

**SCENOGRAPHY AND CHARACTER IN *TINGA TINGA TALES*: A KENYAN
ANIMATION FILM**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dad Japheth Kanyangi Kihima, my mother Hellen Aleyo Kanyangi and my beautiful spouse Beatrice Gatwiri.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Animation Film: simulation of movement arrived at by showing a series of images on a computer.

Character Development: the drawing of characters either digitally or on paper.

Character design: The manipulation of a character's features to suit the intended look and meaning.

Film: motion pictures of any length.

Scenography: the background layout in an animated film.

Scenographer: the person responsible for drawing and painting the animation backgrounds.

Two Dimensional (2-D) Animation-simulations of continuous movement formed by serially displaying independent two-dimensional work/ images.

Three Dimensional (3-D) Animation - simulations of continuous movement formed by serially displaying independent three-dimensional work/ images.

ABSTRACT

The Kenyan animation industry has generally realized an improved growth as depicted by the number of local animation productions that hit the market. This can however be improved through among other factors, producing more quality animation films. These productions will highly depend on the elements put together, one being good character design and scenography. Scenography is not only a set of visual ideas but also an experience of the senses in which audiences read, feel and interpret the space of an animation stage. The meaning in animation films is easily adduced with vivid scenic designs and well-developed characters. This study sought to understand the relationship between scenography and character design as components that improve the quality of an animation production. In this study, it is argued that in the hands of skilled animators, scenography and character development are key in the meaning making process of animation films. By viewing scenography as a symbol, *Tinga Tinga Tales*, a Kenyan animation film produced jointly in Kenya was studied with the objectives to: 1. To establish the nature of scenography evident. 2. To evaluate the nature of characters 3. To analyse the effects that scenography has on characters. The study employed semiotics as the theory of guiding the study. Semiotics is based with the study of signs and was employed in trying to understand the meaning portrayed by scene designs as well as character designs. Methodical data gathering involved observation method which entailed watching six selected episodes of the animation film to identify how the scenographies are created, with a key focus on elements of design, how the characters have been developed using different techniques of shape and colour and how the scenography is employed to affect how these characters have been developed. In addition, interviews of 24 different Kenyan animators based in Nairobi was conducted to beef up the research findings. Data obtained was examined and analyzed in line with the objectives of the study. The study found out that scenography has a great impact on how characters are designed in animation film and are not merely backdrops for action. Their symbolisms and connotations weave together to give meaning to animation films. The study also established useful findings for producers and animators as well as guides for further studies.

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Animation is defined as the impression of movement generated by displaying a series of still pictures in quick succession (Whitehead, 2006). It is an art that began long time ago, and grew into a film genre and an industry. It is an industry that incessantly altered our experience of the motion pictures. The first true animation program was created by Ivan Sutherland using a 1950's cold war computer that was built to trail soviet nuclear-powered bouts. This computer sketched lines that molded discernable images. The art of animation has however grown gradually with time leading to more advanced graphics. Sito (2013) states that with CGI, an artistic edge of the information age brought in a digital revolution that marked the beginning of digital animation, a move that has continuously led to the growth of this art throughout the ages. This has of course been complemented by the advent of new technologies.

In Africa, animation has also been a constantly growing art from the continued production of animated films. The history of animation in Africa can be attributed to Egypt when the two Frenkel brothers viewed a *Mickey Mouse* cartoon and were stirred to come up with their own studio called, Kahira Studios. They learnt to animate their works through a trial and error approach and in the end managed to produce and release a film called *Mafish Fayda* in 1936 (Bendazzi G. , 2001).

Callus (2008) contends that the development of animation in Africa generally has not been well documented to give a precise graph of growth. However, since the early 2000s, there has been a great improvement in the animation programs for Africa and precisely Kenyan film industry. In

2008 for instance, Africa produced 9 animation films. The films were featured in the Africa in Motion 51 Festival in Edinburgh, United Kingdom (Callus, 2008). The festival's purpose was to place African animation on the world map. This idea was grounded on the diverse and wide collection of works produced, ranging from its early years and forms to the more modern and contemporary 3D animations. The success of this venture was realized through the fact that the diversity of the topics covered ranged from children's entertainment stories and documentaries of local narratives, myths, political criticisms and social commentaries (Callus, 2008).

Further, this growth is acknowledged by (Kimutai, 2008). She says that animation inopportunately has historically suffered from taking a back seat to film in the West and beyond. However, with the advent and advancements in technology, there is a more visible urge from the audiences to consume animation films. This could be alluded to the rapid growth of animation in Kenya and Africa at large. According to Nyong'o (2009), the actual commencement of Kenyan animation is accredited to the UNESCO Africa Animated Project that was held in Nairobi from year 2001-2004. Its goal was to support the commencement of animated productions across Africa. The project was centered on training animators in workshops and later having them produce animation films. The group was drawn from the local scene as well as the region. During this period, there were more than forty trained animators, many of whom had begun their careers as cartoonists, graphic designers, painters and fine artists. The group has had a great impact in the animation scene through their individual works as well as commissioned projects. It is also important to note that it is during this period that Kenya produced some of her key animations like *Toto's journey* and *Shiku's song*. This growth has been tremendous and has even penetrated to the institutions.

The mushrooming of learning institutions and studios such as Homeboyz Production, Shang Tao, XYZ and Kenyatta University is one of the key indicators.

One cannot possibly talk about Kenyan Animation industry without talking about *Tinga Tinga Tales*. The production of this animated series is seen as the breakthrough of the Kenyan animation industry in the arena of animation films. In the words of Claudia Loyd (2008), the production of *Tinga Tinga Tales* was inspired by the visual aesthetics of the paintings that were done by several artists from Morogoro stores in Tanzania. The artists were working using a painting technique that was developed by Edward S. The story is based on animal folk stories. In 2005, a 10 minute pilot was created and eventually a 55 eleven minute episodes were created, a great achievement in the Kenyan animation industry.

With this growth being realized in the continent, key focus has to be placed on the elements and techniques of production. These techniques and aesthetics may vary, but scenography and character are key elements as discussed below.

Scenography refers to something more than just putting up sceneries, costumes or lights. It carries an inference of an all-round and encompassing visual spatial construct as well as the process of altering the physical vocabulary of the stage (Aronson, 2008).

A character is a person or any other being in a narrative (Robert, 2006). Characters are key in film experience. They provoke questions concerning their meaning and effects and call for distinct forms and levels of understanding a story (David, 1985). Understanding these two concepts gives the creators of an animation (Kenyan) a position to give their audiences a different experience and in turn help boost the growth of the Kenyan animation industry. It is in the same line that this study

sought to analyze the effects that scenography has on character development in Kenyan animation films, particularly *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Over the years, animation as an industry has recorded a tremendous growth in most parts of the world. Since animation films have great capability of drawing attention to an audience and retaining the meaning relayed to them, a good approach during the production phase is important. Production of animation films highly relies on scenography and character in the meaning making process. From this we can deduce that the meaning in an animation film is easily adduced with a vivid scenic design and well-developed character.

Animation as a subject of research has seen a number of studies being undertaken. The studies have however been focused on either scenography or character. Very few studies have looked at the relationship between the two. Further looking at East Africa and Kenya in Particular, even fewer studies have been done on animation which can be attributed to the few universities teaching animation as a course. Kenya has also had considerably very few animation productions based on the fact that the animation industry started picking in the early 2000s. A notable production during this rise is *Tinga Tinga Tales*. It is one of the classical East African animation films that has been done. Even so, no previous research has been done on this animation film. It is in this view that *Tinga Tinga Tales* was chosen for this study. Furthermore, alluding to the previous statement that the studies previously done did not cover the relationship between scenography and character, this study sought to fill this gap by interrogating the construction of scenography vis-à-vis its effect on the character development of an animation film.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish the nature of scenography evident in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.
- ii. To evaluate the nature of characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.
- iii. To analyse the effects that scenography has on characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the nature of scenography evident in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*?
- ii. What is the nature of characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*?
- iii. What is the effect of scenography on characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*?

1.5 Research Assumptions

This research is based on the assumption that:

- i. The Kenyan animation film, *Tinga Tinga Tales* exhibits scenographic elements and/or aspects.
- ii. The Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales* is characterized by a certain nature of characters.
- iii. The Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*' scenography has an effect on the characters in the film.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Animation films have to a great extent impacted our daily lives both in their principles and techniques. Since animation films share their artistic incentives with the world of comic books and film, they have generally become a vital consumable visual art. The spectacle of seeing what is impossible in other visual arts, being done in animation, makes it magical. Animation has been used for entertainment, especially for kids, adverts, television shows and for educational purposes. This study will contribute to the understanding of how scenography works in animation films, the art of character development, the relationship between scenography and character, all these contributing to how animation films ought to be analyzed and produced.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study recognized that there are various elements that are put into consideration in the creation of animation films like cinematography and editing. The study, however, was limited to scenography and character as essential ingredients in the meaning making process of animation films. This study also recognized that in scenography there are other elements like lighting, and action among others. However, this study was centered on scenography as an amalgamation of elements of design and together with character design, the two have a way of intertwining to give meaning to animation films through symbols created, used and the implied meaning they give. This study did not ignore the fact that there are several locally produced animation films in Kenya such as *Makarao*, *The Legend of Ngong Hills* and *Yellow Fever* among others. However the study chose to use *Tinga Tinga Tales* as a sample of the many existing animation films. Further, the study was limited to the analysis of *Tinga Tinga Tales*, with a focus on the analysis of reptile based stories.

1.8 Review of related Literature

This section assesses literature related to this study with a sole objective of highlighting the realm of animation, and then shift focus to scenography and character.

1.8.1 Animation

Animation as an art is deeply engraved in the wide realm of communicative knack. Art is defined in different ways: it is studying the imaginative, innovative or artistic skills; a progression of putting to use the creative skill; a produce of the creative skill or the spectators experience with the creative skill (Lansing, 2004). Animation is any computer grounded computation used in creating images that intend to generate the impression of motion (Carver & White, 2003). There

are various techniques to animation. The first is artistic animation whereby; the animator has the major obligation for making the motion. The second is data focused animation where live motion is digitized and then mapped onto graphical objects. The third is procedural animation, where there is a computational method that controls the motion (Rick, 2012). Animation can also be defined as the part of language of cinematography that represents the common understanding of the world (Carver & White, 2003)

1.8.1.1 Types of animation

1.8.1.1.1 Traditional animation

This type of animation is commonly referred to as **cel animation**.

In this type of animation, frames that create an impression of motion are first drawn on paper. The drawings are then traced onto transparent celluloid sheets that are referred to as **cels**. These cels are later painted in the preferred tones on the sides of the reverse drawing. A motion picture camera is then used in photographing the cels one after the other against the painted background (Scott, 1991). This process existed for a long period of time before the introduction of computer animation processes that allowed for faster productions (Bendazzi G. , 1994). Studios like Walt Disney had for a long time used this technique to produce films like *Little Mermaid* (Laybourne, 1998). However, with computer, scanners are used to mount backgrounds and characters to the software. Another common way is drawing them directly on the computer. Finally, the computers can also be used to paint the drawings digitally and simulate camera movement and effects.

1.8.1.1.2 Stop motion animation

Stop motion animation is a filmic procedure used to make actual objects seem as if they were in motion. These objects are tangibly manipulated and photographs taken every time they move

between the frames (Furniss, 1998). The technique was developed in Europe and among artists that were operating on very limited budgets and were also looking for alternate production techniques that were different from the mainstream and often very expensive (Manovich, 2001). The disparities of stop motion animation techniques are entirely based on the type of media applied in creating them, stretching to even the current day software programs that aid in this process (Gasek, 2013). Examples of these techniques include **Claymation**, where figures are made of clay or sometimes plasticine; **Cut-out animation**, where flat shapes are cut and moved in small steps while photographing each step and finally playing them all to show movement; **Silhouette animation**, where you animate cut out figures against a backlit stage.

Generally, Stop-motion animation is entirely in the hands of the maker. It entails one placing a puppet or the object being animated in different positions and taking photos between the frames (Priebe, 2011).

In the recent past, the art of **stop motion animation** has encountered tremendous development that has not only seen it grace the big screens, cinemas and studios, but has also spread across to the ordinary humans where human actors are used by incorporating them into **live action** world and **pixilation**. This technique is called the **model animation** (Priebe, 2011).

1.8.1.1.3 Computer Animation

This type of animation is also known as **CGI (computer generated images)**. It used to basically categorize the different techniques created digitally using softwares. In this animation, images and graphics are entirely generated by the computer. These images are then rigged with virtual skeletons for manipulation (Lockman, 2001).

Computer animation is broken down into two major categories; **Computer-assisted animation**, where traditional animations are computerized and **computer-generated animation**, where graphics are designed exclusively on the computer system using animation and 3D graphics softwares (Rick, 2012). According to Wright (2010) advancement of this technique has been **motion capture animation**, where live human figures are fitted with suits that have motion sensors that give way for the computers to copy the movements of the humans into computer generated characters on the screen.

1.8.1.1.4 2D Animation and 3D Animation.

Animation is broken down into broad categories: **Two-Dimension (2-D)** and **Three Dimension (3-D)**. 2D animation is formed by moving pictures within a two-dimensional environment such as in computerized animation software, while 3-D is the creation of images, motion pictures and graphics in a 3-Dimensional environment (Jayne, 2001). Animation in 2-D is entirely dependent on consecutive images simulating motion. Thomas (1995) puts it that in both cases the work of art is filmed by a virtual camera and the footage is transformed into a motion picture by a rendering software. The viewers' eye is hoodwinked into perceiving motion when the individual frames are played at a fast and consecutive rate of averagely 24/25 frames per second. In terms of their appearance, 2-D animation has a more traditional and vector like line appearance as opposed to 3-D animation, which possesses a **surrealist** or **photorealistic-finish**.

1.8.2 Animation Production Processes

Wells (2002) puts it that the technique being used in an animated film determines the process that will be involved. The procedure of animation production is in four major stages: development, pre-production, production and post-production. Each stage has distinct activities that take place

(Eric, 2008). The pre-production kicks off with an idea that begs a question that is pursued and answered by the complete production. The concept could just be an urge to narrate a story, the desire to beam a torch on a particular topic, thematic concern or just putting art techniques to test for the sake of art (Wells, 2002).

After the idea is arrived at, initial activities of research, storyboarding, scriptwriting, scene design, character design and audio/voice recording is undertaken. For each character that is created, a **model sheet** is generated. The **model sheet** details the different postures of that character.

Storyboards are visual representations of each scene and actions that are outlined in the script. The storyboard also details the notes on characters and dialogue for the characters (Levy D. , 2010).

When audio is incorporated in the storyboard, **animatics** are created. This is key in timing the animation and reduces the possibility of errors during the production. However, in case the storyboards are very clear, the animatics may be omitted. The next step is where the crew, (producer, art director, production designer, editor and layout artist) approve the animatics, recommend alterations and finally advise on the chronological aspects of the sequences.

The production stage is normally with the fewest activities involved. This stage sometimes covers the most time as it is where the actual animation takes place. Here, animators are provided with the lay outs that comprise backgrounds, audio and characters. Animators refer to the animatics so as to remain in sync with the descriptions outlined.

Post-Production is the final stage in the production process and it entails the addition of special effects or mechanical effects. The tones, shadows and highlights that are key are also added at this particular stage. These stages are key as they directly affect the way the final work will look like. Therefore, through understanding the stages, the quality of work produced will be improved.

1.8.3 Scenography

Scenography is at once a primeval and current term. Aristotle refers to it as **picturesque** writing.

As much as he may not have addressed the issue of scenography extensively, Aristotle had a clear idea that the theatrical production entailed having different kinds of writing, and one of them was text and vocabulary of the actual physical theatre. The ancestries of the term ‘scenography’ are linked with scene painting and with architectural perspective drawing (Hannah & Harslof, 2008). However during the 20th century, the term gradually gained its current state by drawing attention to the way the space can be used as a vibrant and kinesthetic contribution to the general experience of the performance (Rewa, 2004).

Scenography refers to something more than just putting up sceneries, costumes or lights. It carries an inference of an all-round and encompassing visual spatial construct as well as the process of altering the physical vocabulary of the stage (Aronson, 2008). Just as this previous study links the visual element of art to more than just being the prettification aspect, the study sought to look at scenography as having a key impact on characters in animation films.

Christopher Baugh (2013), Joslin McKinney and Philip Butterworth (2009), Pamela Howard (2009), and Hans-Thies Lehmann (2006) have contributed significantly to the contemporary exploration of scenography in the twenty first century. Scenographer Pamela Howard’s seminal text, *What is Scenography?* (2009) discharges the growths of scenography through hands-on examples and reflections from her lived familiarities as an artist. Howard deliberates

scenography's place inside the theoretical discourse of performance and suggests the view that more definition around role of performance may come from investigating 'visual dramaturgy'. Howard (2009) argues that the incorporation of theory and practice has yet to be realized, as much as it might be the rise of a new kind of discipline that visual dramaturgy could be that link. It is on this continued practice of research that this study sought to build on, basing on the fact that scenography goes beyond the pretty look of a work of art, animation.

