

**THE TECHNIQUE OF SHORT STORY WRITING: AN ANALYTIC
STUDY OF THE MODERN XHOSA SHORT STORY GENRE**

Welcome Sakhiwo Zengethwa

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STUDY OF THE MODERN XHOSA SHORT STORY GENRE**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Welcome Sakhiwo Zengethwa declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely my own, with the exception of such quotations or references which have been attributed to their authors or sources.

Welcome Sakhiwo Zengethwa

Dated at the Fort Hare University this 13th day of June 2014

DEDICATION

Education is generally regarded as the best weapon to address many of the challenges of life. I therefore feel it is quite appropriate to dedicate this work to my children, grand-children and the two daughters in-law for them to take learning as an ongoing process that sees no age. They must therefore study and reach for the stars.

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The staff of the Fort Hare library and the Centre for Cultural Studies (NAHECS) cannot be left behind because they also supported me one way or another in my studies.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify and analyse the Xhosa short stories that have been written since the advent of the new democratic South Africa and to determine the extent to which they are addressing the challenges of the new South African society, such as the establishment and growth of democracy, crime, corruption, HIV/ AIDS, poverty, unemployment and moral degeneration.

The aim of this study therefore, is to evaluate the texts which have been published from the early 1990's up to now within this context. The overall purpose of this research would be to determine the extent to which the literary standard of the genre has improved since the publication of Botha, Mtuze and Nguna's research, on the Xhosa short story genre.

The particular features of the Xhosa short story genre (including its historical origin) will also have to be taken into consideration. This means that the influence of traditional African literature (including the *intsomi* and *isibongo*) on the modern Xhosa short story, will equally be studied here. This study will be based upon an analysis of the most important literary features of the short story as an independent form of literary art. The essential features of the short story to be considered in this study, include the important principles of unity, economy and compression of the content of the story.

The study comprises of the following six chapters:

Chapter One performs the function of an introduction to the study. This chapter provides information on the aim of the study, significance, limitations, methodology to be followed and the organisations of the study. It also provides background information on the authors and their literary contributions.

Chapter Two deals with the historical development of the short story, theoretical features of the short story and the relationship between the short story and other literary genres.

Chapter Three focuses on the theme of this study. This chapter deals with matters that affect society during the post-apartheid era. The researcher will explore the extent to which short story writers in the new South Africa are engaging with issues in South African society, whether positive or negative.

The manner in which they depict the new democratic government, as compared to the previous apartheid regime will also be investigated in this chapter.

Chapter Four deals with the stylistic patterns and language used by the Xhosa short story writer. Various figures of speech will be dealt with here, such as ideophones, repetition and idioms.

Chapter Five deals with structural patterns. Both the macro structure and the micro structure will be discussed in this chapter. The various phases of the short story such as the introduction, climax and ending phases will be discussed in the section on the macro structure. In the section on the micro structure, aspects such as selection, sequence and tension will be discussed.

Chapter Six serves as the conclusion of the study. It consists of a summary of the main findings of the study based upon the theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter Three. This chapter comprises of a final critical evaluation of the short story texts which have been analysed here, as well as mapping out of the way forward for this important literary genre.

ISICATSHULWA

Injongo yesi sifundo kukuchonga nokuhlalutya amabali amatsha, amafutshane esiXhosa athe abhalwa ekuzalweni kwedemokhrasi kuMzantsi Afrika omtsha nokuqwalasela ubungakanani ekulweni imingeni ejongene noluntu lwalo Mzantsi Afrika mtsha, enjengokusekwa nokukhula kwedemokhrasi, ulwaphulo-mthetho, inkohlakalo nokwanakalisa, ubhubhane i-HIV/AIDS, ubuhlwempu, intswelanguqesho nokonakala kwesimo sengqondo.

Injongo yesi sifundo ke ngoko, kukuphicotha iincwadi eziveliswe ebutsheni beminyaka yoo-1990 ukuza kuthi ga ngoku mayela nalo mba isifundo esi singawo. Injongo equlathe konke yolu phando iya kuba kukuqwalasela umgangatho wophuculo lubhalo-ncwadi ngamabalana ukususela koko kwaveliswa nguBotha, Mtuze noNguni kwiimpando zabo. Iimpawu ngakumbi zamabalana amafutshane esiXhosa ngokudibeneyo nebali ngemvelaphi yamabali amafutshane esiXhosa kuya kufuneka zifumane ingqwalaselo. Oku kuthetha ukuba iimpembelelo zoncwadi lwemveli (kudibanisa intsomi nesibongo) kubhalo lwanamhlanje lwamabali amafutshane esiXhosa ziya kufundwa ngokulinganayo apha.

Esi sifundo siya kucangcatha kuhlalutyo lwezona mpawu zibalulekileyo zebali elifutshane njengemo ezimeleyo yobugcisa kubhalo. Iimpawu ezimandla zebali elifutshane eziya kuqwalaselwa kwesi sifundo, kudibanisa nemigqaliselo yobunye, uqoqosho noshwankathelo lomxholo webali.

Esi sifundo siqulathe ezi zahluko zithandathu zilandelayo:

Isahluko sokuqala senze intshayelelo yesifundo esi. Esi sahluko sisinika ulwazi ngenjongo yesi sifundo, ukubaluleka kwaso, unyino nenkqubo eza kulandelwa kucwangciso lwesi sifundo. Kwesi sahluko sifumana nolwazi ngemvelaphi yababhali negalelo labo kubhalo ncwadi.

Isahluko sesibini siqulathe ibali ngemvelaphi yebali elifutshane, iimpawu zebali elifutshane nonxibelelwano phakathi kwebali elifutshane nezinye iintlobo zobhalo.

Isahluko sesithathu sijongene ncakasane nomxholo wesi sifundo. Esi sahluko siphethe imiba echaphazela uluntu ngexesha elisemva kobandlululo. Umphandi uza kuhlola iindlela ababhali kulo Mzantsi Afrika mtsha abaziqwalasela ngayo iziganeko phakathi koluntu ezakhayo nezingakhiyo. Indlela abachaza ngayo urhulumente omtsha wedemokhrasi xa bethelekisa norhulumente wangaphambili wengcinezelo iza kuphandwa kwesi sahluko.

Isahluko sesine siza kuthetha ngesimbo sokubhala nangolwimi olusetyenziswe ngumbhali webali lesiXhosa elifutshane. Izigaba zentetho ngokwahlukana kwazo kuya kuthethwa ngazo, ezinjengezi: isifanekisozwi, isikhuzo, uphinda-phindo, isimntwiso namaqhalo.

Isahluko sesihlanu sithetha ngomfuziselo wesakhiwo seballi. La mabalana kuxoxwa ngawo kwesi sifundo, kuza kuthethwa ngawo apha kulandelwa umfuziselo wesakhiwo seballi.

Isahluko sesithandathu luqukumbelo lwesi sifundo. Esi sahluko siqulethe isishwankathelo ngeziphumo ezingoondoqo ezisekwe kwiingcingane ngoko kuthethwe ngako kwisahluko sesithathu. Esi sahluko sikwaqukumbela uhlabo-madlala kwiincwadi zamabalana amafutshane ezihlalutywe kwesi sifundo, kwanokubeka indlela ebheka phambili ngolu bhalo-ncwadi lubaluleke kangaka.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

The modern short story is regarded as one of the most important literary forms in modern society. Short stories are frequently read by modern readers, mainly because of their shortness and therefore their suitability for the modern rushed style of life. In most world literatures, a fair amount of short story anthologies are published every year. These anthologies need to be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that literary norms are adhered to and to prevent the genre from being impoverished and becoming superficial. The aim of this chapter is to serve as an introduction to this study. The aim and objective of the study will be explained. The method of study, as well as the lay-out of the various chapters will also be discussed here. Finally, background information on the various authors will be provided. This includes information on their personal background, as well as a brief introduction to their publications.

1.2 Aim and objective of the study

The general aim of this study is to make a critical analysis of the modern Xhosa short story and thereby, to contribute towards the study of this specific literary genre against the background of the African literary tradition. This study seeks to provide an analytic description of the most important aspects of the short story, such as narrative style, plot structure, theme and characterization. The study also attempts to redefine the leading set of aesthetic criteria for evaluation of the Xhosa short story, as a form of African literature. Works of Xhosa short story writers will be examined to determine whether or not they adhere to these aesthetic principles in their writings. This study recognises the fact that a number of research projects have already been completed on the Xhosa short story. This includes the work of Botha (1978), Mtuze (1986) and Nguna (1997). This study, however, also recognises the fact that these studies are all rather outdated, with the most recent one having been completed as

long as 17 years ago. During this period, a number of new short story anthologies have come from the press.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to identify and analyse the new short stories that have been written since the advent of the new democratic South Africa and to determine the extent to which they are addressing the challenges of the new South African society, such as the establishment and growth of democracy, crime, corruption, HIV/Aids, poverty, unemployment and moral degeneration. Madamombe (2008:36) says the following with regard to Xhosa literature: "It is clear that, within this new dispensation, the nature of writing is expected to change to suit the new era" The extent to which this observation applies also to the modern Xhosa short story, will form the basis of the investigation in this study. The researcher hopes that this study will pose a challenge to new writers to follow the changing times when they write. The new authors therefore, need to improve their techniques in order to address the challenges mentioned above.

The aim of this study therefore, is to evaluate the texts which have been published from the early 1990's up to now within this context. The overall purpose of this research would be to determine the extent to which the literary standard of the genre has improved since the publication of Botha, Mtuze and Nguna's research. It will also be to determine the extent to which gifted new authors have emerged during recent years. This means that the extent to which this new generation of authors has addressed the technical shortcomings of Xhosa short stories as identified by Botha (1978), Mtuze, (1986) and Nguna (1997) will represent the main focus of this study. In order to achieve this, the general theoretical principles of the short story will firstly have to be identified and discussed. The particular features of the Xhosa short story genre (including its historical origin) will also have to be taken into consideration. This means that the influence of traditional African literature (including the *intsomi* and the *isibongo*) on the modern Xhosa short story, will equally be studied here.

1.3 Theoretical framework

In this study the theoretical model of May (also known as New Short Story Theories) will mainly be used as a framework for the analysis of the stories. This model can

be found in the publication: "The New Short Story Theories" (May, 1994) This publication includes a few basic pieces from the earlier volume, of Poe's "Hawthorne review" (1976) Brander Mathew's extension and formalization of Poe's theories (1976), and essays by Randall Garrell, Elizabeth Bowen and Nadine Gordimer. Poe's inductive reasoning that leads to the constitution of a set of literary criteria will be looked into in particular.

This study will be based upon an analysis of the most important literary features of the short story as an independent form of literary art. The modern, more sophisticated short story genre, as it is known today, originated in America as recently as the early 19th century. Writers, however, initially disagreed about a proper name for the genre. Irving, Poe and Hawthorne, for example, respectively termed it, "the tale" "the short prose tale" and "the sketch". The discussion of some basic features for a short story, such as a single impression, economy of language, lifelike characters, a fitting setting and compactness will be conducted on the basis of the theoretical framework provided by these literary scholars. The essential features of the short story, to be considered in this study, include the important principles of unity, economy and compression of the content of the story.

1.4 Methodology

This study will be based upon a thorough understanding of the literary principles upon which the short story genre is based. The most important theoretical considerations, as formulated by various literary scholars within the African context, as well as within the wider global context, will therefore serve as the point of departure for this study into the Xhosa short story. Resources such as the University of Fort Hare Library, East London Library and Rhodes University Library will be visited to obtain relevant and necessary information with regard to this study. The accessing of internet resources will also be of great advantage. Information on the evaluation of the relevant texts and whatever has been written on them will be obtained from National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) situated at the University of Fort Hare. Regular consultation with the supervisor of this study will be maintained, whilst personal interviews with the relevant authors or their next of kin will also be arranged.

This study attempts to present a critical analysis of the most important Xhosa short story texts which were published from the mid-1990s up to the present. For practical reasons, it will however, not be possible to analyse all the anthologies that were published during the designated period of study. Consequently, only a limited number of publications that are considered to be representative of this period will be selected for analysis and discussion.

The short story tradition from the mid-1990s up to the present is expected to reflect the needs and the preferences of the people in the “new” South Africa. One should not however, discard what the early short story authors have written, instead one needs to recognise what they have achieved and their efforts to help to take the literature forward. For this reason, only the following six texts will be analysed here in depth (two of these are written by female authors): Bongela, “Iimbali zikaMpahleni” (1998), Dudumashe Luthango, “Ngapha komkhusane” (1998), Duka “Ubusi” (2003), Magona, “Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka yawo” (2007), Mtuze “Loo Mhla Zibuyayo” (2003) and Yekela “Ndiboleke Indlebe” (1997). These texts have been selected in such a manner that three of them originate from the 1990’s, whilst the remaining three originate from the first decade of the new millennium. It is envisaged that this method of selection will ensure that a complete, representative picture is obtained of the nature of the Xhosa short story in the new South Africa.

1.5 Significance of the study

It is of vital importance that people should know that even long before the advent of the written word, Africans had produced stories. Since earliest times stories were often told in the evenings by the fireside. Forster (1954:28) for instance, writes that “the primitive audience was an audience of shock heads gaping around the camp fire”. To the people of Africa the narration of stories was equally important. This narrative tradition was continued into the modern environment in which Xhosa society finds itself today. With this study it is hoped that people will develop a better understanding of the inherent beauty and aesthetic value attached to the Xhosa short story. The study will also reflect on the cultural values that the Xhosa short story inculcates in African society. Most of the short stories provide a new

perspective on the meaning of life. Even when confronted with a hopeless situation, one must not look at it as an obstacle, but rather as a challenge.

1.6 Limitations

Owing to the existence of such a large number of Xhosa texts, it will not be possible to undertake a full analysis of them all within the context of this Magister study. Only a limited number will therefore be selected for analysis in this study. Furthermore, some of the authors whose writings will be explored here have already passed away. It will not be possible therefore, to interview them, but efforts will nonetheless be made to interview their next of kin. Finally, limited financial constraints will make it difficult for the researcher to visit libraries and to consult with important role players elsewhere in the country.

1.7 Organisation of the study

This section provides information on how the study is structured by outlining the contents of the various chapters. To this end, the study comprises of the following six chapters:

Chapter One performs the function of an introduction to the study. This chapter provides information on the aim of the study, significance, limitations, methodology to be followed and the organisation of the study. It also provides background information on the authors and their literary contributions.

Chapter Two deals with the historical development of the short story, features of the short story and relationship between the short story and other literary genres.

Chapter Three focuses on the theme of this study. This chapter deals with matters that affect society during the post-apartheid era. The researcher will explore the extent to which short story writers in the new South Africa are engaging with the current circumstances in South African society, whether positive or negative. The manner in which they depict the new democratic government, as compared to the previous apartheid regime, will be investigated in this chapter.

Chapter Four will deal with the stylistic patterns and language used by the Xhosa short story writers. Various figures of speech will be dealt with here, such as ideophones, onomatopoeia, personification, repetition, similes, interjections and idioms.

Chapter Five deals with structural patterns. Both the Macro structure and the Micro structure of the stories under discussion will be analysed in this chapter.

Chapter Six serves as the conclusion of the study. It consists of a summary of the main findings of the study based upon the theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter Three. This chapter comprises of a final critical evaluation of the short story texts which have been analysed here, as well as mapping out of the way forward for this important literary genre.

1.8 Background information on the selected texts.

1.8.1 Bongela, K.S. and his contribution to literature

The writer Knobel Sakhiwo Bongela was born on November 26, 1936 at Bawa in the small town of Gcuwa (Butterworth). He passed his Junior Certificate at Blythwood Secondary School in 1954. He completed his teacher's diploma at Lovedale in 1956. In 1961 he acquired his BA degree at the University of Fort Hare.

He taught at Blythwood from 1962 to 1969. In 1970 he received promotion. He became the principal at Zizweni secondary school at Ngqamakhwe. Bongela made a great contribution to the development of Xhosa literature. He wrote the following books: "Umzi omtsha" (1970), "Imizabalazo" (1969), "Alitshoni lingenandaba" (1971), "Iphulo" (1977), "Inxili" (1985), "Ingalo" (1982), "Kusa kusihlwa" (1979), "Umhlinzeko" (1982) and "Iimbali zikaMphahleni" (1998). He has served as an examiner for Xhosa (matric level).

He has also been a member of the Xhosa language Board. The researcher has selected "Iimbali zikaMphahleni" (1998), among his short story texts for this study (Bongela, 1979: Outside Cover).

1.8.2 Dudumashe-Luthango, N. and her contribution to literature

Dudumashe-Luthango is a female author; she was born in 1957 in the village of Mthingweni at Cofimvaba in Transkei. Her clan name is MamQwathi. Her mother's surname is Khahla of the MaNyeleni clan in Alice. Her father is the second son of Bashi Maglasana Dudumashe. Dudumashe-Luthango's first name is Nokwanele. She is the only daughter of Bashi and Khahla Dudumashe. Her parents also have three sons.

Dudumashe-Luthango completed her primary school education at Mthingwevu Primary School at Cofimvaba. She completed her Junior Secondary School education at Thembisile Junior Secondary School at Cofimvaba. After completing her Junior secondary education she went to Matanzima High School at Cofimvaba under the principalship of a Mr. Ndalasi. She obtained a second class pass in standard 6 as well as in form 3, junior certificate (JC). She left Matanzima High School and went to Tsomo High School. The principal at Tsomo was a Ms Jacobs whose nickname was Nonkcola. She became a school prefect at Tsomo High. She excelled at soft ball at school, such that she became the captain of the school's first soft ball team.

In 1980 she enrolled for the teacher's diploma course at the former University of Transkei (Unitra). After completing her teacher's diploma she was employed at the Holy Cross High School in Mthatha in 1983. She taught Xhosa and Biology at the school. In order to further her education she studied privately. In 1986 she obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree (BA). In 1983 she got married to Mcimbi Laurens Luthango of the Gcina clan. In 1984 her first child, Yolanda was born. She is still teaching at Holy Cross High School in Mthatha. She teaches Xhosa and History for Grade 12. Working together with K. P. Siwundla, they wrote a book on creative writing. This was followed by a book called "Sichumile isiXhosa" for grades 2 & 3. She is also the author of the short story collection called "Ngapha komkhusane" (Published in 1998 by AFRO PUBLISHERS). (Personal Interview with Dudumashe-Luthango: Mthatha, November 9, 2009). "Ngapha komkhusane" will be studied for this study.

1.8.3 Duka, M.M.M. and his contribution to literature

Menzi Meshache Minsie Duka was born on November 11, 1948 in Cradock. He started his primary school education at Lwana Primary School in 1955 at Cradock where he went up to standard 3 (grade 5). He left Lwana Primary School in 1959. He went to Mzamomhle Primary School in Hofmeyr where he completed his standard 6 with distinction.

In 1963 he started his Form 1 (standard 7) at Cradock Bantu Secondary School under the principalship of Mr K. B. Tabata. In 1965 Duka completed his standard 8 (Junior Certificate) with distinction. He then went to Lovedale College in Alice where he completed his standard 10 (matric) in 1967. He continued with his studies at Lovedale, training as a teacher. He completed his Junior Secondary Teacher's Certificate (J.S.T.C.) in 1969. He received awards for his outstanding achievements in Science and Mathematics.

His first appointment as a teacher was in 1970 at Zeleni Secondary School in King William's Town. He continued with his studies privately. In 1988 he completed his Secondary School Diploma (SED) with distinction in Science and Mathematics at Vista University. He registered for the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree with UNISA and he completed it. In 1995 he completed his BA Honours degree at the University of Fort Hare. At Fort Hare he received an award for outstanding achievement in African languages.

His first book "Ibetho" was published in 1987 by Juta & Co, Ltd. Duka served as principal at the following schools: Zuzile Junior Secondary school at Cofimvaba, Mzamomhle Secondary at Whittlesea, and Matthew Goniwe High School at Cradock. In 1993 he established Mziwodumo Combined School at Tambo village. The village is situated in the area between Queenstown and Whittlesea. In 1996 he was promoted to the rank of inspector of schools for educational development at Cradock. His book "Ubusi" was published by Shuter & Shooter Publishers in 2003. The same year he enrolled for his Master's degree at UNISA (Duka, 2003:60). Duka completed his Doctoral Degree in Literature and Philosophy at the University of South Africa (UNISA, 2002). Duka's "Ubusi" (2003) will be studied here.

1.8.4 Magona, S. and her contribution to literature

Sindiwe Magona was born on August 23, 1943 in the village of Gungululu nestled in the heart of the then Transkei homeland. When she was still very young, she was forced by illness to relocate from the expansive rural hillsides to the squashed confines of a shack in the Cape Flats township of Gugulethu.

Magona was an enthusiastic and able learner in her primary school years. The scholastic indifference of adolescence however took its toll, and a grade failure made her to repeat it at an expensive Catholic boarding school in Gugulethu, a season which orchestrated an academic turnabout enabling her to qualify for acceptance to St. Matthew's Teacher Training College. Shortly after qualifying from the college she was contracted as a primary school teacher at Hlengisa Higher Primary School.

Magona has written over thirty educational children's books which have been released in all eleven South African languages, and co-wrote the instructional manual "Teach Yourself Xhosa". In 2007 she produced a book called "Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka Yawo" published by L.P. Printers. Her latest novel, "Beauty's Gift" (2008), interrogates the impact of the AIDS pandemic on monogamous African women and was short-listed for the prestigious Commonwealth Prize. Magona's short stories have appeared in numerous South African anthologies and she has written articles for major national and international newspapers. Her latest literary endeavour is the publication of a poetry collection entitled "About". She retired in 2003. She now lives in Cape Town and has thrown herself into writing [http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/magonas.htm\(c\)](http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/magonas.htm(c)) 1999–2008 South African History online (Accessed on 14/02/2009). Magona's book that has been selected by the researcher for this study is "Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka yawo". The title given to this book by the author aims at encouraging the Xhosas to be proud of their language and make it grow by producing more Xhosa books.

1.8.5 Mtuze, P.T. and his contribution to literature

Peter Tshobisa Mtuze was born on November 2, 1941 in Middleburg, Eastern Cape in the Karoo region. He is a married man, married to Nomathemba Ngwatyu. His

parents worked as farm labourers. They did not have enough money to send him to school, but the gifted Mtuze was determined to go to school. After passing the Junior Certificate examination in 1960, he went to Middleburg to look for work. He was employed as a court interpreter. In 1961 Mtuze was transferred to Somerset West. At Somerset West he received a promotion. He became the deputy clerk of the court in 1964. He was the first black man in South Africa to occupy this position.

In 1968 he took up the post of radio announcer at the SABC studios in King William's Town. Mtuze obtained his senior certificate in 1977. In 1978 he registered as a student at Rhodes University. In 1980 he was awarded the BA degree and in 1984 he completed his Honours degree. In 1986 he obtained his Masters degree in African languages at the University of South Africa. He completed his Doctoral thesis in 1992 on Xhosa literature at the University of Cape Town. From 1985 to 1988 he lectured at the University of South Africa (Unisa). During the same period he became the Editor in Chief of the Greater Dictionary of Xhosa at the University of Fort Hare. In 1988 he became the first black professor in African Languages at Rhodes University and served as head of department (HOD). He is recently retired and now involved in church matters. He is now an Anglican priest and canon in the Diocese of Grahamstown. He is also the Anglican Archdeacon of East London, West (Mtuzze, 2007).

Mtuzze is a prolific writer who in 1966 produced "UDingezweni" as his first novel, followed by "Umsinga" in 1973 as his second novel. He also produced "Ugadla" (poetry), (1976), "Amathol'eendaba" (short stories), (1977) and "Umphehlulu" (short stories), (1984). He also produced dramas, essays and poetry collections (Nguna, 1997:6). The researcher has selected "Loo Mhla Zibuyayo" among his short texts for this study. This book was published by Shuter & Shooter in 2003. It contains 14 stories. In this book the author mainly writes about social issues during the post-apartheid era in South Africa.

1.8.6 Yekela, M. and his contribution to literature

Mazizandile Yekela whose clan name is Zizi, Dlamini, Jama, Sijadu, Fakade was born in Port Elizabeth at New Brighton location. He did his primary school education

in Port Elizabeth. He went to Lovedale College for his secondary school education, but returned to Port Elizabeth for his Junior Certificate (Grade 10). He completed his senior certificate (matric) at St John's in Mthatha. He then went to the University of Fort Hare where he completed his BSc degree and UED qualification. Yekela loved reading books and newspapers as a youth. It was when he was doing Junior Certificate (grade 10) when he recognised that he can write stories. He was always applauded for his essays by his teachers, English essays in particular. Yekela formally started writing in 1984. He wrote Xhosa essays. He was often encouraged by the late Harry Mjamba. He produced his first collection, "Amaxesha Empucuko Sisingise phi na?" in 1989 (published by de Jager Haum). This book was prescribed for use by schools in grades 9 and 10. In 1996 he produced his second collection called "Unambitheko" published by Oxford Press.

In 1997 he produced the short story collection called "Ndiboleke Indlebe" published by Via Afrika. This book is being used as a prescribed work by various universities. In his books he prefers to write about contemporary issues. He is not a gifted speaker but he believes in writing to express his views. He is also one of the three authors who produced the book called "Ukhanyo" for Foundation Phase classes. He particularly enjoys writing short stories. (Personal interview with Mazizandile Yekela, at Beacon Bay in East London, 03.10.2009). For this study his collection, "Ndiboleke indlebe" will be studied here.

1.9 Brief profile of the six selected anthologies

1.9.1 Bongela: "Iimbali zikaMpahleni" (1998)

This book contains 11 stories. The average length of the stories in this text is 8 pages. The writer's stories in this book are about the recent history of South Africa, including contemporary incidents such as the Bhishe massacre in 1992 and the release and inauguration of Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela as the first black president of the South African government.

The primary motive of the author in writing this book "Iimbali zikaMpahleni" is to fulfil Sirayi's wish expressed in his paper at the Festival of Arts and Culture, at the

University of Transkei where he says, “in terms of the forcing review of the Xhosa contemporary literary production, it is evident that the 20th century literary production tends to be static”. Sirayi (1989). The title of the book means “Mphahleni’s narrations”. The name “Mphahleni” refers to the author himself, Knobel Sakhiwo Bongela. The term “Mphahleni” suggests that people sit around him to listen to him narrating stories.

1.9.2 Dudumashe-Luthango: “Ngapha komkhusane” (1998)

This book contains 10 stories. The average length of the stories in this text is 6 pages. The title of the book “Ngapha komkhusane” means “behind the screen”. The author’s dedication page reveals that it was behind the screen whilst following the initiation into womanhood ritual, that she got a golden opportunity to write this book. The stories in this text are about contemporary issues and will captivate readers’ interest. Examples of such stories are “Ubufazi Ubufazi” (“to be a woman, to be a woman”), the story that shows how wives are often abused by men. The story “Icwengile Junior Secondary School” tells us about disobedient undisciplined and unruly youth in the South African schools during the post-1994 era.

1.9.3. Duka: “Ubusi” (2003)

The title of the book suggests the sweet taste of honey. In the context of the book; this means that the reader will enjoy the flavour of different stories in this book. This book contains 12 stories. The average length of the stories in this text is 4 pages, which means that Duka’s stories are generally much shorter than the other stories that are being analysed here. These stories deal with topics such as “Amakhwenkwe” (“boys”), “UZenzile” (“a man called Zenzile”), “UMthembu wokugqibela” (“the last Mthembu”) etc. This book is suitable for use in secondary schools. Each story is concluded with a set of questions that are intended for educational purposes.

1.9.4 Magona: “Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka yawo” (2007)

The title of the book suggests that each tree produces its own fruits. This means that each writer in the book writes his/her own story his/her own way. This book contains 7 stories. The average length of the stories in this book is 11 pages which means that the stories tend to be longer than the stories of the other authors that are being dealt with here.

The writer’s motive in writing this book is to encourage emerging young authors to write books in order to uplift the standard of the Xhosa language and literature. Magona puts it as follows: “I am leading a group that want to write and the group is called Gugulethu Writer’s Group” (p.7). Magona therefore is the collector and editor of the stories that are found in this book, although she has also included one story written by herself namely: “UmkaModi” (“Modi’s wife”). The story deals with possessiveness, showing the close attachment and love between Modi and his wife. The story is 15 pages long. This book was published in 2007, which means that it is the youngest and most recent of all the publications that are being studied here. It may therefore be expected that the social characteristics of the “new South Africa” would by this time have taken on a definite form and that they would be clearly reflected in these stories.

