

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SIX XHOSA RADIO DRAMAS

BY

NOMKHITHA ETHLEY MAKOSANA



Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
the Department of African Languages at the University of Stellenbosch

STUDY LEADER: Prof. J.A. du Plessis

NOVEMBER 1991

DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

SIGNATURE

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the invaluable guidance I received from my study leader, Prof. J.A. du Plessis.

I am also grateful to my colleagues in the Department of African Languages at the University of Stellenbosch, for they have been co-operative and willing to help me in various ways. I am grateful to them for the spirit of brotherhood they have shown.

Mr N.E. Phaswana, Mr M. Dlali and Miss P. Matrose for their fruitful discussions during the course of the study.

Thanks are also due to Dr Edwin Hees of the English Department, University of Stellenbosch, for offering invaluable suggestions to improve the general formulation of my ideas in this study.

I am grateful to Mrs Surena du Plessis in whom I found not only an excellent typist but also a wonderful person.

I am also indebted to my family, particularly my sons, Khotso and Lazola who for one way or another served as an inspirational force.

SUMMARY

This study is based on the comparison of six Xhosa radio dramas spanning the period 1987 and 1988. The main objective is to investigate the strengths and weaknesses which manifest themselves in the dramas. The dramas are compared with respect to the six structural elements of drama viz., theme, plot, characterization, time and space, and the techniques of production.

Themes are studied to establish whether there have been any developments as far as the choice of themes is concerned in Xhosa radio dramas or whether there has been stagnation. Also given is a brief literary history of the themes broadcast in the Xhosa radio.

The analysis of the plot structure is also done to identify the areas where they met the requirements successfully as well as where they failed to. The dramas are analysed according to the traditional approach i.e. the exposition, complication, climax and the denouement.

With regard to characterization, the characters are classified according to the function they perform viz., the protagonist, antagonist, tritagonist and confidante. They are also analysed according to their individual nature i.e. whether they are static or dynamic, mono- or multidimensional etc. Techniques that the playwrights have used in the portrayal of their characters are also examined.

The aspects of time and space are also discussed, to investigate the artistic skills of the different dramatists in handling the time and space relations. Time is viewed with respect to the following: order, duration, frequency, tempo and the presentation of the time structures.

Space is discussed with respect to the following: type, function, and the techniques of localisation.

A critical comparison of the production techniques used by these different playwrights is explored, the focus being on the microphone, sound effects and music.

The examination conducted in the study basically revealed that there is little development in Xhosa radio dramas.

The themes that are broadcast are mainly for entertainment and consequently have little intellectual depth. There is also a lack of innovation which is shown by the repetition of the same themes.

The playwrights also lack skill as far as plot construction is concerned. The plays are devoid of conflict.

The absence of conflict in the dramas has an effect on characterization. It has given rise to weak antagonists in the dramas.

Lack of focus regarding the main character is one of the faults that is evident in the dramas. Because of the fact that all characters are on the level of importance, it becomes difficult to pin-point who the focal character is.

Finally, the Xhosa radio dramas discussed in this thesis revealed that there is latent potential in the Xhosa dramatists and the producers. It is therefore necessary that they should be motivated towards research on the subject and consultation with people who are knowledgeable in this sub-genre. Such actions could be of assistance towards the improvement of skills and techniques needed in the writing of the radio drama.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie is gebaseer op die vergelyking van ses Xhosa radio dramas wat strek oor die tydperk 1987-1988. Die hoofdoelstelling is om die sterkpunte en swakpunte te ondersoek soos dit na vore kom in die dramas. Die dramas sal vergelyk word met betrekking tot die ses strukturele elemente van die drama, naamlik, tema, intrige, karakterisering, tyd en ruimte, en die tegnieke van produksie.

Die temas van die dramas is ondersoek om vas te stel of enige ontwikkelings wat betref die keuse van temas plaasgevind het, en of daar stagnasie was in hierdie verband. Voorts sal 'n kort oorsig gegee word van die literêre temas in radio Xhosa dramas.

Die analise van die intrige van die dramas word gedoen om vas te stel waar daar suksesvol of onsuksesvol voldoen is aan vereistes. Die dramas word ontleed volgens die tradisionele benadering van uiteensetting, verwikkeling, klimaks en die afwikkeling.

Betreffende karakterisering, word karakters geklassifiseer volgens die funksie wat hulle vervul, naamlik die protagonis, die antagonis, die tritagonis, en die vertroueling. Karakters kan ook ontleed word volgens hulle individuele karakter, dit is, in welke mate hulle staties of dinamies is, enkel- of multi-dimensioneel, ens. Tegnieke wat die skrywers gebruik het in die uitbeelding van hulle karakters word ook ondersoek.

Die aspekte van tyd en ruimte word bespreek ten einde die artistieke vaardighede van die verskillende skrywers te ondersoek in die hantering van tyd en ruimte verbande. Tyd word ondersoek ten opsigte van volgorde, duur, frekwensie, tempo en die aanbieding van die tyd strukture.

Ruimte word bespreek met betrekking tot die aspekte van tipe, funksie en die tegnieke van lokalisering.

'n Kritiese vergelyking word gedoen van die produksietegnieke wat aangewend is deur die verskillende skrywers, met die fokus op mikrofoon klankeffekte en musiek.

Die ondersoek in hierdie studie toon aan dat daar geringe ontwikkeling is in die Xhosa radio dramas. Die temas van die dramas wat uitgesaai word is hoofsaaklik van 'n vermaaklikheids aard met geen intellektuele diepte nie. Daar is ook 'n tekort aan vernuwing, soos aangedui deur die herhaling van dieselfde temas.

Die skrywes toon ook 'n tekort aan vaardigheid wat betref die konstruksie van die struktuur van intrige. Die dramas toon weinig konflik. Die afwesigheid van konflik het ook 'n invloed op die karakterisering, wat aanleiding gee tot swak antagoniste in die dramas.

'n Gebrekkige fokus betreffende die hoofkarakter is een van die foute wat opvallend is in die dramas. Omdat byna al die karakters op dieselfde vlak van belangrikheid is, is dit moeilik om te bepaal watter karakter die hoofkarakter is.

Laastens, die Xhosa radio dramas wat ontleed is in hierdie studie toon dat daar latente potensiaal is in die Xhosa skrywers en regisseurs. Dit is nodig dat hulle aangemoedig word om navorsing te doen oor die onderwerp. Konsultasie met kundiges op hierdie sub-genre kan 'n hulp wees in die verbetering van vaardighede en tegnieke wat nodig is vir die skryf van radio dramas.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	THE AIM OF THE STUDY	1
1.2	SELECTION OF THE PLAYS: 1987 AND 1988.....	1
1.3	THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RADIO DRAMA ✓.....	1
1.4	PREVIOUS STUDIES ON THE RADIO DRAMA ✓.....	3
1.5	ORGANIZATION OF THE MATERIAL.....	3

CHAPTER 2: THEME AND PLOT

2.1	THEME ✓.....	5
2.2	THEMES IN THE PLAYS BEING STUDIED.....	9
2.3	THEMES OF DRAMAS BROADCAST IN 1988.....	11
2.4	THE PLOT STRUCTURE ✓.....	14
2.4.1	Techniques of presentation <u>NB</u>	15
2.4.2	Coordination of sequences.....	16
2.4.2.1	The juxtaposition or succession of sequences.....	16
2.4.2.2	The subplot.....	16
2.4.3	The segmentation of the plot.....	17
2.4.3.1	The surface structural level.....	17
2.4.3.2	The deep structural level.....	17
2.4.4	The forms of drama.....	18
2.4.4.1	The closed form.....	18
2.4.4.2	The open form.....	18
2.4.5	The simple and complex plot.....	18
2.4.6	Suspense.....	19

2.5	CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 1987 DRAMAS	20
2.5.1	The exposition	20
2.5.2	The complication.....	23
2.5.3	The climax.....	26
2.5.4	The denouement.....	27
2.6	THE ANALYSIS OF THE 1988 DRAMAS	28
2.6.1	The exposition	31
2.6.2	The complication.....	33
2.6.3	The climax.....	35
2.6.4	The denouement.....	35
2.7	CONCLUSION	37

CHAPTER 3: CHARACTERIZATION

3.1	THE STATUS OF DRAMATIC CHARACTERS	40
3.2	RESTRICTIONS ON CHARACTERIZATION	41
3.3	CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTERS	41
3.3.1	The protagonist.....	41
3.3.2	The antagonist.....	42
3.3.3	The tritagonist.....	42
3.3.4	The confidante.....	42
3.4	CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTERS ACCORDING TO THE INDIVIDUAL NATURE	43
3.4.1	Static versus dynamic characters	43
3.4.2	Mono- versus multidimensional characters.....	43
3.4.3	Levels of reaction of the character	43
3.5	THE TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION	44
3.5.1	The figural characterization techniques.....	44
3.5.1.1	Explicit figural characterization	44
3.5.1.2	Implicit figural characterization techniques.....	45

3.5.1.2.1 Behaviour and actions	45
3.5.1.2.2 The character's appearance.....	45
3.5.1.2.3 The locale.....	45
3.5.1.2.4 The voice quality.....	46
3.5.1.2.5 The language style	46
3.6.1 Explicit authorial characterization techniques	46
3.6.2 Implicit authorial characterization techniques	46
3.7 CHARACTERIZATION IN RADIO DRAMAS.....	47
3.7.1 The protagonist.....	48
3.7.2 The antagonist	49
3.7.3 The tritagonist	52
3.8 DRAMAS BROADCAST IN 1988.....	54
3.8.1 The protagonist.....	54
3.8.2 The antagonist	56
3.8.3 The tritagonists	
3.9 CRITICISM	58
3.10 THE DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE DRAMAS.....	59
3.10.1 The explicit figural characterization techniques.....	59
3.10.2 The implicit figural characterization techniques.....	62
3.10.3 The explicit authorial characterization techniques.....	65
3.10.4 The implicit authorial characterization techniques	66
3.11 THE TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE 1988 DRAMAS	68
3.11.1 The explicit figural characterization techniques.....	68
3.11.2 Implicit figural characterization techniques.....	70
3.11.3 The explicit authorial characterization techniques.....	72
3.11.4 The implicit authorial characterization techniques	72

CHAPTER 4: TIME AND SPACE

4. TIME	75
4.1 ORDER	75
4.1.1 Retrospection	76
4.1.2 Anticipation	76
4.2 DURATION	76
4.3 FREQUENCY	77
4.4 TEMPO	78
4.5 THE PRESENTATION OF TIME	78
4.6 SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION OF TIME	79
4.7 TIME IN THE DRAMAS	79
4.7.1 Time in the 1987 dramas.....	80
4.7.1.1 Duration.....	80
4.7.1.2 Order.....	80
4.7.1.3 Frequency	81
4.7.1.4 Tempo	81
4.7.1.5 Presentation of time	82
4.7.2 Time in the 1988 dramas.....	82
4.7.2.1 Duration.....	82
4.7.2.2 Order.....	82
4.7.2.3 Frequency	83
4.7.2.4 Tempo	84
4.7.2.5 Presentation of time	84
4.8 SPACE IN THE RADIO	85
4.8.1 Types of space.....	86
4.8.1.1 The dramatic space.....	86
4.8.1.2 Mimetic and diegetic space	86
4.8.2 The functions of space.....	87
4.8.3 The localisation techniques.....	88

4.8.3.1 The verbal localisation techniques	88
4.8.3.2 The non-verbal localisation techniques.....	88
4.8.4 Analysis of space in the dramas	89
4.8.5 Space in the 1988 dramas	92

CHAPTER 5: THE TECHNIQUES OF PRODUCTION

5.1 THE MICROPHONE	95
5.1.1 The 'on mike' position.....	85
5.1.2 The 'off mike' position	95
5.1.3 The 'fading on' position.....	96
5.1.4 The 'fading off' position.....	96
5.1.5 The behind obstruction position	96
5.2 THE SOUND EFFECTS.....	96
5.3 MUSIC	97
5.4 THE TECHNIQUES USED IN THE 1987 DRAMAS	98
5.4.1 The 'off mike' position	99
5.4.2 The 'fading on' position.....	99
5.4.3 The 'fading off' position.....	99
5.4.4 The sound effects.....	100
5.4.5 Music.....	101
5.5 THE USE OF PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES IN THE 1988 DRAMAS..	103
5.5.1 The microphone.....	103
5.5.1.1 The 'off mike' position	103
5.5.1.2 The 'fading on' position.....	103
5.5.1.3 The 'fading off' position	104
5.5.2 The sound effects.....	104
5.5.3 Music.....	105

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION..... 108

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 111

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

This study is based on the comparative analysis of six Xhosa radio dramas spanning the period 1987-1988, with the author selecting three for each year. These dramas are compared with respect to the six structural elements of drama, viz., theme, plot, characterization, time and space, and the techniques of production. This work will endeavour to investigate the strengths and weaknesses which manifest themselves in the dramas.

For this purpose, available sources by scholars of this sub-genre have been consulted. In addition to this, cassette recordings and scripts that were provided by the S.A.B.C. were used.

1.2 SELECTION OF THE PLAYS: 1987 AND 1988

The works of the playwrights Gcilitshana, Mji, and N. Saule for 1987; and T.V. Msila, A. Nongauza and G. Mahlaba for 1988, will be dealt with in depth. These plays were selected to compare different playwrights and different years of production of plays.

1.3 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RADIO DRAMA

In order to acquaint the reader with the nature of the medium that we are dealing with, it will be necessary for us to examine briefly the most significant characteristics of the medium acquired from the staged drama which is the earlier form of the genre.

The most significant difference between radio and staged drama is that the aforementioned has no visual element. This is the reason why radio is known as the 'blind medium'. The absence of the visual element means that the radio has to rely on the imagination of the listener. In the theatre the story is depicted /represented live, but the radio only stimulates its listeners into imagining it. Therefore the radio's stage is the imagination.

This absence of sight may be a handicap as well as an advantage because it enables the radio writer to create a mind-picture more effectively than the writer in any other medium. He can create mental images of countless variations as long as these images are within the scope of the listener's imagination. The audience 'sees' places, characters and events just as the writer wishes it to and the audience can even experience emotions the writer wishes it to.

Although a scene must be set in dialogue and sound rather than established through sight as in the staged drama, such orientation and exposition must be done subtly. Radio often employs a narrator or an announcer to set the mood, establish character relationships, describe the scene and even the expected attitude from the audience. However, contemporary critics argue against the insertion of this character in the play. They base their argument on the fact that the narrator can affect the audience's perception through his comments and he can also break the unity of the plot.

In short, one can say that radio characterisation moves towards two related qualities: speed and compression. In the discussion that follows the statement will be explained further.

Speed can be discerned in the manner of approach that is employed on the radio. On the radio, the focus is on the need to present the information as quickly and concisely as possible, whereas in the theatre the crowd needs to be psychologically prepared by attention-seeking devices for any important information; the radio transmits its information with a surprising brevity; the playwright 'just tells' the audience.

The pace and conciseness of the medium can also be noticed in the handling of the conflict element; there is that quick plunge into the essential conflict in order to give an arresting start to the play.

The radio drama has a freedom of movement that a stage play cannot even dream of. The scenes can be shifted with amazing rapidity. The radio dramatists, therefore, have complete freedom of time and space.

Because time can change so easily, parallelism occurs readily; as Smuts (1986) observes, on the radio, the present, past, and future can exist next to each other.

There is a difference in the behaviour of its audience. People sitting in the theatre are restricted in their movements by the arrangement of the seats and crowd behaviour. One has no choice but to listen even to the duller speech. The radio listener will immediately react by switching off anything uninteresting to him.

Regarding compression: the radio drama is distinguishable from other media by featuring fewer characters 'on the scene'. Evans (1977:112) recommends a 'maximum of five

characters, with occasional crowd scenes'. This is necessitated by the fact that the listener cannot possibly keep track of as many characters as he can in the visible media.

Small casts, in turn, have a significant influence in drama for they have led to simpler plots, and to the elimination of subplots and unnecessary characters. This is evident in the dramas studied.

Radio had to learn to hint, to suggest and to stimulate; it cannot afford to be elaborate on certain issues. Barnouw (1942:18) observes that one of the characteristics of the medium is that 'scenery is created by suggestion'.

To summarize, the radio's nature and characteristics commit it forever to the quick start, the simple plot, the concentration on plot essentials. The key to a successful radio drama, therefore, is swiftness and economy.

1.4 PREVIOUS STUDIES ON THE RADIO DRAMA

Although broadcasts for Africans were started by the S.A.B.C. in 1960 and hundreds of dramas have been broadcast thus far, little has been done as far as studies and research on the sub-genre are concerned. As far as I could ascertain only J.P. Lubbe (1968) in his M.A. dissertation has addressed the issue so far. Lubbe's work was aimed at testing the listeners' preferences and dislikes in the broadcasting of Sotho radio drama. In this study the scientific analysis of the structural elements is not dealt with. Other than this, radio drama has only featured sporadically in the critical writings on African literature.

Therefore this study, which is based on the comparative analysis of six radio dramas with a critical view to the structural elements, has been necessary.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE MATERIAL

Chapter One: the first chapter is an introduction; it aims at enlightening the reader about the aims of the study and the reason for the selection of the dramas studied. A brief outline of the characteristics of the medium is given as well as some comments on the previous studies on the sub-genre.

Chapter Two: discusses theme and plot structure. A critical comparative analysis of the two aspects is undertaken. With theme, the study also reflects briefly the literary history of themes broadcast in Radio Xhosa from the 1970s up to the present. The analysis of plot is based on the traditional criteria.

Chapter Three: deals with character, the classification of characters, and the techniques of character portrayal. A critical comparative analysis of the dramas being studied with reference to the theoretical basis provided is also undertaken.

Chapter Four: discusses time and space, with time viewed with regard to: order, duration, frequency, tempo and the presentation of time structure.

Space is discussed with regard to the types, the function and the localisation techniques.

Chapter Five: deals with the techniques of production. A critical comparison of the production techniques used by the different playwrights is explored, the focus being on the microphone, sound effects and music.

Chapter Six: the general conclusion where the main observations are summarized.

CHAPTER TWO

THEME AND PLOT

2.1 THEME

This chapter gives a theoretical background to the concept of theme. It seeks to analyse comparatively the themes of the different dramas, with the express purpose to establish whether there have been any developments as far as the choice of themes is concerned in Xhosa radio dramas or whether there has been stagnation.

The term 'theme' means different things to different people. Willis (1967) interprets it in two different ways: first, he states that the term is often used to denote the basic subject matter of the play; secondly, he views it as a statement about life that is implicit in the action of the play.

Prince (1982:74) defines theme as:

A theme is a general thought or idea of which a set of sub-propositions (or a set themes) is taken to be an illustration.

On the other hand, Brooks and Warren (1959:273) state that:

The theme is what a piece of fiction stacks up to. It is the idea, the significance, the interpretation of persons and events, the pervasive and the unifying view of life which is embodied in the total narrative.

Pretorius and Swart (1982:4) say:

In simple terms, the theme is the message which is embedded in the story.
The theme is the interpretation of life as conveyed by the story as a whole.

Though these different theorists may express their definition in different ways, they share a common premise in regarding theme as a message or an idea which a playwright wishes to convey to his audience and which is based on the writer's interpretation about life.

Furthermore, we find a conflict of ideas between Willis (1967), who regards theme as the basic subject matter of the story, and Pretorius and Swart (1982), who state that it should not be regarded as the topic of the story. They base their argument on the fact that a number of

stories may deal with the same subject matter but find that their themes are different. They also argue that theme is not the incidental philosophical thoughts expressed in the story.

Whatever we term the concept - theme, attitude, thought, message - we must not forget that it lies embedded in the play as a whole and that we perceive it from the experience of reading or listening to the play and analyzing that as thoroughly as we can.

Sometimes we find plays that express their themes explicitly. In such cases, use is made of the reasoner or *raisonneur*. This is often one of the characters who speaks for the author, advancing his ideas on the subject. He is often a secondary character rather than the protagonist of the play. '**Mayibe Sisithethe na?**' is an example of a play which has employed the device. Take for instance Malizole's reaction to the bloodshed at the end of the play; he says that:

Oku kwenzekileyo kweli khaya, iya kuba sisifundo naseluntwini. Akutshiwo ukuba amasiko masingawenzi kodwa ukunyanzelisa isithethe nokuba kunjani kuhamba kuphelele kwindyikitya yokufa efana nale.

(What occurred in this home would be a lesson to the community. This is not to say that we should not practise customs but to enforce tradition in any way whatsoever often gives rise to catastrophic deaths like these.)

With this extract, the message which the playwright wished to convey is explicitly stated to the audience. This device carries with it some sort of moralization for we are overtly preached at. This may have an adverse effect on the play.

The observations about life and people the plays reflect are so multifaceted that it becomes impossible to express theme in a single idea or thought. For this reason we may find that in a play there may be more than one theme expressed. Or the same message may be expressed in different ways.

The themes conveyed by the playwrights to the audience may be different in kind. There are those that may be merely informative; the playwright wished to enlighten his audience about the world they live in. In this way he may satisfy the audience's ignorance or uncertainty concerning reality. On the other hand, it may solely be for entertainment, serving as a kind of escape to forget the worries of life, as most radio plays seem to do. The playwright may even go further than that and try to convert the listener to his own view or he may try to receive some kind of reaction, positive or negative, from the listener. Finally, the sole purpose that a committed playwright has in mind is to make his audience think and act in a particular manner.

In order for the playwright to achieve these reactions, Willis (1967:88) observes that there are certain requirements that a theme has to meet; in the first instance, the statement the theme makes about life should be an important one. Secondly, it should be meaningful to as many people as possible, thus having a universality about it. Lastly, it should concern one of the eternal questions of life and death which always face mankind.

Plays, like every work of man, arise in specific times and places and they bear upon them the marks of a specific culture and set of circumstances. Besides being an individual piece of work, every play occupies a place in literary history. Literary history as defined by Tennyson (1967:105) refers to that discipline concerned with establishing the context in which a work appears, that is, the shifts in taste and literary practice that have exerted an influence on writers at different times.

The circumstances in our daily life evoke the writer's conscience forcing him to take up his pen and express his message or attitude about them. Referring to the influence of circumstances on the writer, Kunene (1986) commented that:

Black writers choose their plots, characters and literary styles; their themes choose them.

In other words, the themes arising out of the contemporary milieu stare the writer in the face, challenging him to ignore them.

The literary history of radio dramas broadcast from the seventies up to the present reveals that themes that are tackled most are the following:

- (a) Traditional values compared to those of modern life.
- (b) The corruption of urban life compared to rural life.
- (c) Historical themes.
- (d) Problems in marriage.

With regard to the first category above, these plays purport to show the antinomy of tradition and modern ideas. In this case, more often the conflict derives from the obstinacy with which both parents and their off-spring cling to their respective views. Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** and **Amandla Othando**, etc. fall into this category. So few Xhosa writers of the present day have shown themselves able to evade this obsessional theme that Nkosi (1981) regards the practice as "no more than the reworking of a rather trite theme of what is now called 'the generation gap'".

Along the same lines, the concern of some writers about the disintegration of traditional custom is quite clear. The initiation schools are regarded as one amongst many things that should be preserved within black culture; plays such as **Oyena Yena** (1985) depict that point of view.

In the second category above, the protagonist is shown to have emigrated from the rural areas and once he (or she) is in the city, he becomes enthralled by the poisonous pleasures of city life and in the end falls to utter degradation. Plays such as **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** (1987), and **Uqale Wagqibelisa** (1985) portray that. The subject matter in these plays ranges from bribery and adultery to shebeen life in the townships.

The historical theme about the war which broke out because of friction in love between Ndlambe and his nephew Ngqika, Thuthula being the source of contention, seems to be the favourite. The theme has been dealt with more than once though under different titles, for example, as 'Uthuthula' (1970) and **Zanqoza** (1984).

Problems of marriage seem to be the predominant theme of the eighties, the themes ranging from adultery to mild conflict within families. **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, **Ubusuku Botyhwytyho**, and **uLindithuba** are illustrations of this theme.

With regards to the above themes Saule (1988, 4) comments:

Kukangaphi sisiva ngamabali angokungalungi konyanzeliso lomtshato; kukangaphi sisiva ngamabali angokungalungi kobomi basezidolophini; kukangaphi sisiva ngamabali angeengxabano zomtshato. ... Iingcinga ezintsha ziyafuneka.

(How many times do we hear plays about forced marriage; how many times do we hear plays about the corruption of city life; how many times do we hear plays about conflict in marriages. There is a need for new ideas.)

Saule's remark is very significant. We are experiencing stagnation as far as the themes of radio plays are concerned. Innovations as far as the radio drama is concerned may be hindered by censorship. It has to be remembered that radio stations are state-controlled monopolies, thus playwrights face a common problem when they have to transmit plays; the plays which appeal to and please a certain group might cause offence to or be misunderstood by another. In order to express sensitive themes, radio playwrights opt for allegorical plays, such as '**Igongqongqo liwufincile Umthombo**' (1971). This play is about the colonial era, whereby the colonists in search of wealth destroy the beauty of the land, and after taking with them the wealth of the country leave it barren and useless for the natives. However, this kind of play tends to have less appeal to people because it is in the form of a fable.

To conclude, the question now is to establish how important the theme is to the play. From our observations we notice that there are certain contributions that a theme makes to the dramatist's piece of work. In the first instance, if the theme is derived from the statement about life, it will allow his audience to have something to think about. Theme will give his play more substance and make it satisfying.

On the other hand, it can act as some sort of a guide to the playwright, towards the development of his story in the most effective way, leading him to make decisions about the structural elements of his play.

2.2 THEMES IN THE PLAYS BEING STUDIED

In the discussion that follows, themes of the plays being studied will be reviewed, the focus being on the message itself, and finally a general comment on these themes will be given. The starting point will be the dramas broadcast in 1987, and then those broadcast in 1988 will be dealt with.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the playwright as the mouthpiece of society identifies the problem of adultery which has plagued our communities. He portrays this through the character Nomhle who betrays the love of her husband by getting involved with another man. The playwright's condemnation of the character is clearly depicted in "Kanti uzenze ngokwakho" (You have only yourself to blame) as a response to Nomhle's cries in the end.

