynamic characters, displaying varying traits and often acting differently from how we expect. Wak who has cut that image of a harmless person surprises us by attacking Odie violently, towards the end of the play. On his part, Odie who has always looked invincible, patiently submits to
Wak’s beating, whereas we would expect him to fight back fiercely. In the last part again, he cries like a baby, upon recalling how his father treated him. Stella, who is their sister, plays the role of the supporting character and she would pass for a quintessential character, representing that sibling or member of the society who mediates people in times of conflict. She is also a round character in the sense that being the level-headed person she is, we get surprised that she could have entertained a sexual relationship with General Mohammed Ali, who is portrayed as being much older than her. Thus, she has the three-dimensional nature of human beings; of having strengths and weaknesses.

The performance which I watched had actors representing the two main characters, Odie and Wak as well as Stella. The role of Odie was played by a tall energetic man whose personality brought out the harsh, hateful and violent character of Odie. He wore a harsh facial expression almost throughout the performance, especially when referring to his step-brother, Wak. Even Stella who was his blood sibling was not spared those hateful looks, especially because of her tendency to support Wak. Odie mostly gesticulated in a violent way, often waving his hands in a dismissive way (See picture 2 on p.74). He made quick body movements that portrayed him as a violent character.

Stella on the other hand displayed a cool, loving and humane personality, ever keen on reconciling her warring brothers. The role was played by a short lady with a fair complexion. Being the arbitrator she was, throughout the performance, her demeanor was that of a loving person, who was always seeking peace. Many times, she was seen pleading with either of her brothers who was attacking the other, tirelessly pleading with him to be more understanding and lenient with the other. The way she held Odie and Wak when they were fighting, showed how much she loved them. Despite her seemingly soft nature, she was however open with her brothers (especially Odie) to tell them when they went wrong. We now move to *The Floods*.

### 2.3.4 The Floods

The play has five characters. The major characters are Nankya and Bwogo and they also play the roles of protagonist and antagonist respectively. Nankya qualifies for the modern day hero who is an ordinary character just like us (Beaty et al., 2002). She is also
representative of the thousands in the society who find shortcuts to climb the success ladder, even when compromising the very ideals they claim to stand for. Bwogo is a stereotype of the rich and powerful in the society who will stop at nothing, to get more and more, even if it means annihilating their real and perceived enemies. The supporting roles are played by Headman and Kyeyune while the fisherman plays that of a minor character. The Headman, Kyeyune and the fisherman are representative characters where the headman represents the leaders who misuse power. Kyeyune and the fisherman represent the hopeless masses who are at the mercy of the rich and powerful.

During the interviews, the researcher was able to gather some information on the process of producing a play from directors: Eric Chege, Tyrus Gathu, E. Shikuku and Mugarizi. According to them, the director acquires copies of the script to be performed and does a thorough reading of the same, during which s/he makes notes on what is required to produce each role, scene or act. If s/he has a group that s/he is already working with, s/he then goes ahead to conduct a read-through of the script. This helps the prospective actors get a feel of the play and also enables the director do casting of various roles. Where s/he does not have such a group, s/he calls for auditions, whereby prospective actors may be given some dialogues to enunciate or some action to perform. This helps the director identify who is fit for which role. After casting, the director then gives the actors a period of time to master their lines, after the lapsing of which, the rehearsals begin.

In the meantime, the director, whom I learnt is the central figure in any production, gets in touch with the other key people, such as the costume, lighting, sound designers, stage manager and producer, informing each what is needed for the production. According to Eric Chege, great collaborative effort on the part of theatre players is necessary. This involves cooperation among the director, producer, actors, designers and others like stage managers.

According to most of the directors, rehearsals for an average play takes two to three weeks. When the director is satisfied that the team is ready to perform and each stakeholder has provided what is needed, s/he schedules for the dress rehearsal, which
involves performing the play with everything, including such things as costumes and props; as in a live performance. Mugarizi emphasized the role of the producer, who is the financier of the production, saying that it is key towards providing everything needed for the production. He divulged that in directing *Aminata*, he had to work with a shoe-string budget which made the task difficult.

The play *The Floods*, was performed by actors who fitted the characters well. This is in line with Method Acting that was developed by Stanislavski, who believed that an actor should immerse himself in the role of the character acted. The Method is still the most popular in acting, across the world and most professional directors use it. Some of the directors I interviewed like Tyrus Gathu and Dr. Shikuku attested to have used it. Mwalimu Mulwa, who is a veteran thespian and lecturer of acting (Kenyatta University, KU) informed the researcher that this is the method he mostly uses. Thus, actors working under such professionals are conversant with it. The play was performed by about five major actors, who played the roles of: Bwogo, Nankya, the fisherman, Headman and Kyeyune. The roles of journalist with notebook, microphone and that with camera were double-casted, being played by Bwogo, Headman and Kyeyune respectively. The role of Bwogo was played by a tall, fairly dark young man with physical presence, which brought out the characteristics of Bwogo as the chairman of the SRB. The actor had an authoritative voice but which was adaptable to different tones.

Nankya’s role was played by a confident, mature, dark lady who wore a serious face, that easily brought out the character of a young intellectual. The Headman’s role was played by an ordinary-looking man, but who spoke with authority. He wore a dark coat to bring out his authoritative position. The role of Kyeyune was played by a serious, old-looking man who walked with a bend on his back. He had white hair on his head and also on his beard. He approached the boat carrying his possessions, which were tied with a red piece of cloth.

The roles of journalists were played by young-looking men and a young lady. This enabled them to have the energy that they displayed as they haggled to interview Nankya as the winner of a coveted award. The serious face that Kyeyune wore enabled
him to bring out his paranoid character. As journalist with notebook, the actor adopted an eager and friendly demeanor to help him coax information out of Nankya. The actor who played the role of journalist with camera wore casual clothes, commensurate with the ones won by most cameramen, able to hold some photography gadgets. The actor wore a friendly, eager and impatient expression. The role of journalist with microphone was played by a friendly and curious character. The role of lady journalist was played by a young-looking, persuasive lady with a ready smile, that enabled her to coax some information out of Nankya. We now move to *Betrayal in the City*.

### 2.3.5 Betrayal in the City

The play has a fairly large number of characters who include: Jusper, Jere, Mosese, Doga, Regina, Nina, Boss, Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito, Askari and Nicodemo among others. The major characters are Jusper and Mulili who also play the roles of protagonist and antagonist respectively. Jusper is a modern day hero in that he, unlike the Aristotelian hero, hails from a poor family. He also has a lot of weaknesses, which make him border on the antihero character. This qualifies him for a dynamic character who surprises us at one point by being an accomplice in Tumbo’s corruption when he agrees to Tumbo’s nomination of his play as an award-winning piece, without a contest. This is despite the fact that he belongs to the revolutionary group that is expected to bring change. Mulili on the other hand is a stereotype of the semi-literate people who get rich courtesy of their social connections. He is a flat character who displays the same characteristics throughout the play. The supporting roles are played by: Jere, Mosese, Doga, Regina, Nina, Boss, Mulili, Tumbo, Kabito and Nicodemo who are representative of various groups in the society. Askari is a minor character whose harshness to Jere portrays him as a stereotype of security officers. These will be addressed at length in the next chapters. The role of extras is played by the guards and palace staff.

The performance of the play I watched had actors who executed the roles of the characters well. The role of Jusper was played by an eloquent young man whose personality befitted a fiery and revolutionary university student. Doga’s role was played by a tall, dark and stout man with a heavy voice, that was commensurate with a father
figure’s personality. Nina was a chocolate-coloured lady with a slight build and a sharp feminine voice. In the opening scene, she was seen in a cotton shawl over her shoulders, which enhanced her mother figure. She was very much angered by the act of soldiers stopping them from carrying out the shaving ceremony and at some point even threatened to strip naked, when Mulili continued pressurizing them. This was quite like women who often get emotional in times of crisis.

Mulili’s role as a soldier was played by a middle-aged man who kept staggering from drunkenness. This then accounted for his disrespectful behaviour. Jere’s role was played by a dark, middle-aged man who had a facial expression that gravitated between friendliness (when talking to Doga), and harshness (when arguing with Askari). Mosese’s role was played by a dark, stout middle-aged man who was eloquent and knowledgeable. This befitted a lecturer’s personality. The Askari role was played by a dark and stout man with an authoritative voice. Tumbo was a tall and stout man with a fair complexion and mostly wore three-piece suits. This went well with a highly placed government official. Kabito and Nicodemo were both tall and wore dark suits that befitted government officers. Later, Mulili as a government officer and member of the entertainment committee also wore suits that went well with his status. Regina’s role was played by a young, fair-skinned lady. We now move to The Return of Mgofu.

2.3.6 The Return of Mgofu

The Return of Mgofu has a fairly big number of characters who include: Mgofu Ngoda, Kadesa, Nora U, Nora, Mwami Mhando, Mwami Rocho, Mdanya, MtANGE, Sariku, Mizra, Bizia, Matia, Mude and Mnavi among others. Mgofu Ngoda is the protagonist of the play, representing peace and development, while Mdanya is the antagonist, representing disunity, retardation and stagnation.

One unique aspect of this play is that it does not have a clear antagonist. The antagonist of the play is symbolized by forces of war, animosity and stagnation and these are to some extent embodied in Mdanya. As earlier noted, Mgofu Ngoda is the hero who almost cuts the image of a god. His piety, great wisdom and foresight portray him as larger than life. The supporting roles are played by: Mwami Mhando, Mwami Rocho, Kadesa,
Mtange, Thori, Thoriwa, Nora U, Mude and Mnawi. Sariku, Mizra, Bizia, Matia, Nora and Adonija are minor characters. The extras comprise the dancers at the Rememberance Day Ceremony and people in the market scene shown in the prologue.

In this play, characterization has some unique characteristics in that Imbuga uses non-human characters. This is first seen in Thori and Thoriwa who, being messengers from the ancestors, would pass for ghosts of dead people. In line with Beaty et al. (2002) they have human characteristics, where Thori for instance wants Thoriwa to continue pushing him on the wheelchair, despite the fact that she has already done it long enough. This represents male chauvinism, where the former would want to continue using the latter, despite the fact that they are now comrades. Non-human characters are again seen in the two creatures which pull in different directions during the Rememberance Day Ceremony. These symbolize antagonistic forces in the society. The roles of Thori and Thoriwa were played by old people who wore white sheets to indicate that they were pure messengers from the ancestors. Nora U’s role was played by a young, dignified and fair-complexioned lady with well-done hair, to bring out the personality of an educated person. She had a loving face to enhance her role as a pillar of her father’s prophetic personality.

Mgofu Ngoda’s role was played by a tall, dark old man with a heavy voice that befitted an elder or seer. He walked with a limp. The role of Mhando was played by a dark tall man who had a heavy voice, that was commensurate with his status of the head of a nation. He also used a diplomatic voice to address the elders and the people later, at the meeting. Mtange’s role was played by a medium-sized man who wore spectacles and had a moustache, which gave him the physical presence needed by an elder. Mdanya’s role was played by a dark man. The actors who played these roles had personalities that enabled them to easily execute them, fulfilling Stanislavski’s Method Acting where actors are supposed to be truthful and natural.

In conclusion, it is quite evident that unlike Ruganda’s plays, Imbuga’s plays have a fairly large number of characters. Where Ruganda embraces economy in characterization, Imbuga embraces proliferation. The two employ a wide range of characters in line with
the ideas propagated by most theatrical scholars. Imbuga tends to craft strong female characters like Aminata (*Aminata*), Nora U, Kadesa and Thoriwa (*The Return of Mgofu*), while Ruganda tends to create weak female characters like Tinka (*The Burdens*). Even when they have major roles like Nankya in *The Floods* and Stella in *Shreds of Tenderness*, they are shown to have very major character flaws. Nankya, the heroine of *The Floods*, provides a good parallel for Imbuga’s heroine in *Aminata* in that she is assertive, confident and intelligent, just like Aminata.

The main point of divergence between the two is that while Aminata passes the integrity bar with distinctions, Nankya’s character is rather questionable, especially with the allegations of immorality that taint her reputation. Nora U in *The Return of Mgofu* provides an almost perfect parallel for Aminata in *Aminata* in that she is intelligent, bold and humble, though she lacks Aminata’s assertiveness. Both playwrights however create strong male characters as seen in Imbuga’s Ngoya in *Aminata*, Jusper in *Betrayal in the City* plus Mwami Mhando and Mgofu Ngoda in *The Return of Mgofu*. On his part, Ruganda develops such strong male characters as Wamala in *The Burdens*, Kyeyune in *The Floods* and Wak in *Shreds of Tenderness*.

### 2.4 Spectacle as a Dramatic Element

Schemmp et al. (1995) opine that spectacle denotes all the visual elements in a performance and it is the nucleus of drama. They further observe that these visual elements are the ones that bring out that distinguishing element of theatre as derived from the Latin word ‘theatron’, which means ‘the seeing place’. These include such aspects as costume, lighting, makeup, set, props and movement. According to Taflinger, (1996), spectacle refers to such visual effects in a production as set, makeup, costumes and movement and it again provides the background and support for the characters, the plot and the meaning of the script. He further opines that spectacle evokes an immediate visual understanding of the atmosphere and mood which aids production by allowing a smooth flow of action and visual enhancement of the production. He adds that when done properly, spectacle does not overwhelm the characters, becoming an end unto itself as in some recent science fiction movies, where special effects, become the emphasis, as
the movie itself can be boring. On his part, Tamplin (n.d.) argues that spectacle involves magnificent mechanisms, startling appearances, sensational effects and transcendent design. On the whole, it appears that spectacle has more to do with visual than auditory aspects.

On lighting, Cohen (2008) observes that the use of light for dramatic effect as distinct from pure illumination can be traced from the earliest surviving plays. While some people are misled to believe that theatre lighting began with the advent of electricity, lighting has always been a major theatrical consideration. There was coordination of their plays to sunrise and sunset and also, theatres took best advantages of the sun’s rays. The medieval outdoor theatres, though as dependent on sunlight as the Greek theatre was, made use of several devices to redirect sunlight. It was in indoor staging as early as in the middle ages, that lighting technology first attained its first significant sophistication.

Cohen (2008) further observes that by the renaissance, the sheer opulence of illumination was astonishing. One 1664 presentation at Versailles featured twenty thousand coloured lanterns, hundreds of transparent veils and bowls of coloured water, and a massive display of fireworks. Electricity was introduced in American theatres in 1819 and the following year in European theatres, and soon after became the primary medium of stage lighting. Electricity is a very flexible form of stage lighting that can be trained in numerous ways upon actors, scenery, audiences, or a combination of the two to create realistic or atmospheric effects and radiance.

On costumes, Carver (2009) observes that one of the key choices for the costume’s designer is with regards to fabric, due to the numerous fabrics available today. She outlines four natural types that are available, namely: cotton, wool, silk and linen. While woolen fabric often connotes cozy warmth or being scratchy or itchy, some people feel allergic to wool. Being very soft combined with the quality of being resistant to such things as dirt and flame, plus its durability, it becomes the most popular fabric for tailoring popular garments. Cotton, which is thought of as cool, soft and comfortable, has the advantage of being highly absorbent, ability to stand high temperatures and also ability to take dyes easily. This makes it important in theatrical design.
Silk has had a reputation as a luxurious and sensuous fabric which is associated with wealth and success. It has the advantages of high absorbency plus that of being easily dyed with deep colors. It also retains its shape, drapes well, caresses the figure, and shimmers with luster on its own.

Linen is an elegant, beautiful, durable and refined luxury fabric and the strongest of the vegetable fibres, with two to three times the strength of cotton. Apart from this, it is highly absorbent and a good conductor of heat. It can easily be dyed and the colors do not fade when washed. In addition, Carver (2009) notes that synthetic fibres, which are the result of extensive research by scientists out to improve on the natural animal and plant fibres include: nylon, Polyester, rayon and acetate. Their individual advantages range from being smooth, highly absorbent, to being easily dyeable, all of which are important for the costume designers. Costume designing involves a lot of tools and accessories, ranging from needles, tape measures, chalk, buttons to things like zippers.

On the history of makeup, Carver (2009) posits that the concept of makeup began in the 1920s and 1930s when a man by the name Max Factor became intimately associated with the world of Hollywood makeup. She notes that he created the first makeup for the movies in 1914 and coined the term makeup which is derived from the verb ‘to make up’ one’s face. According to her, he and his company are credited with many cosmetics’ innovations such as lip gloss, pan-cake makeup and pan-stik. She adds that key to the subject of makeup are the different facial shapes, and this is important because the face needs to be balanced. Carver (2009) outlines six different facial shapes namely, oval, pear, heart, square, round and long, each of which she argues has different needs when applying makeup. She also posits that there are several manufacturers of stage makeup which are different from those bought at the local pharmacy or department store, in that they are intended to be applied and removed frequently. Selden and Hunton, (1959) add that these also lack perfume.

Southern (1937) who views setting as an important part of spectacle divides theatre settings into eight varieties namely: costume setting, symbol setting, background setting, pure curtain setting, detail setting, wing and clothing setting, box setting and cyclorama
setting. He notes that these form a sort of historical sequence of stage setting. On the history of theatre setting, he observes that the earliest way was to set the show merely with the costume and masks of the players. The second style that followed involved adding to the players and their costumes some symbol – a ritual wand stuck in the ground. After that came shows presented in some sort of theatre which was basically a bare hall or a yard or a lawn with or without a raised stage. On their part, Ommaney & Schanker (1972) outline five types of setting, namely: box sets, unit sets, the permanent sets, profile sets and curtain sets. The performances watched utilized a variety of these settings for different scenes.

On movement, Laban (1971) posits that human movement, with all its physical, emotional and mental implications, is the commonest denominator of the dynamic art of the theatre, adding that movements used in works of stagecraft are those of the body, the voice producing organs, and the motions performed by the instrumentalists of the orchestra. He observes that movement evidently reveals many different things and it is the result of striving after an object deemed unachievable, or of a state of mind. Thus, he adds that its shape and rhythms show the moving person’s attitude in a particular situation. It can characterize momentary mood and reaction as well as constant features of personality.

Picture 2: Odie waving hands in Shreds of Tenderness

Source: Jicho Four Dvd

Spectacle is manifested in different ways in the plays. In the first scene of The Burdens, the set comprises a mud-walled room where we find soot strands dangling from the grass-
thatched roof. The mud walls are darkened with smoke. Inside the room we have a spear, a shield and a fly whisk. These props comprise Wamala’s royal regalia. There are several other props that suggest poverty, for example the plastic plate that Kaija puts his food in, the safari bed that Wamala brings for Kaija and the tin cup that Wamala drops when recounting the daily menu of the family. There is also the mat Tinka is weaving. In Act One Scene One, we have a twenty-shilling-note that Wamala uses to coax Tinka to warm up to his conversation.

Movement is highlighted in the scene where Wamala wants some of Tinka’s enguli, and he moves menacingly towards her. Wamala’s menacing movement is caused by anger because Tinka has refused to give him the liquor she is brewing. A similar kind of movement is suggested when in a symbolic reference to Tinka, Kaija describes how Tibasaga moves menacingly when going to stab ‘the bull’ and it is quite clear that she is full of anger. Tinka’s anger also causes her to move menacingly towards Kaija when she pushes him back to the bedroom in Scene One after Wamala calls him to come see his ‘bride’. Soon afterwards, we see a different kind of movement where Wamala and Tinka, after reconciliation, walk hand in hand to bed showing love and romance. In Act Two, Scene One, the following morning, when Tinka is preparing to brew her enguli, we have a conglomeration of paraphernalia which comprise her brewing gear. In the last scene, there is disorganization in the house which comprises bags of clothes, furniture and then the cheap bed Nyakake is brought in. This reveals the role of set in symbolizing the disintegration of the Wamala family.

The Teacher’s black suit plus its accessories: a white shirt, tie, shoes and socks comprise a major part of the costume in The Burdens. This is in sharp contrast with the cheap and torn clothes worn by Wamala and Kaija, which show poverty.
In *Aminata*, we have a cemented grave in Act One Scene One which informs the audience immediately that there is a dead person. This being an item of set, helps to develop the theme of death. In the church scene later, there is a church-shaped building with the sign of the cross at the top, to make the audience have a scene of a church environment. In the rehearsal scene, Agege walks along a wide path calling people for the rehearsal event. The yellowish lighting creates the picture of a late afternoon, when the sun is setting. The handing over ceremony is the climax and this is where there are grass-thatched huts in the background. This is meant to create a village environment.

According to Dr. Mugarizi, the director of the video I watched, this scene was shot at the Bomas of Kenya (a Kenyan cultural centre), as a way of trying to create an authentic Kenyan village scene. Ngoya who is a pastor walks to the dais gracefully during the church service. This is an example of use of movement to delineate attitude and the state of the mind. His movement delineates his piety and love for his congregation. This is also enhanced by his white pastoral robe. Costumes are again used when Agege wears rather torn clothes and speaks broken English, which helps to enhance his role as the village clown in *Aminata*. So jovial is the character that not even his torn clothes will dampen his jovial disposition. This personality enhances his role as the village clown.
In *The Return of Mgofu*, Kadesa walks out of the shrine gracefully, uttering incantations and this shows her piety. In her hands, she holds a pot above her head and this is a prop which is used in worship. The cotton sheet she has tied round her body enhances her demeanor of piety. Her composed and graceful movement contrasts sharply with the hurried restlessness of Bizia when he walks in to report the coming of Adonija and Nora. The two shrines are items of set, symbolizing the traditional and the modern places of worship. Another prop is the pistol held by Mude, that suggests a state of insecurity. This is seen in his alertness and consequent readiness to use it against all real and perceived enemies. Mhando and his elders wear dark coats to suggest their positions of authority.

In *The Floods*, Bwogo adopts an authoritative gait, when he walks in a three-piece suit to the bungalow where Nankya and Kyeyune are. This not only reflects his influential position, accruing from his powerful connections but also his high status and wealth. This is in sharp contrast with Kyeyune who walks with a limp and in a torn overcoat. This reflects his old age and poverty too. The umbrella Bwogo holds in his hand and which he uses to stab the anthill with, is a prop that symbolizes the forces of destruction that are embodied in Bwogo. Another prop is the radio that keeps on broadcasting scary meteorological updates, thus urging people to their deaths. It will emerge later that the media is also an organ of destruction through dissemination of propagandist information.

**Picture 4: Props: coins in a plate at Adika’s grave (Bi.t.C)**

Source: Jicho Four Dvd

In *Betrayal in The City*, Tumbo and his fellow committee members dress in dark suits, in line with their positions of authority, just like the way Jere and Mosese dress in prison.
uniform to indicate their status. The guns used in the rehearsal are examples of props used in the play. Other props include the drinks that Jusper is sent to buy by Tumbo, as well as the notes he is given to go and use for shopping. There is also meaningful movement in the play for instance, where Jusper marches and then mimics the sound of gunshots in the first scene. Mulili’s running and diving to dodge Jere’s shot shows the seriousness with which Jere took the plight of the old couple and his determination to help them. Then it does not surprise us when later, we find Jere in prison.

![Picture 5: Set and costume: Odie’s and Stella’s expensively furnished sitting room](Shreds of Tenderness)

Source: Jicho Four Dvd

Spectacle is utilized in various ways in the performance of *Shreds of Tenderness*. At curtain rise, the scene opens to a beautiful sitting room with expensive and executive furniture, that speaks of affluence, (see picture 5 above). Everything, from the sofa set to the curtains, speaks of a well-to-do family. There is also a cabinet with glass doors where an assortment of expensive drinks suggests that the family is rich. Here there is use of set to indicate the status of the family. The expensive linen curtains show how costume can be used to show economic status.

Odie’s experiment apparatus comprise props and they, among other things reflect the mechanical relationships in the family; they are as cold and dry as the laboratory. Wak’s military garments symbolize the role he plays in redeeming his country from the chains
of bad governance. From the above discussion, it is clear that spectacle plays a seminal role in delineating various messages. The next is a discussion of use of music in the plays.

2.5. Music as a Dramatic Element

The term ‘music’ can be used with a wide range of meanings, ranging from vocal songs and dances to various forms of patterned sounds (Kebede, 1995). Sample (2013) views music and dance both as nouns and verbs, whereby as a noun, he defines music as a sound, or the study of such sounds, organized in time, while dance is a sequence of rhythmic steps or movements usually performed to music, for pleasure or as a form of social interaction. As a verb on the other hand, he views music as to seduce or entice with beautiful sounds, while dance is to move with rhythmic steps or movements, especially in time, to music. From the definitions of these two terms given by scholars, the difference between them seems to be that while music has to do with patterned sounds, dance has to do with patterned movement. The similarity between the two and which possibly contributes to their inseparability is that both have to do with rhythm.

Akombo (2016) notes that the music in any society involves the use of musical instruments and vocal sounds which are produced in patterns. He observes that music is a form of rhythmic movement of powerful communication, which entertains and educates the people to whom and for whom it is composed. Music, like literature can be perceived to be a dynamic mirror through which we can gauge the external and internal structures of a producing society.

On the relationship between music and dance, Brenshofl (2014) observes that scientists have known for some time that even a foetus in the womb can hear music and react to it, whereby it starts moving its limbs in an attempt to dance though it does not even know what dance is. He further observes that the two art forms; music and dance, together seem to create an emotional quotient, always complementing each other as was noted where researchers at Dartmouth had two groups of very different people taking part in a complicated experiment. This was to decide the connection between music and dance involving college students from the U.S. and villagers from a Cambodian village. They
found that an emotional reaction was the result of being subjected to music in both groups, and dancing erupted in them both, irrespective of their background.

Akombo (2016) observes that research into the dichotomies of music and dance began early in the nineteenth century, whereby the idea of music existing in many non-western cultures, without dance, continues to intrigue scholars. He further observes that even though dances without music do exist, they are viewed as incomplete, hence the need to interrogate the historical and modern contexts of music and dance, and whether they are separable.