1.9.5 Mtuze: “Loo Mhla Zibuyayo” (2003)

The title of the book suggests the period when people’s democratic rights are returned to the people. This book contains 14 stories. The average length of the stories in this book is 7 pages. The writer’s primary motive in writing this book is to sensitize the readers about things that happened during the apartheid era and how they affected South Africans and are still affecting them. In the introduction to this book, he says: “In “Loo Mhla Zibuyayo” the stories are written for enjoyment and also warning people to remain on the alert about things that happen during post-1994 era” (p.1).

1.9.6. Yekela: “Ndiboleke Indlebe” (1997)

The title of the book is “Lend me your ear”. This book contains 12 stories. The average length of the stories in this book is 7 pages. The writer writes about contemporary issues, incidents and themes about youth and adults. The writer skilfully handles humour and sorrow in both urban and rural settings, in stories such as “Saphuma Siziintsalu Kuloo Sekisi” reflecting urban life and “Yajayiva iteksi” reflecting rural life in the Ngcobo villages, as well as life in the squatter camps, in Gcuwa (Butterworth). He is versatile in his depiction of all levels of South Africa’s social life. In his book “Ndiboleke Indlebe” Yekela reflects that the expectations of South Africans have not yet been achieved by the South African democratic government. People’s social life, both urban and rural has not changed. Poor service delivery dominates in the new South Africa. Employers’ and employees’ working relationship is not sound. This results in strikes. Travelling on South African roads is not safe because there is no strict traffic control. The title of this book could possibly have been inspired by the following well-known passage from Shakespeare’s (1959:143) drama “Julius Ceasar”: “Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears”.

CHAPTER 2

LITERARY FEATURES OF THE SHORT STORY

2.1 Introduction.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of the Xhosa short stories to be studied here. Matters such as the definition of a short story, the essential literary features of the genre and the relationship between the short story and other literary genres will be dealt with in this chapter. Finally, the development of the modern Xhosa short story will be discussed.

2.2 The theory of the short story

2.2.1 Definition

Mphahlele is an African literary critic who defines the short story as a finished, self-contained piece of writing, independent of the novel or any other form of literature (Mphahlele, 1982:3). Scholes and Klans (1969:9) state that the basic elements of narration are a story and a story teller. In a story we have characters and events, arranged in time so as to move toward some climax and resolution. Guerin et al. (1979:59) describe a short story as a relatively brief piece of prose fiction characterised by considerably more unity and compression in all its parts, (including theme, plot, structure, character, setting and mood) than the novel.

The definition provided by the Encyclopedia Britannica (1986) stresses the difference between the short story and other prose genres. It defines the short story as a brief fictional prose narrative to be distinguished from longer, more experienced narrative forms such as the novel, epic, saga, and romance. This definition emphasises the briefness of the short story in comparison with the longer genres such as the novel, epic, saga, and romance. The difference between the short story and other literary genres will receive further attention in paragraph 2.4 below.

2.2.2 The development of the short story

The historical development of the short story differs in various societies according to subject matter, approach and time. Magill (1981:152) states that in western society, the magazine markets of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries brought forth a modern story with a history that stretches back to the beginnings of man. He goes on to say: "In every age there has been a modern short story of some kind to answer the persistent demand of people for a gripping tale, a tale which holds children from play". He further states:

The modern short story had to wait for a more popular press and magazine format more clearly established before it triumphed. (Magill, 1981: 152)

Magill (1981:153) says that tales in one form or another are approximately as old as language, and if language is the distinguishing feature of Homosapiens, it means that tales must have originated at almost the same time as human beings. In the 19th century Chekhov and Pushkin of Russia, de Maupassant and Balzac of France laid the foundations for the short story genre. In the 20th century G.B. Sinxo and L.K. Siwisa produced their short story genres in Xhosa (Nguna, 1997:24-25).

2.2.3 Features of the short story

The short story is governed by the principles of unity, economy, and compression. Sebate as quoted by Nguna (1997:31) puts it as follows:

Compression calls on the author, to exclude some obvious happenings, since the success of a short story depends on leaving some things out.

Each of these principles will now be discussed individually in the paragraphs below.

2.2.3.1 The principle of unity

Albright as quoted by Nguna (1997:30) says that "...the short story has a unity that can be distinctly felt". In this particular genre, the story is structured firmly around a particular thematic nucleus, and events are selected strictly in accordance with their functionality. Within the particular context of the short story, all events normally contribute towards the unity of the story. This implies that the events are logical, i.e. one event leads to another in order to keep the reader interested to know what will happen next. This logical appearance of events in the story develops systematically through its main phases, from the beginning to the middle, to the climax and to the end.

2.2.3.2 The principle of economy

Yelland et al. (1980:187) says that effective economy is an essential quality of the short story. This refers to the economy of language used by the writer. Sebate (1994:40) refers also to the importance of the right choice of words, the avoidance of expansive elaboration and too much detail. Careful selection plays an important role. By this, it is meant that the writer has to select those facts that seem most useful for the particular purpose of his/her story and arrange them in a particular sequence.

Johnson and Hamlin (1966:12) say that the short story is told with greater economy of words, because there is less space, there is little opportunity for the description of character, setting is described in a few words and dialogue is limited. They go on to say if a short story's aim is to achieve a single concentrated impression, it must move swiftly, it cannot linger to unfold for the reader the little incidentals, the wayward episodes, or the dull patches and uneventful intervals of life.

2.2.3.3 The principle of compression

With regard to the principle of compression Satyo, the well-known Xhosa critic, as quoted by Nguna (1997:89), regards the Xhosa equivalent of the term compression quite rightly as *Uqulunganiso*. Sebate (1994:36) says that compression calls on the author to exclude some obvious happenings, since the success of a short story

depends on leaving some things out. Eugene Current Garcia (1974:22) suggests that pruning away every non-essential word or phrase and driving straight for the story climax with all possible economic means, represents the essential aim of the short story.

2.3 Relationship between the short story and other literary genres

Effective differentiation between a short story, drama, novel, poetry and essay forms a corner stone of research into the short story genre. On the other hand, there seems to be a close relationship between the short story and other prose genres. Nguna (1997: 27) writes that the fact that the short story is discussed at length by Botha (1978), Sotashe (1979) and Mtuze (1986) when they compare it with the novel, drama, poetry, sketch, anecdote, essay and folktale, is an indication that it is distinct and autonomous. At the same time however, it also has several features in common with other literary genres. The aim of this section is to hold an inclusive discussion, comparing the short story with other literary genres such as the novel, essay, drama, and poetry.

2.3.1 Relationship with longer genres

Nguna (1997: 32) says that as a modern prose form, the short story is closely related to other modern epic forms such as the novel and novelette. In all these forms the basic elements of character, action and background play an important role. There are, however, also some important points of difference between the short story and these other modern prose forms. The relationship between the short story and the novel has in the past been investigated by various critics in a number of research documents.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1990:147) defines a short story as a kind of prose fiction usually more compact and intense than the novel. The compactness of the short story suggests being condensed, brief and packed together (Fowler and Fowler, 1982:230-231). This means that the events in the short story generally take place within a limited space of time. The action is also restricted in that there are generally but a few characters actively involved in the story.

The short story is intense because it moves swiftly from one incident to the next and reaches its climax quickly before coming to a speedy end. Most of these features are found wanting in either the novel or the novelette. Compactness also suggests a more compressed plot in the case of the short story as compared to the novel. There is a significant difference between the short story and novel in terms of length, in that the novel has extended length while the short story is generally restricted in length. The short story has only one theme whereas the novel can have more than one dominant theme. The short story is restricted in volume, fewer details are presented and economy of language is applied as far as possible.

According to Nguna (1997:33) in the novel there can be an elaboration of setting, character and action, as there is ample space. The short story is extremely condensed, it is narrated in a moment and there is a uniform perspective throughout. There are fewer characters and the focus is on one main character. The novel has a looser structure. It can be narrated over a longer period of time and the perspective of the narrator may shift during the course of the narrative. Magill (1981) states that the novel differs from the short story, however, not only in length, but also in its view of reality.

The novel may accommodate a number of characters and may be constituted out of more than one sub-plot in addition to the main plot. Although the short story differs from the novel in certain respects, it cannot be totally alienated from the longer genres, as it shares some important similarities with them (Nguna, 1997:33).

2.3.2 Relationship with shorter genres

Nguna (1997:34) writes that as a shorter prose form, the short story is in some respects, closely related to other modern prose genres such as the essay and the sketch. This section attempts to discuss how exactly the shorter prose genres are related to the short story.

Pretorius and Swart (1985:13) define an essay as "...a short piece of prose about the length of a short story, at times even shorter ..." The relationship between the short story and the essay lies squarely in the fact that both genres may be regarded as

forms of prose which belong to the shorter prose category. There is however an important difference between the two genres. Mtuze (1986:36) states that the short story is a fictional form of prose narrative where the author remains in the background and conceals his/her presence in the narrative as far as possible. He goes on to say the essay may be seen as a form of non-narrative prose based upon discussion that does not necessarily exhaust the subject. The author is in the foreground and advances his/her ideas without concealing herself/himself. The essay shares some of the prose features of the short story. It is clear that the short story tends to move even closer to the essay in modern times. In the essay the essayist tries to persuade the reader to accept his/her view of the subject at hand. De Grandsaigne (1985:4) says that the essay consists of a discussion. There may be limited use of character, but plot is absent. The author presents his/her argument reflectively, while the philosophical background of the reader is taken for granted.

Various scholars have written on the relationship between the short story and other short literary genres. For example, Yelland et al. (1980:188) define a sketch as follows: "A short play, story or character description...literary sketches may be narrative, but more often brief descriptions of an incident, a situation or a character."

There are also important differences between the short story and the sketch. The sketch usually involves only one of the basic narrative elements, while the others remain largely in the background. This means that the sketch writer sometimes puts emphasis on character, whilst action and theme receive less attention. In other cases emphasis is laid on action whilst theme and character remain in the background. Shipley (1970:30) says that a sketch lacks the depth of the short story because the narrative may be subordinate and there may be stress on the psychological atmosphere. In the short story the emphasis is laid on the unity of all three basic elements, namely, the action, character and theme.

Hills (1987:2) writes that a short story tells us about something that happened to somebody, whereas a sketch is by definition a static description of a character. or a place. Any incident in a sketch is rendered as an example of a character's behaviour, not as an account of something that happened to him/her that moved or altered him/her, as it is in a story. The sketch therefore is static, whereas the short

story is dynamic. In a short story there is always something new happening, whilst in a sketch life is presented in a more static form. Hills (1987:2) comes to the conclusion that: “a character is capable of being moved in a short story no matter in how slight a way.”

2.3.3 The relationship between the short story and the drama

The short story and drama are closely related in that both genres normally have few characters. In a far more exact and precise sense of the word, a short story has unity as a novel cannot have it (Current Garcia, 1974: 13). Drama is known as a performing art. Shipley (1970: 89) says that a drama is “...something to be interpreted by the actors in front of the audience, in other words it designates a play written for interpretation by actors.”

The short story and drama have a number of literary features in common. Both genres are based on character delineation. Fredette (1994:32) says that every novel you read and every film or play you see depends, in scene after scene, on the writer’s or actor’s ability to create characters that hold a place in your memory. It is clear therefore that both the short story and drama have characters involved. In both genres there is also dialogue. Other common qualities are condensedness, one main theme, no sub-plot, a dramatic single episode, very few, swift and condensed scenes, precise and simple language and maximum unity of action.

Nguna (1997:37) writes that it is evident that these two literary forms are closely related to each other. The only basic difference between them lies in the fact that the short story projects a chosen life image in narrative form, whilst the drama projects it in the form of actors on the stage.

2.3.4 The relationship between the short story and poetry

Nguna (1997:38) writes that the short story and the poem belong to two different literary genres. The short story belongs to the genre of narrative art whilst the poem belongs to the poetic art genre. The difference between these two genres lies in style, i.e. in the way the author communicates his ideas to the reader. There are

however, also a number of important areas of agreement between these genres. The relationship between the short story and poetry is found in the meticulous composition of the text and the use of metaphorical, emotive and associative forms of language in the poem or in the short story.

2.4. The history of the modern Xhosa short story

2.4.1 Introduction

The work of the Xhosa author can only be understood properly when evaluated against the background of African literature. In this section therefore, attention will be given to the historical development of the Xhosa short story within the broader context of African literature. The specific literary features of this genre will also be attended to in this section.

2.4.2 Development of the modern Xhosa short story

Short story telling in the form of traditional tales is an old and established art in Xhosa culture. It is customary for women in traditional society to narrate tales to children around the fire in the evening. Originally tales were not recorded, as was the case in other societies such as Hebrew and Indian societies, but were mostly preserved in memory. Mtuze (1986:12) states that "...short story telling is not foreign to the Xhosas...although it took so long to evolve and develop."

Nguna (1997:40) states that it was only after the mid-19th century that Xhosa narratives started to appear in print. Some of Tiyo Soga's stories for instance, were printed in "**Indaba**" (established in 1862), whilst others were published in "**Imvo Zabantsundu**" (established in 1884). In 1906 Gqoba's compositions from the late 19th century were preserved and included by Rubusana in his "**Zemk' iinkomo magwalandini**", whilst in 1935 a few of Tiyo Soga's compositions were included in Bennie's "**Imibengo**", which is an anthology of prose and poetry. One could mention a very interesting short story, "**UGxuluwe nabaThwa**" (Bennie 1935:27), which is also one of those written by Soga.

The early pioneers of formal collections of short stories are Sinxo and Siwisa, whose collections **“Isakhono somfazi namanye amabalana”** and **“Ndibuzen’ amathongo”** respectively, were both published in 1956. Siwisa’s stories are regarded as an important contribution to the study of the sub-genre and to Xhosa literature in general. Commenting on Siwisa’s work, Mtuze (1986:28) comes to the conclusion that the most important factor that should be kept in mind when analysing or evaluating Siwisa’s short stories, is their level of development and the role of the time factor. People should not equate them too rigidly with their modern counterparts. As one of the pioneers, he belongs to the first years of development of Xhosa literature and should, therefore, be respected as he had no established tradition to guide him.

More short story writers such as Mqhaba and Burns-Ncamashe followed in 1957 and in 1961 respectively. Mqhaba’s collection is titled: **“Hayi ke beth” iinto zomhlaba** (published in 1957), whilst that of Burns-Ncamashe is known as: **“Masibaliselane”** (published in 1961). Jordan’s collection **“Kwezo Mpindo zeTsitsa”** was published post-humously in 1974. Some of the stories that are found in this collection are of an excellent literary quality and therefore the publication of this collection may be regarded as an important milestone in the development of the short story genre in Xhosa.

Peter Tshobisa Mtuze is one of the authors who have made the biggest contribution to the growth of the Xhosa short story genre in modern times. Mtuze’s own contribution towards this genre is made even more significant by the fact that he is the only modern writer who, since the 1970’s has produced a number of anthologies equal to those of Siwisa during fifties and sixties. Amongst the collections that were produced by this author, are **“Amathol’ eendaba”** (1977) and **“Umphehlulu”** (1984). The first collection contains 20 stories that have titles such as **“Alitshoni lingenandaba”** and **“Hamba bhotile”**. The second collection contains 20 stories that have titles such as **“Isaqhwithi”** and **“Uxolo ehokweni”**.

Mtuze (1986:16-17) presents a complete record of the development of the short story from its first serious appearance up to 1984. All these collections, plus those that appeared after 1984, are listed under the chronological survey of the

development of the Xhosa short story on the final pages of this study. One notices that almost every year one or two anthologies of short stories have been published in Xhosa and this in itself shows a great deal of progress in the development of this unique and interesting genre. On average a significant number of short story collections have been produced by different short story writers each decade. This illustrates the rapid growth of the Xhosa short story since its beginning in 1956.

Nguna (1997:42) states that the growing significance of the short story can be attributed to the fact that it permits the author to spill out his/her thoughts in the most direct manner. The sense of emergency, the desire to say things that plague one's thoughts and to express one's feelings within a short space of time as soon as one desires, all these and other factors, prompted the author to look for a short cut to prose effects which are almost impossible to achieve within a novel. It is hoped that in the years to come writers who are veterans and new emerging writers will produce even more collections.

2.4.3 Literary features of the modern Xhosa short story

In this section the general literary features of the Xhosa short story will be defined briefly. To this end, the researcher decided to quote the four scholars whose research work has already been completed on the literary features of the Xhosa short story. The literary scholars we are referring to here are Botha (1978), Sotashe (1979), Mtuze (1986) and Nguna (1997). Botha's Master's dissertation on the Xhosa short story was completed at the University of Stellenbosch in 1978. In his study, Botha pays attention to aspects of the Xhosa short story such as character, structure, style and narrative view point. He bases his observation on an analysis of nine collections which were published between 1956 and 1975. The short story possesses literary features which make it an independent literary genre. The uniqueness of the Xhosa short story results from these essential features, namely unity, economy and compression.

Pertaining to the portrayal of character, Botha (1978) claims that there are several defects which require a considerable measure of criticism. Frequently, for example, more than one main character is depicted and in some cases several main

characters follow one another during the course of events. This tendency often disturbs the unity of the short story. With regard to structure, Botha (1978) comes to the conclusion that the technical unity and concentration of the stories concerned is not always adequately realised because of the inclusion of superfluous material and ineffective selection of events in the story. The stories under scrutiny are mostly predictable because of the simple and naïve nature of their content. During his discussion on style, Botha (1978) identified certain positive as well as negative features. He cites Moloji (1974:39) and Gerard (1971:379) with whom he concurs that traditional literature has played a positive as well as a negative role in influencing the authors concerned regarding style. The positive influences identified by him include matters such as idiomatic expressions, imaginative use of language, imagery and repetition. At the same time he feels the style of the authors concerned have been influenced negatively by tendencies such as weak and injudicious sentence construction, undue verbosity and exaggeration of events. This, according to him, has contributed to the undue length of the stories concerned. Unity in these stories suffers whilst in most cases tension is also affected by this.

Sotashe's Honours sub-dissertation on the Xhosa short story was completed at the University of Fort Hare in 1979. In his study Sotashe (1979) pays particular attention to "**Apha naphaya**" (1973), a collection of short stories written by the well-known Xhosa writer, Jongilanga. In the different sections of this study, attention is given to aspects such as plot, character, milieu, language, style and theme. Sotashe (1979) comes to the conclusion that the modern short story in all languages has its roots in folklore and in religious material. The influence of the early narrative is therefore discernible in many modern short stories (Sotashe, 1979:4).

Mtuze's Master's dissertation on the Xhosa short story was completed at the University of South Africa in 1986. Mtuze's analysis of the Xhosa short story is based upon the study of the collections "**Ndibuzen' amathongo**" (1983), "**Izimanga zalo mhlaba**" (1975) and "**Amabali angemigudu**" (1962) published by well-known Xhosa author and pioneer of the Xhosa short story genre, Siwisa. In his brief survey of the development of the Xhosa short story, Mtuze mentions the fact that the Xhosa short story writer uses Western literary devices as a basis of the

writing but he has become sceptical of the wisdom of applying these techniques too rigidly to African literature (Mtuzze 1986:13).

Referring to the literary features of the short story in his book, "Amagqabaza Abafundi Ngoncwadi LwesiXhosa" Mtuzze also says, although the genre is characterised by brevity, economy and condensedness it should teach readers something (Mtuzze, 1996:44). He highlights the importance of metaphors, simile, personification and idiomatic expression as the unique artistic style of writing that stimulates the reader's interest (Mtuzze, 1996:57).

The last study to be discussed here is that of BNN Nguna. Her Master's dissertation on the Xhosa short story was completed at the University of Fort Hare in 1997. Nguna (1997:49) writes that the Xhosa short story possesses various interesting features. As far as style is concerned, idiomatic language is often used in the Xhosa short story. This is largely attributed to the fact that proverbs normally represent a complete argument that cannot easily be denied. Moreover, it contributes to brevity when information can be imparted to the reader in ways that avoid circumlocution.

Various forms of imagery are also found in Xhosa short stories. The authors often use them in order to convey vague and abstract concepts to the reader by relating them to phenomena of a more familiar, everyday nature. Phenomena of a rural traditional kind could, for example, be used to indicate an author's attraction to the rural way of life. Metaphor and personification are also found in short stories.

Ideophones are another feature used for the most effective and economical portrayal of the content and atmosphere of the story. Brevity, therefore, is one of the salient features of these short stories. Other features include suggestiveness, implication and subtleness, although those who fail to appreciate these, often criticise Xhosa writers because they fail to grasp the true meaning of the expression.

It is evident that, although the research undertaken by the scholars referred to above was completed some years ago, their work still provides valuable insight into the literary nature of the Xhosa short story genre. It is however, also clear that there exists a need for a more recent study of the current nature and form of the Xhosa

short story genre. The researcher aims to provide in this need through the analysis of a selection of Xhosa short stories in the chapters that follow.

2.5 The criteria that must be considered in the study and evaluation of African literature

The aim of this discussion is to determine the extent to which criteria which are not necessarily indigenous to the African cultural milieu may or may not be applied in the evaluation of African literary works. The majority of the theoretical studies that have thus far been completed are of Western, non-African origin. The question that arises from this is: To which extent should these Western criteria be made applicable to African literature? Are there valid criteria that should be taken into consideration in the evaluation of the African literary text?

Dikeni (1992:9) writes that literature in Africa has been greatly influenced by the missionaries. These missionaries committed African oral forms of literature to writing. He says that missionaries had an influence on the modern Xhosa short story writing tradition. The modern Xhosa short story therefore has its roots firmly in folklore and religious material (Sotashe, 1979:4). Therefore, whilst the Xhosa short story tradition is a descendant of its western counterpart; it also possesses features that are unique to the African literary tradition. This view is confirmed by Satyo (1981:25), citing Ziervogel, who argues that modern Bantu literature is developing forms of its own which are neither strictly European nor strictly traditional.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that whilst the Eurocentrics claim that Western standards are appropriated to African literature, it is believed that African literature cannot be defined in terms of Western literary standards only (Nguna:1997,57). Mtuze equally says that Western criteria should not be discarded but their rigid application should be avoided at all costs (Mtuze, 1986:13). Botha (1978) says that in his view there is a necessity for successfully combining both the traditional and modern literary forms in order to improve the literary level of the work. Xhosa writers can use both cultures to compose a story.

The most suitable approach that should therefore be used for the analysis of the modern Xhosa short story is the one that integrates both the Western and the traditional literary criteria so as to acknowledge the unique character of African literature that would take into account both its originality and its creativity. This approach is chosen in order to escape the dominance of the Western criteria on the African text as these two models are complementary and should be applied on an equal basis in the evaluation of the African literary text. "An approach of this nature is a challenge that calls for the best creative thinking of Africans as well as non-Africans...fuelled by the right attitudes and fearlessly willing to explore differences which are all too easy to deny" (Van Niekerk, 1993:12).

2.6. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to provide a theoretical view on the short story in general and on the Xhosa short story in particular. This was done by firstly tracing the origin and historical development of the short story. From this survey it was discovered that the story is one of the oldest literary genres, which means that it is as old as man's history and can be traced back to ancient times. The earliest narratives were originally referred to as "tales" or "sketches". Out of this the short story developed and began to emerge in the 20th century, where it was referred to as the short story for the first time.

In this chapter a definition of the short story was provided. The main literary features of the short story such as the principle of unity, economy and compression were discussed. The relationship between the short story and other literary genres such as the novel, drama, poetry sketch and essay has been dealt with.

The historical development of the Xhosa short story was surveyed in the final part of this chapter. It was discovered that there were some so-called Xhosa "short stories" written prior to the second half of the 20th century about whose classification there is still debate as to whether they are short stories in the true sense of the word. The first proper Xhosa short stories appeared in 1956, written by pioneers such as Sinxo and Siwisa. Much progress has been made up to the present. It was also discovered that the Xhosa short story possesses its own unique set of literary features which

according to some critics, resulted from the influence of African tradition, as well as from the presence of the western tradition, brought to Southern Africa by the European missionaries.

It is suggested that both Western and African criteria should be used in the analysis of the Xhosa texts in this study, in recognition of the universality of the text, thus acknowledging its African character as well as its Western heritage in a balanced manner.

CHAPTER 3

THE THEME

MATTERS THAT AFFECT SOCIETY DURING THE POST-APARTHEID ERA

3.1 Introduction

After many years of political upheaval and instability, South Africa finally became a democratic state in April 1994. This meant the demise of apartheid. The end of apartheid ushered in a new way of life in South Africa. All discriminatory laws were abolished. Many freedoms such as the freedom of movement, freedom of expression and equal rights could now be enjoyed by the people of South Africa. The new constitution was introduced in 1996, after representatives from all political parties had converged to draft the country's constitution. It is recognised as a liberal and modern document, both nationally and internationally. The constitution is the supreme law of the country. The people of South Africa had very high hopes and expectations about the new democratic South Africa. They hoped to get free education, jobs and houses. Whilst some of their expectations as South Africans have been fulfilled, others have not.

Today South Africa has its Bill of Human Rights which is seen as a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. The Bill of Rights enshrines the rights of all people in the country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. After 1994, for the first time in South Africa, there is freedom of expression and freedom of movement. Blacks and whites are now living together in towns and cities. Oppression and suppression are things of the past. Unfortunately not all expectations have been realised. Economically most provinces in South Africa are still suffering.

Many citizens still have no access to clean running water, electricity, basic education, adequate health care, social welfare and basic human security. The inequalities that exist in the South African society continue to widen and the disparity between rich and poor is great, although the country is in its 20th year of democracy.

There is a high rate of unemployment. This results in poverty and a high crime rate. There is a great lack of security in the country because of the inability of law enforcers to control criminal elements. The entire country is dominated by poor service delivery, and this result in regular protests by communities. Evidence of this will be provided in the paragraphs below.

3.2 The aim of this chapter

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the views of the respective authors with regard to socio-economic conditions in the new South Africa, as found in their short stories. This analysis will be undertaken within the context of the role of the author as a social commentator, as will be illustrated in the section on literary theory that forms part of this chapter. The researcher will also determine the extent to which Xhosa short story writers in the new South Africa are engaging with the current circumstances in South African society, whether positive or negative. The manner in which they are depicting the reign of the new democratic government, as compared to the previous apartheid regime, will be investigated in this chapter. Their expectations of the new South Africa and the extent to which these expectations have been realised, will be established through a thorough critical analysis of the various short stories. The aim is to establish how these authors respond to contemporary issues such as the HIV/ AIDS pandemic, educational challenges, anti-social behaviour, etc. This analysis will be based upon a comprehensive theoretical framework. The role of the author as a social observer and commentator will therefore form the main focus of this chapter.

In the section that follows, the role of themes in the literary work will be discussed as part of the discussion on the theoretical framework of this chapter.

3.3 The role of theme in the short story

The literary author has a duty and responsibility to evaluate and pass comments on matters affecting society in his/her stories. In literature, the author's views are embodied in the theme of the story and his/her perceptions are communicated by

means of the characters and their conduct in the story. Brooks & Warren (1971:273) comment as follows with regard to the social role of the author:

“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 unifying view of life which is embodied in the total narrative. It is what we are to make of such human experience that always involve, directly or indirectly, some comments on values in human nature and human conduct, on good and bad on the true and the false, some conception of what the human place is in the world.”

Brooks & Warren (1971: 276) also state that:

“a story gives us an image of our life process, and in that an enlightening image of ourselves.”

Literary authors therefore have a duty and responsibility to pass comments on matters affecting society in their stories. Madamombe (2008:37) supports the notion that modern authors should be prepared to comment on current issues in African society. She quotes Sachs and Ndebele who call for a new approach to writing about South Africa in the post-apartheid period.

It is clear that some of the earlier Xhosa authors have responded favourably to the requirement, as outlined by Brooks Warren above. During the first and second decades of the previous century, authors like G. B. Sinxo for instance, wrote novels such as “Umzali wolahleko” (1933) and short stories such as “Imbadu” (1960) and “Isitiya” (1964) in which he informs readers about the social wellness in South Africa focusing on the non-conducive living conditions in the black townships of big South African cities such as East London, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Gerard (1971:70) describes this feature of Sinxo’s work as follows:

“Like most of the writers everywhere on the African continent, he considered that it was the educated man’s duty to preach,

not only from the church pulpit but also to a world congregation.”