At a very basic level, sets give a film its unique look, its geographical, historical, social and cultural perspectives and associated material details. The set further furnishes a film with its physical framework within which a film's narrative is to ensue (Madsen, 2003). Beyond this basic argument, sets provide an important aid to film in recognizing characters, fleshing out and cementing their psychology (Larson, 1976). This, coupled with other elements of film like music and lighting, they create a logic of place, environment and mood, which goes a long way in evoking emotions, longings and desires that supplement or counteract the narrative. It is of importance to also recognize that set is a central element of mise-en-scene, be it using existing or coming up with artificial scenes (Madsen, 2003). Few studies have analyzed how set designs are utilized within a film narrative, and even fewer studies have been concerned with the effect that scenography has when watching the film beyond one's subordination to narrative and beyond the relationship to various forms of stylistic, cultural or historical genuineness. According to Bergfelder, Harris and Street (2007) the first reason is because of the subservience of the visual under the principles of narrative development and progression, which is a key component of classical narrative cinema. In their discussion, Bergfelder et al. state that the second reason is the impalpable quality and momentary nature of the subject. In contrast therefore to other professionals, the role of scenography in animation films has been a relatively under-researched subject over the years. In

terms of detailed historical analysis of scenographic elements in animation, the field is rather narrow. This research therefore seeks to fill this gap of knowledge by specifically exploring the role of scenography on characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.8.7 Character

Characters are key for our film experience and they provoke us with a horde of questions appertaining their production, structure, meanings and effects. The definition of what characters are is very contentious (Jens, 2008). In most cases, they are regarded as imaginary beings. Although these fictional beings tend to have inner lives, they also present themselves as immaterial and indefinable. Their existence is conceived in varying ways, ranging from being considered mere illusions of language, signs or abstractions. These views go a long way in determining how the characters will be perceived (Hay, 2018). A character takes a specific position to bring and portray a message, a moral code or something that is intentionally conveyed to the audience.

Depending on their creation and development, characters can be more convincing to the audience. Michael Meyer (2002) proffers that the artist has two major ways of presenting characters, either through showing or telling. Showing he says gives the author (animator) the liberty to infer the kind of character being portrayed. Eberly & Roberts (1989) have another opinion on how an author ought to present characters. They have broken down three major ways of doing this:

- i. Actions,
- ii. Descriptions and appearance
- iii. Dramatic statement.

For the purpose of this research, focus was put on the description and appearance, as the research sought to see the different parts that are put together to make a whole. On this issue, Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs (1995) say that the appearance and the environment of a character

reveal so much about that character's socio-political and economic statuses, and also tells more about the character traits.

In a bid to further answer the research question on nature of character in *Tinga Tinga Tales*, it is imperative to understand the character design process and considerations. The first thing to establish in the character design process is whom the character is meant for (Wade, 2011). Character designs for a movie themed with horror for example will not be suitable for young children learning to read. In this same context, Tillman (2011) says that character design for small children ought to be colourful with exaggerated facial features and expressions, with a very crisp alteration in the mood, social interface and behavioural issues.

Another key consideration when coming up with characters for animation is the medium in which the character will be showcased. Each and every project will bear its own style and goal and therefore it is key that the character designs be fashioned for the intended purpose (Barcroft, 1996).

Aesthetics of a character also come in the picture in the early stages of the design process. Appearance will have a great effect on the way a particular character will be perceived (Wright J. A., 2005). Designing decipherable characters may entail silhouetting a character so as to see how discrete they are from other characters without the additions of color and details (Tillman, 2011).

Shapes to a large extent contribute to the whole feel of a certain character. For a character designer to understand this, they should be able to know the underlying symbolism that goes with the various shapes (Tillman, 2011). Circles for example will portray a friendly feeling due to their calm and lack of sharp or protruding edges (Zakia, 2007). Squares are termed as stable and shapes that portray solidity. They have sides that are wide and hard to topple. Triangles on the other hand

are sharp and active and immediately elicit a feeling of an unstable feeling. They also are linked to action, hostility and power (Tillman, 2011). Another key step to understanding character and character design in animation is gray-scaling and colouring. A character designer visualizes the character in grayscale. This helps in making clear the tonal values and contrasts.

Characters in animation films have a great application of colour. Colour is defined by hue, chroma and value (Herman and Punekar, 2017). By changing the saturation, shade or a hue, the perception of colour can have imminent variations. When choosing which colour to use, a character designer will approach it from the colour model. A colour model contains a basic model of the character being designed with clear areas that need to be filled with color without having to shade them (Barcroft 2006). The model equips the designer with a basis for easy exchange of colours until a perfect match is obtained. Colour interpretations change with individuals and change of cultures. However common colour nexuses contain similar symbolism. Red, orange and yellow are warm and passionate. Whereas, blue, green and turquoise are seen as dejected colours (Bear, 2017).

While still looking at the presentation of characters in animation leading to their interpretation, one ought to look at the personality projected by the characters. A timid character will appear in an awkward posture while a hero will portray a strong posture (George , 1996).The aesthetic and visual elements should therefore be applied keenly to have a good character design. A character should be a whole of the visual look. Body language, expressions and voice should all be merged to suit a particular character because they help in portraying the social imprints of a character (Bear, 2017).

After the creation of characters, it is important to understand the psychology of characters in animation for one to be able to analyze them keenly. Character designs stem from the creator or animator. Their emotions and personal traits come from the expression of real-life experiences of the animator (Barcroft, 1996). Through making use of tangible feelings and experiences, a story will feel more realistic. This is arrived at by drawing from the unconscious mind and memories. A designer should therefore dig into their deepest regions of the mind.

As much as this is an uphill task, creators who move past the fear have the most multifaceted characters that are believable. Being honest about their own self, a designer has the capability of having a great emotional understanding that creates rich and all rounded deep characters. When a character has these traits well from the creator, the audience will relate more intimately with the character (Ballon 2009).

With creating characters also, an animator may choose to dwell on the archetypal characters. These are generalized character roles that are cross-culturally accepted (Tillman 2011) the four major types of archetype characters in animation are **shadow, the anima/ animus, self and the persona**. The shadow represents our deepest desires and hostility, the self is the person's conscious and unconscious mind amalgamated, the anima is the feminine and the animus is the masculine true self of a character (Frager and Fardiman, 2005). These stemmed from Jung's theory of archetypes. He says that there are innumerable archetypes and roles that have defined set of behaviours and importance associated with them and can be utilized when need be.

With these discussions, the research found out that creating characters is not merely drawing figures or impressions, but rather it is a psychological and creative process that needs to be keenly done in order to achieve the desired feeling and emotion from the audience.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

Since this study focused on scenography, scenographic elements and characters, with a semiotic approach, the main theory is semiotics. This is a theory that deals with the study of signs.

The word 'semiotic' is a derivative of the term 'semeion', the Greek word for sign. The modern realms of semiotics were coined by Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure. At the very basic, semiotics is the study of signs. Mitry (2000) defines semiotics as the discipline dedicated to the study of all systems of signs, ranging from gesticulations, signals and various symbols. All the signs are in two values: a signifier which is the sign itself, and the signified, which is that which that particular sign relates to. The entire process of trying to get the meaning happens in a society. Semiotics is based on a basic tenet that; a sign has two meanings. These are, the physical-the sign as an object and the psychological-the sign as a concept. While understanding the synecdoche, one comes to understand the relationship of a part to a whole (Monaco, 2000). It is these minute aspects that largely fill our everyday lives with different meanings and interpretations. Just as it is in life, it is true for the film world. Film images are signs. These signs construct and communicate meaning. The sign has two parts, which are the signifier and the signified. Signifier is the physical part, which is the tangible one, while the signified is the psychological part, the reaction to the object, the mental picture a signifier evokes.

Semiotics is a term that encompasses numerous and specified approaches to study of culture as appertains to language. Metz's (1975) approach of semiotics to film is at the most basic an abstract and a concrete film theory. Based on its intention to be a science, semiotics tends to heavily depend on the practical and detailed analysis of a film or parts of a film. In this respect, semiotic criticism is to a large extent more concrete, tangible and intense than any other approach (Monaco, 2000).

This theory is relevant to this study because it helps to semiotically engage the aspects of scenographic elements and characters in Kenyan animation film, *Tinga Tinga Tales*. Essential to this study is the theory's significance to relating signs to meaning in a work of art.

Chandler (2007) proffers that semiotics is not only limited to the analysis and study of what is referred to as signs in everyday engagement, but rather anything that stands for something else. He further says that in a semiotic sense and approach, signs can take different forms like words, gestures, objects and sounds. There has been a great contribution towards semiotics as a theoretical framework, ranging from scholars like Barthes (1975) and (Metz, 1990). The crucial conceptions are centered on the signifier, signified, referent, denotation, implication and the dogma. The basic is that of using one thing as a representative of the other. The signification of these particular aspects and the meaning being searched for are what the encoding and decoding processes are all about. This implies that a semiotic approach is not only concerned with the text but also the context that that particular environment where the film is placed.

Previous semiotics studies in film have widely based their argument from a narratological perspective. In his later work, Metz carried out the most basic and primary objective of film semiotics to build a model that would look into filmic specificity, and its fundamental system. He confused filmic specificity with narrativity when coming up with the *grande syntagmatique*. He later looked and redefined specificity in terms of a specific amalgamation of five traits, merged with the fundamental system that arranges them. The idea of 'cinematic language' for film semiotician is more than an analogy or correlation, this means that film analysis is not grounded on just identifying the correlation between film and language. It is in order to say that semioticians do not pretend to analyze all aspects that make a film intelligible; instead they bind their analysis to invariant characters that describe a film's specificity (Buckland, 2004).

This study hoped to fill this gap by looking at the deeper contribution of film language in terms of the scenography and scenographic elements as being a key contribution to the way characters are designed and presented in animation film,

Tinga Tinga Tales.

Semiology leaves the study of the filmic, the externals of films, to other related disciplines. It is the internal study of the mechanisms of films themselves which Metz and his followers elect to investigate. Semiology is the discipline of meaning and film semiotics offers to construct an all-inclusive model with the ability of elucidating how film exemplifies meaning and connotes it. It hopes to define the laws which make the consumption of film probable and to expose the specific patterns of sense which give any film or a group of films their specific characters. Metz (1975) validates the application of semiology to the study and analysis of films because they are discourse units. Statements correspond to images in film. Images in film take up the position of statements and contrary to words they:

- a. Are inestimable in numeral and are not in themselves distinct units
- b. Are in key the creations of the film's message
- c. Relay to the audience so much information that is indefinite
- d. Are objectified units.

Metz (1975) argues that the transition from one image to two or more images is what constitutes film language. Film therefore has become a language not as a result of the rules of amalgamating images, but because it narrates a story (Roth, 2014). This study has a basis on this important aspect that animation, like all films is not just a visual art, it goes beyond this. It seeks to analyze the aesthetics of animation, precisely scenographic, to try and elucidate the impact and contribution that they have toward characters.

Barthes (2012) proffers that trivial aspects of everyday life can be filled with meaning. For this reason, animation film being a visual art synthesizes meaning and arouses the senses of the body.

This is what in turn brings about the meaning in these films. As mentioned before, semiotics is the study of signs in a given society. Society is responsible for providing the foundation on which meanings are constructed as it leaves a gap for the keen elucidations by the viewers. Barthes (1975) further discusses the variances between denotation and connotation. Denotation is labeling something and connotation is the process of creating meaning from our social interactions and experiences.

Barthes (1975) deliberates numerous media innards: films, photography, novels and wrestling matches. According to him, wrestling matches carry a meaning and moral lessons pertinent to a society. In essence, theory of encoding/decoding is in line with this perspective (Hall, 2001). Above and beyond the overriding position, Hall notes that the probable negotiated and oppositional standpoints deliver the opportunity for the active viewers elucidations. Radway (1983) contends that the creation of significance of romance reading is not only a matter of text but also an interface between text and context. She further argues that:

Literary meaning is the result of a complex, temporally interaction between a fixed verbal structure and a socially situated reader. That reader makes sense of verbal structure by referring to previously learned aesthetic and particular cultural codes (Radway, 1983).

This is further put across by Fiske (1989) that we are not merely consumers of commodities, but most importantly the users. The variation is that as users, we can make logic of cultural activities and products we interact with.

Metz (1990) acknowledges that semiotics of cinema can be studied in two ways; connotative or denotative semiotics. Metz further argues that denotation is a visual and filmic transfer, which has no codes or any integral organization. He further argues that the human intrusion which carries proper semiotics, only affects the level of connotation. Metz (1975) puts it that denotation is a

visual. Scenography in its right incorporates the use of different aspects like colour, light and props. This therefore means that these aspects affect how the message is perceived and therefore the way the character is developed.

Zakia (2007) puts it that symbols date back to a very long history and for a long time have been used culturally for a wide range of purposes: religious, political and economic. The most basic principle of semiotics is that the more conspicuous and richer the sign is, the more substantial it is. Semiotics theory accentuates on considering the length to which a sign expresses meaning beyond the iconic level. It proposes that film should be inferred as a series of signs that express meaning also on symbolic and indexical levels. This study has employed Semiotics film theory to study scenography and how it affects character development in *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.10.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methodology and methods of data collection that were used in conducting this research based on scenography and character in *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.10.2 Research design

A research design is considered as the arrangement of conditions for the collection in a way that is aimed at amalgamating relevance with the purpose of the research (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). It is the conceptual structure within which research is undertaken and comprises a blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. The study used a qualitative approach, employing the following approaches: textual analysis, case studies, content analysis and archival research.

1.10.3 Sampling Techniques

This study employed the stratified purposive sampling technique to ensure a representative of the population targeted is arrived at. Stratified sampling is a procedure that first of all divides the entire population into distinct subgroups and then forms a sample by drawing subsamples from the subgroups (Thompson, 2013). The samples are selected based on the information rich cases and for the most effective use of restricted resources. The selected individuals should either be knowledgeable or experienced in the particular area of the study. This is keenly arrived at so as to represent the entire population with the most relevant traits. Each case in the sample is called the subject, respondent or interviewees.

1.10.4 Sample Size of the *Tinga Tinga* episodes

Tinga Tinga tales was chosen for this study as it is the Kenyan animation production that helped grow the Kenyan animation industry and applied most elements of animation production processes as well as to a large extent possessing the scenographic elements as well as character design aspects that formed the basis for the study to be conducted. *Tinga Tinga Tales* has a total of 55 episodes. The episodes make to a total of 2 seasons. Six episodes were studied for this research. The 6 episodes are a valid sample of study as it is in line with Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) that a sample size of 10% is considered adequate for a study. Therefore, 10% of the 55 episodes is 5.5 episodes, picked from the series. This sample offered a concrete foundation on which sound arguments concerning the scenography and its effect(s) on character in Kenyan animation film, *Tinga Tinga Tales*. To arrive at the six episodes, the process involved dividing the episodes into smaller groups (strata) that share similar attributes and characteristics. The criteria of selection were dividing the episodes into; insect-based episodes, amphibian-based episodes, fish-based episodes, mammal-based episodes, reptile-based episodes and bird-based episodes. The study then narrowed down to reptile-based narrations only. The total number of reptile-based episodes are 6 and the study analyzed all of them. The reptile stories were selected for the study on the basis that the scenographies of the stories were created more on the and exhibited more aspects that are needed for the study. This small but carefully arrived at sample was used to represent the entire population. The episodes studied are:

- a) Why Snake has no legs
- b) Why Tortoise has a broken shell
- c) Why Lizard hides under rocks
- d) Why Crocodile has a bumpy back
- e) Why Chameleon changes colour

f) Why Puff adder sheds his skin.

1.10.5 Sample size of animators in the industry

The selection of the animators was purposive so as to offer a stable ground to hold the research. Trochim, Donnelly & Arora (2016) describe purposive samples as samples within samples and proposes that purposeful samples can be stratified through the selection of specific units that may vary based on a key dimension.

The researcher interviewed 24 animators in Nairobi to help collect qualitative data that aided in giving a sound argument to the research objectives. The respondents were arrived at based on the following major concerns.

- i. Should be an animator in Kenya, specifically working with the technical aspects in animation production like editing, character design, storyboarding, rigging, cinematography, colouring among others.
- ii. Should not have worked as part of *Tinga Tinga Tales* production team
- iii. Should have produced at least three animation films
- iv. Should have worked not less than three years in the industry, actively producing animations
- v. Should be practising in Nairobi
- vi. Should be a practising animator during the research period.

1.10.6 Validity of the Research

Validity refers to the degree to which a measuring instrument reassures what it is designed to measure (Tejumaiye, 2003). This study adhered to the theoretical framework to ensure that the data collected conforms to the theoretical expectations in an effort to answer the research

questions. The researcher also concretely believed that the selected samples of study both for the episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales* as well as the animators interviewed were sufficient in providing tangible information for this study.