On the relationship between music and dance, Akombo (2016) notes that there has been wide debate on the two elements, with some scholars arguing that music can exist without dance while others argue that dance can exist without music. In the whole debate, he observes that the issue of culture has been found to be pertinent, where in some cultures, music means sound and movement. On the other hand, in some others, dance means body movement and sound. It appears then that music and dance overwrap in terms of meaning but music seems to, strictly speaking, deal with sounds, while dance deals with movement. Akombo (2016) argues that he observed instances where music was performed without dance, even though throughout the text, it is to be seen that dance can hardly exist without music. He further observes that the foray into the arts shows a high de facto relationship between music and dance among non-western cultures.

In concurrence with Akombo (2016), Nketa (1974) opines that though purely contemplative music that is not designed for dance or drama is practised in Africa in limited contexts, the cultivation of music integrated with dance or that which stimulates effective motor behavior is more prevalent. This is because in Africa, the music experience is an emotional one and sounds, however beautiful, are meaningless if they do not offer this experience or contribute to the expressive quality of a performance.

Nketa (1974) also observes that outward physical or verbal response to music is encouraged in African societies for a number of reasons, one of them being that through it, individuals relate to music events or performing groups. They also interact socially with others in a musical situation and moreso, the motor response intensifies one’s
enjoyment of music through the feelings of increased involvement and the propulsion that articulating the beat by physical movement generates.

In addition, he notes that dancing not only allows for emotional release but also is used as a social and artistic medium of communication. It conveys thoughts or matters of personal or social importance through the choice of movements, postures and facial expressions. Thus, he argues that through dance, individuals or social groups express a variety of emotions, such as exhilaration, hostility, cooperation, sorrow, respect and even appreciation. They also express their beliefs through the choice of appropriate dance vocabulary or symbolic gestures. This is because being an avenue of expression, dance is closely related to the themes and purposes of social occasions, whereby for instance dancing at a funeral, more than just expressing sorrow may also indicate a tribute to the dead. This is the kind of music and dance that Mama Rosina in *Aminata* was insisting should have been performed during Pastor Ngoya’s grave dressing ceremony. She tells Jumba that he should have been celebrated as Membe’s hero.

A good dancer according to Nketa (1974) usually attempts to interpret the rhythms of the music in definite ways guided by some principles. The first principle is the recognition and proper articulation of the basic regular beats of the music. The second one involves movements of various parts of the body, while the third governs the speed or timing of movement. The fourth principle concerns the articulation of staggered rhythms. The fifth is the matter of phrasing. Another aspect of music for the dance which may influence the organization of movement is sectional structure where in songs, there may be a part for the soloist and another for the chorus, which may be identical or different. While Nketa (1974) focuses more on the practice of music and dance in Africa, Akombo (2016) looks at the two from a world’s perspective.

Mumma (1997) observes that dance is a social tool of communication which provides education to the audience and society and exercise for those who strive to gain harmony of mind and body. After communication, Africans had dance for worship and for everyday events in life. In essence, dance enshrined the center core of African drama and theatre, and it did provide vital social education and entertainment. On the village square,
dancers accented lyrical poems and fused accompaniments into the accenting, danced and went into character mime. Thus, he concludes that from time immemorial, African drama and theatre did join poetry, music and dance to communicate social needs in a way popular, admired and imitated to the present day.

On the issue of music and dance being utilized for every event in people’s daily lives, this appears to be very applicable especially in Imbuga’s plays, where key events in the community are accompanied by singing. This is for instance during the handover ceremony in Aminata, and the Remembrance Day Ceremony in The Return of Mgofu. For Betrayal in the City, there is the singing of a Christian song at Adika’s graveside. This organized singing of songs and dance does not seem to be the case in Ruganda’s plays, possibly due to the fact that Ruganda has reflected periods of reign of terror, which do not give much room for such joyful activities in The Floods and Shreds of Tenderness. For The Burdens, which does not deal with a war period, the mood is more relaxed and we have a case like the one Wamala refers to of drunks chanting slogans in a bar or citizens responding to a politicians greeting in a political rally as shown in the Wamala reverie.

Music as a dramatic element was widely utilized in the performances of the plays that I watched. In Aminata, a flashback reveals a church scene where Pastor Ngoya is said to have served the female members of his congregation with chicken soup. During the service, there is the singing of such Christian hymns as, “There is a Green Hill far away”. Though there is no dancing as such, the singers nod in rhythm to the beats of the song which helps to enhance the theme of religion.

Music, which in this case represents not just real songs but any patterned sound, is also utilized in the character of Agege. In the scene where Aminata is at Mama Rosina’s home, during one of her trips of pursuing the matter of her land, Agege sings and dances in a way to try and mimic the singers, who are members of the village singing troupe. Their singing is a way of trying to recognize Aminata’s contribution, following which he comments that they have been singing very beautifully from the time she hired for them a choreographer. Later, when Agege is calling people to come for the rehearsal, he is
shown shouting, “Come one. Come all!” in a musical way (Imbuga, 1988, p.65). This makes it look more of a song than a mere announcement. This helps to break monotony of dialogue.

In the last scene, which is the handing over ceremony, the oldest man in the area, Abade and Mama Rosina, the new headperson, utilize music. This is mostly in their repeat of the words “Membe yooo”, while the crowd that has gathered responds, “Yooo!” (Imbuga 1988, p.77). In this same scene, we have traditional singers who open the ceremony. All these instances of music help to enliven the play. Likewise, in The Return of Mgofu, traditional dancers at the Remembrance Day Ceremony sing and dance to bring out the theme of unity.

![Traditional singers at the handover ceremony (Aminata)](source: KICD Dvd)

**Picture 6: Traditional singers at the handover ceremony (Aminata)**

Music as a dramatic element is used not just as music per se but also in terms of sound effects in general. In Act One Scene One of The Burdens, there is the sound of a barking dog which helps to enhance the theme of insecurity in the area where this family is living. Also, at this time, there is some soft howling sound which makes Tinka suspect that some “kondo” (thief) is trying to steal her bunch of banana. In Act Two, Scene Two of the same play, when Wamala pushes Tinka and she falls down on her brewing gear, there is the sound of scattering tins, which foreshadows the imminent disintegration of the family. Earlier in the first scene, we have the sound of metal being dragged on concrete, when
Wamala is dragging the bed which symbolizes the friction that exists between Tinka and Wamala. In the first scene again, Tinka, mentions the song, “Guns to Play the Drums”, which is part of the story she tells Kaija, where the paradox of guns and drums symbolizes the love-hate relationship between Wamala and Tinka. In the last scene, when Tinka finally discloses to the children that they have to move to an orphanage, we have the sound of the police siren followed by that of heavy boots. This brings the reality of the fact that the status quo has now changed because Tinka is being arrested by the police and the children have to go to an orphanage.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, there is music that talks about siblings disagreeing after Part One ends. There are several songs in the performance, especially as background music that address the issue of sibling rivalry. The dramatic element of music is also used especially in the alliterative speeches of Odie, Stella and Wak. An example of this is seen in Part Two where at one time they use the following words:

STELLA: (*urgently*) That’s how it starts, Wak. Ticks and Termites… Ticks, tits and termites.

WAK: The dogs will be deported and Daudi detained’.

ODIE: Cows, class and cowardice.

(Ruganda 2001, p.128).

This type of speech is rhythmical and it helps to bring out such themes as dictatorship and divisions in the society. Another example of rhythmical speech is where Odie is narrating to his siblings of the student riot that culminated to his being expelled from the university. He recites the words they were chanting as: “A PEOPLE UNITED SHALL NEVER BE DEFEATED” to bring out the spirit of student activism (Ruganda 2001, p. 37).

Music and sound effects are again utilized for instance in the Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour” play within a play, where we have the sound of a large explosion, which brings out the element of insecurity. Odie keeps on banging things, like in Part One, where he bangs the table, when he is addressing the King of Termites. Towards the end of the performance of the play, Odie breaks the portrait of the father, whom he claims never loved him. There is the sound of breaking glass and that of the pieces scattering. This symbolizes the
disintegration of the family that took place after the father died. In the scene of play within a play of the refugee being harassed by a local, Stella, acting as a local produces some strange and menacing guttural sounds that are meant to scare the refugees.

In *The Floods* there is the playing of a wedding song in the background, when Bwogo is discussing about Nankya’s pregnancy and her secret hope that he will give her a church wedding. The song captures the theme of love and Nankya’s great longing for marriage not just for her actualization, but also for career survival (Ruganda 1988). There is background music of a dirge that is played as the Headman is urging people to the boat to foreshadow their imminent deaths.

In the first scene of *Betrayal in the City*, when Doga and Nina are discussing the issue of the shaving ceremony at Adika’s graveside, a dirge is played as background music to capture the theme of death. This also captures their grief and sense of loss after losing a son they thought would uplift their economic position. After some time of discussion, they sing the Christian song, “Trust and obey…” which reflects their only remaining source of hope, which is their belief in their God.

On the whole, it appears that Imbuga has employed song and dance more in the plays than Ruganda, in whose plays these elements are introduced by the directors during performance. Though for Ruganda there are instances of rhythmical speeches and reference to songs, for instance the song Tinka refers to when telling Kaija a story in *The Burdens*, Imbuga displays a more deliberate effort to use song and dance. The part that follows deals with dialogue as a dramatic element.

**2.6 Dialogue as a Dramatic Element**

While in normal use the term dialogue refers to a conversation between two people, dialogue in drama refers to the use of language in general (Diyanni, 2004). On the format of plays, Carroll (2013) observes that they are not written in paragraphs like a novel or short story but as lines of dialogue in the form of a script. She further observes that these scripts are broken down into one or more acts, or major divisions of the play and each act
is then subdivided into a scene, or smaller divisions within the act. Usually a change in setting means there will be a change in either the act or the scene.

Purves et al. (1997) observes that dialogue is the chief means of moving the plot along in a play and is made up of the lines or speeches of the various characters. On their part, Brockett and Ball (2004) view dialogue as a playwright’s principal means of expression. They posit that dialogue serves numerous functions in a play, one of them being that it imparts information; in that it conveys the ideas, essential facts and emotions in a play. Again, dialogue reveals character and also directs attention to important plot elements. The fourth point they note is that dialogue reveals the themes and ideas of a play in that it provides clues to significant meanings, while it reveals character and develops action. The fifth function of dialogue they outline is that it helps to establish tone and level of probability. The last function of dialogue that Brockett and Ball (2004) note is that it helps to establish tempo and rhythm.

In concurrence with Brockett and Ball (2004), Diyanni (2004) notes that dialogue is an important dramatic element that has several functions. He singles out the three main functions of dialogue as: advancing the plot, establishing setting and revealing character. These numerous functions of dialogue that are outlined by the above named scholars, though differing in terminology, clearly reveal the seminal role that dialogue plays in a play.

Brockett and Ball (2004) further observe that the dialogue of every play, no matter how realistic is more abstract and formal than normal conversation, since a dramatist selects, arranges and heightens language more than anyone ever does in spontaneous speech. A similar observation is made by Styan (1997) who argues that language in theatre is not simply verbal language since the dramatist must think in terms of speech and action. Diyanni (2004), who refers to dialogue simply as character speeches, observes that though dialogue is taken to generally refer to all character speeches, there are in fact three distinct types of speeches. He argues that ‘dialogue’, strictly speaking should refer to speeches of two people, while ‘soliloquy’ is the speech given by one character as if alone, even though there may be other characters on stage. The last type of speech he notes is
the ‘asides’ which he sees as the comments made by a character directly to the audience, in the presence of other characters, but without those characters hearing what is said.

Rather than refer to dialogue or language like many other scholars, Beaty et al. (2002) use the term ‘tone’. They find the term’s dictionary meaning, as style or manner of expression in writing, rather inadequate in bringing out the nuances or subtleties between a reader/actor and the author/playwright.

Aron (2011) posits that dialogue and conversation are two words that are used in the same sense, though strictly speaking, they should be used in different senses, since the two words carry different connotations. He argues that the word ‘dialogue’ is used in the sense of ‘discussion’ while on the other hand, the word ‘conversation’ is used in the sense of ‘exchange of ideas’. This, he notes, is the subtle and main difference between the two words. Dialogue, which in a wider sense also refers to language, includes such uses of language as metaphors, similes, paradox and a multiplicity of other forms of language use, Styan (1997).

While strictly speaking every play has dialogue, there are several outstanding dialogues or speeches in the plays studied. The most outstanding dialogue in Aminata is that of Agege, speaking in broken English. His saying of such words as: “Agege do this, Agege do that. Even in middle of dark night…” (Imbuga, 1976, p. 9). The broken English, combined with his jovial disposition enhance the style of humour. Ababio’s dialogue is also outstanding especially in that it is said with a drunken tone. This tone helps to prepare the audience, who hear his voice before they see him in Act One Scene Two, for the nonsensical and abusive things that follow his initial words. This is through his saying of such words as: “Degrees? Useless, ... A slap or two helps …, Misia on compulsory leave” (Imbuga, 1988, p. 25). On the other hand, Pastor Ngoya’s dialogue is done in calm fatherly words, while Jumba’s is authoritative.

In The Burdens, one of the most outstanding dialogues is that of Wamala. Right from the time the audience hears his voice thanking an unidentified person for helping him carry the bed to the time he enters the stage, he speaks with a drunken voice. This is the happy, carefree, jerky, authoritative voice of a drunk man. Tinka on her part mostly uses hateful
words with a sarcastic tone. Even when responding to Kaija’s objection to her discrediting reference to Wamala, even adding that people refer to him as Chief, in Act One Scene One, she replies with even greater venom as shown below:

TINKA: …a lamb is not a lion, son.

KAIJA: But everyone calls him Chief … they respect him and seek his advice.

TINKA: Flattery that’s what it is … When a leper is around you can’t talk about boil
(Ruganda, 1972, p.6).

Later in the last scene when Kaija is recounting what happened in his dream, Kaija asks whether the father came the previous night and she replies: “I said as wet as a sponge and carrying the odour of illicit intimacy”. She also adds: “… I told him… I’d prefer a dog to him, in future” (Ruganda, 1972 p. 72). These words of Tinka indicate the negative attitude she has towards her husband and they are dangerous in the sense that they are likely to make Kaija also despise the father.

Tinka’s dialogue is very significant as far as showing her negative attitude to Wamala is concerned. When she is telling Kaija this, her tone carries a bitter tone, which shows that she hates Wamala. She could just have told her son so in plain words, but telling him that she would prefer a dog to him reflects a very high level of hatred. When Tinka is telling Kaija the story of Chief Ngoma and his daughter Nyenje, she adopts a sarcastic voice when concluding the story, which suggests that she is actually referring to Wamala as the leper as shown: “… that is how a leper… “(Ruganda, 1972 p. 72).

In the last scene, when Tinka is preparing the children for their departure from that place, Nyakake, whom we meet for the first time, asks an innocent question:

NYAKAKE: Mama, was it all right my telling papa?

TINKA: Telling him what?

NYAKAKE: That you told us he was with friends…our other mamas?

TINKA: Oh, that. (Ruganda, 1972 p. 77).
Soliloquy is used in *The Floods* where Kyeyune narrates about his experience in the lake and his encounter with the man with three nails in the head. It is also utilized during his many prayers to Kagoro, as he makes pleas for mercy.

In *Betrayal in the City*, monologue is seen in Act One Scene One where Jusper talks about how people in Kafira assume that he is mad. He then goes on to mimic shooting. This reveals his revolutionary mind to the audience. In both of these cases, the issues of dictatorship and bad governance, together with their effects on people’s lives are highlighted. Mosese’s speech during the prison cell scene, in which he seems to have gone into a reverie, is a soliloquy and it reveals his secret desire to get into power.

In *The Return of Mgofu*, Kadesa engages in soliloquy during her worship in Shrine 1. Similarly, Mgofu Ngoda utilizes soliloquy when worshipping in Shrine 2. This helps to bring out the theme of religion that keeps being rebranded with subsequent generations. With regard to Diyani (2004) who talks of three types of speeches: dialogue, soliloquy and asides, it is clear that Imbuga and Ruganda have utilized dialogue largely, manipulating language at various levels but this will be looked at in greater depth in the subsequent chapters. Soliloquy has also been utilized to some extent but asides do not seem to have been given much attention in the selected plays. As it is clear from the numerous aspects addressed in the manipulation of dialogue in this section, dialogue is the heart and soul of drama. Both the playwright and the director have a wide range of language resources to play around with and dialogue is manipulated at the segmental as well as at the suprasegmental level. The end result then is fresh and pregnant dialogue that is as communicative as it is entertaining. In the next section, the study looks at the identification of theme as another dramatic element.

### 2.7 Theme as a Dramatic Element

Tengya (2016) opines that theme in drama simply means the underlying message, the subject matter or the issues that the writer tries to project to the readers using the vehicle of drama. Beaty et al. (2002) view it not only as a generalized or abstract paraphrase of the subject of a work, but also as the most comprehensive of the elements, since it
embraces the whole work. They note that theme is not part of the work but it is abstracted from the work by the reader or audience.

Cohen (2008) on his part regards theme of a play as its abstracted intellectual content. He further elaborates this as the overall statement of a play which comprises its topic, central idea or message. Cohen (2008) posits that some plays’ central themes are quite obvious while others have less clearly defined ones, adding that plays with obscure main themes are often the subject of intense debate. Cohen (2008 p. 41) observes that, “A play must have something to say and that something – its theme – must seem pertinent to the audience”. This means that it is expected that a play will not be written as a piece of art for art’s sake but that it should have a message for the audience or readers (Plekhanov, 1953). He argues that a play can have many themes and is not necessarily limited to one theme.

On Cohen’s (2008) argument about a play having many themes, the selected plays for this study comply in the sense that they all handle several themes. In Betrayal in the City, Imbuga focuses on themes such as: bad governance, corruption, materialism, oppression and nepotism. In Aminata, he focuses on gender, family, leadership, religion and tradition. In The Return of Mgofu, Imbuga deals with matters of governance, gender, tradition, community relations and reconciliation. Ruganda on his part tackles a number of issues in his plays. In The Burdens, he deals with issues of domestic strife, gender, religion and leadership. The Floods addresses dictatorship, professionalism, materialism, exploitation and family. Finally, Shreds of Tenderness handles issues of dictatorship, war and its effects, family and gender among others. Thus, this study addresses human interaction as the major theme but we also have the sub themes mentioned above.

On his part, Diyanni (2004) takes a play’s theme to designate the main idea or point of a play stated as a generalization. In concurrence with Cohen (2008), Diyanni (2004) observes that a play’s meaning is rarely explicitly identifiable from the dialogue, but it is almost always implicitly bound up with and derivable from a play’s structure, character interactions, dialogue and staging. Just like Cohen (2008), Diyanni (2004) observes that a play will have something to say about the human experience and that also we, as
readers or the audience, should avoid reducing the meaning of a play to a single oversimplified idea. Noting that a play’s meaning is not always something readily and completely available to us as we complete our encounter with it, he argues that we can return to a play for second and subsequent encounters and understand it differently after repeated readings or viewings.

Thus, he concludes that a play’s meaning is almost always provisional, tentative, temporary and that it changes as we change. Similar to the views of Cohen (2008) and Diyanni (2004), Beaty et al. (2002) and Buzzle.com (2017) posit that the theme of a play refers to its central idea. It can either be clearly stated through dialogue or action, or can be inferred after watching the entire performance. The theme is the philosophy that forms the base of the story or a moral lesson that the characters learn. It is the message that the play gives to the audience. Beaty et al. (2002) note for example that the theme of a play could be of how greed leads to one's destruction, or how the wrong use of authority ultimately results in the end of power. The theme of a play could be blind love or the strength of selfless love and sacrifice, or true friendship.

From the discussion above, it is quite clear that theme refers to the idea or message that the playwright intends to communicate and this is normally implicit rather than explicit. Theme in drama is similar to theme in other genres of literature, since like drama, they always have that underlying idea or message. The key difference here is the mode of presentation of the content where in fiction and some genres of oral literature for instance, the paragraph is predominant. In poetry, the stanza predominates while in drama, dialogue is the key vehicle of presentation.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study has focused on providing some in depth information on each of the elements of drama. The chapter has done some analysis on the application of the principles highlighted in the selected plays. On the whole, the six dramatic elements emerge as the foundation of all plays and regardless of the terms different scholars use to refer to them, the concepts behind the wording continue to form the basis against which
plays are built. In the next chapter, the study analyses the way these elements are manipulated in order to delineate the themes of family and gender relations.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 MANIPULATION OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DELINEATING FAMILY AND GENDER RELATIONS

3.1 Introduction

This section focuses on how Imbuga and Ruganda use a variety of methods to manipulate dramatic elements, to delineate the thematic concerns of family and gender relations in their plays. These methods involve playing around with the six dramatic elements that are the nucleus of this study. We begin by examining how dramatic elements portray the theme of family relations.

3.2 Family Relations

Bullon (2005) defines the term ‘manipulation’ as to control or influence for one’s own purpose. Here, directors and theatre players influence productions in order to create the intended meaning. This involves playing around with the way these dramatic elements are realized, in order to fit the dramatist’s creative need. In this case, this is realized at two levels: the one of the playwright and the one of the director. As noted earlier, a play is an event in two parts; on the page and on the stage (Chambers, 2005). This manipulation begins with the playwright who tries to manipulate both form and content in order to deliver her/his intended message (Ngara, 1990). After this comes the director, who, also being a creative artist, tries to interpret the work of the playwright and to deliver it on the stage in the most credible and creative way possible. Thus, there are aspects of a play which are within the jurisdiction of the playwright to manipulate. These include aspects such as play within a play and elements of language. On the other hand, there are those which can only be realized on the stage by the director and these include such aspects as costuming and set design. The director is thus a key person as far as the realization of a play on the stage is concerned.

In the course of data collection, the researcher found out that each of the six dramatic elements was manipulated but at varying levels in the different performances. Since this chapter is about theme (family and gender relations as aspects of human relations), the
study looks at how the other five are manipulated for thematic development. In the course of data collection, the researcher realized that the dramatic elements were not simply utilized in their normal forms, but were actually manipulated to fit the director’s communicative needs. This is because the director of a performance has to find ways of bringing out the meaning that s/he deciphers to have been intended by the playwright. The director thus finds her/himself charged with the need to inject her/his own creativity in the most dramatic and meaningful way possible, within the resources at her/his disposal.

According to Harris (1990, 70), the term ‘family’ refers “… not to a category or an aggregate or network, but to a social group which is formed by biological reproduction and performs the functions of cultural reproduction or socialization or daily reproduction of its members”. ‘Family’ then may be referred to as a group of people related either by blood or marriage, and it may either be nuclear or the extended family type.

The African family which Imbuga and Ruganda highlight in their plays comprises not only the nuclear, but the extended family also. The research interrogates family relations under four levels, namely: relationships between spouses, relationships between parents and children, relationships among children, as well as relationships among extended family members. The study analyses the intersection between the dramatic elements and the different facets of the theme of family. We begin by examining how dramatic elements delineate relationships of spouses.

The term ‘spouse’ refers to husband or wife, according to Bullon (2005). This may be in a monogamous or polygamous marriage, considering that in many African cultures, it is common for men, especially, to have several wives (Mbiti, 1969). This section interrogates the use of dramatic elements in portraying two types of cases: where spouses treat each other kindly and where they treat each other unkindly. The researcher takes cognizance of the fact that the issue of spouses is both a family as well as a gender one. This is because spouses are the nucleus of a family, and therefore healthy gender relations between them contributes to healthy families. Thus, it is not easy to divorce gender relations between spouses and family relations. Thus, matters of gender that arise when
discussing family relationships are also be addressed together with those of family. In this section, the study only focuses on those relations of men and women, who are joined together by marriage.

3.2.1 Relationships between Spouses

Relationships of spouses can either be harmonious or disharmonious. Harmonious or cordial relationships involve cases where dramatic elements are manipulated to portray spouses treating each other well. To treat each other well may refer to actions like talking to one another kindly, smiling at each other, defending one another or other acts like using body language that shows love (Crystal, 2010).

Plot plays a major role in portraying cordial relationships among spouses. This is done using such sub-elements of plot like flashback and play within a play. Flashback refers to the aspect of showing events that happened before the dramatic time of a play, or the time of a scene. Pickering (2005, p. 28) observes that “the ability to move backwards as well as forwards in time” attracted experimentation from such playwrights as J.B. priestly in the 1930s and 1940s, who were known to take interest in and the concepts of cyclic or circular time. Pickering (2005) opines that playwrights such as American dramatists, Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams employ a more physical and filmic mode of flashback in their plays using stage technology.

Through flashback in *Shreds of Tenderness*, Wak talks of consulting and discussing with his wife the issue of coming back home after the war had ended. This is a positive gesture of a harmonious marital and gender relationship. That Wak has a balanced gender relationship is hinted at by the fact that he seems to always carry his wife with him. Even though there is no mention of his children, a cordial marital and gender relationship is suggested. Flashback once again portrays a similar situation in *The Floods* where we learn that Ssalongo was taking care of his wife and that they had a cordial family relationship. He is said to have been picked by the police never to be seen again. This is why, upon being asked by the children whether their father was a traitor, cut throat and as dangerous as the radio had reported, the wife defends him and says, “He was a good man, a Christian, that’s why they killed him” (Ruganda, 1988, p. 66).
In the scene of *The Floods* where Nankya is narrating to Bwogo about her background, it is revealed through flashback that Matiiya married Nankya’s mother out of sympathy and that he never took advantage of her situation. This not only provided family stability but also gave Nankya a father figure. This case also reveals that as much as negative men-women relations are rife in *The Floods*, we also have cases where men and women relate in healthy relationships, and where there is mutual trust and support in families. In a case of manipulating both plot and dialogue in *The Floods*, Bwogo mimics Nankya when she was acting the role of Medea, to try and win her attention. This mimicry develops the theme of gender relations, where Bwogo as a prospective husband of Nankya, is portrayed treating her lovingly.

Dialogue is another dramatic element that is manipulated to a large extent, and it mostly deals with language and choice of words. Birch (1991) opines that meaning should not be restricted simply to what words mean, but to the many levels of meaning involved (in language as action) in the social and institutional transactions and interactions of people involved in communication. He further observes that most of these meanings never find their way into a dictionary – they are meanings involving body movement, facial expressions, voice quality, and speed of delivery. They are also meanings involving social niceties …and the meanings involved in irony, satire, metaphor and paradox; the meanings involved in the hesitations, false starts and silences of language. This means that dialogue means more than the dictionary meaning of the individual words used. As Birch (1991) observes, words in a dialogue have whole shades of meaning as influenced by such aspects as, tone, facial expression and even gestures. This is in line with Ngara (1990) who opines that form is as important as the content. A similar observation is made in Kariuki (2010).