S.E.K. Mqhayi is also well-known as a political commentator. In his work “Ukuzika kukaMendi” (1914) he not only provides a brilliant description of the tragic events surrounding the sinking of the Mendi in 1914, but also passes important comment on the destructive outcome of the First World War. Similarly, his novel “UDon Jadu” (1929) is a comment on an imaginary utopian state in which people live together in harmony. This book provides important guide-lines for the establishment of a free and democratic South African state. It is clear therefore, that a firm foundation was set by these literary pioneers regarding the role of the author as a social commentator in the South African environment, specifically. The extent to which modern Xhosa short story writers have succeeded in the continuation of this tradition, will now be examined in the section that follows.

3.4 The role of the author as a social critic in the stories under discussion

As indicated above, it is the duty of the author to engage himself/herself with social issues which are prevalent in society. In this section, the views of the authors, as depicted in the selected anthologies, will be discussed. However, owing to practical considerations, it will not be possible to discuss all the stories here. Therefore, only some of the most pertinent examples will be dealt with in this chapter. A careful analysis of the stories under discussion has revealed that authors such as Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) Duka (2003) and Mtuze (2003) have indeed engaged themselves to some extent with social issues which are found in the new South Africa. This includes issues such as moral degeneration amongst the youth of today which leads to ill-discipline and disrespect. This phenomenon will be discussed in greater detail in the paragraphs below.

Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) attempts to provide a perspective on narrative responses to challenges in South Africa in the story “ICwengile Junior Secondary School”. These challenges are centred on the advent of democracy after centuries of oppression and suppression. The writer writes about moral degeneration. ICwengile Junior Secondary School is situated in a rural area in the former Transkei. The principal is Mr. Cwenga. The learners are seriously opposed to Mr Cwenga, and

they want him removed. A meeting is called where all stake-holders are involved, including representatives of the Department of Education, parents and teachers. It is decided that the school will be closed temporarily and parents are requested to take their children home. Stability is restored and the principal is promoted to the rank of inspector. Some of the learners did not return and ended up as drop-outs. In this story the writer wishes to expose the serious level of moral degeneration and ill-discipline which is found in South African schools. In the story for instance, it is mentioned that the learners are throwing stones at the people who are attending a school meeting:

Kuxoxwa nje entlanganisweni
bamana ukuphosa amatye
(p.17)

Whilst the meeting is in progress,
they are busy throwing stones.

This incident shows how South African schools have been negatively affected by the advent of democracy. Learners show ill-discipline and disrespect for teachers by attempting to remove the principal forcefully and by means of intimidation. The fictional events that are portrayed in this story are mirrored by real life events that are currently occurring on a regular basis. A well-known Eastern Cape newspaper, for instance, reports that a total of 98 pupils of Menziwa Senior Secondary School near Idutywa were arrested on charges of public violence and malicious damage to property (“Daily Dispatch”, Wednesday, March 14, 2012:p.1).

The same newspaper (“Daily Dispatch”, Thursday, September 22, 2011) also reported that students who have been protesting for two weeks over marks at Walter Sisulu University in Mthatha, were harassing staff and preventing them from entering the campus (p.9). It is evident therefore, that the events portrayed in this short story are indicative of reigning circumstances in the “new” South Africa.

In “UZenzile” (Duka, 2003) the phenomenon of moral degeneration in post-apartheid South Africa is also successfully depicted and addressed. In this instance, the moral degeneration becomes so escalating that it even leads to crime. The story has been named after one of its main characters, Zenzile and it means: “the one who has to

blame himself and nobody else". The story takes place in Alice, a small town in the Province of the Eastern Cape. Zenzile is a black teenager who stays in an upmarket townhouse with his grandmother, Magaba. His father is no longer living with his mother. His biological mother, Nosidima lives in Pretoria and works at UNISA.

Zenzile is an 18 year old adolescent. He is a student at the local university but he does not care much about his studies. He always leaves home very early in the morning and arrives after midnight. He drives an expensive German luxury vehicle. On his arrival at home after midnight, he always makes a noise by playing CD's at high volume that disturb the tranquillity of the night and his grandmother's dreams. When he arrives home during the early hours of the morning, he knocks and shouts at the door for his grandmother to open for him. His grandmother continuously warns him about his bad behaviour suggesting that it will soon have bad outcomes.

Kusiwa kuphuma emilebeni loo
mazwi obulumnko kuloo nkonde-
kazi, akawananze nento le uZenzile
ubuso buphuphuma yingcwangu
netshiki. (p.43)

Coming from the lips of the granny
the words of wisdom, Zenzile is not
bothered, his face shows
aggression and cheek.

Magaba, his grandmother, eventually reports Zenzile to Nosidima. Having heard that his grandmother has reported him to his mother, he apologises and gives his grandmother a huge, undisclosed amount of money.

Magaba is happy with the money she has just received from Zenzile. She plans to use the funds for the unveiling of a tombstone for her late husband. One day, whilst thinking about her plans with the money, she hears on the radio news that three thugs have been caught during a bank robbery in Oxford Street, East London, that morning. Later the police arrive at her home, reporting that Zenzile has been killed in the armed bank robbery. It is also disclosed that the luxury vehicle he has been driving was stolen in Mthatha. The incident is described as follows:

...iyimigulukudu emithathu
lphange ibhanki iswantsulisana
nephahlothi labakwantsasana
ngoombayimbayi. p.46)

...three thugs caught in a bank
robbery are seen in a fight with a
group of police using fire arms.

Nosidima, Zenzile's mother, collapses after receiving the news of her son's death. She blames her separation from Sipho, Zenzile's father as the cause of the change in Zenzile's behaviour. In this story the author identifies a phenomenon that is regularly found in South Africa today, namely that teenagers in black communities stay with their grandparents due to unstable marriages or divorce. This contributes to moral degeneration amongst the youth. The story shows that some South African youth, day and night roam around the streets committing serious crimes, such as bank robbery and car hijacking.

The story shows that Zenzile did not receive proper teachings of the family values. He also lacks the enjoyment of parental warmth. Unstable marriages often breed criminals. The tendency towards family disintegration affects communities. Low moral values mostly prevail in such families. In healthy environments, there is more stability. Where there is stability, families grow socially and economically. What happens in the story is typical of what often happens in the "New" South Africa. Businesses are not safe. There is robbery everywhere in South Africa. This includes recent incidents such as the one where, for example, four men robbed a tavern in Zwelitsha, outside King William's Town at gunpoint and made off with an undisclosed amount of money ("Daily Dispatch", Tuesday, February 21, 2012: p.3).

In another incident, a getaway car that was allegedly used by one of the Eastern Cape's most notorious criminals has been confiscated by the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU). It was alleged that a convicted criminal has used a co-accused's grey Hummer LUV as a getaway car in a bank robbery in Elliot, Eastern Cape. In the robbery, four suspects escaped with R2, 5 million in carry bags. During the robbery, a street vendor was killed, having been hit in the head by a stray bullet ("Daily Dispatch", Friday, March 16, 2012: p.6). It is possible that the action of these thugs could have been caused by a lack of teaching of family values during their youth and

therefore Duka succeeds in addressing the matter of escalating crime in the new South Africa in a most pertinent manner in this story.

In the story, “UGalatyan Utyebile” (Mtuzze, 2003) it is also illustrated how the phenomenon of moral degeneration leads to an increase in crime. The title of the story “UGalatyan Utyebile” is derived from a struggle song that is often sung by the older naughty boys of Tshatshu, a village near Zwelitsha in King William’s Town district. Tshatshu used to be a quiet missionary village, but after the advent of the “New” South Africa, things have changed. The village has become chaotic, with an unruly and rowdy youth. During the night the elderly people of Tshatshu prefer to stay indoors. The song “UGalatyan’ Utyebile” is sung throughout the night, with the boys doing their “toyi toyi” dance. The youth show various forms of disrespect towards the community, accompanied by high and unmanageable crime levels. They steal fruit from the local orchards and fowls from poultry sheds. The villagers fear them.

On many occasions the unruly boys (about fifty of them) are summoned to the Headman’s kraal. They are caned severely on their buttocks. Their cases are also referred to the chief’s court but there are no charges brought against them. Police sometimes are called in and the boys are arrested. They continue toyi-toying, as soon as they are released. A clear picture of the instability and crime is depicted by the author who says:

Kube ngasa kwacholwa impahla yomntu
ithe saa kuloo ndlela isinga edolophini,
kwaba ngasa kwabikwa inkukhu
elahleke ngephezolo. (p18)

Every morning you get report of robbery,
people are attacked on their way to and
from town, fowls are being stolen every
night.

The views of the villagers are reflected as follows:

“Ndiyasazi nesibetho” uphendule
watsho omnye, akuthethwa le into.

Andizange ndibabone abantwana
abangeva ngolu hlobo. Abeva hayi,
abanqandeki, abanamntu mkhulu.
(p19)

“I know the curse,” replied the other,
it does not mean this. I have never
seen unruly children like these. No
one can stop them, they have no
respect for elderly people.

The events in this story are not of an isolated nature, but in fact they are prevalent in the new South Africa. It is clear that there is a prevalence of the phenomenon of unruly, undisciplined youth in the new South Africa. Incidents such as theft, robbery, rape and drug abuse are often reported in the news. Some of these incidents have already been mentioned during the discussion of the story “UZenzile” in the paragraphs above.

In this story it is mentioned that the police are sometimes called in and the offending boys are arrested. However, they do not remain in custody very long before they are released (p19). By mentioning this, the author wishes to identify another negative phenomenon that is prevalent in the new South Africa, namely the leniency of the South African government towards criminals and the manner in which it contributes to the high rate of crime. The call on courts to revise the conditions under which bail is granted by Parliament’s Correctional Services Committee, also contributes to this anomaly. The Committee suggested that the law be changed to make it compulsory for magistrates to consider the affordability of bail they set (“Daily Dispatch” Thursday, September 22, 2011: p.4). This indicates that there is a lack of political will to control the unruly masses.

In the new South Africa court sentences are often too lenient, punishment is not effective enough and therefore misbehaviour is continued. Bureaucratic negligence and incompetence also leads to the failure of the justice system in many instances. For instance, it was reported by SABC news (03.03.2012) that a Johannesburg man suspected to be a dangerous prisoner facing 120 charges, has been released on parole by mistake and has already started to threaten his victims.

Furthermore, a well-known Eastern Cape newspaper has reported on the confusion that reigned in Grahamstown when magistrate's court officials and police officers disagreed on charges that were laid on a criminal. All charges of theft, resisting arrest and assault had to be withdrawn against a controversial community leader ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, March 1, 2012: p.2).

Finally, the controversy that surrounds the case of the well known "Waterkloof four" in Pretoria is another case in point. These are four young white males who were convicted of the murder of a homeless person in an affluent suburb of Pretoria. Two members of the so called "Waterkloof Four" were released from Zonderwater Prison outside Pretoria in spite of the fact that the department does not agree with the order that the pair be released on parole and that prison officials are also not happy with the order <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Waterkloof-2-releasedfro> (Accessed on 2012/03/13). It is evident that Duka addresses an important symptom of social misconduct in the new South Africa, namely that of youth misconduct and the laxness of the South African legal system.

The evil in the story, "eYunivesithi" (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998: 44-45) is alcohol abuse and how it leads to the downfall of many youth. The setting is the former University of Transkei, where Khanyisa Ziqqa is a new student, fresh from high school. She is subjected to bad influences from the older students, persuading her to take some tots of liquor, saying they are giving her "after hour lectures" (p.45).

Khanyisa, a meek girl from a strict family, passed her matric first class, thus giving her parents a hope that she will do well at university. But, due to bad friends, she fails the courses she registered for. She becomes addicted to alcohol, is raped by five students and falls pregnant. She does not even know who made her pregnant. At home, her father fumes. She is forced to stay at home for a year in order to look after her baby. Her father responds as follows to her situation:

"Khanyisa, ndikuthumela ukuba uye kufunda, wena undibuyela netik' enamehlo ? Umithiswe ngubani? Chaza inyani... Ndincam' izinto mna apha ndikunika ikamva awulifuni. Kanti uza

kundazi". Utsho uyise ilihlwili intliziyo.
(p.5)

"Khanyisa, I sent you to school to learn, you now return home with a child. Who made you pregnant? Tell the truth... I sacrificed everything in order to give you a future, you rejected it. "Nevertheless, I am going to teach you a lesson", said her father with a broken heart.

Khanyisa really does not know who made her pregnant. She curses liquor. She interprets the situation as follows:

"Ingaba ndadlwengulwa ngalaa mini?"
IYunivesithi! Ngoku ndiza kuba
nomntwana endingamaziyo noyise
wakhe. Owu! Bawo ngekungcono
nokuba undikhanyele ndimazi.
Utywala! Utywala!" (p.52)

"Was I raped that day?" A university! I
am now going to have a baby whose
father I do not even know. Oh! God it
could be better if I know who the
father is even if he denies the claim.
Liquor! Liquor!"

The transgressions quoted in the paragraphs above are not of an isolated nature. They occur on a wide scale, such as theft, robbery, rape, drug abuse, corruption and a justice system that often fails the South African society in the new South Africa.

In the story "Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha" (a good person, man or woman sometimes gives birth to a bad child with bad behaviour) (Yekela, 1997) Vuyisile is depicted as a child who exhibits bad behaviour. He is the direct opposite of his parents, who are devout Christians. His father is a priest of the Apostolic Faith Mission. The phenomenon here is drug abuse that leads to crime. The setting of the story is Uitenhage, a town in the Eastern Cape. Reverend Gangxa and his wife live in the Apostolic Faith Mission Presbytery. They have three daughters and only one son, Vuyisile, who is their last born. The three daughters are well educated. Nonzwakazi is a professional nurse at Livingstone Hospital. Nomkhita is a teacher at Limekhaya High School. Nobuntu has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from the University of Fort Hare. Vuyisile, their son, is however, a great disappointment. He is

a secondary school drop out. He smokes dagga and drinks liquor. He becomes a criminal who tends to disappear from home for periods of up to two to three weeks. When he returns he makes show off with a lot of money and beautiful clothes. His parents and sisters are always warning him to refrain from bad, anti-social behaviour.

Eventually it is discovered that Vuyisile is among a group of six boys who were involved in acts of shoplifting and robbery. The six thugs decided to steal a vehicle from a hotel in Port Elizabeth. They use the vehicle to go around committing serious crimes, such as bank robbery and garage robbery. They are being tracked by the police for a Despatch garage robbery. In Vuyisile's room the police discover an AK-47 assault rifle with some ammunition. Vuyisile, together with his accomplices is arrested.

They are found guilty and each sentenced to 20 years in prison (p10). In the story it is clearly stated that these boys have been smoking dagga and that they have deserted school:

Kwaye kwavakala ethubeni ukuba onke amakhwenkwe abekwelaa qela lentsangu alahlile esikolweni...

La makhwenkwe ayemathandathu ewonke kwaye ayengayitshayi intsangu ayeyibuza imvelaphi. (p.5)

There is a rumour that all the boys who have been smoking dagga deserted school. These are six boys and they excelled in their smoking of dagga.

Drug abuse often leads to crime. Yekela, (1997:8) writes as follows:

Zaye zavakala neendaba zokuba elaa qela likaVuyisile lilo elirhanelekayo koluya phango lwebhanki yaseVolkskas. Imoto enombolo yaPhesheya kweLigwa ababehamba ngayo babeyibile kwihotele ethile eBhayi. (p.8)

News spreads that the group of six boys, Vuyisile included, are the suspects in the Volkskas bank robbery. The motor car they were driving with a Transvaal registration number was stolen from a certain hotel in Port Elizabeth.

In this story, the author addresses the following forms of anti-social behaviour amongst the youth: student drop-out tendencies, liquor abuse, drug abuse and crime. It is clear that these tendencies are commonly found in the new South Africa; for instance, the "Sunday Times" reports that hundreds of schools across South Africa are subjecting pupils to drug and breathalyser tests in a desperate attempt to curb an alarming increase in drug abuse. Shocking findings of pupils arriving drunk at school, smoking dagga and using illegal steroids have prompted the decision by school principals to conduct tests ("Sunday Times" Sunday, April 1, 2012: p.1).

In another incident an Eastern Cape newspaper reports that teachers at John Bisseker High school in East London are battling to control drug dealers selling their illegal goods to pupils during breaks. It is not uncommon for dealers to come through the school's fence to sell dagga, tik and mandrax. ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, April 19, 2012: p.6). Yekela therefore succeeds in the depiction of some of the real challenges that face the youth in the new South Africa.

Magona (2007:65) explores a number of themes which are significant to the post-colonial literary landscape in the story "Lowu uMvulo" (that particular Monday). The phenomenon of excessive consumption of alcohol that leads to crime is well depicted in this story. The writer narrates that it is Monday morning; the principal of Rainbow High School is conducting prayers. The previous Saturday people saw a murdered body of a young girl and signs of rape were also noticed. Empties of liquor were seen next to the deceased. The deceased's name is Yolisa Madlondlo. The principal warns learners that transformation resembles two sides of a coin. He tells the learners about the good and bad sides of democracy:

"Uyabona ke, inguquko le yinto embaxa-
mbini: ilungile, kanti ikhe ilume nokuluma."
(p.65)

“You see, transformation has two sides: It is good, but sometimes it is also bad”.

He advises the young people to do what is good and to avoid what is bad.

This is the only story where conditions such as excessive use of alcohol, liberties for the youth, freedom of expression and freedom of movement in the new South Africa are depicted in a direct, deliberate manner. The author wishes to stress the fact that the transformation process has brought about many liberties for the youth of the country. At the same time it brought also responsibilities.

In the story “Isihelegu Somlilo” (the astonishing fire) (Yekela, 1997) the author tells us more about life in the shack village at Gcuwa. Lack of accommodation in town compels people to live in the shack village. People who live in these shacks come from the villages around Gcuwa; with Zenzile being one of such people. He is from Tholeni village. He drinks liquor and smokes dagga. In these shacks they use paraffin stoves for cooking, paraffin lamps and candles to provide light, but owing to Zenzile’s negligence his shack catches light. A screaming voice is heard nearby: “fire! fire!” It is easy for the other shacks to catch fire because of the congestion. Fire fighters take time to arrive on the scene, and ambulances are also not available at short notice to take the injured to hospital.

The disastrous effects of the fire are described as follows by the author:

Kwaye kwavakala ukuba kuye
kwasweleka usana kwelinye ityotyombe
nexhegokazi kwelinye, bobabini
ngokurhaxwa ngumsi... Babebaninzi
ababetshile nabaye babalekiselwa
esibhedlele lo gama abanye baye
bafumana uncedo ekliniki. (p.74)

News was received that a toddler died in one shack and an old woman in another, both through suffocation by smoke... Many with burns were rushed to hospital while some were treated at the clinics.

In this story the lack of service delivery and the high rate of unemployment that exists all over South Africa is well depicted. People in these shacks live a relatively happy life, though it is not safe to live in shack villages. It is the high rate of unemployment that causes the influx into cities and the growth of these shack villages. Clashes between law enforcers and shack dwellers take place on a daily basis in the new South Africa. In a well-known Eastern Cape newspaper for instance, it is reported that police opened fire with rubber bullets on hundreds of Fort Grey service delivery protesters. The protesters were demanding the delivery of services such as houses, electricity, infrastructure and water (“Daily Dispatch”, Friday, March 2, 2012: p.1).

The same newspaper also reports how King William’s Town residents were forced to “beg, borrow, and steal” water after they were left without water for days (“Daily Dispatch”, Thursday, March 8, 2012: p.7). Furthermore, the same newspaper also reported that houses belonging to the mayor and several ward councillors of Senqu Municipality in Barkly East “were damaged by angry residents in service delivery protests on Tuesday and yesterday” (“Daily Dispatch”, Thursday, February 16, 2012: p.4).

In another incident in Villiersdorp in the Western Cape, residents recently burned down a community hall and destroyed public facilities in a protest. According to police reports the trouble began at round 05:00 when about 150 residents burned tyres on the corner of Buitenkant Street and Graaff Street in the town <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfricaNews/Villiersdorp-protest-turns-v> (Accessed on 2012/03/13). It is clear therefore, that these incidents are not limited to certain parts of the country only. They occur on a widespread basis all over the country.

In the paragraphs above, many of the negative features of the new South Africa, as depicted in the short stories under discussion were identified and discussed. In these stories some of the positive aspects of the new South Africa are however, also depicted by the authors. It is evident that they are not focussing solely on the negative aspects of the New South Africa. Authors for instance, are writing positively about contemporary issues. In the story “Inguquko”, (Yekela, 1997:66) for instance, the phenomena of discrimination as practised by whites during the apartheid era,

reconciliation, as well as political and social reforms in the post apartheid South Africa are discussed. The narrator tells us about Jan van der Westhuizen who lives at Ventersdorp in the former Transvaal. In this town discrimination against blacks prevails. Jan works at Telkom in Germiston. He works with black workers. He is not comfortable because within his home background blacks are not accepted. The new environment in which he finds himself compels him to change his attitude. We now see him as a changed person. Later Jan marries Nomalungelo (a black woman) and he loves her. This is a cause of great disappointment to his parents. Due to changes in South Africa, Jan's family eventually accept Nomalungelo and they also love her. Jan and his black wife end up living together in the town of Ventersdorp. Yekela puts it as follows:

Ndithetha nje abazali bakaJan nabantakwabo
noodade wabo baphambili ekulweleni amalungelo
abantu abaNtsundu kuloo dolophu
yaseVentersdorp. Abamthandi ngako umolokazana
Wab... Inene le nt' ingumntu iyaguquka.

(p.66)

As I am speaking now, Jan's parents, brothers and sisters are in the forefront fighting for the rights of black people in the town of Ventersdorp. They love their daughter in law so much... It is true to say, a person can change.

The fact that Jan and his black wife decide to settle in Ventersdorp is of particular significance, since this town is unofficially regarded as the headquarters of the AWB, an ultra-conservative Afrikaner organisation. The story shows that the advent of democracy has brought about a dramatic change in attitudes and behaviour of many whites. A general acceptance of blacks by whites is what we see in South Africa today. They live together in towns and cities. Living examples are that they sit together in Parliament to work on legislature and administration. They use the same beaches. They live together as neighbours in cities like East London, Cape Town, and Johannesburg etc.

The story, "Sifike kweny' indawo" (we have arrived at another place) (Magona, 2007) links well with Yekela's story "Inguquko", as discussed above. Magona in this story writes about the positive aspects of the new South Africa, such as relief from

discrimination and the abolishment of the scourge of pass-laws of apartheid South Africa. Briefly, the story tells us about the ups and downs of daily life in Cape Town.

Visiting Cape Town during the apartheid years by people from the rural areas is depicted as a challenge in the story. People without passbooks were collected in the streets by a big truck that belongs to the police. They arrest them. The fine for a person without a pass was thirty Rand. This story shows the reader how discrimination prevailed in Cape Town during the apartheid era, when blacks were not allowed to stay in the cities. Only those that had pass-books are permitted to stay in Cape Town. It was not easy to get passbooks. Some had to bribe certain police officers to get a pass-book. The demise of apartheid however, brought about freedom of movement in South Africa. The main character in this story is Nomava who is visiting Gugulethu, a black location in Cape Town. She is visiting her husband who works in Cape Town. She is from Dutywa, a small town in the former Transkei. Plans are made for Nomava to get her own pass-book. She succeeds in getting the pass-book and stays legally in Gugulethu. The author puts it as follows:

Yena uNomava, ephela nje amapasi,
sele engumhlali waseKapa, esiya apho
ngokuthanda. (p.47)

For Nomava, the pass laws do not apply
any longer, she is already a resident of
Cape Town, visiting the city as often as
she wishes.

The focus here is on the freedom of movement that exists in the new South Africa and on the policy of non-discrimination against blacks. Through the depiction of a character such as Nomava, the author succeeds in providing a clear picture of the experiences of a large group of people that migrated from the rural areas of the Eastern Cape to the Western Cape, under difficult circumstances. The author clearly shows that they (blacks) were finally liberated after 1994.

3.5. An evaluation of authors' awareness of current issues in the new South Africa

In the section above it was illustrated how the authors under discussion involved themselves with circumstances in the new South Africa. It is clear that they mainly involved themselves with educational matters as well as crime issues. The researcher however is not satisfied with the manner in which various authors involve themselves with matters affecting the nation in the new South Africa. In most instances the spectrum of their involvement is too limited and superficial to provide an accurate picture of conditions in the new post-apartheid era.

In the ensuing paragraphs some vital areas that could have been addressed are identified and have been put in an alphabetic order as follows: corruption, crime, education and health.

3.5.1 Corruption:

The first area that needs to be mentioned here is corruption. The phenomenon, although attended to only briefly by the authors under discussion, is infesting almost all government departments and many other institutions in the new South Africa. For instance, the former head of the Special Investigating Unit, Willie Hofmeyr, recently disclosed that the government loses about R30 billion to corruption every year ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, January 30, 2012:p.7). Corruption weakens the South Africa's democracy and trust in its leaders, undermines the country's ethics, corrodes its moral fibre. It discourages private investment, hindering growth and development ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, March 8, 2012:p.3). "Moral degeneration of leaders fuels the scourge of corruption. The moral degeneration of our leaders is infectious and the people have nobody to look up to". ("Daily Dispatch", Friday, February 10, 2012:p.7). This lack of role models can manifest itself in many unfortunate ways.

Leadership should be about principles and clean stewardship. The "Daily Dispatch" again reported that an internal audit team found that about R1.2 million went missing from the coffers of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Mzankama Street, Atteridgeville, west of Pretoria ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, January 30, 2012:p.5). The "Daily Dispatch" also reported that a young East London woman who stole R1.8 million from a local church has been sentenced to a decade in prison. This means

that not even the country's churches are free from this scourge of corruption ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, March 12, 2012:p.4).

Another living example of corruption is the case of the former Eastern Cape Health Superintendent-General (SG) Lawrence Boya, who was arrested recently by the Hawks on charges of fraud and corruption relating to his service in Bhisho. He is facing accusations relating to fraud, corruption, bribery and theft totalling more than R11.8 million from the Eastern Cape Health Department's funds ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, February 27, 2012:p.1). In another incident the office of the National Credit Regulator has been thrown into turmoil with the suspension of its chief financial officer over allegations of nepotism and tender fraud ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, February 27, 2012:p.4).

The tendency towards corrupt practices has also been uncovered in other Eastern Cape Government Departments. For instance, while the Eastern Cape Department of Education crumbled financially, a deputy director stole R1.5 million from its coffers to send her teenage son to a private school, the East London Regional Court heard recently. The ex-deputy director in the finance department in Mbizana, Abegail Tokwana, hung her head in shame as magistrate Sania Jacobs sentenced her to seven years in prison, two of which were suspended ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, February 27, 2012:p.4).

There are indications that not even the country's National Parliament is free of corrupt activities. Parliament recently asked the Auditor-General and Public Protector to investigate its administrative chief, who used R186000 of the institution's money to build a boundary wall at his home. The "Sunday Times" (2012/03/25) reported that Parliament Secretary Zingile Dingani had used the institution's money to build a perimeter wall at his Cape Town home. An arrangement was made to repay it in instalments of R10000 a month. Another case of corruption and fraud is that against crime intelligence boss Lieutenant-General Richard Mdluli, where it is said the allegation against Mdluli included defrauding crime intelligence to buy two new German luxury vehicles, one for him and one for his wife, appointing or promoting a phalanx of family members to the agent programme and the unauthorised use of safe houses for his personal benefit. Mdluli

and a Colonel Barnard were charged with fraud and corruption last year relating to the sale of Mdluli's official vehicle and the purchase of two new German luxury cars. But charges were controversially dropped in December 2011 after Mdluli's lawyer made representations to the NPA, claiming his client was the victim of a conspiracy in order to keep him out of crime intelligence <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/NPA-told-to-charge-Mdluli> (Accessed on 2012/03/28).

It is clear therefore that corruption is found on a widespread basis in the new South Africa. Furthermore, each of the cases that are uncovered is of a serious nature, involving thousands (if not millions) of Rands each. In spite of the seriousness of the situation, the authors under discussion have elected not to pay much attention to this problem. The various categories of corruption, as outlined above, do not receive adequate attention in the stories under discussion.

