

The Study of Motion Illustration Trends of The Tales of Sang Kancil

Muhammad Nabil Kamaruddin¹, *Nabila Aimi Mohamed Ghazali², Nur Aniza Mohd Lazim³,
Sharkawi Che Din⁴

^{1,2,3,4}College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

¹2021889268@student.uitm.edu.my, ²nabilaaimi@uitm.edu.my, ³aniza32@uitm.edu.my,

⁴sharkawi237@uitm.edu.my

*Corresponding author

Received: 22 July 2023 Accepted: 24 January 2024, Published: 1 April 2024

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the motion illustration tendency of "The Tales of Sang Kancil," a compilation of popular Malaysian folktale stories. The findings demonstrate a considerable increase in the number of adaptations and their online views, demonstrating a rising interest in this medium, based on a complete examination of motion illustration films from various sources using qualitative methods by doing visual analysis. The motion drawings include a variety of visual styles, use numerous narrative tactics, and successfully maintain cultural components while combining current animation technology. The trend pattern could also be seen at the end of the study comparing the significant elements of motion illustrations in adapting the story. This trend helps preserve Malaysian folktale stories and acts as a link between generations, assuring the timeless tales' continuous relevance and enjoyment.

Keywords: Motion illustration, Motion Illustration Trends, The Tales of Sang Kancil



eISSN: 2550-214X © 2024. Published for Idealogy Journal by UiTM Press. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-No Commercial-No Derivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Mouse Deer, also known as Sang Kancil, is well-known in Malaysian folktale stories. Due to its wit and cunning, this clever and cunning creature has become more popular. Sang Kancil, despite its diminutive size, usually outperforms stronger and larger creatures by using fast thinking and resourcefulness. Because of its talent for deftly navigating challenging situations, Sang Kancil has won the hearts of many and earned its place as a beloved and enduring figure in Malaysian folktale stories.

The phrase "motion illustration" refers to the concepts of traditional illustration combined with animation methods to create motion illustration, a type of computer animation. It is applied to create dynamic and captivating visual stories that breathe life into still images. It could also be known as motion graphics (Michael B., 2013). Advertising, social media, explainer films, instructional materials, and more can all benefit from using motion illustrations. They frequently include vibrant, stylised images intended to catch the audience's attention and convey difficult concepts or engaging feelings; thus, motion illustrations and motion graphics will become more approachable and popular soon (Shaw, 2018).

The usage of animation and motion graphics in the retelling of Malaysian folktale stories starring the cheeky Sang Kancil character as a part of the research. This pattern reflects a tendency towards updating and improving the usability and attractiveness of conventional stories for contemporary

audiences using modern visual storytelling tools. This trend is significant in the study of motion illustration as it represents a fusion of traditional storytelling with modern visual communication techniques. It also highlights the potential for using motion graphics and animation in other cultural contexts to preserve and promote traditional stories and folktales in a way that resonates with contemporary audiences.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Motion illustration, also known as animated illustration or motion graphics, is the process of animating or incorporating motion into still images or graphics. It blends storytelling, graphic design, and animation elements to produce aesthetically appealing and exciting visual content. John Withney, a well-known animator, coined the phrase "motion graphics" in 1960. Saul Bass was the first to extensively use his works' motion graphics or motion illustrations (Yu. Li, 2008). The book "Principles of Visual Knowledge" by Donis, Donis, A. (1372), translated by Masoud Sepehr, examines visual arts concepts and discusses the fundamentals of visual communication. This book explains visual variables such as dots, lines, and surfaces and visual effects such as rhythm, contrast, and appeal. Regarding the minds of locals, this illustration trend can be traced back to the first animation released in Malaysia in 1983, titled "Hikayat Sang Kancil" The animation can be considered a motion illustration.

2.1 Types of Medium

Besides being the first animations, the tales of Sang Kancil are also mostly illustrated in the medium of books, which serves the purpose of cultural education for kids. As the tales of Sang Kancil are popular in Malaysia, the popular Malay folktales are Sang Kancil and Crocodile in early education. (Chew, F.P., and Ishak, Z., 2010). There is another medium of adaptation of the tales of Sang Kancil, which is the show "Pada Zaman Dahulu," featuring a few episodes in which the character of Sang Kancil appears in the CGI animated show airing in 2011–2020 and produced by Les' Copaque Production.