Dialogue in this case focuses on the conversations between spouses and moreso, the diction in the conversations. As it is revealed through his dialogue with the elders, in *The Return of Mgofu*, Mhando really respects his wife and consults her a lot on matters of governance. This is why, as the head of the community, he urges elders Mtange and Mdanya to do the same with their wives. Here, unlike most African communities, a woman is given recognition in matters outside running her home and her own family.
This scenario is in sharp contrast with the one shown in *Betrayal in the City* where Boss is said to have locked his wife in the palace cell, because of inquiring about his attempt to rape Regina. In many African communities, a man’s wife (wives) and children are considered part of his wealth, nearly at the same level as his cows, goats and sheep (Mbiti, 1969). In such a case then, women are there to be seen and not to be heard. Thus, Mhando’s regard of his wife and women in general is quite commendable, because it paves the way for harmonious family relations.

Through dialogue and character, we see a case similar to that of Mhando in *Aminata* where Dr. Mulemi is seen treating Aminata well, in absentia, by defending her against Aunt Kezia’s accusations. This happens when Aunt Kezia comes to Mulemi’s house and finds Mulemi alone playing dart. She enquires on the whereabouts of Aminata and she is informed that she has gone to Membe. When she begins to tell him negative things about Aminata, he tells her to leave Aminata out of her talk. Mulemi’s cordial relationship with Aminata is shown by his willingness to take charge of the children when Aminata is away. This is because when she comes, she asks him where the children are and he responds by saying they are playing.

A harmonious relationship is also portrayed in *The Return of Mgofu*, where according to Clinton Ndobi, a member of my FGD, cohesion between spouses is seen in the way Thori and Thoriwa push one another in turns. Thori and Thoriwa, the messengers from the ancestors, were a couple when alive. We find them pushing each other on the wheelchair in turns, which portrays healthy marital and gender relations. This comes out in the first scene through setting, which is an aspect of spectacle.

Mercy Wangui, also a member of my FGD, notes the use of music to portray cohesive family relations in *Betrayal in the City*. In the first scene of Act One, both Doga and Nina sing a Christian song and proceed to pray together. This gives a picture of a family with a common goal and where members are united by their common religious beliefs.

In *The Burdens*, much of what is shown on the family front is conflict, but there are snatches of harmony, like the one seen in Act Two Scene One where after a scuffle in which Wamala hurts Tinka, they reconcile, hug and go to bed hand in hand. This is an
aspect of both character and spectacle, where the playwright exploits space to portray a romantic relationship between the two (see picture 3 on p. 76). This is reminiscent of the good times that they had during the hey days of their marriage. The close physical proximity of the two characters gives a picture of what their marriage used to be. After Wamala shares the idea of I.S.S and thereafter gives Tinka some money in *The Burdens*, Tinka hugs him and thereafter, they go to bed hand in hand, bringing to memory the fact that the family was once united. Later, when Wamala wears the suit that he had borrowed from the Teacher, Tinka commends him and offers to make him look real presentable, through such acts as straightening the tie. This portrays the intimacy that once existed between them.

On the other hand, we have disharmonious relationships, where spouses mistreat each other. The term ‘mistreat’ means to treat a person or animal unkindly (Bullon, 2005). This may be shown through such ways as looking at someone with a hateful facial expression, talking to them with a harsh voice or even through body movement. This section interrogates the intersection between dramatic elements and the unfair kind of treatment that spouses often subject each other to. This is shown through a number of these elements being manipulated in their own unique ways.

Conflict, which is an aspect of plot, is also used to delineate disharmonious marital and gender relations. Conflict may be defined as a state of inequilibrium, largely caused by a problem facing the protagonist. It is very important as it is the engine that causes the plot to unfold. It also grows the plot as the protagonist tries to solve her/his predicament against the opposition from the antagonist. Carroll (2015) observes that conflict occurs before the rising action begins, and conflict is the problem that must be solved (Refer Fig. 1.0, p. 2 where the beginning of the conflict commences at the point marked “inciting incident”). Sometimes the conflict is between two characters, while other times, it is an internal conflict between the character and his or her own thoughts or actions. Conflict can also be between two groups of people or even man against nature (Wilson, 2007). Every creative work must have conflict for the plot to move.
In *The Burdens*, conflict is caused by the marital disagreement between Tinka and her husband, Wamala. Operating under abject poverty, the struggles of each to outdo the other and win favour with the children culminates into Wamala’s death in the hands of Tinka. Tinka keeps on pestering Wamala, especially about where he goes and who he associates with, which makes Wamala refer to her as a slob of a woman, who always drags him down. This case compares very well with that of Willy Loman and his wife, Linda in *Death of a Salesman*. As Guerin Bliquez in Trudeau (1991) observes, Mrs Willy Loman, plays a major role in her husband’s pathetic downfall, especially through her facility for prodding him to his doom. Conflict can be resolved in different ways, which may include death or some form of realization on the part of a key character. The killing of Wamala by Tinka in *The Burdens* shows resolution of conflict by death.

Plot is again manipulated to reveal poor marital and gender relations through oral narratives. When a playwright introduces an oral narrative, the normal unfolding of the events in the play is interrupted and we are transported to the fictional world of oral narratives. Oral narratives comprise an important element of oral tradition that has been used in many African traditional societies for purposes such as pedagogy and entertainment (Obyerodhiambo, 1990).

A good example of the use of this device is in *The Floods* through the narrative of Nyamghodho, who married a daughter of the lake and she makes him very rich. His big appetite for women however, brings conflict in their marriage and she goes back to the lake carrying all the wealth she had brought him.

Another story is in Act One, Scene One of *The Burdens* where Tinka tells Kaija the story of Chief Ngoma and his daughter Nyenje. In the story, the chief demands that all suitors interested in marrying his only daughter must bring down, in one piece, the gourd containing her umbilical cord that is atop a tall mvule tree. As expected, many suitors attempt the difficult test to see if they can win the coveted prize of the chief’s beautiful daughter. Unfortunately, they all fail except for one leper who, amidst a lot of booing and mockery from onlookers, manages to meet the demands of the difficult contest by bringing down in one piece, Nyenje’s umbilical cord. (Ruganda, 1972). This particular
tale helps to reveal Tinka’s character and also to develop the theme of gender relations, whereby Tinka is seen to look down on Wamala. This is seen in her symbolic reference to Wamala as the leper who married her (Tinka), Chief Ngoma’s beautiful daughter.

Plot is also manipulated through flashback in *Betrayal in the City*, where we are informed that Boss locks his wife, Mercedes in the palace cell after she complains about his attempt to rape Regina. This happens during his appointment with her, and it nearly costs Regina her life as she has to jump down a ten-foot-high window to escape the rape. This not only portrays a bad marital relationship but a gender one too. This is because Boss displays behaviour of one who wants ‘to eat his cake and have it’. He wants to be in a marriage where he will do whatever he wants without being accountable to his wife. The fact that he can lock the first lady in the palace cell so casually, for an act which even for an ordinary citizen would attract a jail sentence, clearly portrays him not only as a male chauvinist but a criminal of the highest order.

Dialogue is heavily and variously utilized in portraying spouses mistreating each other. In *Aminata* for example, there is a dialogue in the first scene in which Mama Rosina asks Jumba why the church was not involved in Pastor Ngoya’s grave dressing. Through this dialogue, Jumba tells her that the issue of dressing Ngoya’s grave is more than is fit for women’s ears. Diction is further utilised powerfully to reveal Jumba’s male chauvinism where he tells Mama Rosina that the chief’s stool is not for women’s buttocks. The choice of such words as ‘women’s buttocks’ and ‘women’s ears’ not only shows his lack of decorum, but also his low regard of women. Such male chauvinism is also witnessed in Ababio’s dialogue where he (Ababio) boasts that a slap or two does wonders in taming women. He even adds that he has given Misia, his wife a compulsory leave. Here, words like ‘a slap or two’ and ‘compulsory leave’ show just how much he mistreats his wife. This dialogue develops the themes of family and gender relations.

Dialogue is also manipulated through the use of proverbs and wise sayings. This is especially so with Imbuga’s plays. Imbuga’s dexterity in using elements of oral tradition in his plays is acclaimed internationally (Olilo, 2002). A good example is in *Aminata* where Mama Rosina for instance, says: “A wise man fills his ears before he opens his
“mouth” (Imbuga, 1988, p. 3). This is used by Mama Rosina to chide her husband for saying words that are not commensurate with his status in life. In *The Return of Mgofu*, Mhando says to the elders that when the wise close their eyes they open their ears, which is meant to make them better listeners in order to be knowledgeable. In *The Burdens*, when Kaija borrows some money from the mother to start a business in school, Tinka tells him that the orphaned calf dies clawing at the soil (Ruganda, 1972).

Another way in which dialogue is manipulated is through intonation. Finch (2005) defines this as the variation in the pitch of a speaker’s voice. He further observes that intonation is acknowledged by linguists to be crucially important in both the construction of speech and the determination of meaning. This is where we choose both the words to use as well as from a range of possible intonation variants. This way then, the same word may be said to mean different things, depending on the intonation used. Finch (2005) notes that in Chinese, the same word can mean different things according to the intonation used as shown below:

Ma mother  
ma horse  
ma scold  
ma hemp (Finch 2005, p.48).

In *The Burdens*, intonation is employed to bring out Tinka’s attitude to Wamala as shown below:

TINKA: (*with dirty, damaging laughter*) Oh! Our adorable father! Next time ask him, innocently of course, “Father, do all mothers buy beds for their sons. Pay school fees for their children and …poll tax for their husbands?” (Ruganda,1972, p. 5).

The rising intonation in the first sentence, followed by the falling-rising one in the last three sentences brings out the low esteem in which she holds him.

Character is also manipulated through various strategies to show disharmonious marital relations. One way in which this is done is through body movements and gestures. ‘Movement’ refers to the act of moving or the condition of being moved, while gestures involve moving the body, especially the hands, to express a certain meaning (Bullon 2005). Body movement involves moving the entire body while gestures mostly involve
the hands. A good example is in *The Burdens* when Wamala comes home staggering in the first scene and insists that Kaija has to come and see his ‘bride’. Tinka moves menacingly towards both Wamala and Kaija and violently ‘tears Kaija off the father’, sending him back to the bedroom. All this time, she looks at Wamala hatefully, to show her hatred for him. This reveals hostile family and gender relations.

Similar behaviour is witnessed in *The Floods* where Bwogo moves quickly and violently towards Nankya and slaps her, when she continues to accuse him of being a murderer who uses SRB to kill. Though they are not married formally, they have been in a relationship that is supposed to culminate into marriage. This movement is accompanied by a hateful look that is meant to silence Nankya, especially considering that he is a tall man with a strong build. This shows a disharmonious family and gender relationship.

Character is also used in *Aminata* in Ababio’s drunken body movement, which, coupled by his irreverent language, portrays him as a male chauvinist who has little regard for his spouse and by extension, people of the opposite gender.

In *The Burdens*, the police siren at the end of the play indicates the use of music to symbolize the collapse of the marriage between Tinka and Wamala, following the death of Wamala and the imminent arrest of Tinka. The indication by Tinka that the children will be taken to an orphanage seems to sound the death knell on the existence of this family. This is according to Vigilance Atieno, a member of my FGD. As Digolo (2003) observes, music is widely used by creative artists to communicate certain social concerns. Music is again manipulated through Tinka’s poetic language to show a hostile relationship between spouses. This is when she is talking with Kaija and she tells him to ask the father: “Do all mothers buy beds... do all mothers...do all..” (Ruganda, 1972, p. 5).

In *The Burdens*, after Wamala shares the idea of I.S.S and thereafter gives Tinka some money, Tinka hugs him and thereafter, they go to bed hand in hand, bringing to memory the fact that the family was once united. Later, when Wamala wears the suit that he had borrowed from the Teacher, Tinka commends him and offers to make him look real presentable through such acts as straightening the tie. This shows use of spectacle to
portray the intimacy that once existed between them. It is only in *The Return of Mgofu* where there is no conflict between spouses and this is a deliberate creation of the playwright, mostly because in this particular play, he goes out of his way to delineate reconciliation, healing and restoration after the mistakes of post-independence African states.

It is clear from the above discussion that cordial relationships between spouses are an absolute requirement for any marital bond to survive. Where they are cordial, the players reap the benefits of stable families. On the other hand, where there are unfriendly marital relationships, both the marriage and the family end up in turmoil.

### 3.2.2 Relationships between Parents and Children

The term ‘parent’ refers to the father or mother of a person, and this could be either biological or adopted. The term ‘child’ means a boy or girl from the time of birth until he or she is an adult (Bullon, 2005). Relationships of parents and children are a major indicator of harmony or otherwise in a family setup and they are depicted in a variety of ways. While on one extreme we have benevolent parent-child relationships, we have others on the other end which are cold and hostile. In this section, the study examines both the benevolent and the hostile relationships between parents and children. Benevolent relationships involve cases where parents and children treat each other kindly, while hostile relationships are those where they treat each other badly. To start with, we look at benevolent relationships.

The term ‘benevolent’ means being kind and helpful (Bullon, 2005). This kind of benevolence is seen in friendly body language and also in kind words and deeds. We first look at cases of parents treating children well and then at those of children treating their parents well.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, plot is manipulated through flashback where we learn that the father of Wak and Odie treated Wak better, and also entrusted the family estate to him, even though he was six years younger than Odie. This, we come to understand, is partly the reason for Odie’s great hatred for Wak and it seems to contribute towards the hostile
sibling relations. This also makes Odie to publish Wak’s picture in the dailies so as to be able to transfer the family estate to his name, after Wak disappears for some time. Plot is again manipulated through play within a play, where Odie, acting as Mr. “No Fear No Favour” refers to her majesty, the Queen Mother’s anger. This is caused by the death of her son, and she is said to be advancing menacingly to avenge his death. Though it is within a war context, we see that even those involved in war and violence still protect their family members.

Similarly, in The Floods, we see plot being manipulated through flashback, to bring out the benevolence of parents towards their children. Bwogo’s father, who was a very rich man is said to have taken Bwogo, his only child, to a good boarding school. The home, which was in an exclusive neighbourhood was surrounded by a perimeter wall, to separate it from the servants’ quarters. Nankya calls Bwogo “a poached egg, bread and butter product” (Ruganda 1988, p. 106).

Through flashback and dialogue, Nankya recounts the pain her mother went through to bring her up singlehandedly. At one point, Nankya says that her mother built a house with her (Nankya) strapped on her back. She continues to talk of the problems her mother endured to bring her up; childhood sicknesses and even famine. Even when the situation was very tough, she did not throw her away. Despite the fact that her conception resulted from a rape incident, Nankya’s mother did not abort the pregnancy, but brought her up amidst a lot of suffering.

Through flashback, we learn that Nankya’s mother gave Nankya motherly love and training, where she advised her to do things right and to be a person of good character. She for example, urged her to be hardworking, to be an early riser and not to be snooping on other people’s houses.

Still through flashback, we learn that Ssalango was taking care of his two children; Nyakato and Kato, who were supposed to become healers of men, spiritually and physically, respectively. We find that later these children together with their parents are killed. This is a perfect example of a case of a cohesive family, which would have been very useful had it not been cut off by dictatorial forces.
In the first wave of *The Floods*, Headman is seen ushering people into the boat so that they can be evacuated from the island. We learn through spectacle and the dialogue between the fisherman and Headman that the fisherman is taking care of his two tiny twins, whose mother is sickly, plus other family members. This is a case of a responsible father who is committed to providing for his family. This, coming from a community where the dictatorial regime has almost rendered families non-existent, is a high level of family cohesiveness.

*In The Burdens*, Tinka tells Kaija that the maimed tigress dies clawing at the soil (Ruganda, 1972). This is when Kaija requests the mother for some money, to be able to start a business in school. Tinka will not hear of this because according to her, this is pricking her pride as a mother. This is a case where dialogue is manipulated through use of proverbs and sayings. Character also comes into play where Tinka looks at Kaija lovingly, which enhances the theme of family relations.

On the other hand, children also treat their parents well. Such a case is witnessed in *The Return of Mgofu* where dialogue is used to show Bizia opposing the idea of Matia, his brother, bringing Adonija and Mgofu Ngoda’s wife Nora, into the shrine. His mother discourages him from barring them from entering the shrine. She then insists that Bizia brings them in and we find Bizia submitting. This is a mark of good family relations, where children obey, even without understanding fully the reasons for their parents’ stand. That is why Mude comments that Bizia is a young man with a good head over his shoulders. Similarly in *Betrayal in the City*, Jusper submits to the mother when she pleads with him to go remove the red gown and instead wear a clean shirt, in preparation for the shaving ceremony. Here, there is use of both dialogue and character, where Nina uses dialogue and a loving facial expression. The use of the red gown delineates the use of spectacle to show family relations.

Nora U, Mgofu Ngoda’s university-educated daughter, is portrayed through dialogue as a humble and intelligent woman. Her willingness to accompany her father to Mndika is a sign of a daughter who respects her father and this enhances family unity. Spectacle also contributes towards the development of the theme of family relations in that her very
demeanour is that of a respectful daughter. Her loving relationship with her father compares very well with Aminata’s relationship with her father, in *Aminata*. In a flashback, Pastor Ngoya is seen revealing to Aminata that he has officially bequeathed her two acres of his land. He refers to Aminata and her husband’s kindness in taking care of him during his sickness, and this is why he reciprocates their love. This is seen through character, whereby he wears a loving and gracious facial expression. Mama Rosina refers to Aminata and her husband as running from hospital to hospital with their sick father. This is seen through flashback, where she again talks of Aminata having bought a coffin for her father. She goes on to reveal that according to tradition, the one who buys a coffin for a loved one is taken to be the one who has buried her/him.

In the first Wave of *The Floods*, the fisherman pleads with Headman saying that his mother is blind and that his father was carried away by unknown people and has not been seen since. Underlying this dialogue is a picture of a man who is responsible for the upkeep of his parents. This is a good example of a cordial family, where the fisherman takes care of not only his immediate family, but his extended one also.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, there does not seem to be much kind treatment being shown to anyone. It is no wonder the title of the play is “*Shreds of Tenderness*”, meaning, even the little tender love found is in bits and pieces, and not in whole units. Indeed, violence, murder and bloodshed seem to be the order of the day in the play. Nevertheless, we can see traces of ‘shreds of tenderness’ in the children towards parents. This is for instance where Odie laments in a flashback, that Wak had left the country when the father had just died and their mother was sick. Underlying this statement is the idea that they needed to collectively mourn the father. This is regardless of the fact that for the father, this was posthumous honour. Odie possibly felt that Wak’s support in taking care of their mother would have come in handy. Odie is also bitter with Stella for befriending General Mohamed Ali, who is said to have signed their father’s death warrant. Through character, in Odie’s disapproving facial expression towards both Stella and Wak, we see his love and concern for his parents.
Through flashback, in *The Floods*, where Nankya is telling Bwogo about her upbringing, she talks of how her mother (Nankya’s mother) took care of her bed-ridden mother (Nankya’s grandmother), until she died. Despite her rejection by the hospital, due to the chronic tuberculosis she was suffering from, we see love in the family. Spectacle comes into play in the sorrowful drama that accompanied her grandchildren’s reaction to the news of her death, and the consequent mourning that followed, that points to a closely-knit family.

On the other hand, dramatic elements also delineate unfriendly relations between parents and children, where for instance parents mistreat children or vice versa. Among cases where parents mistreat children, there is one in *The Burdens* where through flashback, Kaija narrates to the mother of his experience when his parents fought in public. With a lot of emotional pain, Kaija tries to re-enact the body movements, harsh facial expressions and gestures of his parents as they tore one another’s clothes. Though indirectly, this fight of Kaija’s parents amounts to child abuse because it caused him so much trauma that he saw as if his world was virtually collapsing. This captures the use of spectacle delineating an ailing marital relationship. Through dialogue, he questions his mother on why they fought in public, to which she replies that Kaija would understand after growing up. Kaija imagines how the girls in the school will giggle at him and make dirty jokes. All this is revealed through flashback, in which Kaija tells his mother what had transpired the previous night.

Through flashback and dialogue, in *The Floods*, Nankya narrates to Bwogo about the circumstances surrounding her birth. She talks of a case where her mother as a small girl was alone in the house. Riots broke out in the town and then, suddenly soldiers burst into the house and raped her in turns. This led to her conception, and she became a mother through this act. Even though the soldiers were not her biological parents, by virtue of the fact that they were adults and she a child, amounts to a case of child abuse, which resulted to her becoming a single mother at an early age. Dialogue comes into play when Nankya sarcastically tells Bwogo that her father could be one or all of the soldiers who raped her mother.
Through flashback, in *Shreds of Tenderness*, Ruganda reveals Odie’s bitterness towards his father for having discriminated against him. In the episode where he talks of having been involved in students’ riots during his university days, he feels that the father was unfair to him, by not having put a word to the administration, towards his readmission. This according to Odie, is despite him having been a member of the university council. Odie, attributes his academic failure to this lack of parental support, and still in another flashback, Odie claims that the father accused him of being dumb-headed in school, connecting this trait with the mother. All this goes towards making Odie to be bitter with Wak.

Though indirectly, there is an insinuation of an improper parent-child relationship in the relationship (which Odie refers to in a flashback) between General Mohamed Ali and Stella. There’s a strong indication that the General belongs to the generation of Odie’s father. This is because just like Odie’s father, he belongs to the working class of that generation. This accounts for the great disdain with which Odie speaks of this relationship. So spiteful is he of it that every time he talks of it, he uses it as a final blow to silence Stella. It is no wonder that Stella ends up being angry and very bitter with Odie for this.

Through flashback, Odie talks of soldiers invading Stella’s school and raping the girls. Judging by the fact that soldiers were adults and may have been regarded as parents to the girls makes this a case of gross misconduct, for them to have engaged in this form of evil. Thus, it may be said symbolically that these were parents mistreating their children.

Dialogue is also employed in delineating parents mistreating children. In that scene in *The Burdens* where Wamala has a scuffle with Tinka, Kaija emerges from the bedroom in an attempt to pacify the two. Wamala orders Kaija back to the bedroom in a rather harsh way. Character is utilized in Wamala’s harsh facial expression towards Kaija, which definitely has a negative effect on father-son relationship. It is no wonder then that Kaija seems to have a better rapport with his mother than with the father and he spends many hours with the mother being told stories and being sung to songs.
Contrary to what seems to be the case, parents are not the only ones who fail the test of love to their children; children too are sometimes found mistreating their parents. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, Odie’s dialogue with Stella reveals why he put Wak’s picture in the dailies. This with a caption that read, “In loving memory of our dear beloved brother”. This, as hypocritical as it is, suggests some level of family unity. The issue of hypocrisy in Odie’s character is raised by Stella when she questions why he did not do the same for the father. It is then that Odie reveals his hatred for the father through a flashback, when he says that the father always favoured Wak and therefore he felt hated. As Odie is recounting this, character reveals him wearing a very hateful facial expression towards Wak and the father’s portrait on the wall. He goes ahead to show his hatred for the father by breaking the father’s portrait. Here, we see both character and spectacle being utilized.

A journal article based on a study on the role of culture in differential treatment in two-parent Mexican American families notes that children differ in such ways as in their personalities, interests, ability and maturity levels, and that they experience feelings of rivalry, hostility and low self-esteem when their parents treat a sibling more favourably. It goes on to add that this may cause them to act out in an effort to garner their fair share of parental attention and fair treatment (Mchale et al, 2005). This article to a large extent explains the sibling rivalry that is evident in this family, as we see Odie acting in a way as to try and make up for the love which he feels he was denied by the father.

Still through flashback, in *Shreds of Tenderness*, Odie continues to reveal his feelings of bitterness with his father for not pushing for his readmission into the university after his involvement in student unrest. This according to him, is despite the father having been a member of the university council. Thus, Odie feels that Wak was given an advantage to pursue his education, which made him become a lecturer. Towards the end of the play, we find Odie smashing his father’s portrait and this is seen through the element of spectacle. Character continues to play a major role here, especially in showing Odie’s hateful facial expression and dismissive gestures. The sound of breaking glass also reveals the use of music as a dramatic element to reveal this strained father-son relationship, suggesting that it is as broken as the pieces of glass.
A similar case is witnessed in *Aminata* where through dialogue, character and spectacle, it is revealed that Ababio fails the test of either burying his father or even cementing his grave. In the African tradition, this is a crucial duty expected from any self-respecting and responsible son (Imbuga, 1988; Mbiti, 1969). Through his drunken and boastful words, dialogue is manipulated to reveal Ababio’s personality, while his facial expression shows utilization of character. The cemented grave and the entire setting delineates the manipulation of spectacle. Another way in which Ababio is seen to mistreat his father is in his opposition to the father’s will, where his dialogue again portrays him claiming that the family land belongs to him and Aminata will not have a share of it. Spectacle and character delineate this when he tears the copy of Ngoya’s will that Aminata gives him. This is again unforgivable in the African context where dishonouring the word of the dead is seen as something that would even attract a curse (Mbiti, 1969). In the other four selected plays, there are no cases of children mistreating their parents. Possibly the scarcity of such behaviour in the selected plays is an indication of how un-African and unorthodox such behaviour is.

Though there does not seem to be any evidence of Odie’s allegations, through dialogue and flashback, Odie claims that Wak failed to show family responsibility when he went to exile leaving him (Odie) to singlehandedly handle family interests after their father’s demise. Character plays a role as shown in his dismissive gestures and body movement, Odie claims that the situation was made worse by that the fact that their (Odie’s and Stella’s) mother was sick. This according to Odie, was a great blunder on the part of Wak, considering the important role she had played in bringing him up after his own mother’s death.