3.5.2 Crime:

There are various categories of crime in South Africa, namely murder, assault, gun, violence, robbery, rape, farm attacks and killings, killing of police and violence against women and children. They are all violent crimes <http://www.csvr.org.za> (Accessed on 2014/05/15). The authors of the six selected anthologies made little mention of insecurity in the country, whereas South African citizens feel unsafe under the present democratic government. Incidents and instances where and when these occur in South Africa are clearly shown in the paragraphs below: For instance, the "Daily Dispatch" news reported that villagers in Mbozana have been robbed, raped and murdered by *oonontwayibonwa* (balaclava-clad men) on more than one occasion since 2011 ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, March 8, 2012:p.3).

Violence against women is found on a widespread basis in the new South Africa. "Daily Dispatch" reported one example of violence against women where it says a Leaches Bay woman, stabbed with a screwdriver and severely beaten, was almost buried alive by a jealous boyfriend because he believed she was cheating on him. The man, who has been arrested, was stopped by the woman's brother in-law after a neighbour saw the jilted boyfriend dumping her body in a ditch and covering it with

sand. The 42 year old man was charged with attempted murder and summoned to appear in the East London Magistrate's Court ("Daily Dispatch", March 12, 2012:p.1). In another incident of violence against women, three people were arrested in connection with the murder of a teenage girl in Gugulethu, Cape Town. Warrant Officer November Filander said that three men, aged 19, 34 and 36, were arrested. They allegedly killed 14 year old Nontombi Jonginamba. Jonginamba's body was found on a street near her home with a pillow covering her face and multiple stab wounds ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, April 19, 2012:p.11).

The brutal murder of a former Rhodes University female student while hitchhiking from Port Elizabeth to her graduation ceremony has shocked the Grahamstown community. University spokesman Zama Matiwana said the death of Lelona Thembakazi Fufu, 23, whose body was found on the Addo road near the old Coega hotel had shocked the entire University. Fufu, a BSc Honours student from Motherwell Township in Port Elizabeth, had hitchhiked to Grahamstown on Thursday afternoon to attend her graduation ceremony in the evening. She was due to receive her Honours Degree in Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics the same evening ("Daily Dispatch", Monday, April 16, 2012:p.3).

Violence against children is equally rife in the new South Africa. Recently, a convicted child rapist case was postponed by the Nelspruit Magistrate's court on Wednesday for the 71st time in four years. Andries Mfana Sibiyi, 55, a preacher, raped a 13 year old girl between 1998 and 2007 and fathered three children with her. He said during his trial that God had ordered him to father children so his family could go to heaven. He was found guilty on April 2, 2008 on nine charges of rape, and has been in custody since then ("Daily Dispatch", Friday, April 6, 2012:p.3). In another case of violence against children, a student constable was accused of shooting dead a Soweto teenager. He could have committed suicide before he was arrested but did not, the Roodepoort Magistrate's Court heard. Student constable Siphso Mbatha applied for bail after he allegedly shot and killed 16-year old Thato Mokoka in Braamfischerville Phase Two, Soweto, on February 14, 2012 ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, April 19, 2012:5).

It is clear that criminals have no respect for the justice system in the new South Africa. They would not hesitate to disrupt the functioning of the system and could even resort to violent means in order to achieve this. Security at the East London Magistrate's Court was for instance stepped up recently following fears of a planned attack by a convicted gang of armed robbers. The added precautions came after one of the convicts allegedly smuggled a loaded gun into the East London Regional Court and hid it in his pants, while listening to magistrate Deon Rossouw giving judgement ("Daily Dispatch", Tuesday, March 6, 2012:p.1).

Violent attacks on police officers occur on a regular basis. For instance, a police officer was gunned down and killed recently in Elliot in the Eastern Cape. The 44 year old sergeant was shot by two men as he approached his house after work. The policeman, attached to Elliot's visible policing unit, died at the scene and the two gunmen fled. There is also great insecurity at the workplace in South Africa today. In another incident, a police officer pulled a gun on a colleague at work, the officer ran into the captain's office for safety and hid under the table ("Daily Dispatch", Thursday, September 22, 2011:p.3).

In various instances, even employees of the Department of Justice are involved in criminal activities either deliberately or through mere negligence. Two acting magistrates have for instance been arrested for their alleged involvement in an armed robbery. The two recently robbed a scrap metal company in Krugersdorp of more than R100 000. The men were also partners at a Roodepoort law firm. The vehicle they used was stolen shortly before the robbery ("Daily Dispatch", Friday, April 6, 2012:p.3).

Furthermore, the Daily Dispatch has reported that an Eastern Cape police station that serves more than 15 villages allegedly closes down at 5 p.m. every day and only opens the next morning. This has been happening for years, residents said. The area has recently experienced an increase in house break-ins and stock thefts, they said ("Daily Dispatch", Saturday, March 31, 2012:p.8).

On the other hand, police officers also execute their duties in a brave and professional manner in some instances. For instance, police in Port Elizabeth shot

and killed five suspected armed robbers when they attempted to rob a business near Motherwell recently. Eastern Cape police spokeswoman Brigadier Marinda Mills said the suspects who attempted to rob a brewery in Markman Industrial Area, were foiled by the police's Tactical Response Team just before 9 am. Police had been tipped off about the planned robbery and had been waiting for the suspects. The suspects who died on the scene after the shootout with police were between the ages of 25 and 35 ("Daily Dispatch", Saturday, April 21, 2012:p.1).

From the discussion above it is clear that the new South Africa is suffering under an extremely heavy crime rate. Various categories of crimes are committed on a daily basis. This includes violent crime, crime against women and children and even crime within the justice system itself. Unfortunately the authors under discussion have not succeeded in depicting these crimes comprehensively enough in their stories. Their work does not provide an accurate picture of reigning conditions in the new South Africa on the criminal front.

3.5.3 Education

The authors under discussion here lacked depth in addressing the unsatisfactory state of affairs in educational matters such as tuition, lack of facilities and equipment. For instance, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), in addressing their grievances to the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, at Kempton Park, said the system of education under the apartheid government was better than the present system of education. Since 1994 the present Department of Education has done nothing, whereas during apartheid, schools and Universities were built, such as the former University of Transkei (UNITRA) that was built by the Matanzima regime, University of Fort Hare at Bhisho, built by the Sebe regime and former VISTA University. This angered Motshekga (SABC news at 19h30 on 23/03/2012).

Professor J. Jansen, the Vice Chancellor of the Orange Free State University, states that since 1994, South Africa's schools had become worse, even though they receive more money. Speaking at the anniversary of the Federation of Governing Bodies of South African Schools, Jansen said education had enough policies, but

lacked workable plans <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Jansen-speaks-out-on-state> (Accessed on 2012/03/23).

In another similar case, Mamphela Ramphele, a former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town (UCT) says South Africa's education system is worse today than the "gutter education" the country had under the apartheid government. She criticised the much praised matric pass rate, saying it is deceptive, consigning thousands to a life that promises neither further education nor employment. She lashed out at the 30% pass benchmark, saying it degraded educational standards and was being used only for political purposes www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Education-worse-than-und (Accessed on 2012/03/23).

South Africa has a dire shortage of new schools, yet the Department of Basic Education has slashed its infrastructure grant to provinces by more than R657 million over the period 2012 to 2013. Mike Myburgh, chief executive of the Gauteng branch of the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of SA, slammed the cutbacks as "totally unacceptable". It is clear that the parents are just as concerned about the situation as the members of Teachers Unions. Recently, residents of Grabouw in the Western Cape burnt down the Umyezo wamaApile School, following repeated demands for additional facilities and an end to overcrowding. The week before, 14 high school pupils in one of the Eastern Cape's most remote villages, Ndibela, near Dutywa, were charged with public violence and malicious damage to property after they burnt down their eight dilapidated and prefabricated classrooms, the principal's make-shift office and six water tanks. It emerged in court that, for more than seven years, teachers and pupils at the school had pleaded with the provincial Education Department to build them a proper school <http://www.timeslives.co.za/sundaytimes/2012/03/25/state-to-spendr65> (Accessed on 2012/03/28).

In addition to these challenges, the discipline and general behaviour of learners in South Africa's schools also seems to be deteriorating. The "Sunday Times" reports that hundreds of schools across South Africa are subjecting pupils to drug and breathalyser tests in a desperate attempt to curb an alarming increase in drug

abuse. Shocking findings of pupils arriving drunk at school, smoking dagga and using illegal steroids have prompted the decision by school principals to conduct these tests (“Sunday times”, Sunday, April 1, 2012:p.1).

From the evidence submitted above, it is clear that the education system in the new South Africa is in a severe crisis. There is an urgent need for more, modern educational facilities. This crisis situation in education receives little attention in the stories under discussion. There seems to be a certain degree of reluctance amongst the various authors to engage themselves fully with issues of such a fundamental nature.

3.5.4 Health:

When one looks at health issues, one sees that they are not addressed effectively enough by the authors under discussion. It is clear that much health-related problems have been ignored. We hardly find any reference to health matters in the stories that were analysed. The fact of the matter is that the country is facing huge challenges in the field of health management. The scourge of HIV/AIDs has been causing havoc amongst the South African population since 1983. The infection rate is amongst the highest in the world. Millions of South Africans are dying because of this disease. Programmes for the prevention of HIV/AIDS seem to be less effective. At the same time the government’s roll-out efforts of antiviral drugs also seems not to be fully effective. In spite of the seriousness of the situation, the authors under discussion fail to make any mention of this disease in their stories. The authors seem to be ignorant of the existence of this disease. At the same time the government’s incompetence with regard to combating the disease does not receive any attention either. Reflecting on this in short story texts could save millions of lives.

In many instances, this disease leaves behind orphans because the father and mother both died of HIV/AIDS. These orphans become a burden to the society. The government spending towards the welfare of these orphans is very high. These orphans often resort to crime, and do all sort of things to earn a living. “Daily Dispatch” reports that a third of all deaths in South Africa in 2011 could be linked to

Aids-related diseases, according to data released by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) (“Daily Dispatch”, Monday, January 30, 2012:p.1).

The authors under discussion have also neglected to make any reference in their stories to the disfunctional state of many of the state hospitals in the country. An in-depth report on service delivery in the Mkhondo municipality, which includes the town of Piet Retief, paints a shocking picture of the state of health services in the area. The “Sunday Times” found during a visit to Piet Retief Hospital, locals are unhappy about the poor service. A local resident, said her 73 years old husband, who suffered a severe stroke, died on February 12, a day after his family had him discharged because of alleged bad treatment. Lushaba was admitted on January 31, but was left to lie on his bed in his soiled and dirty underwear for several hours <http://www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/2012/03/25report-detailscolla...> (Accessed on 2012/03/28). It is evident that bad service delivery is not limited to hospitals in the rural areas. The same tendency also prevails in some of the country’s leading hospitals in the bigger cities. For instance, cancer patients at Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Pretoria were recently turned away because two radiation machines were not working <http://www.coza/sundaytimes/2012/03/25public-hospital-in> (Accessed on 2012/03/28).

There seems to be a lack of safety even in the country’s hospitals. For instance, a lady who posed as a nurse recently entered Dora Nginza Hospital in Port Elizabeth and kidnapped a child without being noticed (SABC, 29.02.2012, at 11h00). It is clear therefore, that the health-care system of the new South Africa is facing serious challenges. Unfortunately the authors under discussion have not shown any awareness of this in their stories. The fact that service delivery in this field does not answer in the needs of the people, is not reflected in any of the stories under discussion. The HIV/AIDS pandemic does not receive any mention either in these stories.

3.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the views of the respective authors with regard to socio-economic conditions in the new South Africa, as reflected in their

short stories. The researcher has explored the extent to which short story writers in the new South Africa are engaging with the current circumstances in South African society, whether positive or negative. The manner in which they depict the new democratic government, as compared to the previous apartheid regime was investigated in this chapter.

Their expectations of the new South Africa and the extent to which these expectations have been realised, have been determined through a critical analysis of the various short stories. This analysis was based upon a comprehensive theoretical framework. The role of the author as a social observer and commentator forms the main focus of this theoretical framework.

The six selected authors, Bongela, Dudumashe–Luthango, Duka, Magona, Mtuze, and Yekela deserve praise for their willingness and courage to engage with some of the challenges and problems of the New South Africa. Their manner of writing corresponds with Professor Zulu's views, namely that South African literature in African languages was liberated from the constraints of the censorship bear, and now reveals some signs of maturing (Zulu; 1999:3). There is a great consensus in the way in which the six writers reflect on current issues. But the writers of the six selected anthologies have fallen short in addressing certain important challenges that face the South African nation during the post-apartheid era. They failed to expose corruption in government areas such as embezzlement, awarding tenders to friends and employment of cronies (nepotism), affirmative action, party politics, land restitution, the Zimbabwe issue and how these affect development and retard growth.

They also did not address persistent problems such as an ineffective educational system and the inability of law enforcers to control crime and maintain law and order. They lacked depth in addressing the state of affairs in education such as reflected in poor grade 12 results, lack of facilities and equipment. The advent of democracy brought about both hope as well as disillusionment. South Africans had thought that there would be no slum areas in the post-apartheid South Africa. But, to their surprise, people are still living under appalling conditions, dominated by congestion

and heaps of garbage. Crime and violence are rampant in the new South Africa. Drug abuse is epidemic.

Finally the researcher comes to the conclusion that the authors under discussion did address some of the issues that affect South African society in the post-apartheid era. They have made the reader aware to some extent of issues such as drug abuse in schools, lack of discipline, poor service delivery and crime. It is clear however that these authors have failed to expose all the socio-economic and socio-political issues that threaten the existence of this fledgling democracy. In this respect they have not sufficiently fulfilled their function to make readers aware of the many challenges that face the new South Africa, so as to alert the future generation. The matters referred to above are so important to the future of this country and yet they have largely been ignored and neglected by the authors. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that short story collections such as those under discussion, are often meant to be used as prescribed texts in South African schools. The authors of these texts are thereby granted a valuable opportunity to educate the South African youth through their work and to make them aware of the many social evils that exist in the country. Unfortunately the authors under discussion did not grasp this opportunity eagerly enough. They have not fulfilled their role as social observers and commentators satisfactorily.

CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE AND PATTERNS OF STYLISTIC DEVICES

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to analyse the six selected anthologies in order to explore the six authors' style of writing as a peculiar mode of expression in the short story genre. Literary style will be defined and the various theoretical concepts of style will be outlined and discussed. The principles identified here will be applied to the six chosen anthologies. This analysis will be based upon the assumption that the stylistic qualities of the short story are no different from those of other prose genres and that there are no fixed rules laid down as to the real style of the short story.

In this chapter it will be argued that language depicts the calibre of the author who was writing the text and the spirit or form he/she was in when he/she was producing the text. In this study therefore, attention will be given to the style of writers of the six selected anthologies by looking at the language they use to express ideas and emotions, to depict character and to describe situations in their short stories. The aim of this study is to evaluate the quality of the author's style and to establish its significance in his/her work.

As mentioned above, in this chapter an attempt will be made to analyse the six chosen authors' style of writing. This analysis will be preceded by a discussion on the term literary style, whereby it will be defined as accurately as possible. The various theoretical concepts of style will be outlined and discussed thereafter. The principles that are identified in the process will be applied to the six authors' work. The specific figures of speech that are most prevalent in these stories will be identified and discussed, including the various modes of figurative expression.

Some of the most important stylistic features of the Xhosa short story will also be identified for discussion in this chapter. Language contains features such as a rich vocabulary which includes figures of speech, which are the "universal elements of

style and dialogue” (Msimang, 1986:178). In this chapter, therefore, the six authors’ use of figures of speech such as simile, personification, repetition and onomatopoeia will be analysed critically. This investigation will also focus on other modes of expression such as proverbs and idioms, ideophones, biblical expressions and humour. Main concern in this chapter is with the stylistic features of the six chosen authors, their skill in expressing themselves and how they maintain the economy of language in the process. Each author’s literary style will be described in terms of its dominant features and the impression it makes upon the reader. The effectiveness and functionality of the various stylistic features will also be determined.

4.2 Definition of the concept of style

In this section the basic principles of literary style will be briefly discussed. The stylistic features of the six chosen Xhosa authors’ work will be analysed on the basis of this discussion. The concept of literary style, as found in prose texts in general, will be defined. The origin of the term style will be traced and a definition of the concept will also be provided.

Literary style may be described as the manner in which an author presents his/her view of a particular aspect of life by means of language. That is why Shaw (1972:360) defines style as:

The manner of putting thoughts into words: a characteristic mode of construction and expression in writing and speaking. The characteristics of a literary selection that concern the form of expression rather than the thought conveyed.

Style, therefore, is a reflection of the manner in which an author writes (as opposed to what he/she writes about). It is the product of factors such as word choice, tone and syntax. It is the voice the reader “hears” when he/she reads a particular author’s work <http://fictionwriting.about.com/od/crafttechnique/g/style.htm> (Accessed on 2013/04/16).

Arising from the above, the term literary style may therefore be defined as:

a term of literary criticism, used
to name or describe the manner
or quality of an expression...
(Shipley, 1972:397)

Kennedy (1991:10) emphasises the aspect of choice of linguistic expression when he claims that in general, style refers to the individual traits or characteristics of a piece of writing, to a writer's particular way of managing words that the reader comes to recognise as habitual or customary. Kirkman (1992:6) concurs with Kennedy with regard to the aspect of choice when he argues that:

Style in writing is concerned with choice.
Every writer has available the enormous
resources of a whole language. The
choice we make creates the style which
is a term covering balance, emphasis
and tone.

The term style is derived from the Latin word stilus, which is a name for the instrument that was used to inscribe symbols on wax tablets (Botha, 1978:40). The person who could handle this instrument in the most expert manner, was traditionally held in high esteem in Roman culture. Nguna (1997:164) quotes Lucas, who states that in Classical Latin the word stilus was extended to mean, firstly, a man's way of writing and then, more generally, his way of expressing himself, in speech as well as in writing. In French it has been narrowed down to signify a good way of expressing oneself.

From this brief historical interpretation it becomes clear that style is not merely concerned with a way of writing, as the above critics claim in their definitions, but also as a "good way of writing". From the arguments that have been presented above, it is clear that language is the material that is used by the writer in the creation of the literary work. In the same manner that the sculptor uses stone as the basic material by means of which a sculpture is formed, this function in literature is fulfilled by language (Botha, 1978:142). That is why Msimang, as cited by Nguna (1997:162) says that:

The basic element of style is language, a rich vocabulary which allows the writer to choose the word that best communicates his/her ideas.

In similar vein, Simpson (2004:23) writes that stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language. Moreover, stylistics is interested in language as a function of text in context, and it acknowledges that utterances are produced in a time, a place, and in a cultural and cognitive context. He furthermore says: "to do stylistics is to explore language, and more specifically, to explore creativity in language use exploring language offers a substantial purchase on our understanding of literary texts".

The role that is assigned to language as the primary medium of the literary text is acknowledged by one critic after the other. Mabuza (1988:162) for instance, cites Pretorius and Swart, who come to the conclusion that style can be defined as the way in which a writer utilizes the linguistic means at his/her disposal to produce a definite effect on the reader. One author, for example, makes use of adjectives in an unusual way, while another author may have a preference for particular figures of speech, or may be distinguished by his/her unique choice of words or syntactical patterns.

The important role that is fulfilled by the psychological factor in the process of stylistic creativity is acknowledged on a universal basis. Williams (2003:202) for instance, writes that Chomsky believes that the study of grammar and thus language, necessarily involves the study of psychology. He goes on to say that all languages have subjects, verbs, objects, modifiers and function words. Language is organised in keeping with how the brain is structured or with how it operates. A viable theory of language would have to address the relations between the brain and language. The mere fact that a reader is capable of enjoying the text is because of the relation between language and the brain.

Language is the primary medium of instruction in literature. It is the aesthetic effect of language that becomes stylistics. The psychological aspects of stylistic creativity have already received attention in the preceding paragraphs. Kennedy (1991:110) is

of the view that style refers to a writer's particular way of managing words that the reader comes to recognise as habitual. That is why Shipley (1972:398) says: "Style is thinking out into language".

Murray, as cited by Msimang (1986:177) also emphasises the intimate relationship between an author's personality and literary style. According to Murray, a writer's style is closely associated with his personality, which means that elements of his/her personal feelings, thoughts and experiences are evident in the type of language he/she uses. This means that, in order to appreciate fully the stylistic content of the text, the reader ought to be acquainted with the writer's background because the factors that may have shaped or affected his/her personality may also be reflected in his/her literary style. This however, does not mean that the critic is not able to comment on the style of a writer whose background is unknown to him/her. Stylistic analysis of a text is, to a greater or lesser degree still possible, without any knowledge of the author's background.

The above definitions of the concept of style are quite accommodative in that they acknowledge the right of the writer to use his/her own choice of words to express whatever he/she has thought of writing about, in so much so that the reader is able to differentiate one writer's works from those of others merely by looking at the linguistic peculiarities of that writer which give that writer's work a distinctive style. Each writer, therefore, selects the arrangement of linguistic items that he/she thinks will best give the balance, emphasis and tone necessary to produce the desired response from his/her reader. In an online article on the concept of style, Curteman comes to the conclusion that every author has a basic writing style. Style is not what an author writes about, but the manner in which he/she writes. It is an author's unique way of communicating ideas. One might say that style is the verbal identity of a writer. An author defines his/her style in word choice and in syntax (the order of words in a sentence). She continues by saying: while every author has a personal style of writing, that style is not static. The author refines it through reading a variety of writings and through his/her own particular writing experiences <http://nancycurteman.wordpress.com/2010/07/29/what-is-literary-style/> (Accessed on 2013/04/16).

An author's writing style is not static but rather, it is subject to change. One critic mentions that:

Naturally your writing style will change depending on your subject matter and the point of view. However, when we talk about developing your writing style, we mean the voice that is uniquely yours. That voice will change as your writing develops, of course, but like personality, the foundation is already there.

Style, therefore, is a revelation of an author's personality, of his/her individualism and his/her uniqueness. The study of an author's style provides important information with regard to the personal features of that particular author. It is evident that the selective application and arrangement of sounds and words within the literary work of prose is not undertaken merely with the view to the creation of a series of interesting sound patterns or syntactic structures. The application of language is undertaken primarily with the view to the achievement of a particular aesthetic effect. Literary style may therefore be described as the successful amalgamation of sounds and ideas:

When a thought is invested with its essential form, style results. The thought and the form are an indivisible one. (Shipley, 1972:397)

The literary critic is interested in the comprehensive and systematic description of the manner of application of language within the text, with the view to determining the manner in which a particular aesthetic effect is achieved through the use of sound. Wellek and Warren, (1966: 176 -177) write as follows:

But linguistic study becomes literary only when it serves the study of literature, when it aims at investigating the aesthetic effect of language, in short, when it becomes stylistic...

Finally, the intimate, reciprocal relationship that exists between the content of the text and the language that is used to convey those contents to the reader, is described as follows by Palmer (1993:69):

A good style is not imposed from without, but emerges from within. It should combine naturalness, flow and pleasure for all. A good style should show no sign of effort. What is written should seem a happy accident.

4.3 Stylistic features of the short story

In this section the most important stylistic features of the short story will be identified and discussed. This discussion will be based upon the assumption that any attempt at the laying down of rules beforehand regarding the stylistic features of the short story, would not be in order. Whilst the stylistic qualities of the short story are not necessarily different from those of other prose genres, there are no hard and fast rules that have been laid down as to the “proper” style of the short story (Nguna, 1997:198). The critic should rather recognise the unique status of each individual text. As indicated in earlier chapters, the short story genre is synonymous with the concepts of unity, shortness, brevity and compression with regard to all its constituent elements. Nguna (1997:26) for instance, argues that the short story is governed by the principles of unity, economy and compression.

Sebate (1994:36) whilst talking about compression in the short story, says it is a system of leaving some things out or exclusion of some obvious happenings or ideas. These special qualities of the short story genre and its unique features also manifest themselves at the stylistic level. Nguna (1997:16) puts it as follows:

At the same time, however, it should be borne in mind that this genre possesses certain special qualities including those of brevity, economy, condensation and simplicity of language. The language of the short story writer should contribute towards the general aim of this genre,

namely, the creation of a single artistic impression.

In this regard, Satyo (1987:89) regards the Xhosa equivalent of the English term “condensation” as uqulunganiso (literally: to say more in a few words). The principle of word economy plays an important role in the stylistic composition of the short story. This principle is recognised by most scholars of this genre. Nguna (1997:165) for instance, writes that a short story is a concise and condensed genre which has an economy of language, leaving aside superfluous elements and avoiding detailed description throughout.

Various scholars concur with what Nguna is saying above. Yelland et al. (1980:187) for instance, writes that effective economy is an essential quality of the short story. This refers to the economy of language used by the writer. The use of idioms, proverbs and ideophones mostly encourage economy. Johnson and Hamlin (1966:12) write that the short story is told with greater economy of words. The short story does not offer space for the full description of character, setting is described in a few words and dialogue is limited because the space is not enough. The text of the short story, therefore, is characterised by a limited usage of words and by compression of the story content within a limited number of pages. This is generally achieved through the judicious selection of the most meaningful words, short sentences and the avoidance of any form of discussion (Botha, 1978:144). That is why Hunt (1950:113) says:

anything that eliminates use-
less words automatically in-
creases the value of those
that remain.

Kwatsha (2001:134) suggests that lengthy explanations and paragraphs should be avoided to ensure economic use of language in short stories. She further quotes Jordan’s short story “Idabi laseMpindweni” where simple sentences are used for the purpose of economy.

In the lines above, reference was made to the fact that the use of stylistic forms such as idioms, proverbs and ideophones mostly encourage stylistic economy in the short

story. In addition to this, the short story writer also makes use of implication and suggestive language to achieve this goal:

It means that a short-story writer does not directly tell us things so much as let us guess or know them by implying them.
(O'Faolain, 1964:151)

O' Faolain (1964:229) also describes the stylistic character of the short story as “a language of undertones”. Through the use of this technique, excessive word usage is avoided and the unity of the text is strengthened. The use of this type of language does however, have important consequences for the short story reader. Nguna (1997:39) puts it as follows:

Suggestive language is normally used in short stories, and this needs an experienced reader who will be able to interpret the hidden meaning of the words that are used in the text.

The reader should continuously be on the alert for any form of symbolism or hidden meaning that might form part of the text. That is why Stopforth (1954:22) says:

The short story writer, on the other hand, expects more on the part of the reader while supplying him with fewer details.

In the paragraphs that follow, the specific stylistic features of the short story will be discussed in greater detail.

4.4 Figures of speech

In this section the relationship between literal language and figurative language will be explained. The purpose of figurative language within the literary text and the different types of figurative language that can be used by the author, will also receive attention in this section.

According to Nguna (1997:166) the writing style of an author generally manifests itself in the manner in which it deviates from the “normal” form of expression in a

particular language. One could, therefore, either refer to “literal language” where the speaker means exactly and completely what he/she says, or to “figurative language” where this direct relationship does not exist.

Figures of speech are mainly used to add vividness and clarity to what is being communicated. That is why Peck and Coyle (1985:139) say that “language is used figuratively to make ideas vivid”. Sotashe (1979:7) equally states that figures of speech used in the short story are not merely used for embellishment, but are meant to vivify the utterance of the traditional narrator or the written expression of the modern literary artist. In this regard, Nguna (1997:168) specifies the role of figurative speech more closely when she states that figures of speech possess various functions in literature and they may, for instance, be used to clarify or to illustrate that which is being narrated. They may also be used to stimulate associations or to raise laughter. In some cases inanimate objects are animated. The most important function of figures of speech, however, according to Nguna, is to contribute towards the aesthetic value of the text.

In the paragraph above, it was argued that the style of an author manifests itself in the extent to which it deviates from the “normal” form of expression in a particular language. Shipley (1970:120) provides a more detailed definition of this concept when he defines figurative language as:

an intentional deviation from the normal
(1) spelling (2) formation (3) construction
or (4) application of a term.

Cohen (1973:51) emphasises the associative nature of figurative speech when he says:

Figures of speech are images that are often intentionally indirect, they generally depend on a process of association, the deliberate linking of two elements.