Embedded in the message, the playwright's stance is not concealed; his attitude towards womenfolk (regarding them as untrustworthy) is clear. This is detectable in statements such as 'Ambalwa amabhinqa athembekileyo' (There are very few women that are trustworthy). One of the characters also says 'Abafazi esinabo abathembakali' (Our women are not trustworthy).

Viewed from another point of view, this playwright purports to show the corruption of city life and the departure from the righteous ways of tradition, where women had to be home, becoming fully responsible for the running of their homes. In the cities they become corrupted by the work situation which liberates them from that bondage, giving them equal status to that of the men. The submissiveness to men becomes a thing of the past, as is illustrated by Nomhle's way of answering her husband and in her obstinacy.

If we view this theme with respect to Willis's (1967) observation about the nature of themes that would appeal to the audience, we may conclude that it is well chosen, for it is universal in nature. Research has shown that the high rate of divorce cases is in most cases caused by

adultery. The problem is encountered in every society irrespective of race or creed. Therefore this is a meaningful theme that gives the audience something to ponder about.

In **Amandla Othando**, the title of the play may be seen as representing the theme: Through love we see Nontsikelelo defying her father to marry the man she loves. We are made aware of the sacrifice she makes, forsaking her freedom at a young age, burdening herself with a crippled man. Were it not for her love, Sisa's recovery would not have been achieved. At the same time, through her love she is able to convince her father who has gone even to the extent of disowning her that he is wrong. There is no worse pain inflicted upon the father than to humble himself and beg for his daughter's forgiveness at the end of the play.

Viewed from another point of view, the playwright also makes the audience aware of the 'generation gap' problem. He means to educate parents to refrain from the habit of prescribing partners for their offspring.

The dramatist wishes to draw society's awareness to the advancement of the medical field as a subtheme. Many miracles have been performed at the hospitals; for instance, such things as the test-tube babies, the heart transplants and many others. If we compare the injury sustained by Sisa to the aforementioned achievements, they make his injury seem more trivial.

In **ULindithuba**, the basic subject matter of the play is jealousy. If we define the theme as a statement about life that is implicit in the action of the story, we may then say that the playwright wishes to show to the listener the difficulty that is experienced by men who have jealous wives. He makes known to the listener the absurdity of fights that occur because in most cases they are caused by unfounded suspicions and at the same time he highlights the fact that mistrust between married couples can be the source of trouble in marriage. He advocates the idea that people should refrain from being emotionally incited but act in a level-headed way whenever problems seem to arise.

From another point of view, the title of the play, '**Lindithuba**' (Waiting for an opportunity) may convey the message that in life there is time for everything. One must wait for the right opportunity to present itself. This is illustrated by Lindithuba's patience, having waited for eight years before she could express her gratitude to Phumzile for saving her life.

According to Willis (1967:89) the best themes are those that have potential for appealing to the deepest feelings of an audience. The play '**Lindithuba**' has this emotional power because of the tension and suspense that is embedded in it. Nomhle's deformity and her acceptance of her condition are also things which arouse the emotions of the audience.

2.3 THEMES OF DRAMAS BROADCAST IN 1988

With **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the playwright as the mouthpiece of society highlights the evil of the practice of a forced marriage. The problem is as old as the hills in African society. Parents have been selling their daughters, hiding under the cloak of tradition. But if one takes a good look at the real reason behind this ambushing, it becomes evident that avarice is the main cause. The idea of benefiting from their daughters' marriages becomes such a driving force that there are parents who would force their daughters into marriage even as early as the age of fourteen.

The playwright also wishes to outline the fact that these marriages many a times result in deaths, as is the case in this play. There are other works that have tackled the same theme for example (to mention just a few) we have such novels as **Ukuqhawuka kwembeleko** by Jongilanga, and plays such as **Buzani KuBawo** (1958) by Tamsanqa, and many others. These works are indicative of the universal nature of the theme.

What is also clear with themes of forced marriage is the fact that the initiator of the marriage in many instances pays the price at the end. For example, in this drama, Namhla's father is stabbed to death; this also happens in Mtywaku's **UFeziwe Okanye Inkohlakalo** (1982), where Kwedinana, the initiator, is shot dead.

It is surprising to find somebody still writing on this theme, because it has been exhaustively dealt with by hordes of writers.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** (1988), the playwright highlights the lack of safety of townships especially during the weekends and the evenings, when anything could happen. To leave small children by themselves is to invite trouble.

He also wishes to draw our attention to the irresponsibility of MaGaba and Dlamini. They stand as examples, representing a number of people in our communities that are unable to sort out their priorities. These people put pleasure above everything else. The fact that MaGaba gambles with the safety of her child for the sake of the party illustrates that.

Viewed from another angle, with this couple the dramatist reminds the listener about home situations whereby men always show authority, but in a subtle manner their wives are the decision-makers. For instance, in this drama, at first Dlamini portrays himself as a rigid man who cannot be manipulated by a woman but we see him undergoing a transformation because he has consented to MaGaba's request against his will.

Another fact that the dramatist may wish to portray to the audience is the influence of environment on characters. People in reality always adapt themselves to the conditions of

their area. People who are in high crime rate areas will always be on the alert for crime. For example, the two children, instead of being stupefied with fear, think quickly of a way out of the problem. Perhaps if they were children from an area where crime is not common, they would have been too scared to think properly.

In *Isiqalo Sobulumko* (1988) the playwright wishes the listener to view the society from the angle that he does. He portrays a society of a complex culture whereby there is not a single system of conduct but a conflicting variety. The values of our society are outlined for the listener and among the values that are found, those having to do with 'money' are always at the top. Money is the most valued asset because it is a medium that, for good or bad, makes an affluent society. It does not make an equal society but one in which there is a constant shifting of classes. For example, the playwright focuses on the lower socio-economic group, and even within this particular sector, inequality is predominant. For instance, we have MaDlomo at the bottom of the social ladder, and MaMpinga who sees herself better than her friend; at the top of the ladder there is Theresa who seems to be more affluent and is used by MaMpinga as a role-model.

Bhadikazi is not saddened by the fact that she does not have food to eat; she is concerned about her appearance and wants to buy a dress. Because of these demands that the society makes on people, we find that people will do anything for the sake of money. MaMpinga's exploitation of men illustrates that; Bhadikazi's indifference as to whether she is labelled as a bad woman - as long as she gets money - also proves that. But more important in the drama is MaDlomo's downfall because of money; her decision to take the life of an innocent man because of money is highlighted. In all, the dramatist's message is that 'money is the root of evil'. Much foolish behaviour in our communities is due to this love of money.

The title of the story can also be viewed as revealing the theme 'the beginning of wisdom is the fear of God'. The playwright draws the listener's attention to the fact that man is always prone to temptations. However, God has given him a free will to choose between right and wrong and his destiny lies in his choice. The dramatist has undertaken to delineate the personality of MaDlomo so as to illuminate his theme. In the first instance, he gives MaDlomo all the qualities of a righteous person, that is, her dependence on God is much emphasized in the story. Even as she admonishes MaMpinga about her behaviour she expresses such remarks as 'God will punish them', and she convinces her that Jesus is alive inside her. (This of course, refers to her conscience.) Ironically, she is proved to have a weak conscience in the treatment she gives to the stranger. It becomes even more disgusting to hear her conspiring to murder an innocent man.

The playwright also wishes to point out that there is always a final penalty for a sin whether it is committed secretly or in the open. With MaDlomo, the final penalty is the pain of

discovering that the stranger she murdered is her own son, Vuyisile, and her conscience will gnaw her for the rest of her life. Had she feared God and been more humane to people, such a crime would not have happened.

To conclude, if we take a look at these themes, one finds that they share common ground. They have a moral lesson; in some plays it is implicitly interwoven in the story and in others expressed explicitly through a character, as could be illustrated in **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** As mentioned before, direct moralization somehow weakens the play because nobody wants to be preached at.

Once again, the same playwright seems to have let his theme dominate the play, neglecting all the other aspects of the play, such as the plot, characters, etc. In order to meet the demand of the theme, like his predecessors he forced a death to occur in the play. The numerous killings that occur are really unnecessary; perhaps he was trying to create a sense of tragedy, as Qangule (1968) has observed about the dependence of Xhosa playwrights on bloodshed for creating dramatic interest. He criticizes the practice for he comments:

The incessant brutal killing creates an atmosphere of horror.

It is interesting also to note that there is a difference in these playwrights' perspective concerning women, for there is a breakaway from the old tradition of depicting women as subservient objects who are dominated by males, as depicted in the dramas of 1987. For example, in **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** (1987), Nomhle is portrayed as weak, her dependence on men for financial support is apparent. This is one of the reasons why she indulges in adultery. Her fragility is even depicted by the way she cries, begging for mercy when her husband catches her red-handed in the act. She sees her world crumbling in front of her eyes. Even the playwright's comment through one of the characters that "She has only herself to blame" adds more effect, depicting her impotence in the situation. He makes it seem that it would be the end of the world for her.

The same viewpoint is depicted in **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** There is some incongruity if we compare the character and the era she lives in. It is strange that Namhla is depicted as having a submissive character in spite of her education, for she is a teacher. Though she lives in the modern world, she is a model of the traditional child who dare not overtly oppose the parent. The playwright's manipulation of the theme is distinct in this drama.

Nongauza in **Ubusuku Botyhwytyho** follows suit for Dlamini reminds his wife about her status when he says: 'Ungumfazi into oyiyo' (In reality, you are a woman). The same character celebrates the traditional mode of life of his ancestors, for he expresses the desire for the the clock to be turned back to the period of his ancestors where women's place was in the kitchen.

The dramas of 1988 show a break from this stance. Women are portrayed as strong individuals who refuse to be submissive to male dominance. This depicts this period's awareness to 'feminism'. For example, the women are professionals who are not tied by their apron strings to the kitchen. This gives them a sense of individuality, improving their status in relation to men. For example, in **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo refuses to have her life prescribed to her by her father; she defies him to marry the man she loves. His threats of disowning her do not in any way make her succumb.

The same standpoint is adopted by Saule. He awards Mandisa the same status as that of her husband Phumzile. She is a teacher by profession and her education influences her personality. She is challenging; the way she interrogates Phumzile about Lindithuba proves so. She does not even flinch as he tries to be defensive, adopting an arrogant attitude; she still pins him down. This does not surprise us for she is a product of her time in the way Thompson (1946:124) suggests.

Isiqalo Sobulumko also portrays the same type of a woman: strong, and determined to face the roughest of times in life. MaDlomo as a widow is not fragile; she supports her family when they have nothing and is too proud to succumb to male assistance as her friends advise her to do.

In all, though the above themes are derived from statements about life, they have been written basically for the purpose of entertainment. The information transmitted is stale. This reminds us of what Saule (1988) commented about earlier that there is a dire need for new ideas as far as the themes are concerned. Because of this problem, these themes have lost significance, failing to gain any reaction from the audience. After listening to the drama, one might ask: so what? They lack the ability to stir our thoughts; they lack the substance to give us something to ponder about.

2.4 THE PLOT STRUCTURE

The aim of this section is to offer a theoretical background to plot structure. This will be followed by a comparative analysis of the plot structures of the dramas being studied, according to their year of broadcast. This is to establish whether there are any theoretical changes in as far as plot construction is concerned in the period under study. The failures and successes of the six playwrights will be pointed out with regard to this aspect.

Broadly speaking, Vandermoere (1982) views plot as being comprised of a succession of statements on facts, events and things that are and those that happen. These statements are the motifs and they form the smallest components of the plot. Motifs in plot do not all have

the same level of importance: some mark steps in the development of events, others are merely descriptive and do not play any role in the developments of events.

He further points out that in the combination of motifs three steps are discernable, i.e. the story, plot and the text. In the story the motifs are arranged in a chronological succession and they show a certain logic. For instance, we know that life comes before death, hunger means food is necessary, etc.

It is clear that motifs in the story are not always presented explicitly; some of them are implied or merely hinted at. This helps to increase the suspense potential of the play.

As mentioned earlier the second step is that of a plot; the story is abstracted from the plot. In the plot the motifs are arranged with a view to transmission of the message. With regards to these two concepts Pfister (1988) states that 'plot' is for presentation whereas the 'story' is for the subject of presentation.

Motifs in a plot are arranged according to principles. Hence Dipple (1970) defines plot as:

the chain of events in a story and the principle which knits it together.

Plot involves the action of characters which in the radio drama are conveyed verbally in dialogues and their personalities as well. For this reason, when dealing with plot concepts such as action, action sequence and action phases will be referred to regularly.

Action: with regards to the concept 'action' one has to make a distinction between the word 'action' and 'action sequence'. Pfister (1988) makes the following distinction with regards to the concept: by action he refers to a single action by a particular figure in a particular situation. Action sequence then refers to the overall action of the whole text. Furthermore, he defines 'action' as the intentionally chosen and not causally defined transition from one situation to the next.

In all, every action and every action sequence is a part of the story but this does not mean that every story consists of actions or action sequences. The same applies to plot and story: a story is a part of the plot but not all plots contain a story. For instance, documentary plots do not have a story.

2.4.1 Techniques of presentation

According to Pfister (1988) the story can be presented either directly in scenic form or it can be mediated narratively in characters' speeches. Scenic presentation is regarded as 'Open action' as against the 'Hidden' action of the narrative presentation. This refers to the fact

that in the aforementioned, the audience perceives the scene acoustically whereas in the latter the audience relies on the second-hand information from the characters which may be less vivid and objective.

Pfister also states that hidden action may be in two forms: the 'spatially hidden action' which takes place off-stage at the same time as the on stage-action. On the other hand, 'temporally hidden action' takes place in the periods omitted between various scenes and acts.

Both methods of presentation have their role to play in drama; for example, scenic presentation is used by the dramatist for emphasis. He selects all important elements that will help in structuring and giving meaning to his plot. It is these elements that give his story a unique entity.

On the other hand, 'hidden action', especially spatially hidden action, can have a powerful effect on the audience by creating suspense, especially if the events are just hinted at rather than presented directly.

As mentioned before, the plot is comprised of sequences; there are various ways in which these sequences are combined to form a unified whole and we shall now undertake to view how the dramatists do this.

2.4.2 Coordination of sequences

Theorists such as Vandermoere (1982) and Pfister (1988) agree on the fact that sequences can be coordinated in the following ways: they may be juxtaposed or succeed each other, or be embedded in each other as subplots.

2.4.2.1 The Juxtaposition or Succession of Sequences

Depending on the chronological relationship linking them, the sequences can be coordinated either according to the principle of juxtaposition or that of succession.

Juxtaposition occurs when the sequences coincide chronologically. Heese and Lawton (1983) regard these as parallel scenes. On the other hand, succession occurs when they follow each other, in other words, when they are chronologically completely separate.

2.4.2.2 The Subplot

The sequences of a story may also be coordinated hierarchically or quantitatively. In the former case the plot is given one or more subplots that are subordinated to it, whereas

coordination of sequences quantitatively occurs when a number of plots are strung together successively.

When a dramatist introduces a subplot in his play, it is not an irrelevant inclusion or a decoration in the story but one of the ways in which the dramatist emphasizes the universal nature of his theme. Heese and Lawton (1983) also state that the function of the subplot is to illustrate a different facet of a problem encountered in the main action of a play. Subplots may also create a contrast to the main plot in order to readjust the perspective with which one views the main action, while at the same time echoing the actions of the main plot.

Now that we have outlined the different ways that sequences are combined, it is appropriate now to look at the counter-part, to see how these sequences of the plot are broken up.

2.4.3 The Segmentation of the plot

Pfister (1988) also observes that the plot of a story can be segmented in two levels: the surface structural level and the deep structural level.

2.4.3.1 The Surface Structural level

Boulton (1960) refers to this as the external structure of the plot. It is marked by the changes in the configuration, interruptions in the chronological and spatial continuity, the division into acts and scenes. The division in the radio drama is marked by the introduction of music and sound effects or pauses.

2.4.3.2 The Deep Structural level

Boulton (1960) also refers to this as the internal structure of the plot. In this case, the story is divided up according to certain semantic and logical criteria, for instance, the individual action or events, the phases of events, the sequences of action or events and episodes.

In our study we shall adhere to the concepts of episodes and phases when considering the segmentation of the plot. An episode may consist of a number of action sequences. Aucamp (1983:94) defines an episode as:

'n teks met twee of meer tonele wat om een hoofinsident sentreer.

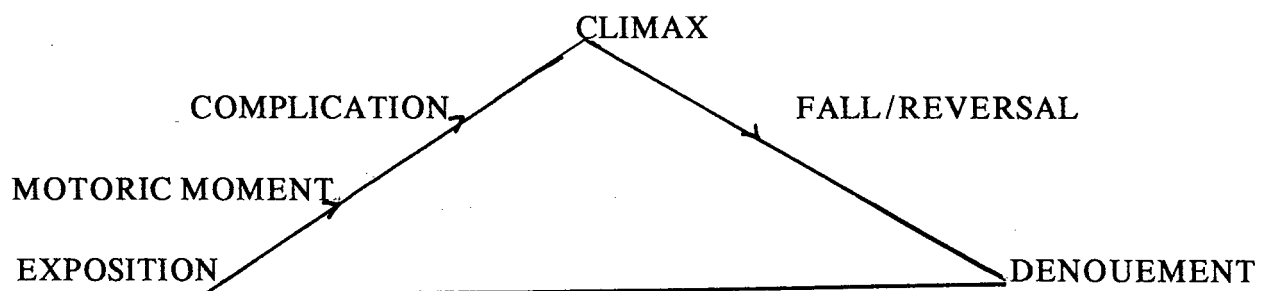
Wellek and Warren (1948) also speak of the plot as à structure composed of smaller narrative structures (episodes, incidents).

2.4.4 The forms of drama

Pfister (1988) also distinguishes between two forms of the plot structure: the closed and the open forms.

2.4.4.1 The closed form

The closed form is based on a completely self-contained story in which there are no background events to influence the beginning, and the ending is absolutely final. This kind of plot is based on a pyramid-like structure which can be represented graphically as



As can be seen in the diagram, this plot conforms to the traditional classic plot. In this kind of plot a conflict between two antagonistic forces develops and is led towards an unambiguous solution at the end. In this kind of plot, each phase and each detail is important because they help the progress of the plot. The plot and its components are still not autonomous elements.

2.4.4.2 The Open Form

The open form is devised as a counter-model to that of a closed form. The plot consists of individual sequences that are relatively autonomous and isolated from one another. According to Pfister (1988) this kind of plot does not move forward in a linear sequence as in the closed form but as series of cycles. He also states that there is a repeated use of imagery and the sequence of scenes is joined thematically and atmospherically as a deliberate attempt to establish a set of meaningful similarities and contrasts.

2.4.5 The Simple and Complex Plot

The structuring of incidents in drama can also determine the kind of plot the play has. A play may have a simple or complex plot. The complexity and the simplicity of the plot refer to the linear arrangement of incidents in the story. According to Aristotle a simple plot is:

One which is single and continuous and in which the change of fortune comes about without a reversal or a discovery.

On the other hand he defines a complex plot as:

One in which the change is accompanied by a discovery or a reversal or both.

By 'reversal' he refers to the change from one state of affairs to its opposite, which should still conform to probability or necessity.

2.4.6 Suspense

Suspense is one of the important elements in the sequential development of the plot. Smuts (1986) mentions three possibilities in which suspense can occur in drama. Firstly, the reader or the audience may know what is going to happen and the character concerned may not know. In most cases, in their ignorance these characters utter their thoughts which are in contrast to what we know, thus creating dramatic irony.

Secondly, both the listener and the character may not know and in these cases a surprise is experienced at each discovery of the truth and, thirdly, the reader may be less informed than the character.

Pfister (1988:98) confirms what was said by Smuts when he states:

Thus suspense, always depends on the existence of an element of tension between complete unawareness on the one hand and a certain level of anticipatory expectation based on certain given information on the other.

There are certain factors that determine the intensity of suspense in drama: in the first instance, there is the identification of the audience with the protagonist or with the events of the story. The stronger the identification, the more the audience becomes committed to follow the plans and decisions made and the risks; thus it looks forward with anticipation.

In the second instance, suspense becomes intensified with the number of risks involved, such as for instance, in cases where the risk would involve the loss of life.

Suspense can be further intensified by the quantity and clarity of future-oriented information which can be used by both the audience and the characters to develop their anticipatory hypotheses. This information can be stated explicitly in the characters' speeches or in dreams, prophecies, etc. It can also be transmitted implicitly in atmospheric omens. Sometimes the playwright may play around with the audience's emotions by fulfilling their

expectations more slowly. Delay is another device which the playwrights use to create suspense in the play.

2.5 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 1987 DRAMAS

The discussion that follows seeks to explore the skills and artistry of the playwrights being studied in the handling of their plot structure. The dramas will be critically analysed against the theoretical background already given. Preceding the analysis, a brief summary of each drama will be provided to give the reader a better understanding of the drama. Each drama will be divided into episodes which will then be analysed according to the traditional approach.

2.5.1 The exposition

The three dramas that were broadcast in 1987 are the following: **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** by Gcilitshana, Mji's **Amandla Othando** and Saule's **uLindithuba**.

Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho:

Nomhle conceals the fact that she is married and gets involved with another man. The affair has an impact on her marriage; she starts comparing her husband, Mjongile, with her lover, Themba, who seems to have better looks than her husband. Her change of attitude made her husband suspicious and one day, as he searches in her handbag, he finds a note from Themba confirming an appointment. He keeps quiet about the issue. On the appointed day, he catches the two lovers red-handed. Nomhle is jilted by both men on the spot.

This play can be divided into the following episodes:

- (a) The meeting of Nomhle and Themba and the proposal.
- (b) Nomhle's change of attitude towards her husband.
- (c) Mjongile's suspicion.
- (d) Mjongile's discovery of the affair and the trap set for Nomhle.
- (e) Nomhle's rejection by both men.

Amandla Othando

The second drama commences with Nontsikelelo, a nursing sister discovering a crack on her wedding cake, on the day preceding her wedding. That same day her fiancé, Sisa, is involved in a car accident which leaves him crippled. On learning about the tragic news, Nontsikelelo's father cancels the wedding because he feels that he cannot marry his daughter to a cripple. He rationalizes his actions by saying that Sisa would be unable to father children in the marriage. In spite of her father's disapproval and his threat to disown her, Nontsikelelo proceeded with the marriage. After surgical treatment Sisa regains his normal health and is able to father a child. The news of Sisa's recovery is shocking to the father and after an admonition from his wife, he finally swallows his pride and asks for his daughter's pardon.

The episodes of the above play can be divided as follows:

- (a) The premonition.
- (b) The fulfilment of it or Sisa's accident.
- (c) Sisa's rejection by his father-in-law.
- (d) The nurse's advice to Nontsikelelo and her defiance of her father.
- (e) Sisa's recovery.
- (f) The repentance of Nontsikelelo's father.

ULindithuba

In the third drama, **uLindithuba**, Saule shows a home situation whereby Phumzile and his wife Mandisa fight over a telephone call. The caller identifies herself as Lindithuba and she demands to speak to Phumzile. Phumzile, who is suspicious of the call, declines to respond. His refusal to respond evokes suspicion within Mandisa for the caller is a woman. She suspects that the caller may be an ex-girlfriend of Phumzile or an enemy who wishes to settle a score with him. There is a heated argument over the issue. Lindithuba decides to call in person at their residence. It is only when they all meet that they learn that Lindithuba is a friend who has come to thank Phumzile for saving her life.

ULindithuba can be divided into the following episodes:

- (a) The introduction of Mandisa and Phumzile and their home situation.

- (b) Phumzile's refusal to answer the telephone and the argument that ensued.
- (c) Lindithuba's announcement of her arrival.
- (d) The explanation.
- (e) The preparation to go to church.

The next section examines the function of each episode, using the traditional classification of the plot.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the first episode introduced us to the two main characters, Nomhle and Themba. The introduction of the setting is implied; we assume that the two meet at a bus rank because of the sound of the moving vehicles and the voices of people in the background. From the conversation one is able to discern that the scene commences in the morning because both characters are on the way to their places of employment. As the play progresses, more information about the characters is provided because the listeners learn that neither of them is a Capetonian by birth. Themba is from King Williams Town and Nomhle is from Whittlesea. Nomhle's physique is described to the listeners to enable them to adjust their perspective with regards to her behaviour in the later stages of the drama. The seed for the future conflict has been sown to germinate because Nomhle denies that she is married. This may be a kind of invitation to Themba to make advances. The exchange of telephone numbers between the couple proves that. This first phase is also the exposition because it conforms to the traditional principles of drama: characters have been introduced as well as the time and setting, but there is no direct conflict in this first phase.

With regard to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, we are introduced to the main character, Nontsikelelo, in the first episode who seems to be troubled because of a crack she discovers in her wedding cake. There is concern in her voice which immediately makes the audience inquisitive. One cannot help noticing the strong belief she holds that this may be a premonition of an ill-omen; this is revealed by her words:

Kazi ithetha ntoni na le nto?

(I wonder what does this mean?)

The time aspect has been indirectly introduced to the listeners in the conversation of the characters because the aunt remarks that Nontsikelelo is not supposed to be roaming around in the village a day before her wedding day. This episode serves the function of the exposition.

With regard to Saule's **uLindithuba**, the first episode introduces us to the main characters, Phumzile and Mandisa. The mood and the atmosphere of the play are established from the outset for the couple are quarrelling. Lindithuba (or Nomhle) is also introduced telephonically to the listeners. There is a queerness about her voice which sounds rather irritating to the listener. The introduction of Lindithuba has been done to create tension and suspense within the characters and listeners as well. There are certain factors that may lead one to believe that the caller is somebody who has evil intentions: the slur in her voice, the fact that she gives herself a nickname and the irritating laugh as she hung up the telephone provoke the suspicion.