1.10.7 Data Collection

1.10.7.1 Data Collection Methods

i. Observation method

The study began with collecting the sample population episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*. The episodes are; Why Snake has no legs, Why Tortoise has a broken shell, Why Lizard hides under rocks, Why Crocodile has a bumpy back, Why Chameleon changes colour and Why Puff adder sheds his skin. Using observation as a primary data collection tool, the researcher first watched each of the selected episodes without putting much detailed analysis so as to have a grip on the meaning of the animation films.

ii. Interviews

The researcher interviewed 24 animators in Nairobi to help collect qualitative data that aided in giving a sound argument to the research objectives. The study used closed interviews to collect qualitative data from animation artists working in the Kenyan animation industry. The aim was to determine to what extent scenography affects character in animation through their experiences as animators. The demographics of the interviewed animators are as follows:

- a) 100% (representing 24) - worked with the technical aspects in animation production like editing, character design, storyboarding, rigging, cinematography, colouring among others.
- b) 100% (representing 24 animators) had not been part or crew that made/produced *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

- c) 80% (representing 19 animators) had produced atleast 3 animations or had been part of a production crew during the time of this study.
- d) 80% (representing 19 animators) had worked in the industry for not less than 3 years. Most of them however had been in the industry for more than 6 years.
- e) 100% (representing 24 animators) were practising in Nairobi.

iii. Literature Review

Literature review on the topic at hand was majorly used for the secondary data. Review of the existing literature on scenography and character was keenly put into consideration as well as looking at the existing case studies of animation films, techniques and developments and they provided a crucial basis and context for the study.

1.10.7.1.2 Data Collection tools

i. Observation guides

An observation guide was used during the watching of the selected episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*. The guide involved keenly studying scenographies in all selected episodes, then keenly studying the characters and finally looking at the scenographies vis-à-vis the characters. This systematic data gathering helped determine the nature of scenographies, the nature of characters and the effect that the scenographies had on the character design.

ii. Interview guides

Interview guides were used to as a framework on getting the desired information on the most important concerns of this study. The guide covered the questions that were in line with the objectives.

iii. Textual analysis

Literature on scenography and character was keenly put into consideration as well as looking at the existing case studies of animation films, techniques and developments. These provided a crucial basis and context for the study. Further to the above, secondary data was achieved through analyzing research from academic papers as well as journal articles to help unearth findings on the effect of scenography on characters.

Collective results from the data collected using the instruments above provided a conclusive report on how scenography affects character in the Kenyan animation film, *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

1.10.8 Ethical Considerations

Graphical information (pictures) used in the study were directly derived from *Tinga Tinga Tales* videos. The pictures were captured using screen capture software “VLC Player” a free video player. The pictures were derived expressly for this study and not any commercial or personal use. To serve the study, the pictures are used to illustrate scenography, characters and the effects that scenography has on characters. Further on this, the identities of the respondents in the interview are protected and their names are not mentioned.

1.10.9 Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

Data obtained was examined and analyzed qualitatively in line with the study objectives and tested with the assumptions that were proposed. This involved analyzing the facts and information gathered through reading *Tinga Tinga Tales*, information from the interviews, as well as the secondary information that was gathered through review of related and relevant literature. Semiotics theory was applied during the interpretation of the data that was obtained.

The method of presentation in this study is discursive. Pictures have been included in the necessary places to further boost the core objectives of the study. The dissertation is divided into five sections. The first chapter offers an introduction, which then heads to chapter 2-5. Chapter two discusses the nature of scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales*, Chapter 3 focuses on the nature of characters in *Tinga Tinga Tales*, while Chapter 4 looks at the effects of scenography on characters in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. Finally, Chapter 5 is solely dedicated to a discussion of the findings of this study, a summary answer to the research questions and a trajectory for future researches.

Further, the findings from the interviews have been presented in (**APPENDIX II**) of this study.

CHAPTER 2: NATURE OF SCENOGRAPHY IN *TINGA TINGA TALES*

OVERVIEW

This section details the analysis of the nature of scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. This has been achieved through the analysis of the elements of design. The elements analysed are colour, form, line, shape, space and texture. The interrelation, merging and conflicts of these elements are what have made possible the scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

2.1 Introduction

Scenography can be a sensory as well as an intellectual experience (Butterworth and McKinney, 2009) and can be defined as the unified synthesis of space, text, research, art, actors, directors and spectators that donate to an original creation (Howard, 2009). As discussed earlier, scenography refers to something more than just putting up sceneries, costumes or lights. It carries an inference of an all-round and encompassing visual spatial construct as well as the process of altering the physical vocabulary of the stage (Aronson, 2008)

Scenographic creation includes working with design, dramaturgy, deliberate use of media and the staging of the narrative experience in a space (Larson, 1976). When scenography is said to be the art of writing space or stage, it is because it has the ability of redeeming the text and the story behind it, i.e. the narrative (McKinney & Butterworth, 2009). In that way, it is a staging of another type of narrative that both donates to-and withdraws from the text-based narrative of a play or performance. The same applies to animation since the goal of the animator is to pass the message with the utmost clarity.

The demand of how to design the scenes in animation largely hangs on the goals of the director concerning on what he/she wishes to achieve and the message he/she intends to communicate. In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the directors and animators have used created scenes. This results in well-designed scenes that are tailored to make sense and bring out the meaning of the film. Throughout the series, the viewer is exposed to different scenes that they later become acquainted to as the series continues.

One key purpose of scenography in animation is to offer a backdrop for events of the story to unfold. Through different designs and creations that are realistic for the animation action, scenography offers characters a space to meet and hold discourses portraying period and location where the dealings are unfolding. This can be viewed broadly through the principles of design and at a more in-depth angle through the elements of design, which the research has used to analyse the scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. To get to understand this, synopses of the selected episodes are key in understanding how the stories unfold.

2.2 Synopses of the selected episodes

The production of *Tinga Tinga Tales* was inspired by the visual aesthetics of the paintings that were done by several artists from Morogoro stores in Tanzania. The series is also grounded on several animated animals and uses music, dialogue and colourful images to express the tales. The stories in *Tinga Tinga Tales* are etiological in their form and manner. The word etiology is an elucidation of how things came to exist or how they were at a particular point in time or place. These can be stories of creation, origin of man, plants or animals (Alan, 1984).

The topics are generally on how these animals came to be the way they are and to riposte the queries such as *Why do Bush babies Have Big Eyes?* The stories are narrated by red tail Monkeys.

Below are the synopses.

2.2.1 Why Chameleon changes colour

Chameleon doesn't have colour. He is dull, boring and as grey as a rainy day and therefore cannot take part in Tinga Tricks. On realizing that he does not fit in with the other animals, he sets to be alone. On his way, Chameleon meets Butterfly who narrates his ordeal and former self to him. With new found knowledge, Chameleon encounters rainbow and touches it. He suddenly is able to switch colours as he wishes and finds his happiness once again. He is now able to fit with the other animals in the kingdom freely.

2.2.2 Why Crocodile has a bumpy back

Crocodile is befallen by a bad fete that makes his back bumpy. Crocodile always had a smooth and silky skin, so smooth that he burnt in the sun. On the fateful day, there are wild beasts that are grazing and it is forbidden for any animal to mention the 'R' word, which translates to run. The word makes the wild beasts run and cause stampedes. Unfortunately, elephant mentions the word and everyone has to run for their safety. Crocodile doesn't manage to escape and is trampled on by the wild beasts. He ends up having a bumpy back.

2.2.3 Why Lizard hides under rocks

Lizard is always greedy and light fingered. He keeps on stealing food from other animals. On this particular day, Mosquito sees him stealing from Chameleon and all the animals corner him. To exude himself from any problem, he suggests that the food is for his invited guest, Frog. He however plays a trick on Lizard and makes him wash his hands many times without tasting the

food. As a revenge, the other animals trick Lizard into attending a dinner session at Frog's pond. The dinner is organized at the bottom of the pond. Lizard cannot swim and misses out after many trials. He is embarrassed and has to hide under rocks to avoid the eyes of the other animals.

2.2.4 Why Puff adder sheds his skin

Puff adder is desperate to have a friend. However, all the animals are scared of him because of his nasty bite, but it's because his dull skin is not visible to avoid being stepped on. Something that triggers his bites. He is dejected and commits to staying alone, concurring that it is the best thing to do. He leaves the kingdom and, on his way, he meets Camel. Amidst their conversation, he is trapped under a rock. Camel cheers him on so that he can untangle himself. As he does this, his old skin comes off and he remains with a shiny skin that is visible to everyone. He now has to continuously shed it for visibility.

2.2.5 Why Snake has no legs

Desperate to have a pair of eyes so that he can attend the *Tinga Tinga Festival*, Snake sets out to find eyes. He visits different animals including Frog and Lizard without success. On the verge of giving up, he meets Millipede, who offers him eyes in exchange of his legs, to which Snake obliges. The two promise to meet the following day to return the eyes and legs. Snake attends the festival and comes back to return the eyes. He cannot find Millipede. He ends up losing his legs forever.

2.2.6 Why Tortoise has a broken shell

Tortoise hears of a secret feast for the birds in the sky and offers to guide the birds to the feast. Since Tortoise can't fly, the birds each donate a single feather to form wings for Tortoise and they teach him how to fly. But Tortoise flies ahead of the birds on the day of the feast and eats the entire

feast by himself. When the birds arrive later, they angrily realize that they were tricked by Tortoise and they pluck off the feathers they had given him. Unable to fly without the feathers, Tortoise falls from the sky and breaks his shell.

2.3 Elements of Design

Gatto & Selleck (2011) define the elements of visual designs as components that visual artists or designers can use in their creation of works of art. Evans & Thomas (2013) recognize that line, texture, space and shape as palpable elements, and form and colour, as provisional elements. Gatto and Selleck (2011) further in their book, *Exploring Visual Design: The Elements and Principles*, identify line, colour, shape, form, space and texture as the key design elements. The research has based the suggestions and discussed the following as design elements:

- a. Colour
- b. Form
- c. Line
- d. Shape
- e. Space
- f. Texture.

The choice to base the argument on the elements of design has not only been arrived at based on the theoretical framework, but also through the interviews conducted. One respondent, a member of the Association of Animation Artists of Kenya confers that;

...animation backgrounds in my work are normally affected by the elements of design as I view the set as flat designs. Despite the fact that I borrow from manga animations, the combination of elements of design help me in designing my sceneries...

this is beefed up by an independent animator interviewed, who says that;

...one works with what is suitable for their work because animations are created with different motives and meanings. However, to make sure you remain within the

principles of animation, elements of design are the ingredients for layouts and sceneries...

Therefore, through analyzing how these different elements have been used in the construction of the scenographic aspects in *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the research was able to compare them with character design essentials to have a conclusive and rich argument.

2.3.1 Colour

Colour is a key attribute when producing animation, and when used well, it has a tremendous capability of creating great sceneries and backgrounds in animation. Colour is a very interesting element based on its erratic nature.

Colour is usually described by three major dimensions: hue, chroma and value. The name of the colour is referred to as hue. The value is how light or dark the colour is. The lighter values are tints while the darker values are shades. Chroma is how intense the colour is, and is normally referred to in terms of saturation (Herman and Punekar, 2017).

Colour is also key in putting forth an animation's scenographic personality; primarily founded on the cultural representations linked with them as well as for aesthetic reasons. *Tinga Tinga Tales* producers have used this aspect well in their work, as the animation heavily relies on colour themes to portray meaning. Jules Engel, an American critic and animator in an interview at California institute of Arts suggests that colour has a number of functions in animated works. First, it can be used to create space, by providing a sense of utter openness and serenity or, perhaps anxiety. He uses the example of the UPA short, *Gerald McBoing Boing* (1951). At the beginning of the film, colour is used to create a light and simple background, but eventually they become darker and more complex. Colour can also be used to create any effect, ranging from sad, somber to happy.

When picking colours for an animation background, it is important to have in mind the underlying associated meanings of the colours. As much as there are different interpretations of colours from one person to the other or one culture to the other, there are common colour connections linked to certain colour symbolisms. Colours like red, orange and yellow are seen unanimously as warm, loving, energetic and aggressive. On the flip side, blue, green and turquoise are normally seen as cool, calming and melancholic colours (Bear, 2017).

When using colour, their harmony needs to be considered so as to achieve an aesthetically appealing work of art. Small details of a strong colour will give great focal points and hints on the intended meaning. For example, a strong white colour would typically suggest purity and utter innocence, but with a dash of bright red, then the meaning will change to more of a passionate and aggressive feel. When looking at colour in relation to its significance in scene design, it is important to look at different colours and their general meaning.

Further, a useful distinction when looking at colours is categorizing them as warm or cold. Being warm colours from red at one end of the spectrum, to cold colours at the other end. Warm colours tend to give a high temperature perspective, and signify closeness with the environment; meanwhile, the cold ones imply low temperatures and extraction.

Tinga Tinga Tales as an animation film has banked a lot on colour to relay meaning. The animation has used different colours to signify different meanings. To analyse this, dominant colours in the selected episodes were discussed independently in the different episodes and a conclusion drawn.

2.3.1.1 Black

Black as a colour disturbs the mind and body by serving to produce a discreet feeling. In different situations, the colour may invoke varied interpretations such as those of an improved self-assurance (Daniels, 1989). On the contrary, the colour may invoke feelings of intolerance, wickedness, concealment and sinister attitude (Ambrose G. , 2005). In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the colour has been used in various episodes in line with the above discussed. In the episode, ‘why Lizard hides under rocks’, the scenographer has used black in two major instances to imply the sinister nature of the characters. In the first application, Lizard uses black ashes to make sure that Frog does not get an opportunity to share the food. He has it in mind that as Frog goes to wash hands, he will hop and soil his hands over and over and so won’t be able to eat (**FIG 1**). The same is seen as Mosquito goes to Lizard’s house to deliver the message of invitation to a dinner by Frog. Lizard is placed on a black stone. The stone compounds his sinister character and his continuous misconduct. This is because despite the fact that he applied tricks on Frog to miss out on the food, he is happy to be invited for dinner (**FIG 2**).



FIGURE 1 Frog hopping on black ashes



FIGURE 2 Lizard resting on a black stone

In the other episodes however, there has been insignificant use of colour black towards conveying the meaning.

2.3.1.2 Blue

Blue as a colour exudes emotionless tendencies, peaceful tendencies as well as religious connotations (Ambrose G., 2005). This colour is also normally used to represent the sky and water. The colour appears many times in the selected episodes to help in the meaning making process.

In the episode, ‘Why Chameleon changes colour’ blue is used mainly to signify the relaxed mood of the animals. They are playing games, and it’s a free and bonding time. The scenographer therefore evokes the feeling of a relaxed and peaceful mood in the mind using this colour (**FIG 3**).



FIGURE 3 Animals singing under a blue tree

The same can also be noted in ‘why the Lizard hides under rocks’ where the blue colour has been used to indicate the calm and peaceful feeling that covers most parts of the episode. In the first scenario, the scenographer places Chameleon and Mosquito in a blue scene. It is the beginning of a new day and they are having breakfast, (**FIG 4**).



FIGURE 4 Chameleon and Mosquito in the morning searching for breakfast

The second scenario happens as Lizard prepares the dinner. At first, one does not know the intentions that Lizard has. The scenographer therefore decides to colour the scene blue (**FIG 5**).



FIGURE 5 Lizard preparing for the dinner

This changes as tension rises between the two. This can also be seen in ‘why Snake has no legs’ as Snake visits Chameleon. The playful Chameleon is seen in a blue scene to symbolize his peaceful day and feeling (**FIG 6**).



FIGURE 6 Snake meeting with Chameleon

Finally, the blue colour has been used in all the six selected episodes to symbolize water and sky. In symbolizing water, the lifeline of the jungle, and the calmness of the ponds is well brought in the series as seen in **(FIG 7 & 8)**



FIGURE 7 Cloudy sky



FIGURE 8 Tortoise and Eagle flying in the sky

2.3.1.3 Brown

The color brown is stern and very down to earth, with properties like steadiness, structure and support (Ambrose 2005). Brown color stands for protection and support with a great sense of duty and responsibility “Colour Meanings”, 2019. Wooden, ease, ground, earth, physical or worn out materials are well represented by the colour brown. In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the colour has mainly been used to show the locations in which the action is taking place. The savannahs being mainly brown as seen in the episode ‘Why Crocodile has a bumpy back’ (**FIG 9**), the scenographer has let’s one to quickly identify the location. The colour brown is also used to emphasize the dry seasons that are frequently experienced in the African savannah grasslands as presented in the episode, ‘Why Snake has no legs’ (**FIG 10 & 11**). In the two figures also, one can be able to see the representation of the different places ranging from the plains to hills.



FIGURE 9 Wild beasts grazing in the Savannah



FIGURE 10 Hills in the Savannah



FIGURE 11 Dry Season in the Savannah

2.3.1.4 Green

For the scenographer in *Tinga Tinga Tales* to portray nature, richness, fertility, equilibrium, youth, as well as water, green is a good colour. The scenographer has adhered to this and more so on nature and water. This is in tandem with green being regarded as an active color, that signifies regeneration and growth and it portrays the period when all is alive and unfurling its natural processes, according to (Gage, 1999). The richness of the ground means life to the animals in the jungle. The water in the rivers and ponds is also a lifeline of the animals. In most of the episodes among the selected, this is very evident as seen in (FIG 12 & 13).