Yelland et al. (1980:74-75) give recognition to the role of the reader’s imagination when they state:

Whenever a writer calls on our imagination to make comparisons and transfer ideas (as in simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy) or to realise that he is exaggerating (as in hyperbole) or that he means the opposite of what he says (as in irony), he is using figurative language.

It is clear therefore, that figures of speech are the universal elements of style and dialogue and that they call upon the reader's imagination. It evokes associations and connotations in the memories of the reader that provide greater significance to the information that is being communicated. The fact that figurative language is tightly packed and that it says a great deal in a few words, contributes to the fundamental principles of the short story of unity, compression and economy of expression.

According to Nguna (1997:167) the short story writer generally has a wide variety of stylistic forms at his/her disposal. Figures of speech such as simile, metaphor and symbolism may be used effectively within this particular genre. Other forms of figurative language such as the proverb and the ideophone may also be used effectively in order to strengthen the unity, economy and brevity of the short story as an independent literary genre.

The various forms of figurative speech that may be found in the text will now be dealt with on an individual basis in the paragraphs below.

4.4.1 Interjection: (Xhosa: "Isikhuzo")

The interjection may be described as a short sound, word or phrase uttered suddenly to express emotion. According to Louw and Jubase (1963:255) the interjection is an isolated word which is found in a sentence, but which does not have any grammatical relationship with the rest of the words in the sentence. Example: "Owu!" (Oh!)

4.4.2. Repetition: (Xhosa: “Uphinda-phindo”)

Repetition may be described as the repeated use of certain sets of words, parts of words (morphemes) or even sentences within a literary text. Nguna (1997:178) puts it as follows: “Repetition is regarded as a basic principle of art”.

Various forms of repetition may be used in the literary text. In prose narrative, forms such as the following are found: repetition of a word, (which is called anaphora), repetition of clauses or phrases and repetition of sentences or passages. Anaphora may be defined as the repetition of a particular word within the text with the specific aim of achieving a particular premeditated effect (Nguna, 1997:179).

It is evident that this figure of speech plays an important part in the total stylistic design of the literary text. That is why Shipley (1972:339) is of the view that: “Repetition as a device in prose is endlessly fertile”. Repetition is mainly used to emphasise a particular notion and to strengthen its impact within the literary text. Botha (1978:162-163) points out that repetition is often used as a figure of speech in the Xhosa short story. He identifies the following categories of repetition:

- (i) Repetition of word morphemes in the form of the subjectival concord or the negative morpheme nga- ;
- (ii) Repetition of words in the form of geographical names;
- (iii) Repetition of ideophones;
- (iv) Repetition of syntactic structures.

Nguna (1997:178) equally comes to the conclusion that this figure of speech plays an important role in Mtuze’s short stories. This may be attributed to the influence of traditional literature on Mtuze’s work and on the Xhosa short story writer’s work in general.

The important role played by repetition in traditional literature, is described as follows by Okpewho (as quoted by Nguna, 1997:179):

It is a device that not only gives a touch of

beauty or attractiveness to a piece of oral expression (whether song or narrative or other kind of statement) but also serves a certain practical purpose in the overall organisation of the oral performance.

4.4.3 Personification (Xhosa: “Isimntwiso”)

Personification may be described as the practice of representing objects, animals, etc. as humans. Shipley (1972:305) defines this figure of speech as follows:

the endowing of abstract qualities, general terms, inanimate objects, or other living things, with human attributes, esp. feelings.

Personification, therefore, is a figure of speech in which human characteristics are attributed to an abstract quality, animal, or inanimate object. An example is the well-known English expression: “The Moon doth with delight” <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/453037/personification> (Accessed on 2013/04/16). The moon is an object. It cannot show any delight, but here it is shown as human. It is being personified or endowed with human qualities.

Personification is used to compare two things that are not generally associated with each other. Therefore, personification is when an author makes an indirect comparison between an inanimate object and a human being <http://suite101.com/article/comparisons-in-literature-a138373> (Accessed 2013/04/16)

According to Botha (1978:159), personification is often used as a figure of speech in the Xhosa short story. The verb “to eat” is for instance, used as follows by two different Xhosa authors:

- i. “Yadla intonga”: the stick ate, i.e. the stick was used to beat someone with. In UNgaba (Jongilanga, 1973:60)
- ii. “sadla isikhali”: the knife ate, i.e. someone was stabbed with a knife. In Umfana wasemaTolweni (Jordan, 1974:33).

The use of personification enables these authors to provide a vivid and accurate account of the events that took place in the scenes from the respective stories.

4.4.4 Simile (Xhosa: “Isifaniso”)

The simile is a figure of speech that plays an important role in most literary texts. It is often used by authors to provide a clear picture of certain aspects of the story. Shipley (1972:376) describes the simile as:

The comparison of two things of different categories because of a point or points of resemblance, and because the association emphasizes, clarifies, or in some way enhances the original.

A simile therefore, is a word or phrase that compares something to something else, using the words like or as. Example: Imhlophe oku kwekhephu. (It is as white as snow.).

The online publication All American Glossary of Literary Terms defines a simile as: “a type of figurative language that does not mean exactly what it says, that makes a comparison between two otherwise unlike objects or ideas by connecting them with the words “like” or “as”. According to this source, similes allow an author to emphasise a characteristic of an object by comparing that object to an unrelated object that is an example of that characteristic <http://wwwuncp.edu/home/Canada/work/allam/general/glossary.htm> (Accessed on 2013/04/16).

It is clear that the simile is a figure of speech that is often used by Xhosa authors. According to Nguna (1997:168) for instance, the simile is the figure of speech that is most frequently found in Mtuze’s short stories. Nguna continues by saying: “In his stories Mtuze has successfully employed the simile to make a simple comparison, to appeal to our imagination, to reinforce meaning, to add a pictorial element and to create associations. It is noted that Mtuze prefers the comparison of actions to objects rather than the comparison of two objects”.

4.4.5 Onomatopoeia (Xhosa: “Isifanodumo”)

According to Nguna, the term “onomatopoeia” refers to the use of words in which the sound of a specific action is imitated linguistically (Nguna, 1997:82). Onomatopoeia, therefore, are words containing sounds that are similar to the noises they describe. Example: “saa” (scatter). It is clear that the use of onomatopoeia enhances the overall literary quality of the text. That is why Boulton, as quoted by Nguna (1997:182) says:

Onomatopoeia may attract us not only by the accuracy with which it gives a sound-picture of the things or events it describes but also by lulling us into a trance as a kind of incantation.

The use of this figure of speech undoubtedly contributes towards the unity of a short story text, since it encourages brevity and economical usage of words. Nguna (1997:182) points out that the overall success of Mtuze’s short stories may be attributed to his successful application of this figure of speech in his work.

4.4.6 Idiomatic expressions (Xhosa: “Amaqhalo”)

Idiomatic expressions represent the kind of language used by particular people at a particular time or place or the style of writing that is typical of a particular person, group, period or place and it gives beauty to what is being said. Example: “Let the cat out of the bag.” This English idiom means to reveal a secret by mistake.

The Free Dictionary defines an idiom as a free speech form or an expression of a given language that is peculiar to itself grammatically or that cannot be understood from the various individual meanings of its elements <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Idioms> (Accessed on 2013/04/16).

Idiomatic expressions represent an important part of the stylistic nature of a literary text. The literary quality of the text is determined, to a large extent, by the use of idiomatic expressions in the text. The presence of idiomatic expressions in a text is a clear indication of stylistic quality and of an author’s good command of the language. Furthermore, brevity and compression, which are fundamental principles of the short

story genre, is generally encouraged by the use of idiomatic expression, since they are models of economical language usage (Nguna, 1997:187).

Botha (1978:147) identifies three different categories of idiomatic expressions, namely proverbs, sayings and ideophones. These categories will now be discussed individually in the paragraphs below.

The term proverb (Xhosa: “Isaci”) is derived from the Latin word verbum, which means: a word. Proverbs are common to all nations and people and they are rooted in their folklore and preserved by their oral traditions. It is an old and popular saying that illustrates a basic truth <http://www.TheGuide-to-Literary-Terms> (Accessed on 10/12/2012). Proverbs are frequently used in daily conversations between people. The collective experience and wisdom of the people is generally contained in its proverbs. That is why Jordan (1974:33) says:

In general African proverbs state universally accepted principles and give guidance as to conduct in particular circumstances.

The saying (Xhosa: “Iqhalo”/“isaci”) does not have such a strong didactical component as the proverb. It is regarded as a traditional expression of more general nature than the proverb. According to Satyo (1988:292) an idiom is a complete speech form that teaches a lesson or warning whereas the saying is a statement that expresses something about life that most people believe is wise and true. Most of these proverbs and sayings are found in the book of proverbs and sayings (Mesatywa, 1954). The online publication The Free-Dictionary describes a saying as a concise verbal expression setting forth wisdom or a truth. A saying therefore, is an often repeated, familiar expression <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/saying> (Accessed on 2013/04/16).

It is clear that sayings play an important role in the Xhosa short story. Nguna (1997:185) for instance, points out that certain Xhosa idioms are frequently found in Mtuze’s stories. This author uses idioms to depict some basic aspects of human behaviour. The use of idioms in this manner clearly reveals the author’s in-depth knowledge of Xhosa. It further plays an important role in limiting boredom and

monotony on the part of the reader and is, therefore, of both aesthetic as well as of practical value. Sayings are often found in Xhosa short stories. This enables the respective authors to convey the contents of the story to the reader in a less discursive and roundabout manner. This results in the advancement of the fundamental principles of the short story of unity and compression. The third category, namely ideophones will be discussed in the paragraph that follows.

4.4.7 The ideophone (Xhosa: “Isifanekisozwi”)

“Isifanekisozwi” is a word that describes a verb, an adjective or another ideophone. According to Louw and Jubase, (1963:255) the ideophone is a word that describes a predicate with regard to sound, colour or action. Ideophones are often used when the speaker becomes excited or he/she strongly emphasizes a fact or a thought. In Xhosa the ideophone is mostly preceded by the verb “thi”. The structure of the ideophone may vary from one syllable to five syllables. Example: “ukuthi cwaka” (he/she is quiet) “imhlophe qhwa” (snow white).

The ideophone therefore is a lexical item that describes a phenomenon or an action in terms of colour, sound or the manner in which the action is being executed. Satyo (1987:60) provides the following information with regard to the literary function of the ideophone:

Sikholisa ngokulinganisa into
ebhekiselele kuyo. Amandla alo,
asekuhlongozeni ekuvuseleleni,
ekuzobeni, nasekuchukumiseni.

It often imitates something that
relates to it. Its power is in
provoking, invoking portraying,
and triggering.

Within the context of the short story, the use of the ideophone plays a most important role in the achievement of economy, compression and brevity. This is confirmed by Kwatsha (2000:127 – 128) who says that both the writer of a short story and a poem write almost the same way. Their selection of words shows

condenseness and accuracy. A good example of this is AC Jordan's short story collection "Kwezo Mpindo zeTsitsa" (1974). Kwatsha puts it as follows:

Kukho ibalana elinomdla apho elisihloko sithi "Idabi laseMpindweni". Xa uphonononga elo balana uya kufumanisa ukuba umbhali ulu-sebenzisile uqoqosho lwamagama kuba uqa-qambise kakhulu ngezifanekiso-zwi eziqulethe lukhulu kuba zona zizoba ngqo loo ntetho ibiza kolulwa ngumbhali.

There is an interesting story with the heading "Idabi laseMpindweni". When one looks at this story one discovers that the author has observed the economy of words by using ideophones to give a vivid and direct picture about what is contained in the story, thus avoiding a long, detailed description.

The ideophone also plays an important role in the manner in which another Xhosa author, PT Mtuze, expresses himself in his stories. Nguna (1997:188) puts it as follows:

In his stories, Mtuze has exploited the ideophone with its dramatic effect to lend additional force to the expression. He uses the ideophone not merely for embellishment but for the creation of a particular artistic effect.

4.4.8 Humour (Xhosa: "Ukuhlelekisa")

Humour is found on a wide-spread basis in literature. There are different forms of humour, such as irony, satire and comedy. Although humour is found on such a wide-spread basis and in spite of the fact that it has been present in literature for over one thousand years, very little is still known about it. That is why Robinson, as quoted online by Mawter, says: 'Humour is the Cinderella in the world of children's literature. Volumes are devoted to fantasy, to folklore and myth, even belated, to poetry, but humour is lucky to rate even an occasional chapter or article. Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC) was one of the first philosophers who stated that humour and tragedy are of equal importance. Furthermore, Bremmer and Roodenburg, as quoted by Mawter, define humour as: "any message transmitted in action, speech,

writing, images or music intended to produce a smile or a laugh” <http://www.jenimawter.com> (Accessed on 16/04/2013).

In modern times, various definitions of the term “humour” may be found. In terms of these definitions, humorous fiction refers to novels and stories written in a comical and amusing manner. The online publication “A Glossary of Literary Terms” defines humour as: “The quality of a literary or informative work that makes the character and/or situations seem funny, amusing, or ludicrous” <http://www.ode.state.or.us> (Accessed on 16/04/2013).

It is a well-known fact that Xhosa literature abounds with humorous texts. One of the best-known older Xhosa humourists is the short story writer GB Sinxo. His stories about the relationship between a man and his wife in “UNojayiti Wam” are a good case in point (Mkonto, 1984: 34). This mode of expression is also regularly employed by a modern author such as Mtuze in his short stories. The author is well-known for the humorous manner in which his stories are often narrated (Nguna, 1997:196).

4.5 Stylistic features of the Xhosa short story.

The most important stylistic features of the Xhosa short stories under discussion will be identified and discussed in this section. The researcher will recognise the unique status of each text. As indicated in earlier chapters, the short story genre is synonymous with the concepts of unity, shortness, brevity and compression with regard to all its constituent elements. This section intends exactly exploring that. In the excerpts that appear in the sections below, the relevant figure of speech is printed in italics.

4.5.1 Interjections

As indicated in paragraph 4.4.1 above, the interjection is a short sound, word or phrase uttered suddenly to express emotions. This stylistic feature plays an important role in the story “ICwengile Junior Secondary School” whereby Dudumashe-Luthango (2003) portrays the negative impact democracy has on the South African youth.

ICwengile is a rural school in Cala in the former Transkei. This school offers classes from grade 7 to grade 9. Learners here are still relatively young. Young as they are, they do not hesitate to revolt against their teachers and they see nothing sinister regarding their actions. They talk openly about their rights. Among their demands is that they want an SRC to be elected. They also want to be provided with regular reports about the school fund.

The learners gather in front of the principal's office on a particular day to lay their demands in front of Mr Cwenga, the school principal. The principal orders them to go to their classrooms. They instantly yield to the call, but within 10 minutes they decide to leave the classrooms without permission from the teachers. They begin to toy-toy, singing and shouting: "viva Cosas, viva!" (p.15). Teachers look shocked and dismayed, as this is their first experience of this type of behaviour. The narrator puts it as follows:

Owu! Yavuthuluka yaphela tu imbeko kumntwana womAfrika. "Ingaba iseyidemokhrasi? Esinjani sona isizwe ukuyicinizela imbeko kwinkcubeko yaso. Siza kukhe sijonge le demokhrasi kwesinye sezikolo zeli, iCwengile phaya eCala...(p.14)

Oh! The African child has completely lost moral behaviour. Is it still democracy? What type of a nation is it that suffocates its good behaviour and culture. We shall now look at this democracy in one of the schools, Cwengile situated at Cala...

By using the interjection: "Owu" (Oh) in the quotation above to show this shocking experience, the narrator accurately illustrates the volatile situation and the youth's misbehaviour at Icwengile Junior Secondary School. This strange volatile situation exposes today's youth's immoral behaviour. The interjection "owu" here creates a dramatic effect of astonishment. This effect is strengthened through the use of this interjection in combination with the rhetorical question: It serves as an accurate expression of the negative emotions of the narrator about this new form of behaviour in the society.

There is a general perception that democracy has produced an unruly rowdy youth and that this characterises the S.A. nation after 1994. The interjection quoted above

shows how democracy has affected many South African schools. The interjection: “owu!” used prominently at the beginning of the sentence in the middle of the first paragraph of the story, is meant to awaken the interest of the reader and lure him/her to read further.

In the story “Ubufazi! Ubufazi! ” (Woman-hood! Woman-hood!) Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) informs the reader about the challenges of being a woman. The setting is Cofimvaba, at a village called uMthingwevu in the former rural Transkei. The story illustrates that men tend to suppress women sometimes. Since Dudumashe-Luthango is a female author, this story reflects her sentiments which are based upon her emotions. She looks at society from the female perspective, showing how females experience male domination and male chauvinism.

In the story, Mandlakapheli works on the gold mines in the former Transvaal. His wife Noluntu lives in Cofimvaba at Mthingwevu village. On his arrival at Mthingwevu on one week’s leave, Mandlakapheli discovers that their daughter, Nontombi, is pregnant. He responds to this discovery by becoming hostile towards his wife, firing many unanswerable questions at her.

Noluntu decides to leave Cofimvaba to stay with her brother in Port Elizabeth. Her brother takes her to the University of Fort Hare in Alice to further her education. She succeeds and receives the Bachelor of Social Work Degree.

The excerpt below shows the ups and downs in Noluntu’s life, vividly illustrated by interjections and exclamations, as can be witnessed in the following excerpt:

Ubufazi! Ubufazi!

“*Ubufazi! Ubufazi!* Ndiyekeni ngobufazi”
Watsho uNoluntu umfazi kaMandlakapheli
intliziyo ilihlwili exakiwe ukuba
makaphendule athini kuthotho lwemibuzo
eyayingxixhwa phezu kwentloko yakhe
nguMandlakapheli. (p.1)

Woman-hood! Woman-hood!

“Woman-hood! Woman-hood! My mouth is sealed regarding the issue of womanhood,”

said Noluntu Mandlakapheli's wife heartbroken, not knowing what to do, and how to answer the flood of questions that were being put to her by Mandlakapheli.

In this excerpt, the exclamation "Ubufazi! Ubufazi!" ("Woman-hood! Womanhood!") has been used most prominently by the author in the title of this story, the aim being to attract the reader's attention to read the story. This is an effective strategy that is aimed at conquering the reader's interest. The first sentence of the first paragraph of the story opens with the same exclamation, so as to anchor the reader's mind in reading the story. The same exclamation also appears more than once in the text, by so doing the writer is putting full emphasis on the theme of the story. In this example, the use of the interjection is effectively combined with the use of another figure of speech, namely repetition. This matter will receive further attention in paragraph 4.5.5 below.

There are other interjections and exclamations that have also been used by the writer in this story, such as "awu!" (Wow!) (p.1), "Tyhini!" (Good heavens!) (p.5) and "yhu!" (Heavens!) (p.5). It is clear that this figure of speech plays an important role in this author's work. The author uses these interjections to emphasise her indignation at the unacceptable manner in which women are often treated by men in Xhosa society.

The story "Ikamva Lesizwe" (Future of the Nation) was written by one of Magona's emerging writers, Nomsa Somdaka in her collection: "Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka Yawo" (1997:69). The writer tells us about an abandoned baby that was discovered and taken into care by a married couple, Noxolo and Zithulele. The setting is in Mendi road, at New Brighton location in Port Elizabeth. This couple decides to take the baby to Doctor Ziqu. Doctor Ziqu is Zithulele's father. Out of compassion, empathy and sympathy, Doctor Ziqu and his wife accept and welcome the abandoned baby. Doctor Ziqu's wife gives her a bath and food. Doctor Ziqu phones the police to report the matter. The story opens as follows:

*Yho! Yho! Yho-o lusana! Esi
sikhalo sihlabayo sesikaNoxolo.
(p.69).*

Yoo-hoo! It is a baby! The sharp unbearable cry is uttered by Noxolo.

The writer begins her story with an interjection to create a dramatic effect and to attract the reader's attention. As in the case of "Ubufazi! Ubufazi!" (Dudumashe-Luthango:1998), the use of this figure of speech is combined with that of repetition. This technique will receive attention below. The excerpt above depicts the unacceptable situation that is related to the abandonment of babies and how people respond to such situations. This is what is often happening in South Africa today. According to figures compiled by the Child Welfare Society, over 200 babies were abandoned in Buffalo City Metro in 2011 ("Daily Dispatch", 18. 08. 2012:p.5). The author makes successful use of the interjection to draw the reader's attention to this social evil.

There are other forms of exclamations and interjections that are also found in this story. This includes the interjection "Yhoo!" as in: "Yhoo! Akasemhle" (How beautiful) (p. 71) as well as the interjection "O!" as in: "O! Uthetha ukuba nyhani?"(O! Is it true?) (p. 75). The presence of these interjections shows that this figure of speech plays an important role in this author's work. It certainly contributes towards the overall dramatic effect of the narrative.

4.5.2 Ideophones

In paragraph 4.4.7 above it was argued that an ideophone is a word that describes a verb, an adjective or another ideophone. The structure of an ideophone may vary from one to five syllables. In this section ideophones will be identified and discussed and it will be shown how various authors use them to promote aesthetic value and strengthen unity, economy and brevity in their stories.

Both Dudumashe–Luthango and Duka have effectively used ideophones in their stories to promote the aesthetic value of the text and to strengthen the unity, economy and brevity of their short stories. These ideophones link perfectly well with what is being narrated in the story. Amongst the ideophones that are found in the Xhosa language, they skilfully chose specific ideophones that befit the situation. In

the story “Icwengile Junior Secondary School” (Duka, 2003), as referred to in section 4.5.1 above, the ideophone “tu” is for instance used as follows:

Owu! Yavuthuluka yaphela *tu* imbeko kumntwana womAfrika. Ingaba iseyi-demokhrasi? Esinjani sona isizwe uku-yicinezela imbeko kwinkcubeko yaso.
(p.14).

Oh! The African child has completely lost moral behaviour. Is this still democracy? What an uncompromising nation regarding issues like respect in its culture.

The use of the ideophone “tu” (complete) in the extract above modifies the meaning of the verb “yaphela”. It serves as an accurate reflection of the perception that good behaviour is no longer there in the youth. It provides a vivid image of the action described here. The writer has also used various other ideophones in this story to express his views in the strongest possible manner, as can be witnessed in the following excerpt:

Bantwana bam ndithi kuni yiyani eklasini. Bathe *gwiqi* nje phandle bathi *gqum, ngqo* eziklasini. Kungemzuzu, dungu abafundi eziklasini ngaphandle kwemvume yootishala. (p.15)

My children, I say go to the classrooms. They dispersed outside swiftly and went straight to the classrooms. Within a second they dispersed and went outside without getting permission from the teachers.

In this excerpt the ideophones “gwiqi”, “gqum,” “ngqo” and “dungu” clearly depict the collective action by the students, taken simultaneously and unhesitantly as if instructed by a commander. Everything is done as in the wink of an eyelid. In some cases the ideophones are used in complete form, for example “bathe gwiqi”. In other instances the ideophone is used in its abbreviated form, for example “ngqo”. This way the writer avoids monotony and achieves a more varied, dramatic effect in the story.

The ideophone is used with equal success by Duka (2003), in the story “UZenzile” (“He only has himself to blame”). In this story the author narrates about Zenzile’s bad behaviour that is a source of concern to both his grandmother, Magaba, and Nosidima, his biological mother.

The setting is Alice, a rural town in the province of the Eastern Cape where the University of Fort Hare is situated. Zenzile, a young man of 18, is a student at the University of Fort Hare. He lives with his grandmother Magaba in an upmarket house in Alice. Nosidima, Zenzile’s biological mother, has divorced her husband. She works at the University of South Africa as a lecturer. She stays in Pretoria. Zenzile’s actions are exactly those of a youth who is at the adolescent stage. Zenzile becomes a gang member. They steal motor cars and rob banks. Magaba is not happy with Zenzile’s behaviour. He leaves home at sunrise and arrives at midnight everyday. He drives a BMW. Magaba phones and reports Zenzile to Nosidima. He bribes his grandmother Magaba with an undisclosed amount of money.

Eventually Zenzile and his friends are apprehended by the police in Oxford Street, East London. There is cross fire with the police. The police and the criminals start shooting at one another. Zenzile is killed. The police visit Zenzile’s home to report the incident. Magaba is disturbed. In the evening Nosidima arrives and on hearing the alarming news of her son’s death she collapses (p.47). The scene where Zenzile’s immoral behaviour is portrayed is described as follows:

Nanko umfana omalunga neshumi
elinesibhozo leminyaka enyathelela
phezulu kwipaseji emdudulela em-
nyango wangaphambili. *Cofi cofi*
eludongeni. *Qhakra Gengelele! Mbakra!*
ucango. Gxokro-kro-kro-kro! Vum-vum-
vuu! Wahlehla udeda umgrugra weBMW.
Tshitshilili isandi sofafa lwenqwelo
yomzukulwana. (p.42)

A young man of approximately 18 years can be seen rushing down the passage that leads to the front door. He presses the light switches on the wall. The sound can be heard of the forceful, wide opening and closing of the door and starting the

car engine and moving reversing the new BMW. The sound of Magaba's grandson's car disappears in the distance.

In this excerpt, the writer has made effective use of ideophones to portray the behaviour and feelings of the characters in the story. The ideophone "qhakra!" shows that it was dark in the evening and electrical lights are now switched on in a rushed manner. The ideophones, "gengelele" and "mbakra" show Zenzile's bad behaviour and the force that is used to open and close the door. These ideophones clearly indicate Zenzile's negative attitude when leaving the home. His actions show disrespect and ill-discipline.

Although the reader has never seen or met Zenzile, through the use of these ideophones a clear picture of Zenzile is shown. Everything that he does, he does with force. The writer has used three types of ideophones in this story to increase the aesthetic value of his narration, namely:

monosyllable: "jwi," "gqa."

two syllables: "mbakra," "merhe," "qhuzu."

four syllables: "tshitshilili", "gengelele,"
"khwasilulu"

The use of these ideophones effectively show that Zenzile is an extreme evil. In this excerpt, the ideophone is used in combination with another figure of speech, namely onomatopoeia (see 4.5.5 below).

Words such as "cofi cofi" and "kro-kro-kro" provide a clear description of the sounds that are made whilst Zenzile moves through the house in an impatient and inconsiderate manner. The dramatic effect of this scene is therefore increased through the combined use of these two figures of speech (see also excerpt above) where the ideophones "qhakra" "gengelele" are discussed.

In the story "Yajayiva iteksi" (The taxi jived), Yekela (1997) has used ideophones to describe certain situations as effectively as possible enabling the audience to hear, feel and experience the narrative as fully as possible. The setting of the story is the

rural village of Ngcobo in the former Transkei homeland. People from Ngcobo buy the goods they need in Mthatha and Queenstown. They generally use taxis as mode of transport. On this particular day the people from Ngcobo board a taxi to buy groceries and clothes for Christmas in Mthatha. The author points out that the taxi drivers travel at excessive speed on the roads. The taxi they used from Mthatha was travelling at a very high speed. A tyre burst and the taxi rolled, thus causing some casualties. The ambulance took the injured to hospital. The scene is described as follows:

Abakwiidolophu ezincinane kwakunye nabo basezilalini abakwazi kuyifumana yonke into abayifunayo kwezo ndawo bakuzo. Kuyanya-nzeleka ke ngoko ukuba bakhwele izithuthi baye kuthenga kwiindawo ezithe *qelele nama-khaya* abo. Sekukhonya ngoku ezi tekisi ziligqibileyo ilizwe, zibagqibileyo nabantu. (p.33)

People that live in small towns and villages are unable to get all the things they want in the places in which they they live. They are therefore forced to board any mode of transport to go and buy in places that are far from their homes. Taxis dominate the whole world nowadays and many people die in taxi related accidents.

The three-syllabled ideophone “qelele” (far away) clearly reflects the distance people in rural villages have to travel to get groceries and other things from town. This ideophone also reflects that many things are not accessible in the rural areas. Life is difficult. Things are at a distance for the people. The plight of the local residents is therefore depicted effectively in this excerpt, in particular through the use of this ideophone. This ideophone has been used strategically by the writer to achieve economy and brevity in accordance with the stylistic requirements of the short story genre. The following ideophones are also found in this story: “qwaba” (only) (p.33), “rhoqo” (regular) (p.34), “tu” (completely) “ntli” (completely full) (p.34), “thu” (appear) (p.36) and “chu” (move slowly) (p.37). These ideophones contribute towards the economic use of language in the story.