This first episode serves as an exposition or clarification as Boulton (1960) calls it. Certain information has been clarified for the listeners: for example, the characters and their relation to each other; Phumzile and his wife Mandisa; the strange caller who calls herself Lindithuba. The listeners are aware of her eagerness to speak to Phumzile and his refusal to respond to her wish. Suspense is created in this manner. During the characters' dialogue, the setting and time are also introduced. What has also been established in the first episode are the mood and the atmosphere of the story.

Before commenting on the expositions of the above dramas, it will be appropriate first to review the expectations we have about this phase. Jafta (1978:101) expresses the view that:

The exposition introduces one to the created and imaginary world of the dramatist. The cause of conflict is identified against the background of normal social structure. The main characters are introduced and identified according to their roles and relationship. It is in the exposition that the type of atmosphere which is conducive to the whole play is established.

If we evaluate the above plays in terms of the above requirements, we notice that they have complied with the stated principles. But there seems to be some differences between the playwrights regarding the handling of the conflict. In Saule's **uLindithuba** a strong element of conflict has been introduced in the initial stages of the drama. This is strongly in Saule's favour. On the radio, as a blind medium, introduction of the conflict immediately can be regarded as a strong weapon for holding the audience's attention. This view is supported by Willis (1970) for he remarks that conflict is the best hook for the listeners' attention.

2.5.2 The Complication

This section will be devoted to a critical analysis of the complication phase of these dramas, paying particular attention to the individual playwrights' treatment of the conflict.

Broadly speaking, the phase which succeeds the exposition is meant to sharpen and deepen the conflict until the final crisis is reached. The developments that intensify the conflict and make it more critical are called **Complications**. In this study, complications are encountered in more than one phase.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the second phase introduces to the listener Nomhle's husband, Mjongile. Conflict is depicted between the two because the husband pleads with her that they go together to his home in the rural areas. Her arrogance towards her husband somehow evokes a negative feeling within the listener because of their awareness of the existing circumstances.

In the same episode Nomhle's weak character is epitomized. The introduction of the third character or the protactic figure is done to show to the listener Nomhle's short-sightedness. She discloses that her marriage to Mjongile was one of convenience.

Events get more complicated with Themba's proposal of marriage to her. Themba's thoughts about Nomhle are revealed to the listeners. They are made aware of his mistrust of her and apparently he is not totally blind to the negative characteristics of her personality. It is ironic that Themba sees her as illiterate whereas she regards her husband as illiterate.

Mjongile's discovery of the truth is another crisis. The discovery of the letter proves too much for him because he cries out in agony to show his disbelief. To make the scene effective, sound effects have been used to highlight the crisis.

With regard to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, the correlation between the first episode and the following one is quite distinct. In the first episode, the playwright made the listener anticipate misfortune in the near future. When one hears the screeching of tyres and a loud sound of a crashing object, the listeners' imagination is drawn to the scene of the accident. The impact of the scene is emphasized by the hurrying feet and the sound of a siren which suggests the arrival of the ambulance crew. As a stimulant to the listener's imagination, no words are used to interrupt the effect of the sound. This can be viewed as the motoric moment, an action which triggered off the conflict. The car accident that involved Sisa is to determine the course of events in the rest of the story.

In the next phase, the wedding is cancelled and the lobola cattle returned to the groom's home because Nontsikelelo's father finds it unacceptable to have a son-in-law who is crippled. The atmosphere created in this scene is gloomy, the father's forceful voice overshadows all other voices in the room. Besides the bullying impression that is evident, the words that are uttered by the same voice are more piercing and cruel than the sound or tone itself. The scene becomes even more pathetic as Nontsikelelo's sobs can be heard in the background. Boulton (1960:43) says this about the complication:

The crises may succeed one another as causes and effects, or some fresh, crisis may arise from another cause. This may be called the complication.

With regards to the phase as part of the story, Thompson (1946:128) states that:

... interference with the will of the hero sets up a struggle that we call the complication, which in the typical plot grows more intense.

The above quotations are quite fitting. With reference to Boulton's quotation, the car accident that robbed Sisa of his healthy state is the first crisis of the story. Its effect can be seen in his father-in-law's reaction to the news. The return of lobola cattle is another crisis which strikes Sisa and Nontsikelelo like an insult. The action committed propels the story further.

With reference to Thompson's quotation, the act that is committed by Ntsiki's father, that is, jilting the groom, can be seen as a kind of interference with Nontsikelelo's will and we expect her to put up a struggle.

More problems that pertain to the main conflict arise. Nontsikelelo in defiance of her father, marries Sisa; in retaliation her father disowns her. To disown, or 'ukuhlamba' as it is known in Xhosa, can be regarded as the most serious punishment that a parent can ever afflict upon a child because the ties are not only broken with the living but also with the ancestors who are regarded as mediators between God and the living. At this juncture neither party is prepared to succumb; their obstinacy is depicted through their actions.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, Phumzile's refusal to answer the call gives rise to Nomhle's determination to contact him. In order to create suspense the playwright makes the caller hang up on Mandisa. The listeners are kept inquisitive about what this Lindithuba wants to say. Whilst their minds are still preoccupied with Lindithuba, Saule switches to the quarrel between Mandisa and Phumzile. Mandisa is suspicious that this Lindithuba may be Phumzile's mistress, or an old enemy that has come for revenge. As the argument gets heated, the tension intensifies and as Phumzile fumes with anger the listeners get the impression that he is going to hit her but he controls his temper just as they wait for the worst. Phumzile's hesitation in answering Mandisa gives an impression that he is the guilty one for he seems to conceal the truth. The listeners are also made aware of the mental conflict that exists within these characters. When the telephone rings for the second time Mandisa refuses to answer it but on second thoughts she tells Phumzile that she will answer it in order to give Lindithuba a bit of her mind. There is an element of humour in the scene because Phumzile who has been avoiding contact with Lindithuba encourages Mandisa to confront her. With regards to this device Pfister (1988:217) says it is:

a simple way of providing comic relief, of liberating and relaxing the audience emotionally and of satisfying its need for variety and abundance.

In the next episode the events get more complicated for Nomhle announces that she is coming to their home. She warns them not to tell anyone. The suspense heightens even further as they are unable to contact the brother because his telephone is engaged.

If we compare the three dramas, we find that there is a visible difference as far as the handling of conflict is concerned. Gcilitshana in **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho** fails to give a consistent conflict in his drama; at the beginning of the second episode there seems to be a kind of confrontation between Nomhle and her husband Mjongile but it is not developed any further because Mjongile becomes submissive to her. There seems to be no logic in Themba's action of proposing marriage to Nomhle when he has doubts about her character.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, though there is no direct confrontation between the father and the daughter, conflict prevails. The actions of the characters prove that the two are fighting; for instance, Nontsikelelo's defiance of her father by going to live with Sisa, as against her father's action of disowning her.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, the complication arises with the introduction of Lindithuba. The playwright has chosen to give Lindithuba the ability to instigate trouble even in her absence. Lindithuba can be regarded as a catalyst, which Tennyson (1967:21) describes as:

The inciting moment or the inciting force. It often comes in the form of a new character (sometimes called catalyst) for it is he who stimulates new action and new responses.

Of the three dramas, Saule shows the best handling of conflict. Complication is quite clear because Phumzile refuses to answer the telephone and his action instigates trouble in the house.

2.5.3 The Climax

In the discussion that follows, the climaxes of these three dramas will be critically analysed against the theoretical background already provided to determine to what extent do they comply with the principles. The successes and shortcomings, if there are any, of the individual playwrights will be pointed out.

Our expectations of the climax are that the events that have been building themselves up in an ascending order should reach their highest peak.

With reference to Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle is caught red-handed by Mjongile. In this phase the forces that had been fighting come face to face with each other. There is confrontation between Nomhle and Mjongile.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, the climax comes about with the recovery of Sisa from his illness. Sisa's recovery is a sign of victory for Nontsikelelo; it proves how wrong her father was. To him, this is some sort of an anti-climax. The news came like a thunderbolt in a blue sky and he cannot control his disbelief.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, the arrival of Lindithuba or Sis'Hlehle is the highest peak in the story. The listeners are eager to know what she will do because 'ithuba', or the opportunity she has been emphasizing throughout the play, finally came. Lindithuba comes with good tidings to the couple for she has come to thank Phumzile and offers him a gift of a R50 000 cheque plus five tractors.

Smiley (1971:59), in commenting on this phase, says that it involves discovery or realization for the characters, and that it can be a moment of reversal in the story. He further states that it may be a moment of decision.

All the three dramas do possess one or two of the above traits. There are discoveries and realizations; for instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle realises that her little game is up and she loses both men. In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, the father realises his mistake and, in like manner, Phumzile and Mandisa realise that their fears and suspicions were unfounded. Thus, the three dramas do comply with the principles.

2.5.4 The Denouement

The denouements of these dramas will be critically analysed to ascertain whether the conflict is resolved and how this has been done by these different playwrights.

This phase serves the purpose of rounding off the story. As Jafta (1978) noted, in the denouement there is a new pattern that has been developed from the climax. We expect to see realignment of forces or things turning for better or for worse. It is in this phase that the dramatist reveals what the import of his plot is, and for this reason he often has a message to convey to his audience; he has a moral obligation to his audience.

With reference to Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, no sympathy is felt for Nomhle as her world begins to crumble in front of her eyes. She is rejected by both men. The moral obligation is quite evident for she is made to ask for mercy. The listeners are surprised to hear Themba calling her names because prior to that incident he had shown so much love for her. This serves as a lesson to Nomhle.

As far as Mji's **Amandla Othando** is concerned, there is reconciliation between the father and daughter. Having swallowed his pride, Nontsikelelo's father apologizes to her as she lay in the maternity home. In him, the listeners are made to see a character developing in a new awareness of life. Despite her father's cruel deed of disowning her she never stopped loving him as her father. At the end we see stability again as their differences are ironed out.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, a new pattern is realised because a great friendship develops between Phumzile's family and Lindithuba. The two families go to church together in order to hear Phumzile preach.

It is a common practice with the playwrights that in the denouement they make their characters confess. The phase may be taken as a revelation phase for the concealed truths are disclosed. The above dramas have not departed from this trend; Nomhle in **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** confesses that she has been lured into the affair by Themba. The same is experienced with Nontsikelelo's father in **Amandla Othando**, for her father acknowledges his mistake begging for pardon and in this manner the conflict is amicably resolved. In Saule's **uLindithuba**, Phumzile confesses, giving the reason for his refusal to answer the telephone. He ascribed his reaction to the meeting he attended in the previous week. There had been confrontation between the members of the congregation and he had assumed that the call might be from one of them.

The confession gives the listeners another perspective, enabling them to judge the characters in a different light.

As far as the denouement of the three dramas is concerned, the contradiction is solved convincingly in each instance. There is also no direct moralization. The lesson the different playwrights intended to show in their plots is skilfully interwoven in the story and we give them credit for that.

2.6 ANALYSIS OF THE 1988 DRAMAS

This section aims at giving a comparative analysis of the plot structures of the three specimen dramas broadcast in 1988 to ascertain whether they meet with the theoretical requirements of plot structure. Preceding the analysis there will be a brief explanatory outline of each story. The approach that will be followed will be the division of the plots into episodes which will then be analysed in terms of the traditional plot structure.

The dramas that were broadcast in 1988 are the following: **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** by Msila, **Ubusuku Botyhwytyho** by Nongauza and **Isiqalo Sobulumko** by Mahlaba, respectively.

Maybe Sisithethe na?

The story commences with Madiba, who plays the role of Namhla's father, making arrangements for a wedding between his daughter Namhla, who is a teacher by profession, and Solani, a polygamist and an illiterate man from the neighbourhood.

Namhla's failure to respond to the family's correspondence resulted in their bringing her back home by force. To the surprise of the delegate that is assigned the duty, Namhla is cooperative and does not show any resistance. Arriving at home, her uncle who is one of the delegates, relates to the mother that on their way they heard rumours that Mbulelo, who is Namhla's boyfriend, was dead. The following day Namhla is found dead in her room. The boyfriend who innocently visits her home in order to rescue her is struck by the tragic news on his arrival. He goes berserk and stabs to death both Namhla's father and the husband.

The above story can be divided into the following episodes:

- (a) Preparation for Namhla's marriage by her parents.
- (b) The decision to have her forcibly brought home.
- (c) The news of Mbulelo's death.
- (d) Namhla's suicide.
- (e) The arrival of Mbulelo at her home resulting in the death of her husband and father.
- (f) The end - the weeping and the message to the audience.

Ubusuku Botyhwytyho

The second drama, **Ubusuku Botyhwytyho** by Nongauza, commences with MaGaba pleading with her husband, Dlamini, to take her out for the evening to a dance party. She arranges that their baby be left in the care of two babysitters, Nozimbo and Mqwayito. In their absence, a convict escapes from a neighbouring police station and he breaks into their home, using Nozimbo and the baby as his hostages, and he demands that they give him clothes to change into. Mqwayito, who leaves the room under the pretence of fetching the clothes from the bedroom, runs to summon the police. The convict is captured. The home owners arrive at that moment; their cries are drowned by the sergeant's sarcastic remark that as they were enjoying the evening, to the children it was a night of terror.

The play can be divided into the following episodes:

- (a) Preparations for going to the party.
- (b) Comparison of the two situations i.e. the home and the dance party.
- (c) The escape of the convict and the warning to the local residents.
- (d) The house breaking.
- (e) The children's plan to have the convict arrested.
- (f) The arrest of the convict and the arrival of the home owners.

Isiqalo Sobulumko

The third play, **Isiqalo Sobulumko** by Mahlaba, is about MaDlomo, a widow who seems to be struggling for survival. Her only son, Vuyisile, vanished in Johannesburg, neglecting his mother and his sister, Bhadikazi. MaDlomo's reliance on God is highlighted; she stands firm in her principles, refusing to succumb to her friend's advice on hooking a man that can shoulder her financial responsibilities. Her prayers are answered for her prodigal son returns home but, due to the disfigurement of his face, his mother is unable to recognize him. She is suspicious of the man and offers him the kitchen as a shelter for the night. In the middle of the night driven by sheer inquisitiveness and fear, she stealthily goes to investigate what the man was doing. To her surprise, she finds him counting stacks of money. Immediately evil thoughts enter her mind for she murders him for that, burying his corpse in the kraal. She only learns about the truth in the morning when her friend, MaMpinga, comes to inquire about the young man.

The episodes of this drama can be divided as follows:

- (a) Background about the conditions of the family.
- (b) Vuyisile's decision to return home.
- (c) His arrival at home and being turned away by his mother.
- (d) The announcement of his arrival to MaMpinga and her advice that he return home.
- (e) MaDlomo committing the murder.
- (f) The discovery of the truth and her regrets.

In the following discussion the exposition of the three dramas will be comparatively analysed to ascertain whether the three playwrights comply with the theoretical principles. The successes and failures, if there are any, of these playwrights will also be pointed out.

2.6.1 The Exposition

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**, the first phase introduces us to Namhla's home; the main characters that open the story are: Namhla's father, Madiba, and his wife Nosayinethi. Namhla's introduction is by implication because it is only in their conversation that she is introduced. Immediately at the commencement of the scene, conflict is introduced and it centres on the idea of forcing Namhla into marriage. The listeners are made to anticipate a clash of ideas between the parent and the child because they seem to live in different worlds. Namhla's father is portrayed as a traditionalist who clings steadfastly to tradition. He is contrasted to his daughter who is a modernist, for she is a teacher who works in an urban area. Sociological influences may play a significant role in affecting her character. In the same episode, the standpoint of a woman in a traditional society has been depicted. Nosayinethi's protests against the marriage are disregarded by her husband who seems to regard her as inferior.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, in the first episode before the actual start of the first scene, an atmosphere which is conducive to the theme is created. This is to elicit suspense and at the same time to give more meaning to the title: 'Ubusuku Botyhwatyho (A night of terror). There are dogs whining and the wind seems to blow vigorously. The whining of the dogs at night is always associated with evil, thus when one hears such cries, it creates an impression that they represent an ill omen in the story. To add more to the atmosphere already created by natural forces, music with a dragging rhythm and sharp instrumental sound is played to give a completely eerie effect to the scene.

The main characters are introduced to the listeners: MaGaba and her husband, Dlamini, and later on Nozimbo and Mqwayito, who are the babysitters. In the first scene, there are traces of conflict although they do not develop much because MaGaba wants to be taken out to a dance party against her husband's wish. He attributes his reluctance to the weather conditions which may be foreshadowing an illomen according to him. Ultimately we see him succumb to his wife because they do attend the party.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the first scene introduces the listener to MaDlomo in soliloquy. She is emotionally engrossed in a prayer and it becomes evident to the listener that there is some problem that has been bothering her for some time and her daughter Bhadikazi is trying to convince her about the futility of her actions. With MaDlomo's response to the questions, information is transmitted to the listeners for they learn that she is

worried about her son, Vuyisile, who has deserted the family. In this manner Vuyisile has been introduced in the conversation.

The living conditions of the family are also revealed. MaDlomo is a widow. This then gives an indication of the long suffering she has borne. She is maintained by her daughter Bhadikazi on a meagre wage. Her situation is made more problematic by the neighbours' attempt to persuade her into having a man to perform the duties of a breadwinner. The condition in which she lives and the social pressures are the basis from which the playwright develops the conflict.

If we evaluate the exposition of the three plays according to what Jafta (1978) said, we notice that they have complied with the principle she described. In this first phase, the main characters are introduced to the listeners and in instances where there has been no direct introduction, it is implied by incorporating the character not present into the conversation of the characters. For example, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Namhla is introduced in the conversation of her parents as is Vuyisile in Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**. The milieu and the time of the story are also introduced.

We also notice that all the three dramas do not possess strong conflict from the initial stages of the play such as we have experienced with the 1987 dramas (see Saule's **uLindithuba**), though the ground has been prepared for the seed of the conflict.

As stated before, in the exposition the type of atmosphere which is characteristic of the whole play should be established. It seems that the dramas being studied have met this expectation. In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the exposition is even made more realistic by the use of the sound effects which help to create that eerie atmosphere and at the same time enhance the theme.

It is quite clear that all these dramas have used the dialogical exposition. In the dialogical exposition, two characters are involved: one merely to stimulate the transformation of information by asking questions and making comments. In this kind of exposition, the use of a protactic character is quite common. Pfister (1988:92) comments as follows on this kind of character:

From a functional point of view, the protactic figure is thus not a genuine dialogue partner, but a thinly veiled stage representative of the audience's hunger for information.

A clear example of such a person is discernable in Mji's **Amandla Othando**, in Nontsikelelo's aunt. She transmits information about the precise time of the story, the personality of the chief character (i.e. the cruel nature of the father) and about the cultural

norms - that the bride-to-be is supposed to keep indoors during this period. After this scene she vanishes altogether from the play.

The monological exposition can be cited in **Isiqalo Sobulumko**: MaDlomo's frustrations are vented in the form of a prayer.

2.6.2 The Complication

In the following discussion the complication phase of the three dramas will be critically examined against the theoretical background given earlier to determine whether they meet the traditional requirements.

In the complication phase, our expectations are that there should be an intensification of the conflict as the two opposing forces are trying to thwart one another.

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**, the second episode introduces Namhla to the listeners so as to hear her views about the matter. Namhla's determination not to marry Solani is echoed in this episode. The feeling is made more strong by the fact that she enters into a love pact with her boyfriend. In the third episode, a decision is taken by her family to bring her back because her silence with regards to the correspondence is regarded as a sign of defiance. The news of Mbulelo's death comes as another crisis and it influences the course of events in the story.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwathyho**, the second episode consists of what Heese and Lawton (1983:90) call parallel scenes. The device is often employed by the dramatist to emphasize the universal nature of his theme and to give contrast. Listeners are made to compare the two situations; Nozimbo seems to be very scared and is regretting that she agreed to be the babysitter. At the dance party MaGaba seems to be enjoying every minute of the evening. MaGaba is again contrasted to her husband who is not in the mood.

The third episode is also a complication or crisis, as Boulton (1960) puts it, because an important event occurs. There is a mentally ill convict who has escaped from custody. To enable the listeners to have a better understanding about the intentions of the escaped convict, the playwright has employed monologue to reveal the thoughts of the convict for he says:

Mandiye kulaa mzi okhanyise izibane phaya ekuphumeni kwelokishi nditshintshe ezi mpahla.

(Let me go to that lit house towards the end of the township and change these clothes.)

Shipley (1942:384) cites the function of the monologue to be the following:

To convey the gathering of thoughts of a character as they lead towards action.

The thought of having a mentally ill convict on the run and children that are all alone at night creates tension and suspense because the listeners fear the outcome.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the second episode introduces Vuyisile on his way home from Johannesburg. There is an element of uncertainty in him about the reception he will receive due to the fact that he has changed physically. In the next episode tension soars with the reunion of the mother and the prodigal son. Unfortunately for him he is not recognized by his mother and is turned back. The weather conditions also contribute to the atmosphere; Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:70) pointed out that weather conditions can be analogous to a passing mood. The bitterly cold weather is symbolic of the reception Vuyisile received from his mother. On the advice of MaMpinga, he manages to work up the courage to return to his home but this time he is offered a kitchen as a bedroom.

As mentioned before, in the complication we expect the intensification of conflict; if we evaluate the three dramas on these lines we find that they fail to meet this expectation. Msila in **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** had created such expectations at the beginning of his play but nothing much came of this. Namhla becomes as meek as a lamb when the men came to fetch her, thus giving an impression that there is something up her sleeve.

The same fault is noticeable with Nongauza's **Ubusuku botyhwathyo**; the line of conflict sags. What this playwright has employed are parallel scenes as a means of contrasting the characters. Following this is a random scene; in other words, the scene of the convict has no direct link with the previous one nor has there been motivation for it. These two phases are episodic; they are incidents that are isolated but combined to give effect.

In **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, we also notice that there is no direct confrontation between the contending forces. The conflict that is experienced is mostly internal; Vuyisile is ill at ease so he decides to hide his identity. The manipulation of the situation by the playwright is quite evident. It is incomprehensible that MaDlomo should not recognize her own son, not even by the voice. What is also strange is Vuyisile's submissiveness to the situation; the fact that he hides his identity and accepts even the worst conditions at his home is rather unrealistic.

This manipulation of the situation by the playwright is also clear with **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** because we find it strange that in a traditional setting such as the one portrayed the uncle should concern himself with the love affairs of his niece; Malizole is the one who discloses the news of Mbulelo's death.

It is quite probable that the three playwrights noticed that there was an inadequacy as far as the development of events in their stories was concerned. They thus without any motivation inserted the parts we pointed out; consequently these episodes are not so convincing.

2.6.3 The climax

In the discussion that follows, the climaxes of these three dramas will be critically analysed against the theoretical background already provided to determine to what extent do they comply with the principles. The successes and shortcomings, if there are any, of the individual playwrights will be pointed out.

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the climax is reached with the death of the main character Namhla. Namhla's suicide is a blow to the entire family and it also comes as a shock to the listeners.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the highest peak is the arrival of the convict at the house. Sound effects have been used to increase tension and suspense. The sound of a barking dog which is followed by a breaking window pane creates tension. Tension becomes even stronger as the convict takes the baby as his hostage. The significance of the title, 'Ubusuku Botyhwatyho' is emphasized in this phase because of the incidents that occur.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo sobulomko**, the climax is reached when MaDlomo murders her own son. It comes as a surprise that MaDlomo who boasted about her righteousness and reliance on God should commit murder in cold blood.

2.6.4 The Denouement

The following discussion will be devoted to a comparison of the three dramas, to examine critically how the playwrights have handled their denouement, the focus being on the manner of solving the conflict in the story and on how the moral stance is transmitted to the listeners.

In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the arrival of Mbulelo leads to the death of Namhla's father. With this action, the playwright tries to bring to the listener's awareness that the evil-doer always suffers in the end. Madiba, who has been the initiator of all the suffering brought on the other people throughout the play, pays the price for his selfishness.

The same applies with the arrival of Mbulelo, there are certain revelations or the 'untying of the knot', as some critics put it. The mystery of Mbulelo's death is resolved for he explains

that it is a matter of mistaken identities. It is his father who died and he bears the same name as his father.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwythyo**, attention is drawn to the intelligence of the children; their ability to keep calm at such a critical moment is illustrative of that. With the arrest of the convict and the return of the couple, equilibrium is restored. There is sarcasm in the sergeant's words as he relates the incident to the couple for he remarks:

Bulelani nje ubukrelekrele bengqondo yaba bantwana. Kuni **ibingumdaniso apha ibubusuku botyhwythyo.**

(Be thankful for the intelligence of these children. To you, it was a **dance party** whereas here it was a **night of terror.**)

The juxtaposition of the two situations is an effective way of stimulating the listeners' imaginations, making them visualize the danger which nearly befell the children. At the same time, the implication behind his words is for MaGaba and Dlamini to see how irresponsibly they have acted as parents.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the truth about Vuyisile's death is revealed with the arrival of MaMpinga. There is dramatic irony incorporated because MaDlomo denies Vuyisile's arrival, not knowing that prior to his murder he visited MaMpinga's home.

In the same episode the moral stance is implied: MaDlomo pays dearly for her greed as it turned out that the murdered victim is her own son, Vuyisile. There is no greater pain than what she experienced at that moment. To rub salt into her wound MaMpinga's sarcastic words are a reminder to her about the irrevocable doom she will be facing in the community, for she says to her:

'Awucingi kaloku, wena ukholwe kangaka'

(You can never do that, being so religious.)

The playwrights have also made their characters confess in this phase. Both Msila and Mahlaba employed this device because in **Maybe Sisithethe na?** the confession is made through other characters, in their accusation of the protagonist. On the other hand, Mahlaba gives MaDlomo the chance to confess that she has murdered her own son.