FIGURE 12 Green plains in Tinga Tinga



FIGURE 13 the river represented by green colour

2.3.1.5 Grey

Grey is a lighter shade of black. This colour is normally used to imply a sorrowful nature when used according to “Bourne Creative”, 2010. As much as the other episodes slightly use this colour, the highlight of it has been used in the episode ‘Why Chameleon changes colour’. Its use in this episode satisfies the research purpose. The colour is used widely as Chameleon undergoes an emotional breakdown. After realizing that he cannot ‘fit in’ because of his too grey colour, he sets out to stay alone. Along the way, the scenographer amplifies his sorrow by placing a grey background (**FIG 14**).



FIGURE 14 A dejected Chameleon

2.3.1.6 Orange

Orange as a colour is used to indicate energetic force, strength, durability and a warm feeling (Ambrose G., The brown color stands for protection and supporting the family with great sense of duty and responsibility. Generally, it is a warm colour. In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the use of orange as a colour appears in several episodes, with the highlight of the selected episodes being ‘Why Chameleon changes colour’ and ‘Why Crocodile has a bumpy back’.

In the episode ‘Why Chameleon changes colour’, the scenographer uses the colour orange just after the Chameleon has acquired colour. At this point in the story the Chameleon was almost giving up but after touching the rainbow, he is victorious. His jubilant mood is best seen in the background colour, **(FIG 15)**.



FIGURE 15 Chameleon happy after acquiring a new colour

This further concurs with the sunsets that are displayed in ‘why the Crocodile has a bumpy back’. The animals are having a great sunset and are playful. The warmth of a great day can be felt by observing the background, (**FIG 16**).



FIGURE 16 sunset in Tinga Tinga

The series has successfully used the colour to be in line with what the audience would easily identify. This in turn helps them to understand the story better. These two episodes are the ones that have exhibited the greater and significant use of this colour. The other episodes do not show this significant use.

2.3.1.7 Red

Red is a colour associated with love, passion, pleasure, health, bravery, risk, blood, fierceness, influence, fire (Ambrose, 2005). Of the six selected episodes, the dominance of this colour is seen in two episodes ‘Why the Crocodile has a bumpy back’ and ‘Why the Snake has no legs’. The colour has various meanings attached to it. In ‘Why the Crocodile has a bumpy back’, the Crocodile is placed under a red tree. The red tree has two major meanings attached to it, one is the fiery nature of the Crocodile. His snappy character scares away other animals and therefore this evokes the intended meaning (**FIG 17**).



FIGURE 17 Crocodile under the red tree

The second meaning of the red tree is the impending danger that later befalls Crocodile. He gets trampled on by the wild beasts which causes him the bumpy back as seen in **(FIG 18)**.



FIGURE 18 Crocodile after being trampled on

Snake in the episode ‘Why Snake has no legs’ is passionate in finding a pair of eyes to attend *Tinga Tinga Festival*. He visits Frog for help without success and has to walk for a long while to find Chameleon. He is also required to carry some flies as a token of appreciation in case he gets the help. On arrival at Chameleon’s place, the scenographer seeks to magnify this passion and zeal of him getting the eyes. He wraps it in the use of the red colour as seen in, **(FIG 19)**.



FIGURE 19 Snake at Chameleon's place

As much as Snake fails to secure the eyes from Frog, he doesn't give up. His passion leads him to millipede's hole to borrow them.

2.3.1.8 White

White is considered a pure colour. A colour that seeks to represent the purity and cleanliness of a place, object or a character (Ambrose G. , 2008). *Tinga Tinga Tales* has instances of the colour white in the selected episodes. In the available instances, the colour is a representative of the cleanliness of the water in the river and the ponds as seen in (**FIG 20**) as well as the peace that prevails along these ponds, where all animals frequently meet to have a good time away from the tribulations of the savannah. This is a recurrent phenomenon in the six episodes. The white strips in the blue waters are the core representative of the use of white as a colour. Combined with other elements, the intended meaning is passed.



FIGURE 20 A pond

2.3.1.9 Yellow

Yellow is a colour associated with joy (Ambrose G. , 2008). It means happiness and jubilation. In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, a series that has a lot of happy moods, yellow is a present colour. These instances appear with the sole meaning of joy. The animals in the kingdom are having a good time in the episode ‘Why the Chameleon changes colour’. They are singing and showing off their tricks. The scenographer changes the colour of the tree trunk to yellow to boost this feeling as seen in, *(FIG 21)*.



FIGURE 21 Animals Singing

The same is seen when Tortoise challenges hare to a race in the episode, ‘Why the Tortoise has a broken shell’. The Tortoise wins the race and to show his victory and happiness, the scenographer uses yellow in the background (*FIG 22*)



FIGURE 22 Tortoise celebrating his victory

2.3.2 Form

Form is a two-dimensional object that is created or made by lines. Form can be grouped into two main categories; geometric and organic (Gatto & Selleck, 2011).

2.3.2.1 Geometric Forms

These are forms that have even properties and proportions. They are rarely found in nature and they immediately strike the eye as manmade (Gatto & Selleck, 2011). They can be used to create a sense of order or control. They are discussed in circles, rectangles and triangles. When handling them, they each give a different impression according to their use.

2.3.2.2 Organic Forms

Organic forms are irregular and are similar to what the objects found in nature are like. This can be compared to clouds, bushes or mountains. They are relatively free form. They seem precisely how a three-dimensional object appears in nature, with all its indiscretions. The forms can express a sagacity of being natural and relaxed (Evans & Thomas, 2013). The episodes in *Tinga Tinga Tales* have made use of organic forms in many scenarios.

They have mostly been used to present the natural forms of trees, mountains and stones. This is in line with making one to easily connect with different locations in the animation series. Combining all the other elements, the form has been able to achieve a 3D look in its application. Below are some instances in the use of form.

i. Hills and mountains



FIGURE 23 Hills

ii. Stones



FIGURE 24 Stones

iii. Trees

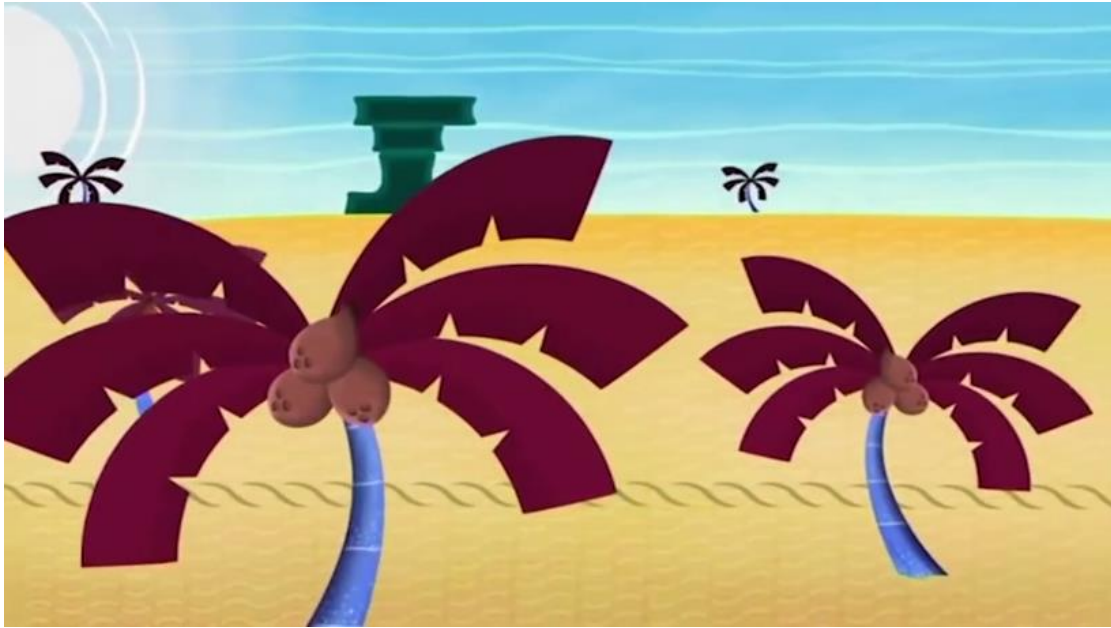


FIGURE 25 Palm Trees



FIGURE 26 Baobab Tree

iv. Clouds



FIGURE 27 Clouds

2.3.3 Line

A line is typically thought of as any mark that is longer than it is wide (Gombrich, 1950). Although this definition is technically correct, line as an element of design can be a great deal more. In essence, it is line that defines nearly all the other elements in design.

Universally, line has always been the primary means of visual representation. Drawn lines can exactly record or loosely suggest the dimensions and structure of forms and their interspaces (Evans & Thomas, 2013). Lines can subdivide the picture plane, tone or colour in animation.

Both in scientific or artistic engagements, line is understood as a path of a point moving in space. Line is a key element of design in Chinese paintings and can always be experienced as a guiding manifestation on a tough profile (Gombrich, 1950). This therefore explains to us that line can be used to enunciate a shape of a particular object.

Lines are key components in forming our visual vocabulary. When they are combined with other elements of design, they give a visual language that is essential in communicating. This is well illustrated in the scenography of *Tinga Tinga Tales*. It is also important to use lines appropriately or for universally acclaimed meaning so as to be able to achieve the perceived meaning of an animation.

The projected purpose and use of line as an element of design goes a long way in determining what the final product will be. Each and every artist has to work with great rapidity in order to retain continuity of the lines, without which the results would turn out to be a disappointment (Silvester, 2000). Line is therefore a very crucial element of design. It reveals movement and activity in designs, design in this case going a long way to determine how the scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales* has been achieved.

2.3.3.1 Types of lines

There are various kinds of line that are used by animators without noticing. Dependent on the nature of a medium being used in art, capability and aim of the artist, the resultant line may be broad or narrow, heavy or light, short or strong constant or viable (Ashwin, 1982). This goes further to explain that close to all subject matter appertaining art and specifically animation includes the application of a line along with fundamentals of creativity.

The look of any drawn line-its particular configuration and character, even its length is determined by its function in an animated work. Inquiring lines, that is, lines that measure, analyze and probe the structural nature of a subject's parts will, by the nature of these roles, be different in kind from those more declarative lines that express the weight and density of a part, define a contour, or supply a needed accent (Goldstein, 2002).

The various lines include:

2.3.3.1.1 Vertical lines

They are also called straight up and down lines. These lines imply strength and stability. They are also filled with probable energy that could be released in case they fell over (Within, 2015) . Vertical lines are rigid and this rigidity magnifies when thicker. They also accentuate height and convey immobility. The lines have not been used in the selected episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

2.3.1.1.2 Horizontal lines

They run from side to side. They are used to indicate calmness. They're almost lying down like posture presents rest and relaxed comfort. They cannot topple. They convey an absence of chaotic feeling (Within, 2015). *Tinga Tinga Tales* has employed this type of lines in various episodes. Of the 6 episodes to be studied, the following episodes exhibit the horizontal lines:

i. Why Chameleon changes colour

As Chameleon is frustrated on how he can never fit in for lacking anything catchy about him, he meets with butterfly. Butterfly offers him a shoulder to cry on. He tells him of how he himself didn't have any glamour but changed. Chameleon is challenged and gains confidence to believe in himself. At this particular moment, the scenographer uses horizontal lines in the background. The lines are an indication of the new gained calm (**FIG 28**).



FIGURE 28 Butterfly talking to Chameleon

The thickness of the lines is a surety of the firmness that the calm comes with and is not easy to topple.

The scenographer further uses these lines after Chameleon gets a solution to his problem. This is after getting the power to change colour upon touching the rainbow. The confidence, stability and his new found character are all merged in the background design through the use of the lines (**FIG 29**).



FIGURE 29 Chameleon gets colour from Rainbow

ii. Why Lizard hides under rock

When Frog finally manages to revenge on Lizard for denying him food, the other animals join in to congratulate him. It's also important to note that they had fully supported Frog in planning for that dinner. Upon victory, they all gather at Frog's pond. Their unity is portrayed not only in the dialogue but more so in the scenography. The scenographer uses vertical lines with a thick stature to show the content and peace of the animals after fighting a vice (**FIG 30**).



FIGURE 30 Animals celebrating after revenging on Lizard

2.3.1.1.3 Diagonal lines

These lines suggest tension owing to the fact that they are unbalanced. They are full of a restless and energy that is uncontrolled (Ambrose G. , 2008). These lines are the most dramatic as compared to horizontal and vertical lines. These lines have not been exhaustively used in the series. However, for the few scenes that exhibit the lines, meaning has been made clearly. In the following episodes, the scenographer uses diagonal lines for various reasons. In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the following episodes clearly exhibit the use of diagonal lines.

i. Why Lizard hides under rocks

The impending predicament that is to befall Frog as he visits Lizard for dinner is well brought out in the background design. The scenographer uses diagonal lines to emphasize this. The first lines appear just after Lizard lays down a trick to have Frog miss on the food. Mosquito looks down at them because of his suspicion towards this perceived dinner (**FIG 31**).



FIGURE 31 Mosquito looking down on Frog and Lizard

The lines persist through the scene to help build up the tension. This goes on even as Lizard starts to apply his trickery on Frog (**FIG 32**).



FIGURE 32 Lizard tricking Frog

From the onset we are set on a path of mistrust and the growing strain. Compounded with the other elements, the scenographer sends the message clearly through the use of these lines.

2.3.1.1.4 Curved Lines

These lines are softer as compared to straight lines. They arc and turn gracefully between end points. As compared to straight lines, they tend to be less definite and predictable (Within, 2015). These lines change direction when they bend. They also express a fluid movement, which is determined by how much curvature they portray. These lines have been frequently used in the series. Mostly to show motion. In the selected episodes, the following episodes portray these lines.

i. Why Chameleon changes colour

In this episode, the scenographer uses curved lines to show the calmness of the animals as they play their games. It is important to note that games are a relaxing time for the animals and it's only just to portray this calmness not only in dialogue but also in the scene design (**FIG 33**).



FIGURE 33 Animals singing

In the same episode, the scenographer also uses the wavy lines to show the extent of the ranges. With these wavy lines, one is able to visualize a continuous range of hills in the horizon (**FIG 34**).



FIGURE 34 Hill and Ranges

ii. Why Lizard hides under rocks

In this episode, the water’s motion is implied using the curved lines since they portray gracious movement. The scenographer applies them in Frog’s pond not only to show the water movement, but also the quiet, peaceful nature that Frog owns in the early stages of the story (**FIG 35**). The same is replicated in hippo’s pond (**FIG 36**).



FIGURE 35 Frog's pond



FIGURE 36 Hippo's pond

iii. Why Puff adder sheds skin

In the first scenes of this episode, there are birds up on a tree. In this initial stage, peace is prevailing. To show this peace in the trees, the curved lines are an indication of the gentle swaying of trees (*FIG 37*).



FIGURE 37 Lines showing swaying of trees

This peace is however interrupted with the entry of the Puff adder, whom the other animals fear a lot.

Further, to show the movement of the water at the ponds, the curvy lines are repeated. However, the edges are more pointed and sharper. This directly relates to the disturbance of the peace caused by the arrival of the Puff adder as well as the entry of many animals in the pond (*FIG 38*)



FIGURE 38 Rapid movements of water indicated by the move curved lines

2.3.1.1.4 Zigzag lines

These lines are a combination of diagonal lines that merge at particular points. They give an impression of high energy levels and characteristics (Evans & Thomas, 2013). They create intense and heightened movement. These lines further convey confusion and nervousness as they change their direction abruptly (Gatto & Selleck, 2011). Zig zag lines can imply risk or devastation. These lines however have not appeared in the selected episodes.

2.3.4 Shape

Shape is defined as a two-dimensional object that is created or made by lines. In two-dimensional design, shapes possess width and length. When they have depth as part of their design, they transit into the world of three-dimension (Gatto & Selleck, 2011). Meaning in a shape is largely determined by its configuration. This can be explained in terms of; a shape that has soft, curved

edges being termed as sensual, while a shape that has angular edges and sharp points passing as a harsh one.

Shape has a unique way of communicating universally, based on the general conception that circular shapes contrasted with triangular shapes originate from nature. Rounded shapes give a sense of safety while angular shapes elicit a cautious feeling (Eric, 2008). These senses are based on the sense of touch and as much as that is not in visual art, the viewers have a tendency of applying the real life experiences and encounters onto the very shapes (Solariski, 2012).

When used, shapes should be able to convey the intended message. If one is passing a message that is marred with feelings of tranquility, then the use of harsh, sharp and angular shapes will totally confuse the viewer. Instead, flowing organic designs of shapes will be able to portray the message clearly. The shape is grouped into two types, geometric shapes and organic shapes (Gatto & Selleck, 2011). Geometric shapes are squares or circles whereas organic shapes refer to irregular shapes. In order to have a coherent design, a balance of the two needs to be carefully considered.

Shapes occur as figures in or on a background in a work of art-animation. Shapes are generally considered positive figures that displace space or impose themselves within a space. The interplay between character and background-positive and negative spaces-is a fundamental visual relationship. Space around figures can also be considered as shape and it is therefore imperative to create a harmony between the two. Since animation is concerned with the harmonic arrangement of elements in a given frame to create a visual art, a keen eye should be placed on how the two play out.