The setting of the story, “UGalatyan’ utyebile” is Tshatshu, a village near Zwelitsha in King William’s Town. The older, naughty boys of Tshatshu disturb the peace in the village whereas Tshatshu is well-known for its peaceful environment. Tshatshu is a missionary village. Christianity was introduced by Jan Tshatshu, the hero of the amaNtinde clan. His son, Chief Phakamisa Tshatshu ruled at Tshatshu even long after the death of his father.

About fifty older boys roam around the village, stealing fowls from different households, peaches from orchards and watermelons from other households. They are summoned to the headman’s kraal. They are sentenced to six lashes each. The boys however, are not deterred. Eventually they are reported to the police. They get imprisonment, but they are soon released. They continue attacking people at night. Their behaviour frightens the villagers. Nyelenzi is the only old man who is supporting the naughty boys. He explains to the other villagers that the boys are toyi-toying towards freedom. The situation at Tshatshu is described as follows:

Kube ngasa kwacholwa impahla yomntu ithe
saa kuloo ndlela isinga edolophini, kwaba
ngasa kwabikwa inkuku elahlekileyo nge-
phezolo, kwaba ngahlwa satsho isijwili se-
ndoda isukelwa ngamakhwenkwe kwelo thafa
linabele eGood Hope esekusithiwa yiDa
Gama kule mihla. (p.18)

Every morning people’s clothes that are seen
scattered on the road to town are collected.
Every morning people report cases of fowls
that were stolen during the previous night.
Every evening a sharp cry of a man who is
being harassed by the boys is heard on the
flat ground around Good Hope, an area
presently known as Da Gama.

The use of the term “saa” in the extract above accurately depicts the unwelcoming situation of people’s clothes that are seen scattered on the road. This also illustrates that there is no unity in Tshatshu as well as the undisciplined behaviour of the older boys of the village. The ideophone “chu” has also been used as follows in this story by the author:

Uthe esathe chu kuhle ngendlela
uSiqhukumfa wadibana noNyelenzi
(p.20).

As Siqhukumfa steadily moved
along this road, he came across
Nyelenzi.

The ideophone “chu” as used here, successfully depicts the slow pace of Siqhukumfa’s movement. This indicates that the villagers are dejected and that there is no happiness in the village.

4.5.3 Idiom

The idiom, as already shown in paragraph 4.4.6 above, is described as the kind of language used by particular people at a particular time or place to add beauty to what is being said. In this section idioms used by the various authors will be identified and discussed.

In the story “Amakhwenkwe” Duka (2003), makes effective use of idioms to add aesthetic value to his story. Reverend Dela has a large beautiful house at Gubevu. On his premises he also has a flourishing orchard. It is summer season, the trees look beautiful. All orchards at Gubevu show high yields of fruit, but Reverend Dela’s orchard excels. Boys at Gubevu are the greatest enemies of the owners of these orchards. They cause great destruction once they enter Reverend Dela’s orchard. These thieves have a leader. Their leader is Hlazo and he is the eldest among these boys. Reverend Dela’s orchard is tightly fenced, but this does not stop the thieves from entering. Reverend Dela decides to preach about this devilish behaviour at all church services. Hlazo and his group decide to harass Reverend Dela by visiting his evening church service with the aim of disrupting it.

In this story the orchard is described as follows:

KwaGubevu. Umzi omkhulu wale mihla
kamfundisi Dela nanko uthe ngqendeve
kuloo lali ithe thande ngesidima kwelo
thambeka liphakathi koNothenga neZi-
nyoka. Kusehlotyeni ilizwe

liyintombazana. Imiyezo iyawunduza imithi ithwele iyasindakala. Kodwa kuloo lali yakuGubevu akukho mzi uziqhamo zincasa njengawo lowo kaNyawontle. (p.27)

At Gubevu. The large modern house of Reverend Dela stands on a hilly slope in a dignified village that lies on a slope between Nothenga and Zinyoka. It is summer time, the nature is beautiful and green. Orchards have high yields. But at Gubevu the priest's house dominates all the orchards with the best, nice fruit.

In this quotation, the idiom “ilizwe liyintombazana”, effectively illustrates the beauty of nature during the summer season and what people yield when the season is good. The joy of the eye and abundance of food and fruit is vividly shown through the use of this idiom.

The author has also used idioms such as “ukuhla nomcinga” (to withdraw) (p.27) and “ukubeleka abasicatyana” (to run very fast) (p. 28) in this story. The latter is used as follows:

Akubangakho bani uchola igosa elibe liwe isiduli. Yaba sisijwili iyimbonde-mbonde, abanemitsi ngeefestille, yangumntu enyathela oleleyo. Ophume phandle *acele kwabasicatyana.* (p.28)

Nobody collected the elder that collapsed. There was crying and chaos, the ones with strength jumping through windows, people stepping on the ones who fell down. Those who managed to get outside, decided to run away as they were in a state of panic.

In this quotation the author makes use of a less well-known variant of this idiom, namely “ukubeleka abasicatyana”. The use of this variant reflects the state of anxiety of the villagers more effectively.

In one of his stories, Yekela (1997) shows that an idiom can be used successfully as the title of a story. In the story “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha” (a good person can

give birth to a bad child), it is stated that reverend Gangxa of the Apostolic Faith Mission stays in Uitenhage. Reverend Gangxa is a well-known preacher in Uitenhage and surroundings. The reverend and his wife have three daughters and one son.

Vuyisile is their last born. Vuyisile is a naughty boy. Instead of inheriting his parents' good manners, he is just the opposite. He grew up as a naughty boy at school and in the streets of Uitenhage. His three sisters however, behave responsibly. They are upholding the good name of the family.

Numerous reports reached the parents from Vuyisile's teachers. He is becoming more of a disappointment to his parents. At home he steals sugar. At school he steals money from other learners' bags during breaks. His performance is deteriorating at school. He plays truant. He suddenly leaves school to join some gangsters. His gang of six are the talk of the town. The crimes they are involved in are shoplifting, bank robbery, garage robbery, and vehicle theft. They are caught and arrested. They do not stop after their release from goal, they continue with their criminal activities. Eventually, both the parents died out of grief. This situation is described as follows:

Baye bafunyanwa abo babini beqela babesindile ngomhla wogqogqo omnye emva kweeveki ezintathu kanti omnye emva kwenyanga. Wafika umhla wamatyala, bafunyanwa benetyala lokuphanga nelokubulala baza bagwetywa iminyaka engamashumi mabini emnye bedontsa entolongweni. Babhubha iintliziyo zabo zidandathekile, yena enkolonkoloza kwesimnyama sona isisele. (p.10)

The two who escaped were caught on the day of a door to door search, one after three weeks another after a month. The date of the trial arrived, they were found guilty of robbery and murder and they were sentenced to twenty two years each in custody Vuyisile's parents died with

sore hearts, leaving him behind in the dark cells of prison.

The above quotation forms the last paragraph of this story “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha” and it relates well with the title of the story, although the title itself is not part of the paragraph. Vuyisile’s bad behaviour and bad actions show that he is the opposite of his parents and yet he is born of a Christian family. Therefore, a Xhosa idiom is used effectively in the title of the story to summarise the events that will be presented during the course of the narrative and to illustrate the fact that, to be born of a good family, does not mean *ipso facto*, that a child will be well-behaved.

Other idioms have also been used successfully by the author in this story, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

Abazali bakhe bamthethisa *boma imiqala* unyana wabo ngesimilo sakhe esasixakile esikolweni. (p.4)

His parents talked to him about his bad behaviour that was unbearable at school, until their throats became dry.

...wavula ifestile engasemva watsiba ngayo, wathi lakatyu ngaphaya ko-thango, *wacela koo-xhongo*. (p.8)

...he opened the back window and jumped through it, he jumped over the fence, and ran very hard as if he is mad.

Through the use of these two idioms, Vuyisile’s delinquent behaviour is portrayed vividly to the reader.

In the story, “Ixesha” (Mtuze, 2003) the writer tells us about the situation in South Africa during the apartheid period, referring to the town of Hofmeyr in the Eastern Cape that was dominated by white people, the so called “verkramptes.” After 1994 many of them left the town to live elsewhere in South Africa. The town of Hofmeyr is now dominated by black people as they represent the majority of its inhabitants.

Today Hofmeyr has a black magistrate and a black prosecutor. People are equal under the new South African law. Whites in South Africa today could be summoned by black magistrates and cases are tried by black magistrates, something that did not happen before 1994 in Hofmeyr.

Unfortunately Hofmeyr is now no longer as clean as it was before 1994. Service delivery is very poor. Presently there is no bank, no hotel, no butchery, no garage and very few shops that function in Hofmeyr. There is nothing attractive in this town today. There is no life in this town. There are no activities, it is just quiet.

The author makes effective use of idioms to describe the situation when he says:

“Ukuhamba kukubona, anyanisile amaXhosa xa atshoyo” utshilo uJongi emva kwethuba sincokola ngezinto-yinto zemihla yengcinezelo Ethetha loo nto nje sasincokola ngale ndawana kuthiwa yiHofmeyr apho sekuhlala abantu abamnyama edolophini *elila ibhungane* kuba abelungu ababeyimi bodwa kunjalo nje bebaninzi bafudukela kwezinye iindawo. (p.112)

“To travel is to learn, that is what Xhosas say and that is true” said Jongi after our lengthy conversation about certain things during the time of oppression. By saying that, we were talking about the small town of Hofmeyr where black people are now allowed to stay in the town. It is a deserted town since many white who used to live in it left to stay in other areas.

In this excerpt two idiomatic expressions are used, namely “Ukuhamba kukubona” (seeing is believing) and “idolophu elila ibhungane” (a deserted town). The idiom, “elila ibhungane” (a deserted place) has been used for aesthetic purposes by the author in this excerpt. The use of this idiom clearly depicts the current situation in the town and this description fits perfectly well. The Whites that used to live at Hofmeyr moved to the cities. There is no business in this town. There are neither hotels nor banks. It is now of no attraction to tourists (p.112).

There are other idioms that are also found in this story. This includes:

- (i) Iliwa libheke umoya (things are bad). (p.112)
- (ii) Ukuqhuba amatakane (a person who is drunk)
(p.116)

These idioms contribute significantly towards the strengthening of the brevity, compression and unity of this story.

Nomsa Somdaka is one of Magona's emerging writers in Magona's collection of Gugulethu young short story writers, titled "Intlaka Nomthi wayo". In the story, "Ikamva Lesizwe" (Future of the nation) (Somdaka 2007) the author has used idioms to bemoan the sadness of newly born babies that are often being abandoned in South Africa.

In this story it is mentioned that Noxolo Ndima and her boyfriend Zithulele Ziqu, were going down Mendi Road at New Brighton in Port Elizabeth when they saw an abandoned baby. They took the baby to Dr Ziqu, Zithulele's father. Both Dr. Ziqu and his wife accepted the baby, but instantly phoned to report the matter to the police. The police attended to the case and they soon discovered that the mother of the baby is Lungelwa Vamva. They arrested Lungelwa for the crime. The author puts it as follows:

Lona usana olulusizi, nobuso obu babuse bugcwele imihlisela kungoku nje, kuxhaphe namehlo la. Lubonakele kakuhle imeko olukuyo usana, nje ukuba ludibane noGqirha Ziqu, uyise kaZithulele. Ugqirha yena uye waluxilonga ngelixa uNoxolo noMama kaZithulele belenzela into eya *phantsi* kweMpumlo. (p.70)

The condition of the baby looked pathetic. The condition of the baby became clear after being examined by Dr Ziqu, Zithulele's father. The doctor examined the baby whilst Noxolo and Zithulele's mother were preparing food for her.

The idiom written in italics in the extract above lends aesthetic quality to the writer's narration, and emphasises the baby's urgent need for food, thus causing more interest to the reader.

Another idiom that is aptly used by the writer is found in the following excerpt from the text:

Umthetho wabo aba bamelwane, babesenza le nto kuthiwa, "*izandla ziyahlambana*." Omnye ubengena kulala engatyanga kanti likhona icebo kwammelwane. (p. 73)

What the neighbours often did, was to do what is called "hands wash one another." One never goes to bed without having eaten for we know that neighbours often help one another.

In the above extract the writer has used the idiom "izandla ziyahlambana" ("hands wash one another") successfully to describe the close relationship between the two families in a vivid, concise and economical manner. The writer has used the idioms in this story specifically for aesthetic purposes, thus encouraging the reader to take more interest in the story.

In the story, "UZenzile" (the one who has himself to blame and nobody else), (Duka, 2003) the writer has also made effective use of some Xhosa idioms. The writer's narration is about an 18 year old naughty young man who is at his adolescent stage. The setting of the story is Alice, a small rural town in the Province of the Eastern Cape. His biological parents are in separation. His mother Nosidima stays in Pretoria. She is a lecturer at the University of South Africa. His father Siphso Lugxa is a professor at Michigan University in America. Zenzile stays with Magaba, his grandmother, in an upmarket area in Alice. The separation between the parents is described as follows:

Emva kothulikazi ledabikazi nowakwakhe
uProfesa Lugxa, le ngqondi yabutha yonke

impahla yayo enxitywayo ayashiya negqesha eli, nyakenye ngoTshazimpunzi ya- liva. Kungekudala oovelesazi bathi loo ngqa- nga *iwisa iintsiba zayo zobuchopho* kwenye yeeDyunivesithi zaseMelika.(p.42)

After a big quarrel with her husband Professor Lugxa, this intellectual took all his belongings, not leaving even a piece of clothing, the previous year in April and left. Those who know say that the intellectual is lecturing at one of America's Universities.

In the excerpt above, the idiom lends colour and beauty to the narration and it is an economic way of giving an explanation, clearly stating that the man is well learned and a lecturer of high esteem. This makes the description of this scene even more successful.

There are various other idioms that the writer has used in this story. The examples are: "Unyawo lwambeth' indlela" (p.44) (someone whose is always on the road) and "Ndiyimazi edla neenkunzi" (I am a competent person) (p.46). These idioms are found in the scene where Magaba complains to her daughter about Zenzile's bad behaviour. Instead of writing a paragraph quoting the various places that Zenzile visits, the writer adheres to the requirements of a short story namely, economy and brevity, through the use of the following idiom.

Ndidutywa yile yokuvuka ekuseni ndivulela umntwana "*ongunyawo lwambeth' indlela*". (p.44)

I am tired of waking up very early in the morning to open doors for a child who is always on the road.

In a subsequent scene, the angry Magaba is being appeased by Zenzile by giving her an undisclosed amount of money. Although she looks shocked, she accepts the gift and assures Zenzile that she will not disclose anything to anybody. The writer uses the idiom, "Ndiyimazi edla neenkunzi" (p.47) (I am a competent person). This idiom effectively confirms the fact that Magaba is an experienced and skilled old lady.

Idioms are also used effectively as figures of speech elsewhere in this story. For instance, shortly after Zenzile's death, Nosidima is seen arriving home from Johannesburg. She is shocked to see so many people at her house, which signals that something ominous has happened. Indeed, the mourners are mourning her son's death. The author uses the following idiom to illustrate the scene accurately:

Wafika endlwini yakhe *kumhlambi weentaka* ngabamelwane. (p.47)

Upon her arrival, she found so many neighbours gathered at her house.

4.5.4 Humour

Another mode of expression often used by some authors in their short stories is that of humour. This stylistic device often occurs where two versions of reality do not agree, as will be illustrated in the paragraphs below.

In the story "Ikamva Lesizwe" (Magona, 2007) for instance, the writer Nomsa Somdaka, presents the situation that exists between the police and the accused, Lungelwa Vamva in a humorous manner. Lungelwa Vamva has been arrested by the police on a charge of abandonment of her infant child. Her argument in defence of her action is that Monde, her boyfriend, does not support the child. The police take this as no valid excuse because the magistrates's office is always ready to assist parents who are not able to support their children. Lungelwa then tells them that the magistrate is afraid to make decisions. The author puts it as follows:

Kaloku, abakwantsasana babezamile uku-mkhumbuza ukuba umntu uya kwaMantyi xa engayifumani imali yesondlo. "Hayi suka! OoMonde basela nabo aba bafana bakwamantyi. Yaye uhlal'endiqhayisela ukuba utshomene nabaphathiswa. Nangoku sendivela nakuloo mantyi wenu, azange ndifumane mkhondo tu-u. *Basuka banditula tulisa, okombengo emlilweni.*" Qhuzu!

Amapolisa, akakwazi ukuzibamba, ahleka.
(p.77)

In fact, the police tried to remind her that if a person is not receiving child support, she goes to the magistrate's office. "Oh, nonsense! Monde drinks liquor with those young men that work at the magistrate's office. He often boasts that even ministers are his friends. Even now, I come from that magistrate but I did not receive any guidance as to what to do. Instead they directed me from pillar to post like meat that is being fried. The police burst out in laughter.

In order to avoid monotonous narration, the writer introduces humour in the form of: "basuka banditula-tulisa okombengo emlilweni" ("directing me from pillar to post like meat that is being fried"). This amusing comparison creates amusement and a joyous effervescence to the reader.

Mtuzze is another Xhosa author who often makes use of humour in his work. In the story "Ixesha" (2003) for instance, the writer illustrates the untrustworthiness of some amaXhosa people in an exaggerated manner as he reflects on conditions in Hofmeyr after 1994, when most whites left the town, leaving blacks as the majority of its inhabitants. He puts it as follows:

"Uyabazi ke abelungu abathetha isiXhosa ngezimbo... AmaXhosa ngamasela angaluba ubisi ekofini yakho, isale imnyama thsu njengawo", utsho endijonge ntsho emehlweni lo mfo kunjalonje le nto eyithetha ngoburharha obatsho ndacubhuka yintsini.
(p.113)

"You know the pride some white people take in the fact that they are able to speak Xhosa fluently... the amaXhosa are such thieves, *they can steal the milk* from your cup of coffee, thus *leaving it black like them*". He looked me straight in the eye as he was saying this jokingly, something that left me laughing.

In this excerpt, the author refers light-heartedly to the perception that the amaXhosa are generally dishonest. This illustrates how the writer uses humour effectively to amuse, excite and generate pleasure for the reader. Nguna (1997: 196) writes that Mtuze is well-known for his humorous depiction of matters that are serious in nature. He has the ability to often see the lighter side of an unpleasant situation.

Humorous expressions are also found in some of the other stories under discussion.

In the story “Umkamodi”, (Magona: 2007) humour is shown as follows:

Ningaxhalabi. Akenzakelanga koko wenziwe inkosikazi. Ekuhambeni kwexesha, siya kuzibonakalisa. Kwabonakala kufika kowabo apho ndoda ithile iqhuba isithathu seenkomo ezibuthisayo kukunqina, enye kuzo ibona ngaso-nye. (p.34)

You need not worry. Nothing has happened to her, she has been made a wife. In the near future we shall come to see you. A certain man arrived at her home with three very lean cattle, one of them having only one eye.

Following the Xhosa tradition a maiden is made somebody's wife without her consent and a message thereafter is sent to her parents not to worry, lobola will be paid soon. After waiting for a long period for lobola, the bridegroom's family arrived with only three sickly thin cattle. The expectations of the bride's parents did not match with the intentions of her inlaws. This is an excellent example of a situation where two versions of reality do not agree, resulting in a humorous situation.

4.5.5 Onomatopoeia

In paragraph 4.4.5 above, it was argued that onomatopoeia are words that contain sounds similar to the noises they describe. This figure of speech is often found in the stories under discussion. For instance, in the story “uZenzile” (Duka, 2003) the following extract reflects onomatopoeia used together with ideophones: “Gxokro-gxokro-kro-kro!” “Vum-vum-vu-n!” “Tshitshilili” (p.46). Through the use of these examples of onomatopoeia the actions of the character are clearly depicted:

*Gengelele! Mbakra! Ucango.
Gxokro-kro-kro-kro! vum-vum-
vum! Wahlehla umgrugra
weBMW Tshitshilli kwindlela
yetha ucanda phambi kwelo
pomakazi. (p42)*

He threw the door open! He slammed the door shut. Switch on the ignition, sound follows. The new BMW re-versed taking the tarred road crossing in front of the mansion.

This figure of speech is also often used in some of the other short stories under discussion, including the story “Intlekele eBhisho” (Bongela, 1998). In this story onomatopoeia is once again used in combination with ideophones. In this story the writer provides a good illustration of the chaotic situation that reigned during the Bhisho massacre that took place in September 1992. About 70 000 people gathered at the Victoria Grounds in King William’s Town on that day. The key organisations that were in attendance are the following: African National Congress (ANC) Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). Prominent leaders of these parties were in the forefront, including leaders such as Chris Hani, Steve Tshwete and Cyril Ramaphosa. They all marched through King William’s Town to the Bhisho grounds. Upon their arrival at the sports grounds, they were shot at. Some people were killed by Brigadier Gqozo’s forces and many others were injured. The injured were taken by ambulance to various hospitals, such as Grey Hospital, Cecilia Makhiwane, Frere Hospital and Victoria Hospital in Alice.

The incident is described as follows:

*Bathi bengahambanga neemitha ezingama-
shumi amabini savakala isithonga sokugra-
grama kweengxukuma zemipu yemikhosi
kaBrigadiya Gqozo. Ga-ga-ga-ga-ga! Didli!
Mbakra! Kungakhange kwenziwe
nesilumkiso. Enyanisweni ndandicinga ukuba
itsho emoyeni kanti itsho esikhumbeni
somntu. (p.25)*

Before they had even moved a distance of twenty meters the sound of gun fire was heard from Brigadier Gqozo's army. *Gaga-ga-ga-ga!* *Didli!* boom! and no warning was given. I thought it was the sound of shots that were being fired into the air, not knowing that these were being inflicted into the human body.

In this excerpt, the following forms of onomatopoeia are used: "ga-ga-ga", and "mbakra". The use of onomatopoeia as shown in italics in the extract above, vividly illustrates the quick sound of the gun-fire and falling of the victims. This heightens the dramatic effect of the actions taking place in this story. These sounds provide a clear picture of what things were like at Bhisho on that day, even to people who were not there.

In this excerpt the examples of onomatopoeia that were identified are used in combination with the ideophone "didli" (to occur very fast). Through the combined use of these two figures of speech the intensity of the situation is depicted even more vividly.

4.5.6 Personification.

Amongst the figures of speech dealt with in this chapter, personification (*isimntwiso*) is described as the practice of representing objects, qualities, etc. as humans. A fitting example of the effective manner in which personification is often used in the Xhosa short story, is found in the story "Yajiva iteksi", (Yekela, 1997). In this story the versatile writer narrates about typical December activities in rural areas. People become busy preparing for Christmas. Some build houses, some paint their houses, some build their cattle kraals, others attend funerals whilst some are attending weddings.

The setting of the story is the rural town of Ngcobo in the former Transkei. People of Ngcobo often do their shopping in Mthatha or Queenstown since the local town of Ngcobo is too small. The mode of transport they use is the taxi. During December these taxis are often driven at high speed. The taxi owners are rushing from one stop to the next to make a good turnover each day. One day, just a week before

Christmas, a taxi became involved in an accident. The taxi was en-route from Mthatha to Ngcobo with a full load of passengers and groceries when a tyre burst. The taxi overturned and some people died instantly whilst others got injured. The incident is described as follows:

Emva koko sibone ngeteksi igqiba indlela le, ithi ikweli icala ibe ikweliya ingazinzanga kwaphela. Kuvakele ilizwi phaya ngasemva lisithi, “livili! kugqabhuke ivili!”. *Iye yajayiva* inqwelo apha endleleni umqhubi ezama ukuyilawula kodwa yamoyisa. (p.35)

After that we saw the taxi swerving across the road, from one side of the road to the other, in a zig-zig fashion. A voice was heard from behind saying: “It is the wheel! A tyre has burst!” The taxi “jived” across the road, the driver trying to bring it under control, but in vain.

In this excerpt, the author has used personification in the form of the expression “*iyeyajayiva*” to provide a clear and vivid picture of the incident and in particular, of the manner in which the taxi swerved across the road before it overturned. The fact that this expression also forms part of the title of this story, serves as an indication of the prominent role that has been assigned to this figure of speech in the story.

In this particular instance, the figure of speech of personification is used in combination with that of irony. This observation is based upon the fact that the act of jiving is normally associated with a pleasant, joyful and carefree environment. In this instance however, it forms part of an incident that is marked by death and destruction.

The use of personification is also found elsewhere in the texts under discussion. Dudumashe-Luthango (1998), in the story “Icwengile Junior Secondary School,” narrates about the effects of democracy on the South African youth. It is often difficult for teachers and school governing bodies to control the learners. The writer uses Icwengile Junior Secondary School as her example. The setting is at Cala, a village in the former rural Transkei. Learners are unruly. They are revolting against their principal and teachers. Learners are campaigning for the election for an SRC

and they want a report about the school fund. They are accusing the principal of misappropriation of funds.

Mr Cwenga is the principal of Icwengile Junior Secondary School. This school is one of the best schools, producing good results each year. The author puts it as follows:

...iCwengile phaya eCala ebifudula
isaziwa ngenkqubela phambili
neziphumo ezivuzis' izinkcwe. (p.14)

...Cwengile at Cala which was always
well-known for progress and good
results that makes one's mouth water.

In this quotation the writer provides colour and beauty to her narration by using personification, in the form of "neziphumo ezivuzis' izinkcwe". By using this figure of speech, the author provides an accurate indication of the school's excellent results.

The use of personification is also found in the work of other Xhosa short story writers. In the story "Amakhwenkwe" (Duka, 2003), the writer narrates about the beautiful orchards that are found during the summer season at Gubevu in Zeleni near King William's town. Pastor Dela has the most beautiful orchard in the village. The author describes the situation as follows:

Kusehlotyeni *ilizwe liyintombazana.*
Imiyezo iyawunduza imithi ithwele
iyasindakala. Kodwa kuloo lali
yakuGubevu akukho mzi uziqhamo
zincasa njengawo lowo
kaNyawontle. (p.27)

It is summer, the environment is
beautiful. The orchards show good
yield. Pastor Dela's fruits are the
most tasteful in the village of
Gubevu.

In this quotation, the author makes use of personification in the form of the expression "ilizwe liyintombazana" to sing the praises of the beautiful Gubevu

countryside. The writer likens the local environment with a girl in summer. This means that the environment is as beautiful and attractive to the eye as a young girl.

In the story, “Isiqithi sikaMakhanda” Bongela (1998) writes about the history of Robben Island, which he calls “Isiqithi sikaMakhanda”. The island is named after one of the greatest Xhosa leaders, Makana, who lived during the 19th century and fought in the frontier wars. He became prominent during the Grahamstown war in 1819. The area where the war took place received the name eGazini (the place of blood). Makana was taken to Cape Town and imprisoned on Robben Island. Robben Island is also known as Makana Island because of the fact that this prominent Xhosa warrior was drowned near the island (Milton, 1983:75). Meintjies, another prominent historian says the same thing when he writes that Makana was captured and banished to Robben Island near Cape Town (from which he scaped in a small whaling boat, only to drown in the surf at the mainland) (Meintjies, 1971:59).

Other political leaders, who were kept on this island by the apartheid regime, during the 20th century, include Sobukhwe, Sisulu, Mbheki, Makhwethu, Kathadra and Mandela. They worked hard in the quarry every day, irrespective of whether the sun was shining or whether it was raining. Facing this island is the famous mountain in Cape Town, called Table Mountain. The author describes it as follows:

Le ntaba yodumo ilengalenga phezu kwesixeko saseKapa iwabonile amazolo, izivile iingqele, yatshizwa namaqhwa yada, ngenxa yokutshizwa ziimeko zezulu, yagqiba kwelokuba mayizifunele iqhiya emhlophe iyithwale khona ukuze imimoya namaqhwa angayonzakalisi ebuchotsheni. Ewe izibonile iinqanawa nezikhephe zamadoda amaPhuthukezi asezimbalini, iinto zooVasco daGama, Bartholomew Diaz kunye noDiogo Cam. (p.5)

This famous mountain that overlooks the city of Cape Town, has seen events of the past, it has felt the cold, snow drizzles and because of exposure to the weather conditions decided to cap itself with a white head cloth so as to protect

itself against winds and frost that may damage the brain. “Yes, it has seen ships of the Portuguese great men such as Vasco da Gama, Bartholomew Diaz and Diogo Cam.”