The only flaw that we can point out as far as this phase is concerned is that there is a tendency towards pontificating to the audience. One playwright who has inserted the bluntly is Msila in **Maybe Sisithethe na?** The message is delivered through the two characters that had witnessed the ambush. There is direct moralization to the audience, for Malizole remarks:

... Oku kwenzekileyo kweli khaya, iya kuba sisifundo naseluntwini. Akutshiwo ukuba amasiko masingawenzi kodwa ukunyanzelisa isithethe nokuba kunjani kuhamba kuphelele kwindyikitya yokufa efana nale.

(What has occurred in this home should be a lesson to the community. This is not to say that we should not practice our customs but to enforce tradition in any way whatsoever often gives rise to catastrophic deaths like these.)

Once again, the dramatist, through Nosayinethi, makes people aware that things change with the times and one should be flexible enough to accommodate such changes. Nosayinethi remarks:

Ndathi ndimxelela ukuba amaxesha ngamanye walibala kukuncamathela esithetheni.

(I warned him that times have changed but he clung to tradition.)

The messages that are uttered by these two characters make it clear that the moral code of the play is given explicitly to the audience. Had this particular playwright included this as an aspect of his style, it would have made such a big difference to his concluding note, because people resent the idea of being preached at.

Implicit insertion of the moral code gives the listeners the opportunity to make their own judgements and reach their conclusions without the slightest interference from the playwright. This encourages objectivity and the listeners are free from the manipulation of the playwright.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion our expectations are that with the progression of time there should be a visible change in as far as the theoretical application is concerned in the writing of radio scripts but to our disappointment we observe regression. This is evident in the 1988 dramas which were apparently written for entertainment only, with no regard for the theoretical background. This is quite clear in their handling of the conflict element. A strong conflict in the radio drama is one among many other means that captures the listener's interest through suspense, tension and the surprises which erupt because of the struggle between the two forces. In support of this view, Smiley (1971:118) remarks that:

Conflict - whether arising episodically or extending throughout - is one element in drama that always provides interest and suspense.

If we judge the dramas under study in terms of the above quotation we find that they fail to satisfy the criteria. In spite of the fact that conflict has been introduced in some of them, there is failure to keep it flowing spontaneously throughout the play. Consequently, the above playwrights, in realizing their blunder, have inserted a *deus ex machina* or characters whose introduction has not been motivated to save the situation. This flaw is distinct with the 1988 dramas, for example, Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**

The lack of conflict in African dramas has been observed by many critics, among others Scott (1973). However, some of the Black writers refute the above accusation stating that most plays have conflict but there is not a balance in the contending forces. There are certain factors which they claim contribute to this. In the first instance, the social norms of African society put much stress on the recognition of seniority, especially on the parent-child relationship. This leads to the lack of direct confrontation between the forces, although in such cases the conflict is channelled through a third person, usually a mother, an aunt or any relative in the family. For example, this can be illustrated in **Amandla Othando** by Mji. There is no overt confrontation between Nontsikelelo and her father; the same applies to Namhla and her father in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**

In the second instance, some playwrights, when they write radio dramas, write with the express purpose of depicting the theme or a situation. In such instances, the conflict is situational. The characters find themselves enmeshed in a situation. This can be observed in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** and Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, as well as in Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**.

Of the six playwrights under discussion, Saule has been shown to be the most knowledgeable with regards to the traditional aspects of drama.

It is one of the essential demands with regards to the plot that incidents be causally related so as to give a unified impression at the end. What this means is that the phases of the plot should be autonomous. Viewing some of the dramas being studied one gets the impression that the nature of their plots is episodic. Brooks and Heilman (1964:48) describe this kind of play as:

A play composed of series of episodes not causally united in a single action.

As mentioned earlier, this flaw is evident in **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** by Msila and Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, both dramas broadcast in 1988. In **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Namhla's death has no link whatsoever with the previous incidents. The same applies to Mbulelo's arrival at Solani's residence.

In **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the phase of the escaped convict and the incidents that follow are isolated incidents. Practices such as these do have an adverse effect on the plot and we demand clarity of actions in the construction of the plot.

The credibility of the action is also of vital importance. Exaggeration of events destroys the interest of the listeners. Although Saule has produced a good play, he nearly marred it by exaggeration of the prize given by Lindithuba to Phumzile, i.e. the gift of a R50 000 cheque plus five tractors. As Tennyson (1948) suggests, when we seek probability in character we are not seeking statistical probability; we are seeking what we call 'psychological probability'. This exceptionally generous character may spoil the credibility of her action to the listener.

Whilst **uLindithuba** (1987) has proved to have the most successful plot of the six dramas, **Maybe Sisithethe na?** shows the playwright taking no cognizance of the traditional theoretical background. For this reason, I feel that there is some urgency and a necessity to encourage our would-be playwrights to conduct more research as far as this genre is concerned.

With the exception of the flaws already pointed out, the dramatists concerned have written basically satisfactory plays, although there is a lot of room for improvement.

Plot is artfulness. One playwright differs from the next according to the artistic skill evident in his work. Therefore the artistry, skill and insight of the dramatist are the criteria by which we judge the value of any literary genre.

CHAPTER THREE

CHARACTERIZATION

3.1 THE STATUS OF DRAMATIC CHARACTERS

Drama is about character in action. This is the reason why, amongst other structural elements of drama, characterization is given a pivotal role. They are vehicles which the dramatist uses to convey his message. It is appropriate therefore to define the term 'Characterization' as the manner in which the dramatist has symbolized his thoughts through fictional characters who imitate them.

The contemporary writers reject the tendency to treat these fictional characters as real people. They regard fictional characters as artificial constructs whose functionality is to give meaning to what the author is trying to convey to the audience. In support of the argument Pfister (1988) has tried to give us a broader view by comparing the fictional character which he calls the 'dramatic figure' to the real-life person. In the first instance, he argues that fictional characters are always viewed in conjunction with the environment in which they operate because they are constituted by that environment. People, on the other hand, are not solely dependent on the environment; it merely influences them, an influence which they are able to transcend when they reach maturity. He further argues that to show that fictional characters are not real people, the information which we get about them from the text is finite and closed whereas information gathered about people will always be infinite. He also points to the most human aspect which distinguishes man from inanimate things, the name. According to him the names given to fictional characters may reflect some personality trait whereas in people any significance that can be attached to the name may be accidental and does not give any indication of the character of that person. What Pfister is trying to highlight is that characters in fiction should not be equated to real-life people for we may be tempted to analyze them as if they are people.

As confirmation of this argument Chatman (1978:138) states that:

Characters do not have "lives"; we endow them with 'personality' only to the extent that personality is a structure familiar to us in life and art.

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:33) also shares the same view for he states that:

In the text characters are nodes in the verbal design; in the story they are - by definition - non- (or pre-) verbal abstractions, constructs. Although these constructs are **by no means human beings** in the literal sense of the word, they are partly modelled on the readers' conception of people and in this they are **person-like**.

Even the very word 'play' which is applied to the genre emphasizes the game element of drama, the pretence, which denotes that we are not dealing with a real-life situation but an imitation of life which is depicted through fictional characters.

There are certain restrictions which impede the dramatist with regards to characters.

3.2 RESTRICTIONS ON CHARACTERIZATION:

Unlike narrative writers, the dramatist does not have the liberty of going into detailed portrayal of characters.

Secondly, there is also a limitation in the exposure of the character's inner mind or social factors which determine the personality of the character. In instances where this occurs, it is done by the character himself through monologue. The disadvantage of this is a certain one-sidedness.

Thirdly, there is also a limitation with regards to the number of characters on stage. The fewer they are, the better. A small number enables the listeners to identify their voices easily.

3.3 CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTERS

In every play characters are classified as main and minor characters. The main characters in a play can be categorized according to the function they perform in the play. Thus we get characters such as the protagonist, antagonist, tritagonist and the confidante.

3.3.1 The Protagonist:

The protagonist is the chief character in the play. He is the initiator of events in the play. He is the vehicle through which all the most interesting questions are raised; he evokes our

beliefs and sympathies as well as our revulsions. Harvey (1965:56) states that the protagonist is the end product of drama; he is what drama exists for - it exists to reveal him.

An artistic way of making the conflict stronger is to make the protagonist have a set goal; something he craves for but which appears difficult to attain. With regards to this Thompson (1946) states that a protagonist is a character who is willing to try to change the circumstances no matter what obstacles may lie in the way.

3.3.2 The Antagonist:

An antagonist is the next important figure in the play for he lends clarity and power to a dramatic structure. The antagonist is the opposing character; he opposes the actions of the protagonist. It is recommended that in order to make the conflict strong in the story these two forces, that is the protagonistic force and the antagonistic force, should be of equal strength. He is frequently responsible for initiating the protagonist's and the play's crucial problem. He is usually second as far as the number of speeches, amount of time spent on the stage and degree of activity is concerned.

3.3.3 The Tritagonist:

This is a supporting character. A tritagonist may be portrayed as positive or negative. By a positive tritagonist we mean a supporting character whose function is to mediate the existing conflict. On the other hand, a negative tritagonist is the one who propels the conflict. Instead of pacifying, he or she by some means or other adds fuel to the existing conflict.

3.3.4 The Confidante

Boulton (1960:85) defines this character as:

A character in whom a more important person of a play can confide in, and is almost always a trusted friend of the same sex.

The confidante is primarily employed as a device to transmit information concerning the character or events in the story.

3.4 CLASSIFICATION OF CHARACTERS ACCORDING TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL NATURE.

Characters may also be classified according to their individual nature. Pfister (1988) distinguishes four categories that can be associated with a character's personality. He suggests that a character can be static or dynamic; mono- or multidimensional.

3.4.1 Static versus Dynamic characters

By static characters he refers to characters who remain constant throughout the text.

Dynamic characters, on the other hand, undergo a process of development in the course of the text. Their sets of distinguishing features change either in a continuous process or disjointedly.

3.4.2 Mono- versus Multidimensional Characters:

By monodimensional characters we refer to the characters whose personality is characterized by a single dominant feature. This is analogous to Foster's (1927) 'flat character'.

Multidimensional figures are given complex features; these include such factors as the biographical background, the character's behaviour towards others, his reaction to certain stimuli, etc. Each of these aspects will somehow reveal new sides to his character; as a result his personality will be revealed as multidimensional. Foster (1927) refers to this type of character as a 'round character'. This is the type of person that is capable of surprising us. Their actions are true to life.

The flatness or roundness of a character can be influenced by time. With the progress of time a character may undergo a change. If this does not happen we regard him as tending towards the 'flatter' side or vice versa.

3.4.3 Levels of reaction of the character

The way a character reacts to a certain stimulus reveals something about him. There are three levels that can be used to judge the personality of a character. A character may react emotionally, rationally or may be mystical.

The Emotional level: under this category Heffner (1964) includes the temperamental or phlegmatic characters. The emotional level of the character may be influenced by the

passage of time; that is, his feelings may change for better or worse with the progression of time.

The Rational level: This deals with the rationality that a person shows in a given situation. We may find such labels as 'reasonable', 'witty', etc. applicable in this category.

The Mystical level: This refers to the person's dependence on powers beyond his or her control. Some characters may distinctly reveal their dependence on such powers as divine healers, witchcraft, etc.

If one of the above levels is dominant at the expense of the other two, then the character may be said to fall on the 'flatter' side of characterization.

3.5 THE TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION:

In this section we are concerned about the different techniques that are used by the playwrights in the delineation of the characters. These devices may be categorized into two types; those that are done by the characters, i.e. figural characterization, and those that are done by the playwright, i.e. the authorial characterization.

3.5.1 The Figural Characterization Techniques:

Figural characterization may further be classified into explicit figural characterization and implicit figural characterization.

3.5.1.1 Explicit figural characterization

Pfister (1988) states that all explicit figural characterization techniques are verbal. They may in turn be divided into two categories. The first is self-commentary, whereby the characters explicitly articulate the way they see themselves. In the second instance, it may be an external commentary whereby the figure is characterized by another character.

Self-commentaries can be divided further into monological and dialogical commentaries. With dialogical commentary, a dialogical partner is provided who helps in the delineation of this character. With regard to this device, there may be an element of distortion and pretence because the other partner may articulate things for strategic and tactical reasons. He may flatter the other character to suit his own ends and in the process the character concerned may have false perceptions of his own actions and motives.

What is also of importance are the conditions in which the character is discussed. When commentaries are provided in the presence of another character, it is possible this is being done for tactical reasons. If other characters comment on him/her in his or her absence or just before he/she comes onto the stage, the playwright may be preparing the audience for the character's appearance.

3.5.1.2 The Implicit Figural Characterisation Techniques

In this category, the character characterizes himself through traits displayed in his personality such as his behaviour and actions, his appearance, and the context within which he operates. In the next discussion we shall discuss these aspects.

3.5.1.2.1 Behaviour and Actions:

A person's behaviour and actions may implicitly portray something about his personality. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983) distinguishes the person's actions as one-time and habitual ones. He states that one-time actions tend to reveal the dynamic aspects in the character. Contrary to that habitual ones tend to reveal the character's static nature.

3.5.1.2.2 The Character's appearance

The appearance of a person can be judged from two points of view. The first is from traits that a person cannot have control over. Biologically inherited traits such as physical features fall in this category. Society tends to associate these traits with certain stereotypes; for example, big eyes may be regarded as displaying innocence as contrasted to small beady eyes which may be associated with slyness. In like manner, a thin and hard looking face may be associated with shrewdness.

In terms of the second point of view, certain traits can be within the character's control, for example, cleanliness which is evident in such things as hairstyle, clothing, etc. In this group, there may be underlying causative factors which make the character be like that.

3.5.1.2.3 The Locale:

The environment surrounding the person can function as a form of implicit self-characterization. The setting reflects the state of consciousness of a particular figure. For example, a room that is beautifully furnished may be regarded as a manifestation of the occupant's status and taste.

3.5.1.2.4 The Voice quality:

The dramatic figure may be characterized on the basis of the voice alone, that is, paralinguistically. For example a high, piercing voice may be associated with a temperamental person or fanaticism whereas a soft-spoken person may be regarded as being sensitive in nature.

3.5.1.2.5 The Language Style:

The style may be indicative of the person's origin, dwelling place, social class and profession. For example, a character may be judged according to whether he uses a standard language or a dialect. This also includes technical terms he may use (whether they are legal, medical, biblical, etc.).

The way a person responds to the preceding speech may also reveal his character. A self-centred person will tend to ignore what the other person says and continue in his own view. As opposed to that a rational person will respond to the preceding speech and discuss the arguments that transpire from it.

The length of a speech may also display the talkative nature of the person. On the other hand, frequent interruption of the other person's speech may reflect the character as being impatient or his desire to dominate.

3.6.1 The Explicit Authorial characterization techniques

In this category, the author may characterise the dramatic figure explicitly in the secondary text or he may use 'telling names', which serve to define a character before he even appears on stage. Satyo (1977) refers to this device as 'prestabilisation'. For instance, we refer to such names as 'Sikhohlakali' (Cruel One) Lindithuba (Waiting for an Opportunity), etc.

3.6.2 Implicit Authorial characterization techniques

In this category the author ascribes names to his characters which seem to be ordinary names when viewed superficially. However, when we locate the names within the context, we find them to be loaded with meaning and significant in revealing the personality of the character. For example, ordinary names such as 'Nontsikelelo' (Blessing) in Mji's **Amandla Othando** (1987) symbolise a blessing to her in-laws; 'Namhla' which means 'Nowadays' in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** (1988), etc.

In the second instance, the author may place two characters in a similar situation and bring out their personalities through their reaction to that situation. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:70) refers to this device as 'reinforcement by analogy'.

He states that:

When two characters are presented in similar circumstances, the similarity or contrast between their behaviour emphasizes traits characteristic to both.

The author may also portray the personality of his characters by showing the different ways they address a particular figure or theme. This pattern is distinct in traditional themes where terms of endearment are something of a rarity between husbands and wives.

3.7 CHARACTERIZATION IN RADIO DRAMAS:

The main objective of this section is to compare the characters in radio dramas, considering first three that were broadcast in 1987, and then those broadcast 1988.

In 1987 the following dramas were broadcast: **Amandla Othando**, by Mji; **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** by Gcilitshana and Saule's **uLindithuba**.

As mentioned before we shall look at the number of characters that are involved in the drama. Radio drama is very selective when it comes to the number of characters on stage. Most critics feel that the ideal number for radio drama is between three to four characters. This then gives the listener the chance to identify the voices as well as identifying with the personalities. Barnouw (1942:60) recommends that the characters should form an opera quartet, that is, classifying the speaking voices as baritone, tenor, contralto, soprano, etc. He says:

One reason family groups of four or five are so frequent on the air is that they arrange themselves into a perfect aural pattern, resembling opera. The opera quartet is the ideal of clarity for radio drama.

If we compare the dramas that were broadcast in 1987, there is some differentiation as far as the number of characters is concerned. Saule's **uLindithuba** has three characters, and Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho** has three. Mji's **Amandla Othando** has eight. This means that the writer has rather exceeded the expected number. To counteract the problem of confusion the writer has placed the characters contrastively in the way their voices are used in a scene. Too many characters rob the listeners of the chance of identifying with

them. Of the three plays, Mji's **Amandla Othando** may be regarded as flawed in this respect.

In the next step, we shall discuss the characters with regards to their functions in the plays. The first character we shall consider is the protagonist.

3.7.1 The Protagonist:

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** (1987) the protagonist is Nomhle for the simple reason that the story centres on her. The story is written to reveal her personality since she is the one who suffers at the end. One of the most essential demands from a protagonist is that he or she should have a set goal pursued in such a way as to make the conflict strong. Nomhle seems to have no set goal and for this reason she is a weak example of a true protagonist.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, the person who fits the role of the protagonist is Nontsikelelo's father. He is the initiator of the action in the play. The act of rejecting his crippled son-in-law propels the conflict in the story. Even in his absence, his influence can be strongly felt. For example, we hear the in-laws discussing his unpolished behaviour when he returned the cattle. Nontsikelelo's deteriorating standards in her performance as a nurse is attributed to him. The drama is written to reveal his nature because he is the one who develops a new awareness of life. Notably, he has a set goal: to nullify the marriage ties between his daughter and the physically disabled son-in-law.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, I attribute the role of the protagonist to Lindithuba because of the following factors: she has a goal - to speak to Phumzile in order to thank him for saving her life. This attempt had been made long before the opening of the play. This urge that the protagonist has is very strong; it is the means by which the conflict in this drama is propelled. However, Phumzile is an obstacle which makes it difficult for her to attain her goal for he refuses to respond to her telephone call.

Referring to the activities of the protagonist, Thompson (1946:127) observes that:

The opposition that the protagonist meet causes him to shift and alter his plans, but all these shifts must be causally connected so as to show their initial purpose.

If we apply the above quotation to these dramas, we will notice that two of the plays, **Amandla Othando** and **uLindithuba**, have conformed to this pattern. In **Amandla Othando**, the protagonist is Nontsikelelo's father who changes his strategy when opposition intensifies in order to make his opponent feel the pain. He disowns her, anticipating that she

will eventually succumb to his demand. Contrary to his expectations, Nontsikelelo stands firm and instead goes to marry Sisa as an act of defiance.

The same technique is encountered in Saule's **uLindithuba**. Lindithuba's determination to get what she wants compels her to alter her plans for she decides to come to the house in person. We notice a chain of events that are connected through causality. Phumzile's refusal to answer the telephone call creates the urge and determination in Nomhle to speak to him. Her persistence in pursuit of her goal led to a quarrel between Phumzile and Mandisa.

One of the obviously interesting things about a protagonist is the process of change and growth which he undergoes during the course of the drama; changes of which he is often unaware as he lacks our privilege of varied perspective.

With reference to Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle does not change, she remains static. Her regrets at the end of the play are no more than wails to show her bitterness for the lost opportunity. She becomes aware of her foolishness but it is too late for tears.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, we see the protagonist, who is Nontsikelelo's father in this case; changing. He humbles himself as he is admonished by his wife. We see him adopting a different perspective as he swallows his pride and seeks his daughter's pardon.

As far as Saule's **uLindithuba** is concerned, we do not detect any change because there has been no direct contact of Lindithuba and the listeners. What makes it more difficult is the lack of any exposure of her inner-mind to the listeners in order to enable them to compare her activities with her thoughts, thus enabling them to discern whether there are changes.

With reference to the levels of reaction, the protagonist in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho** seems to react emotionally to circumstances. We judge Nomhle as an impulsive thinker; her infatuation with Themba at the expense of her marriage proves this. The life of lies and her negative attitude towards her husband displays her as living in a world of fantasy; she lacks rationality. Due to this single trait epitomized in her, our observation about her is that she is mono-dimensional.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, there seems to be a balance of the levels of reaction. At the beginning Nontsikelelo's father appeared to be emotional - displaying a dictatorial attitude and insensitivity to others. However, his awareness of the fact that he has over-reacted about the whole issue and becoming bold enough to admit his mistakes show him as a rational person. Thus his personality is not static.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, the protagonist is not fully portrayed to the listener because of the limitation of time. Only her emotional side has been revealed. We hardly perceive her over-reaction to the whole situation: why did she have to create all the uneasiness? The irritating laughter and the threats that they should not disclose her intended visit to anybody depict her lack of rationality. She is static throughout the play.

Of the three dramas Mji's protagonist seems to be better constructed than those of the other writers. He possesses strong qualities and has a set goal, which propels the conflict. Gcilitshana's and Saule's protagonists seem to lack the strong qualities normally associated with the protagonist.

3.7.2 The Antagonist

In the next step we shall view the antagonists and determine whether they fulfil the expectations of their roles.

With regards to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo is the antagonist. Her opposition, however, has been direct. We take, for instance, the scene when the father breaks the news about cancelling the wedding. She expresses no words in opposition; only her sobs can be heard in the background, which reveals her dissatisfaction with the decision. The fact that she writes a letter to her father instead of confronting him about her decision to marry Sisa also proves this. The absence of direct confrontation in her case stems from her observance of cultural norms - the respect for seniority.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, we attribute the role of an antagonist to Mjongile because he counteracts the action of his wife. However, as an opposing character Mjongile has not been given strong qualities. He is too soft to be an antagonist and as a result of this the conflict in the story is weak.

With reference to Saule's **uLindithuba**, Phumzile is the antagonist as he opposes Lindithuba's actions. His refusal to speak to her, thus creating a state of disequilibrium in the story, proves that. It is interesting to note that the conflict in the story is triangular. Phumzile's position is such that he fights two forces: his wife Mandisa on the one hand, and Lindithuba on the other. It is derived from the fact that Lindithuba who is the protagonist of the play insists on speaking to him. He renders a poor struggle, for he diverts the opposition to Mandisa making her to be the one who talks to Lindithuba.

We shall next consider whether these antagonists undergo any process of change in the drama and what their levels of reaction are.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Mjongile has proven to be dynamic as he also changes. At the beginning he gave the impression that he was dancing to his wife's tune. Though he is portrayed at first as a sweet and loving person, it becomes evident that he is not the forgiving type, especially where betrayal is concerned because he jilted Nomhle the moment he caught her in the act.

With reference to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo also undergoes a process of change; she abandons her arrogant attitude towards her father and forgives him. Judging her according to the levels of reaction, she is portrayed as a rational person. The fact that she takes a firm stand on her future, being disobedient to her father's demands, proves that. She also comes to terms with Sisa's emotional state, realizing that his outbursts stem from frustration because of his physical state. We also see her as a person who is emotionally balanced. With all the heartaches and pangs the father caused her, she still does not begrudge him; she still regards him as her beloved father. These two aspects are enough for us to regard her as having a personality that tends more to the 'round' side.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, Phumzile who is the antagonist seems to be dynamic. If we view him on the basis of the three levels of reaction, he has the ability of letting his temper flare up but at the time when listeners are expecting the worst, he regains self-composure. This is then reflective of the emotional side of his personality which is not static. He changes in the end for he drops the arrogant attitude he displayed earlier, confessing to his wife why he acted strangely.

As an actor he seems to lack the skill to control his voice, that is, the intonation and expression, etc. At the beginning of the drama, he is able to control his voice well and as a result his speech is natural. But if we compare this scene with the one where Lindithuba announces her arrival, one may feel that there is an exaggeration in the display of emotions. We condone the fact that he is a fast speaker by nature but still one gets the impression that the emphases have been put in the wrong places.

What is remarkable about these three antagonists is that all of them undergo a process of change with the progression of the play.

Furthermore, in order to create suspense and hold the interest of the audience, the struggle between the contending forces should be strong. Jafta (1978:30) says in this respect:

... quality of egoism impels each party to seek to eliminate the other to the extent necessary for the satisfaction of his own desires.

Opposition comes about through that urge to thwart one another. If the desire to overcome is weak, then the struggle also becomes weak, resulting in weak antagonists. As far as the

three plays are concerned, all of them have weak antagonists; they seem not to measure up to expectations.

3.7.3 The Tritagonists:

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Themba is the tritagonist and he also seems to be multi-dimensional. It is clear that he balances both the emotional and rational aspects in his personality because his mind is not clouded by love. In his monologue as he thinks about Nomhle he says these words:

Lo yena umntwana uvakala kwasentethweni ukuba akalunganga tu tu.

[From what the child says one can detect that she is not good at all.]

It is quite clear that he is an observant person from the very fact that he is able to detect that there is some peculiarity about Nomhle's behaviour. Furthermore this gives us an impression that he is keeping a watchful eye over her, for he says:

Tyhini madoda! uHlehle lo undithatha njani? ... xa esithi akangomfazi kodwa ngumfazi ujonge phi?

[Gosh! What is Hlehle taking me for? ... when she denies that she is married whereas she is, what is she up to?]

Statements such as the one above reveal his rationality; he is not in the least fooled by Nomhle. This gives us enough evidence to claim that he is a multidimensional figure if we judge his levels of reaction.

As an actor he plays his role well. His gentle voice fits his personality of a lady's man.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Sisa is the tritagonist to Nomhle. He is portrayed as a peace-loving person. He calms down his father who threatens to take legal action as he is infuriated by Nontsikelelo's father. His personality is also not static; there are instances where he has angry outbursts due to frustration and where he acknowledges his unjust behaviour and apologizes. This is revealed in his confession to his wife when he says:

Ndithi ndakucinga indlela ebendikuphetha ngayo ngamanye amaxesha. Kukangaphi ndixabana nawe nje ungenzanga nto? Kukangaphi ndikuqumbela, ndingafuni nokuthetha oku nawe?