2.3.4.1 Primary shapes

2.3.4.1.1 Circles

Curved and circular shapes tend to be friendly as they lack sharp or dangerous corners. They also give an impression of softness and harmless stature (Solarski, 2012). In scenes and backgrounds that are friendly, these shapes will appear more. This is evident in the selected episodes of this study.

i. Why Puff adder sheds skin

Desperate that he does not make friends because of his biting nature, Tortoise suggests that Puff adder should polish his skin to make him visible. He sets out and, on his way, he whole heartedly convinces himself that he does not need friends for him to be happy. For a moment, this feels like the best option. Dead in the night, with the calmness and quiet nature of the savannah, the scenographer tries to magnify this feeling. A circular shape is used to represent the full moon. The feeling is however short-lived after Puff adder meets camel who changes his mind about not having friends (**FIG 39**).



FIGURE 39 Puff adder out in the night

ii. Why Chameleon changes colour

In this episode, one is able to see these trees even as the animals are singing their favorite songs and playing games (**FIG 40**). The scenographer has used the circles intentionally to give this feeling.



FIGURE 40 Animals singing

iii. Why Crocodile has a bumpy back

The scene opens to a new day in this episode. There is a good feeling both to the characters and the viewers and the use of circles in the background heightens this. One can almost not guess that there is going to be any tension in the upcoming scenes (*FIG 41*). This is even further revealed by the sun, and the halo it forms. A halo that translates to the radiance and another opportunity for the animals to tackle a better day.



FIGURE 41 A new day (sunrise)

iv. Why Lizard hides under rocks

The calm nature of the of the Monkeys in the episode is very conspicuous. The story is jus beginning and this initial stage is not with any tension (*FIG 42*).



FIGURE 42 Monkeys Sleeping

The monkeys are asleep and the mood, ambience and the general state is calm. The story unfolds and even as Lizard enjoys the stolen food, the scenographer patches circular graphics in the background (*FIG 43*).



FIGURE 43 Lizard eating

The trend continues later in the story as we meet the sleeping Frog. One would expect peace, amity and a quiet feel when sleeping. The scenographer employs the circular graphics to bring out this feeling. The pond is itself circular, the plants inside and outside are also circular in nature (*FIG 44*).

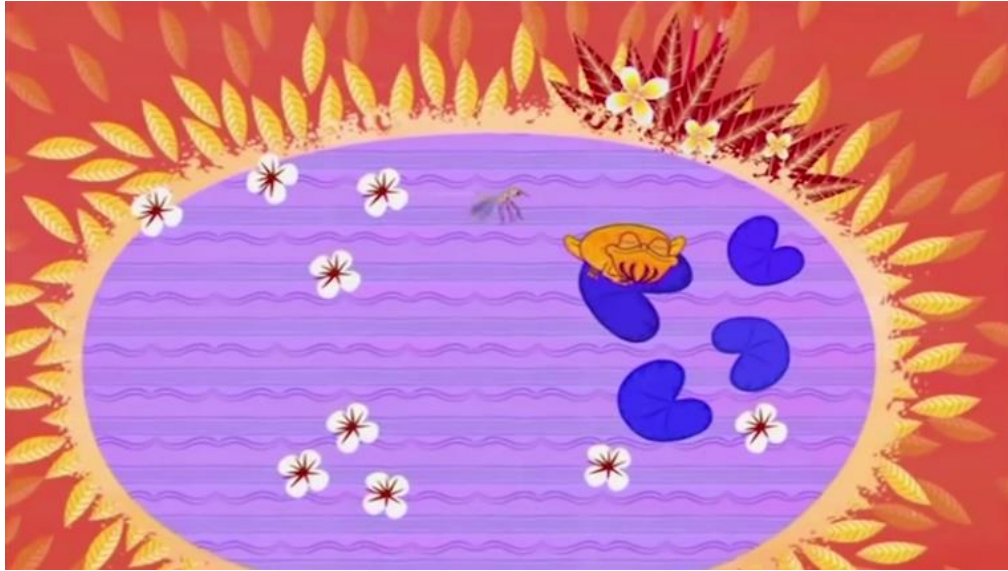


FIGURE 44 Frog Sleeping

v. Why Snake has no legs

Snake goes through so much frustration to get eyes so that he can attend the *Tinga Tinga Festival*. He successfully gets a pair. The scenographer chooses to have circles in the background at the party. The animals are having a great time, dancing and enjoying the party. The peace and happiness that is in the air is great and the circles that the scenographer has added heighten the feeling. When watching, one is easily drawn to the song and dance and as one would expect, the happiness persists throughout the scene as seen in (*FIG 45*).



FIGURE 45 Animals Dancing

vi. Why Tortoise has a broken shell

In this episode, Tortoise invites Hare for a race. He wins the race. In his celebratory mood, one can feel his satisfaction in winning the race. The scenographer plays this well by using circles in the background to magnify the serene feeling of the hare(**FIG 46**)



FIGURE 46 Tortoise winning the race

2.3.4.1.2 Squares

Square, rectangles and square-like shapes relay to straight, vertical and horizontal lines that portray strength, confidence and stability. Squares can be used in two ways, they can be large and intimidating or reassuring and awkward. They generally depict scenes or characters that are dependable (Barcroft, 1996).

Tinga Tinga Tale's scenographer and animators have not quite exhaustively applied this shape.

The two occurrences that have this shape are in the following episodes:

i. Why Lizard hides under rocks

As Lizard is on his way to Frog's home, the scenographer uses square just as he nears the venue. The block confidence that Frog harbours is very evident. He is certain of a great party and the scenographer uses the square shape to evoke this firm feeling in the mind when watching(**FIG 47**)



FIGURE 47 Lizard on his way to Frog's dinner

ii. Why Tortoise has a broken shell

In this episode, Tortoise breaks his tough shell after a party goes wrong in the heavens. It is right to say that right from the onset, one already has a picture of the hardness, firmness and stability of the shell. The scenographer therefore uses the squares and rectangles to cement this in their minds (*FIG 48*).



FIGURE 48 Fragments of Tortoise's broken shell

2.3.4.1.3 Triangles

These are the most dynamic of the other shapes. They are directly associated with diagonal, firm and angular lines. When used, they portray malicious, threatening feel and aggressive feel (Barcroft, 1996). These shapes are a total contrast of the circle. In *Tinga Tinga Tales* the scenographer has generously applied this type of shape to help in the meaning making process.

The instances of application in the various episodes are as follows:

i. Why Puff adder sheds skin

Puff adder faces so much hostility from other animals because of his bites. The scenographer in *Tinga Tinga Tales* has used the scene design well to help magnify the feeling that Puff adder bears as well as the other animals. He uses triangles to show the threatening nature of the Puff adder (**FIG 49**).

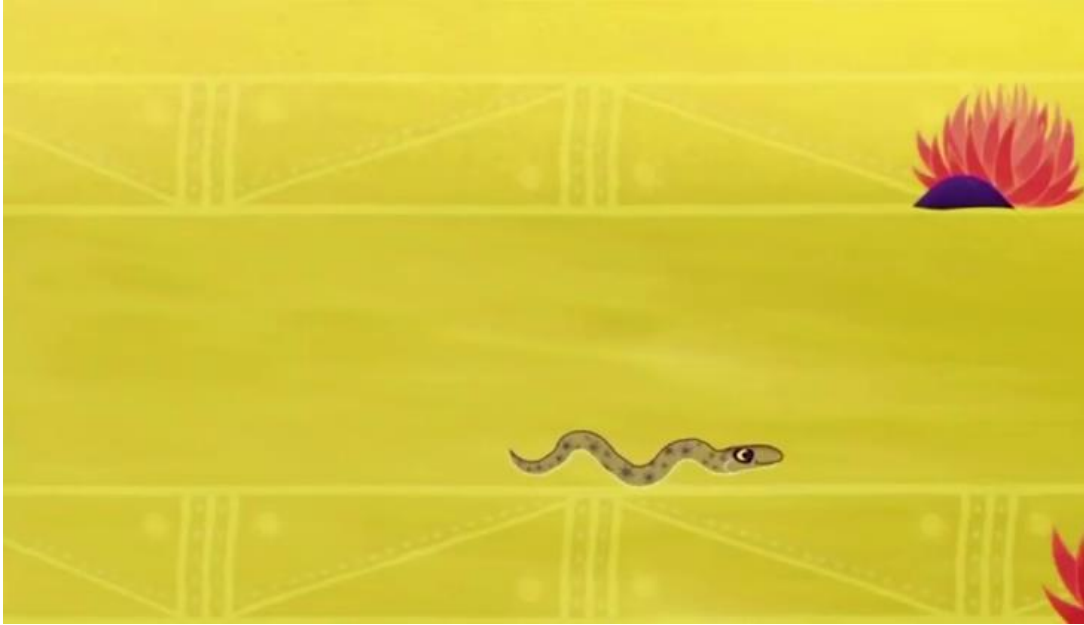


FIGURE 49 Lonely Puff adder

As Puff adder comes in contact with other animals on his way, the use of triangles in the background persists (*FIG 50*)- He meets hippo, who literally runs away. He forges on and the rest of the animals run away. The persistence of the triangles in the scene magnifies the fear that is held towards Puff adder.



FIGURE 50 Hippo running away from Puff adder

As the story goes on, the scenographer uses pointed shrubs to show the height of fear that is now at maximum levels (*FIG 51*). It is still at this point that Puff adder has given up on the rest of the animals and has decided to stay alone.



FIGURE 51 Animals retracting from Puff adder

ii. Why Chameleon changes colour

Tired of being grey, Chameleon feels his relationship with the other animals is threatened. He sets out to find himself a new life. The following scenes take us through the hardships he experiences. A notable scene is at his lowest. He is crossing plains on a rainy day, his pain is all visible. With his dwindling relationship, the scenographer magnifies it by using triangle shapes (**FIG 52**)



FIGURE 52 Chameleon crying as he crosses the plains

iii. Why Crocodile has a bumpy back

As Crocodile encounters the stampede from the wildbeests, he lets out a huge cry of help. At this point however, all the animals have crossed the river and can not help him. The scenographer places sharp triangular vegetation in the background so as to complement this mood (**FIG 53**). They signify what is about to befall Crocodile. He finally gets trampled on by the wildbeests.



FIGURE 53 Crocodile crying out for help

iv. Why Lizard hides under rocks

Lizard goes out to steal. He steals from the Monkeys (**FIG 54**) and the Chameleon (**FIG 55**).



FIGURE 54 Lizard stealing Monkeys' food



FIGURE 55 Lizard stealing from Chameleon

In both cases, the scenographer places triangular shaped vegetation to magnify the malicious character of the Lizard. This is seen again even as he invites Frog to his home for dinner, a dinner which Frog doesn't get to eat anything. The scenographer similarly fills the scene with triangular shapes seen in the leaves (**FIG 56**). These shapes show the impending predicament that Frog eventually faces at the dinner table.



FIGURE 56 Lizard planning on denying Frog food

v. Why Snake has no legs

At Chameleon's place when Snake arrives to borrow eyes, the scenographer uses triangular leaves on the trees. The mischievous act that is portayed by Chameleon later seals the essence of the triangular shapes, (*FIG 57*). He eats the flies brought by Snake even though Snake doesn't get to use his eyes.



FIGURE 57 Chameleon eating Snake's flies

vi. Why Tortoise has a broken shell

In this episode, focus is drawn to Tortoise's impish behaviour. He plans on preying on the birds' party. The anticipation of this is well brought out in the scenographer's choice of the triangle shapes. As Tortoise speaks to parrot, the surrounding has lots of triangular shapes especially in the vegetation just so to prepare for what is to happen (*FIG 58*).



FIGURE 58 Tortoise talking to Parrot

The natural communicative aspects of shapes make them a very dominant element of design, especially in 2D animation. Contrasts and proportion can be easily created and they are distinguishable. Most scenes in *Tinga Tinga Tales* have employed this element to aid the meaning making process. While using shapes, one needs to be careful not to mix them up so as to achieve full meaning of the message being put across. It is imperative to centre designs around key and major shapes rather than focusing on minute details of a design (Solarski, 2012).

2.3.5 Space (perspective)

Space is defined as a point or place where objects (two-dimensional and three-dimensional) exist (Evans & Thomas, 2013). In precision, the method of portraying three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface is termed as perspective (Goldstein, 2002). Space comprises the background, foreground and middle ground. It further includes the reserves or area around, between, and inside the objects. Positive spaces are the parts that are engaged by an object and

form in a piece of art. A space where no objects exist is called negative space and the perfect or proper use of this space is key in making striking and effective visual design (Lohr, 2008).

From the above explanation therefore, space is achieved by how the arrangement of objects is done in a frame. The illusion of depth is arrived at by using perspective. Perspective is the system that is used to create the impression of depth. Perspective will make the artwork-animation appear as if it is in motion as in a distance like a landscape. The study will focus more on the perspective because it is through the unique construction of space that the background in animations is well achieved. *Tinga Tinga Tales* is a 2D animation that the creators understand well this aspect in making meaning. Perspective doesn't limit itself to just completing the equation of scenography but rather helps in communicating the message that is to be passed.

2.3.5.1 Types of perspective

When doing backgrounds especially in two-dimension, nonlinear perspective is key (Schell, 2015). To achieve nonlinear perspective, the following techniques are put into consideration.

2.3.5.1.1 Position

This is the placement of objects higher in a frame so as to make it appear farther back than the objects which are placed on the lower positions of the frame (Schell, 2015).

This positioning is an evident technique of space as an element of design. The creators of *Tinga Tinga* have used positioning for various reasons. The technique has been spread in different capacities in the selected episodes. However, a few episodes tend to magnify this aspect more. In the episode, 'Why Puff adder sheds his skin', there are two major instances. In the first instance, when Puff adder is out strolling, the placement of vegetation vis-à-vis characters is in such a way

that one can easily see the expansive nature of the savannah as seen in (**FIG 59**). The sisal plants are on the lower part of the frame as compared to the trees that are a bit higher in the frame.



FIGURE 59 Savannah vegetation

This is further appearing in Puff adder's journey. Throughout the day, Puff adder moves around but fails to get a friend. Out at night, the animator uses this technique again to show even how big the rift is growing. The scenography is playing an important role in amalgamating the character's feelings, (**FIG 60**). He meets fox, who doesn't want anything to do with him and he actually runs away. The close placement of the Puff adder further makes amplifies the pity one develops towards Puff adder when watching the scene.



FIGURE 60 Puff adder

This technique continues to appear in the other episodes. In the episode ‘Why Chameleon changes colour’ where the animator also shows the expansive nature of the savannah by using the positioning technique (*FIG 61*). The same is seen in the episode, ‘Why Snake has no legs’, as the Snake goes round searching to borrow eyes and one can almost feel the long distances that he has to cover so as to achieve his goal. Distances that occur in the placement of the sisal plants and trees in (*FIG 62*) also show the power of perspective and positioning in showing expansiveness of a region.



FIGURE 61 Expansive savannah



FIGURE 62 Sisal plants

2.3.6 Texture

In animation, texture synthesis and analysis is an important part of the production process. In many cases, real and existent textures are gathered, scanned, and then modified by artists. Alternatively,

artists spend long hours generating the necessary textures (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 2011). In both processes, the final textures generated are normally photorealistic and non-photorealistic. Texture is the use of lines and different shadings on a paper so as to form the impression of a tactile experience in an illustration on a 2-D surface (Hernandez, 2013).

Traditional approaches to textures have a great impact on information and features of the general production. Textures are often expressed as sets of regular patterns, themselves consisting of a set of elementary components. In macro textures, the **primitives** themselves have significant features as well as some form of spatial arrangement. Micro-textures on the other hand are patterns with small primitives, which in the extreme case consist of only single pixels.

The texture of a background gives more life to it. It affects how we feel like. As Hernandez (2013) puts it, when you see a delicious meal in a photo, your head starts thinking of how sweet it tastes and smells. Yet if you see the same food a week later, moldy and grassy, the reaction to it is completely different.

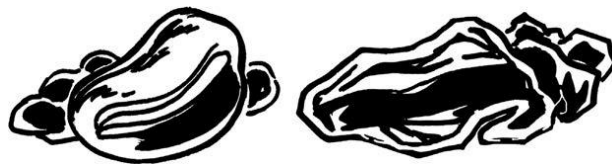


FIGURE 63 Rocks

In the above images, there are two rocks. However, each rock represents a different and distinct surface and a different rock altogether. The first rock represents a lighter and a smoother surface. This can be seen by looking at the contour line, which is appearing to be continuous. This is in contrast with the second rock, which has sharper edges and intercut marks, the lines are not also continuous. Such is an example of how texture affects how we perceive things. Consequently,

when used in animation, they symbolize specific feelings besides helping in aiding how the message is passed. This element has been used in the six selected episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*. It is right to say that the different textures have been used to make meaning in the animation film. The main evident reason is to show the different terrains of the Savannah.

To achieve textures in a 2D dimension, there are various techniques that can be used. The following are the common techniques according to (Hernandez, 2013).