The writer makes excellent use of personification to describe the mountain in the extract above when he says it has “seen” things of the past, including ships of Portuguese great men such as Vasco da Gama, Bartholomew Diaz and Diogo Cam. He plays with words to give beauty to his story and shows how rich the Xhosa language is. In this passage, more than one example of personification is found. This includes:

- “iwabonile” (it has seen)
- “izivile” (it has heard)
- “yagqiba” (it resolved)
- “zibonile” (it has seen) (p.5)

The author also creates the image of a white head cloth that is “worn” by the mountain. This image refers to the white clouds and mistiness that often cover the mountain. In this instance, the author makes successful use of personification as a figure of speech to describe the greatness as well as the timelessness of this well-known landmark. He succeeds in conveying the notion that, to the people of Cape Town, the mountain is not merely a physical feature. To them it is imbued with personal qualities.

In the story “UZenzile” (Duka, 2003) personification has also been used successfully as a figure of speech by the writer. As mentioned in the paragraph below, Zenzile is the key character in the story. He is a gang member. The gang excels in bank robberies and stealing of cars. Zenzile lives with his grandmother Magaba in an upmarket house in Alice. He is very naughty. Every day he arrives home after midnight. This behaviour is described as follows:

Wothuka imitha yelanga sele *ixhentsa-xhentsa*
phezu kobuso bakhe. Vumbululu ngqe-e ukuya
kwigumbi lokuhlambela. (p.45)

He woke up with sun rays dancing on his face.
He quickly woke up and ran to the bathroom.

The writer has used personification in the form of the words: “*imitha yelanga sele ixhentsa-xhentsa*”, (written in italics in the excerpt above) to disclose the fact that Zenzile always goes to bed after midnight and as a result of that on this particular day he could not manage to wake up early. The use of personification makes the story more attractive and interesting from the reader’s point of view and it provides a clear picture of Zenzile’s unsavoury conduct.

Zenzile is a student at the University of Fort Hare in Alice. He does not care much about his studies. He is a gang member. The gang steals motor cars and executes bank robberies. Every day he arrives home after midnight. This perturbs his grandmother, Magaba who decides to report him to Nosidima. Just before Nosidima arrives in Alice to sort out the problem, Zenzile is killed by the police whilst executing a bank robbery on Oxford Street in East London.

After having received the alarming news from the police that Zenzile has been shot, Magaba feels extremely bad. Personification is used to depict her feelings effectively in the following passage:

Uhle loo paseji *intliziyo idada egazini*. (p.47)

She moved down the passage in a heartbroken state.

In this excerpt, the expression “*intliziyo idada egazini*” is used to depict the state of shock that Magaba is in as accurately as possible. The use of this figure of speech helps to portray her feelings as concisely as possible, in accordance with the requirements of the short story genre.

4.5.7 Repetition

In paragraph 4.4.3 repetition was described as the repeated use of certain sets of words, parts of words or even of sentences. These forms of repetition are often found in the stories under discussion. In the story “*Ikamva lesizwe*” (2007) by one of Magona’s Gugulethu emerging writers, Nomsa Somdaka, effective use has, for

instance, been made of repetition. In this story the writer narrates about an abandoned baby that was discovered by Noxolo Ndima and Zithulele Ziqu at Mendi in New Brighton. They took the baby to Dr Ziqu, Zithulele's father. Dr Ziqu and his wife took pity on the baby. The baby is given a bath and food. Dr Ziqu phones the police and reports the matter as follows:

*"Mhl' uThixo! Yena ulungile yaye
uThixo uyasithanda, mhl'uThixo!
ilungile iNkosi."*(p.23)

God is beautiful! Yes he is good,
God loves us. God is beautiful!
the King is righteous!

In this passage the term "uThixo" (God) is used repetitively. The repetition used by the writer in the excerpt above, confirms the Ziqu family's love for and trust in God. This also emphasises their Christian values, in particular with regard to orphan babies.

In the story "UGalatyan' utyebile" (Mtuzze, 2003), the writer writes about the undisciplined boys of Tshatshu, a village that lies next to Zwelitsha in King William's Town. The boys steal fruits from the village households. They also steal fowls. They do not sleep at night. They make a noise which disturbs the whole village. Eventually they are reported to the headman. The villagers also report them to the police. They are arrested by the police but they do not remain long in prison, before they are released. The fact that they were locked up in prison does not deter them from continuing with their bad behaviour. One of the villagers describes their actions by saying:

Andizange ndibabone abantwana abangeva
ngolu hlobo. Abeva hayi, *abanqandani,*
abanqandeki,abanamntu umkhulu
abanamntu *bamoyikayo*, ngumbhodamo nje.
(p.19)

I have never seen such disobedient children.
They are unruly, they do not reprimand each
other. They have no adult people who can
control them they fear nobody, it is just
chaos.

In this excerpt, there is repetition of the subjectival concord (negative mode) “aba-” This grammatical construction is used none less than five times within the course of a single sentence. The repetition of this sound pattern creates the following rhythmic effect in the story: “aba...aba...aba...aba...aba...” The writer resorts to this instance of repetition to emphasize certain issues in the story. The situation is so bad that the people of the village have given up. They do not know what to do to curb the volatile situation. Through the use of this figure of speech, the villagers’ predicament is illustrated to the reader in a transparent manner.

In the story “Yajayiva iteksi” (Yekela, 1998), the writer narrates about the taxi accident that occurred on the road between Mthatha and Ngcobo. The accident was caused by a tyre burst. Some people were killed whilst others were injured when the taxi overturned. The incident is described as follows by a first person narrator:

Sithe sakuqaphela ukuba noko thina
asenzakalanga kakhulu njengabanye,
sazama kangangoko sinakho ukunce- da
ababesengaphakathi eteksini ukuba nabo
baphume. Ngalo lonke eli xesha
bayancwina, bayagcuma, bayakhala,
bayakhwaza, bayakhuza, bayashwabula,
njalo-njalo. (p.36)

After having discovered that we were not as badly injured as the others, we tried all means to help those who were still inside the taxi to get out. During this time people were groaning, crying, shouting, cursing, etc.

In the final sentence of this excerpt, the construction: “baya” is repeated none less than five times. The repetition of this sound pattern is intended to clearly show the severity of the accident. The writer emphasizes beyond doubt how bad the accident was so that the reader can also share in the feelings and emotions of those who were injured.

The story “Intlekele eBhisho” (Bongela, 1998), deals with the killing of about 28 people by Brigadier Gqozo’s army in September 1992. The masses of people

marched from Victoria Grounds to the Bhisho stadium. Involved in the march were members of the following political structures: ANC, Cosatu and S.A.C.P. The marchers were led by well-known leaders such as Chris Hani, Cyril Ramaphosa, Steve Tshwete and Ronnie Kasrils.

The scene in which the marchers are shot and killed, is described as follows:

Umntu wakhwela phezu komnye umntu “*kwelaseBhisho.*”
Zathululisana zigilana iimbumbulu zerhuluwa “*kwelaseBhisho.*”
Lakrazuka ibhayi leflegi ngesaquphe “*kwelase Bhisho.*”
Wabhong’umfazi yabharhamla indoda “*kwelaseBhisho.*”
Latsawul’igazi zatak’ iimbuphu zerhuluwa “*kwelaseBhisho.*”
Yatsawula inja ngentlola nomkhulungwane “*kwelaseBisho.*”
Zakhamnqa izinyanya zooRharhabe nooMlawu “*kwelaseBhisho.*”
yancwina imilondekhaya yakwaGcaleka “*kwelaseBhisho.*” (p.25)

People fell upon one another at Bhisho.
A flood of bullets were released at Bhisho.
The flag suddenly teared apart at Bhisho.
Women and men cried at Bhisho.
Blood spurted and bullet shells were released at Bhisho.
The Rharhabe and Mlawu ancestors were shocked at Bhisho.
The Gcaleka forebears groaned at Bhisho.

In this excerpt, the expression “*kwelaseBhisho*” is repeated at least 8 times. The repetition of this construction becomes a powerful refrain that tends to repeat itself in the mind of the reader. Furthermore, the specific position of this expression within the sentence is also of importance. In each of the respective sentences in this quotation, the expression appears in the concluding part of the sentence:

Umntu wakhwela phezu komnye.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Zagilana iimbumbulu.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Lakrazuka ibhayi*kwelaseBhisho*
Wabhonga umfazi.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Latsawula igazi.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Yatsawula inja.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Zekhamnqa izinyanya.....*kwelaseBhisho*
Yancwina imilandekhaya.....*kwelaseBhisho*
(p.25)

Poetic effect and the influence of traditional poetry “isibongo” is clearly observable here. This notion is confirmed by Finnegan when she says, “Parallelism and repetition are marked features in praise poetry.” (Finnegan, 1984:13). Finnegan distinguishes two modes of repetition that are mainly found in traditional poetry. One of these is repetition in the form of parallelism. This form of repetition may be represented schematically as follows (where “A” represents the phrase that is being repeated)

Line

- 1.....A
- 2.....A
- 3.....A
- 4.....A
- 5.....A

Nguna also acknowledges that this stylistic feature plays an important role in traditional poetry (“izibongo”) (Nguna, 1997:181). In the excerpt above, Bongela has made use of this exact pattern and therefore his work is no exception in this regard. Using repetition, the writer illustrates how bad the situation was at Bhisho on the particular day in September 1992. Repetition in the excerpt above emphasises in the mind of the reader that the situation was really bad. Even today, many years after the massacre, the term “Bhisho” still conjures up many bad memories in the minds of members of the older generation.

In some instances, repetition is used in combination with other figures of speech. In the preceding paragraphs, it was illustrated how this figure of speech may be used in combination with the interjection, onomatopoeia, etc. This confirms the fact that most writers prefer to make use of repetition in their stories.

4.5.8 Simile

As part of the discussion on figures of speech earlier in this chapter, the simile was described as a word or phrase that compares something to something else, using words such as like or as (paragraph 4.4.4). Various examples of this figure of

speech were identified in the consulted texts. For instance, in the story “UZenzile” Zenzile is the main character (see paragraph 4.5.2 above). Zenzile is portrayed as an unruly young man. He is always misbehaving. His mother describes his conduct as follows:

“Yaye okoko ndashiywa kwesinomhlwa
nguyise walo mntwana ingqondo le
yakhe iyaphithizela inamavivingane.
Umunyu-munyu-okwesepha.” (p.44)

“Ever since I was left by his father in a
very unceremonial manner this child is
in a quandary. He is slippery like soap.”

In this excerpt the author makes use of the following simile to describe Zenzile’s conduct: “Umunyu-munyu okwesepha”. The image of a bar of wet soap is fittingly used here to describe Zenzile’s personality. He is seen as a slippery person, he is unreliable and one can never believe what he says. The mother likens Zenzile with a bar of wet soap, thereby providing an accurate picture of his personality. The writer has used this simile for the purpose of economy and brevity in accordance with the requirements of a short story.

In the story, “*Yajayiva iteks*” (The taxi jived), (Yekela, 1998) the author has also used similes to achieve a particular narrative effect. In this story the writer writes about a taxi accident that occurred on the road between Mthatha and Ngcobo. It was during December, just five days before Christmas. The taxi left the road after a tyre had burst. People were killed and some were injured. The situation in the taxi is described as follows:

Ngenxa yengxinano ebikule teksi
abanye bebehleli ngamacala ee-
ntsula apha ezitulweni, sipakishene
kanye oku kwesadini enkonxeni.
(p.35)

Because of the congestion the
passengers sat very close to one
another. We were packed like
sardines in a tin.

The writer has used the simile “like sardines in a tin” in the excerpt above to provide a clear picture of the situation in the taxi. He likens the passenger overload in the taxi with sardines in a closed tin. This simile is adding beauty to the story and makes it more attracting to the reader, whilst it also adds an element of humour to the description of the scene. In this light-hearted manner the author succeeds in providing a vivid picture of the unfavourable conditions that thousands of taxi commuters are subjected to on a daily basis in South Africa.

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter an attempt was made to analyse the six selected anthologies with particular reference to the various author’s style of writing. The various stylistic features of the stories under discussion were identified and subjected to critical literary analysis. This analysis was preceded by a discussion of the concept of literary style.

The discussion on literary style was introduced with a definition of the concept of style. The origin of the term was also traced and it was found that the term “style” is derived from the Latin word *stilus* which is the name that was used to inscribe symbols on wax tablets in Roman times. It was found that literary style describes the manner in which the author presents his/her view of life by means of language. Style therefore reflects the manner in which the author writes and it is the product of factors such as word selection, tone and syntax. Language is the primary medium of the literary text. Style therefore is a revelation of the author’s personality and the study of his/her style may provide important information with regard to the personal features of the author.

The specific stylistic features of the short story were also identified and discussed in this chapter. It was argued that this genre is based upon the fundamental principles of unity, shortness, brevity and compression. These features of the short story also manifest themselves at the stylistic level. This means that there is economy of language and strict selection of words that will convey the meaning of the text as effectively as possible. This is strengthened by the abundant use of forms such as idioms, proverbs and ideophones.

During the course of this chapter the various figures of speech were identified and discussed. It was found that figures of speech add vividness and clarity to what is being communicated. The theoretical features of a number of figures of speech were identified and discussed. This includes the interjection, repetition, personification, etc.

The discussion of figures of speech was followed by a critical analysis of the stylistic features of the Xhosa short stories under discussion. It was found that figures of speech play an important role in these stories. One of these is the interjection which is often found in the form of “owu.”(Oh!), thereby showing the author’s disgust about what is happening in society. The female author Dudumashe-Luthango on the other hand, uses the exclamation “Ubufazi! Ubufazi!” (“Womanhood! Womanhood!”) to illustrate the manner in which women are often dominated by men in society. In the stories under discussion it was often found that a particular figure of speech is used in combination with other figures of speech. In the story “Isihelegu somlilo” (Yekela: 1997) for example, the exclamation is used in combination with that of repetition, to intensify and justify the author’s view.

Ideophones are unique to the Southern African languages (including Xhosa). It was found that the authors under discussion make extensive use of this figure of speech to achieve a desired effect. In some instances various ideophones are used in succession to increase the dramatic effect of the story. The ideophone is also used to provide a clear picture of the events taking place in the story, for instance Zenzile’s evil conduct in the story “UZenzile” is effectively described by means of this figure of speech. This is strengthened through the use of more than one category of ideophones namely, the mono-syllabic ideophone, the bi-syllabic ideophone as well as ideophones consisting of four syllables. In these stories the ideophones have been used strategically to strengthen the unity and economy of the short story.

An author such as Yekela often makes use of figures of speech in the formulation of the titles of his stories. In one instance an idiom is used as the title of the story: “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha”. In another instance, this author makes use of personification in the formulation of the title of the story: “Yajayiva iteksi”.

The influence of traditional literature can often be observed in the stylistic features of the stories under discussion. This is particularly noticeable in the manner that repetition is used in these stories. In Bongela's "Intlekele eBhisho" for instance, the phrase "kwelaseBhisho" is repeated numerous times. The influence of traditional poetry and in particular "isibongo" is clearly observable here. The stylistic features of the stories under discussion clearly confirm the intimate relationship that exists even today between the traditional and the modern forms of Xhosa literature.

From this analysis of the Xhosa short stories under discussion, it is clear that the stories are mainly of a good stylistic quality. They reflect exactly what one would expect from such well-known authors as Mtuze, Yekela, Duka etc. The various figures of speech have been used strategically by the respective authors to achieve economy and brevity, in accordance with the stylistic requirements of the short story genre.

CHAPTER 5

STRUCTURAL PATTERNS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the plot structure of the short stories under discussion. This chapter is introduced with a theoretical section, in which the concept of plot and its various related aspects will be determined by means of given definitions.

The chapter will also dwell on the concepts of Macro Structure or external structure, as well as Micro Structure or internal structure, where the manner in which the authors combine individual, smaller segments of action to form the plot will be investigated. The aim of the analysis of the short stories selected from the six chosen anthologies by the researcher is, therefore, to find out more about the structural patterns found in the chosen stories and to determine the priority given to the development of a successful plot structure in them.

5.2 Definitions of plot

Over the years scholars have come up with different definitions for the plot of a story, for example, Shaw (1972:289) says that plot refers to the arrangement of events to achieve an intended effect. He goes on to say a plot is a series of carefully devised and interrelated actions that progress through a struggle of opposing forces to a climax and denouement.

Leggett (1934:120) provides a more concise definition of the concept when he refers to a plot as the framework of incidents. Nguna (1997:63) citing Fenson and Kritzer, says that plot is the meaningful arrangement of events. The researcher therefore feels that it is quite clear that a plot is the structuring of events in the story in a particular manner. The manner followed by a writer to design his/her work for readers to understand his/her intentions is referred to as the plot of the story.

When one looks at the definitions given above, one could argue that a story without a plot is no story at all. Even the plot on its own does not constitute a story and cannot be taken as a story in its totality. Plot therefore is a most important part of a story. Yelland, et al. (1980:149) confirms this notion when he writes that it becomes obvious that in order to be successful, the author has to write a story with a well designed plot, because this element stimulates the imagination and concentration of the reader.

Cohen (1973:68) describes what plot entails by saying:

Plot structure encompasses every means which an author uses to arrange and unify his material.

Phillips (1974:37) concurs with Cohen when he says:

We proceed coldly, artificially, only seeking to convert a given mass of material into units that will best suit our purposes, enforcing our own logical order by twisting time by the tail, as it were.

This strategy of conversion involves the transformation of “raw” materials into manipulated action. This is due to the fact that no situation in real life is, in its original form, suitable for presentation as the plot of a story. This implies that “raw materials” should firstly be adapted or manipulated to form a unit with a logical narrative structure. Plot, then, is the meaningful manipulation of action (Brooks and Warren, 1979:34). Various criteria may be applied to complete this transformation. Brooks and Warren (1979:39) for instance, state:

the fiction writer may choose or “create” facts in accordance with the pattern of human action and values that he wishes to present.

5.3 Relationship between plot and other literary elements

When one deals with the plot, one is also dealing with all the remaining narrative elements of the story and not one element in isolation. This therefore means that there is a close relationship between plot and theme, plot and character and plot and conflict. These relationships will now be discussed in the paragraph below:

5.3.1 Plot and theme

Nguna (1997:66) concurs with the view above when she writes that every story should aim to have a worthy purpose and, more than any other form; the short story has a mission. She furthermore insists that it should be borne in mind that there is a direct relationship between plot and theme in the short story in that the theme is the basic fact upon which the plot of the story hinges.

5.3.2 Plot and character

Events in the story are character driven. Events occur in a story because characters are the cause. Events therefore are determined by characters. Fredette (1994:41) concurs with the view above when he writes that plot is the things characters do, feel, think or say that make a difference to what comes afterwards.

5.3.3 Plot and conflict

The relationship between plot and conflict is a unique one and it will receive particular attention during the course of this chapter.

5.4 Specific Requirements of the short story

Nguna (1997:92) writes that it should be borne in mind that in some way the plot of the short story is different from that of the other narrative forms in that it requires careful selection and re-arrangement of its materials in order to make it fit compactly into a definite pattern. Gullason (1964:30) writes that unlike a novelist who enjoys spreading his material over a great period, the short story writer usually gains in

control, in power and in meaningfulness by his/her art of distillation, telescoping and understatement.

Notestein (1974:54) supports this notion when he says short stories rarely have the complex plots that are found in novels. He goes on to say that in the short story there is a representation of only a single series of events where the relation of a specific event to the one which immediately precedes it or directly follows it, is clear and necessary, and the focus is upon a particular episode or situation rather than on a chain of events. This makes the plot of the short story invariably short and compact. Shortness, however, does not mean simpleness but rather compression. In the short story compression often results from the avoidance of long explanations, description and too much detail. Nguna (1997:92) says that it is better to begin and end the story as near to the middle as possible. Shaw (1972:46) confirms this notion when she states:

If a short story is to achieve a single concentrated impression, then it must move swiftly, it cannot linger to unfold for the reader the little incidentals, and wayward episodes, the dull patches and uneventful intervals.

On the whole the discussion of the nature of the modern short story compels the author to suppress details. Likewise, it teaches him/her to choose a single event or happening, and stick to it through thick and thin, “employing only such incidents as play a vital part in bringing it to pass” (Phillips, 1974:50). For the purpose of this study, the plot structure of some short stories from the six selected anthologies will be studied according to the two main structural components of plot, namely, the Macro Structure and the Micro Structure. These two structural components will now receive attention in the sections that follow.

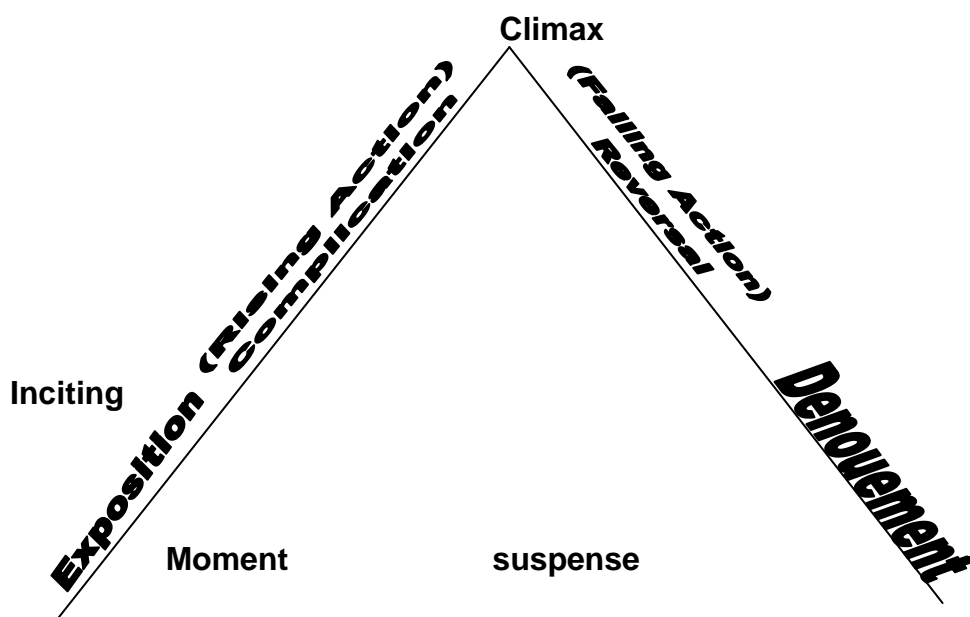
5.5 Macro structure

The composition of the Macro Structure or external structure is one of the main aspects that need to be considered by the literary critic when analysing the plot.

According to Hills (1987:96) the narrative structure has always been divided into three parts, namely, the beginning, the middle and the end.

Nguna (1997:69) writes that the beginning is an element that presumes further action, the middle presumes both previous and succeeding action, and the end requires the preceding events but no succeeding action. The unity of plot is thus the result of necessary relationship and order among the events. These elements are conventionally known as exposition, rising action or complication, climax and denouement or resolution. The plot structure is evaluated by most critics in terms of these phases and the writers are expected to comply with these phases when they create their works.

Grace (1965:139) agrees with the view above when she writes that the plot is a method of writing in which a unity of impression or a unity of mood is achieved through a series of events that lead from a starting point to a climax or point of highest tension and thereafter to the conclusion or resolution of this point. According to Sirayi (1990:115) these phases constitute a pyramidal structure when they show up. The vital importance of the phases can be determined by the following pyramidal diagram, which was propounded by Freytag and is therefore known as Freytag's Pyramid (Hills, 1987:96). These elements will be discussed not in one single paragraph, but rather in consecutive paragraphs when each different stage is dealt with.



Freytag's Pyramid according to Hills (1987:96) is a diagram which clearly depicts the various phases of the action, as well as the way in which suspense rises and recedes. This diagram applies to all forms of narrative prose, including the plot of the short story. Nguna (1997:70) suggests that although the structure of the short story can be divided into the three phases, it should be borne in mind that a short story should be as much of oneness as possible. She furthermore states that the forced separation of these phases could destroy the unity of the short story.

The different phases of the Macro structure will now be discussed in succession. Specific attention will be given to the depiction of each of these phases in the chosen short stories from the six selected anthologies.

5.5.1 Exposition

Cohen, as cited by Mtuze (1986:83), presents some specific features of the exposition by saying:

It comes at the beginning and provides the necessary background material for a reader. It establishes setting, creates the basic atmosphere, provides information about the past of characters and delineates vital contexts for the events which will soon begin to unfold.

In addition, Hills (1987:96) writes:

The beginning will suggest the basic line of the conflict. What all the trouble is going to be about.

Nguna (1997:72) writes that it is also important for an author to convey the specific tone and atmosphere of the story from the outset so that the reader understands the author's emotional attitude towards his material. Tone and atmosphere are therefore closely related.

In the paragraphs that follow, the various aspects of the exposition will be discussed. This discussion will commence with a discussion of the role and function of the

background element. This will be followed by a discussion of the role of conflict during the exposition phase.

5.5.1.1 The role of the background in the short story

From the views of Mtuze and Nguna above, it becomes clear that the events in the story take place within a particular space. The characters and the events cannot be separated from the space in which they exist. The successful depiction of the story content is therefore determined to a large extent by the successful creation of the background. Smuts, as quoted by Botha (1986:230), points out that there are basically two categories of narrative spaces, namely a rural environment as well as an urban environment. The rural environment contains scenes that refer to nature, animal life and agriculture. The urban setting contains references to scenes that consist of shops, motor vehicles and electric lighting.

The exposition phase of some of the stories under discussion have been utilised effectively to introduce the reader to the background and setting of the respective stories and to convey the specific tone and atmosphere of the story clearly from the outset. The analysis of the exposition phase of these stories shows the presence of various different background categories. Each of these background categories provides the story with a special and unique setting and atmosphere. The various categories that were identified include firstly, stories that are set within a rural, Xhosa speaking village background. A story such as “Yajayiva itaxi” Yekela (1997) for instance, takes place in the village of Manzana at Ngcobo in rural Transkei.

The reader is introduced as follows to the particular setting and atmosphere of the village in the exposition phase of the story:

KungoDisemba inyanga yokubuya kwamahilihili,
abantu banemali eninzi ezipokothweni zabo.
Kuyaphithizela, kuxakekiwe, abantu balungi-
selela umhla omkhulu weKrisimesi. Abanye
bayakha,abanye bayafulela, abanye
bayaveta,abanye bayabiya, abanye bayatshatisa
kanti abanye bayangcwaba. Abakwiidolophu
ezinkulu abanangxaki banayo ngokuba yonke

into abayifunayo ilapha. Abakwiidolophu ezincinane kwakunye nabo basezilalini abakwazi kuyifumana yonke into abayifunayo kwezo ndawo bakuzo. Kuyanyanzeleka ke ngoko ukuba bakhwele izithuthi baye kuthenga kwiindawo ezithe qelele namakhaya abo. (p.33)

It is December, rovers come back home, people have plenty of cash in their pockets. People are busy preparing for Christmas day. Some build houses, some do roofing with thatch and some are burying their loved ones. Those in cities have no problem, everything they need is accessible. People in small towns and those who live in villages are unable to get all their needs and they are forced to travel long distances using transport to get the things they need.

The excerpt above provides a perfect picture in the mind of the reader about the life in rural villages during the month of December. There is great rush and excitement. People are preparing for Christmas day. They spend a lot because they have money in their pockets. Additional references that are provided during the course of the narration, also serve to remind the reader of the rural setting of the narrative events. This includes references to cattle (p.35), horses (p.35), and stray goats (p.35) that are often hazardous on the road. Other stories which are set against a similar rural background, include “UGalatyan’Utyebile” Mtuze (2003) “Umka Modi” Magona (2007) and “Ubufazi! Ubufazi!” Dudumashe-Luthango (1998).

A further category that may be found during the exposition phase of some stories is the urban background. An author such as Yekela (1997) experiments successfully with the depiction of a variety of urban settings in his stories. This includes a story that has been set against the background of an urban squatter camp community, namely “Isihelegu somlilo” (p.73). This story is introduced as follows by the author:

Mna noZenzile sasisuka kwilali yaseTholeni eGcuwa. Sasingazani phaya emva ekhaya ntonje sadibana ematyotyombeni aseGcuwa la sasesingabahlali abazinzileyo bawo kungokunje. Lamatyotyombe ngala asekungeneni kwedolophu xa uvela ngase-Mthatha. Ukuba wakha wawabona uya

kuyazi indlela ashinyene ngayo, ayithandeki.
(p.72)

Zenzile and I were from Tholeni village at Gcuwa. We did not know each other at home but met at the squatter camp in Gcuwa where we reside now. This squatter camp lies at the entrance of Gcuwa as you come from Mthatha. If you have seen them you will know how close together they are built.