[When I think of the manner in which I treated you sometimes. How many times have I quarrelled with you for no apparent reason? How many times have I got cross with you, refusing even to speak to you?]

If we are to judge his personality in terms of levels of reaction, he balances both the rational and the emotional aspects in his personality. Thus he is not mono-dimensional. However, with regards to this character, the dramatist has used a style which earlier writers were very fond of, namely, characters expressing themselves in a foreign language - for instance, Tamsanqa in **Buzani KuBawo** (1958) and Sinxo in **uNomsa** (1922) to mention a few. Reacting to the action of the returned lobola Sisa says:

Now more than ever seems it rich to die ...

This practice seems rather strange and there is an element of artificiality in it. In a more natural situation, the mother tongue always comes first as an expression of thought in highly emotional situations.

Apart from the artificiality inserted by the playwright, as an actor he performs his part well. He has voice control and it sounds natural.

With regard to Saule's **uLindithuba**, Mandisa is depicted as a logical and rational person even though she is temperamental. She does not look at the problem superficially but wants to identify the core of it. The fact that she pleadingly asks her husband to recall if he had any clashes in the past confirms that. Like a detective, she devises certain tactics to get the truth from her husband. She realises that pleading does not help and opts for another method of interrogation. Mandisa tries to be sarcastic, ridiculing Phumzile so as to make him crack. She says:

Kutheni umoyika nje? Indoda ikhe yoyike ibhinqa? Sisini eso?

[Why are you afraid of her? Can a man be afraid of a woman? How do you explain that?]

From the above extract, it is quite clear that she wants Phumzile to doubt himself, but unfortunately for her Phumzile does not lose his temper easily because he is not in the least perturbed by the accusations.

One cannot deny the fact that she is a good actor. The manner in which she controls her voice to display her emotional state is quite convincing. Where she is supposed to flare up in anger she does that without any strain. For example, as she interrogates Phumzile she sounds very natural.

Comparing the three plays with regard to these characters, Mandisa in Saule's **uLindithuba** seems to outshine the other two; she has the greater acting skill.

3.8 DRAMAS BROADCAST IN 1988

The main objective of the next discussion is to consider the three dramas that were broadcast in 1988, following the same pattern that was used for those broadcast in 1987; after that they will be compared critically.

The first step will be to view the number of characters involved in each drama.

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** we notice that there are about six main characters, namely, Madiba who plays the role of Namhla's father; his wife Nosayinethi and his daughter Namhla; Mbulelo, who is Namhla's boyfriend; Solani, the man to whom Namhla is married against her wish; and Malizole, the uncle. As mentioned before, a suitable number of characters for radio drama is three to four. We find that Msila has exceeded that number for he has six characters.

In Mhlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** this requirement has been observed by this dramatist. There are four characters involved in the story, namely, MaDlomo, MaMpinga, Vuyisile and Bhadikazi. This is advantageous in the sense that listeners are able to differentiate the characters with ease through their voices.

Nongauza's **UBusuku Botyhwatyho** has six characters, namely, Dlamini and his wife MaGaba, Mqwayito and Nozimbo who are the babysitters, the sergeant and lastly the convict. Like Msila he has exceeded the required number for the characters in the drama.

Comparing the three dramas in this respect, we notice that it is only Mhlaba who has succeeded in keeping his characters to the minimum.

3.8.1 The Protagonist:

In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Madiba is the protagonist because he is the initiator of the events; he forces Namhla to get married. He has a set goal - to fill his kraal with lobola cattle and he is prepared to remove any obstacle that may come between him and his goal.

In Mhlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, MaDlomo is the protagonist for the following reasons: the story centres on her. She is the one who evokes the listeners' sympathies. She is the main focus of the drama, it is written to reveal her. More important is that she has a goal she wishes to achieve, that is to have her son back.

With reference to Nongauza's **UBusuku Botyhwatyho**, it becomes difficult to identify the protagonist because his characters seem to be on the same level of importance. But if we take the theme into consideration, it is only then that we can say it aims to show the

negligence of Dlamini and his wife, MaGaba. Therefore we select MaGaba as the protagonist for she is the initiator of events. The story is written to reveal her character.

If we compare the three dramas merely on the grounds of the characteristics of the protagonist, Nongauza's protagonist does not have a set goal. This affects the conflict of the story as it becomes weak, thus affecting the plot of the story as a whole.

Having identified who the protagonists are in our dramas, we now attempt to find out whether the above protagonists undergo any process of change or growth during the course of the drama and also whether they are depicted as flat or round characters.

As far as Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** is concerned, Madiba does not seem to undergo any change. In actual fact, Madiba's presence is only evident at the initial stages of the play, when he advocates the marriage preparations. There are references to him throughout even though he is kept in the background. He is brought into the foreground only at the time of his death. Even before he dies there is nothing he utters to make us believe that he has changed.

Madiba's emotional level has been emphasized. The feeling of having a big herd of cattle is the driving force behind his actions. He is insensitive to the feelings of other people. The very fact that he forces Namhla to marry a man who has already committed bigamy proves that. His egocentricity is displayed throughout the drama and for that reason we regard him as being mono-dimensional.

The part is also well played by the actor. His voice is audible enough and well controlled.

As far as Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** is concerned, MaGaba also does not seem to have developed nor changed by the end of the play. With regard to the levels of reaction she seems to lack rationality; only her emotional side is revealed. The idea of leaving behind small children for the sake of a party depicts her irresponsible nature.

The actress plays the part well. Her voice fits her personality; she is supposed to play the role of a middle-aged woman and she does it without any problem.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, MaDlomo changes. To effect the change, the playwright emphasized the dominant feature in her personality. Her righteousness is depicted by her continued praying. She even claims that Christ is very much alive inside her. When she commits murder, it comes as a shock because the act is a gross contrast to her personality. Preplanning the murder so well and the alibi she gives afterwards portrays that she is calculating and a deceiver. It is evident that she is multidimensional.

The actress plays the part well. Her voice suggests that the character portrayed is an elderly woman. Its shakiness and its emotional tone (for example, as she prays she sounds as if she is crying) are characteristic of elderly people's behaviour, especially when they pray. In instances where her voice is supposed to reach a high pitch (for example, as they quarrel with MaMpinga), she does that without any problem.

3.8.2 The Antagonist

In Msila's **Maybe Sisithethe na? Namhla** is the antagonist for she is meant to counteract the actions of her father. However, there was no opposition from her due to the norms of the traditional society. At the beginning she showed some signs of resistance but she does not act according to these expectations. Thus she fails to fulfil the role.

The actress performs the role well. The voice also suits her age because she plays the role of a girl and it is well done.

In Nongauza's **UBusuku Botyhwytyho**, Dlamini seems to oppose his wife's actions at the beginning of the story because he is reluctant to go to the party. The playwright does not carry this any further and therefore there is no antagonistic force in the play.

Concerning the performance of the role, the actor concerned performed it well. His voice fits well with the character's age because time and again he mentions that he is 'old'. Thus, from the voice one could estimate his age to be in the mid-forties or older. For this reason the producer deserves to be praised.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, MaMpinga is the antagonist because she counteracts the actions of MaDlomo. In every possible way she is depicted as a bad woman. She earns her living through exploitation of men and she wants to persuade MaDlomo to follow suit. Warren and Wellek (1948:229) state that the environment may be one of the causative factors in shaping a character's personality. They express the notion that:

Setting may be the massive determinant-environment viewed as physical or social causation, something over which the individual has little control.

The validity of this statement is clearly shown in MaMpinga because in her attempt to persuade MaDlomo into having a man she remarks:

...Sithi thina vula phezulu...
(We say: be open-minded)

The morpheme 'Si' denotes plurality and gives the impression that they are a clique of bad women who wish to have influence on MaDlomo. This also reflects the acceptability of such practices in the area.

There is more than one personality trait revealed in her character. Although she is portrayed as a bad character, there is a hint of goodness about her for she is an advisor to both MaDlomo and her son Vuyisile. We regard her as having a multidimensional character.

As mentioned earlier, the antagonists in these plays do not have strong qualities; only Mahlaba in **Isiqalo Sobulumko** has managed to render a strong antagonist. MaMpinga is challenging, confronting MaDlomo throughout. There are instances where one gets the impression that they are on the verge of fighting. She challenges MaDlomo up to the last scene, at times being sarcastic too. For instance, as MaDlomo tells her of the persistent prayers, she remarks:

Kowu! inoba agruzukile mfazi. (amadolo)
(They ought to be bruised. (knees))

In another instance, as MaDlomo remarks that she murdered her son, she says:

Awucingi wena ukholwe kangaka
(You can never do such a thing, being so religious.)

This is to humiliate her opponent and she sounds so triumphant, saying all the piercing words to make her feel the pain. The way the actress plays the role is also done well.

3.8.3 The Tritagonists:

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** there are two tritagonists evident: Namhla's mother, Nosayinethi, and Mbulelo. Both of them are positive tritagonists for they are good at convincing Madiba about the changing times. Namhla's mother seems to be multidimensional in the sense that, although she is a traditionalist, she is open-minded. Her concern about the happiness of her child above wealth depicts her rationality.

The actress gave the impression that she was playing a role of an illiterate person because she remarked that when Nosayinethi married Madiba she was a red-blanket: 'iqaba'. However, it is surprising to hear her utter English words, such as in the statement:

Ndibuhlungu ngomntwana wam kuba uza kusufferisha.

This is inconsistent with her character; an illiterate person is unlikely to be so competent in another language.

Mbulelo's exposure to the listeners has been limited. He only appears at the beginning of the scene, giving the impression that he will convince and educate Madiba about the change in the times. However, he never stays to fulfil the promise, for he reappears at the end to murder Namhla's father. There is little that can be said about him except that he is a positive tritagonist.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the supporting characters are the children, Nozimbo and Mqwayito. What has been highlighted in these children is their sense of responsibility, which contrasts with that of their counterparts, Dlamini and MaGaba. Their intelligence makes it possible for the convict to be recaptured. As characters we see no development in them. However, as actors they play their role well for they are supposed to act the role of children. There is a slight exaggeration in the display of emotions with Nozimbo, something which nearly spoilt her character.

3.9 CRITICISM:

Comparing characterization in the six plays, we notice that there are differences in the construction of the characters. The dramas of 1988 do not seem to place any importance on character compared to those of 1987. For instance, the opposition seems to be weak, thus resulting in poor antagonists: compare Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** and Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** with Saule's **uLindithuba** and Mji's **Amandla Othando** in this respect.

The manipulation of characters by the playwrights is a common feature in these dramas. In the 1987 dramas, Mji's protagonist becomes active in the play only at the initial stages and then disappears. He returns at the end as a way of rounding off the story, asking for pardon to those he offended. In like manner, Msila's protagonist, who is Namhla's father, appears in the initial stages and then disappears from the scene only to reappear at the end to die. The playwright's manipulating hand becomes even more evident in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** in the character who plays the role of Mbulelo, Namhla's boyfriend. At the beginning of the drama, he gives the impression that he will hold negotiations with Namhla's father, to make clear to him that what is important in the marriage bond, is love. However, he never fulfils the expectations but only comes to their residence to murder him. No motivation has been given for his actions, which leave the listeners puzzled.

The voices of the characters are of vital importance to radio drama because they are the only means of conveying the message other than the sound effects. Zilliacus (1976) is of the opinion that the character of the voice is most important: the more distinctive it is, the more it co-defines the words it utters. The voices of the characters in the dramas are quite audible

and they are well controlled. However in Saule's **uLindithuba**, Lindithuba or Sisi Hlehle has a slight problem in keeping her voice consistent throughout; there are instances where she speaks in her normal voice.

Another thing which these playwrights seem not to consider carefully enough is the number of characters on stage. Mji's **Amandla Othando** has eight characters and this number is rather too much for radio, where the listeners have to identify the characters through their voices.

Of the six dramas Saule seems to be most knowledgeable about the principles of drama. The aspects we have tried to outline such as the number of characters, and the roles played by the characters, that is, the protagonist, antagonist, etc. seem to be better defined in his work than in those of his counterparts.

3.10 THE DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE DRAMAS

In this section, a comparative study of the different characterization techniques employed by the playwrights being studied will be dealt with. The focus will be on the similarities and differences in their works. Once again, the three dramas that were broadcast in 1987 will be dealt with first, then those of 1988.

As mentioned before, the information used to portray a character may be transmitted by the character or the author himself. In both instances it may be explicitly transmitted or implied.

3.10.1 The Explicit figural characterization techniques

The explicit figural characterization techniques take two forms: the self-commentaries and the external commentaries. We shall now consider how these two devices have been employed by the three playwrights in the delineation of their characters.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** both methods have been used. Gcilitshana has used Nomhle and Thandi as sources of information in order to put the listeners into the picture about what goes on in the play. For example, as Nomhle and Thandi discuss Mjongwa, the listeners learn that:

Unemali kwaye akayibandezi
(He has money and he is not stingy)

From that statement one can learn that Mjongwa is a type of person who is always willing to help those in need although people take his generosity for granted.

Furthermore, the same characters have been used to describe Themba for the listeners. Nomhle says about him:

Umfo xa umjongile ngumfo olungileyo ojongekayo
(He appears to be kind and is good-looking)

She further goes on stating that Themba drives a smart car. This information which Nomhle conveys about other characters ironically portrays her as well because the listeners are able to compare the characters she discusses with Nomhle herself, thus emphasizing the negative traits in her personality.

Gcilitshana has also used self-commentaries by this character herself, for example, Nomhle says:

Ndithi xa ndijonge izi'naps' zam zobu'cherry' ndinga ndingalila, kodwa
andikafahlaki kuba ndisabonwa ngamasoka.
(When I take a look at the photos of me when I was a girl, I feel like crying, but I still
maintain my standard because men still admire me)

It becomes clear to the listeners that she must be an attractive lady and it also dawns on them that she takes pleasure in having men admire her; this boosts her ego and will be her downfall.

She further displays her dishonest side because, as she excitedly tells her friend about her new-found love, she says:

Ndiphike naloo nto yalo mtshato
(I even denied that I'm married)

There is no better self-revelation than this and it is credible because it comes from Nomhle herself.

Discussion of a character in her presence may involve some distortion or pretence because the one who utters the compliments may be doing so for tactical reasons. The validity of this statement may be illustrated in Themba and Nomhle's conversation when he says to her:

Yazi ntwazana, ndine-eight years ndilapha apha eKapa, andizange ndimbone umntu ofana nawe ngobuhle.

(You know, girl, I have been here for eight years in Cape Town and I have never seen anybody as beautiful as you)

The compliment is expressed to flatter her, in order to make her receptive to his proposal.

With regards to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, both the self-commentary and external commentaries are used. For example, Nontsikelelo's father introduces himself to the listener with the words:

Nditsho nangoku

(I still maintain what I say)

The tone of his voice is very emphatic implying that he is protesting. The phrase 'Nditsho nangoku' is often used in fighting situations, the speaker showing his determination not to retreat. As he discusses the marriage matter with his wife he says:

Yiva le nto ndiyithethayo

(Listen to what I say)

His desire to dominate his partner is quite clear in his words. He shows himself to be a dictator and selfish because he would not listen to the views of other people.

Mji also uses outside commentaries because in the conversation between Nontsikelelo's mother and her aunt we learn that they regard Madiba as cruel. Her aunt says:

Kowu! Ubhuti ukhohlakele kambe

(Oh! my brother is cruel)

He also uses the technique of complimenting another character in her presence. Unlike as in Gcilitshana's drama, the commentary in this case seems to be sincere. As Sisa expresses his gratitude to Nontsikelelo he tells her:

Inene uyakwazi ukunyamezela ntombi kaNokhala

(Really, you know how to be tolerant, daughter of Nokhala)

Nontsikelelo is portrayed as a tolerant person. The love she has for Sisa made her endure the ups and downs of the marriage.

With reference to Saule's **uLindithuba**, both of these methods have been employed. For example, the playwright uses Phumzile and Mandisa to make the listeners aware of the physical appearance of Sis'Nomhle and Lindithuba. She is revealed as having an artificial

arm and she limps. In like manner, they disclose that she is driving a flashy car which portrays her taste and style of living.

Their conversation goes like this:

Phumzile: Mandisa moto entle kangaka, ikhwelwa zizigwili leya ndiyakuxelela...
Kutheni ingathi uyaqhwarela?

Mandisa: Nam ndiqaphela loo nto, khangela ingalo yakhe yasekhohlo, ingathi ifakelwe.

Phumzile: (Mandisa, what a beautiful car! A car like that is driven by wealthy people, I'm telling you. Why does it seem as if she is limping?)

Mandisa: I have also observed that. Look at her left arm, it looks artificial.)

Saule has also used the characters to reveal themselves through what they say. We learn that both Phumzile and Mandisa were teachers prior to their occupation of the farm because in their argument Mandisa remarks:

Kwakungcono ngoku besiziitshala.

(It was better when we were teachers.)

The influence of education is quite clear in their personalities because they both seem to be level-headed. However, this does not surprise us as Thompson (1946:219) states:

Characters in serious drama should be products of their time and space.

When looking at these dramas with regards to method, we find some differentiation. Saule has not used the technique of describing a character in his presence as the two other playwrights have done.

3.10.2 The Implicit figural Characterization techniques

There are a number of ways in which a character can implicitly reveal his personality. The first technique we shall examine is the way the playwrights deal with the behaviour, etc.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle's getting involved in an affair and the stories she fabricates to secure her affair with Themba portray her unfaithfulness and at the same time her shallowness if we take into account Mjongile's responsible attitude towards her.

As far as Mji's **Amandla Othando** is concerned, Nontsikelelo's father's rejection of his son in law, Sisa, without a valid reason portrays him as a callous, insensitive man. His arrogant attitude is emphasized by the manner in which he instructs his representative when he says:

Ze ningenzi nelimdaka niziqhube nibuye
(Do not utter a single word, drive them and come back)

In an African setting, a delicate issue such as this is usually discussed openly by the family members and a consensus reached. However, with Nokhala this does not apply.

In describing characters Willis (1967:70) says:

A character is best revealed by the response it makes to circumstances.

This view is borne out in Saule's **uLindithuba**. Lindithuba, whose real name is Sisi Hlehle, in trying to contact Phumzile (although the accident occurred many years before) reveals herself to be a determined character. This is also supported by her acceptance of her physical state. From the description we get of the accident, it becomes clear that she was badly injured but her determination to live made her pull through.

The second technique that can be used to portray a character implicitly is the appearance of that character.

All these three playwrights have provided descriptions of their characters to give a vivid picture of them. For instance, in Gcilitshana's **Amandla Othando**, in the conversation between Thandi and Nomhle, Themba is described as a handsome man who seems to be good-hearted. Nomhle says of him:

Umfo xa umjongile ngumfo olungileyo ojongekayo
(When you look at the man, he seems to be kind and good-looking)

After hearing such statements, it comes as no surprise that Nomhle is infatuated with him.

With regard to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Sisa is described as being crippled, having sustained spinal cord damage from the accident. As the father-in-law protests against the marriage he says:

Andinakwendisela umntwana wam esilimeni!
(I cannot let my child be married to a cripple)

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, Lindithuba is also described as being physically disabled as well. Phumzile and Mandisa had described her as having a limp and pointed out her left arm was artificial.

As can be seen, the descriptions given in the above dramas are mostly of physical traits which the characters concerned can do nothing about, fate having robbed them of their healthy state.

In the third instance, voice quality can be used to portray implicitly a character's personality.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Mjongile has been given a humble and meek personality. With regard to the quality of his voice, there is that gentleness and deep quality in it which brings out its serenity when it is contrasted with his wife's voice. Even the way he addresses his wife - 'Nothobile Mfazi wakuthi' (Nothobile, wife of my family) - adds to the gentleness and dignity of his personality.

Mjongile's voice is always contrasted to that of his wife's which is sharp and youthful, depicting her naivety.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo's voice reveals her as having a happy disposition. The fact that wherever she is, there is a happy atmosphere around her proves that. The warmth in her voice is also emphasized by her constant use of the possessive pronoun 'wam' (mine) when she refers to her husband. Even as she addresses her mother-in-law the same pattern is clear for she says 'Gatyeni Wam'(My Gatyeni, etc.).

With reference to Saule's **uLindithuba**, Lindithuba's (Sisi Hlehle's) voice is slurred, which suits her speech defect. It also characterises her nature, for she is portrayed as a patient person, which is clear if we take into consideration the number of years she waited before she was able to contact Phumzile. However, there are instances when Sisi Nomhle or Lindithuba does not have control of her voice and does not speak normally. The sound of her voice is also irritating to the listener.

In the fourth instance, the language style can say a lot about a character.

With reference to Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho**, the language used by Themba depicts him as a womaniser. For example, whenever he refers to Nomhle he uses such words as 'Baby, Sana, Darling, Love, etc. which denote his experience in the game.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo's profession is highlighted and whenever she is mentioned terms indicative of her nursing career are used. Again in the conversation between Ntsiki and her mother-in-law she further discloses that:

Nditsalelwe umnxeba ngusister Yokwe ongumaqhuzu eBaragwanath apha bendiqeqeshwa khona.

(I received a telephone call from sister Yokwe who is the matron at Baragwanath, where I trained)

Terms such as ‘Sister, matron, training, etc. are relevant in the nursing profession. It is no wonder that Nontsikelelo shows such love and concern for the sick because it is part of her career.

With regard to Saule’s **uLindithuba**, it is quite evident that the language used by Phumzile and Mandisa has high literary quality. This has contributed to their eloquence and it emphasizes their status as teachers. To give an indication of what we mean, an example of a conversation between these two characters goes like this:

MANDISA: Ke ngoku ngumntu otheni lo osuke, asuke **akuvunukele** athi kudala elindele ithuba lokukufumana?

PHUMZILE: Ingathi ngowubuze kwapha kuye kuba kakade nguwe namntu obethetha naye.

MANDISA: ...Akuzange ube nje, usuke **walugcalagcala** lo **msindo kaQongqothwane** unawo ukuba wenziwa kuba ndisendleleni yakho noSisHlehle ndixelele man, **indlela** ebheka ekhaya **ayinazimbovane**.

MANDISA: [But now, how come this person **pounces on you**, saying that she has waited long for the opportunity to get you?

PHUMZILE: You should have asked her that; after all you are the one she spoke with.

MANDISA: You have never been like this before. **You are fuming with anger**. If **this uncalled for anger** is due to the fact that I’m an obstacle between you and Sis Hlehle, say so. The path to my home is clear.]

As can be seen in the above extract, there are idiomatic expressions employed which do not only add beauty through their unusual quality, but also make this play distinguishable from the other two.

3.10.3 The explicit authorial characterization techniques:

The author may reveal the personality of his characters explicitly by revealing names which serve to define the character before he or she even appears on the scene.

With reference to the three dramas of 1987, explicit naming technique is evident only in Saule’s **uLindithuba**. The name ‘uLindithuba’, which also has been used to emphasise the theme, gives an indication that the character has long been waiting for this opportunity. The

device is another technique the playwright has used to hold the interest of the listeners for they are kept inquisitive about this 'ithuba', and this maintains the suspense.

3.10.4 Implicit authorial characterization techniques

In this category, the author gives names to his characters which prove to be meaningful when we relate the names to the context.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the main character is Nomhle; we find this name to be quite revealing as far as the physical appearance of the character is concerned because, through discussions by other characters, the listeners learn that she is beautiful.

Names can also emphasize the contrast between that particular name and the trait, thus creating an ironic effect. The same character, Nomhle, is named 'Nothobile' (The Humble One) by her in-laws. The name is ironic as her behaviour shows that she is not in the least humble. Perhaps the ambiguity lies in the fact that she has submitted to the exploitation of Themba.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, both names given to Nontsikelelo are significant if one takes the role given to her in the play into account. Her maiden name, 'Nontsikelelo' (which means One with Blessing) and the name given to her by her in-laws, that is, Nomthunzi (A Shade), both have the same connotation. Her arrival at their family is seen as a blessing because it is through her efforts that their son, Sisa, is cured. She is also a blessing to her mother-in-law because of her company. This is depicted in the mother-in-law's monologue, for she says:

Kowu! umolokazana wam ulilandele igama lakhe. Kum uyafana nentombi yam!
(Oh my daughter-in-law has taken after her name. To me she is like a daughter!)

On the other hand, a shade is such a blessing on a sweltering day. Sisa's family have found a comforter in her, as a shade.

Unlike the other two playwrights, Saule has not used interpretative (allegorical) names. The names Phumzile and Mandisa do not hold any meaning for the story; they are just ordinary names.

In the second instance, the author may present two characters in a similar situation so that we may judge the contrast or similarities that are revealed in the personalities.

Of the three playwrights, only Saule has used this technique. Phumzile and Mandisa are placed in a similar circumstance as they are both terrorised by Lindithuba's telephone call.

Contrasting the two characters, the listeners are able to notice that Mandisa displays more bravery than her husband, Phumzile. One may also sense that there is an exaggeration in the display of emotions by Phumzile. It is inappropriate for a man to display his feelings, such as fear or to shed tears in front of his wife, as Phumzile has done.

In the third instance, the playwright may portray the personality of his characters by showing the different ways they address a particular figure or theme.

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, this device has been used. When addressing his wife Mjongwa always says:

Nothobile, mfazi wakuthi.

(Nothobile, wife of my family.)

This portrays him as a traditional man. In a traditional setting, you marry for your family; this also emphasizes the communal nature of the Africans.

With reference to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo's mother does not call her husband by his name when she addresses him. She either refers to him as 'Buthi kaSigxakumeni', 'tata', or by his clan name, 'Nokhala'. This denotes her respect and her submissiveness to her husband. It also points out her traditional nature.

Contrary to the other two plays, Saule's play **uLindithuba**, does not share the same traditionalism. The characters address each other by their first names, revealing themselves as modernists.