2.3.6.1 Techniques in texturing

2.3.6.1.1 Cross hatching

- a) This is a technique that entails using intercut lines in order to form or create an illusion of light and forming shadows. The lighter the lines are, the darker the surface seems.



FIGURE 64 Cross hatching

This technique appears in most of the selected episodes. As much as it has been used to portray similar meanings of location, the cross hatching presents more insights in the scenography. These are situations in the six episodes of how it has been applied and the intended meaning.

i. Why the Puff adder sheds his skin

In this episode, Puff adder is hated by other animals because of his bite. However, his bite is escalated by the fact that he is not easy to spot and so animals keep on stepping on him. In the first

scene, we see Puff adder in a location that is marred by the cross hatch. The technique has been used to give the scene a rough look (*FIG 65*).



FIGURE 65 cross hatched ground

This look resonates well with the frustrations and hate that Puff adder is harboring towards the other animals. The scene later transits to show his utter disgust when he meets them.

ii. Why Lizard hides under rocks

Lizard invites Frog for dinner but ends up not sharing his food. The other animals get disgusted and hatch a plan to have Lizard suffer the same predicament in Frog's territory. The animator uses the cross-hatching technique in the scene just before Lizard attends the party. The technique appears on his way there. As he passes the other animals, he is jeered at. The animator uses this rough texture to show what the Lizard is going to encounter and also to show the feeling that the other animals have towards the Lizard (*FIG 66*). It is a tense moment and a scenography that bears

roughness is most suitable. We later see Lizard being denied food and toyed around by the Frog, to the jeers and ridicules of the other characters.



FIGURE 66 Cross hatched background

iii. Why Snake has no legs

In this episode, Snake has no eyes and is out to borrow some for a party-*Tinga Tinga Festival*. He wanders all over the place and throughout we can see his frustration, this is even further aided by the scenography that the animator chooses to use. He uses rough terrains achieved by crosshatching to foster the meaning that he intends. In the most frustrating scene, Snake visits Frog. Frog is having a flu and the frustration is evident. On trying on the eyes, they are too big for Snake, and the animator magnifies this by giving us an aerial view of the roughness of the scene through crosshatching, (**FIG 67**).

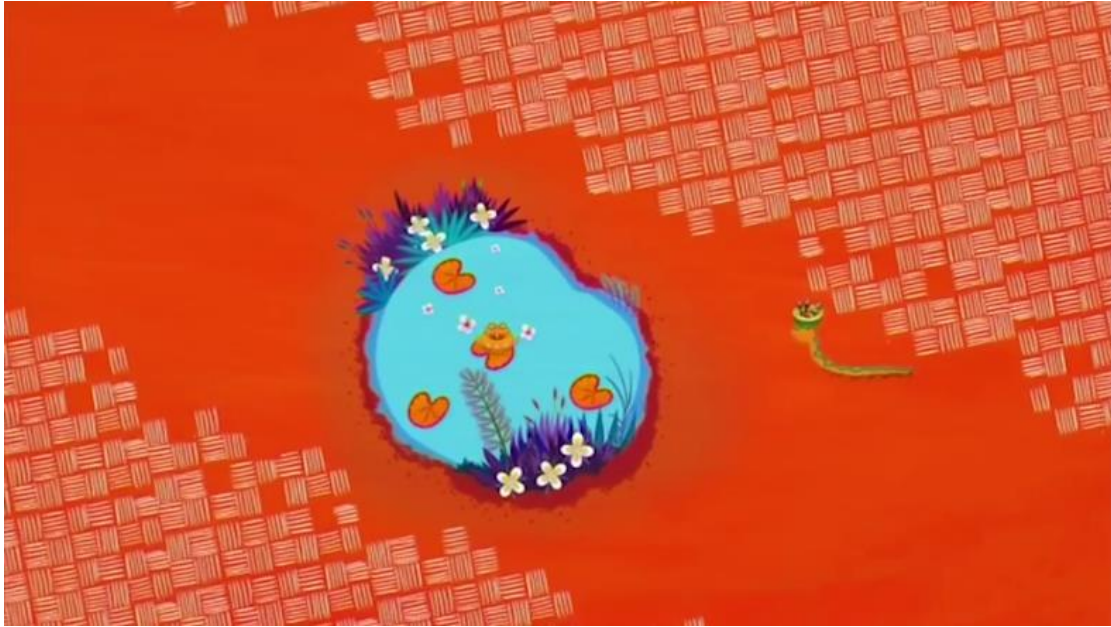


FIGURE 67 cross hatched field

2.3.6.1.2 Intercut Lines

These are lines that flow in a specific manner and are normally broken lines, indicating lack of or less focus or the clarity of the texture being portrayed (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 2011).



FIGURE 68 Intercut lines

Tinga Tinga Tales has applied this technique in many scenes for various reasons. The main reason is to bring out specific textures in different situations so as to complete the meaning making process.

i. Why the Tortoise has a broken shell

Tortoise is greedy and wants all to himself. He beats hare in a race and overhears the birds talking of a party in the heavens. He hatches a plan and is ready to attend the party and eat everything.

The birds are not comfortable travelling with him, and promise not to tell the secret. Parrot however goes against this. In the scene where Parrot breaks the news to Tortoise, there is a sense of tension between the two. The animator uses texture to portray the rough relationship the two are having as well as the guilt that is building on Parrot's side. Through the use of intercuts to show the lack of trust, honesty and the underlying rivalry (*FIGS 69 & 70*) the surrounding environment projects these feelings in the mind as you watch the film. As expected, the story ends badly as Tortoise denies the others a chance to feast. He however faces the repercussion as he falls from the sky and cracks his shell.



FIGURE 69 Parrot being warned by Flamingo against sharing the news to the ‘non-feathered’



FIGURE 70 Parrot sharing news with Tortoise-tension builds up

The intercut lines continue in the episode after Tortoise's fatal fall. The remorse that Tortoise is showing is great. He feels sorry for his actions before the rest of the animals. As a result of wronging the birds, one can feel the tension of whether his remorse will push the animals to forgive him. The roughness of the situation is portrayed by the animator in the scene design to escalate this (*FIG 71*)



FIGURE 71 Tortoise asking for forgiveness from animals

2.4 CONCLUSION

These discussions led to show that scenography is an integral part in the production of animation films. Scenography further is not merely a backdrop for events but holds a great position in the interpretation of a particular message. Therefore, scenographic design of an animation film goes a long way in determining how the audience will receive the message. It is also important to note that the elements of design are important when weaving together this scenography. Through the use of colour, line, texture, shape, space and form, an animator is able to come up with good scenographies. The way these elements correlate therefore is very important during the stage of scene design. Every animator should be keen on how to use them. A corruption of any would easily lead to a message being misinterpreted. The Kenyan animation films, through the eyes of *Tinga Tinga Tales* can be improved through the proper design of the scenography.

The following chapter looks at character and character design. The chapter further looks at parameters that are to be considered when designing the characters and of what importance they are. The chapter then compares these parameters and considerations in *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the extent of their use and how they have been applied.

CHAPTER 3

NATURE OF CHARACTERS IN *TINGA TINGA TALES*

OVERVIEW

This section details the analysis of the nature of characters in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. This has been achieved through the analysis of the processes of character design and considerations that one has to follow to achieve great characters for animation films.

3.1 Introduction

There have been many researches made on the whole subject of how an individual is perceived based on their visual clues, which in turn defines character design. Solomon Asch in his paper, 'Forming Impressions of Personality' (1946) researched on how the impression of a human being and their personality traits are influenced by previous imprints of their physical appearance. This is coupled by the Karen K Dion, Ellen Berscheid and Elaine Walster in, 'What is Beautiful is good' (1972), where they interrogated how physical appeal affects the brands of a person's personality traits. The conclusion was that physically attractive individuals are assigned more favourable qualities, traits and success.

Character Designer David Colman discusses the 'who' Vis a Vis the 'what' in his DVD, 'The Art of Character Design Vol. 1'. He says that the character designer's focus should not be only on what the character is, nor should they just focus on who the character is. Achieving a balance between the two is very key. This gives the viewer a wide understanding of the character.

Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2010) proffer that facial expressions are secondary to body expressions and should be used to re-enforce what is happening to the rest of the body.

Solarski (2012) further says that the design of the body and how a character carries their physical weight will distinguish them as individuals as well as adding to their personality.

The antiquity of character design goes back to the commencement of storytelling. Individually, a story had lone or many characters. However, their display was not necessarily visual illustrations. Every character had its traits and detailed descriptions of its appearance (Hedgpeth, 2006).

With the advent of film, storytelling took a new route that required major alterations in character design. As a story unfolds, the traits of every character are further revealed. The character is shown from different perspectives, emotions and angles. This helps in understanding the character in different scenarios as well as forming a strong intimacy (Su, 2012). This argument is further compounded by George (1996) who says that with a great detail being served, imagination aspects are lessened. Instead, the analytical skills are triggered and it focuses on how the characters play their roles to the audience's anticipations.

Eric (2008) argues that the believability of a character is highly dependent on the success of the character design. Sometimes this might not be achieved due to a disagreeable design, variation of the characters physique in different scenes and inconsistency of the characters traits as the story unfolds.

Character design therefore is creating someone or something that, taken in the setting of its surroundings, will elicit a credence, response, or expectation from the audience concerning its physicality, character and its personality (Gil, 2009). This process involves many steps that end in a visual creation that is easily identifiable by the audience.

There are many resources for studying character design. Some focus more on the visuals and the art of drawing. Some discuss more in depth both the visuals and personality of the character and how it should be in the context of the story. Whatever angle one chooses to undertake the study, it is important to note that through character design, the corporeal and the psychological aspects are presented, providing the character with depth and the ability to connect with the audience. To achieve this, the designer has to do more than just draw an attractive image. Bryan (2011) confers that the amalgamation of story, narrative aspects, shapes, and aesthetics constitute a good character design. This combination provides the created character not only with a good look but more importantly it gives the character life.

As discussed above, Kenyan animators have in some way adhered to a systematic way of designing their characters as narrated by the respondents of the interview. These are some of the reactions to whether Kenyan animation films have a specific way of designing characters.

...my influence in coming up with characters is influenced by manga and anime films that I watch. I ape what the other industries are doing, only making sure that the final characters have an African feel...

...when doing my characters, I base them on the basics of human figure drawing or animals, combining shapes and adding colour where necessary...

...I work with the principles of animation or inspiration from past films I've watched, but all in all, I have to give each project a definite style of character design...

Looking at these various responses, Kenyan animators agree to the fact that their character designs are based on a specific production channel. This therefore means that the industry is aware that the

creation of characters is not merely a drawing exercise but rather it is a way of assembling the vehicles that carry the message. This was agreed to by many of the respondents. On the contrary, one respondent, a seasoned animator alleged that;

...I think everyone works with what is suitable for them because animations are created for various reasons. Even so, it is always important to create your characters from a creative historical, cultural, political or economic background so that the audience will easily understand...

Even so, looking at this statement it has the undertones of anchoring your character design to a harbor. At the end of the day, the audience is the main concern and they should be able to clearly understand the message you're trying to communicate.

When analyzing character, one should consider the character's material composition (signifier) and the information that the character is carrying (the signified) (Bryan, 2011). In order to convey the information that the animated film is supposed to provide, the key is harboured in the character's design. Therefore how the designer will portray and deliver the message through the character is based on their understanding and array of the shape of the characters, the colour, which creates the expressional language of 'painting' the character and the facial expression and dynamics that create the expressional language of moving.

3.1.1 Symbolic constituent of 'painting characters'

This is mainly exemplified in the shape and colour. The combination of these elements elicit a feature that portrays the characters as having the representative features.

3.1.1.1 Representative features of shape

A designer's major problem in the expressive need of character design is to use shapes that have accurate meaning to a character. This is achieved through the different applications of proportion,

position and the configuration (Wade, 2011). For every chosen combination, different meaning will be achieved. To further understand and explore this, a character's constituents will be divided into head and body. The symbolic features will then be discussed and analyzed as per the varying personalities.

3.1.1.2 Shaping the head

Shaping of the head is key in reflecting the personality of the character. This is because it can reflect the character's age and facial expression, a feature that differentiates one character from the other (Gil, 2009). It also helps portray the character's emotions, mood and psychological situation. For this reason, the research will look at the various shapes that form the head and their symbolic features created by the varying combinations of these shapes.

3.1.1.2.1 Round

A round shape is a faultless graph that has the most tranquil manifestation, evoking the feeling of light, smooth and a friendly feeling (Shi, 2008). The round shape is common in character design of 2D animation. As is seen in the animation, *Mickey Mouse*, one of the best character designs, the head modelling is done with two ears at the top of the head, with an enlarged size. This aids in having a flawless transition from the larger round of the facial features and outline to the small round dots of the eyes and the nose.

Comparing the above discussion with *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the character designer has used round shape in the character design process in the selected episodes. This appears mostly in the eyes. As much as the character designer is using natural reference, the use of the circles goes beyond this. The round eyes are a portrayal of the friendly nature of these characters. This also aids in wooing the audience to identify and love the characters, especially the kid audiences. As in the case of the

Crocodile, Puff adder and Snake, feared animals, the character designer has exaggerated their eyes by using bigger circles to elicit calmness (**FIG 73, 75 & 76**). Coupled with other elements, this helps in creating an intimate relationship between these characters and the audience and therefore offers a platform to drive the story easily.

In the case of Tortoise and Snake (**FIGS 76 & 77**), the character designer has used the circles not only on the eyes but for the entire head. The Tortoise in nature is a slow, calm and friendly animal. The character designer has therefore transferred this to the character shapes. As much as in the episode, ‘Why the Tortoise has a cracked shell’, where Tortoise is shown as an opportunistic character, at the end of the story, he regrets his acts and is seen as a gentle character who is ready to ask for forgiveness.

Snake and Puff adder, despite the fact that are dreaded reptiles, the story shows them at their vulnerable points. Snake is desperate to get a pair of eyes to attend the *Tinga Tinga Festival* and will do anything to have them. He even offers to present food to Frog and Chameleon just so to have the eyes. The Puff adder is also desperate to have a friend. His dull skin is denying him a chance to easily interact with the other animals. His urge to get a more shiny skin exposes his vulnerability and humility. This elicits the emotion of pity and the character designer achieves this with the use of round or circular shapes for the head.



FIGURE 72 Chameleon



FIGURE 73 Crocodile



FIGURE 74 Lizard



FIGURE 75 Puff adder



FIGURE 76 Snake



FIGURE 77 Tortoise

3.1.1.2.2 Square

Squares provide a sense of stability and regularity. This shape is used on characters that harbor a lot of strength and righteousness (Barcroft, 1996).

In the selected episodes, the six main characters, do not show the use of squares in their physique.

3.1.1.2.3 Triangle

In character design, a triangle gives a visual impression of a thin, sharp, moving and restlessness. When used, the designer portrays a character that is sinister, cunning and unsatisfied (Bryan, 2011). This can be seen in the case of *Lion King*, whose head is an amalgamation of different triangles, portraying the image of an ominous and a toxic conspirator.

In the selected episodes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the triangle shape appears in the character designs of Crocodile, Lizard and Chameleon as seen in (**FIG 78, 79 & 80**).

We could argue that the character designer has to a large extent has used nature's reference, but this goes beyond the natural physique. The main trait that the triangular shape portrays is that of unsatisfied and cunning characters. Chameleon hates his skin, he is grey and does not fit in with the other animals. He feels unsatisfied in his own skin, so much so that he sets out to be alone. It is only after getting a colourful skin from the rainbow that he is able to settle in with the other animals.

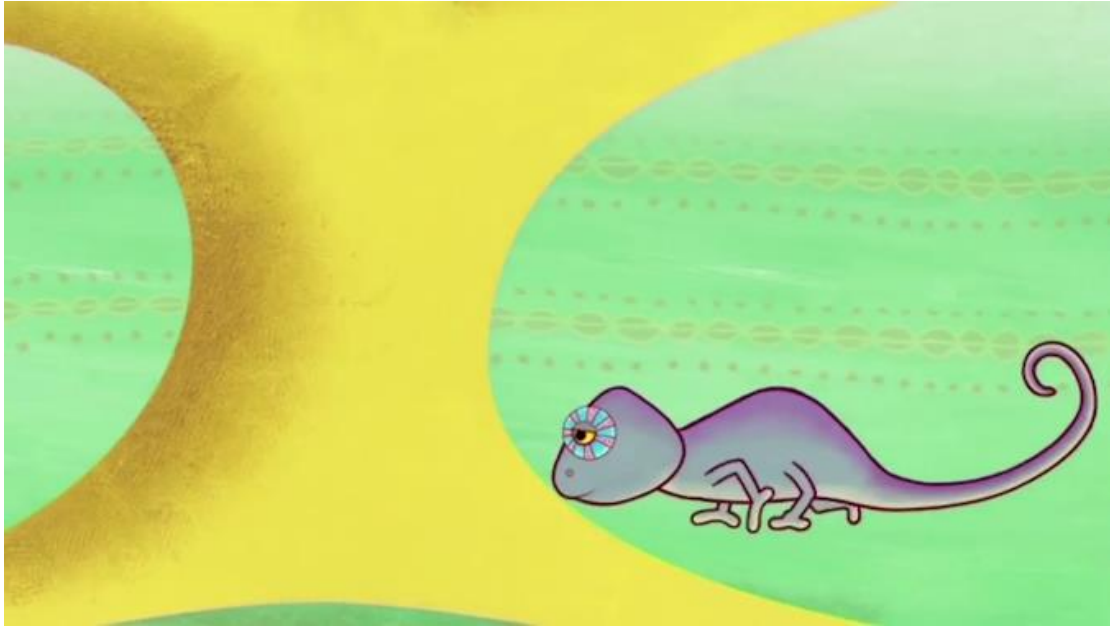


FIGURE 78 Chameleon's Triangular Head

The Crocodile is also unsatisfied. His does not feel comfortable being with the other animals. His egocentric nature only allows him to stay away in the shade. He even warns Monkey against using pseudo names when addressing him, despite Monkey's intention to be friendly. This is magnified by the use of the triangular head in portraying this character.