From the foregoing discussion, the researcher notes that many times a theme is portrayed through multiple dramatic elements. This is the kind of case we have, for instance when Odie is using dialogue to discuss his relationship with the father, with his siblings, then he proceeds to narrate a flashback in which spectacle and character play a role. In such a case, it may not be easy to isolate a single dramatic element because virtually all of them come into play during a performance. Thus it appears that dramatic elements are ‘indivorceable’ from each other.
In conclusion, it appears that kind treatment of a child by the parent breeds a positive character, while the opposite also appears to be true. All the examples shown where children are treated well, show a positive correlation between tender treatment of children by parents and positive character development in them. This is something possibly the parents in the plays should have practised even with those children they treated badly.

### 3.2.3 Relationships of Children

The third level from which the study will examine family relations is that of relationships among children and this refers to the way siblings behave toward one another. Here, we look at the section under two perspectives: where they treat each other well, and where they mistreat each other. In one perspective, children are portrayed treating each other well, which is a recipe for a healthy family relationship. One such case is that of Regina in *Betrayal in the City*, who shows love for her brother Mosese, by going to petition Boss for his release from prison. This is after securing Tumbo’s help in organising for an appointment with Boss. Unfortunately, this almost ends fatally when she is forced to jump over a ten-foot-high window, to escape being raped by Boss. This comes out through a flashback between Jusper and Tumbo. Spectacle also comes into play where Jusper, Regina’s boyfriend, is so pissed off about this issue that he, swears not to continue directing the play that is being prepared for the visiting head of state. His anger is clearly visible in his angry facial expression.

This benevolent action of Regina compares very well with Aminata’s assistance to her brother Ababio’s family in *Aminata*. Aminata is said to have paid school fees for her brother’s children, but again like Regina’s case, the goal for her benevolence seems rather elusive in that just like Regina gets into trouble over the matter, so does Aminata get insulted by Ababio, who is very ungrateful. Similar to Regina’s and Aminata’s benevolence to their siblings, is Jusper’s act of avenging his brother Adika’s death in *Betrayal in the City*. In this case Adika, who is also a fellow university student of Jusper, is killed by the police during a students’ riot. Jusper, who is very bitter about this, embarks on a revenge mission, which sees him not only singing war songs, but also killing Chagaga, the brother of the sub chief. His stage-managed killing of Mulili
through a play rehearsal is also part of Jusper’s effort to avenge both the death of Adika, his brother and those of his parents. This is also revealed through character and spectacle.

Despite the character differences, we find that Bizia and Matia, sons of Kadesa are able to work together as the guards of the Shrine of Peace in *The Return of Mgofu*. This is seen through the cordial dialogue; they have in the Act One Scene Two when they are interacting with Mude. This compares well with the children of Mgofu, Nora U, and her medical doctor brother, whom flashback portrays living harmoniously, with each pursuing her/his career path. This is a case of healthy family relations.

In *The Floods*, lone children in families are common in that Nankya and Bwogo are both sole children, and so there is no much mention of siblings. We however have a brief mention of Ssalango’s twins; Kato and Nyakato who were set to become bishop and doctor and respectively. They had a loving relationship before their deaths at the cruel hands of the dictatorial regime. Flashback reveals the great missions they had to serve humanity but all this comes to an end when they are killed prematurely.

On the other hand, we have unfriendly sibling relations and this is especially true in *Shreds of Tenderness* where there is conflict almost throughout the play. Dialogue is manipulated through suprasegmental features to bring out the hostile relations between siblings.

Also referred to as prosodic features, the term refers to use of features of speech that go beyond the words or segments of a language. Mugubi (2005) observes that suprasegmental features operate at a plane higher than phonemes and that they are construed through variance in loudness or through the speed of articulation of an utterance. This means that on the page when one is reading a play, they may not be realized and it is only when spoken in a performance that they gain their actualization. Suprasegmental features include stress, tempo, pitch intonation and pause. When used together with language, suprasegmental features have the capacity to communicate novel meanings other than the ones denoted by the language segments and these can be either positive or negative ones. Suprasegmental features are among the major elements that help in the realization of performance, in the sense that they help to bring out meanings
that cannot be realized in the printed version of a play. They set drama on a higher pedestal than other creative genres, as far as communicating meaning is concerned.

Other than the ones already dealt with, features like tempo, pitch and stress are manipulated powerfully to bring out hostility between siblings. Mugubi (2005) defines tempo as the speed with which an utterance is said and he further observes that it can be used effectively to bring out such emotions as worry, annoyance, adoration, reconciliation, urgency, and even tenderness. In performance, tempo is a very effective tool of communicating the mental states of characters. Another suprasegmental feature is pitch, which Mugubi (2005) defines as the loudness occasioned by the frequency of the vibration of our vocal chords. In addition, stress refers to the amount of force applied on a tonic unit where a tonic unit in this case may refer to a syllable, phrase or a sentence (Mugubi, 2005). Just like the other suprasegmental features highlighted in this section, stress can communicate both negative emotions like anger and grief as well as positive ones like joy and peace. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, Odie’s reply to Stella on p.13 when they are discussing about Wak exploits the three features in that it is loud (pitch), said forcefully (stress) and speedily (tempo) as shown:

STEELA: He is our brother.


Dialogue delineates Stella, the symbol of love and family reconciliation, repeatedly going out of her way to try and thaw the very cold relationship between her brothers. In the first part, where Odie refers to Wak as a coward, Stella corrects him and says, “But he is our brother” (Ruganda, 2001, p.13). This she repeatedly does every time Odie utters a hateful word or statement against Wak. Later on, as Odie continues to carry out his experiments, Stella enquires whether the experiments he is carrying out have a connection with Wak’s return because as she notes, it was only after his return that Odie began carrying them out. This comes out through dialogue and spectacle where we find Odie’s experiment apparatus being displayed. When Wak comes in soon after, Odie receives him in a very hostile manner, but Stella on the contrary, seals the gap by hugging him, giving him a loving look and then going ahead to serve him with a drink. These are aspects of both character and spectacle at play. Even when Odie complains that she is serving him with
his drinks which have cost him a fortune, Stella continues to serve him. In this, she seems to quietly tell Odie, ‘After all, this is our parents’ wealth’.

Cold sibling relations are also portrayed through pause, which is an aspect of dialogue. Pause denotes deliberate cessation of speech as opposed to that which is naturally caused by breathing (Mugubi, 2005). He further notes that accomplished speakers as well as creative writers employ this device effectively to drive home meaning or even entertain. A good example where this feature is used is in Part Two of *Shreds of Tenderness*. This is where Stella and her siblings sit quietly in their sitting room, each busy with individual affairs, which prompts Stella to tell them to talk. This silence signifies the relationship distance in this family, where everyone except Stella seems to mind their own business.

Another case in which dialogue is manipulated in *Shreds of Tenderness* is when Odie shouts at Stella in Part One and tells her that he hates it when women shout. Still in the same scene, when Stella refers to Wak as their brother, Odie shouts and says: “He is our step brother!” (Ruganda, 2001, p. 13). Odie’s stressing of the words, “Our step brother” accompanied by a hateful facial expression helps to bring out his hatred for Wak. The same is true of Ababio in *Aminata* where he keeps insulting his sister Aminata. He says:

> They can say whatever they want to say. Let them talk. So What? Land is not a degree. Degrees useless. They can collect all the degrees in the world if they want, …no woman will touch my father’s land because that is my land. A will?… Zero! Did I ask her to pay my children’s fees? (Imbuga, 1988 p.23).

Odie’s perennial verbal attack on his brother Wak, where he keeps on calling him a coward is another example of a sibling treating a fellow sibling badly. This behaviour, which definitely contributes to the strained relationship between the two brothers, compares very well with Ababio’s verbal attacks on his sister, Aminata in *Aminata*. Just like in the case of Odie, both dialogue and character play a key role in delineating sour sibling relations in that both Odie and Ababio give their siblings hateful facial expressions and dismissive gestures.

This develops the themes of family and gender relations. The suicidal death of Ababio in *Aminata* is an example of a case where conflict is resolved by death, and possibly Imbuga is saying that anybody who stands in the way of change has to give way.
On Wak’s part, he also treats Odie badly and again Stella is forced to intervene. This is in the last scene of *Shreds of Tenderness* when he fishes out a pistol and threatens to shoot Odie for calling him a coward. As he points the pistol at him, threatening to shoot him, Stella passionately pleads with him to treat Odie well. Stella on her part wears an Orange T-shirt with the drawing of a heart to symbolize how loving and accommodating she is. This is spectacle at work in the name of manipulating costumes. Through spectacle too, we see Stella occasionally serving her brothers with drinks and at times, they all take drinks together and this enhances family unity.

In *Shreds of Tenderness* when Wak is declared the chairman of the premier game by Stella, the returning officer, Odie moves menacingly towards Wak, throwing him down and fixing him to the ground. This develops the theme of cold family relations through spectacle.

In the last scene, after Wak displays a file and documents proving that indeed Odie had told on him to the SRB, Odie breaks down and asks for forgiveness. He says that he is ready to pay for his sins and he actually allows Wak to beat him, as a way of paying for his sins. The play ends on a positive note with the reconciliation of the siblings, having put all their differences behind them. Here, conflict is resolved by a moment of recognition where Odie comes to realize his mistake and this paves the way for reconciliation in the family. The file and documents displayed by Wak are props that enhance the use of spectacle in bringing out sibling relations.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, a flashback in the plot also reveals how Odie puts his brother’s picture in the dailies claiming he was dead. Stella reminds Odie what he told her just before he put Wak’s picture in the newspaper. According to Stella, he said: “Sister, look…” (Ruganda, 1988, p.15). This is the height of hatred because especially in the African tradition, it is an unforgivable sin to ‘kill’ someone who is alive (Mbiti, 1969). This reveals the cold relationship that exists between these siblings and it in turn develops the theme of family relations.

Use of field jargon is another way of manipulating dialogue, where characters belonging to certain professions use register associated with that field. Mugubi (2005) defines
jargon as vocabulary used and generally understood by a particular professional group such as lawyers and doctors. Finch (2005) opines that in stylistics and sociolinguistic register, field jargon refers to a socially or situationally defined style of language. Finch (2005) also adds that many fields of discourse, such as religion and medicine have their own special language styles. In Aminata, this is used to delineate poor sibling relations where Aminata addresses Ababio using legal register as shown: “I put it to you that you hate women in general and me in particular.” This prompts Ababio to protest telling her, “… don’t lawyer me!” (Imbuga 1988, p. 52). This she says when she meets Ababio at Mama Rosina’s place. Ababio is trying to play down her status and contribution in the family, citing her gender as the main reason for her disqualification from getting the land. This enhances the theme of gender relations.

In the first scene of The Burdens, where Kaija emerges from bed and joins his mother in the sitting room, he tells her, “Nyakake has done it again” (Ruganda 1972 p. 1). This is after Tinka’s inquiry as to why he has woken up in the middle of the night. While wearing a distraught face, Kaija refers to Nyakake as “A great pisser” (Ruganda 1972, p. 1). Here, we find character at work. It takes the mother’s sort of reprimand to soften his heart by telling him that she is his younger sister. This is brought out through dialogue, where we find Kaija has baptised his sister ‘a great pisser’.

Though this does not grow to a full-blown conflict, there is some indication that Bizia and Matia have some differences and this is seen through dialogue and facial expression, where Bizia accuses Matia of being a fool for bringing strangers to the shrine. Bizia’s disapproving facial expression, coupled by his disapproving words underline this negative sibling relationship, being delineated through character.

In Shreds of Tenderness, the theme of sibling rivalry clearly comes out. Right from the start of the performance, we find Odie’s great hatred for his step-brother Wak, being shown through character in the hateful facial expressions and dialogue, where he shouts saying “STEP BROTHER”- not brother (Ruganda 2001, p. 4). We find Odie carrying out experiments where he imprisons termites in a glass jar, which finally causes their death. This seems to symbolize putting Wak through suffering until he dies, and this shows how
malicious he is towards him. So great is his hatred that while shouting all the time, he criticizes Wak’s use of utilities like drinks and tissue in the house.

Patrick Kariuki, a member of my Focus Group Discussion, feels that the set design of the sitting room portrayed in *Shreds of Tenderness* does not portray a home atmosphere and instead portrays a cold atmosphere especially as aggravated by the presence of lab equipment in the sitting room. This aspect of spectacle helps to bring out the cold state of family relations witnessed among the siblings.

In another episode, Odie venomously attacks Stella’s dignity when he reminds her of her past relationship with Gen Mohamed Ali. This hurts Stella so much that she slumps on the seat and breaks down crying. All this is seen in her aggrieved facial expression and the tears that flow down her cheeks. During the premier game, which is part of the plot, Wak wins the chairmanship, but Odie hijacks the process, throws him to the ground, and forces him to say such words as “A” for “Autocracy”. This actually brings to an end something that could have enhanced their family unity. Here, we see character being manipulated through Odie’s body movements, harsh facial expression and dialogue to portray negative sibling relations.

### 3.2.4 Relationships among Extended Family Members

Extended family members are regarded as relatives who are outside the nuclear family (Masolo & Ongong’a, 1987). In this category we have such people as aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and even in-laws (Kenyatta, 1938). In the African context, these relatives are so much a part of the family that sometimes there is no distinction between them and members of the nuclear family. A case in point is like where in P’ Bitek, (1989), Lawino refers to a member of the extended family as ‘Brother’ as shown below:

> Brother, when you see Clementine!  
> The beautiful one aspires  
> To look like a white woman; (p.37).

In this case, the term ‘Brother’ does not necessarily refer to a blood sibling but male members of the immediate community, mostly clan members. Relationships in the
traditional African society are very close and that is why for instance in *Aminata*, we are told that when Amata goes to the city to see his sick son, he is taken to see Aminata.

Similarly, a wife to one’s father’s brother is regarded as a mother too, like what is seen of Mama Rosina in *Aminata* (Kenyatta, 1938). Relationships among members of the extended family are in some cases shown to be friendly and at other times, hostile. The study first looks at the friendly relationships.

Through dialogue in *Aminata*, a warm relationship is alluded to between Aunt Kezia and her ‘fertile’ daughter-in-law, whose eighth child she is on her way to seeing, when she passes by Mulemi’s place. Similarly, Aunt Kezia also seems to have a friendly relationship with Mulemi’s children because she refers to a story which she had promised to tell her namesake (Mulemi’s daughter) the last time she had visited the Mulemis.

Through flashback, in *The Floods*, we get to learn that at Nankya’s ‘home’, ten relatives, who included Nankya’s grandmother, coexisted peacefully in a twelve-feet-room. Even when Nankya’s granny died, she and her cousins were not supposed to cry loudly to avoid disturbing the master. Disobeying this rule earned Nankya a slap from her mother but this notwithstanding, the fact that the children openly mourned their grandmother points to a warm relationship between her and her grandchildren.

This is in sharp contrast with the scenario portrayed in *Shreds of Tenderness* where through flashback, Odie reveals that he did not mourn his grandmother because she never used to give him her biscuits. This is an example of hostile relations between members of the extended family, and it is quite ironical in that in many African families, there are very warm relationships between children and their grandparents. This brings to our attention the fact that Odie seems to have such a disagreeable character that he does not seem to have a good relationship with any person in the family. It is significant to note that Odie talks badly of Wak, his father, his granny and even heavily criticizes Stella, who is the symbol of family unity in the text.

In *The Burdens*, in the scene where Tinka and Wamala remember the good old times they had, Tinka talks of relatives filling their house after Wamala’s rise, to which
Wamala replies by telling her that she always sent them away. This is through dialogue and character. We see the pain that Wamala experienced as a result of this, in his unhappy facial expression. When this matter is mentioned, he points at Tinka in a manner to say that she is the cause of the cold relations with relatives. Wamala tells Tinka that her act of sending relatives away was what culminated into their not having anyone to help them when the firing squad came for him, after being accused of wanting to overthrow the government. This also shows how character is used to delineate unfriendly extended family relations.

On cold relationships among members of the extended family, another example is in *Aminata*, where in one scene, Aunt Kezia comes to Mulemi’s house and upon finding Mulemi alone, enquires on the whereabouts of Aminata. Upon being informed by Dr. Mulemi that Aminata has gone to her people to follow up on the land issue, she proceeds to level several accusations against Aminata, one of them being that she has refused to give birth and that she is cursed. Aunt Kezia also tells Dr. Mulemi that the game he is playing is of those men whose wives have gone away. This is clearly seen through character, specifically, in her hateful facial expression as well as in her dismissive gestures. This relationship between Aminata and Aunt Kezia closely resembles that of Akoko and her mother-in-law (Ogola, 2002). Akoko’s mother-in-law keeps on saying bad things about her and just like Akoko’s case, Aminata is accused of having refused to give birth.

### 3.3 Gender Relations

According to Bullon (2005), the term refers to the idea of dividing people into the male or female sex. Kuper & Kuper (1996) on their part opine that the term gender is mistakenly taken to refer to women. They further observe that gender studies are concerned with the cultural construction of embodied human beings, women and men. Under gender relations, the study focuses on how dramatic elements are utilized to delineate relationships between the male and female genders. Since gender relations involving couples have been addressed under family relations, this section focuses on relationships that involve men and women who are not in a marital bond. Such interactions are seen for instance, in families between say a brother and a sister. Gender
relations can also be seen in work places or in other places within the wider society. The researcher singles out two levels of gender relations between men and women who are not bound by marriage. These comprise favourable and unfavourable relations. Favourable relations involve fair treatment of people of opposite sex, while unfavourable ones are seen to be discriminative of the same. Here, the researcher interrogates the utilization of dramatic elements in the way members of the two genders interact. Bullon (2005) defines discriminating as the act or system of treating different groups of people in different ways. As seen with other types of human interaction in the study, dramatic elements are heavily utilised in delineating these relations.

Cases of balanced gender relations are rare in the selected dramas. *Betrayal in the City* displays some balanced gender relations in the scene where we meet Jusper and his girlfriend Regina. Gender equality is suggested for instance, where she reprimands him while wearing a disgusted facial expression, because of coming into her house unexpectedly and consequently scaring her. Spectacle is used where she calls Jusper’s red gown ‘that thing’. Here, we find her pointing at it. She lies to Tumbo that Jusper is her cousin, possibly to avoid exposing him to victimization by Tumbo, who is one of the bigwigs of the current regime. Jusper does not object to this and is even content to act as an errandboy, where we see him wearing a happy facial expression when going to buy for them drinks. Dialogue and character are also utilized in this scene.

A case of negative gender relations is seen through plot in *The Floods*, where Kyeyune narrates the oral narrative of Nalubale, the lake goddess who was caught in Nyamgondho’s net. Diction is exploited very powerfully to graphically describe the rape act, which reveals that men’s disregard for women supersedes their regard for sacred beings. More acts of gender discrimination are shown in the way Nyamgondho starts engaging in multiple sexual affairs with the ‘straight ones’ and also begins to taunt the daughter of the lake, branding her ‘barren’. This culminates into her retreating back to the lake with all the wealth she had brought him. Plot delineates a high level of male chauvinism on the part of Nyamgondho.
In *The Return of Mgofu*, dialogue reveals a case of negative gender relations where Bizia opposes the idea of Nora (Mgofu Ngoda’s wife) giving birth inside the shrine. This is a case of gender discrimination where a pregnant woman, moreso, one who is just about to give birth is seen as having the propensity of defiling the sacred place. This calls to mind the fact that women have, over the years, both in African tradition and even in biblical history, been discriminated against, on account of states like having recently given birth, or even being in their menstrual cycle (Mbiti, 1969). The following verse from *The Holy Bible* clearly shows this: “…a woman who becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son will be ceremonially unclean for seven days, just as she is unclean during her monthly period” (Leviticus12:2). This kind of discrimination is driven even further by some communities and it culminates to denial of many other rights, such as the one to education. This is delineated through dialogue and character.

Boss in *Betrayal in the City* engages in sexual immorality and even tries to rape Regina when she goes to see him on account of her brother, Mosese. From the way he harasses Regina, it looks like he uses his power to sexually abuse any female whom he deals with. This is all revealed through flashback. We are further informed that when Boss’s wife, Mercedes complains about this, he locks her in the palace cell. This further portrays him as a male chauvinist who is not ready for accountability even to his spouse. Male chauvinism is also seen in Act One, Scene One where Doga and Nina are at Adika’s graveside and we see Doga ordering Nina around, telling her to bring soil.

In *The Burdens*, Tinka discourages Kaija from having girlfriends, after he discloses to her that he has all types of friends. Tinka warns Kaija that girls will take him away from his mother. This is seen clearly in the Tinka’s disdainful facial expression and in her gestures. This is a case of women fighting their own; a case of negative intra-gender relations.

Dialogue also highlights the issue of homosexuality which is a unique form of gender relation in *Betrayal in the City*, in the cell scene involving Jere and Mosese. When Jere talks of having done ‘it’ because of boredom, this is at first interpreted by Mosese as homosexuality; a practice that is rife in prisons. He presumes they engaged in sodomy
and even asks Jere, “You mean you did it?” (Imbuga, 1976, p. 50). All this is revealed through flashback where he later clarifies that the ‘it’ they were doing was actually acting. The mischievous look on Mosese’s face helps to show how stigmatized this practice is in this society.

Similar reference to homosexuality is made in *The Burdens* where through flashback, Wamala refers to the issue of priests having unnatural relations with altar boys. Wamala tells Tinka this as part of defending himself against Tinka’s accusation of his blasphemous behaviour. Ruganda, in this case, was touching on a matter that was to later generate a lot of public debate. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, the matter is again broached when in the play within a play involving a refugee and security officers, the constable accuses the refugee of calling his boss ‘queer’. Dialogue is used to delineate this through choice of words. Though the matter is not developed further, it shows that there were already traces of such in the society and the playwrights were possibly suggesting that these are issues that need interrogation by the society.

**3.3.2 Conclusion**

The chapter has examined two types of relations; positive and negative relations between men and women. This refers to relations between spouses or simply relations between men and women who are not in a marital relationship. Positive relations are seen where both men and women treat each other with respect. On the other hand, we have negative relations where acts of disdain and ill-treatment of opposite genders are witnessed. There is also a highlight of homosexual relations.

The researcher notes that dramatic elements played a seminal role in the delineation of family and gender relations in the performance of the selected dramas. This further proves how important dramatic elements are, in delineating the content the dramatists intended. The analysis has focused more on the elements that stand out in a single dramatic act but we must always keep in mind that even the other elements are involved but possibly on a lower scale. This is because it is almost impossible to isolate or disentangle the elements from each other. Indeed, they seem to stick together like the way metallic things stick to a magnet. This arises from the fact that in drama, an act is not just
a physical act; it is anything that passes meaning. This may include a wink, a shout, the way of moving towards someone or even silence. In drama all these have huge communicative potential (Hilton, 1987). In the next chapter, the research looks at utilization of dramatic elements in delineating intra and inter-ethnic relations.
4.0 DRAMATIC ELEMENTS DELINEATING INTRA AND INTER-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter which is based on objectives two and three, looks at two types of human relationships, based on community set-up. These are: intra and inter-community relations. Kuper & Kuper (1996) opine that the term ‘community’ refers to a group sharing a defined physical space or geographical area, such as a neighbourhood, city, village or hamlet. On his part, O’Leary (2007) views the term as referring to group of people who share a sense of belonging, based on commonalities such as residential area, culture, race, religion, profession or interests. From the above two definitions, it is clear that for a people to take themselves as belonging to the same community, they have to have some sort of shared space.

While Kuper & Kuper (1996) only focus on the geographical space, O’Leary (2007) recognizes some other socio-cultural aspects of space that define that sense of belonging to the same community. This is with the realization that belonging together derives not just from occupying the same geographical location but also from belonging to other socio-culturally defined spaces. From O’Leary (2007)’s, definition, it is clear that interactions within a community are normally guided by some laws which could be written or otherwise. At a national level, (or any other formally constituted body) such interactions are governed by a constitution. This document provides the rules that guide the operations and interactions of the members. In communities where these written rules are not there as in traditional societies, then there are unwritten rules that govern such interactions (Kenyatta, 1938). This is for the purpose of guarding against anarchy, and to ensure smooth operations in the community. This definition also means that for instance, people from different geographical regions could still see themselves as on, based on a factor like religion. A good example of this is like the congregation of Muslims from all over the world that takes place in the city of Mecca, annually (Bakari & Yahya, 1995). On the other hand, they could occupy the same geographical area and perceive
themselves as belonging to different groups. Such a case is noted in Wamwere (2008) where he cites cases in Kenya where people of a different ethnic group living in an area predominantly occupied by another single language group would be seen as ‘madoadoa’, a Kiswahili word denoting impurities. Wamwere (2008) further observes that prior to the 2007/8 post-election violence in Kenya, this is what culminated to what came to be referred to as ‘ethnic cleansing,’ which meant ‘cleaning’ the community by removing those perceived to be outsiders.

Intra community relations refer to relationships within a community of people who view themselves as one, based on all or some of the factors named above. We begin this section with the analysis of the intersection of dramatic elements and intra-community relations.

4.2 Intra-community Relations

‘Intra-community relations’ may be classified under either harmonious or disharmonious categories. Harmonious intra-community relations denote where there exist friendly and cohesive relationships among members of a community that live together. While it may seem like this should be the obvious case especially for a people who are regarded as one, it is not always the case. We begin by looking at harmonious intra-community relations in the selected dramas.

In Aminata, harmonious intra-community relations are evident with the many social gatherings that take place, indicating a closely-knit community. The men (elders) in the community seem to have a strong bond and through dialogue, we see them just socializing or discussing community matters. A good example is the episode where elders, Amata and Midambo come to see Jumba over the issue of Aminata’s land. Through spectacle, a picture of the elders walking resolutely into Jumba’s homestead to intervene in a matter concerning one of their own, shows just how harmonious community relations are. So solid are they that no community member, not even the headman, will be allowed to destroy that equilibrium.
Through dialogue again, strong intra-ethnic relations are seen in the leadership system, where it is revealed that the chief’s stool is supposed to alternate among the different clans. When the pressure to release Aminata’s land becomes too much, Jumba tells his wife, Mama Rosina that, their family, Nyarango’s clan has some two remaining years to sit on the stool of headmanship. He divulges to her that he intends to leave the stool of rule to her to complete the two years. Membe is said to have different clans which alternate leadership positions and even engage in different social activities like song and dance festivals. Community relations in this play are given great weight, where we find activities like community gatherings and visits being very common.