2.2 Illustrations Trends

Both animations, "Hikayat Sang Kancil" and "Pada Zaman Dahulu," are very similar in terms of the theme, such as moral value, cultural storytelling, and complex action, in a way to convince the audience they are in for a cultural Malaysian folktale story. However, the illustration trends are much different; one is hand-drawn animation using the cel technique, which is drawing on transparent sheets with a static background (Yenla L., 2016). While the other is CGI animation, which applies the principles of traditional animations to 3D computer animation (John et al., 1987). Based on the study of interactive animation by Norfarizah M. B. et al. (2018), a project called the leap motion controller is a gesture detection device that is programmed to turn to the next scene when it detects the swipe gesture. This study aims to provide a forum to help preserve Malay folktales lost through time. This platform would leverage technology to draw the younger generation to Malay folktales by creating interactive motion visuals depicting local Malaysian folktales stories.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research strategy for investigating the motion illustration trend in Tales of Sang Kancil would use qualitative method to conduct the content analysis which can give a more detailed analysis of huge volumes of collected data. (Steve S., 2001). The observation and comparison of Hikayat Sang Kancil and Pada Zaman Dahulu were being conducted based on the elements of motion illustration such as art style, theme, platform, year aired and duration. The additional elements of motion illustration that had been analysed are squash and stretch, timing and rhythm, anticipation, follow-through and overlapping action, arcs, staging, exaggeration, and secondary action. This analysis aims to identify the changing patterns in the way that Sang Kancil stories are presented through motion

illustration over the years between 1983 to 2020.

4 FINDINGS

Based on the findings that I have found between the two motion illustrations, "Hikayat Sang Kancil (1983)" and "Pada Zaman Dahulu (2011–2020)", there are few comparisons that can be made between these two motion illustrations. In the case of multiple seasons of "Pada Zaman Dahulu", the findings would also find the improvement during the 9 years the show aired.

Table 1 The Existing Media of The Tales of Sang Kancil in Malaysia

Description	Hikayat Sang Kancil (HSK)	Pada Zaman Dahulu (PZD)
Art Style	Watercolour Style	Cartoon CGI Style
Theme	ire, Wisdom, Trickery, Moral Lessons	ire, Wisdom, Trickery, Moral Lessons
Motion Illustrations	Traditional Hand-drawn	omputer-generated Animation (CGI)
Platform	Television	Television Social media
Year Aired	1983	2011-2020
Duration	12 Minutes	21 minutes per episodes
	Short Film	on series spanning 5 Seasons

Table 2 The Elements of Motion Illustrations

Elements	HSK	PDZ
Squash and Stretch	Limited use of squash and stretch to exaggerate movement	Significant use of squash and stretch for dynamic motion
Timing and Rhythm	Basic timing and rhythm in line with traditional animation principles	Emphasis on timing and rhythm to enhance storytelling and comedic effect
Anticipation	Minimal use of anticipation to prepare for actions	Strategic use of anticipation to create anticipation and build suspense
Follow-through and Overlapping Action	Limited follow-through and overlapping action	Extensive use of follow-through and overlapping action for more natural and fluid movements
Arcs	Simple and straightforward movement paths	Complex and curved arcs to enhance realism and visual appeal
Staging	Clear staging to direct the viewer's attention	Detailed staging to enhance storytelling and visual impact
Exaggeration	Moderate use of exaggeration for comedic effect	Pronounced use of exaggeration to enhance storytelling and expressiveness
Secondary Action	Limited secondary actions in the background	Abundant secondary actions to add depth and richness to scenes

Based on Table 1 and Table 2, the motion illustrations in "Hikayat Sang Kancil" (1983) and "Pada Zaman Dahulu" differ greatly in their elements and motion principles. HSK utilises earthy tones, erratic line graphics, and less detailed shapes, while PZD maintains a consistent style with vibrant colours, well-drawn shapes, complex texturing, and replicated lighting effects. Furthermore, PZD has a longer duration compared to HSK. Regarding motion principles, HSK has limited use of certain techniques such as squash and stretch, basic timing and rhythm, minimal anticipation, and less follow-through and overlapping motion. On the other hand, PZD incorporates the effective use of these techniques, along with complex arcs, detailed staging, pronounced exaggeration, abundant secondary action, and intricate appeal. These differences highlight the progress and advancements in motion illustration techniques, particularly in computer-generated animation, as seen in PZD." The findings demonstrate a significant improvement in the motion illustration elements between the two animations, as evident in the collected data. In the study analysis conducted by Azahar H. M. et al. (2010), much evidence demonstrates the animator's struggle to achieve realistic movement. Meanwhile, PZD shows the trend of different animation styles with CGI, improving many aspects of

motion illustration elements between the two comparisons. In summary, the improvement in modern motion illustrations shows the trend that since the first motion illustration back in 1983, we have seen so much improvement in this folktale in all the data collection elements above.