FIGURE 79 Crocodiles Triangular Head

In the case of Lizard, the triangular shape serves many purposes. His light fingered nature, as he is referred to by Monkey shows him as a character that preys on others weaknesses. He steals from Monkeys and Chameleon, knowing that they are gentle and won't harm him. This is further shown in the way he tricks Frog when he invites him over for dinner. He applies tricks to make sure that Frog doesn't partake of the food. Throughout the episode, Why Lizard hides under rocks, one is exposed to these traits by these shapes.



FIGURE 80 Lizard's Triangular Head

3.1.1.3 Designing of the body

This stage has a great degree of freedom to the character designer and may employ different techniques of exaggeration, distortion and deformation to either create a body that resembles a human or animal structure or one that differs from the human or animal form by utter imagination and variation (Shi, 2008). The natural structure of a character's body is the head, neck, trunk and limbs. During the design of the body, a character's age, gender and personality is determined by the different proportionalities of the body Vis-à-vis the head. As opposed to the portrayal of characters in actual film where an adult would be portrayed with a natural height proportion, while a kid is differentiated by their age stages, animation character design does not stick to objectivity of proportions (Bryan, 2011). The animator can amplify or shrink a character's proportion of the head and the body to reinforce the character's personality and individuality. According to Rudolf

(2005), this might be done by enlarging the proportions of the head to fully embody and convey a character's naivety, lively nature or cuteness.

In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the character designer has tried to use nature's reference to create the characters. This goes a long way to help one to easily identify with the characters in the animation. The use of smooth curvature in the six characters' body design impresses their looks, resulting in lovable and good-natured characters. The curves also give a sense of stability and peace. There have been no exaggerations in the body design of the selected characters to warrant a different portrayal. The generality and audience expectation therefore play a big part in the characters body design of the selected characters.

3.1.1.4 Symbolic Features of colour in character design

Colour as discussed before is a vital element in animation. As well, it plays a vital role in character design process. A sound understanding of the symbolism of colour language is key for the designer. This helps in creating characters that carry a great mental influence power and a solid visual impression. In *Tinga Tinga Tales* colour plays a major role as a visual art.

In the selected characters of study, different colours have been use to amplify the personality of the characters as discussed below.

3.1.1.4.1 Lizard

The character designer has used a number of colours in this character. The use of pink, purple, and yellow colours are symbolic (**FIG 81**). The colours make the Lizard a brilliant, lively and energetic character.



FIGURE 81 Lizard's colours

In colour psychology, pink is a symbol of optimism. It is an affirmative colour that motivates warm and calming feelings (Ambrose G. , 2005). The Lizard in the episode Why the Lizard hides under rocks, is presented as a loving and calm character. He is willing to share and even invite Frog over for dinner. Although this did not come to and is later seen as a cunning and up to no good character, his calmness does not fade. He regrets his decisions and his new found trait of hiding shows his guilt.

Purple has been used to amplify the pink colour. Purple represents power, royalty and ambition (Ambrose G. , 2005). Lizard through the episode 'Why Lizard hides under rocks' is seen as having the ambition to be seen as a good character. When cornered, he opts to lie that the food he has is for his guest. He does this to shun off any criticism. This can also be seen in the way he is ambitious to eat the food served by the Frog, despite the fact that he cannot be able to last in water.

Yellow colour in the eyes has been used to portray the happiness that Lizard has as well as compounding the optimism that he holds. Other than that, yellow colour is also used to show deceit. In the character of Lizard, we encounter his deceitful nature in the way he treats Frog during the dinner.

3.1.1.4.2 Chameleon

Chameleon has three main colours; grey, blue and yellow as seen in (*FIG 82*).



FIGURE 82 Chameleon's grey colour

Grey colour is associated with dullness, dirt and dinginess (Bear, 2017). This is a direct relation with how Chameleon is treated by the other animals. He is seen as a dull, not so fun and emotionless character by the other animals. This is clearly seen during song and dance as he is alienated because of his character and inability to take part in the fun games.

In the design of Chameleon, the character designer has also incorporated shades of blue colour. Blue colour symbolizes loyalty, knowledge, cleverness, faith (Gage, 1999). Of focus in this

interpretation will be the aspect of faith. Despite being jeered at by other animals, Chameleon takes a leap of faith and believes that he can solve his problem. He sets out to exactly do this. He meets Butterfly who encourages him and one can see Chameleon's determination, hope and faith that he will be able to get a colour. This eventually happens after his encounter with the rainbow.

3.1.1.4.3 Crocodile

Crocodile's design has three main colours; red, brown and yellow (*FIG 83*).



FIGURE 83 Crocodile's colours

Brown is the dominant colour in this design. Brown represents wholesomeness and stability (Ambrose G. , 2008). The satisfaction and pride that Crocodile portrays is well brought out in the use of this colour. In his eyes, the character designer has used red. Red as a colour portrays vigor, war, risk, strength and power. In the case of the Crocodile, his snappy behavior poses a risk to the other animals. He is known to have a deadly bite. As much as therefore his body is covered in

wholesomeness, stability and self-pride, the character designer uses it to hint of potential dangers that the character harbours in his personality.

The green colour on his nose is used to portray renewal of life. As the story unfolds in the episode, ‘Why Crocodile has a bumpy back’, the validity of this symbolism is portrayed when he gets trampled by the wild beasts and his skin changes forever. On the positive side, he no longer has to stay away from the sun for fear of getting hurt by the sun.

3.1.1.4.4 Puff adder

When discussing the use of colour in the character design of Puff adder, there are two colour themes that have been used. The first part is his initial state that he had (*FIG 84*) and the state that he acquired after shedding off the skin (*FIG 85*).



FIGURE 84 Puff adder's former colour



FIGURE 85 Puff adds new colour

In his former physique, the designer has used brown and blue. Brown is an earth colour. A down to earth colour that portrays simplicity of a situation it is applied to (Gage, 1999). In the case of Puff adder, he is considered by the other characters as useless. He tries as a much as he can to interact with them but is shunned away. The character designer therefore applies this colour in his design to show this.

Blue colour is used to show his loyalty as well as faith and hope in changing his situation. It foreshadows his success in this quest when he sheds his skin to have a brighter and more visible skin.

In his current state, the character designer applies yellow colour to his body. Yellow is a colour that represents freshness, cheerfulness, oomph, hopefulness and joy (Ambrose G. , 2005). This colour has been used to represent the new self that Puff adder has acquired. He is visible, vibrant

and above all has been accepted by the other animals. The joy that he now holds is clear in the colour that has been selected. The touch of blue spots go further in compounding this by representing the affirming loyalty that Puff adder still harbours.

3.1.1.4.5 Snake

Snake as a character has been presented as a needy character that is out to seek help at all costs. He is blind and his wish is to get a pair of eyes so as attend *Tinga Tinga Festival*. This vulnerability despite being seen through his actions and dialogue in the episode, ‘Why Snake has no legs’, the character designer has amplified this through the use of colour. Since the perception of Snakes is that of a dreaded character, the character designer has tried as much as possible to make the character likeable (**FIG 86**).



FIGURE 86 Snake's Colours

The use of yellow colour to show vibrancy and happiness can be attributed to this. The character designer has also incorporated green to magnify this. Green represents freshness, a trait that Snake acquires after getting the pair of eyes. On the contrary however, a dark shade of purple has been used to show frustration. The character designer is out to show a three-dimensional character. The frustration that Snake goes through to get the pair of eyes is well brought out through this colour.

3.1.1.4.6 Tortoise

Tortoise has been presented in two stages in the episode, Why Tortoise has a broken shell. In the first part of the story, the shell is not broken (**FIG 87**). In this initial stage the character designer has used maroon, green and yellow.

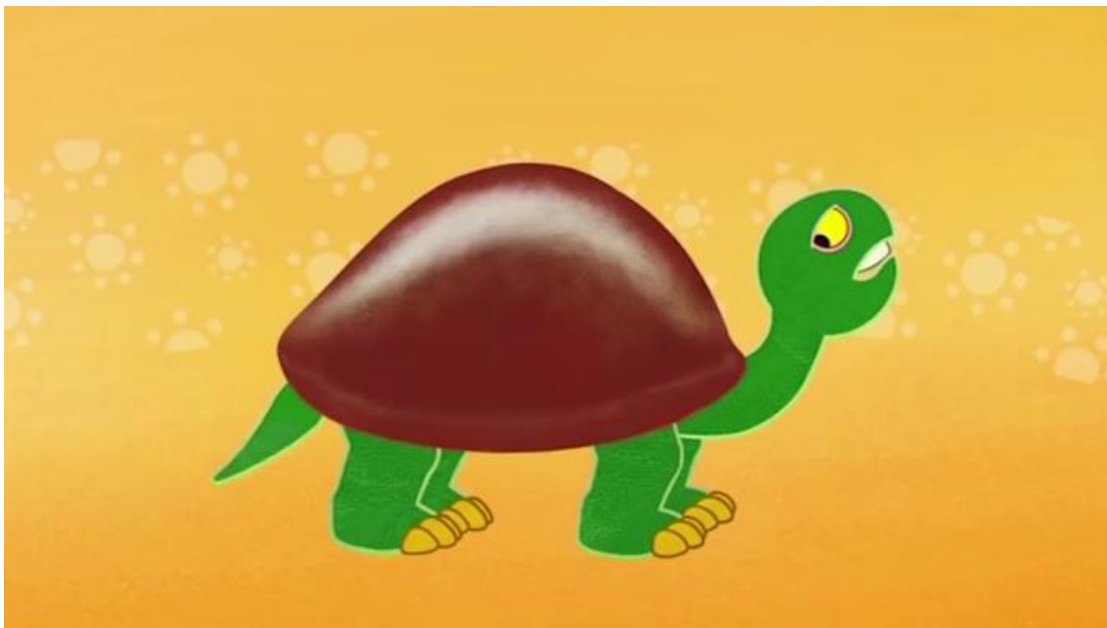


FIGURE 87 Tortoise's unbroken shell

The Tortoise at first is a likeable and sociable character. He is also passionate and insistent. Maroon colour has been used to represent this intensity and passion. It has also been used to show his confidence in his interactions with other characters. We see his confidence in winning the races

against Hare and his confidence in wanting to guide the birds to the heavens for a party despite not being familiar with the terrain. Nevertheless, his confidence makes the birds to trust him and they gladly donate their feathers to enable him fly.

Green has been used to amplify the lively character of Tortoise. He is easily likeable and fresh. The character designer therefore captures one easily with this colour. To add on this, yellow colour has been used. Yellow is associated with happiness and joy just as portrayed throughout the story.

After Tortoise falls from the heavens as a result of the birds retracting their feathers for playing a trick on them, his appearance changes as seen in (**FIG 88**).



FIGURE 88 Tortoise's broken shell

At this stage, the character of Tortoise has been exposed. He is a malicious character that was out to frustrate the birds and prey on them. The broken shell might be the repercussion of this but the character design uses it as fragments to amplify other behaviors. The character designer introduces blue, pink and purple colours.

Blue is a calm colour that shows peace and calmness. Pink is also a colour that presents a calming effect to a viewer. Purple as well represents peaceful nature, wisdom and tranquility. Looking at all these colours used in one space, the character designer is out to stamp the remorse and humility that Tortoise now has. As he is helped by Monkeys in patching up the shell, his voice and character elicits regret. He vows to have concern for other characters henceforth and therefore the character designer uses these colours as an assurance of this.

3.2 CONCLUSION

The deliberations above opened a channel to understand the nature of characters in animation film *Ting Ting Tales*. The discussions propose that when designing a character one has to follow conventions that then expose the character to the viewer in a better way. The design should first of all be centered on the head before spreading to the body. It is also important to note that the representative features of shape are key when either shaping the head of your characters (Barcroft, 1996). Depending on the choice of a shape, one may easily stereotype the character and therefore will have particular expectations.

The second thing to think of in character design is the body. When designing the bodies of the characters, the research found out that the choice of colours and shapes go a long way in determining the final perception of the character. Each choice will have an implication of how the character will be perceived and a keen eye should be applied. It is therefore right to assert that the creation and design of characters is not merely putting together shapes. It goes beyond this and every animator should put a psychological angle to the character design just so to as to remain in tandem with the intended message.

After looking at characters, their nature and design and having already looked at the scenography in the previous chapter, the next chapter is centered on the effects of scenography on character development. This is the third and most crucial objective of this research. The chapter interrogates the relationship between these two animation ingredients.

CHAPTER 4

EFFECTS OF SCENOGRAPHY ON CHARACTERS

OVERVIEW

This section details the analysis of the effects of scenography on character in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. This has been achieved through the comparison of the similarities of the characters in their different scenographies.

4.1 Introduction

The essence of animation like film is to entertain and educate. They are also created with a purpose of passing a particular message and creating meaning using different techniques and signs. This is grounded on the concept of semiotic theory. Scenography and character design in their right integrate the use of diverse aspects like colour, light and props meaning that this affects how the message is perceived .

According to Wells (2002), the process that an animated film undertakes during its production depends on the technique that is being applied. He further looks at the three main factors that greatly influence this process; the studio, budgetary boundaries as well as the context of the broadcast. Generally, the process is divided into preproduction, production and post production. It is during the production phase that scenography merges with the characters to form a whole. This phase is key as it moulds the story. Having looked at characters and scenography independently, it is now at this point that the research undertook to see the relationship between the two.

Characters can be well-defined as fictional individual within a larger imaginary situation (Kress, 2005). Predominantly when enacted by an actor in a theatre production or film (animation), characters encompass the illusion of being a human. The most fascinating thing about *Tinga Tinga*

Tales is that many of the characters are re-used in different episodes. The art of creating these characters is very key. The information about the characters can be directly conveyed through the their personalities or indirectly through presenting things that disclose the personality of a character.

As one gets to understand these characters, the locations or setting where the characters enact their role is key in inferring meaning. Every character is offered a stage that they perform on, way before the production phase. The animation will therefore give a particular meaning even before a character steps on that stage. Therefore, if one dares place opposing characters and scenographies unintentionally, the meaning may end up being misinterpreted.

This chapter explored how scenography affects characters in *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

4.2 SCENOGRAPHY AND CHARACTER DESIGN

Every character in an animation film has taste, morals and ideologies (Gil, 2009). The way the character deals with other characters, issues and personal concerns will either make them relatable to others in a unique manner or will alienate them from the rest. The way a character behaves in a school setting for example will change if he is at his workplace. It is therefore right to say that the characters adapt to their environments and that those environments become part of their personality (Elvin, 2013). Just by looking at the environment, one can make several assumptions not only about the character but also about the type of adventure or action that is going to take place. Elvin (2013) further confers that a character that reads as an action character, when placed in an unbecoming background is a contradiction to his nature. It is therefore imperative to design characters that are relevant to the backgrounds created.

While looking at the data gathered from the respondents, Elvin's conferment is replicated in the Kenyan scene. When asked whether the scenography affects the way in which they design their characters, these are some of the answers they gave;

... Yes, I believe scenography affects character development. This is because without the specific environment, then the action will seem to be in a vacuum. The scenography will give more meaning to the character designed as when designing characters, you look at their environment...

Another independent animator one says that;

...the backgrounds determine the type of animation or character you are going to create. It is all about coordination of the scenes and characters...

This is echoed by a seasoned 2D animator interviewed, who says that

...your characters should be in sync with your backgrounds. If you have a poor setting, when designing the character, you will have to borrow from the scene and apply to the character so as to pull it off...

Looking at these responses, it is in order to say that, the animators have an understanding of scenography affecting the way the characters are designed.

In *Tinga Tinga Tales*, this validity has been examined by analyzing the six selected characters in their different settings and seeing how the extent of this effect.

4.2.1 Lizard

The Lizard is generally presented as a cunning character at first in the episode 'Why Lizard hides under rocks'. As the story proceeds, he is presented as a greedy character when he tricks Frog and denies him food. However, at the end of the story, the Lizard is remorseful and apologetic for his

actions. As one traverses these different character traits, the scenography in many ways dictates how the character is presented. Through looking at the symbolisms in the scene design, vis-à-vis those presented in the character, we can be able to justify the character design.