As products of modern times, we find this relevant. The parity between husband and wife is something which modern society encourages. It is for this reason that there is an air of challenge and confidence in Mandisa, something not found in traditional wives.

As far as the techniques of characterization are concerned, there is variation in their use. One playwright may use what the other has omitted. What is evident also is that the personalities of characters differ according to the themes; themes with traditional settings tend to produce traditional characters and norms to which the characters concerned conform.

3.11 THE TECHNIQUES USED IN CHARACTERIZATION IN THE 1988 DRAMAS

In this discussion there will be a critical comparison of the different techniques used by the playwrights in the delineation of their characters. The pattern used will be the same as that employed in the analysis of the 1987 dramas.

3.11.1 The Explicit figural Characterization techniques

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** portrayal of the character's personality has been done both by the character herself and other characters. In the first instance, the listeners are made aware of the fact that she is educated because, as she talks to her boyfriend, Mbulelo. she remarks:

Ndiyayazi iGeography, ndafumana uB symbol kwimatric.
(I know Geography, I obtained a B symbol in matric.)

Furthermore, as her parents discuss the marriage issue, her mother says about her:

UNamhla mdala, kwaye ufundile.
(Namhla is old; moreover, she is educated.)

The above statements prepare the listeners to anticipate a clash of ideas between Namhla who is said to be educated, and her illiterate father, who is tradition-bound.

Pfister (1988) has stated that it is worth noting whether the comments are made just prior to the appearance of the character concerned or in her presence. Namhla is discussed by her parents prior to her appearance and it is some sort of preparation for the listeners to observe her according to the information conveyed about her.

In Nongauza's **ubusuku botyhwytyho**, MaGaba remarks as she and her husband leave for the dance party:

Khawujonge Dlamini, le lokhwe endiyinxibileyo, inene namanye amakhosikazi kula mdaniso akunga ngelendele kuwe.
(Just look Dlamini, at the dress I'm wearing. Really, other women in the party would wish that they were married to you.)

She further goes on to remark about her appearance when she says:

Uyise kaNtombentle akalazi ithamsanqa analo lokufumana onje ukuba mhle
umfazi.

(Ntombentle's father does not know how fortunate he is to have such a beautiful
wife.)

Statements such as these convey to the listener that she is a smart woman. What is also
noteworthy are the compliments showered upon her. Nozimbo says to her:

Tyhini Anti MaGaba, utsho wayintombi ngokuhlwa nje.

(Wow! Aunt MaGaba! You seemed to be a girl this evening!)

The compliments are given for tactical reasons, because in reality she can never be a
teenager. They are expressed to boost her self-confidence for the party.

With reference to Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, both methods have been used. For
example, MaDlomo, who plays the leading role, is depicted as a very religious person for she
says to her friend MaMpinga:

Into endingasoze ndiyenze kukulahla ukholo lwam.

(What I will never do is to abandon my faith)

She goes on further:

Imini inye athi thu uVuyisile, nandule nazi mzi waseQokolweni ukuba ndikhonza
uThixo ophilayo.

(One day Vuyisile will return. The people of Qokolweni will then know that I serve
a living God)

There is nothing else as self-revealing as the above statements articulated by MaDlomo; we
do not doubt her Christianity.

In the second instance, the playwright has used MaMpinga to portray the character of
MaDlomo to the listeners. However, there is some sarcasm inserted which is meant to
humiliate her. After MaDlomo had confessed that she has murdered her son, MaMpinga
made the remark:

Awucingi wena, ukholwe kangaka!

(It can never be you, for you are so religious)

As far as this technique is concerned, all the dramas have used the description of the
characters through other characters. Only Msila has not used external commentaries that are

made in the presence of that particular character. Whereas in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** it has been employed to give MaGaba self-confidence. In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the external commentary has been done to humiliate religious people, giving the impression that the so-called pious people are the first to commit disgusting acts.

3.11.2 Implicit figural characterization techniques:

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Madiba's action of forcing Namhla into marriage with a man she does not love shows him to be a callous, insensitive man who is driven by avarice to commit such acts, and he hides this under the cloak of tradition. The way he handles his family also points to the traditional way of thinking, for he is said to be a man who does not want to have discussions with his wife or children. This is revealed by Namhla when she says:

Utata akaxoxi nomfazi.

(Father does not hold discussions with a woman.)

Nongauza in **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** has also used the character's behaviour as a means of portraying her characters. As pointed out by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983), the actions of characters may be one-time or habitual. We notice from the opening of this play that MaGaba has a habit of nagging her husband. The agitation in the husband's voice, which is accompanied by the word 'Uyawa' (as usual) in the sentence, denotes his boredom with her. He remarks:

Iyawa yintoni mfazi?

Uyawacela nangoku

(What is it wife?

As usual you are asking)

The tone in which the words are expressed is also meaningful for there is annoyance in it. Habits add to the static nature of the character.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, MaDlomo is characterized as having a habit of praying in the morning. This seems to disturb Bhadikazi in her sleep, for she remarks:

O nkosi yam! Mama, yintoni mama? Ndakuze ndibulale nini ubuthongo obubhadlileyo? Kunini mama uthandaza kunini?

(Oh my Lord! Mother, what is it Mother? When will I ever get a proper night's sleep? For how long have you been praying, Mother? For how long?)

To show that she has become enslaved to the habit, her response to Bhadikazi's complaint is:

Bhadikazi mntwan'am, andizenzi, andizenzi.

(Bhadikazi, my child, I cannot help it, I cannot help it.)

This depicts her helplessness and we see her as static with regard to this.

On the other hand, committing murder for the sake of money, evil as it is, portrays the humanity in her character. She is susceptible to temptation.

The character's personality can also be judged by her physical appearance.

In **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Msila has portrayed Solani for the listener. He is said to be quite large in build and has a pitch-black complexion. (Yingxilimbela yomfo omnyama okokhozo lomya). This also draws the listener's attention to the reason why she detested the idea of marrying him as there is nothing attractive about him.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, MaGaba is portrayed as a smart woman. She reveals this herself and the compliments by Nozimbo validate the statement, because the child remarked that she looked stunning for the occasion.

Mahlaba in **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** has also revealed the appearance of his characters to the listeners. For example, Vuyisile reveals that his face is badly scarred due to the attack he suffered in Johannesburg. He says:

...Namhlanje ndibona ngeliso elinye, ubuso bam buzele zintanda neziva.

(Today, I see with only one eye, my face is full of cracks and scars)

In a way the playwright is implicitly creating an awareness in the listeners for the reason why Vuyisile could not be recognized by his mother.

In the third instance, voice quality can delineate the character of the speaker.

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Madiba's voice is not a baritone yet it has that forcefulness in it and it becomes more clear as he is contrasted to his wife, Nosayinethi, who is soft-spoken, showing her to be sensitive in nature. Her husband is depicted as an obstinate person who wants to have the final say. His power to dominate is also revealed by his tendency to interrupt as his wife speaks.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, Nozimbo and Mqwayito's voices depict their age. The playwright has used Nozimbo's voice to create suspense for she sounds very frightened. One may even regard the fear in her voice as an exaggeration of her emotions.

With reference to Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, MaDlomo's voice suggests that the character portrayed is an elderly woman. The shakiness in it and its emotional tone (for example, as she prays she sounds as if she is crying) are characteristic of elderly people's behaviour, especially when they pray. The voice illuminates her bitterness about life. On the whole it suits her character.

The language style is another device which can portray the character. In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Namhla is characterized by her repetition of words in her speech. This is distinct in her conversation with Mbulelo; her desire to win his support is clear. She uses such phrases as 'Mamela, mamela ke' (listen, listen). This is followed by the rhetorical question 'Uyeva ke?' (Do you hear?). She wants to make sure that her words have found their mark in his heart.

As far as Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** is concerned, there is nothing peculiar about the style; the language is straightforward.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** what is evident is that there are biblical terms inserted into the speeches to depict the religious nature of MaDlomo; for example, her frequent use of such phrases as UYesu uyaphila kum (Jesus is alive in me); Ndikhonza uThixo ophilayo (I serve a living God), etc. completes the impression and they point to the mysticism in her nature.

3.11.3 The Explicit authorial characterization techniques:

This is the prestabilization method whereby the character is endowed with a telling name which makes the listener make assumptions about the character's personality even before he or she appears on the scene. As far as this device is concerned, none of the playwrights has used it. Names that are given to characters do not hold any direct meaning for the story.

3.11.4 The Implicit Authorial Characterization Techniques:

In between the telling names, we have the interpretive names, which are ordinary names but if we relate them to the context they are significant.

Only Msila in **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** has employed this device, for his leading character is Namhla, which means 'Nowadays'. She symbolises modernism as contrasted to her father, who is a traditionalist in every respect.

Juxtaposition of characters which have different personalities is another device that implicitly portrays the characters. This device is used to give the listeners a vivid impression

about the two characters, contrasting them to each other, thus emphasizing what is peculiar in their personalities.

In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Madiba always appears with his wife. In discussion of the marriage issue, Nosayinethi seems to be more rational than her husband who seems to be forcing matters even when circumstances do not warrant this. The mother is portrayed as a protective, loving mother if contrasted to her insensitive and selfish husband, who is blinded by greed.

In Nongauza's **UBusuku Botyhwatyho**, MaGaba is contrasted to her husband who seems to be ill at ease at the dance party. Though she is portrayed as enjoying every minute of the party, the husband seems to detest every minute of it. He is troubled by the idea of leaving children alone at home. MaGaba's irresponsible nature is emphasised in this manner.

As far as Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** is concerned, the technique has also been used. Contrasts are drawn between MaDlomo and MaMpinga. On an elementary level of interpretation MaDlomo is a symbolic representative of goodness contrasted to MaMpinga who is a symbolic representative of evil. MaMpinga is set to influence MaDlomo into finding a man who will shoulder her financial problems. She is portrayed as an admirably resistant character; she stands firm in her principles for she preferred to live in poverty rather than exploit other people.

Another device which the author may use to reveal the personality of his characters implicitly is showing how they address a particular figure.

With reference to Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** it is quite remarkable to notice that Nosayinethi, who is Namhla's mother, does not call her husband by his name. She prefers to call him by his clan name, which is Madiba in this case. As opposed to that, the husband calls her by her own name. This depicts the traditionalism in her character and her submissiveness.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the same device is used, for MaGaba calls her husband by his clan name, Dlamini, to show her respect. It also denotes the traditionalism in her personality.

As far as Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** is concerned, the device has not been used, for the characters are mainly women and this pattern is not applicable to them.

As a concluding note, what is remarkable about these plays, both for 1987 and 1988, is the absence of the narrator, who is normally a common feature of radio drama. The narrator expresses the thoughts of the playwright explicitly, guiding the listeners to view the

characters through the eyes of the playwright. These playwrights have remained in the background, giving the opportunity to the characters to speak for themselves, delineating even their intricate personality traits in the process of the performance.

A noteworthy feature of the techniques is that not all the techniques have been used in any one drama. What the one has employed was omitted by the next playwright.

There is diversity as far as the language style is concerned in both 1987 and 1988 dramas. What is evident is that in traditional themes, terms of endearments are not used (vide Mji's **Amandla Othando** (1987), Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** (1988)), etc. This is to portray the traditional nature of the characters and is appropriate to the setting. On the other hand, in plays where the setting is in the townships, the character's speech tends to conform to the environment; the usage of non-standardized language is evident. For example in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle's speech is characterised by these words:

'icherry' instead of intombi (a girl) (a slang English word for girl)
andikafahlaki = andikaphalali (I have not lowered my standard)
andinakuzijemisela = Andinakuzilibazisa (I cannot waste my time), etc.

It is difficult to trace the origin of some words. For instance, such words as 'icherry' which appears to be English has a different meaning from what the English word means.

With reference to the characters portrayed by these playwrights, it is evident that some of the actions are not motivated well enough. If a character is to be convincing for us, we must believe that the character has adequate reasons in his nature to do what he does. To understand a character one must first understand the character's actions, his nature, motives and his responses to certain stimuli. Although we look at these traits as separate entities, such details cannot ultimately be viewed in isolation; they must be related to each other to build up to a unified impression, thus giving a sense of individual personality, that is, the uniqueness of a character.

CHAPTER FOUR

TIME AND SPACE

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the artistic skills of the different dramatists in handling the time and space relations. The focus will be on the comparison of the dramas to one another, illuminating points of similarity and divergence. Also provided is a theoretical basis for a consideration of time and space in drama.

TIME

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:44) defines time as the relation of chronology between story and text. Time and space, together with the character's verbal and/or non-verbal behaviour are the only basic concrete categories presented in both the narrative and the dramatic text. In the former it is presented as the 'narrative time' and in the latter as the 'actual playing time'.

For the analysis of the text, time is generally viewed with respect to the following: order, duration, frequency, tempo and the presentation of the time structures.

4.1 ORDER

Under order Genette (1983:34) examines the relations between the succession of events in the story and the linear disposition in the text. The presentation of information about things in the dramatic text is in linear order. Although the hypothetical norm is that there should be a correspondence between the two, a complete correspondence is rarely realized. This gives rise to the possibility that the order of events in the text can differ from the order in which they occur in the story. Chatman (1978:63) in expressing this idea states that:

The discourse can arrange the events of the story as much as it pleases, provided the story sequence remains discernable.

The most common discordances between story order and the text order are: retrospection (traditionally known as flashback) and anticipation (or foreshadowing). Genette refers to the two concepts as 'analepsis' and 'prolepsis' respectively. By analepsis he refers to a narration of a story-event at a point in the text after later events have been told. This means

that the narration returns to a past point in the story. On the other hand, prolepsis is a narration of a story-event at a point before earlier events have been mentioned. Here the narration leaps into the future of the story.

In this study the terms 'retrospection' and 'anticipation' will be adhered to when referring to analepsis or prolepsis respectively.

4.1.1 Retrospection

Retrospection provides past information about the character, events or the story line mentioned at that point in the text. It can be categorized according to its point of occurrence in the story line. External retrospection may evoke a past which occurred before what Pfister calls the point of attack of the story. Retrospection that occurs internally evokes a past which occurred after the point of attack of the story but is narrated for the first time in the text later than where it is supposed to be. This serves to supplement incompleteness or fill in a gap in the text. If the period covered by the retrospection begins before the point of attack but at a later stage joins it or goes beyond it, it is considered as 'mixed'.

4.1.2 Anticipation

This occurs less often than retrospection and when it does occur, it creates suspense because it evokes such questions as "what will happen next?" and 'how is this going to happen?' Like introspections it can either be external, internal or mixed. External anticipation lies outside the point of attack of the story line. Internal anticipation, on the other hand lies within the space of time of the story. Mixed anticipation occurs after the point of attack of the story and refers to a period after the closing of the story.

4.2 DURATION

In drama duration refers to the relationship between the text time (i.e. fictional time) and the actual time taken by the performance. By 'actual performance time' we mean the period of time it takes to perform the play.

The actual performance time is imprecise in the literary text. It can only be established in the actual performance itself because the style and tempo for each production will vary in length according to that particular play.

The same view is shared by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983:51) for he argues that:

... it is much more difficult to describe in parallel terms the duration of the text and that of the story, for the simple reason that there is no way of measuring text-duration.

Furthermore, in emphasising the same argument reference is made to the dialogue, which is more relevant to radio drama and he says that:

Even a segment of pure dialogue, which has been considered by some a case of pure coincidence between story-duration and text-duration, cannot manifest complete correspondence ... It is, therefore, only by convention that one speaks of temporal equivalence of story and text in dialogue (1983:52).

He suggests that the only measurement with regard to duration that could be effective in the text is the constancy of pace. This is the unchanged ratio between story-duration and the length of the text; for example, if each year in the life of a character could be treated in one act throughout the text.

With reference to constancy of pace two forms can be discerned in the dramatic text; 'deceleration' and 'acceleration' of pace. By deceleration is meant the practice of extending the performance time to something that is supposed to occupy a short time of the text. On the other hand, acceleration occurs when a long period in the text is given a relatively short time in performance.

When a portion of the story is deleted, this is called ellipsis. Comparatively speaking, this means that the text time is less than the story time; it is zero. The omission of certain portions in the story may not be due to the fact that they are unimportant. In drama, we may find that these events may be unstageable (except on radio) or they may be too painful to be discussed. This is a common occurrence in scenes where brutal murder is involved.

4.3 FREQUENCY

Frequency refers to the number of times an event appears in the story and the number of times it is narrated. In actual fact, it deals with repetition. Repetition in the story may be singulative, repetitive or iterative. Singulative refers to the practice of telling once what happened once. Repetitive means telling more than once what happened once and iterative to mention once what occurred several times.

4.4 TEMPO

Tempo refers to the ratio of events per unit of time. In most cases, the dramatic text does not remain constant throughout the performance. In some scenes the tempo may be slow, in others it may accelerate. Tempo may even be varied within a single dialogue; for instance, if that dialogue starts with a long speech with a peaceful note and develops into an argument with the exchange of heated utterances. In many cases turbulent scenes in drama are contrasted with peaceful ones to balance the situation. Variations in tempo may have an influence on dramatic suspense.

4.5 THE PRESENTATION OF TIME

The most important aid that the dramatists utilise in establishing the chronology in the play is to make the order of scenes correspond to the order in which events took place in the story. Where there are deviations such as introspection and anticipation they are indicated explicitly. However, this refers more or less to the unspecified time. Our interest lies in cases where the playwright decides to be absolute with his time. In such cases certain devices have to be employed in order to meet the requirement.

In the first instance, the playwright may use an epic commentator, that is, a narrator on the radio who will inform the listeners about the exact time of the event. In the second instance, characters could be used and they may explicitly make comments about the time. For instance, a character may utter statements such as this: "It's three o'clock now" and so on. Characters may again comment implicitly about time; for instance, in Mahlaba's *Isiqalo Sobulumko*, MaDlomo enquires from MaMpinga where she comes from in the early morning: "Uvelaphi ekuseni kangaka?"

In some cases, the playwright may decide to use non-verbal indicators. For instance, on stage costumes and the decor would indicate the period of the performance. On radio the listeners could be assisted by the characters who comment about these.

Non-verbal indicators are more effective on the radio when they are aided by acoustics; for instance, the chime of a clock, striking the intended hour could be useful or in instances where the setting is in the fields, the sound of the threshing machine would imply that it is the harvest time, etc.

When the playwright pinpoints the time in this manner, he can affect the suspense potential of the play. For instance, from the very first scene of the play, there is always that forward-looking reference to a particular time in future. This gives a sense of forward movement in

the play and it places characters under the pressure of time, thus creating suspense. The suspense potential becomes even more intensified when there is a continuous reference to that particular time. The listeners are timeously reminded that the critical time is approaching fast; in addition, it gives the impression that time is passing very quickly.

4.6 SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION OF TIME

When a playwright sets his story at a specific time, he is not only doing that to give it plausibility or to imitate reality, but he does so for semantic reasons.

The choice of a specific historical period as setting for a story may carry with it certain socio-cultural stereotypes associated with that era. For instance, we notice that plays written in the early twentieth century were written to satirize the values and beliefs of Black people, such as the practice of parents choosing partners for their off-springs, witchcraft, etc., things that were predominant in our culture that time.

Also the reference to certain seasons of the year may have important semantic connotations. For instance, a playwright may choose winter or autumn for tragedy and summer or spring for comedy. Sometimes this trend may be deliberately violated for ironic effect.

The time of the day in which the events occur can also be interpreted in a particular way. For instance, night is usually associated with the supernatural, dreams, imagination and daytime with rationality and the real world. Even if we look at the different genres, we will notice that the different times of the day or the daily cycles may be interpreted in a particular way that will suit such an event. For example, in tragedy, midnight is usually seen as the time of threatening darkness in which evil things are committed whereas the morning is the time of sober disillusionment. This could be illustrated in Mahlaba's *Isiqalo Sobulumko*, where the mother unknowingly murders her child at midnight; in the morning when the truth is unfolded to her she is shocked.

In comedy, the passing of time from morning to noon and midnight is often interpreted as one that leads from rebirth to maturity and fulfilment.

4.7 TIME IN THE DRAMAS

The procedure we follow is to start the analysis with the 1987 dramas, followed by those broadcast in 1988. They will be discussed with respect to the aspects we have discussed above viz. duration, order, frequency, etc.

4.7.1 Time in the 1987 dramas

4.7.1.1 Duration

As far as the duration is concerned, there is uniformity because the actual performance time is about 25 minutes for each drama. It is problematic to pinpoint exactly the time that is allocated to each scene.

4.7.1.2 Order

With reference to the order of events, we find that all the three dramas have their events arranged chronologically. However, we do experience discordances more especially in the form of introspection or analepsis as Genette (1983) calls it. In both **Amandla Othando**, by Mji, and Saule's **ULindithuba**, the listeners are provided with information that occurred in the past. In **Amandla Othando**, introspection is external because it occurs before the start of the point of attack. The listeners are confronted with a scene of the accident in which Sisa is fatally injured. After that the story begins and Sisa is jilted by his father-in-law because of what occurred outside the story line. Introspection in this instance has been employed to enlarge the exposition.

In **ULindithuba** introspection occurs twice and they are both internal. When Lindithuba arrived at Phumzile's residence she was not recognized by him and for that reason she has to relate how they happened to meet at the scene of the accident in which she was involved. She takes the listeners to a period eight years back as she recreates the scene. In the second instance, Saule uses the character to transmit information as a means of filling in a gap in the text. After the mystery of Lindithuba has been sorted out, Phumzile explains about a turbulent meeting he attended the previous week. He attributes his reluctance to answer the telephone to that.

Gcilitshana in **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** does not have any deviation in time.

Only Mji in **Amandla Othando** has used anticipation or foreshadowing. Nontsikelelo finds a crack in her wedding cake. The cultural belief is that this is an ill omen in the marriage of that particular couple. With this device, the listener's mind is made to take a jump ahead in time; he is made to foresee that there may be a misfortune in the marriage. The realization of this anticipation is certain for the wedding plans never materialize due to the fact that Sisa's father-in-law cancelled the wedding. It is not acceptable in his eyes to have a cripple as a son-in-law.

4.7.1.3 Frequency

With reference to the above aspect all the three playwrights have used repetitive frequency. In most cases, it has been employed to emphasize a certain incident. In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho**, Nomhle mentions more than once that the matrimonial tie between herself and Mjongile is solely based on the need for mutual security. The same information is conveyed as she talks to her boyfriend Themba, though to him she denies the fact that she is married to Mjongile. On each occasion Mjongile's loyalty as a husband to her is emphasized. This is done to create suspense potential in the text because each time this is mentioned new arcs of suspense are created. We begin to fear for the outcome should the husband discover the truth.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, we find that Sisa's accident, which occurred once, is mentioned more than once in the story. For instance, Ntsiki relates the incident to the sister at the hospital; it is mentioned again by Sisa in his confession to Nontsikelelo. The repetition in this case is deliberately employed to stress the significance of the accident to the play. It has kept the events of the play in motion, thus leading to the development of the incidents in the play.

Saule in **uLindithuba** has also utilised the device to accentuate the importance of the farmers' meeting which Phumzile attended the previous week. Suspense potential is created each time Mandisa mentions the meeting. Phumzile adopts a defensive stance in order to bar further discussion on the topic.

4.7.1.4 Tempo

There is variation with regards to the handling of this aspect. In some phases the tempo is slow, and in others it accelerates. What is significant is that conflict situations increase the tempo of the play. For example, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the tempo becomes faster towards the last scene, as Mjongile confronts Nomhle and her lover.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, in the initial stages of the drama tempo is accelerated as there is a high concentration of conflict, Nontsikelelo's father dissociating himself from Sisa. With the progression of the story the suspense decreases up to the end.

With reference to Saule's **uLindithuba**, we notice that the compactness of the story, that is, the fact that it concentrated on a single setting, and the short period of time coupled with the highly emotional dialogue that occurs between Phumzile and his wife, lead to the acceleration of tempo. It only slows down at the final episode with the arrival of Lindithuba who explains about her mysterious phone calls.

4.7.1.5 Presentation of time

As far as the presentation of the chronology is concerned in these dramas, it is clear that there is not explicit mention of time sequences. It is only Saule in **uLindithuba** who decided to be explicit about this in order to put the listeners into the picture about the exact time at which the story starts. Phumzile says:

Mandisa khawude ugqibe, siza kushiywa lixsha. Khangela, uleveni sesondele...

(Mandisa please do get finished, we shall be late. Look, it's nearly eleven o'clock...)

Also, where we live and how we live determines our sense of time. For example, a farmer will have a different sense of time than a businessman. His time is directed by what goes on around him; the planting period, the harvest, shearing etc. are time indicators to him whereas the businessman is conscious of the clock. In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo mentions to her mother-in-law her intentions of being at Baragwanath hospital early in the morning; she says: "... aze athi evulelwa amathole sibe sisesibhedlele" (By the time the calves are released before the milking, we must be at the hospital.)

There is nothing more explicit than this expression because milking is done in the early morning. When the milking is done she will be in a different setting, in Johannesburg but the reference is meaningful to her. This reflects the mutual bond that exists between the character and her environment.

4.7.2 Time in the 1988 dramas

4.7.2.1 Duration

There is uniformity with regard to duration in these dramas because the actual performance time is about twenty-five minutes. As mentioned earlier, the division of scenes is done through short pauses and music, but it is problematic to pinpoint the duration of each scene.

4.7.2.2 Order

As far as the order of events is concerned, the chronological order is maintained. Discordances are not so common in these dramas. In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the weather conditions are used to transport the listener into the future, hinting at the possibility of an ill omen for the characters. This anticipation is realized as the two children are confronted with an escaped convict who broke into Dlamini's home.

With reference to Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumiko**, the playwright, in order to increase the sense of expectation in the listeners, has placed a scene before the title. This however, does not bring about deviation in the time sequence. The dramatist is not only creating expectancy but also enlarges his exposition. For instance, before the point of attack, he illuminates the problem the character is confronted with and the time aspect involved, for Bhadikazi speaks strongly to her mother to refrain from the habit of disturbing her in her sleep; she says:

Kunini mama uthandaza, kunini?