While appreciating Aminata’s kindness in getting the dance group a choreographer, Midambo observes that, now that they have a teacher, they are dancing so well that they are likely to do well in inter-clan festivals. Midambo notes that for some time in the recent past, Ivona and Keveye clans have outdone them in the dance festival. Music is employed her, especially where we see Midambo dancing a bit to imitate the singing of the dance group. To show strong intra-community relations, music is manipulated in the following ways:

i) Poetic expressions – These are segments or phrases that are used either as salutations or expressions to capture mood. These include, ‘salutational phrases’, which are short phrases that are used and accepted in the community as a form of greeting, during public gatherings. They mostly go without tunes but they have rhythm which enhances their musical aspect. It is important to mention that the term ‘music’ covers not just songs that have tunes, but a wide range of dramatic expressions, which can be said to have rhythm and patterning of sounds. Thus, music includes songs, dances and even various forms of poetic expressions (Kebede, 2005). A case in point is at the handover ceremony where the community spirit resonates strongly, when the characters addressing the crowd repeatedly shout “Membe Yoooh” (Imbuga, 1988 p. 75-80). Here, music and spectacle are utilized extensively where people yell, sing and dance in response. The repetition of these words is a good example of the way music as a dramatic element is manipulated through the use of salutational phrases, to enhance the theme of intra-community relations. This handing over that is supposed to mark the change of leadership from
Jumba to Mama Rosina compares well with the ‘itwika’ (change) in Kenyatta (1938) which marked the breaking away from autocracy to democracy, after which there was feasting and celebration for six months, after the acquisition of independence in Kenya. Just like this case in *Aminata*, it marked a change from one era to another.

Similarly, in *The Return of Mgofu*, salutational phrases are used at the National Remembrance Day when Mgofu Ngoda and Nora U address the excited crowd. In this case, Nora U is able to resonate with the crowds’ festive mood by use of appropriate interjections. This is seen where, upon taking to the dais to address the crowd, she shouts:

NORA U: Mndika ngiyio!
CROWD: Ngiyio!
NORA U: Mndika Ngago!

These joyful moments shared by the whole community delineate harmonious community relations.

Salutational phrases’ are also used in *The Burdens*, where immediately after wearing the Teacher’s suit, Wamala goes into a reverie, which again translates into a play within a play of a political rally. He goes ahead to address ‘the people’ at the rally telling them: “Wamala Oyee!” (Ruganda, 1972 p. 30). Wamala’s action is reminiscent of his behaviour during his hey days in politics, when he would do this for political expediency, to enable him bond with his electorate. In addition, such catchwords would appeal to the community spirit of patriotism, consequently enhancing harmonious intra-community relations.

Another form of poetic expression which delineates intra-community relations is recitations, such as those that Agege makes at the rehearsal to the hand-over ceremony, in *Aminata*. As he walks along a path in the village, harmonious community spirit resonates in his loud calls, “Come one, come all” (Imbuga, 1988 p. 72). While they may not have a tune to make them qualify as music in the strict sense of the word, they display a high level of rhythmic patterning, which enhances their musical value. Similarly, in *Shreds of Tenderness*, such poetic language is used during the students’ riot at Odie’s university.
where they repeat: “A PEOPLE UNITED SHALL NEVER BE DEFEATED!” (Ruganda, 1988 p. 45). This helps to bring out the cohesion in students’ relations, which is a form of intra-community relations. In  *Betrayal in the City*, poetry is also used for example in Jusper’s idiophonic mimicking of gunshots, tu-tu-tu-tu. In  *The Floods*, Kyeyune’s ‘... call of the beckon, no one can resist it’ is also poetic. In these last two examples, they portray other themes and not intra-community relations.

ii) Rhythm and dancing - These represent another aspect of music through which intra-community relations are delineated. Crystal (2010) sees ‘rhythm’ as the perceived regularity of prominent units in speech. Bullon (2005) takes ‘to dance’ as to move the feet and body in a way that matches the speed or movement of music. Nketa (1974) notes that dancing may range from simple to intricate movements or slow to fast action. Alternatively, it may involve such action as stamping of feet or movement of various parts of the body in regular rhythms (see pictures 5 & 6 on p. 78 & 83 respectively). In  *Aminata*, we see the body movements of dancers who are clad in sisal skirts and have fastened cans and jingles on their legs. This enhances the dramatic nature of the scene and develops the theme of intra-community relations.

Similar singing and dancing is also witnessed during the last scene of  *The Return of Mgofu* where Mgofu Ngoda comes to attend the celebration at Mndika. This enhances the theme of intra-community relations. In a study that focuses on matters similar to the ones under discussion, Zodwa (2007) interrogates the use of the song genre in Wole Soyinka’s  *The Lion and the Jewel*, as well as that of such other dramatic features as ritual, dance, drumming, chants and mime for thematic development. While making reference to Soyinka’s other related works, the article demonstrates his dexterity in incorporating into his plays, elements of Irish myths that bear semblance to his Yoruba oral tradition.

iii) Accompaniments represent another way in which music is manipulated to delineate strong intra-community relations. Bullon (2005) defines the term ‘accompaniment’ as something which is used or provided with something else in order to improve it. Accompaniments in a dramatic performance may include such instruments as drums,
whistles and horns (Kebede, 1969). There is also the use of whistling as well as ululations that accompany singing and dancing. In the introduction, to Tsikhungu, Barasa, Khaamba (2015), Terry Gunnel’s description of one performance, very well captures the use of accompaniments in a performance as shown below:

The performance begins with a thunder of ethnic cultural drums and a whirling sound of native flutes accompanied by the occasional roar of bullhorns… we are greeted by a thirty-strong ensemble of singing youths dressed in a variety of bright costumes and body paints, all of them engaged in fierce, concentrated action, their bodies vibrating, their eyes shining bright, their limbs keeping tight time to the ever-changing rhythms of the drums, their voices resonating as a choir, echoing those of the lead dancers (p. 164).

The sound of drums and that of flutes plus the roar of horns, clearly adds great dramatic value to the entire performance without which this performance would not be what it is. Like in the above case where accompaniments such as drums and horns are used, it is the same in both Aminata and The Return of Mgofu. In the songs that are sang during the entertainment session at the handover ceremony and that of Mndika’s National Celebration Day (see picture 6 on pp 83). While celebrating their cultural heritage, the songs bring out such themes as, respect for human life, patriotism, reconciliation and the quest for peace, all which develop the theme of intracommunity relations. Here, the choice of songs that bring out these themes is a very deliberate choice on the part of the director, to be able to deliver the author’s message effectively.

In The Floods, Shreds of Tenderness and The Burdens where there is a lot of suffering and restlessness, the community is not very cohesive and there is therefore no much celebration like what is witnessed in The Return of Mgofu and Aminata. Music is nevertheless employed by the director as background music to capture such aspects as the mood of sadness and danger.

iv) Use of local language in songs - This refers to use of a language like Kiluhya or Kiswahili in the songs sang. In Aminata, there are songs that are sang in Kiluhya, the mother tongue of Imbuga (Imbuga, 1988; Otipo, 2002) for example during the handover ceremony and again in The Return of Mgofu during the National Remembrance Day. This is in line with the Sociological Literary theory which says that you cannot divorce a
work of art from the community that gives rise to it (Ngara, 1990; Finnegan, 1977). An artistic piece both borrows from and gives to the community it originates from. This kind of language in songs, together with words like ‘va nzogu’ in *Aminata*, which the elders refer to when they come to see Jumba, help to enhance the theme of intra-community relations. This is where people feel that they are bound together by the use of a common language or that some other people are outsiders by virtue of their inability to use a language.

In *Aminata*, Agege’s costume enhances intra-community relations in that he is now a community officer. This is brought out through the title on his jacket which reads, “I.O.” meaning ‘Information Officer’. Character as a dramatic element enhances the delineation of community harmony through Agege’s body movements and jolly facial appearance. His friendly demeanor as he invites everyone to come for the handover ceremony symbolizes peace in the community.

This comes in sharp contrast with *Betrayal in the City* where Mulili, the clown of the play is a source of community disharmony. Unlike Mulili who disagrees with almost every character he interacts with, even causing the death of Kabito and others, Agege is able to put his points across without breeding animosity. While in *Aminata* we may not see another ethnic community as such, it is evident that there is the immediate community being dealt with and the wider community. Amata narrates of his experience in the city where he is able to interact with people of the wider community. This is seen through dialogue and flashback.

In the incident in *Betrayal in the City* where Jere and Mulili go to Doga and Nina’s village to stop their (Doga and Nina’s) dead son’s shaving ceremony, Doga recognizes Jere and through dialogue, enquires whether he’s not Kaleka’s son. Through their discussion, plot reveals that Jere has been sent to work in his village, and even Doga claims that he had shared the knife with Jere’s father. It seems that this softens Jere and he is willing to let them continue with the shaving ceremony. When Doga invokes closeness with Jere’s father, by virtue of having been his agemate, Jere softens due to intra-community relations. He respects the relationship between his father and Doga and
even tries to convince Mulili to allow them to proceed with the shaving ceremony, which he calls ‘just a simple community ritual’. This is a case of healthy intra-community relations. We find that Jere even goes ahead to draw a pistol at Mulili when he becomes stubborn, so as to see to it that he helps people from his community.

Contrary to the harmonious intra-community relations discussed above, intra-community relations are sometimes disharmonious, for instance in *Shreds of Tenderness*, where the whole atmosphere is riddled with insecurity, fear and violence. Even soldiers are raping the very children they are supposed to guard, for example what is witnessed during Stella’s school rape incident. There is so much suspicion and betrayal that even brothers are betraying one another. A good example of this is the case of Odie having told on Wak, his brother. Flashback plays a major role in portraying this type of relationship where Wak recalls what happened, and this is confirmed through spectacle. Wak extracts a file with SRB information showing how Odie told on him. This is confirmed by the fact that the document even bears Odie’s signature.

Flashback again reveals a case in *Shreds of Tenderness*, where Daudi’s dog is said to have barked at the presidential motorcade thereby precipitating a court case against both Daudi and the dog. While this may sound like a ruler-ruled relations issue, it also shows the suspicion and level of betrayal in the society, which makes the possibility of strong community relations remote. Possibly this explains why Odie and even Stella are still single despite being of marriageable age, since solid relationships in this community seem rather elusive. Plot again plays a role through the play within a play of the coup scene, where Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour” is seen hiding. All this portrays disharmonious intra-community relations. In *The Burdens*, a similar situation seems to prevail where the Wamala family fights its economic battles alone. Despite having had a lot of friends during Wamala’s hey days in politics, there is no evidence of community support to this family. Wamala himself confesses that when the firing squad came to arrest him, nobody came to help him.
In Act Two, Scene One of *The Return of Mgofu*, Mude, the messenger from Mwami Rocho informs Kadesa, the keeper of the shrine that the second madness has broken out again in Mndika and that people are maiming one another and torching houses. Those doing it claim to have been trained in Nderema; a refugee camp under Kadesa. This is all seen through character and dialogue. As Mude is passing this information from Mwami Rocho, Kadesa wears a serious look, which helps to bring out the negative effect the item of news has on her. Earlier on, character is used in the discussion between Mude and Kadesa where Mude enquires from Kadesa why the shrine is called “the Shrine of Katigali” (Imbuga, 2011, p. 12). While wearing a serious look, Kadesa explains that the name reminds the people of the first madness, when people of the same community killed one another like ruthless brutes. In this particular case, hostile intra-community relations among people of the same community are revealed through flashback. This is why Mwami Rocho, the leader of Nderema sends Mude to warn the people whose origin was Mndika but they are now refugees in his nation.

The dialogue of Kadesa, Adonija and Mude reveals that there was burning of even places of worship, showing serious hostility in the community. This incident compares well with the burning of people in an Eldoret church which took place during the 2007/8 post-election violence (PEV) in Kenya (Wamwere, 2008). There is use of dialogue to bring out the hostile intra-community relations, where Kadesa calls the people who are fighting ‘ogres’ and then later says that Bizia has “a heart of stone like that of his people in Mndika” (Imbuga, 2011, p. 17). This hostility within the community is further revealed through plot when Kadesa narrates how she ate meat in a dream. According to Kadesa’s interpretation of the dream, eating meat symbolizes death. As if the first madness was not bad enough, we are told that the second madness has begun. This reveals a serious case of hostility within the community that even forces some of them to move to a neighbouring community (Nderema). It is clear that despite having their origin in Mndika, the people in Katigali’s shrine now consider themselves a different community.
4.3 Inter-community Relations

Inter-community relations refer to interactions involving one community as a single unit with another, where the difference between the two may be based on factors like language orientation, colour or geographical location. In such a case, people thus view those not of their inner groups as outsiders, a perception which if misinterpreted can breed conflict. Inter-community relations are a form of international relations, about which Kuper & Kuper (1996) note:

…international relations have existed ever since people formed themselves into social groups, and then developed external relations with groups like themselves. Relationships were most frequently conflictual or warlike, although occasionally, they were cooperative but they took place in a system of anarchy and not within the framework of any political or legal or customary rule. But from the seventeenth century onwards, international law and the problems of war and peace began to attract attention (p. 46).

From the above quote, it is clear that communities have always interacted with one another, the bottom line being whether the interactions are cordial or hostile. The other notable thing is that with time, the need for control of those relations has continued to emerge, leading to the formation of bodies to control those interactions. This calls to mind such bodies as, United Nation (UN) Habitat, which checks environment matters; United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), which oversees human rights issues, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which controls the use of nuclear weapons and others. These and many others not mentioned here primarily seek to provide checks and balances against excesses in these interactions.

In the current dispensation, advancement in communication and technology has revealed that we live in a global village, where the need for greater cooperation among community groups is seminal, as no country is an island. Inter-community cooperation has been witnessed in such sectors as health, trade, education and environment among others. This has seen the convening of international conferences and also the formation of regional economic blocs that are meant to increase productivity in the individual and collective communities. Just like intra-community relations discussed above, inter-community relations can either be harmonious or hostile.
Harmonious inter-community relations involve a situation where people of different communities live in friendly and supportive relationships. This means for instance, maintaining peace with each other, respecting each other’s boundaries and also providing help in times of calamities. This type of situation seems rather uncommon in most cases, with the disharmonious ones being more prevalent, but there are a few cases of friendly inter-community relations. In *The Return of Mgofu*, flashback reveals that whenever Mndika got into problems, they got help from Suguta, a much smaller community than themselves. In *Aminata* also, dialogue reveals the existence of healthy inter-community relations where the elders talk of inter-clan festivals, in which Membe is expected to do well this time, since Aminata has hired for them a choreographer. During the visit of elders to Jumba, Midambo decries Membe’s recent past’s performance where Ivona and Keveye clans have outdone it in the dance festival. Midambo’s words reveal that there is healthy competition among different communities.

Similarly, friendly inter-community relations are alluded to in *The Floods* where Boss is said to have gone out of the country on a peace-keeping mission. This suggests that countries and communities help in brokering peace on the international scene. This is again seen in *Betrayal in the City*, where another head of state is coming to visit Kafira. A notable case of harmonious inter-community relations, is revealed through dialogue and character, where Bizia in *The Return of Mgofu* tells Mude that their people (from Mndika) are a good example to show that refuges from neighbouring communities can also add value to the host communities. Again, for Mwami Rocho to have sent Mude to escort escapees from Mndika to a safe place in Nderema, and later to warn Mhando of the outbreak of the second madness, portrays good inter-community relations.

On the other hand, disharmonious inter-community relations are also evident. This refers to cases where different community groups regard each other as enemies. These community groups could be living in one neighbourhood or far apart. Sometimes these comprise foreigners who are living in a neighbouring country for such reasons as war in their country, or even when pursuing other interests. In the cell scene in *Betrayal in the City*, spectacle and character are manipulated through props and body movements, when the soldier gives Mosese tea with milk and not Jere. The soldier then proceeds to say that
he does not even know why he has given him (Mosese), and he is not from his tribe. This reveals negative inter-community relations, where people believe that they only need to help people within their ethnic groups.

Through plot, the theme of tribalism, a form of negative inter-ethnic relations, is further highlighted when we get to know that Boss has hired Mulili, his cousin to senior government positions. As if this is not bad enough, he has also awarded him supply tenders, for example the one of supplying milk to the university, not to mention rewarding him with chunks of land and grade cows for carrying out certain assignments. While this may pass as mere nepotism, it on a wider note reveals tribalism, where people favour those from their community. Mulili seems to have an express communication line with Boss where for instance, he is able to go directly to Boss during the lunch break of the committee meeting day and tell on Kabito, upon which Boss orders his (Kabito) ‘silencing’. Another case like this is where Mulili calls Boss concerning the university milk tender and Boss reverses the tender allocation from Kabito to Mulili. While it appears so easy for Mulili to get in touch with Boss, that does not appear to be the case for other characters, otherwise, possibly Kabito would also have been able to call Boss to campaign for himself; as far as the milk tender and the framed-up charges were concerned.

Through dialogue in *The Return of Mgofu*, Mude reveals that they are not involved in Mndika’s insecurity. Apart from just disowning Mndika, he goes ahead to say they will not allow exiles from Mndika again. This reveals disharmonious inter-community relations. Through the dialogue between Bizia and Adonija, it is revealed that hostile inter-community relations are fanned by belonging to different communities and bearing different names. The role of media and leaders in fanning negative inter-community relations is highlighted. Through flashback and dialogue, Adonija recalls a case of how people planned to attack people of a different ethnic community. They planned to buy weapons and to use vernacular radios so that people of that different community would not know what is being planned as shown below:
ADONIJA: I have evidence here. I saw them kill one another because of soil. It’s all here. I secretly recorded some of their meetings. There were preachers, priests and a chief. They were all there, plotting to shed the blood of their brothers and sisters.

BIZIA: What is your name?

ADONIJA: Name? I have already answered that question. Everything starts with a name and then you are either friend or foe. What is in a name? Father, Pastor or Chief, what do you mean? … Ngoda’s eyes” (Imbuga 2011, p. 22).

In a case similar to the one highlighted in *The Return of Mgofu*, Wamwere (2008) notes the following on the role of media in the 2007/2008 post-election (PEV) violence in Kenya:

As we face the danger of balkanization from Majimbo, we need to remember that certain media, especially F.M radio stations have been twin sisters of Majimbo. They have deliberately fragmented Kenya into ethnic linguistic enclaves. As in Rwanda, vernacular and English F.M stations have done their best to antagonize and divide Kenyans by spewing out lots of ethnic propaganda and hate, to the communities that listen to them (p. 41).

From the above quote, it is clear that the media (especially radio stations), can and is often involved in fueling conflict in the society as was the case in Kenya. This is done through dividing people using the languages they speak and the names they bear. Radio stations are also portrayed as media for spreading propaganda. This should possibly be a wakeup call for the media to avoid becoming partakers of such conflict.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, through play within a play, we see an episode where a lady refugee is being harassed by male immigration officers. Play within a play is another way that is used to manipulate the plot whereby the playwright interrupts the ongoing events and injects a new play within the ongoing one. Plays within plays contribute to both thematic development as well as the entertainment needs of a playwright. This is because they not only break the monotony of dialogue, providing the much-needed comic relief, but also bring in new aesthetics from the new play. Ruganda is especially fond of this device and uses it widely, with Imbuga also using it to some extent in *Betrayal in the City*. In the above mentioned example from *Shreds of Tenderness*, Odie, Wak and Stella divert from their normal roles as siblings, where they would possibly be involved in
verbal wars and take on new roles as immigration officers and a female refugee respectively.

In this play within a play in *Shreds of Tenderness*, the lady refugee is asked for registration documents, after which the immigration officers demand a body search. This is regardless of the fact the she is female, so the fact that they are male amounts to gender discrimination. This is because the constitutions of most countries in the word guarantee right to dignity, where in the event that a body search is needed, a female should be searched by a female and vice versa. Still in another play within a play, plot is utilized where Mr.“No-Fear-No-Favour” (Stella) is telling a refugee (Wak) to go back to his country. Outsiders bear the brunt of this evil, where the elements of character and dialogue are used to insult refugees.

People of other countries are discriminated against either by having framed up charges leveled against them or simply being told to go back to their countries. In this case, the lady refugee is falsely accused of farting. In *The Floods*, a similar scenario is portrayed. Through flashback, it is revealed that one of the accusations levelled against Ssalongo was that he was carrying on dubious trade with dangerous refugees. In *The Return of Mgofu*, when Bizia is defending refugees from Mndika who have settled in Nderema against accusations from Mude, he tells him that even Nderema residents have also settled in Mndika. In reply, Mude claims that those were criminals from Nderema as shown below:

BIZIA: But your people have also settled in Mndika, haven’t they?

MUDE: Those were Nderema’s original troublemakers. They were criminals (Imbuga, 2011, p. 20).

From these examples, it seems that refugees unwittingly find themselves carrying the tag of criminals. Through dialogue in *Shreds of Tenderness*, foreigners are accused of depleting the scant economic and human resources of the host countries in that they take the jobs and women of the insiders. While on the surface this may seem to suggest that women and jobs are at the same level, it actually reveals society’s tendency to perceive
the acquisition of women (read spouses) and jobs (read economic empowerment) as elements of successful life.

Hypocrisy is shown to tarnish inter-community relation where for instance in *The Floods*, Boss is said to have been escorted on a peacekeeping mission first before the boat can come to evacuate citizens from the island to safety. This is ironical because there is no peace in Boss’s nation, yet he is going to keep peace in another country. A similar situation is portrayed in *Betrayal in the City* where Boss is over-concerned about creating a good international image more than improving the welfare of his people. This is the reason he goes into great details to even constitute a well-funded committee that is to oversee the entertainment matters of the visiting head of state’s visit. That the play that will be performed should have the words ‘progress’ and ‘development’ in every page is simply a public relations gimmick, that does not really hold water.

Poor intercommunity relations are shown in *The Burdens* when Wamala, through dialogue reveals that it was the Yankees who cheated him that he could make a better leader than the incumbent. This got him involved in treasonable activities, that culminated into his political fall. This means sometimes political regimes do sometimes undermine other political systems. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, dialogue too reveals that the strong Western nations meddle in the affairs of African nations, sometimes refusing to intervene in wars in African nations because of their own vested interests. In addition, they are shown to give aid with strings attached.

### 4.3.1 Conclusion

In this chapter, the study has addressed various aspects of community relations, in line with objectives two and three. Some of these are healthy while others are unhealthy. It has also emerged that both healthy and disharmonious relations are contributed to by some underlying factors. The role of international bodies and the media in maintaining harmonious coexistence in the community has also been highlighted. In the next chapter the research looks at relations that are based on various types of socio-economic classes in the community.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 MANIPULATION OF DRAMATIC ELEMENTS IN DELINEATING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS RELATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter which is based on a combination of objectives two and three, examines the intersection between dramatic elements and socio-economic class relations. O’Leary (2007) defines the term ‘class’ as a way of categorizing the population according to the nature of their employment, wealth and/or social status. Bullon (2005) defines ‘socio-economic’ as a factor based on a combination of social and money conditions. Human beings all over the world affiliate themselves to different classes. This is because no human being is an island and so everyone seeks to belong (Holfold, 2004). The socio-economic class of an individual sometimes causes her/him to affiliate herself/himself to a particular group. Sometimes this happens spontaneously, while other times it is deliberate. In the selected plays, there are several categories of socio-economic classes such as, the economic, religious, political and the professional ones. The chapter examines the manipulation of dramatic elements to delineate interactions of people in these classes.

5.1.1 Economic Class Relations

Bullon (2005) defines the term ‘economic’ as the state of being connected with trade, industry and the management of money. This section interrogates the role of dramatic elements in delineating economic class relations. Under this, we recognize three categories namely: the rich versus the poor, the rich versus the rich and the poor versus the poor.

Stevenson & Waite (2011) view the term ‘rich’ as a state of having a great deal of money or assets. It also takes the term ‘poor’ to denote a situation of lacking sufficient money to live at a standard considered comfortable or normal. While the former denotes a case of comfort and luxurious living, it also suggests a state of want and deprivation for the latter. Other than through dialogue, one may be able to distinguish rich persons through...
such indicators as: the type and location of houses they live in, the food they eat, the cars they drive and also the type of clothes they wear. While the same is also true of poor people, it is important to note that some people are known to create a false impression of being rich when they are not, by trying to ape the rich. A good example of a character who poses like a rich man while he is indeed a person of humble means is Hlestakov in Nikolai Gogol’s *The Government Inspector*. He manages to create this false impression through his expensive clothes, the act of boarding a hotel and also ordering expensive food.

A major example of a case depicting the relationship between the rich and the poor is in *The Floods*, where the rich are represented by Bwogo and his father, while the poor are represented by characters like Kyeyune, Nankya’s mother and the fisherman. Relationships between the rich and the poor are characterized by a wall of cold distance. Bwogo’s father is said to own a big mansion that is surrounded by a perimeter wall. This is where Nankya’s mother used to work but she lived in the servant’s quarters. In this case, the perimeter wall symbolizes the economic divide between the rich and the poor.

A flashback of the plot in *The Floods* plays a major role in delineating this relationship, where Nankya reveals that her mother was working for Bwogo’s father as a house help. Dialogue also plays a role where Nankya recounts her past to Bwogo. There seems to exist an official and distant relationship between Nankya’s mother and the family of her boss. This is first and foremost revealed through flashback in the symbolism of the perimeter wall, which apart from being a security measure, is meant to keep off people who don’t belong to the rich class. The dog that barks fiercely at little Nankya when she climbs atop the wall to have a glimpse of how the rich live, reveals this distant relationship. Nankya’s mother trains her to respect the privacy of the rich. She is warned by her mother against peeping on the side of her master’s house as part of her growing up etiquette. Even when her grandmother dies and she and her cousins wail loudly, Nankya says that her mother slaps her hard, telling her, “Master hates noise” (Ruganda, 1988, p.111). It is no wonder then, that Nankya grows to have great hatred for the rich, even to the extent of joining a human rights’ group.
The relationship between the rich and the poor is also seen through the character of Bwogo, and his perception of the father. Even as a young child, as shown through flashback, he is portrayed as being very protective of the family estate. Whenever Nankya would climb over the wall to have a view of the high life of the rich, Bwogo, even as a small boy, would invite the dogs to attack her. While Nankya’s act of climbing the wall symbolizes the attempt by the poor to rise on the economic ladder, Bwogo’s attack of her, on the other side represents the determination of the rich to maintain the status quo by suppressing and oppressing them.