Table 3 Comparison between on the PZD improvement elements and motion principles

Elements	HSK	PDZ
Colour	Soft and pastel colour palette	Bright colour palette
Texture	Detailed texture	More detailed texture
Value	Light less detailed	Light became detailed
Motion Principles	Basic motion principles applied	Improved motion principle

On comparing the shows that aired for 9 years on television, PDZ had few improvements on the show between that year (refer to table 4). During 2011 – 2012, covers seasons 1 & 2, there was no significant improvement in motion illustrations and principles overseas. However, during the year 2013 (beginning of season 3), the improvement saw the elements of the colour palette of the shows to be more striking and, at the same time, improved the smoothness of animation that applied the motion principles. While in Season 4 (year 2018) & Season 5 (year 2020), The show retained the improvement of the previous season and utilised more filters improvement on shadows to give more value and intensity to motion principles. The texture also improves to give more detailed character and background. To conclude, the improvement proves that the motion illustrations can be applied over time to the PZD series to give more attraction to the audience in terms of visual appeal and storylines, thus keeping the existing fan of the series and, at the same time, inviting a new one to anticipate the motion illustrations adaptation of the famous folktales, Sang Kancil.

5 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the "The Tales of Sang Kancil" motion illustration trend, in conclusion, indicates a dynamic and varied design universe. The results demonstrate that animated motion pictures using various colour schemes and artistic styles are growing more and more popular. Although the application of motion principles and elements of motion illustration on the "Hikayat Sang Kancil" (1983), a 2D animated motion illustration project, does not apply properly in comparison to the "Pada Zaman Dahulu" (2011-2020) project, a 3D animated motion illustration project, even though the motion principles had significantly improved between 1983 and 2020 on the topic of adapting the tales of sang kancil in motion illustrations. The captivating visual techniques used in the motion illustrations, which range from hand-drawn animation to CGI. These motion illustrations used in the adaptation of the tales of sang kancil demonstrate that there are trends in the use of computer-generated animation (CGI) to create motion illustrations that range from 2D to 3D animated. Other than that, technical advancements in the application of motion principles to projects of motion illustration into the adaptation of Malaysian folktale stories could encourage the adaptation of other well-known stories besides "The Tales of Sang Kancil" and expand the project of motion illustrations in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Researcher is grateful to the Research Ethics Evaluation Committee of the College of Creative Arts Studies at MARA University of Technology (UITM) for giving the permission to conduct this study (Number Research: CCA/GK/01/2023 (EXM04). Furthermore, researchers would like to acknowledge the creators of HSK and PZD for their imaginative storytelling and visual craftsmanship in bringing the tales of Sang Kancil to life through animation. Their work has captivated audiences and contributed to the cultural heritage of these folktales in Malaysia.

FUNDING

This research is not funded by any organization.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors shared the same responsibilities towards the production of this paper.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest declared for this paper.

REFERENCES

- Azahar H. M., Hassan Abd M. (2010). *"Hikayat Sang Kancil" Revisited: A Formalistic Perspective of the First Made in Malaysia Cartoon Animation*, Faculty of Art & Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia.
- Chew, F.P. & Ishak, Z. (2010). *Malaysia folk literature in early childhood education*. In: International Conference on Education and Information Technologies, Paris, France.
- Dondis, Donis, A. (1372). *Rudiments of visual literacy*, Translated by: Masoud Sepehr, Tehran, Soroush publication, Second edition.
- John L., Pixar (1987). *Principles of Traditional Animation Applied To 3d Computer Animation*, San Rafael, California.
- Michael B. (2013). *The History of Motion Graphics: from avant-garde to Industry in the United States*.
- Norfarizah M. B., Juliana I. K., Nurliana Y. (2018). *Hikayat Sang Kancil and Buaya: An Interactive Animation*. 3rd International Conference on Creative Media, Design and Technology (REKA 2018).
- Shaw, E. (2018). *Motion Graphics in Branding: Creating a conceptual brand identity that utilises motion graphics*. Stemler,
- Steve S. (2001) *An overview of content analysis, Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation: Vol. 7, Article 17*.
- Venla L. (2016). *The Hand Drawn Animation Process*, Tampere University of Applied Science.
- Yu. LI (2008), *Typography in film title sequence design*, Lawa state university.