(For how long mother have you been praying, for how long?)

This is suggestive of the fact that the problem was in existence even before the point of attack of the story-line.

4.7.2.3 Frequency

The three playwrights have used repetition. In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** repetitive frequency is used to emphasize an event which the playwright regards as important. Malizole relates to Namhla's mother that he overheard people speaking about Mbulelo's death. The same information is conveyed by Solani as he reminds Mbulelo that according to the information he received, he is taken for dead.

With regards to Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the incident of the escaped convict is told more than once, for the sergeant notifies the people in that vicinity to adopt precautionary measures with regards to the escape.

In **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the incident about Vuyisile's stabbing is repeated three times in the story. In the first instance, he narrates it in a soliloquy as he is about to leave Johannesburg. He is embittered and vindictive about the place. In the second instance, he explains to MaMpinga about the accident because she could not recognize him. Added to this is new information that his own mother could also not recognize him. In this case MaMpinga narrates it to MaDlomo; this serves as a reminder that the man she turned away happened to be her own son, the son she has murdered for money. In this case, there is an accusation involved and the frequency of the repetition is meant to force MaDlomo to face sober disillusionment.

4.7.2.4 Tempo

In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the tempo is slow because there is hardly any conflict in the story and it only gathers momentum in the final episode where Mbulelo stabs both Namhla's father and his son-in-law, Solani.

As far as Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** is concerned, the tempo of the story accelerates after the escape of the convict. This also serves to reinforce the suspense potential because new arcs of suspense are created each time mention is made of the convict. This also creates the impression that the critical moment is approaching fast as the children await the inevitable.

In **Isiqalo Sobulumko** there is variation in tempo throughout. In some scenes it is slow, for example in Vuyisile's soliloquy, and it accelerates in other phases, especially in scenes that involve conflict situations such as the confrontation between MaDlomo and MaMpinga. The scene of the reunion between the mother and her prodigal son has the same tempo; unfortunately for her she unknowingly turns him away.

4.7.2.5 Presentation of time

As far as the notion of presenting time is concerned, there is variation with each individual playwright. In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** it is quite evident that the playwright has not emphasised the notion because no mention is made of time in the Western sense, that is, clock time, days, months, etc. Neither has he used traditional time, that is, indicating lapse of time by natural things such as the sun, seasons, etc. in his play.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, he at least makes the listeners aware that the incidents occur on a Saturday evening. He introduced the notion of time through characters and this is done explicitly.

Mahlaba, on the other hand, presents time implicitly through characters. MaDlomo, in her prayer for the return of her prodigal son, mentions that when fortune no longer favours Vuyisile, he will take his baggage at sunset and come home: "Uya kuthi xa lithi ndithenge..." In the second instance, MaDlomo enquires from MaMpinga the intentions of her early visit to her home. She remarks: "Uvelaphi MaMpinga ekuseni kangaka?" (MaMpinga, where do you come from so early in the morning?).

With reference to the semantic interpretation of time, we notice that with tragedy night is often interpreted as a time of darkness during which atrocities are committed whereas the morning is the time of disillusionment. The validity of this view can be illustrated in

Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**. MaDlomo commits the murder of her son at night; in the morning she is struck by reality as she learns that the murdered stranger is her own son.

Nongauza also portrays the same image because the incident of the escaped convict, which created terror in that vicinity, occurs in the evening. It is also noticeable that both these playwrights associate seasons with a certain mood in the story. For example, when Vuyisile arrives at his home, it is a bitterly cold winter day with wind that cuts through the flesh. The implication behind this is that the reception he receives from his mother is as cold as that day. In a like manner, Nongauza depicts a wintery day on which the convict escapes.

To conclude, what is evident about most of these plays (irrespective of the year) is that not much importance is placed on the aspect of time. Time has been unspecified, the references to time are taking the form: 'it is morning', 'long week-end', etc. with no specificity from one period to another: In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** there is no information about the time of commencement or the end of the story; it can only be measured by events in the story. Larson (1970:118) suggests a reason for this when he says:

Time in an African sense has little to do with actual blocks of time as measured in a Western sense, but rather with human values and human achievements.

The validity of the above statement is clearly shown by the fact that these playwrights put more emphasis on the narration of events as a means of indicating lapse of time.

4.8 SPACE IN THE RADIO

To refer to space in a dramatic text means looking at the presentation of things and objects that form the environment in which the characters of the text perform, as well as the principle governing the way these characters are organised and distributed in this artistic continuum and the language employed to express a number of non-spatial relations in the text. In a summarized way Rockas (1984:110) defines space as:

The sum of all visual or sensuous references in a work, whether it is staged or not, including everything from place or picture to atmosphere or mood.

Space in fiction can be of different kinds; for example, in narratives when we talk of space we normally refer to the text itself considered spatially (i.e. the space of language) or to the words which cue the reader, enabling him to participate in the illusion of the verbal creation of the geographic space. This is referred to as the language of space.

In drama space is a much more complicated thing because it embraces several theatrical areas. Distinction can be made between space 'on stage' and space 'off stage'. This refers to what is made visible to the audience and what is not. Dramatic tension is often created by the discrepancy between visible space represented on the stage and the invisible space described. In all, space in drama is not one-dimensional as in narrative (which is abstract and projected by verbal means only) and it is best classified in accordance with its mode of transmission.

4.8.1 Types of space

Issacharoff (1981:212) gives three types of space that we find in the theatre, viz. the architectural scenographic and the dramatic space. By architectural design, he refers essentially to the theatre buildings, and the scenography refers to the aesthetics of the stage which include the stage design, the decor and the costumes of characters. The third type, the dramatic space involves the text or the dramatic script. Our main concern in this discussion is the third type, the dramatic space, i.e. the space as used by the individual dramatist.

4.8.1.1 The Dramatic Space

Before we attempt to classify the types of dramatic space and their mode of operation, it is essential to remind ourselves that since the theatre script usually precedes its performance, it is language that creates and focuses space in theatre or at least any space in a play that is functional. In the dramatic script, language takes two forms: the auditory (i.e. the spoken text or discourse of characters) and the non-auditory (the stage directions). Both of these modes can refer to dramatic space but they differ in their functions. The function of the stage directions is to refer exclusively to what is visible or what the producer has intended to make visible to his audience. On the other hand, the function of the spoken text is to refer to both what is visible and what is not. When we speak of what is not visible we mean the space that is described but not shown on the stage.

4.8.1.2 Mimetic and Diegetic space

There are two major forms of dramatic space: the mimetic and the diegetic. In the theatre, mimetic space is that which is made visible to an audience and represented on stage. Diegetic space, on the other hand, is described, i.e. referred to by the characters; thus it is communicated verbally not visually.

In the case of radio, mimetic space is created by verbal language and extended by the sound effects. The latter are supported by the verbal language due to the fact that they can be

unclear when used alone on the radio. Diegetic space in radio drama is a device used to extend dramatic space. It often deals with the past whereas the mimetic space focuses on the space perceived by the character in the present.

Two types of mimetic space are discernable in radio drama. The first type is the one that is represented by sound effects alone and the other one is the kind that relies solely on verbal language for transmission. In radio drama language may have the double role of focusing or representing mimetic space.

4.8.2 The functions of space

In the theatre space may be represented realistically in order to thrill the audience through its spectacular visual effect. But since radio is a "blind" medium, the effect could be brought about through sound effects.

It can also be used to emphasize the extent to which characters are conditioned by external circumstances. As Pfister (1988:265) states:

By using objects to reflect the circumstances affecting a dramatic figure, it is possible to demonstrate its dependence on the conditions of its immediate environment, social atmosphere and its physical and psychological disposition.

The validity of the statement can be illustrated through MaDlomo, in Mahlaba's *Isiqalo Sobulumko*, who in the initial stages of the play displays every quality of being a highly principled Christian but through social pressure (viz. her friend MaMpinga) and finding herself in a society of affluent people, she degrades herself by committing murder because of money. This illustrates clearly that a character is not an autonomous entity but will always act under the pressure of external conditions.

Space may also have a reflective function, reflecting upon the status of a particular character or the social class within which that particular character exists. For example, in Msila's *Mayibe Sisithethe na?* the social class depicted is that of traditionalists who cling steadfastly to customs. What is discernable is that in this particular society, polygamy is acceptable and we see that as traditionalists they place no value on education; this is reflected in the fact that they force Namhla to marry an illiterate man, even though she is a teacher. We see the cultural values of the place; cattle are regarded as a yardstick of measuring the wealth of a man.

Space or setting may provide a character with an occasion for reminiscence, more especially if that occasion left a mark on his entire life. For example, in Mahlaba's *Isiqalo*

Sobulumko, the listeners are introduced for the first time to Vuyisile boarding a train to his home in the country. This very train serves as a reminder to him of his first visit to Johannesburg, eager and with high expectations, but on this day he is embittered and vindictive for the scars the city has left on his face, but the most painful scars are on his soul because due to the disfigurement of his face not even his mother could recognize him.

When the focus is on an object in the setting, this may be done deliberately to signify one aspect of the biographical background of one of the dramatic characters. For example, in Saule's **uLindithuba**, the focus is on the car she is driving; it gives an impression that she is a rich woman.

Space may also serve a symbolic function as in **Isiqalo Sobulumko**. As Vuyisile arrives the place is bitterly cold; this symbolises the reception he gets at his home.

The way people speak is often associated with the area they inhabit. This is discernable in the dramas because those whose setting is in the urban areas use colloquialisms liberally; this denotes the area they operate in.

4.8.3 The localisation techniques

Space in drama can be constructed by two means, viz. it can be constructed verbally or non-verbally.

4.8.3.1 The verbal localisation techniques

This refers to the way the spatial context is referred to in a character's utterances. In some instances this is referred to as 'word-scenery' or 'the spoken space'.

There are certain functions associated with this device, for instance, the basic function is solely to compensate for what cannot be shown on stage. This is of immense value to scenes that are deliberately omitted for performance reasons.

It can also be used as a means of depicting a character or the development of the central theme; for example, the association of a character with a certain area as a means of defining his personality.

4.8.3.2 The non-verbal localisation techniques

There are numerous ways that can be employed to create space by non-verbal means. In the first instance, space can be created through the actions and activities of characters on stage.

We should also call to mind that "being on stage" in the radio drama refers to audibility by the audience. In this regard, the exit and entrance of characters may be used to indicate certain spatial relationships and to make contrast between what is shown on stage and what is not shown.

Also when characters seem to be coming from and going to a number of different directions, in a way they add complexity to the off-stage area. However, this can be made concrete only by the characters' utterances.

On the radio, space can be defined non-verbally by spatial proximity between two characters. The microphone can be used to define the relationship between these characters. In addition to this, semantic interpretations can be attached to this distance. Firstly, it may have a connotation that one of them is not part of the action but stands as an observer. On the other hand, this may depict conflict or animosity between the two characters.

There is nothing more effective than acoustics on radio to create space. This could be used to create an immediate or distant environment. For instance, in an accident scene, more often the car can be heard crashing and, as it rolls down the cliff, it is the sound that creates an impression that the object has moved away from the listener. Acoustics are also of vital importance for the way the plot develops.

Objects can be used to characterize dramatic space and the dramatic character. For example, the banging of iron doors and the sound of handcuffs will create the impression that the setting is a prison and the character involved a prison warder. However, in radio the characters' utterances can be used to supplement the actions.

4.8.4 Analysis of space in the dramas

In the discussion that follows the focus will be on the comparison of the dramas being studied, trying to establish the similarities and divergences in these play. The procedure is to start with the dramas that were broadcast in 1987, followed by those of 1988.

With reference to the unity of space in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze ngokwakho**, the drama is confined to one setting, Cape Town. Scene movements are only between Rondebosch and the men's quarters in Langa. Thus there is unity of space.

We observe a difference as far as this aspect is concerned in Mji's **Amandla Othando**. There is a lot of scene shifting; there is movement between Nontsikelelo's home and Sisa's home which are both in the rural areas, there is also movement to Johannesburg. This fragmentation of setting has an effect on the unity of space but is not necessarily a weakness in the play.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, the action is confined to one setting which is a house. Setting has been made more effective in accentuating the theme because the characters' impotency against the prevailing circumstance is enhanced. We feel that they are trapped in the house because help seems to be remote and this is made more effective by their nervous attitude. In all, unity of space is achieved in this drama and effectively utilised.

Referring to Issacharoff's (1981) kind of space, we notice that mimetic space is predominant in the three plays. We are not only introduced to the dramatist's imaginary world by the articulation of the characters, but sound effects also give a complete feeling about the setting. For example in **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the scene presented is a metropolitan area; the noise of the traffic is audible in the background and it is coupled to the characters' conversation as they state that they commute to their places of employment.

The same is found with Mji's **Amandla Othando**. Setting is created by the sound effects and the utterances of characters. For example, many of the scenes are in the rural area; the chirping of birds and the bellowing of cows or the clanging of ploughs is always audible in the background. This gives a pastoral atmosphere to the setting.

Saule's **uLindithuba** has followed suit; the mimetic space is a room which the two characters occupy; the persistent sound of the telephone enhances the fact that their movements are restricted. The mentioning of the church in the characters' utterances and the sound of its bells ringing transport the listeners to the imaginary world created by the dramatist.

Issacharoff (1981) states that there are two kinds of mimetic space: that which relies on verbal language for transmission and that which is represented by sound effects alone. It is noticeable that what is predominant in these three plays is the space which relies on verbal language for transmission, because whenever space is created through sound effects, the characters would refer to it in order to direct the listener's mind to the intended setting. On the other hand, there is only one instance where the mimetic space that is represented by sound effects alone has been used. This is achieved only in Mji's **Amandla Othando**, in the scene of the accident. There is screeching of tyres, loud sounds of the siren and running feet and no verbal utterances. All these movements are suggestive of the ambulance crew. The device has been employed to create dramatic tension.

Diegetic space in the three plays is clear in Mji's **Amandla Othando** as Nontsikelelo relates her trip to Johannesburg to Sisa's parents. As mentioned earlier that diegetic space focuses on the past; this is illustrated in this scene because she has narrated what has already happened.

As we know that the conception of space does not only refer to the physical space; it also incorporates the social environment. As far as the social setting of these dramas is concerned, space has a reflecting function, i.e. it represents qualities that are representative of a particular class. For instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the social class depicted is the working class, for the characters commute to their places of employment. The same is achieved in Mji's **Amandla Othando**. Nontsikelelo's father seems to be managing quite well: the very fact that he rejects the lobola cattle reveals him to be not a desperate character. In Saule's **uLindithuba** the characters are farmers; they are also financially well off.

What is also evident in these dramas is that the characters are not treated as autonomous entities; their dependence on conditions of their immediate environment is clear. In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Nomhle's involvement in the extra-marital affairs which cost her her marriage could be associated with the area. It seems that the crowded metropolitan areas have an influence because, perhaps if she were in the rural areas, not having to work, the opportunities to two-time her husband would have been few.

In Mji's **Amandla Othando**, Nontsikelelo's frustrations are caused by her father who does not wish to violate the expectations prescribed by society. To him, having a crippled son-in-law would lower his status. Her father's actions have a tremendous influence on her life.

In Saule's **uLindithuba**, Phumzile refuses to respond to the telephone call because of an argument that occurred between the members in the meeting the previous week. His reluctance to respond to the telephone creates tension between the couple.

An identified object in the setting may have a symbolic function as could be illustrated in Mji's **Amandla Othando**. The sister reminds Nontsikelelo about the significance of the white wedding dress - its colour signifies purity. It is this reference which made Nontsikelelo change her mind, for she thought of the vows she took. As a consequence she defied her father and married Sisa.

Language can be one of the devices that a playwright could use to depict setting and dramatic characters. Listening to the conversation of Themba one is able to pick out such words as:

'Baby' whose Xhosa equivalent is 'sana'
'icherry' instead of 'intombi'
'ukufahlaka' instead of 'ukuphalala'
'i-Ou' instead of 'umfana' etc.

Some of the above words are even difficult to trace their original since no one can find them in lexicography of any dictionary. Words such as 'icherry' is a slang English word for girl.

4.8.5 Space in the 1988 dramas

With regard to the dramas broadcast in 1988, the playwrights concerned seem to have taken greater account of the unity of space. For example, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the action takes place between Madiba's place which is in the rural areas and Namhla's residence which is situated in the urban areas. In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the action is confined to Qokolweni and Johannesburg, and in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the action is confined to one area.

The type of space represented is mostly mimetic since it is not created through sound effects alone; the articulation of characters is also incorporated. In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**, the first scene commences in a pastoral setting; there is bleating of sheep and birds chirping in the trees. This setting is appropriate for the theme of traditionalism.

With reference to Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, mimetic space is also predominant for in scenes where the setting is rural animals could be heard in the background and these are matched with the characters' conversation. This is also the case where the setting is urban; for instance, Vuyisile travels by train from Johannesburg to Qokolweni. Before the departure of the train, Vuyisile informs the listeners that he was on board; sound effects then complete the visual image because the bell that notifies the passengers to be ready for the journey could be heard ringing.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** the scene of the dance party is a clear - cut use of the mimetic space. The listeners are made to participate in the party because of the music that is played, the murmur of voices in the background, and the conversation of the characters evokes visual images.

Diegetic space is also used in the characters' conversation. Msila uses diegetic space as a means of informing the listeners that Namhla's uncle overheard something about the death of Mbulelo when they filled up with petrol at a garage. The setting has not been visually transmitted to the listeners; it is part of the conversation. The same is achieved in Mahlaba's **Isiqalo sobulumko**. MaMpinga, in a bid to persuade MaDlomo to get involved in an affair, tells her about Erica's plush house that was built by one of her associates. The information about the house is transmitted verbally. In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, Dlamini seems to be uncomfortable at the party; his mind lingers on the circumstances at his home. The listeners are not taken physically to his home, but his utterances are enough to make them visualize the place.

With reference to the social environment, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**, the inhabitants are revealed as traditionalists. Their values depict this orientation for they place greater importance on cattle which are regarded as sign of wealth. This is the reason why Madiba is so adamant that Namhla should get married in order to fill his kraal with cattle. The traditionalism of the area can also be seen in their customs. The ancient custom of polygamy is still practiced in the area. It is no wonder that Namhla's uncles collaborate with him because they perceive the practice as the perpetuation of the tradition.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, although the setting is rural, there is incongruity between the physical and social environment. Contrary to the behaviour of the people in rural areas, the inhabitants in this area place more value on appearance; smartness is a criterion of self-actualization. MaMpinga indicates to MaDlomo that she should find herself a man who will assist her financially and her admiration of another woman whose house has been built through the same scheme is quite clear. MaMpinga also tries to lure MaDlomo's daughter, Bhadikazi, to join her cast.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, there seem to be the same codes of values, for MaGaba also places importance on appearance. She is delighted about the compliments she receives concerning her smartness.

As mentioned before, characters do not operate in isolation but are influenced by external conditions in their environments. The same applies to the dramas concerned. In Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Namhla as a teacher faces degradation by virtue of being forceably married to an illiterate man, and she decides to commit suicide. It seems that she could not face the humiliation and was a misfit in the community of traditionalists.

With reference to Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, it is apparent that MaDlomo, because of the poverty she lived in and the pressures that were exerted by her friends on her, made her give in to temptation. Seeing the stacks of money being counted by the stranger had a psychological impact on her, causing her to commit murder.

The natural phenomena in the setting could also be used to depict the mood or attitude of characters. In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** Vuyisile's reception at his home is symbolized by the bitterly cold weather. He is turned away by his mother for she could not recognize him. His status is lowered because he is made to share a bedroom with chickens since he is made to sleep in the kitchen. Kraals are also symbolic places of burials in the Xhosa cultural setting. MaDlomo murders her son and in an attempt to hide the corpse she buried it in the kraal. This is ironic because although they deprived him of his rightful status when he was alive, they gave it to him as a corpse because culturally that is where he belongs as the head of the family.

To conclude, when we compare the dramas that were broadcast in 1987 with those of 1988, one finds that they share a common premise; in instances where the settings are in the urban areas there are linguistic traces which depict the colloquialism of the area (vide Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, (1987) Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** (1988)); there is a flow of such words as 'baby, icherry, umack, broer', etc. In the second instance, there seems to be an association of crime and low morality with urban areas. This is an oversimplification of space. For example, in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the area is terrorised by an escaped convict. In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** (1988) Vuyisile is left with a scarred face caused by an unknown man for no apparent reason, and in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** Nomhle is double-crossing her husband with another man, etc.

All these dramas have named or identified their setting, though there are exceptions. This does not only depict the playwrights' knowledge of the place or subject matter, but also gives more credibility to the story. The listeners are also given a sense of identification for they can reach conclusions which are taken from their preconceived knowledge of the place. Furthermore, names can be revealing about the conditions of the area. For instance, in Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, as Vuyisile talks about Johannesburg, he refers to it as 'Ilizwe leendudumo' (the country of thunders). There is no better description to suit Transvaal than this. Two of the 1988 dramas (viz, Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, and Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**) do not mention where the story takes place. The listeners are unable to have a clear picture about the place, the activities of the area, etc. These playwrights have created phantom spaces.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE TECHNIQUES OF PRODUCTION

In this chapter a critical comparison of the production techniques utilised by the different playwrights will be examined. Focus will mainly be on the trio - the microphone, the sound effects and music.

5.1 THE MICROPHONE

Talking about sound, the microphone plays a prominent role in radio because it is the disseminator of sound. The microphones are selected in terms of their sensitivity and for specific effects. The writer's responsibility is to indicate the relationship of the microphone to the performer. This physical relationship is important because it determines the orientation of the listener.

There are five basic microphone positions which a producer can manipulate in the production of his play to give the required effect, namely:

5.1.1 The 'On Mike' Position

This position signifies that the characters are on the scene. It gives the listener the opportunity of being in the same physical spot as the performer. In this manner, the immediacy of the scene is created.

5.1.2 The 'Off Mike' position

This is the opposite of the 'on mike' position and it places the performer in a distant position from the mike. The performer is not only distancing himself from the mike but also from the listener. However, the same position is utilised when the characters need to give the impression that they are whispering.

5.1.3 The 'Fading On' position

In the 'mind's eye' of the listener, the character is approaching the physical centre of the action. As the action moves slowly to the point of orientation, the listener's mind is being prepared for action to be performed.

5.1.4 The 'Fading Off' position

The performer moves away from the microphone while speaking. He thus moves away from the central orientation point, giving an impression of a character moving out of a scene.

5.1.5 The Behind Obstruction position

Here the performer sounds as if there was a barrier between him and the focal point of the audience's orientation. This may give the impression that he is behind a door, outside a window or perhaps under a bandstand, etc.

Special kinds of microphones are used to give certain sound effects; for instance, the 'filter mike' which creates an impression that the voice is coming over a telephone.

Another kind is the echo chamber which creates various degrees of an echo sound. This type of microphone is often used in ghost stories, courtroom scenes, caves, etc.

5.2 THE SOUND EFFECTS

In radio drama, sound effects are of vital importance because they are the principal means of leading the audience to visualize a scene. They can be grouped into two categories, namely, the recorded sounds and the live or manual sounds. Any sound effect may be found on records, ranging from various types of airplanes to the barking of a dog, etc.

Live or manual sounds on the other hand include such sounds as the opening and closing of a door. In this instance, the sound would come from a miniature door located near the microphone. Under this category also fall those sounds that emanate from natural sources such as the sound of walking feet in which the microphone is held near the feet of a walking character, etc.

Some sounds are self-identifying whilst others need identification. By self-identifying sounds we refer to sounds that immediately create a picture; for example, such sounds as the chirping of birds, the telephone, the bleating of sheep or goats etc. On the other hand, sounds that need identification are those sounds that the listeners are helped to identify. For

instance, if one wishes to establish a fire blazing, it would be wise also to shout 'Fire!' as the cellophane is crackling, to stimulate the listeners' imagination.

Sound effects do not only add colour to the play but are also used to perform special functions so as to help the playwright in conveying his message to the audience, for example:

They may be incorporated into the drama to establish the mood and atmosphere of the situation.

Secondly, sounds may be used to signify the entrance or exit of characters in a scene. For instance, the sound of footsteps fading on will indicate the entrance of a character in the scene.

In the third instance, sound effects can be used to direct the audience's attention and emotions towards a certain stimulus. For example, in **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, written by Nongauza, the sound of a breaking window pane acts as a stimulus to the listener's mind, making him anticipate immediate violence.

Sound effects can also be utilised to establish locale. For instance, the ringing of a bell and running feet accompanied by young voices will denote that the setting is a school. In the same way the sound of bleating sheep and goats, singing of birds in the trees indicate that the environment is rural.

They can also be utilised to establish time. For instance, the clock striking the hour or the crowing of a cock are often used effective devices that indicate time.

Barnouw (1942:44) sums up the function of sound effects with these words:

Thus properly handled, sound effects, whether used for plot action or to suggest a locality by its characteristic activity, are of value in steeping the scene in a sense of reality.

Sound effects, however, are not used in isolation; they may be interchanged with music to create dramatic effect. Therefore it is necessary for us to examine the role played by music in drama to give the desired effect.

5.3 MUSIC

Music makes little contribution to the communication of meaning, but it can be a powerful aid in reinforcing the emotional effect of a drama. It is of vital importance that music be used economically. Willis (1967:174) says that:

Music may make significant contributions to a drama, but it must be used with moderation, especially in radio.

He claims further that too much music suggests that a writer has little faith in the dialogue he has written and is trying to gain emotional power by artificial means.

There are a number of ways in which music can be used in radio drama, for example:

- i) It has a unique ability to create a mood almost instantaneously. It is therefore useful to radio drama as background as well as a scene-shifting device.
- ii) It can be used as a transition between scenes, indicating the end of one scene in an appropriate mood and giving a tonal send-off to the next scene.
- iii) Music can be used as part of action itself; for example, in a party scene it will be part of the action because there ought to be music involved.
- iv) Music can be utilised as commentator, that is, it has the power of interpreting or commenting on the action. For instance, its ability to point at critical stages in the dramatic development. It can even take us inside a character interpreting his thoughts etc.