As much as Lizard appears only in one of the selected episodes, the use of different elements of design and character design principles discussed earlier can be used to see this effect. In most scenes, the animators use colours to relate with those that Lizard portrays. As seen in the below images, the use of black colour is the main indicator of the sinister nature of Lizard. This therefore indicates that through the backgrounds, the character design has been shaped (*FIGS 89 & 90*).



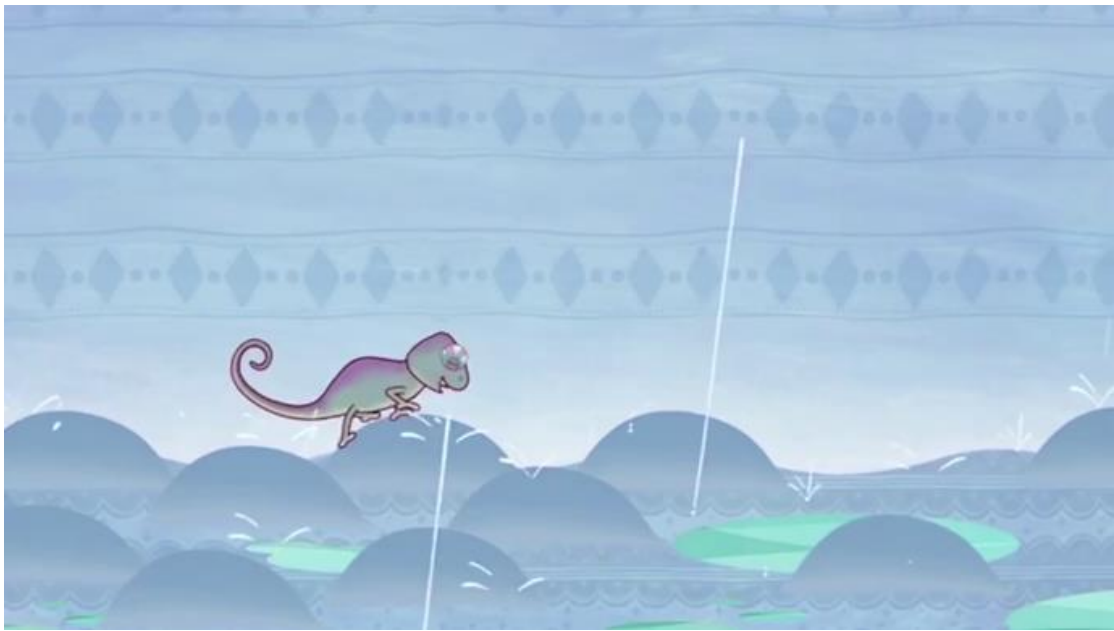
Figures 89 Black backgrounds



FIGURE 90 Use of black colour in Lizard's scenes

4.2.2 Chameleon

Chameleon as a character is associated with dullness and dinginess. He is an emotionless character whose words and actions are the reason he is not liked by other animal characters. This character is well expressed in the backgrounds and it is through these different settings that the character design of Chameleon picks from. Looking at the figures below, the scenes are rainy, dull and gloomy. These scenes are spread out in the story. If we were to remove Chameleon from the scene, a quick look would automatically classify the scenes as unhappy. Looked side by side at Chameleon's physique, it is easy to draw the unity of the two. Further looking at the restless nature of the Chameleon's body design, such scenes elicit these feelings.







FIGURES 91 Display of grey and dull colours in Chameleon's scenes

Later in the story, scene changes when Chameleon acquires colour. This prompts the change in the design aspects of the character as seen in (*FIGS 92*).



FIGURE 92 Colourful colours in Chameleon's background

We can see the colourful nature of the rainbow, affecting even the postures that the character designer assigns on Chameleon. In (*FIGS 93*), the background is directly affecting the character design.



FIGURE 93 Chameleon's colour picked from the background

4.2.3 Crocodile

We are introduced to a snappy Crocodile who is not so friendly because of the snappy nature. His attainment of a bumpy back is the climax of the story, 'Why Crocodile has a bumpy back'. It is at this particular point that we see his true self. The character design has been directly affected by the scenography as seen in (*FIG 94*).



FIGURE 94 Crocodile's design picked from the background

A violent scene after the stampede by the wild beasts is evident. The spiky fallen tree is also a sign of an aftermath of danger. This occurrences in nature go hand in hand with the design of the Crocodile's back and his new acquired character. Looking at the colour also, the resemblance and balance of the colours in the background against those on the character imply that the character design is highly affected by the scenography.

4.2.4 Puff adder

This character is presented as a dangerous one. He bites other animals and is feared. These are the first scenes that we are exposed to. As he tries to find himself and get a solution, the scenography then reveals how much it has affected the character design. In (**FIG 95**), the rough desert terrain has played a major role in how the character has been designed.



FIGURE 95 Puff adder's look picked from the desert background

Looking at this image, the resemblance of the colour is directly picked from nature to symbolize the harsh moments that he's going through. In (**FIG 96**), we can see the patterns in the nature, these patterns have been replicated on Puff adder's skin.



FIGURE 96 Puff adder's patterns picked from the background

In the second phase of Puff adder's journey, he acquires a new colour after shedding of his skin. Looking at the environment before, one is able to notice the predominantly blue colour of the palm trees (*FIG 97*).



FIGURE 97 Puff adder's blue colour picked from the palm trunks and sky

Once the Puff adder acquires the new colour, the character designer uses the most available colour in the nature and sky to be the new colour for Puff adder. This is an indication of how scenography greatly affects the character design.

4.2.5 Snake

Snake's character has been highly inspired by nature. We see this through various aspects. First, the wavy motion lines in the nature are replicated on the character design of Snake as seen in (**FIG 98**)



FIGURE 98 Snake's wavy motion lines picked from the background

Snake's legs are also picked from the scenography. The vegetation that surrounds him have inspired this as in (**FIG 99**).



FIGURE 99 Snakes Legs resembling vegetation in the background

The predominant yellow colour is also picked from Snake's surroundings, further adding to his character design. Finally, the radial patterns in the leaves as he goes round borrowing eyes from Chameleon have been directly replicated as seen in (*FIG 100*). This harmony that is created is not a coincidence but rather an indication that scenography goes a long in determining how characters are designed.



FIGURE 100 Snake's radial eyes picked from the radial leaves in the background

4.2.6 Tortoise

In the episode, 'Why Tortoise has a broken shell', we can allude his character design to the scenography in various ways. As the story begins, the resemblance of Tortoise's shell and the hills in nature is evident. This is not only limited to the colour, but most importantly the shape,

This is further compounded in the shapes of the trees and the sun as seen in (*FIG 101*).

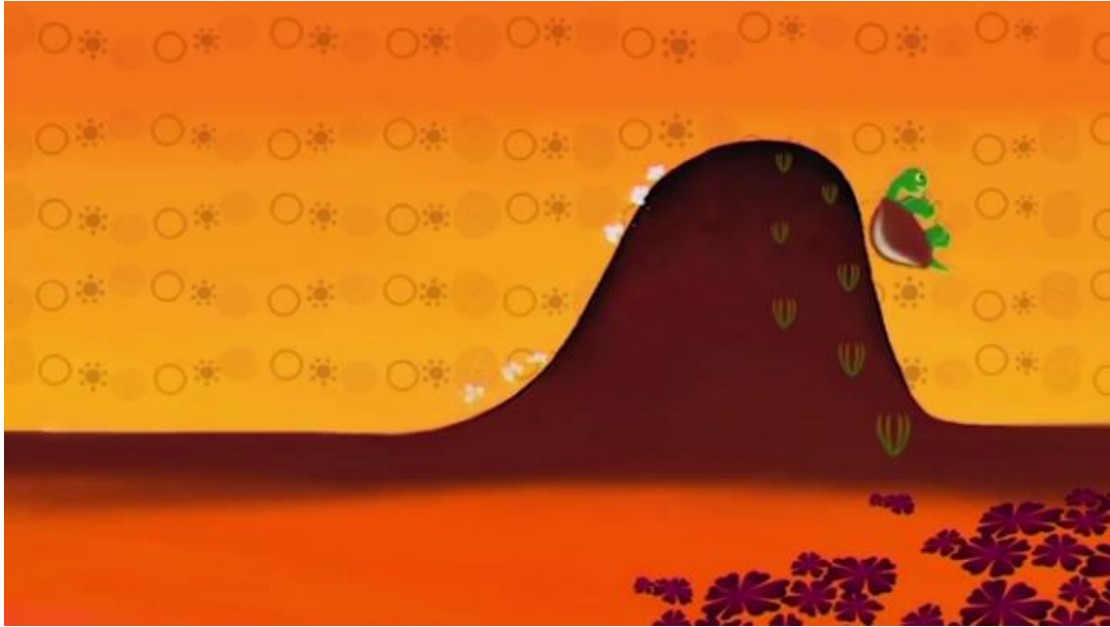


FIGURE 101 Tortoise's Shell resembling the hill and the trees

The texture on Tortoise's head is also directly picked from the scenography (*FIG 102*).



FIGURE 102 Tortoise's texture picked from the patterns in the background

The two have the same look and characteristic. Later in the story as the birds donate their feathers to Tortoise, we see a predominantly blue colour being taken from the blue tree stump at the centre of the meeting, (*FIG 103*).



FIGURE 103 Blue tree stump at the bird's meeting

This is not merely a coincidence because the tree stump symbolizes the authority in the bird's group. As a result of Tortoise assuming the power of guiding the birds to the heavens, the character designer picks the colour from the scenography (*FIG 104*).



FIGURE 104 Tortoise's new feathers dominated by blue colour as the tree stump

We also see a direct resemblance of the erupting mountain just as Tortoise is about to fall and break his shell (*FIG 105*).



FIGURE 105 Erupting volcano

The shape of the mountain and colour of the lava are later reflected on the Tortoise's shell, a clear indication of how scenography affects character design (*FIG 106*).



FIGURE 106 Tortoise's breaking shell resembling the volcano

4.3 CONCLUSION

The discussions in this chapter have found that scenography affects character design. Through the eyes of *Tinga Tinga Tales*, the research compared the look and techniques applied on scenography and those on characters. An amalgamation, balance and harmony of the two brings about a better understanding of the animation film. The research also found out that scenography is not merely a backdrop that the characters play in front, but rather a reflection of who they are. Of importance is also for animators to look at scenography and character design as one artwork which needs to be weaved to give intended meaning. This therefore enhances the way they harmonize the two and in turn lead to a better production.

The next chapter looks at the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations that the research came to.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

This section details the summary of the findings of this study as well as conclusions. Further, the chapter discusses recommendations for producers and animators as well as a trajectory for future studies.

5.1 Introduction

The prior three chapters of this study have built up an apex to the effects of scenography on character development. In keeping with this very analogy, this chapter ties up the loose ends by recapping the most important observations made and bulging them onto the field of animation practice with an advice on way forward.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study was grounded on three objectives.

- i. To establish the nature of scenography evident in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.**

Analysis in this study has shown a great degree of scenographic elements being exhibited in *Tinga Tinga Tales*. Just like in film, scenography in *Tinga Tinga Tales* serves the basic purpose of offering a backdrop for events of the story to unfold. Scenography further takes up a symbolic stand as a visual sign by hinting on impending actions through employing the elements of design. Through the analysis of elements of design, one is able to clearly interpret the nature of scenography in 2D animation. The use of colour, form, line, shape, space and texture define the kind of message that one will perceive. Through scenography (a background where a character is

placed) one is able to decode information about the character. This was also backed up by the interviewed animators who agree that these elements are key in the meaning making process of 2D animation films.

ii. To evaluate the nature of characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

Character design is an important process in animation as it creates the carriers of the story. As it is in film, character development in animation is about the appearance, the characters actions and thoughts. In examining this, the analysis of the reptile characters, who are the main characters, was undertaken.

The study discovered that through the presentation of corporeal and psychological aspects in character design, the character is able to portray and disseminate the intended message. In analyzing the characters, the study used the approach of symbolic constituent of painting which is greatly based on shape and colour.

The study discovered that *Tinga Tinga Tales* character design has employed different shapes and colours in designing the heads and bodies of the selected characters. The findings of the study further revealed that the character traits of the different characters are closely intertwined with the way the character is designed.

iii. To analyse the effects that scenography has on characters in Kenyan animation film *Tinga Tinga Tales*.

The analysis of the different characters placed in the different backgrounds revealed a great connection between the two. The characters in *Tinga Tinga Tales* have not been merely placed in different scenographies for convenience but rather because they fit there. The effect that scenography has had on these six characters is tremendous. The shapes, the colours and different

patterns that are applied resonate well with what the characters look like and what their role in the animation film is. It is therefore right to say that because when watching, one tags some traits to a character for being placed in a particular background, the character designer should work closely with the backgrounds to be able to design characters that befit those scenes. A failure to this would mean the distortion of intended meaning.

Looking at the analysis of *Tinga Tinga Tales*, scenography goes beyond the basic role of being a mere backdrop. The amalgamation of different elements of design and processes leads to environments that are key in affecting how the animation film will be perceived by the audience. The characters on the other hand have not merely been placed there to carry the story but rather they are an indispensable element. The way they have been designed is determined by their environments and just like humans, we are greatly shaped by the backgrounds we have grown in. This has been beefed up by the responses from the animators interviewed who are in tandem with these findings. They acknowledge of having inspiration albeit sketchy on the relationship of scenography and character.

5.3 Recommendation

The findings of this study positively will be useful to animators as well as researchers who are all still exploring ways of communicating messages effectively through animation films. The study hopes to show that scenography is of great significance in designing characters as well as shed light on how to design scenographies, characters as well as their analysis.

5.3.1 Recommendations for producers and animators

With animation being a new venture in Kenyan entertainment industry, the different techniques of producing animation films are very key. It is this research's recommendation that when producing

the animation films, the animator should consider the elements and principles of animation as a whole, in that they complement each other. The study also proposes that there is a great need to vary characters as scenographies change as a way of helping passing the intended information..

5.3.2 Recommendations for further studies

This study suggests that more research is needed to understand how best to use different production techniques and elements in 2D animation beyond dialogue to pass messages. These elements include light and the cinematic language. How to best place the lighting techniques and camera angles and compositions in 2D animation will further complement how the message is perceived. One of the key contributions of this study is that it acknowledges scenography has a great effect on character design and should therefore be keenly considered when producing animation films. An amalgamation of these elements is what will determine the end result. It is thus the recommendation of this study that even as scenography is analysed, key elements and techniques like cinematography, editing and sound among other elements and techniques that are applied in the animation production process should be considered as a whole.

The research proposes more studies on how Kenyan animation characters can be developed so as to have a definite 'dictionary' of character design.

5.4 Conclusion

The harmony of Scenography and character is important to animation productions. That importance was the subject of this thesis. The study concluded that scenography affects character design in animation film production process. This conclusion is also supported by semiotics theory assertion through the use and study of signs, one is able to understand a film (animation) better. If we are to recover the vital role of scenography in affecting how characters are designed, we must

attend to how various scenographies affect how a character is presented so as to communicate meaning. Animators must therefore be keen in designing their characters based on the design of the backgrounds so that they may combine the most relevant elements that will enable the animation to communicate the intended message. The animators interviewed to a large extent agree that in some way their characters have been affected by the background creations. They however were not in sync with the existing techniques that lead up to this. Their main inspiration was from other productions and animation companies like Disney and Pixar, which largely follow the principalities of animation. So, in one way or the other, the animators indirectly applied these techniques.

Scenography and character go hand in hand. In the same way we are affected by our surroundings so are the characters we acquire. It is very vital for an animator to know the background of their characters, where they currently are in their lives, work, or spend their time. A viewer will easily adopt a behavior performed by attractive characters than that of unattractive one, scenography can therefore help in designing well rounded and appealing characters and enhance dissemination of information through animation films.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A

Bio

Name.....

Age.....

Profession.....

Practicing period.....

SECTION B

1. Do you think Animation films have a future in Kenya?
YES....
NO.....
2. If yes, explain why.
3. What is your role in animation production crew?
4. A) Do you think Kenyan animation films have a specific style of character design?
YES.....
NO.....
B) If any, which ones are they and why do use them?
C) Give opportunity, would you explore other existing techniques?
5. A) Are there techniques you apply when doing your scene backgrounds?
YES....
NO.....
B) If any, which ones are they and why do you think they are used?
C) Give opportunity, would you explore other existing techniques?

6. A) Do you think scenography affects the way in which the characters are designed? If yes explain.

NO OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED	Do you think Animation films have a future in Kenya?	Do you think Kenyan animation films have a specific style of character design?	Are there techniques you apply when doing your scene backgrounds?	Do you think scenography affects the way in which the characters are designed?
24	100% agreed that animation as an industry has a future in kenya.	17 respondents out of 24, representing 70.8% proffered that Kenyan animation films have a specific style of character design.	Of the 24 interviewed, 10 were in agreement of applying techniques to their backgrounds representing 45.8 %. The rest had applied them indirectly, based on their statement that their inspiration came from other industries and companies like Disney and Pixar.	21 respondents out of the 24 interviewed, representing 88% had it that in their works, scenography affects how the design their characters.

B) What are some of the impacts that scenography have on character?

Appendix 2: Data Presentation and findings