Bwogo talks very fondly of his father saying that he was a very hardworking old man. The dialogue between Nankya and Bwogo reveals the difference in their attitudes towards the latter’s father. While Nankya believes Bwogo’s father shot to fame due to nepotism and having the right connections with the leaders of the day, Bwogo believes it is his determination and ambition that propelled him to success. Through the dialogue between Nankya and Bwogo we realize that the rich like to associate with the rich, and that is why Bwogo is taken to a boarding school that was initially meant for whites only. This dialogue reveals a trend in the newly independent African states where the acquisition of independence and the consequent exit of the colonialist had no major positive impact. The wealth and power of the white capitalists were basically transferred to African leaders. This meant that while in pre-colonial days Africans were exploited and oppressed by their white masters, in post-colonial days, Africans are exploited by their own leaders (Wa Thiongo, 1982).

Through flashback, we learn that Bwogo’s father was a mean man who paid Nankya’s mother a paltry seventy shillings a month, for all her effort to be efficient. Nankya’s mother decides to call it quits once the African masters take over, because they have thrown decorum to the winds. In Wa Thiongo (1982), the African bourgeoisie is impersonated in the character of Kioi, the rich Christian capitalist, who tricks the peasant (Kiguunda) into using his land’s title deed as collateral for a loan. Kioi lures Kiguunda into taking this loan to finance a church wedding, knowing very well he cannot afford to repay it, only for him to buy this land and evict Kiguunda’s family when it is auctioned.
In the play within a play in *The Burdens* where Wamala goes to see Mr. Kanagonago over the Two Top Matches idea, plot is used to show class relations between the rich and the poor. Wamala and Tinka momentarily abandon their roles as man and wife and take new roles as Wamala and Vincent respectively. Away from her normal picture of a nagging wife, Tinka now cuts the image of an expert in matters of fashion and decorum. All this comes after Wamala wears the suit he has borrowed from the Teacher. This is part of his preparation of going to see Vincent Kanagonago, a businessman and an aspiring politician, over the International Slogan Syndicate idea.

As Wamala enters the house of Mr. Kanagonago, he is rather unsure of how to approach him, when he finds him extremely busy, studying a building plan. At first, we find ‘Mr. Kanagonago’ (who is wearing a serious look) ignoring his greetings in a style characteristic of the way the rich people behave towards the poor. Wamala, who is already feeling uncomfortable in such unfamiliar environs, greets him again and this time he responds casually, without looking up to see the person greeting him. This clearly brings out the rift between the rich and the poor. Wamala then lights a cigarette and Kanagonago, who is wearing the serious look of a busy, rich person, waves his hand to show repulsion, arising from the irritating smell and smoke of Crown Cigarettes. He offers Wamala the executive ‘555’ type of cigarette, if only to calm the situation. When Wamala tries to talk to him again, he tells him to wait. Wamala then goes ahead to comment on the nice surroundings Vincent enjoys, and we find dialogue being used where Kanagonago questions Wamala as shown: “…something you have come to see me about?” (Ruganda, 1972 p. 53). Character and spectacle also play a role in depicting all this.

On the relations depicting the rich versus the rich, we note that the rich are cohesive among themselves and strive to keep off those who do not belong to their camp. This category mainly comprises politicians and rich businessmen. In many instances, the rich are seen to own such things as, plush cars, large farms and buildings. As noted earlier, Bwogo and his father represent the rich in *The Floods* together with the rich half-wit who attends a meeting with the head teacher, Nankya and Bwogo.
In *Betrayal in the City*, the rich are represented by the likes of Tumbo, who is said to own blocks of flats, and Mulili who owns large tracts of land and grade cows. The rich are generally close allies of Boss, who have accumulated their wealth through unfairly acquired business opportunities, derived from their close association with Boss. This clearly comes out through spectacle and dialogue, in the verbal exchange that takes place between Kabito and Mulili during the entertainment committee meeting. Nicodemo, whose main concern is in the size of the ‘potato’ to be earned from the meeting as sitting allowance is also in this category of the rich. Dialogue and character reveal a high level of competition among the rich as they try to outdo one another in getting business opportunities, as seen in the conflict between Kabito and Mulili. The harsh facial expressions they give one another, coupled by threatening gesturing, portray the role of character in revealing this competition. There however exists what would appear as ‘unholy unity’ among the rich here, where despite their individual differences, they are united in their quest for a bigger potato.

Through dialogue, economic class relations play out in another play within a play in *The Burdens* where Wamala, acting as a politician in a political rally, meets his fellow politicians. Spectacle and dialogue portray Wamala, acting very warmly towards his fellow rich friends, for example where he gives Drake, a fellow VIP, a very warm reception. This is seen especially in the warm handshake and bright smile that he gives him.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, the family in question is portrayed as well-off, having inherited a fairly large estate from the father. The father was a man of considerable influence, judging from his position as a member of the university council and the fifteen hundred acres of land which he is said to have left Wak. This is the land that Odie transfers to his name after Wak goes to exile. All this is revealed through flashback and dialogue. Spectacle also plays a role through the set design as shown in the expensively-furnished sitting room. The relationship between the siblings is portrayed as cold, especially due to competition for the father’s land which plays out between Odie and Wak. Stella’s flashback reveals how Odie went ahead to transfer the land from Wak’s name to his, so as to become the new owner. This is after having paid for special clearance of the land.
which reveals his (Odie’s) materialistic nature. There is also competition for utilities like drinks, tissue paper, which Odie continually complains that Wak is misusing. In reply to Odie’s complaints, Wak assures him that he did not come to try to wrench the land from him, and so he need not fear.

On the other hand, relations among the poor are highlighted through ordinary villagers who struggle to meet their basic needs and have little to spare. Some of the cases portrayed are very dire and the effects of poverty are clear. In The Floods, the poor class is represented by the likes of Nankya’s mother, the fisherman and Kyeyune. They are portrayed as cohesive, long suffering, hardworking, desperate but also dignified. After being coaxed by Bwogo to give some information about her background, Nankya, in a flashback, describes her mother as, “… ordinary, palms serrated. Eyesight bad. Trachoma. Back slightly bent… and legs (Ruganda 1988, p.112).

From this description, it is quite clear that she was a woman who went through hard times. Despite her challenged economic background, Nankya’s mother still maintained her personal dignity and ensured that she brought her daughter up under good moral ethics. Apart from this, through both flashback and dialogue, we learn that she not only trained her daughter to be content with their humble lot but also refused to be degraded for the sake of financial gain. Nankya tells Bwogo that her mother once resigned from a job as a house girl upon realizing that her African female boss was throwing her underwears and menstruation gear everywhere. At no time are we told she complained, even though they lived in a tiny room, shared amongst twelve family members. Nankya’s mother’s character is possibly derived from her staunch Christian orientation, where Nankya reveals that she was a staunch Catholic, who would not fail to go to church come rain or shine.

Away from Nankya’s extended family background, relations among the poor are shown to be cohesive. During one episode in the second Wave, Kyeyune enters Nankya’s house excitedly, only for a shocked Bwogo to fire at him, thinking he is an enemy. This of course traumatizes him, sending him into a wave of prayer and supplication. This is shown through spectacle and also through Nankya’s character. Her body movements and
facial expression portray her great love for old Kyeyune, in the way she goes to him, lifts him up from where he has fallen, examines him, then goes on to encourage him to calm down. This happens even as Bwogo interprets his traumatized religious antics as madness (Ruganda, 1988). Quite often, we find Nankya urging Bwogo to be more understanding of the old man. This comes out through Nankya’s facial expression, where she wears a loving look towards Kyeyune and an appealing one towards Bwogo.

In *The Burdens*, relations among the poor are revealed largely through the interactions of members of Wamala’s family who are: Wamala, Tinka, Kaija and Nyakake. Unlike in *The Floods* where the poor are presented as cohesive, here, poverty seems to drive a wedge between the players, causing the relationships to oscillate between intermittent cohesion and disharmony. Cohesion is seen for instance in the scene where Wamala is recounting to Tinka the suffering that the family goes through, largely because of his jobless status. Here, spectacle is used, where Wamala drops a cup to the ground to indicate that it is empty, which in turn means there is no water even to wash the face. He also uses gestures to accompany his dialogue as he repeats the daily routine: “…Tea without milk. Cold potatoes and beans…” (Ruganda 1972, p. 25). His dialogue largely reflects the suffering the people in the low class undergo. He also mentions the other problems that those who live in the slums have to endure, such as ‘the little anthills’ of children which force one to walk carefully lest you step on them, the noise, the stench and the insecurity (Ruganda 1972).

In the above dialogue, Wamala speaks as a representative of his poor family. It is then no wonder that when they enact the play within a play of his visit to see Vincent, he comments about the good environment Vincent enjoys. This play within a play helps develop the theme of poverty, largely through Wamala’s appreciation of the environment Vincent lives in. Even though this is coming from Wamala’s mind, it is worth noting that having been a minister, Wamala is well conversant with the surroundings the rich enjoy. Thus, when he tells Vincent about the rich place, he is only borrowing from his history. Wamala’s family currently lives in a hut which has strands of soot dangling from the roof and whose mud-smeared walls are darkened by smoke. Spectacle, through costumes,
reveals Tinka’s, Kaija’s and Wamala’s clothes, that are either old or ragged. Here, spectacle is used to delineate the low economic class to which this family belongs.

Togetherness among the poor is shown where Wamala gives Tinka some of the fifty shillings which he had allegedly earned from Vincent, telling her, “Let us share my first earnings” (Ruganda 1972, p. 27). In this scene, the poor are seen united in their poverty, but in most cases in The Burdens, poverty seems to drive the spouses away from one another. In an earlier scene, Kaija and the mother are portrayed as united in the common goal of acquiring a bed for the former. This follows Kaija’s persistent calls for one, as necessitated by Nyakake’s frequent wetting of the bed. The Teacher has also added his opinion on the matter, saying that a boy of fourteen years should have a bed of his own (Ruganda 1972). This comes out through flashback. In response to this situation, Tinka promises Kaija that she will buy for him a bed with the proceeds of her next mat. This comes out through dialogue.

Spectacle is further used to delineate the low economic class of the family through the second-hand bed that Wamala brings for Kaija soon afterwards. The family’s poverty is shown in the fact that Wamala can only afford to buy a second-hand bed. Wamala’s feeling of achievement is cut short when Tinka disapproves of the second-hand bed, but Wamala puts her off by reminding her that some families have never even seen tenth-hand beds. The dialogue between Tinka and Kaija earlier on, during which Tinka promises to buy for Kaija a nice little bed with her proceeds from the next mat, indicates that the issue of purchasing a bed for Kaija has been an uphill task for the family.

Character here also plays a part in that the facial appearances they wear show poverty. At the beginning of the play, the opening scene features Tinka, who is said to wear an I-have-been-through-hell face. On Kaija’s part, when he comes from bed claiming that the great pisser has done it again, his mother tells him that all the time, she knew that the issue was not Nyakake’s urine but that he wanted some food. This comes out through the dialogue with his mother, where after expressing his disgust with Nyakake’s behaviour, he requests for some food. Kaija and his mother continue to talk and in the course of this, she enquires from Kaija why he no longer laughs or smiles, but only sulks. After trying to
defend himself unsuccessfully against this accusation, Kaija owns up but also blames the mother for her “… hot temper of late” (Ruganda, 1972 p. 9).

The low economic class of this family is further depicted through spectacle; as part of his preparation to visit Vincent, Wamala borrows a suit from the Teacher. Upon wearing the suit, his appearance undergoes a complete transformation, due to the contrast between his clothes and those he has borrowed. This causes Tinka to say, “Complete metamorphosis.” (Ruganda, 1972, p. 47). Carver (2009) observes that contrast, especially in costuming can be very useful in depicting the socio-economic class of individuals (see picture 3 p. 76).

In *Betrayal in the City*, the poor are represented by the family of Doga, and while they may not be as poor as the family of Wamala in *The Burdens*, they are depicted as ordinary villagers struggling to make ends meet. Spectacle plays a role in showing this as Doga and Nina wear cheap and ordinary clothes. The fact that they just accept whatever action is meted out to them without even instituting legal action against the authorities, indicates just how hopeless their situation is. Character plays a role in depicting the poverty that afflicts this family, as seen in the desperate looks on their faces, and in Nina’s appealing waving of hands. Jere tells Mulili to allow them go on with the ceremony as they are just poor villagers. When they feel it is too much, Nina resorts to her last weapon, which is threatening to strip naked before the two men. There is also use of sad background music to depict the plight of the poor in this scene.

In *The Return of Mgofu*, there is very little to do with matters of economic class as the play focuses mostly on correcting the mistakes of past leadership and reconciliation. In *Aminata*, there are no cases of serious poverty as witnessed in *The Burdens*, but characters like Agege and Ababio are generally poor. Spectacle reveals this through costume, where Agege is said to wear a shirt with lice and at one time Jumba promises to give him one without lice. This derives from the fact that lice are generally associated with poverty. There are cordial relations among the villagers who are portrayed as a closely-knit community. Care for common good and the needy is given prominence, for example where the women give Agege their pieces of meat when he cries, during the
Chicken Soup ceremony. Though flashback and dialogue reveal that Ababio has to be assisted with school fees for his children by Aminata, his poverty is self-inflicted through his drunkenness.

5.1.2 Political relations

Bullon (2005) defines the term ‘Political’ as matters of public affairs and/or the governance of a country, and its relations with other countries. O’Leary (2007) defines governance as the system and processes used by states and organizations to manage their affairs. Political relations then refer to the type of interactions that manifest themselves in leadership and government circles. In this study, this involves characters who play such roles as headmen, chiefs, members of parliament or even heads of states. Leadership positions and those who occupy them are significant in any society, because they have implications on every other aspect of life of the population within their areas of jurisdiction. Two types of political leaders are portrayed in the plays; the first comprises wise, patriotic and visionary leaders, while the second comprise foolish, dictatorial and self-seeking ones.

The first time we get a hint of the political leadership in the play, The Return of Mgofu is when we first see Mude sitted on a stool outside the Shrine of Peace. His demeanor as he sits there quietly, suggests a man who is conversant with handling weighty matters. The fact that he travelled from Nderema very early portrays him as a dutiful man. Upon being told by Kadesa through dialogue that he is an early riser, he says that Mwami Rocho, the leader of Nderema had instructed him to be there before cockcrow. Mude wears military uniform, a kind of costume which, apart from symbolizing political power, also indicates there is insecurity and that is why when Bizia comes in, he draws his pistol ready to atttack.

An example of good political leadership is seen in The Return of Mgofu where the political class is represented by the likes of Mwami Mhando, the leader of the nation of Mndika and elders, Mtange and Mdanya. This class also includes Mwami Rocho, who heads Nderema. Unlike in most modern societies and nations, these political leaders are portrayed as self-sacrificing. Dialogue plays a major role in delineating political relations
where at the beginning of the first scene of Act Three, Mwami Mhando, the leader of Mndika consults and holds a discussion with elders of his inner circle. Here we see tranquility and harmony between the leader and his support team. This consultative style of leadership most likely accounts for the peace in the community of Mndika, as the elders are able to communicate the heartbeat of the people to the head of state.

A display of good political relations is witnessed in Mwami Mhando’s court when he meets elders Mtange and Mdanga and moreso in his relationship with them. Despite being a semi-modern society, the traditional method of ruling using a council of elders is evident in this community. The elders are portrayed as being wise, frank and judicious. Even their very demeanor suggests people who handle weighty matters.

The elders and their leader, Mwami Mhando have a cordial, open and respectable relationship and this is evident in The Inner Circle scene, when they are led into Mhando’s chamber by Sariku, the state hostess and usher. Spectacle is utilized to reveal the warmth with which he receives them, and while wearing a jovial facial expression, he tells them, “Welcome elders, come right in and sit down” (Imbuga, 2011, p. 37). Apart from the ordinary word of welcome, his dialogue is qualified by the intensifier ‘right’ which shows Mhando’s willingness to consult with his elders. Such discourse, which in this case is revealed through Mhando’s dialogue with his council of elders, paves the ways for healthy discussions. In this kind of conducive environment, the elders and Mhando are able to discuss developmental matters.

Among the issues Mhando and his elders discuss, is that of titles, where he floats the idea of ceasing to call the leaders, ‘elders’ just for the sake of it. From the dialogue that takes places in this scene among the three leaders, we get a picture of the way matters of leadership are handled in this state of Mndika. Through dialogue, we find Mhando suggests the idea of changing the titles but does not dictate to them. Inclusivity is revealed in this dialogue, where he seeks the consent and view of each individual elder. It is then not surprising that elder Mtange comments that while some communities are forcing their leaders to leave office, the people of Mndika want their leader Mhando to stay on. The title, ‘Suja’ that Mhando suggests reflects the element of simplicity and
humility. Dialogue and flashback highlight the theme of gender relations, revealing that the political leadership is considerate of women’s views.

Spectacle is largely utilized here, where even the sitting arrangement at Mhando’s court adopts a round-table format, to pave way for open and healthy debates. Mhando also seeks to have deep, individualized relations with his co-leaders where he seeks elders Mdanya’s and Mtange’s views, individually. The snacks and drinks they take when discussing the issues highlight the use of properties in the spectacle. Apart from revealing Mhando’s generous character, this highlights togetherness and unity of the leaders.

The theme of globalization, even in this humble setting, is hinted at through flashback where Mhando broaches the issue of Suguta, a village which is to the west of Mndika, and quarter its size, but is said to have recently beaten them four-one in a game. Through dialogue, Mhando leads the elders to discuss the reason why there are numerous disasters, such as floods and drought in Mndika, while the other communities have excess of good things. As the elders start revealing some of the maladies bedevilling their land, immediately Mdanya begins to blame Suguta, even claiming it has an advantage over Mndika (Imbuga, 2011). Mtange’s reply provides a frank and forthright answer to the question of blame-game; where communities and individuals blame others and give excuses for their failures, instead of looking for lasting solutions or checking themselves to see where they could have gone wrong.

From the discussion of the three leaders: Mhando, Mdanya and Mtange, it is clear that the current political leadership is grappling with the repercussions of past bad governance. Character also plays a major role through the serious and condemning facial expressions of the leaders upon mention of negative issues such as when Mhando says, “Our people need to be made to touch the scars of bad governance” (Imbuga, 2011, p. 51).

Earlier on in their discussion, the three leaders had broached the idea of bad governance where Mhando had talked about a time when the elders began to not only throw words at one another but proceeded to use physical violence and this is what culminated to their religious leader going to exile (Imbuga, 2011). The theme of impunity is also addressed through the dialogue of the elders, and flashback reveals that there was a time
when Mndika was doing well, prior to the misgovernance of their predecessors, which drove the country to scarcity, political instability and a state of material and psychological dependency. This is not to mention the brain drain of wise and resourceful people such as Mgofu Ngoda. The current leadership, which is portrayed as wiser, more foresighted and more youthful, has the heavy task of correcting the mistakes of the previous generation of leaders, which as dialogue reveals, perpetuated such evils as impunity. The current political leadership seems to have the advantage of being more enlightened and united. Mhando seems keen on correcting the wrongs performed by his predecessors. This is seen in strategies like getting Mgofu Ngoda to come back to Mndika, changing titles that are no longer relevant and restructuring the current political set-up to include female leaders. The leaders are concerned about the state of dependency that has gripped the nation of Mndika, for example where Mtange says, “… when famine strikes us, it is Suguta we rely on, and now their children are beginning to fill our schools.” (Imbuga, 2011 p. 42).

Despite the apparent cohesion of the current political leadership, Mhando seems rather uncomfortable with the character of Suja Mdanya, who seems to have a negative attitude and wrong ideas on how things should be. For instance, when the issue of bringing back Mgofu Ngoda, who is already assimilated in another community is raised, Suja Mdanya even wonders what value repatriation of an old man would add to the nation of Mndika. While Mdanya cuts the image of the biblical doubting Thomas, who questions and doubts everything, Mhando and Mtange have the foresight to see the therapeutic power of getting Ngoda back, even if it is just for a few hours. This is because as Mhando says, he is a symbol of the community’s wellbeing.

At one point in their discussion, Mhando, in what would look like a dressing down of Mdanya, openly tells him that he doubts if he is right in involving him in the discussion. Despite this, it is quite evident that Mhando has the wisdom and patience to withstand him, which enhances relations in the realms of the political class. In Mhando, Imbuga portrays a leadership that has learnt from past mistakes, and is willing to go an extra mile to put things right.
This is significant as it is in sharp contrast with what happens in *Aminata*, where dialogue reveals that Jumba the headman, has a cold and hostile relationship with the elders. In this case, we see a headman who is not willing to be asked any question by his elders and worse so, one who does not want to incorporate the views of the very people who are supposed to be the pillars of his leadership.

In sharp contrast also to the type of leadership portrayed in *The Return of Mgofu*, in *Shreds of Tenderness*, the political class is portrayed as cruel, intolerant, suspicious and murderous. This is shown through the SRB force which is always on the hunt for real or perceived enemies of the dictatorial regime. Flashback is utilized to bring out relations in the political front, where Odie recalls how general Mohamed Ali signed his father’s death warrant. When Odie is narrating this flashback, he wears a sad face, which shows the pain he felt concerning this. It seems that General Mohamed Ali was a major representative of the ruling regime. Odie’s father also seems to have been a key player in the community, although his operation seems to have been more on the professional side. General Mohamed Ali acts on behalf of the political class, possibly to eliminate those elements deemed hostile to the regime of the day. This explains the reason Odie gives Stella a harsh look for having befriended somebody who participated in the killing of their father.

Through flashback again, Wak reveals how Odie told on him to the SRB. There is use of props to prove the evil nature of the political regime when towards the end, Wak fishes out a file from his bag which has the record of the information that Odie gave to the SRB, and it has his (Odie’s) signature in it. As represented by the SRB, the political class is portrayed as suspicious, malicious and one that involves itself in witch-hunting.

In Part Two, there is mention of such an accusation as “Pepe pissed on the President’s portrait in a public bar” (Ruganda, 2011 p. 126). Another accusation in the SRB file is that of Daudi, whose dog is said to have barked at the presidential motorcade. In this incident, there is the utilization of dialogue and spectacle. In this dialogue, emphasis is placed on the content words of these accusations. “Pepe, spat, president’s, portrait”. This is meant to show the seriousness with which these accusations are treated. In the second
accusation, like in the first, emphasis is placed on the content words to bring out the weight of the accusation as shown: “Daudi’s, dog, barked, presidential, motorcade”. Dialogue is further manipulated through alliteration, where in the first case, the words, Pepe, president’s and portrait are alliterated, just like Daudi’s and dog, to enhance the portrayal of the regime’s harshness.

The evil of the political class is revealed in the fact that even a dog is being charged in court and with the serious charge of treason. The owner, Daudi is also accused of concealing the intent of the dog. The incumbent political regime has a high affinity for self-preservation, whereby anything that suggests opposition or a threat on the SRB and other elements surrounding Boss causes them to react with heavy retribution.

The political class in *Shreds of Tenderness* is characterized by fighting and violence between antagonistic forces, where towards the end of the performance, Wak, in a dialogue with his siblings, refers to the rounding up of spies whose names will be in the dailies of the following day, prior to their being paraded and possibly executed at the city stadium. The public is said to have been invited to witness. This captures the animosity of the public towards traitors. In the scene of Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour”, the people in the bar are shown to be afraid and suspicious and this is seen when shooting is heard outside.

In the political arena in *Shreds of Tenderness*, struggle for power and supremacy is very evident, where frequent coups and attacks are reported. In the play within a play involving Mr. “No-Fear-No-Favour”, and through dialogue, it is reported that the Queen Mother is coming menacingly to avenge the death of her son. She seems to represent an antagonistic force to the ruling regime, where the struggle for supremacy is rife.

Guerrilla movements are common, which explains the reason for the suspicion and hunt for those who are deemed opposed. In the play within a play of leader and subject in the first Wave, Odie acts as the leader (His Excellency) while Stella acts as his trusted subject. Here, the play within a play is used to highlight the high state of suspicion and restlessness of the ruling regime due to constants attacks both from internal and outside
forces. This is also seen through dialogue, where Odie as His Excellency asks whether the reported attack is from invaders or insurgents.

Dialogue in this play within a play reveals that in the political arena, there is a very high level of distrust, where it seems that no one trusts any other. This is shown where His Excellency is asking his subject to kill the Queen Mother, who is said to be staging an uprising. She is said to have been joined by many of their forces, especially those comprising people who are dissatisfied in various ways. In the political arena, the formula of self-preservation for incumbent leaders seems to be that of fighting and eliminating real and imagined enemies. The executive arm of this formula is the SRB, which is said to be ruthless and murderous.

Though not to the scale portrayed in *Shreds of Tenderness* and *The Floods*, there is still some suspicion and animosity in political circles in *The Burdens*. There seems to be some stability in the leadership of the time, so that people are almost able to go about their daily activities normally, unlike in *Shreds of Tenderness*, where normal operations are almost at a standstill. Despite this semblance of normalcy, leaders still suppress their perceived opponents as seen in Wamala’s complaint that even getting a job or associates after his political fallout is not easy. This followed his accusation of wanting to overthrow the government through the sponsorship of Yankees. Political leaders are portrayed as materialistic, selfish and hypocritical.