In the next discussion we shall examine how these different plays have utilised these techniques in the three dramas to accomplish the dramatic effect. The pattern will be the same as before, is namely, to deal first with the 1987 dramas, critically comparing them and then proceeding to those broadcast in 1988.

5.4 THE TECHNIQUES USED IN THE 1987 DRAMAS

In radio, sounds and music are not just mere accessories or background in drama; they become storytelling factors in their own right. As stated earlier, the microphone as the disseminator of the sound has an invaluable role in production; it will be necessary to start with a discussion of its use in the plays. There are five basic positions that can be used by the producer to give the necessary effect. It is obvious that all the dramas would use the 'On Mike position' because it is the equivalent of being on stage. All the performance of drama whether on the stage, radio or TV, is done "on stage", so no further discussion on this setting is necessary.

5.4.1 The Off Mike Position

All three dramas have used this position, the sole purpose of which is to give the impression that the characters are whispering to each other. For instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, as Mjongile expresses the desire to search Nomhle's handbag, he whispers. This gives the impression that he has moved to a different part of the room in order to get hold of the handbag. This also emphasizes the wrongfulness of his behaviour and his awareness of the fact.

In both Mji's **Amandla Othando** and Saule's **uLindithuba**, this position has been utilised to give aside comments. Mji has used it to portray the character's dissatisfaction about what is said to her. On the other hand, Saule has used it to show the character's disbelief of the news Lindithuba discloses. It is fascinating to note that although the whispering is done in front of the intended addressees, in terms of the convention they do not hear what is said.

5.4.2 The 'Fading On' Position

As mentioned before, this position gives an impression that the speaker is approaching the physical spot of orientation. We observe that it has been utilised in all three these dramas. It is also quite evident that it is employed purely as means of preparing the listener's mind for the approaching character(s).

In Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, Themba's voice fades on slowly to announce his arrival at Nomhle's place. In the like manner, in Mji's **Amandla Othando**, the voice of Nontsikelelo's father slowly fades on, overshadowing the others in the room to indicate that he is coming to the front. In Saule's **uLindithuba** when Sis'Nomhle enters the house, she greets Phumzile and Mandisa. It becomes clear that she is distanced from Phumzile and Mandisa. When she finally talks to them, the listeners are made aware that such distance has been closed.

5.4.3 The Fading Off Position

This position has not been used by these producers in the three plays. What is distinct is the use of music as a substitute to indicate the exit of characters on stage.

We observe also that the filter mike has been utilised by the playwrights mainly in the telephonic conversations of the characters. For instance, see the conversations between Nomhle and Themba as Themba proposes to her in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**; also Nontsikelelo and Sisa with Sisa phoning from Johannesburg to express his

gratitude for her tolerance in Mji's **Amandla Othando**; in Saule's **uLindithuba**, sis'Nomhle or Lindithuba presents herself to the listeners for the better part of the play telephonically.

With regard to the echo chamber, it is interesting to note that of the three dramatists only Saule has employed it. The echo effect is evident in the flashback as Lindithuba narrates to the couple how Phumzile rescued her. The screams of Sis'Nomhle as her car collides with a cow and afterwards those of the horrified spectators stimulate the emotions of the audience. With this device, the listeners are taken to the crash scene with the driver of the car, and placed at a vantage point where they are able to see the accident as it occurs. The distance of the listener from the scene of the accident is clearly defined by the screams because the echo gives an impression that they are far removed.

5.4.4 The Sound Effects

In all three dramas, both manual and recorded sounds have been utilised to create the reality of the scene. Manual sounds mainly are knocks or opening and closing of the door to announce the entrance or exit of a character from the scene. Recorded sounds are mainly those of moving vehicles, the ambulance siren, animal sounds etc.

What is remarkable about the sound effects is that they are mainly employed to establish the locale. The device used is invaluable to radio drama. By switching on the different sound effects which establish setting, the playwright is able to take the listener with him into his imaginary world without the listener even being aware of that. For instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, in the opening of the drama, the listeners are confronted with Nomhle and Themba. The noise of the moving vehicles and the voices suggest that the setting is a bus terminus. After a while, the clatter of the typewriter and the telephone ringing denote that the scene has moved into an office.

In the like manner, Mji's **Amandla Othando** uses mainly animal sounds to give the pastoral feeling of the area. For instance, the setting associated with Nontsikelelo and Sisa's homes is indicated by chirping birds and bleating sheep, etc. To indicate that the scene has moved to a different setting, the sound is changed. For example, the insertion of the hospital intercom system and voices in the background are effective enough to reveal that the locale is a hospital.

With regards to Saule's **uLindithuba** there has not been much interchange of sound effects to denote locale due to the fact that the setting in this drama is confined to one place. To establish setting, the telephone is used which is accompanied by the caller's inquiry whether it was Mnyango's residence. In other words, the listeners are indirectly told that the scene is at Mnyango's residence.

Sound effects in these dramas are also employed to create mood and atmosphere. For instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, to effect the shock Mjongile experiences as he reads Themba's letter to his wife, a sharp cutting sound is heard which adds tension and suspense to the scene.

With regard to Mji's **Amandla Othando**, when one hears the screeching of tyres and a very loud bang of a crashing object, instantly the listener's imagination is drawn to the scene of the accident. The impact of the scene on the listener's mind is more emphasized by the hurrying feet and the sound of a siren which is suggestive of an ambulance crew. As a stimulant to the listener's imagination no words are used to interrupt the effect of the sound. Tension, which may last for only a brief moment, is created within the listener. Saule in **uLindithuba** has employed the sound effects for the same reason, to replay the scene of the accident. There is no better way to create mood and atmosphere in drama than to let the sound effects combine with action to portray on their own the events of the story.

Sound effects have been employed also to indicate time. Only two of these dramas have used such effects; for instance, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, the sound of crickets, which are small insects associated with the night, denotes that as Nomhle pleads for her husband's permission to visit a friend, it is late in the evening. Due to the fact that the listeners may not understand the purpose of the sound, the playwright gives the opportunity to Mjongile to point out that he is reluctant to allow her to go because 'Kusebusuku': it is late in the evening, as he puts it.

Saule has used the sound of a ringing bell to indicate the aspect of time. It is in the morning and to give meaning, the character's speech has been used to emphasize the point because Phumzile remarks that it is nearly eleven o'clock. It is also interesting to note that the sound in this case is symbolic. It symbolises the fact that it is Sunday, and people are expected to attend church services as Phumzile and Mandisa were to go.

What is noteworthy in these dramas is that they share a common feature of utilising the sound effects mainly for establishing the setting. They also to a larger extent use them to create a mood and atmosphere. There is, however, also variation; for example, while two playwrights have used them to indicate time, Mji has not. Time with him has been established in the dialogue of the characters. The most important thing above all is that each sound chosen approximates the function it was intended for.

5.4.5 Music

Though music may seem to be the least necessary when compared to the speech and sound effects in drama, it has the ability to give the scene its appropriate atmosphere. But it has

other uses and functions; for instance, one will observe that in these three dramas it has been largely utilised as a transition between scenes: for example, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho**, when Themba and Nomhle part, music is played to indicate the end of the scene and the start of a new one; it also indicates the change in setting.

The same is found with Mji's **Amandla Othando**, to indicate that the setting has moved from Nontsikelelo's home to Sisa's; music is also played to denote the change of both the setting and the time lapse.

Saule has used music less for its own sake; instead the interruption of the telephone in between scenes has been a good substitute. He used music only to indicate the arrival of Lindithuba at Phumzile's home. In this instance, it has been utilised to indicate a lapse of time.

In the second instance, it has been used to establish mood and atmosphere. This is quite evident in Mji's **Amandla Othando** and Saule's **uLindithuba**. For example, Mji uses lively music to indicate the happiness of Sisa's family at his recovery from ill-health. On the other hand, in Saule's **uLindithuba**, with the arrival of Lindithuba at Phumzile's home, music is played to 'stab' or a 'sting' to indicate that the critical moment has come. In this manner it has been used to heighten tension and suspense.

There is nothing distinctive about Gcilitshana's use of music; it is evident that it is mainly utilised for transition between scenes. We also notice that of the three writers he is the only one who has used music as part of action. In one particular scene, the listeners are confronted with the characters attending a dance party. The tune played acts as part of the action.

Saule's use of music is quite remarkable because he has used it twice only for the entire drama. On consulting the script we notice that there is another interpretation for the playwright had required that lively music be played; perhaps this was intended to heighten the dramatic effect of the scene, but instead music with a slow rhythm is played, which gives the scene a gloomy atmosphere.

It is also interesting to note that these three playwrights have used music with moderation, and there has been no overshadowing of the dialogue by it.

5.5 THE USE OF THE PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES IN THE 1988 DRAMAS

5.5.1 The Microphone

The 'On Mike position' is basically used all the time because it signifies that the characters are on the scene. Again it shall not be discussed any further.

5.5.1.1 The 'Off Mike' Position

The 'off mike' position which puts the performer as well as the listener in a distant position from the mike has been used by all three playwrights. For instance, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** it has been used in the scene where there is a meeting of the family members. The murmur of voices approving of what is said by Madiba can be heard in the background. The effect of this is to give an impression about the size of the room occupied. The spatial distance between characters is emphasized for the background voices seem to be distant from Madiba.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** the method has been utilised when characters need to give the impression that they are whispering. Take for instance, Nozimbo and Mqwayito whispering to each other in the presence of the convict. They have moved off the mike and the effect of that is that the listener is able to share the secret because he could hear something the convict is unable to.

In the like manner, Mahlaba in **Isiqalo Sobulumko** has used it in the scene where MaMpinga speaks to Bhadikazi in a whisper advising her about ways and means of getting money. The whispering emphasises the wrongfulness of MaMpinga's action. It creates an impression that she is distancing herself from MaDlomo as well as from the listener in order to bar them from hearing her disgraceful advice to the child.

5.5.1.2 The 'Fading On' Position

In the mind's eye of the listener the character is approaching the physical centre of the action. As the action moves slowly to the point of orientation, the listener's mind is being prepared for the coming action. For instance, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Madiba's brother announces his arrival by verbally announcing himself before he enters the scene.

In Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** the playwright starts the scene of the dance party by 'fading on' the music before introducing the characters. In so doing he makes the listeners realize that they are at the dance party and this is confirmed by the characters' speech.

In Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko** the position is evident in the scene where MaMpinga advises MaDlomo's daughter Bhadikazi about the methods of hooking a man. MaDlomo's approach to the scene is indicated by her insults which are howled at MaMpinga. The action gives the impression that she is closing the distance between them in order to assault her.

5.5.1.3 The 'Fading Off' Position

The 'fading off' position which moves the performer away from the central orientation point is discernable in all three dramas. For instance, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the cries of Madiba, who is Namhla's father and Solani her husband, slowly fade off in the scene as they die. In this manner the listener is made to visualize their picture as death slowly removes them from the scene.

Mahlaba has utilised the method to indicate the parting of MaDlomo and MaMpinga after the heated exchange of words.

With regards to Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, in the scene where the sergeant visits the children, after talking to them he gets into his car and drives off. The sound of the moving vehicle is left to linger on for a few seconds or so and then slowly fades off. The effect it has on the listener is that he remains on the scene, while the vehicle moves away.

The filter mike as well as the echo chamber have not been utilised by these playwrights in the dramas.

5.5.2 The Sound Effects

In all three dramas both manual sounds and recorded sounds are utilised. The recorded sounds range from sounds of animals to those of natural forces such as the howling of the wind. On the other hand, manual sounds consist mainly of knocks at the door, the sound of running feet, etc.

It is quite clear that in these dramas the sound effects are also utilised mainly to establish the locale. For example, in both Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** and Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**, the sound effects denote a rural area. This is achieved through the use of the sound of animals such as the bleating sheep, the bellowing cows and the chirping birds in the trees. Nongauza whose setting is in the township was unable to do that. The setting in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** is discernable only from the dialogue of the characters.

The sound effects are also used to create mood and atmosphere. Nongauza and Mahlaba have seized the opportunity to create a sense of reality by making use of the sounds of

natural forces. These sound effects provide a continuous background to a scene. The difference lies in the fact that whereas Nongauza employed them to create an eerie atmosphere that is conducive to the theme 'Ubusuku Botyhwatyho' (A night of terror), Mahlaba utilised the sounds of natural forces for symbolic effect. The cold wind howling, which is confirmed by MaDlomo's remark that 'bendingazi ukuba kubanda kangaka' (I was not aware that it is so cold), signifies the reception Vuyisile received from his mother.

It is also noteworthy to observe that in these scenes the characters continuously remind the listeners about the weather conditions in order to consolidate the impression in their imaginations that the sound is from the wind. Without the aid of the speech, the listeners may misinterpret the sound.

Msila has not used the sound effects in his play in such a way.

The sound effects may be used to signify the entrance or exit of a character in a scene. This device is utilised in all three dramas. The entrance of a character is denoted mainly by a knock at the door. For instance, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** Solani knocks at Namhla's room before he enters to discover her dead body. In a like manner, in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, the closing and opening of the door serve to indicate the exit or entrance of characters. For example, as MaGaba leaves to call Mqwayito and Nozimbo; the arrival of the two kids at MaGaba's house, etc. The same is found with Mahlaba's **Isiqalo Sobulumko**. For example, the announcement of Vuyisile's arrival at his home is indicated by the knock at the door, etc.

Only Nongauza in **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** has used sound effects to direct the audience's attention and emotions towards a certain stimulus. For instance, the sound of the breaking window pane cannot escape the listener's ear. In this case, the noise directs the audience's attention towards the window and orientate the audience's emotions towards the suspenseful terror of imminent violence.

It will be noticed that of the three dramas, Nongauza has outshone the other two playwrights in the use of the sound effects. He has succeeded in portraying a vivid visual image in the listener's mind and in this manner he managed to put a sense of reality in the drama. As opposed to that, Msila has used them less; as a result his drama tends to be dull for there is no stimulant for the listener to help the dialogue of his characters.

5.5.3 Music

Music in radio is chiefly utilised as background and for scene shifting. This is borne out in these three dramas. For example, Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** commences at Madiba's

home in the country. To indicate the end of the scene and the start of a new one in Namhla's place in the urban areas, music has been inserted to indicate the transition and also the lapse of time.

In like manner, in Nongauza's **UBusuku Botyhwatyho**, after MaGaba has left her home to go to Nozimbo's place, music is played to indicate to the listener that the scene has ended and a new scene starts at Nozimbo's place.

Mahlaba has done the same; the transition is between MaDlomo's place in the country and Johannesburg where Vuyisile is boarding a train which will take him to his home. The listeners are smoothly transported to Johannesburg with the help of a peaceful tune.

Nongauza and Mahlaba have used music as a sting to highlight a critical stage in the drama. For instance, in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, when the convict arrives at Dlamini's house, he takes as hostages the baby and Nozimbo. Mqwayito had to run to the police station to seek help. To make the audience aware that this is the critical stage, brass music combined with the sound of running footsteps is played. This is to heighten tension and to evoke the listener's emotions.

Likewise, Mahlaba has utilised music in the scene where MaDlomo goes out to murder her own son Vuyisile. The high-pitched orchestral music expresses the seriousness of the action and it creates suspense and tension.

Only Nongauza has used music in his play as part of the action. At the dance party, music is played; at the same time it serves as background to the scene, heightening the content and the mood of the sequence.

Comparing the three plays, we observe that Nongauza in **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**, has shown himself to be skilful in the use of the production elements. Msila, on the other hand, seems to have overlooked their significance. He even adopted a style of using the same tune throughout as a means of transition between scenes. Though the device may be good for its own sake, due to the fact that listeners are immediately able to discern the end of a scene or the start of a new one, it has a disadvantage because it can become monotonous. The lack of artistic means of informing the audience about the critical stages in the drama has an impact in this play. Consequently, the drama lacks highly dramatic scenes where we expect the emotions of the audience to be heightened even if only for a moment.

On examining the six dramas being studied, one can make deductions that the sound effects are used mainly to establish the locale and to create a mood and atmosphere. What is interesting is that only one sound has been used to depict the pastoral environment, that is, the sound of sheep bleating and birds chirping. It leads one to wonder whether these are the

only animals found in the country, or whether this is the only sound effect available on record for this kind of setting? However, this reflects on the producers' lack of creativity.

Another interesting point is that the dramas whose plot construction was somehow not so pleasing prove to be outstanding in the utilisation of the production elements. Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** is an example.

In conclusion, I wish to note Barnouw's words (1942:30):

The radio script is a trio for three singers: (1) Sound effects (2) Music (3) Speech. At any time, any of these can carry a solo passage, or they may be used in any combination.

It is a pleasure to notice that all the dramas studied have made use of the trio though they differ in degrees of usage.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The six dramas that were studied in this thesis revealed that there is little development in as far as Xhosa radio dramas are concerned.

The themes that are broadcast are mainly for entertainment and consequently have little intellectual depth. It is also clear that some are adapted from prose fiction, for example, **Isiqalo Sobulumko**. The drama is improvised from a short story which is about a woman who mistakenly murdered her son for money.

There is a lack of innovation which is shown by the repetition of the same theme, the 'reworking of trite theme' as Nkosi (1981) calls it. It is disappointing to find that there are still playwrights who write about the forced marriage practice that was predominant in the works of earlier writers. As a consequence these themes have lost their significance.

The contribution of theme in the portrayal of characters could be seen in the dramas. Due to the fact that the eighties have emphasized feminism, the women portrayed in these dramas have strong personalities; they are independent, as could be seen in **uLindithuba** (1987) and **Isiqalo Sobulumko** (1988) respectively.

The playwrights also lack skill as far as plot construction is concerned. The plays are devoid of conflict. This could be seen in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** (1987) and Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** (1988). It is difficult to visualize a drama completely devoid of conflict. Conflict is the central force in any drama because its ultimate resolution is responsible for the design of the plot structure. It need not occur in every scene but it must have a significant place in the structure of the play as a whole. The conflict in drama may vary greatly in intensity and it may appear in different forms, but it must always be there.

In the dramas broadcast in 1988, there is a tendency by the playwrights to present isolated incidents within the dramas. In other words, the incidents are not causally related. This practice has given rise to plots that are episodic in nature, as can be seen in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** and Msila's **Maꞑibe Sisithethe na?**

Although the unities of time and space are loosely used in the radio drama, there must be unity of action, that is, there should be consistency and wholeness of purpose and development within the plot. Each sequence must be integrated thoroughly with every other

The absence of conflict in the dramas has an effect on characterization. It has given rise to weak antagonists, as could be seen in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** and Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho** respectively. In order to hold the interest of the audience throughout the play, the antagonist and the protagonist should be on the same level of strength.

The manipulation of the characters by the playwrights is obvious in the dramas. The dramas are characterized by weak motivation in the appearances and disappearances of characters. As we have pointed out, in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?** the appearance of Namhla's boyfriend to murder Solani comes as a shock to the listeners. They are not psychologically prepared prior to the occurrence of the incident.

Lack of focus regarding the main character is one of the faults that is evident in Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**. Because of the fact that characters are on the same level of importance, it becomes difficult to pin-point who the focal character is. It is clear that this playwright wanted to depict a situation more than revealing characters.

Mji has exceeded the normally accepted number of characters on radio drama because there are eight in his play. The listeners may have a problem in identifying the voices.

On the radio, the voice plays an important role because it is the only vehicle that can be used to transmit information. There is lack of naturalness in some of the dramas. This gives an impression that the actors are reading directly from the script (though, of course, this is acceptable) and they were not given the script prior to the performance to acquaint themselves with it.

The dramas have used language to indicate the space. This is clear in the dramas with urban settings. There are a number of slang words incorporated as means of delineating the area; this is found, for example, in Gcilitshana's **Kanti Uzenze Ngokwakho** and Nongauza's **Ubusuku Botyhwatyho**.

It is also clear that the playwrights do not place any importance on time for the purposes of plot because time is unspecified in these dramas. The lapse of time is indicated by what is implied in the succession of incidents of the narrative. This could be seen in Msila's **Mayibe Sisithethe na?**

Of the six dramas, Saule's **uLindithuba** is the best because it complies with all the requirements stipulated for each dramatic element. But there is still room for improvement. Msila and Nongauza did not take into account the theoretical requirements of the medium.

Of the six dramas, Saule's **uLindithuba** is the best because it complies with all the requirements stipulated for each dramatic element. But there is still room for improvement. Msila and Nongauza did not take into account the theoretical requirements of the medium.

Xhosa radio dramas are of a low standard because the playwrights are not given the opportunity for thoughtful analysis of their achievements. They are under continuous pressure to serve the immediate needs of the listeners. This period of enormous inventiveness, therefore, tends to concentrate on dramas of little intellectual importance.

Again, because radio plays are usually broadcast only once, there is no opportunity (as there is in the theatre), to alter and improve a production in the light of comments by informed members of the audience.

Finally, it is not advisable for playwrights to study any form of creative activity without taking into account its social context and the practical conditions which to some extent predetermine its method. This is especially true of radio drama which must depend for success upon immediate rapport with its audience.

The playwright can establish this rapport by writing stories that are of interest and which possess emotional power. He must know what appeals to his or her audience. The more fascinating the story, the greater his audience will be.

The language of the drama must be clear and precise because listeners do not have the opportunity to check again on what has been said.

The characters or actors must be consistent throughout the play in everything said or done and must be plausible in terms of life and reality. The actions of the characters could be projected by the voice. Voice control is one of the vehicles he or she can use to stimulate the imaginations of the listeners.

The number of characters should be kept to the minimum. Listeners must have the opportunity to identify the characters with ease. This also helps to create a sense of identification with the characters because the playwright may project problems that are in the listener's experience. The smaller the number of characters in a scene is, the more the listener is able to keep track of the activities of his or her hero.

Sound effects, music and dialogue are needed to clarify movement, setting and action. They should be used effectively and sufficiently for the purpose of the play. When used correctly, they can hold a tight grip on the feelings and minds of the listeners.

Lastly, it is evident that the radio dramas discussed in this thesis revealed that there is latent potential in the Xhosa dramatists and the producers. It is therefore, necessary that they

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

AUCAMP, H.

1981 Die Blote Storie. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

✓ BARNOUW, E.

1942 Handbook of Radio Writing. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

✓ BOULTON, M.

1960 The anatomy of drama. London: Routledge and Kegan.

BROOKS, C. & HEILMAN, R.B.

1964 Understanding drama. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

BROOKS, C. & WARREN, R.P.

1959 Understanding Fiction. New York: Appleton-Century Crafts Inc.

CHATMAN, S.

1978 Story and discourse. London: Cornell University Press.

DIPPLE, E.

1970 The critical idiom. London: Methuen and Co. LTD.

EVANS, E.

1977 Radio. A guide to broadcasting techniques. London: Barne and Jenkins.

FOSTER, E.M.

1927 Aspects of the novel. London: Edward Arnold LTD.

GENETTE, G.

1983 Narrative Discourse. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

HARVEY, W.J.

1965 Character and the Novel. New York, Cornell University Press.

HEESE, M. AND LAWTON, R.

1983 The Owl Critic. Goodwood, Nasou Limited.

HILWARD, R.

1976 Writing for television and radio. New York: Hasting House publishers.

ISSACHAROFF, M.

1981 **Space and reference in drama;** Poetics today. Vol. 2:3 (1981), 211-224.
French, Western Ontario.

JAFTA, D.N.

1978 A survey of Xhosa drama, unpublished M.A. dissertation. Umtata.

KUNENE, D.

1986 **Language, literature and the struggle for liberation in S.A.** Staffrider (vol;
6 no 3).

LARSON, C.

1970 Patterns of African fiction. Michigan: University Microfilms, A Xerox
company.

LUBBE, H.J.P.

1968 Evaluering van Suid-Sotholusteraars se voorkeure ten opsigte van radio
dramas. M.A. thesis. Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit.

NKOSI, L.

1981 Tasks and masks, themes and styles in African literature. Harlow, Essex:
Longman Group LTD.

PFISTER, M.

1988 The theory and analysis of drama, New York: Cambridge University Press.

PRINCE, G.

- 1982 Narratology: the form and functioning of narrative. New York: Mouton Publishers.

RIMMON-KENAN, S.

- 1983 Narrative fiction: contemporary poetics. New York: Methuen.

SAULE, N.

- 1988 Amaciko. Arcadia: Bard.

SCOTT, K.

- 1973 In search of African Theatre. New York: Charles Scribnerps Sons.

SHIPLEY J.T.

- 1942 Dictionary of world literature, New York: The Philosophical library, INC.

SMILEY,, S.

- 1971 Playwriting: the structure of action, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.

SMUTS, J.P.

- 1986 Triptiek, Cape Town: Tafelberg.

TENNYSON, G.B.

- 1967 An introduction to drama, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

THOMPSON, A.R.

- 1946 The Anatomy of drama, California: University of California Press.

VANDERMOERE, H.

- 1982 The structure of the novel, Luven: Acco.

WELLEK, R. & WARREN, A.

- 1948 Theory of literature, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

WILLIS, E.

- 1967 Writing television and radio programs, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston Inc.

SECONDARY SOURCES

ABRAMS, M.C.

- 1981 A glossary of literary terms. New York: C.B.S. Publishers.

AUCAMP, H. & A. LOUW

- 1983 Hoorspelkeur - Radio dramas. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

BENTLEY, E.

- 1966 The Life of drama. London: Mexthuen and Co. LTD.

FELTON, F.

- 1949 The radio play. London: Sylvan Press.

FIELD, S.

- 1974 Professional Broadcast writer's handbook. U.S.A.: TAB BOOK.

FUCHS, J.D.

- 1946 Die radiodrama: Wese, vorm en verskyning in Suid-Afrika. Ongepubliseerde M.A.-verhandeling. Kaapstad: Universiteit van Kaapstad.

SATYO, S.C.

- 1977 Traditional concepts and literary conventions in Sinxo's works. M.A. thesis. Pretoria: UNISA.

STRACHAN, A.

- 1990 An article in *South African Journal of African Languages* 1990, 10(3), 98-108.

STYAN, J.L.