Dialogue is used to show the character of leaders in *The Burdens* for example, when Tinka walks into the house while on her brewing endeavours, to find Wamala in a suit. She gets surprised at the sudden change in appearance and consequently offers to improve his grooming, in an attempt to make him real presentable. Her words, “You really are looking like somebody” and her other words like, “Marvellous! Absolutely unbelievable metamorphosis!” are just examples of how dialogue is used to bring out class relations (Ruganda, 1972, p. 47). After these remarks from Tinka, Wamala goes into a reverie, re-living his former position as a minister and he is seen interacting with his fellow politicians in a political rally. This suit also shows how costumes can reveal class.
Through the play within a play that follows, and also through dialogue, spectacle and character, there is a highlight of how the political class interacts. Through dialogue, Wamala interacts with such political allies as Drake, Patel and Enock. Through character, we find Wamala smiling broadly as he ‘shakes’ the hands of imaginary fellow politicians. From their interactions, some attributes of politicians, such as being hypocritical, immoral, materialistic and ambitious are revealed. At one point, Wamala tells a fellow politician that if he wants to survive politically, he must never keep peasants in the sun for too long. This statement shows the inner circle interaction of the rich politicians, whereby they maintain some secrets from the poor. The fact that Wamala, an African can conspire with a person like Patel, an Indian, against his fellow Africans suggests that the bond of the economic class supersedes that of the tribe or race.

5.1.3 Professional Class Relations

According to Stevenson & Waite (2011), the term ‘professional’ refers to someone who is in a paid occupation, especially one involving training and formal qualification. Thus, the term “professional class” in this study refers to people in formal employment and in mainstream careers such as: lawyers, doctors, teachers, soldiers and journalists, who earn their living by practising their specialties. This class also comprises intellectuals who mainly include university lecturers. The study looks at three main types of professional groups and their relations and these are intellectuals, soldiers and journalists. This is because their roles in the plays are outstanding. Being among the educated in the society, most professionals are portrayed as opinion shapers in the societies they live in. In The Floods, the characters who represent this class include Nankya, Rutaro, the soldiers who rape Nankya’s mother, Norman and Nankya’s colleagues in the lecturing fraternity.

In Aminata, professionals are represented by characters like Aminata, and Dr. Mulemi. In The Return of Mgofu, we have Nora U and her brother who is a medical doctor. In The Burdens, we have the Teacher and the soldiers who come to arrest Tinka. In Shreds of Tenderness, we have Wak, the soldiers who attack rioting students and the constable at the immigration office. In Betrayal in the City, we have the prison warden, the soldiers who attack rioting students and Mosese.
a) Intellectuals

According to Stevenson & Waite (2011) an intellectual is someone who has a highly developed intellect. Intellectuals in the plays are generally portrayed as ambitious, aggressive, intelligent and hardworking. The intellectual world is portrayed as competitive and rather harsh and therefore wading through its waters is portrayed as a tough game. It is a man-eat-man world where it is each man for himself and God for us all. This state of affairs may have been brought about by a number of factors. First and foremost, the capitalist ideology which seems to be the prevalent in the societies portrayed in the plays studied. It directs people’s actions not only in the economic field, but also in other fields of their lives. In the capitalist world, each individual seeks to outdo the other and that dictates that each individual minds her/his own interests. Their intelligence and courage, coupled with good oratory skills, allow them to challenge the evil actions of authorities and powerbrokers, which often gets them in trouble with the political class. In *The Floods*, this class is represented first by Nankya and her fellow lecturers. In the scene where Bwogo and Nankya are discussing Nankya’s imminent promotion, we learn, through dialogue and Bwogo’s flashback, of the yardsticks by which success in the intellectual world is measured, which include, publishing strong academic papers and moral uprightness. In the dialogue between Bwogo and Nankya, his disdainful look towards Nankya reveals his attitude towards her. Bwogo highlights his dialogue by raising his voice to indicate the significance of this achievement, as far as the intellectual world is concerned.

Competition in this world seems to cut across even gender lines, where even women compete for high offices. Bwogo’s disdainful facial expression and sarcastic voice towards Nankya as he tells her about this, reflects the gender barriers that women have to circumvent to get to leadership positions. As Bwogo explains in his dialogue, Nankya’s ambition to become chair of her department is complicated by the fact that the university senate comprises very pious Christians who would not support the promotion of someone who is pregnant outside wedlock as is the case with Nankya.
Other players in the intellectual and academic world include absent characters like Rutaro and Norman, a doctor who is said to have been Bwogo’s collegemate in Delhi. Bwogo’s doubt of Nankya’s moral uprightness is brought out through character, in the suspicious look he gives Nankya as he narrates the flashback of the suspected relationship between Nankya and Norman. He says, “Yes, a male doctor. By God, I can see it all. You are crafty” (Ruganda 1988, p. 121).

The mischievous look he wears, suggests that Nankya had an affair with Norman. It clearly brings out the suspicion with which he views female intellectuals. Bwogo also uses the same sarcastic look when accusing Nankya of also having had an affair with Rutaro. Bwogo’s voice as he enumerates Rutaro’s attractive credentials, in a flashback, is laced with suspicion and jealousy. “…And I haven’t forgotten Rutaro either. Tall and handsome. First Class Honours Animal Husbandry…” Nankya’s resentment of Bwogo for having facilitated the killing of Rutaro is brought out in the vindictive and confrontational voice that she adopts, when she tells him “You did not let him” (Ruganda 1988, p. 125).

Nankya’s confrontational voice that is mentioned above is just one among a variety of voices that a speaker can use. Bullon, (2005) defines ‘voice’ as the sounds that you make when you speak or the ability to make these sounds. Ommanney and Schanker (1972) observe that an expressive voice and clear correct speech are not only important for the acting student; but also in every walk of life. They further observe that an effective voice derives from bodily relaxation and good posture, since there is an intimate relationship between the voice, the emotions and the body, therefore a person’s bodily or emotional state is reflected in the voice. Ommanney and Schanker (1972) note that such bodily and emotional states as anger, fatigue, hurry, nervousness, illness or tension can be traced in the voice. They present themselves through a variety of voice types such as a high-pitched monotonous voice to show anger, and a colourless voice to show boredom. On the positive side, a person who is poised, self-confident and healthy tends to have a pleasing voice.
On voice production, they opine that this is done by the air from the lungs passing over the vocal folds, which are thin curtains of muscles with delicate edges. These folds respond instantly and set up vibrations or waves. These vibrations become sounds and are amplified when they strike the resonating chambers of the throat, head, nose and mouth. The sounds produced depend on the shape of the resonating chambers which are in turn determined by the position of the tongue, soft palate, lips and the lower jaw. Effective speech and voice production derives from deep central breathing, an open relaxed throat, a flexible tongue and lips and a relaxed lower jaw. An actor or speaker of a language can improve her/his speech through regular exercises and speech control which can be learnt in dramatic schools. Voice training is one of the pillars of Stanislavski’s Method Acting whose ideas the study utilized. Among the actors I interviewed, Busienei, Lydiah and Chavene admitted to having done thorough voice training in order to be able to project the voices of their characters correctly.

In addition, Ommanney and Schanker (1972) observe that a major element in the voice training is breath control. This is especially important since there is a difference between regular breathing and breathing for speech, in which case regular breathing has equal inhalation and exhalation time. Breathing for speech on the contrary requires very brief inhalation period and a slow, controlled exhalation period. Since speech is produced when breath is being exhaled, in voice training, one should inhale through the mouth, which allows for quicker prolonged exhalation. Controlled breathing is more important for the actor than deep breathing, for voice tone depends on it.

In concurrence, Finch (2005) names the following as the main organs involved in production of speech: lungs, lips, the tongue and teeth. According to him, speech is formed by a stream of air coming up from the lungs through the glottis into the mouth or nasal cavities and being expelled through the lips or nose. He further observes that it is the modifications we make to this stream of air with the organs mainly used for breathing and eating that produce sound (see Fig. 5.1 ahead).
In the performance of the plays dealt with in this study, voice is largely exploited as a way of manipulating character. Through the type of voice that a character uses, we can tell a character that is say, good-intentioned, malicious or even hateful. Again, the type of voice used can give an indication of the mood of the speaker where someone who is annoyed may use a high-pitched voice. This is the kind of voice that Nankya uses to confront Bwogo in the case mentioned above.

In *Shreds of Tenderness*, when Odie is narrating the flashback of the incident that culminated into his expulsion from the university, it is mentioned that lecturers are silent and cowardly about agitating for students’ affairs leaving the students to fend for themselves. This suggests that lecturers have a responsibility to mind their students’ wellbeing. Instead, they are unwilling to soil their hands. Like everybody else, years of suppression by the government have made them paranoid. One would expect them to be more courageous, being members of the higher class of the society. However, they succumb to the choking fear that afflicts the rest of society. Odie’s facial expression of disgust, while narrating this flashback, brings out this sad state of affairs. The fact that they have succumbed to the plague of fatalism is further illustrated by the fact that they are boozing, suggesting that like everyone else in the society, they have lost hope.

The picture below shows the path that air follows in the course of speech, while moving from the lungs, upwards and out through either the mouth or the nose. It also shows the organs that are involved in this and the various articulation points.
Fig. 5.1  **The organs of speech.**  Source: Finch (2005 p, 34).
Here, the element of dialogue is widely used especially in Wak’s conversation with spies, and later in Odie's narration. Like everyone else, lecturers are also bent on self-preservation. This is seen in Odie's speech where he says: “... the academic staff is cowed and cautions. Busy boozing and protecting their pockets (Ruganda 2001, p. 55).

In *Shreds of Tenderness* again, the various professional groups are highlighted and these are portrayed uniquely. Through Wak’s flashback in Part Two, he reflects on his flight to exile after an encounter with SRB spies. By that time he was working in the university as a lecturer, whereby he reports that he was, supposed to be delivering a talk on “THE INEVITABLE ROAD THAT WILL LEAD US BACK TO DEMOCRACY.” (Ruganda 2001, p. 123). Dialogue helps to delineate lecturers as a professional group, where Wak is shown to have an encounter with SRB spies. Wak’s intelligence is seen whereby upon being asked to help trace Wak Witu, he quickly hatches a plot to confuse them, thereby earning himself some time to run for his life. Lecturers, as seen through Wak are intelligent, socially committed but also cowardly and lacking in moral principles. In the above mentioned example, we see the social commitment of lecturers in that he planned to go and give a talk concerning democracy. The fact that Wak was going to deliver a speech that dealt with a societal concern displays the fact that lecturers are willing to participate in correcting the wrongs in the society. This bring out the theme of struggle and sacrifice in ensuring right governance. Lecturers here, who represent intellectuals are seen as being willing and ready to provide leadership in the cause of fighting for democracy. Also, included here though different from lecturers, are members of the university council, as seen through Odie's father. While wearing a hateful facial expression, coupled by a dismissive waving of hands, Odie narrates a flashback of his interaction with his father. Dialogue is used to bring out his bitterness with his father, whom he claims never forgave him for leading riots in the university. This is where Odie says, he led fellow students to repeat: “A PEOPLE UNITED SHALL NEVER BE DEFEATED” (Ruganda 2001, p. 47). In this, thought as an element is used to bring out the theme of struggle and determination on the part of students. On the part of the university council, we see firmness and professionalism, where indisciplined students, like Odie are not spared in spite of their connections. We also see an element of dictatorship. This is brought out through character as seen in Odie’s bitter look and body
movement, whereby they are just said to be punishing rioting student without going out of their way to dig into the cause of this.

b) **Journalists**

Stevenson & Waite (2011) define the term ‘journalist’ as a person who writes for newspapers or magazines or prepares news to be broadcast on radio or television. Journalists collect, record and disseminate information through such media as the printed word and electronic means among others. This category of professionals is not represented by present characters in *The Floods* but by characters in the play within a play, whose roles are enacted by Bwogo himself. This is seen where Bwogo (as a journalist with notebook; JWN) interviews Nankya concerning her winning of a coveted award that attracts three other journalists, namely: lady journalist (LJ), journalist with camera (JWC) and one with a microphone (JWM). This category is portrayed as aggressive, competitive, persistent and persuasive. They are shown interacting with each other and also with their client, Nankya.

Spectacle is utilized when bringing out the aggressive characters of the journalists, where each journalist uses the tools they have to capture the moment. While the journalist with a notebook uses his notebook to capture the moment on paper, the one with a camera does so by taking photographs. On his part, the one with a microphone captures the interview verbatim. The only journalist who seems not to have any tool is the lady journalist. Light as an element of spectacle is used where flashes of light are used to indicate that photos are being taken by the journalist with a camera. Character is used as they push one another to capture the moment. This is shown in their body movements. Facial expression is also utilized and a good example is through the journalist with a microphone who wears an impatient facial expression and whose wiping of sweat on his brow shows how hard he has worked. He pushes his way past the others in order to outdo them in the game of journalism. The competition among journalists is further portrayed through character where the other journalists look at the journalist with a microphone with hateful and impatient expressions. That one journalist takes the earliest
opportunity to steal the moment from the others, portrays journalists as being over-aggressive, theirs being a world of cut-throat competition.

There is nevertheless some collaboration that is indicated by the fact that the journalist with a microphone announces Nankya’s final response to the other journalists and this is greeted with laughter by the others. Gender discrimination is shown to exist among journalists especially where Nankya smiles at and begins to answer questions from the lady journalist. This comes as a surprise as she is shown to snub the other three male journalists. The hostile and inquisitive facial expressions of the other journalists reveal gender hostility between the male and female genders.

The climax of the collaborative spirit among journalists is portrayed when the lady journalist questions Nankya on what she intends to do with the ten thousand dollars that she gets as part of her award as shown below:

   NANKYA: ...arm my people. My comrades in arms.
   LADY JOURNALIST: I beg your pardon.
   NANKYA: Yes, arm the Patriotic Front down South. They need every penny of the prize (Ruganda, 1988 p. 35).

As soon as Nankya confirms her response, that indeed she intends to arm guerilla fighters to kill, all the three male journalists join in one accord to condemn her. This is not only shown in their words but also in their hateful and disapproving facial expressions. The journalist with a notebook is especially hateful in his looks towards her. The three also raise their voices to indicate shock and disappointment.

When conflict in a play (as in life) becomes unsustainable, it climaxes in some form of dramatic explosion (Pickering, 2005). In tragedy, this explosion is referred to as catharsis which is a cleansing of the audiences’ feelings of pity and fear. In any play, climax is basically conflict driven to the apex, the moment of maximum tension. Pickering (2005) further opines that a good example of catharsis is that which accompanies Oedipus’s gouging out of his own eyes after recognizing his own self-demonstrated extreme theatrical explosion. While modern climaxes do not always involve death or
disfiguration, they certainly contain elements of heightened emotions. This is one of the mini climaxes portrayed in the play before the main climax.

Journalists are also portrayed as being articulate and to have a knack for flowery language. This is especially so with the journalist with a microphone, who uses vocabularies when interviewing Nankya on her community, and on Bwogo’s poem. His flair for difficult words continues as he spews vocabulary after vocabulary, when questioning her about her acceptance of such an exorbitant prize, while yet decrying the poor living conditions of her people. The pride of the journalist with a microphone is clearly evident in his enunciation of words and in the bravado that shows on his facial expression.

This same pride and overconfidence is evident in the journalist with a camera, who describes the photo that he takes Nankya as one that will hit the headlines. All this is said in rich, flowery and poetic language. His persuasiveness as he coaxes Nankya to pose well for the photo is shown mostly through his smiling face and the gestures he uses. This is also true with the lady journalist who persists in seeking Nankya’s word on how she intends to use the money she has received.

c) Soldiers

A soldier can be defined as someone who serves in the military forces of a country (Bullon, 2005). This category of professionals refers to persons who serve in uniformed service and who are mandated to handle arms in the course of their duty of keeping law and order. The study looks at the way soldiers interact among themselves, as well as the way they interact with other members of the society. They come through as cruel, heartless and inhumane. This is especially seen in Shreds of Tenderness through flashback where, during his dialogue with Stella, Odie mentions the incident where soldiers are said to have descended on Stella's school and raped the girls. Upon mention of this, character comes into play where Stella immediately wears an agitated and sad look, due to the pain she and her fellow students suffered. Also, in the earlier mentioned incident of a students’ riot at Odie’s university, Odie narrates how the soldiers descended on them with dogs and the result was that there were several casualties on either side.
This is seen through Odie's dialogue in which he raises his voice to show his anger over this. A similar scenario is revealed in *Betrayal in the City*, where soldiers attacked rioting university students using live bullets, which culminated into the demise of Adika. In the incident of Doga and Nina’s encounter with soldiers, Mulili and Jere, there is a slightly different picture where Jere displays humane feelings towards the old couple, but Mulili stubbornly remains harsh and cruel to them. All the same, this softening may have been partly occasioned by his discovery of the relationship that existed between his father and Doga through his dialogue with him (Doga). His human nature is however further strengthened by the fact that he not only prays at Adika’s grave but also makes an offering. Possibly in this, Imbuga is trying to say that all is not lost and that there are still some upright people in a profession that is reputed to be notoriously evil, the world over and even in historical times. This picture of soldiers is also revealed through character and spectacle. Soldiers are also shown to be corrupt, for example in the case of the prison warden who apart from being harsh, tells Mosese that he does not know why he has given him tea and yet he is not from his community. He confesses to Jere to have killed many people and threatens to do the same to him unless he stops talking. Soldiers are generally portrayed as trigger-happy, ready to kill at the slightest provocation.

They are also seen to be immoral and predatory whereby instead of protecting the people they are employed to protect, they become the predators. Many times, they are seen colluding in wrong-doing, for example in the case of Stella’s school rape. In the case of the constable in *The Floods*, we see him together with his senior, trying to sexually abuse the lady refugee. Soldiers are portrayed as exploitative, and bent on misusing the power vested in them. The idea of soldiers just going contrary to the order they are supposed to maintain is quite common, where they are portrayed as immoral, corrupt, violent and predatory.

**5.1.4 Religious Class Relations**

Stevenson & Waite (2011) define the term ‘religion’ as the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. The ‘religious class’ may thus be taken to refer to a group of people who believe in the superhuman power
mentioned above, or who subscribe to and follow the teachings of a religious system, that is based on a Supreme Being of one form or another. In this case, the Supreme Being may refer to such beings as the God of the Christians, Allah of the Muslims, or even a god or gods of traditional religious communities. Examples of this include: God as shown by Pastor Ngoya in *Aminata*, Allah and the traditional god(s) in *The Floods*. The religious class depicts itself in many shades in the different plays. While the religious beliefs and the behaviour of the believers of different religious groups is found to differ in the plays studied, there is one common denominator that cuts across the different religions and that is their piety.

The religious class in *The Return of Mgofu* is partly represented by the likes of Kadesa, Mgofu Ngoda, Bizia and Matia. These are portrayed as pious, loving, responsible and firm. Spectacle is largely utilized to bring out the theme of religious relations, for example when we first meet Kadesa as the keeper of the shrine of peace in Nderema. It is notable that unlike in many traditional positions of responsibility, a lady is in charge of the shrine and she seems to wield a lot of influence over the people of this particular place. Kadesa is dressed in respectable, traditional garments that befit a person playing the role of a priestess. This is because costumes are a major source of delineating one’s status or social position (Hilton, 1987).

The shrine is a grass-thatched structure, and this is where Kadesa performs rituals of worship. In Act One Scene Two when we first meet Kadesa, she is seen emerging from the shrine walking in rhythmical movements that are in tandem with the beating of drums. She wears a serious facial expression which indicates someone who is deep in worship. Her body movements also enhance the theme of worship. She walks holding a small pot above her head towards a mound that seems to be part of the religious set. In this we have a combination of all the six dramatic elements.

Kadesa is portrayed as loving, responsible, authoritative but also receptive in that she is willing to listen to Mude, a messenger from Mwami Rocho, the leader of Nderema. He has come with a message that the madness of past years has recurred. Her facial expression and demeanor when walking from the shrine befits someone who is
responsible for the religious well-being of the community of refugees from Mndika that has now settled in Nderema.

Other than just being the religious leader of the community in Mndika, Kadesa also seems to have a big say in the secular docket of community leadership. When she is talking with Mude, Bizia her son and guard of the shrine, rushes in wearing a scared look and immediately reports that Matia, his brother and fellow guard of the shrine, is bringing in a woman who is about to deliver, accompanied by one who has “the moon’s burden on his head” (Imbuga, 2011 p. 16). Character plays a major role in this particular scene where we see Bizia’s worried and restless facial expression delineating the instability and insecurity level in the community. Kadesa’s leadership skills are seen in her calm demeanor even when Mude is restless and ready to fight. Her calm and assured stance enables her not to be carried away by Bizia’s emotional reaction but to initiate a rapport between a threatened Mude, who has drawn a pistol, and Bizia, her son.

Through dialogue, Kadesa’s loving and concerned nature is revealed when she orders Bizia to bring in Nora, Mgofu’s widow and Adonija. While still maintaining a friendly and calm facial expression, she prevails on Bizia to bring the duo into the shrine, where Nora is to deliver. This particular incident portrays her as a character who cares for the common good, without dwelling on petty issues. She tells Bizia that the shrine is for life and not just a structure to be viewed without adding value to the worshippers. Bizia also complains that Nora’s partner is not fit to enter the shrine since he has ‘the moon’s burden on his head’. On this, she makes Bizia understand that the shrine should be used in the service of humanity and not just as a symbol held above and detached from people’s welfare. Her authoritative nature is seen when, without being high-handed, she tells Bizia to accompany Matia and bring the two to the shrine. In all this, she shows her sons that religious facilities, resources and personnel are supposed to serve the needs of the people.

This resonates well with Pastor Ngoya’s message in *Aminata*, where he advocates for a religion that serves rather than dominates the people. This is the reason he gets women to partake of chicken, which they have been denied for long, and also equips the community
with knowledge of the importance of having manageable family sizes. In *Aminata*, the religious class which is portrayed as pious, loving and benevolent, is largely seen through the character of Pastor Ngoya. This is a good example of religion serving people’s needs and is in sharp contrast with contemporary religious leaders, many of who have been accused of using religious facilities and funds for selfish and hypocritical purposes. In Kenya and the world at large, newspapers have been awash with cases of religious leaders accused of using religious facilities and fora for self-enrichment.

When Bizia rushes to the shrine to find Kadesa talking with Mude, she notes the tension that ensues between the two, as Mude draws his pistol ready for action. She immediately commences a rapport-building exercise between the two, by inquiring whether Bizia knows Mude. Character is further utilized to thaw the already charged situation through Kadesa’s smile at her son while introducing Mude, making him understand that there is no need of being suspicious. Using dialogue, flavoured with a simile from the local oral tradition, she asks him, “…why are you trembling like a chicken?” (Imbuga, 2011 p. 16).

Mude also calms down upon realizing that the person whom he had intended to harm is in fact a son to his host, Kadesa. In this particular incident, Kadesa employs a friendly facial expression and gesticulates by pointing her hand towards Mude. Prop as an element of spectacle is also used through Mude’s drawn pistol and the spear that Bizia holds.

In a later scene, Mgofu Ngoda replicates this role of religious leadership where again, he serves the elders. A number of things have changed in the set, though the venue is the same. First, the former grass-thatched structure has been replaced with a new-look one. Mgofu Ngoda who was born inside the shrine, much to Bizia’s disappointment is now the new priest. He has now taken over the duty that was formerly done by Kadesa. He too, like Kadesa walks out of the structure in tandem with the beats of the drum, holding a small totem above his head and communes with spirits. This heightened action takes place at the Shrine of Peace 2, which is in Act Three, Scene One.

In *The Floods*, religious relations are characterized by hostile confrontation, violence and discrimination. This is mostly between the two major religious groups namely, Muslims and Christians. In *The Floods*, the Christian divide is represented by such characters as:
Ssalango, his wife Nnalango, Nankya, and her mother. The Muslim side is represented by among others: Bwogo and Adriko, who is brought out in a play within a play. The religious category also includes Kyeyune, who subscribes to the traditional brand of religion. The religious class in this play comes across as hypocritical and violent and this is revealed in Kyeyune’s narration of the genocide of some Christians who were sailing on a boat across the lake. Spectacle is utilized very powerfully to show “bright flashes of light” in the “dark sky”, against the “wild waves that are beating against the tilting and whirling boat”. Here, we have very meaningful elements of spectacle, such as: “the bright light” against the backdrop of “a dark sky” and the “wild waves” that are beating against the “tilting and whirling boat”, elements which connote danger.

There is also the use of music as a dramatic element and the ‘beating of drums’ to enhance the sense of danger and urgency coupled by the ‘loud sound of gunshots’, as Christians are shot dead. There is the singing of the Christian hymn, “Onward Christian soldiers marching on to war with the banner of Jesus…” in the background coupled by some clapping in the passion of Christians who are exterminated by rival forces (Ruganda 1988, p. 56). The killing of Christians on the boat is dramatized through the “screams of men, women and their children” as they helplessly try to save themselves from the bullets. There is also the “sound of raging waves” as the boat “whirls in circles” before drowning.

The dialogue of Nankya and Bwogo that follows Kyeyune’s flashback lays bare the rivalry that exists between Christians and Muslims. Bwogo is on the side of Muslims and Nankya on the side of Christians and this is clearly brought out in their cross-purpose talk, where each is engrossed in her/his individual thoughts, as shown below:

BWOGO: Guerrillas parading their ill-gotten guns. An assortment of guns from Peking, or are they from Russia without love?

NANKYA: They too have gone down the lake.

BWOGO: Dragging Muslims from their mosques ripping their bellies open …

NANKYA: They too have gone down the lake.

BWOGO: Dragging Muslims from their mosques, ripping their bellies open.
NANKYA: Faithful Christians. Like my mother.  
(Ruganda 1988, p. 59)

Nankya’s voice is full of bitterness, due to the mass killing of Christians, while Bwogo tries to evade the accusation of being responsible for the killings. This is why he adopts a ‘sympathetic tone’. Bwogo sees the rivalry between the two religious groups as pitting Muslims against turbans.

Religious relations are highlighted through the play within a play involving a roadblock, where people are asked not just their names but even their religions. The play within a play highlights an absent character, Adiko Abdalla, who is a Muslim. Religious discrimination as portrayed here by Bwogo, shows his sympathy for Muslims, whom he claims are put in landrovers to eventually face death, and at the same time brings out his hatred for Christians, whom he claims are set free. Bwogo wears a disdainful facial expression when talking about Christianity, which he not only views as a discriminative religion, but also as a murderous one. He disdainfully portrays the Bible as a commodity that, far from being God’s holy Word, is something that can be smoked or even used as tissue paper. This use of names to either condemn or justify people as highlighted in the above play within a play, compares well with a case highlighted by Adonija in The Return of Mgofu as shown below:

ADONIJA: … I have evidence here. I saw them kill one another because of soil. It’s all here. I secretly recorded some of their meetings. There were preachers, priests and a chief. They were all there, plotting to shed the blood of their brothers and sisters.

BIZIA: What is your name?

ADONIJA: Name? I have already answered that question. Everything starts with a name and then you are either friend or foe. What is in a name? Father, Pastor or Chief, what do you mean? … Ngoda’s eyes (Imbuga 2011, p.22).

The play within a play portraying the religious class being involved in discrimination highlighted in The Floods parallels the one just cited above in The Return of Mgofu, where even priests and preachers are said to have been involved in plotting to kill people who are viewed as enemies. A similar case of the Church being involved in religious
discrimination is highlighted in *Shreds of Tenderness* where in the play within a play pitting a refugee against immigration officers, the issue of names as a basis of discrimination is again highlighted. In this case, the refugee complains that getting medical attention in the mission hospital is a problem because hospital authorities claim that the hospital gives priority to Christians. The issue of the religious class and politicians being involved in discrimination as shown in the above discussion is unfortunate, simply because the two comprise the group that should be at the forefront of preaching peaceful coexistence between people of different religions, tribes and even political orientation.

The late Archbishop Cornelius Korir of the Eldoret Catholic church in Kenya, who became famous for hosting victims of Post Election Violence (PEV) in 2007/8 without caring about tribe or religion, would provide a foil for such leaders. Just like Kadesa in *The Return of Mgofu* and Pastor Ngoya in *Aminata*, he showed a picture of what true religion should be.

This killing of people of certain religions calls to mind the historic event in which Hitler is said to have butchered three million Jews. The Bible itself records numerous cases of religious discrimination, which in biblical language is referred to as persecution of Christians. In “Acts of Apostles”, Paul talks of Christians being persecuted through such ways as imprisonment, various forms of torture and even death (*The Holy Bible*).

The religious rift between Christianity and Islam as represented by Nankya on one side and Bwogo on the other side widens as each defends the side they represent. While it may on the surface look like a rift between these two religions only, in the real sense, this is a reflection of the division in the whole society. Nankya is very sympathetic of Christians and sees them as victims of religious discrimination and this is especially brought out in the flashback where she narrates the sad experience of Ssalango, his wife Nnalango and their set of twins; Nyakato and Kato. Her mimicry of the innocent questioning words of Nyakato and Kato elicits sympathy in the audience as shown below:
NANKYA: … ‘Was he a robber, Mummie, a cut throat as they say?’ Asked young Nyakato. ‘Was he a dangerous man, a traitor as the radio says?’ quipped in Kato. Nnalango simply said, ‘He was a good man and a Christian. That’s why they killed him (Ruganda 1988, p. 64-5).

The innocent voices of the children as they question the mother about the cause of their father’s death, coupled by the sad voice of the mother and her sad look clearly elicits deep emotions that would fuel religious rivalry. As Nankya portrays Christians as the victims, Bwogo on the other hand portrays them as the predators who are preying on Muslims.

In an earlier mentioned play within a play, Bwogo dramatizes the discriminative treatment that is accorded to people based on their religious affiliation. His harshness while impersonating a Christian officer screening a Muslim civilian, puts to the fore the religious animosity that exists between Christians and Muslims. The officer’s harshness is evident from his harsh voice and the hateful facial expression he wears. The climax of this is where Muslims are ushered to the left, into a landrover that takes them to the maximum security prison and to eventual death. Christians on the other hand, are ushered to the right and to freedom.

Bwogo’s speech, echoes the speech of Jesus in Matthew 25:32-33, where he said that on judgement day, the (sinners) goats will go to the left, unto eternal fire, while the (righteous) sheep will go to the right, and to paradise (The Holy Bible). His speech portrays Christians as harsh and very oppressive towards Muslims. Dialogue helps to bring out this religious discrimination where Bwogo looks at the audience and addresses them directly. While emphasizing the first person singular pronoun as well as the second person one, he says: “…I’m telling you - and I know” (Ruganda 1988, p. 64).

This is a very strong tool of creating a rapport between him and the audience and it helps to win the audience over to his side. While Bwogo’s words about writing graffiti on the Koran or using the Bible as tissue paper may reflect his wanting religious morals, they also demonstrate how much religions have degraded themselves to the point of causing their holy books to be defiled, owing to the conduct of those who subscribe to them. The
hypocrisy of the religious class comes out through the fact that while posing as pious, the believers fail to uphold the cardinal rule of ‘love your neighbour as you love yourself’ which is the yardstick of every true religion.

Another category of religious class is the African traditional religious group, as represented by Kyeyune. Subscribing to the traditional religion, Kyeyune is portrayed as weak and old physically, but pious and strong spiritually. He worships Kagoro whom he refers to as ‘lord of the sky’. To bring out this category of religion in the first wave, spectacle is greatly utilized through lighting, where in a previously dark environment, we have “bright flashes of light”. This is accompanied by “big peals of thunder” to bring out the state of danger. Thunder is brought out through loud sound effects. In this case, digitally manipulated thunder sound is used to create the scary mood needed for this scene, as indicated below:

For the sound designer, designs may move in the direction of music underscoring (retreating brass bands, used violins, and ominous chords), ambient noises (distant sirens, gunfire, ocean breakers) and enhanced reverberated or digitally manipulated live sounds (voices, footsteps, door slams) gathered into digitized recording media (Cohen 2008, p.135).

This is seen in the first scene where as Headman is ushering people to the boat, there is lightning and thunder. The sound designer is able to digitally create the sounds needed for different moods as can be seen in this particular wave, where the mood of danger is needed. Through Kyeyune, the traditional religious class is portrayed as pious, mature, God-fearing but also fearful. Every time there is a bout of thunder and lighting, Kyeyune falls to his knees to supplicate. His piety is brought out through both his pleading facial expression and voice. It is however important to note that while the traditional religion is shown to be virtuous, it has a tinge of the retributive element, where Kyeyune prays that if there is a sinner among them, evil may befall no other person but that one. Kyeyune also prays that Kagoro, the lord of the sky may send his retribution to other islands.

This is in sharp contrast with Christian teaching especially in the New Testament which teaches forgiveness. A similar scenario is repeated in the second scene where Bwogo,
Nankya and Kyeyune are in the bungalow. Sound is used where Bwogo bangs the table and Kyeyune slips into another bout of supplication. Kyeyune’s prayer utilizes the dramatic element of dialogue where he adopts a priestly voice, articulating his words, one by one. The god in the traditional brand of religion appears to be punitive and retributive, which is in sharp contrast with the Christian God, who is portrayed as loving, forgiving and only retributive to those sinners who refuse to repent. Character is utilized when Kyeyune wails, upon noticing the red gear with which his belongings are wrapped. He sees danger and malice, and for this, blames the neighbours, believing they are bent on killing him. This portrays his religious category as judgmental, superstitious and individualistic.

In general, relationships on the religious front reveal points of convergence and divergence, as well as strengths and weaknesses in all religions. There seems to be a deliberate effort on the part of the authors to encourage the audience to seek to be virtuous and humane rather than just embrace blind and empty religious piety.

5.2 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have analyzed the use of dramatic elements to delineate relations involving various socio-economic groups of people, where each group is seen to have its unique attributes. Like in the previous chapters, the dramatic elements appear indivorcable in that at any one time, they seem to be all involved in the actions and dialogues portrayed. In the next chapter, we look at the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.
CHAPTER SIX

6.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The chapter provides a summary of the findings and conclusion of issues highlighted by this study in each of the five chapters. It also seeks to examine the extent to which the objectives of the study have been met. The chapter then proceeds to give a highlight of areas of study deemed worthy of consideration in future studies.

6.2 Summary of Findings and Conclusion

This study sought to investigate the utilization of dramatic elements in delineating human interaction in selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda. These are the six elements which *The Poetics* of Aristotle enumerated as the basis of every dramatic work, and these are: plot, character, theme, dialogue, spectacle and music. The study was based on six plays; three by Imbuga namely: *Betrayal in the City*, *Aminata*, and *The Return of Mgofu*. The other three are by Ruganda, namely: *The Burdens*, *The Floods* and *Shreds of Tenderness*. The study was guided by three objectives which generated the three research questions and the corresponding research assumptions.

The first chapter laid the foundation of the research by spelling out the background, statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study. The aim and objectives were in turn used to generate research questions and assumptions. In addition, the first chapter also addressed the literature review, theoretical framework as well as the research methodology. Chapters three, four and five addressed the manipulation of dramatic elements to delineate different levels of human relations. Chapter three addressed both family and gender relations, chapter four intra and inter-community relations. Chapter five addressed socio-economic class relations.

Chapter two which was based on the first objective, sought to identify the elements utilized in the delineation of human interaction in each of these six dramas. The chapter sought to answer the question: What dramatic elements are utilised in the delineation of
human interaction in the selected drama of Imbuga and Ruganda? The study found out that all the six dramatic elements were utilized in the performance of all the six selected plays but to different extents. In some performances, certain elements were used more while others to a smaller extent. For example, in the performance of *The Burdens*, the researcher watched, music as an element was not used to a very large extent, except as background music. On the other hand, music was used to a very large extent in both *Aminata* and *The Return of Mgofu*.

The chapter did an in-depth exegesis of each of the six elements to try and establish the composition and working of each in depicting how human beings interact with each other in the six plays. The dramatic elements were seen to be very closely interrelated in such a way that in a particular scene, it was almost impossible to tell which element was at work because they tended to overlap. This was for instance when a character came on stage having applied makeup. This was a case of both character and spectacle and so it was not easy to divorce one from the other. This is a case of what the researcher would refer to as the ‘indivocibility’ of dramatic elements, during performance.

On objective two, dramatic elements were manipulated through various methods. Plot for instance was manipulated through such strategies as flashback and play within a play. To a large extent there was a general pattern of the Freytag’s Pyramid (see Fig 1.0 on p.2) where in most plays, they began with the exposition, then conflict was introduced, which set the plot on the rising action path. Then came the climax. For many plays, the climax and resolution of conflict came at the same time so that the play ended there without a falling action or denouement or if it did, it was brought out in a short statement or question by a character. This was the case for instance of *Aminata, The Return of Mgofu* and *The Floods*. Except for *The Burdens* where there was a real denouement, for the others, the climax and resolution of conflict came almost at the same time.

Character was also manipulated through such strategies as costuming, makeup, body movement, facial expression and others like voice. On characterization, Imbuga seemed to have a preference for the ‘clown’ character while Ruganda used the ‘harsh’ figure. Imbuga’s clown character was evident in *Betrayal in the City*’s Mulili and in *Aminata*’s
Agege. While Mulili was not seen to be a clown as such, his non-standard English made his character border on a clown. In *The Return of Mgofu*, the clown was seen in Adonija. In most of these cases, those clown characters played a major role as mouth pieces of the playwright.

Ruganda’s harsh character was seen mostly in *Shreds of Tenderness*’s Odie, and in Boss and Bwogo in *The Floods*, both of whom displayed great ruthlessness in handling the people they interacted with. This was seen for instance, in the harsh way that Odie treated his siblings, Wak and Stella. In *The Floods*, this was seen in the ruthless way Bwogo treated Nankya and more so, in his evil scheme to annihilate her which saw him eliminate a whole island through drowning in the lake. In *The Burdens*, Boss was largely absent but his terror forces were still active especially seen in the great fear that Wamala still held of the ‘firing squad’.

Language was also manipulated through such ways as, use of oral literature, figurative language, suprasegmental features, voice, local languages, non-standard English, humour and others like poetic language. Both playwrights utilized oral literature to a large extent, the difference being that they choose different genres. This was evident in that while Imbuga used songs and dances plus proverbs and wise sayings, Ruganda on his part preferred to use oral narratives. Imbuga used a lot of songs and dances in *Aminata* seen especially in the handing over ceremony and during the National Remembrance Day in *The Return of Mgofu*. In these two, we had traditional singers in dancing costumes and makeup; engaged in unique movement, aided by accompaniments. This was however not very evident in *Betrayal in the City*. Proverbs and wise sayings were widely exploited in both *Aminata* and *The Return of Mgofu* and to a small extent in *Betrayal in the City*.

Ruganda’s use of oral narratives was seen in the story Tinka told Kaija in *The Burdens*, and in the Nalubale/Nyamgodho narrative of Kyeyune in *The Floods*. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, this was not very evident. On language in general, Imbuga went for non-standard English to create humour, while Ruganda stuck to standard and poetic English. On music, Imbuga exploited both the Christian hymn and traditional songs and dances. Ruganda on his part avoided these songs preferring poetic language instead. Music was
another important element that was manipulated through such devices as, use of tune, sound, accompaniments, idiophones and poetic expressions. Spectacle was shown to be manipulated through such strategies as props, costumes, body movement, setting, lighting and makeup.

On objective three which sought to interrogate any themes which accrued from manipulating dramatic elements in the selected plays, dramatic elements were not just manipulated for entertainment’s sake but for the purpose of unlocking the different levels of social interaction generated from the major theme of human interaction. Several levels of human relations were seen to exist, such as family, gender and religious relations.

On family in chapter three, Imbuga to a large extent portrayed harmonious and successful families with strong women figures, who were able to find their space without dislodging the male figures in their lives. He portrayed equally strong male figures who were in ‘quiet’ domains and who were able to give feminine characters a chance to exploit and display their talents without feeling threatened. In this, we had Jusper in Betrayal in the City, who allowed Regina to interact with Tumbo without feeling that Tumbo would wrench her from him. In Aminata, Mulemi, an expert in medical research allowed Aminata, who was a young and highly successful lawyer, to grow her legal career and engage in community work without fearing that her popular image would portray him as a weak husband. This was again evident in Pastor Ngoya, who though very successful himself, heaped praise on his late wife, Monica Ngoya. In The Return of Mgofu, we had Kadesa, the successful priestess who referred respectfully to her late husband. This was also the case with Mhando, the successful leader of Mndika who claimed to get a lot of consultative support from his late wife, Mama Enos. In The Return of Mgofu, Mgofu Ngoda also mentored his daughter Nora U, so that she at the climax, emerged as an upcoming community leader with high academic credentials.

Ruganda on his part portrayed disharmonious family units, whereby even where marriages existed, they were highly dysfunctional. This was evident in The Burdens where the Wamala family continuously ailed from marital strife, that culminated into
Tinka’s murder of Wamala. In *Shreds of Tenderness*, both Odie and Stella were unable to get into marital bonds despite being of marriageable age. It is only Wak who had a wife but she was largely absent, with no mention of children (who would symbolize future growth) in the whole setup. In *The Floods*, Bwogo’s relationship with Nankya seemed to gravitate towards abortion rather than maturity. The one successful marriage, of Ssalongo and Nnalango, was nipped in the bud by dictatorial forces. Matiya’s marriage to Nankya’s mother on its part was said to be just out of convenience.

At the family level, the two portrayed respect and cohesive co-existence among parents and their children as the only way in which the family institution could stand and/or succeed. Where this was lacking, as in the case of *The Burdens* and *Shreds of Tenderness*, the family either collapsed or was irreparably damaged. Still in chapter three, gender relations were seen to play out both at the family and in other spheres. In the home set up, patriarchal leadership still dominated as seen in Jumba in *Aminata*, Wak/Odie in *Shreds of Tenderness*, Bwogo in *The Floods* and Mgofu in *The Return of Mgofu*. There were however strong feminine voices that were emerging to question male dominance, as seen in Mama Rosina in *Aminata* and Nankya in *The Floods*. In cases where men failed in their designated male roles, as in the case of Wamala in *The Burdens* and Ababio in *Aminata*, we found strong feminine figures that stepped in to fill the gap.

In *The Burdens*, we saw Tinka offering to buy a bed for Kaija, who was fourteen years and who even in the words of the Teacher, should have had a bed of his own. It was interesting to note Tinka’s reaction when Wamala beat her in her own game by bringing a bed for Kaija before her.

She was furious and in fact rejected the bed and told Wamala that some families had never seen second hand things, to which Wamala replied by saying that some others had never seen tenth hand ones. In Tinka, Ruganda portrayed an opportunistic female figure who took advantage of the weaknesses of male figures in her world to portray men negatively. On the contrary, Imbuga portrayed a strong woman figure in Aminata who filled the gap of the weaknesses in the brother, Ababio but did not take the chance to
claim superiority or disqualify the men. The two playwrights seemed to advocate for harmonious gender relations in the family and even in other social spheres.

Gender relations also played out in the professional scene where we got strong women professionals like Aminata in *Aminata* and Nankya in *The Floods*. The female refugee in *Shreds of Tenderness* was also a medical doctor and the two playwrights seemed to suggest that women could do as well or even better than men in professional fields, but they should not use their success to undercut or disqualify men. For men also, the playwrights seemed to suggest that men should give women a chance to develop.

Chapter four addressed both intra and inter-community relations, where dramatic elements portrayed both harmonious and disharmonious relations with communities. In many cases, the feeling of togetherness and the glue of oneness was able to make people live harmoniously and with patriotism as seen during the handover ceremony in *Aminata* and the National Remembrance Day in *The Return of Mgofu*. Pockets of disharmony and internal conflict were nevertheless seen to exist as in the case of Mndika in *The Return of Mgofu* where people were forced to flee their own country and go to seek refuge in a neighbouring one.

Cohesive inter-community relations, whether within a nation or among nations were portrayed as an important recipe for global harmony, where for instance good inter-community relations were witnessed in *Aminata* and *The Return of Mgofu*. The two playwrights endeavoured to portray that the world is a global village and no one country is an island or self-reliant. Resources from other communities, whether human, material or otherwise were crucial in complementing home-generated ones. The two playwrights condemned discrimination of people from other communities and they seemed to suggest that rather than see outsiders as liabilities, community members should seek to see how they can exploit the resources and talents of those who come from outside in a symbiotic kind of relationship. The two playwrights seemed to advocate for peaceful co-existence across all divides of the society with an indication that where there was disharmony, all parties lost. This was the message that was brought out in *The Return of Mgofu* where at the end, the two creatures only got the totem they so much desired when they devised a
joint strategy with unity of purpose. This was also seen in *The Floods* where Bwogo talked of pulling down the wall that separated the poor and the rich. In *Betrayal in the City*, Jusper spared Boss’ life because everyone was needed in rebuilding Kafira.

Chapter five addressed several types of and socio-economic class relations such as economic relations, religious relations, professional relations and others like political relations. In most of these, the glue of belonging to one group was seen to hold the members of the different categories together. This was for instance where politicians, whether originating from the same country or not were seen to unite and even collude against the masses. This was seen for instance in the case of Wamala and politicians like Drake in *The Burdens* or Boss and the visiting head of state in *Betrayal in the City*. There were however pockets of disharmony, like where the other students rose against Jusper in *Betrayal in the City*. Among professional groups, stiff competition was seen to exist as witnessed in the case of journalists and lecturers in *The Floods*. Religious relations were seen to be especially strong from within while closing out or discriminating others. This was the case for instance, of Christians against Muslims, shown in *Shreds of Tenderness* and *The Return of Mgofu*. 
6.3 Recommendations for Further Studies

The researcher considers the following areas as worthy of consideration by those aspiring to carry out research in the field of theatre arts:

1. Analysis of utilization of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in plays of other playwrights, for example, the plays of Ngugi wa Thiong’o, David Mulwa or even other plays by these two playwrights, such as: *Black Mamba, Echoes of Silence, Game of Silence* and *Man of Kafira*.

2. Examination of awareness levels and use of dramatic elements among theatre players.

3. Analysis of complementability levels among dramatic elements in theatrical performances.

4. Analysis of utilization of dramatic elements in the development of other aspects like character, other than theme.

5. Discussion of the utilization of dramatic elements in delineating content in other disciplines such as music and literature.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Observation Check-list and Interview Guides

(i) Observation check-list for observing the DVDs (For researcher and FGD members)
   a) What dramatic elements are manipulated in the performances you are watching or have watched?
   b) Briefly explain how those dramatic elements are manipulated to make the performance enriching.
   c) Is there anything that watching a live performance of a play (as opposed to just reading) contributes towards enhancing your understanding of the plays?
   d) What do you consider to be the role of dramatic elements as far as stage performances of plays are concerned?
   e) What do you consider to be the most important differences between watching a play and reading it?

(ii) Interview Guide for Directors
   a) What dramatic elements did you employ/manipulate to enhance delivery of meaning in the videos?
   b) What is the role of a director as far as of enhancement of meaning is concerned/bringing out the human interaction concept is concerned?
   c) What was your focus while directing this video play?
   d) Did you apply the ideas of any dramatic theorist at any point of the directing exercise? Explain.

(iii) Interview Guide for Actors
   a) What is the relationship between different members of the society as shown?
   b) What dramatic elements do you think help to bring out human interaction, in the video plays watched?
   c) Which characters do you identify with in the video plays?
d) Which dramatic elements do you feel most powerfully contribute towards developing human interaction, in the plays?

e) Did you apply the ideas of any dramatic theorist at any point of your acting? Explain.

(iv) Interview Guide for Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs)

a) Which actor(s) do you feel brought out the human interaction concept well?

b) Why?

c) In which ways do you think drama can be used as a tool to enhance human interaction, with reference to your experience when watching the plays?

d) What do you think needs to be done to improve the role of drama as a vehicle of social change as far as human interaction is concerned?

e) Do you think any theoretical ideas were employed in the production of these plays? If so explain.
APPENDIX II

Consent Form

Title of Research: **Utilization of dramatic elements and audie-response in delineating human interaction in selected plays of Francis Imbuga and John Ruganda.**

Researcher: Kariuki Faith Wambui, Doctoral Student, Department of Film Technology and Theatre Arts (School of Creative Arts, Film and Media Studies), Kenyatta University. Nairobi, Kenya.

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits, in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should file a copy of this document to keep a record.

**Explanation of Study:** Drama is mimetic in that it mirrors the society, thus translating into a powerful socialization tool. Through their written plays, Imbuga and Ruganda have exploited this mimetic element of drama with the aim of communicating and exposing the numerous social ills in the societies they mirror. With this realization, numerous studies have been done on the dramas of Imbuga and Ruganda, but unfortunately, many of them are from a literary perspective, whereby they look at plays as texts. This leaves a gap in the arena of dramatic scholarship where plays are viewed as productions and therefore performance of plays on the stage is key. It is during performance that dramatic elements come into play to unveil the content of a work of drama. This study therefore seeks to investigate the utilization of dramatic elements in the delineation of human interaction in Imbuga’s and Ruganda’s plays, in an attempt to fill this gap. The six major dramatic elements that the study focuses on are: plot, character, thought, dialogue, music and spectacle.

**Risks and Discomforts**

This study involves very minimal risk. This mostly involves availing yourself, sitting through and participating in an interview. For those involved in FGDs, you will need to watch all the video plays selected for the study. This is likely to be refreshing but also uncomfortable. You will also be required to avail yourself for a focus group discussion at Kenyatta University on a date and time to be communicated by the researcher. The FGD session discussions will be audio and/or video recorded and any photographs taken will be exclusively for research purposes.
Benefits

This study hopes to make positive scholarly contribution to the field of drama, which is a powerful tool of social growth.

Confidentiality and Records

Any disclosed personal information will be used solely for this study, and will be kept confidential. The researcher will try very hard to remove any identifiable personal information from the data sheets and retain a copy of un-identifiable raw data for her own research analysis. However, it is important to note that information collected during the research process may be shared with the panel that deals with Postgraduate research at K.U. It may also later be used during conferences and other academic-related activities.

Contact Information

For any queries regarding this research, please contact the undersigned:

1. Professor Wangari Mwai, Department of Literature. P.O. Box, 43844-00100, Nairobi. Tel No, 0722653745. E-mail, mwai.wangari@ku.ac.ke.

2. Dr. John Mugubi, School of Creative Arts, Film and Media Studies. P.O. Box, 43844-00100, Nairobi. Tel No, 0724788668. E-mail, mugubi.john@ku.ac.ke.

3. Faith S. Wambui Kariuki. P.O. Box, 2503-00200. Nairobi. Tel No. 0722807724. E-mail, faythkariuki@yahoo.com.
Kenyan and university regulations require signed consent for participant in research involving human subjects. Please indicate your consent by signing in your name, signature and date below.

Name__________________________________________________

Date_________________________________________________________________

Signature_____________________________________________________________

by putting your signature, you are agreeing that:

• You have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions

• Known risks to you have been explained to your satisfaction.

• You understand Kenyatta University has no policy or plan to pay for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this research process.

• You are 18 years of age or older.

• Your participation in this research is given voluntarily, and that no payment shall be demanded for services rendered during the research process.

N.B

Some details of this consent form have changed from the way it was in year 2015/2016, when it was used during the data collection process. This is partly due to changes in administrative units at KU and change of status of some of the people mentioned.
APPENDIX III

Interviews

1. Mr. Kenneth Magawe - acting as “Jusper” in Betrayal in the City on 7/12/15 at Kariokor Social Hall.

2. Mr. Eric Chege - Director – Both Shreds of Tenderness & Betrayal in the City- Interviewed on 18/12/15 at Kariokor Social Hall.

3. Ms. Lydia Wamuyu as “Regina” in Betrayal in the City – Interviewed 18/12/15 at Kariokor Social Hall.


5. Dr. Emmanuel Shikuku- Director – The Return of Mgofu on 30/11/15 – Dr. E. Shikuku’s office (K.U.)


7. Mr. Tyrus Gathu - Director – The Burdens – Pacific Hotel – NRB.


9. Mr. Anthony Chavene - as “Wak” in Shreds of Tenderness Interviewed 18/12/15 at Kariokor Social Hall.

10. Mr. Evans Mugarizi – Phone interview – Director Aminata on 26th March 2016.


APPENDIX IV: Sample Research Pictures

Faith with Vigilance

Faith with Mr Gathu
Faith with Lydiah

Faith with some FGD members