During the course of the story, the reader is introduced to a number of typical background features, such as bottles of liquor (p.72) and a paraffin lamp (p.72). The empty bottles of liquor signify that people at the squatter camp drink a lot of liquor. The paraffin lamp shows that there is no electricity at the squatter camp. On the whole this reflects that the government is failing to monitor and control the situation.

Yekela has also written stories that depict other aspects of South African social life. A story such as “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha” (Yekela, 1997) for instance, depicts the experiences of a black family in a former white South African town (e.g. iTinarha) whilst a story such as “Ugwayimbo” (Yekela, 1997) is set against the background of the city of Durban, which is one of South Africa’s largest industrialized urban communities. Each of these background categories is introduced effectively and imaginatively during the exposition phase of the particular story. Through his successful experimentation with the depiction of the various background categories, Yekela distinguishes himself as a versatile author who is well acquainted with the various patterns of South African social life and who is able to depict these scenarios successfully in his stories.

Several other background categories may also be found in the introduction phase of the stories under discussion: Township life in the Cape Town suburb of Nyanga is for instance depicted in “Sifike kweny’ indawo” (Merile in Magona, 2007). Campus life is depicted in the story “Eyunivesithi” (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998), whilst Sayedwa’s story “Lowo Mvulo” (Magona, 2007) is set within a high school environment. Finally, a traditional setting is depicted in “UGalatyan’ Utyebile” (Mtuze, 2003).

In a story there is always a close relationship between character and background. The manner in which the character experiences or observes his/her environment provides the reader with important clues with regard to his/her personality. According to Botha (1986:233), the following levels of observation by a character of his/her environment may be identified:

- 1) Visual: The manner in which the character observes colours, shapes and sizes.
- 2) Auditives: The manner in which sounds and noises are interpreted.
- 3) Sense: The manner in which the environment is experienced e.g. the character may experience feelings of confinement owing to the presence of walls around him/her.

The depiction of weather conditions often forms a significant part of the background of the story as well. In some instances these descriptions are only decorative, but in other cases they form an integral part of the story. The description of weather conditions can be used to form a parallel or a contrast with the circumstances in which the character finds him/her. That is why Forster (1980:180) says: "The weather may be planned in pre-established harmony with the mood of the characters...on the other hand the weather may stand in emotional contrast with the characters". It is therefore a duty of the author to depict the relationship between the characters and his/her background as accurately as possible.

The analysis of the short stories under discussion has shown that the exposition phase has been utilised effectively by some of the authors to introduce the reader to the background against which the stories have been set. It is however, also clear that the depiction of the background in most of the stories under discussion is not satisfactory.

It is clear, for instance that the introductory phase of most of these stories do not reflect the full spectrum of South African life (physically as well as socially) adequately enough. These shortcomings make it difficult for the reader to construct a clear, imaginative picture of the setting where the events are going to take place. The unsatisfactory depiction of the background in most of the stories under discussion becomes even more evident when these stories are compared with other

Xhosa texts, such as for instance, Saule's novel "Unyana womntu" (1989), where a variety of background settings are depicted with great success, including the description of urban scenes as well as rural scenes.

The exposition phase of this novel contains a vivid description of an urban environment where there are references to background details such as municipal services, streets and vehicles, descriptions of buildings, etc. There is a description of an urban, downtown setting including references to the movement of traffic, and details about streets and roads (p.8). There are also references to empty liquor bottles as well as broken drinking glasses. Mbatsha (2012:51) points out that, during this phase of the story, the reader is informed that Bantu, the main character, had attended a meeting with his estranged wife. The meeting ends in a quarrel between the two and Bantu leaves the house in a disturbed state of mind. His mind is in a quandary and he walks down the street in a careless manner, with cars sounding their hooters at him.

It is clear that the references to these background features play an important role in the story. Their function is to introduce the leading characters and in particular, to reveal Bantu's confused state of mind as well as to emphasize Dora's addiction to alcohol. The function of these background features is to create the required atmosphere and to identify the area of conflict to be depicted in the story. It may be concluded therefore, that the author successfully depicts the background in "Unyana womntu" (Saule, 1989).

In the story "Idabi laseMpindweni" (Jordan, 1974) the writer has also created a conducive environment for the events to take place. The excerpt that follows gives a fertile background description for the reader to have a clear image in his/her mind:

Indlu esiya kuyo sasiyibona kakuhle,
isemalenga-lengeni phezulu kwelo liwa
libomvu. Sisiza nje sidulile kuba akukho
nomfankungu wokusifihla. Lwarhola uFud'
olufakade inkwenkwe kaZuzanto, lwanyus'
iliwa, luhamba luphinyela emibhongiweni.

Kuthe kanti kukho ndoda iyibukeleyo yonke
Le nto, nantso phezu kweliwa, ilele yintsini:
“Kakade, makwedini, nizinganga nje kuxa
Beningobani nina. Eza nyosi litsili elidala.
Zancanyw’ ukuphakulwa nathi sisengaba-
ntwana ngenxa yengcwangu yazo!” (p.3)

The house we are going to is clearly seen
dangling on the red cliff. As we are approach-
ing we are clearly seen because there is
no mist to hide us... Fud’olufakade, the son
of Zuzanto led them up the cliff, ducking
through the black- wood trees. It so
happened that there is a man observing all
this, sitting on the cliff, lying full of laughter.
Who do you think you are young boys to
challenge these bees. This is an old bees’
nest. As far back as when we were young
people we gave up from taking honey from
that hive due to the strong anger of the
bees.

The story shows how the boys ran down the slope from the cliff to the Tsitsa River, the bees not stopping their stinging attacks on them. The spectator could not hesitate to laugh at them. This short story has been perfectly illustrated in the mind of the reader. This may be attributed to the successful depiction of the background features in the story, including a clear picture of the rock face, the absence of mist, the presence of vegetation, etc. It may be concluded then, that the depiction of the background in the stories under discussion is not at the same level as this short story of Jordan or Saule’s novel “Unyana womntu.” Whilst it must be conceded that the short story genre does, because of its limited length, not provide opportunity for the inclusion of elaborate descriptions of the background features during the exposition phase, some basic references to the background and setting of the story are still a basic requirement. In this regard, some of the stories under discussion do not fulfil requirements.

5.5.1.2 Tension and Suspense

Every story must have a beginning. The exposition therefore, should conquer the interest of the reader and prepare him/her to receive whatever the author is going to say to him/her. It should be brief and to the point with immediate exposure of the

reader to the source of conflict. It is also preferable that the central characters should be introduced to the reader, including their names, age, personal features, etc.

The exposition generally plays a most important role in the identification and introduction of the main characters as well as in the exposure of the main area of conflict in the short stories from the six selected anthologies. For instance, in the story “Ubufazi! Ubufazi!” (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998), Mandlakapheli and his wife are at loggerheads. Mandlakapheli quarrels with his wife, Noluntu. Mandlakapheli is in conflict with his wife because of their daughter’s pregnancy. He accuses her of failing to control Nontombi and allowing her to behave immorally. In the story Dudumashe-Luthango introduces the reader to a well-known, typical South African domestic situation. A clear and imaginative picture has been well constructed in the mind of the reader about a typical form of domestic life in this exposition, where women are being ill-treated by men. The head of the family is working on the gold mines in Johannesburg, whilst his wife is left behind in rural Transkei as a housewife. Whenever the husband is on leave he goes home, that is how he manages to notice that Nontombi is pregnant. The father expresses his shock as follows:

“Nditsho nangoku akangekhe akhulelwe uhlala naye apha! Umithi nini? Njani? Emithiswa ngubani?” (p.1)

“I am saying that now, the child should not have conceived since you are staying with her here. When did she conceive? How? Who made her pregnant?”

The manner in which the situation is portrayed here, forecasts severe conflict and this kindles interest in the mind of the reader. Having been given these circumstances and information, the reader soon becomes interested to know what will happen next. It is clear that Dudumashe-Luthango has been able to lend more energy and credibility to the progression of the story through this exposition. This phase becomes even more exciting when the reader realises that the man is accusing his wife of something she has not done. The reader expects that something of great interest may result from this tense situation. In this story,

therefore, the exposition phase is presented in a most satisfactory manner by the author. She has given a clear and full description of the initial situation between the wife and her spouse.

In the story “Inguquko” (Yekela, 1997) the exposition shows the existence of conflict of a political nature. The personalities and the environment depicted in the introduction points to stubbornness, people with a heart of stone. The writer introduces the narrative as follows:

UJan van der Westhuizen wazalelwa wakhu-
lela kwidolophana yaseVentersdorp
Phešheya kweLigwa. Le dolophana yabe
ibalasele ngokungamfuni nangokumcekisa
umntu oMnyama. Uninzi lwabeLungu
balapho yabe ingaba sithi xa sibabiza
ngoontamo-lukhuni, la okwenyani wona
amaBhulu. Inkqubo kaVelefutha
yocalucalulo ngokobuhlanga yayigquba kule
dolophana, ekhonya mfondini amaBhulu,
atabhata. (p.60)

Jan van der Westhuizen was born and bred
at Ventersdorp in the Transvaal. This small
town was infamous for its hatred of black
people. The Whites who lived here were the
verkramptes. They inherited Verwoerd policy
of racism and it dominated in this small
town.

The story “Inguquko” shows how Jan van der Westhuizen’s actions were opposed to the ideologies of the Ventersdorp community regarding blacks. Jan rejected the Ventersdorp community ideology of racism by marrying a black woman whereas the boers of Ventersdorp extremely hate blacks.

In the story “Amakhwenkwe” (Duka, 2003), the author depicts the existence of an unhealthy relationship between the community of Gubevu and the older boys of the village. Duka has been able in his exposition to indicate very definitely the type of story one may expect when he writes about the boys and the village of Gubevu, where all orchards show high yields of fruit. This unstable situation is presented as follows at the commencement of the story:

Amakhwenkwe alapha kuGubevu
akazibi iziqhamo zalo mfo kaLizwi
azibuza umlandu. (p.27)

The boys at Gubevu steal large
quantities of fruit from Reverend
Hlazo's orchard in a great manner.

The writer has effectively introduced his story thus giving a clear picture in the mind of the reader about the season of the year and fruit trees that bear good fruit that make one's mouth water. Clashes at the village are caused by incidents such as the stealing of fruits by the boys and the showing of ill-discipline and disrespect towards elderly people of the village.

In the story "UZenzile" (Duka, 2003) the author also from the outset clearly suggests the basic line of the conflict in the story and what all the trouble is going to be about. The reader is informed about an 18 year old teenager who stays with his grandmother and about the unfavourable time at which this teenager arrives home every day. The following few lines tell us about the time of the day he gets home daily:

Ezi veki zidlulileyo zimbini wenza
le nto lo mntwana, abuye ngosuku
olulandelayo ukulila kweenkuku
zesibini. (p42)

For the past two weeks this child
is continuously doing this, he
arrives home the following
morning at day break.

This behaviour is totally unacceptable to his grandmother. It causes trauma to the old woman and it provides a firm base from which the events will develop towards the climax.

In the story, "Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha" (Yekela, 1997), the writer has provided a brief, to the point and immediate exposure of the source of conflict. This story depicts the experience of a black family in a former South African town of Uitenhage. In his exposition the writer writes as follows:

“Awu Nkosi yam! Uyawa wenzeni lo mntwana kwakhona ngoku?” yatsho kabuhlungu inkosikazi kamfundisi mhla kwakugaleleka abakwantsasana emishini ekuseni beze kugqogqa igumbi elingaphandle awayelala kulo unyana welo khaya. Wayentanywe ngoogxa bakhe ukuba uneAK-47 awayeyiqhusheke... (p.1)

“Oh Jesus! I wonder what has this child done again?” This was the wife of the pastor’s painful utterance the day police arrived unexpectedly at the mission house at daybreak to search the outside room where the boy sleeps. His friends reported to the police that he has an AK-47 he is hiding...

The youth’s possession of the AK-47 assault rifle represents the point of conflict, as it is associated with garage robbery. It is clear that the conflict in the story will be between the young man and the law. This exposition therefore lays a solid foundation for the story to develop from.

In the story “Ugwayimbo” “Protest” Yekela (1997) has adequately presented the nature of a different category of conflict which gives some indication of what is at stake in it. Protest songs are sung by the workers at Toyota Manufacturing Company in Durban. They are calling for better working conditions and wage increases. Negotiations between the workers and the employer reach a deadlock, thus resulting in a violent strike. Workers are seen throwing bricks at factory windows destroying almost everything. Many of the workers are arrested by the police. Yekela introduces the story in a creative manner by means of the following protest song:

“Sizonqoba, sizonqoba namuhla,
Sizonqoba, sizonqoba noma sekunjani,
Mlungu, khuphukisa izinga lethu”.
Lalisitsho igwijo labasebenzi mhla
babeqhankqalaza kuloo mzi mkhulu
kunene wenza iinqwelo mafutha wakwa-
Toyota eThekwini. (p.77)

“Victory, victory, today, victory victory no matter what. The white manager has to improve the working conditions”. The protest song was sung by workers whilst protesting at the offices Toyota Car Manufacturers in Durban.

The excerpt above provides immediate exposure to what the reader should expect in the story. This involves confrontation between the protesters and their employers.

In some of the stories under discussion, the exposition phase is not utilised with the aim of providing a clear picture of the source and nature of the conflict. In the story “Lowu Mvulo” (Sayedwa in Magona, 2007) for instance, unlike the two stories mentioned above, the exposition is not clear. What the story is going to be about only starts to show during the rising action phase. The exposition depicts a typical school environment. The writer writes as follows:

Le mini, yeyona yakha yandinzimela okoko ndathi ndiyitshala ndiyafundisa. Indinzimele kuba intliziyo le yam ikrazukile. (p.64-65)

This day is the most difficult day ever since I became a teacher to teach. It is a difficult one because it leaves me with a broken heart.

This story commences on page 64, but it only becomes clear on page 65 that the story is going to be about certain challenges that are experienced in the teaching profession. In terms of the technical requirements of the short story genre, the source of the conflict should be exposed at the commencement of the story. The success of this story is therefore prejudiced by this shortcoming. Dudumashe-luthango (1998) introduces the story, “Umhla we-10 kuCanzibe ngowe 1994” with an interesting beginning in order to conquer the interest of the reader. This story is associated with political life in South Africa. This exposition links perfectly well with the theme of the story. It clearly depicts what South Africa looked like before the dawn of democracy. The author states that May 10, 1994 was the inauguration day of the first Black President of South Africa after years of oppression. The event took

place at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. Thousands of people attended the ceremony.

In her exposition the writer puts it as follows:

Ilizwana loMzantsi Afrika laziwa kakhulu kwizizwe ngezizwe zehlabathi ngenkqubo yalo yocalucalulo. Sekulithuba leminyaka engama-48 eminyaka igquba le nkqubo ngekungenalusini. (p.37)

South Africa is well-known to countries of the world for its apartheid rule. This unsympathetic system has existed for a period of 48 years¹.

The excerpt above shows the immediate exposure to what the reader should expect in the story. After a period of 48 years of instability in South Africa, people of different colours converged at the Union Building in Pretoria to celebrate together the advent of democracy uniting them as one South African nation. Although it provides a vivid and clear description of the most important event in the history of South Africa, this exposition unfortunately does not fulfil the requirements of a short story since there is no instability or potential for conflict that is initiated here. In fact, this prose text remains descriptive up to the end of the presentation.

It simply provides an account of what happened during the ceremonial transition from the age of apartheid to that of democracy. It does not cover the struggle period that preceded this transition phase, with all its accompanying levels of tension and suspense. Since these vital elements are not present here, this text does not qualify to be regarded as a short story. It should rather be regarded as a sketch. The sketch is less dramatic but more analytic and descriptive than the tale and the short story. It has an entertaining account of some aspects of a culture written by someone within that form of culture for readers outside of it <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/343568/literary-sketch> (Accessed on: 2013/09/03). The sketch may also be described as just a short literary composition

¹ The figure of 48 years that is mentioned in this excerpt is incorrect. The National Party came into power in 1948, which means that the length of the term should be 46 years.

somewhat resembling a short story but it is intentionally slight in treatment, discursive in style and familiar in tone <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sketch> (Accessed on: 2013/09/03).

On the whole, one would commend the six authors for the way that they present the exposition in their stories. Most of these stories begin quite appropriately with the presentation of incident, places, character and the cause of conflict as essential data to acquaint the reader with the situation in general and to suggest lines of conflict. The situations presented are realistic, which ensures that the reader will become interested in the development of events. Their efficiency in this regard can be seen as confirmation of what Kempton (1967:03) says about the literary value of the exposition:

Whatever the approach, whatever the material and method, every story begins with a tacit profession of authenticity, as if simulating the factual authority, of written history which amount to promise by the author.

5.5.2 Rising Action

According to Hills (1987:105) "...even if a story doesn't have a beginning or ending as such, it more or less has to have a middle". This shows how important the middle of the plot of the story is. The rising action is part of this middle stage whilst the other part of this stage is the climax. It is important, therefore, to know what this phase encompasses and where its boundaries are. Nguna (1997:75) writes that "Complication" and "Development" are other terms often used by critics to identify this phase. Because of the limited volume of the short story, a lengthy and more complex phase of development is seldom possible. The term "Development" however, is a more acceptable one because the pace of movement of the story increases gradually in accordance with the development or unfolding of the events already introduced during the exposition phase. This is confirmed by Joseph (1928:65) who says:

The story must 'march' and the pace is a gradually increasing one until the catastrophe or climax".

Defining the boundaries of the phase, Cohen (1973:68) claims that this phase "encompasses that part of the story from the first event of the plot to the climax. Here the author will indicate the development of his situation, develop his characters". The first event that Cohen refers to is, according to Brooks and Warren (1979:34), also the beginning of the conflict as it (the conflict) can only be implied or specified in the exposition. Therefore, the rising action is the phase where the conflict is incited in such a way that each event is rising and we therefore, speak of rising action. This implies that the author in this phase develops his/her basic situation and also his/her characters, since character cannot be separated from action (Notestein, 1974:82).

Nguna (1997:76) states that for the story to progress satisfactorily there must be something at stake for each contending party and each opposing party should act out of necessity. The opposing parties must be evenly matched and there must be a sense of action and counter-action. This process is only possible when a character's purpose encounters opposition in a story. In this way the story usually becomes credible and interesting to read and follow. In this phase, as the name suggests, the increasing difficulty encountered by the characters to maintain stability is presented. What is of great interest to the reader is to see characters really struggling to overcome and resisting being overcome, hence the development of conflict and stimulation of the reader's interest by a rising pattern of action.

The chosen stories are generally characterized by a definite pattern of rising action and growing conflict. A story where the development is worked out particularly well to a pattern of rising conflict and tension is "Ubufazi! Ubufazi!" (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998). In this story, Mandlakapheli returns home from the mines to find that his daughter is pregnant. His wife Noluntu is unfairly accused of failing to control Nontombi. Because Noluntu feels that she is not guilty, a lengthy argument between her and her husband arises. Eventually Mandlakapheli leaves his wife and goes to stay on the mines without writing or sending money to his wife. They stayed in separation because Noluntu decides to go and live with her uncle in Port Elizabeth.

She decides to go back to school. She successfully completes the B.A. degree in Social work at the University of Fort Hare. This is described as follows:

Tshe iminyaka emine wasiphumelela isidanga sobuntlalontle gqathu. Mve esithi, “ndifuna kanye ukunceda abantu abaneengxaki ngemitshato yabo.” (p.5)

The four years quickly ended and she successfully passed the B.A. degree in Social Work. She said: “Truly. I want to assist people who have problems in their marriage.”

In the above story Dudumashe-Luthango may be commended because, as the story progresses, tension mounts, as Mandlakapheli refuses to yield to the pleadings of his wife. His wife explains that she knows nothing about the situation Nontombi finds herself in, and she is not part of it. She has done all in her power to educate Nontombi as to how a girl should behave. Because of the stubbornness of her husband, Noluntu decides to report the case to her husband’s brother. Seeing that she and her children are starving, she decides to go and work for a white family in Mthatha. Mandlakapheli follows his wife to Mthatha and he convinces her to go back to Cofimvaba, where she is then left starving. This story clearly exhibits the development of conflict and the readjustment of forces as they struggle unsuccessfully to settle into a new kind of stability.

In the story, “Inguquko” (Yekela, 1997) the writer succeeds in the depiction of action and counter-action through making the story more interesting to read and follow. One can see that the pace of movement of the story increases gradually in accordance with the development of events already presented during the exposition phase, events such as the form of education given to Jan at school and at home, namely that a black person was created by God to be the servant of a white man. Working at Telkom in Germiston with black people leaves him unhappy. At Telkom House where Jan stays with four other white men, there is a black woman who is doing the cooking which Jan does not approve of. He decides to stay alone and do his own cooking. After some days Jan is seen changing his mind. He is now seen

willing to eat the food cooked by the black woman. He falls in love with the woman and marries her.

The author states as follows:

Bothuka abakholelwa abazali abanta-
kwabo noodade bakaJan mhla beva
ukuba eli gatyana lizimanye nentombi
eMnyama. Bathi linyala nesikizi
kwisizwe samaBhulu. (p.64)

His parents, brothers and sisters were shocked when they heard the news that Jan has married a Black woman. They saw this as a shame and disgrace to the white Afrikaner community.

The Afrikaner community of Ventersdorp where Jan van der Westhuizen was born is well-known for its hatred of black people. It became an irony when Jan, the son of the verkramptes, decided to marry a black woman. This contradicts the Afrikaner ideology. This unexpected turn of events stimulates the reader's interest. There is a strong possibility that there is going to be a confrontation between those involved.

In Mtuze's story "Loo mhla zibuyayo" (2003), the rising action and tension is also depicted perfectly well. During the period of the struggle, the utterance of the word "terrorists" scared both black and white in the Grahamstown townships. The problem with terrorists is that they strike unexpectedly and cause great damage. Grahamstown police do not go easily to the area where terrorists are suspected to have been seen. They know that terrorists have AK47 assault rifles, scorpions and various types of explosives. The writer states government forces know that freedom fighters have dangerous weapons which they use to attack armies and destroy public places. The writer describes the confrontation between the freedom fighters and the police as follows:

Ibe lulwamvila phezu kolwamvila, umoya
wanuka irhuluwa ngephanyazo. Kwakucacile
ukuba kudibene izangxa yaye abakwaNonibe
babeqonda mhlophe ukuba bahlangene
nenyok'iphung'umhluzi. Ndandiqala ndingaka

nje ukubona nokuva abantu abathi ngelishesha kugeqeka umntu babe becula igwijo elithi “Loo mhla zibuyayo” (p.9).

It became a sting upon a sting the atmosphere instantly smelling gunpowder. It is clear that both sides are equally strong, soldiers knowing very well that they are facing danger. It was the first time in my life to hear people singing “Loo mhla zibuyayo” whilst people were falling.

The excerpt above without any doubt gives a clear picture of tension and rising action in the mind of the reader. It is clear that this situation is developing into a confrontation between the police and freedom fighters. There is a strong possibility that this confrontation will develop into a state of full scale violence. The rising action links perfectly well with the title of the story and the exposition. The writer has cleverly shown in his exposition what the reader should expect during the rising action.

On the whole the rising action phase is presented satisfactorily in the stories under discussion. Most of these stories develop in an interesting manner from the exposition phase into the rising action phase, with the conflict and tension showing a gradual, but definite increase in intensity.

5.5.3 Climax

ShIPLEY (1970:52) defines climax as: “...the decisive moment in the dramatic conflict”. This implies that each event contributes dramatically to the build-up of the story until a crisis occurs which then brings about what is known as the turning point. JOSEPH (1928:86) calls it a “final revelation” in that we are now at the stage of awaiting the outcome of what has been going on in the story. Since conflict primarily involves the characters, we now see the final clash between them and we await the final result with the elimination of either of the participants. It is this result or consequence that we are now at this phase concerned with. Giving us a clear outline of this phase, BROOKS and WARREN (1971:36) write:

The complication moves toward a moment, an event, when something has to happen, when something has to crack. This moment is the point of highest tension, the moment when the story turns towards its solution.

Cohen (1973:69) concurs when he says:

Climax is defined as the highest and most important point toward which the chain of events in the rising action has been moving. It can be the point at which issues and conflicts in the plot are fully and clearly resolved. A climax in a story may be a moment of disaster, of joyous discovery or of sober recognition of truth previously unknown to the character.

This implies that climax is the incident towards which all episodes lead. The function of climax, therefore, is to settle the core conflict between opposing parties so that there is a change in the story from instability to stability. This happens only when pressures on the characters build up to breaking-point. In this phase there must be a tremendous change either in the life or in the social relations of the chief character, and the obstacle should be removed.

The features of a successful climax are revealed by Joseph (1928:86) when he mentions that amongst other things “the reader should feel a definite emotional shock, whether it be surprise at the final revelation, satisfaction at the triumph of right over might, sorrow at the tragic outcome or thrill at reaching a high water mark of excitement”. The importance of the climax in the writer’s work of art lies in the fact that it forms the “kernel” of the story (Hunt, 1950:88), and it represents “the conscious purpose of the story” (Notestein, 1974:58).

The portrayal of the climax is most important because it shows conclusively the final outcome of the main conflict. This is confirmed by Skenjana (1997:14 -15) when he says:

...climax is the point where the prevailing conflict between the two forces reaches the apex there is a gradual movement from the problem in question to a solution.

In some of the stories from the six selected anthologies the climax phase is presented satisfactorily. In the story "Intlekele eBhisho" (Bongela, 1998) for instance, climax is presented in a satisfactory manner. Earlier in the story, during the exposition phase, the author illustrated in the mind of the reader what all the trouble is going to be about. Tripartite alliance marchers are seen marching through King William's Town to Bhisho stadium. They have a petition for Brigadier Gqozo. In the fore-front are the well-known leaders of the tripartite alliance, Chris Hani, Steve Tshwete, Cyril Ramaphosa, etc. The day is calm and warm. The singing and whistling of the crowds caused exuberance, thus causing panic amongst Brigadier Gqozo's forces. This leads the author to write as follows:

Bathi bengahambanga neemitha ezingama-shumi amabini savakala isithonga sokugramama kweengxukuma zemipu yemikhosi kaBrigadier Gqozo. Ga-ga-ga-ga-ga! Didli! mbakra!. Kungakhange kwenziwe nesilumkiso (p.25).

Not having moved even twenty metres a sound from guns of Brigadier Gqozo's forces was heard. Ga-ga-ga-ga-ga-! boom! without any warning.

The excerpt above indicates the final clash between Brigadier Gqozo's forces and the tripartite alliance marchers. The conflict reached boiling point when live ammunitions were fired at the marchers. About 19 people were killed at that battle and some were wounded. The alliance forces are defeated and for that particular moment Brigadier Gqozo's forces are seen as the victors. This is exactly what the theory about climax is supposed to be. Later however, after a couple of months in 1994, the alliance partners managed to take over the rule of Bhisho. This shows that they became the final winners.

In the story that was analysed above, the final confrontation is of a physical nature. One of the parties fires at the other with semi-automatic fire arms which caused

many of the opponents to become physically wounded or even to die. In some stories however, the final confrontation is of a non-physical nature. In these cases one party achieves a moral victory rather than a physical victory over the other. In Duka's "Amakhwenkwe" (2003) for instance, the naughty boys of Gubevu village are in conflict with the adult community. In this story the climax is presented in a sophisticated, hidden manner because there is no physical clash. The clash is between the boys of Gubevu and the word of God, where Hlazo, the leader of the boys is converted to Christianity.

The village of Gubevu is well-known for its beautiful orchards. The naughty boys of the village steal from these orchards. Reverend Dela has the most beautiful orchard. He curses the boys and the devil. His curse angers Hlazo and his group. Hlazo and his group subsequently disrupt the evening church services and the tension between the two groups mounts. The author describes the final clash between the two parties as follows:

Kuthe kanye ezinzulwini zobusuku, indlu yeNkosi imi ngeembambo, isitsho ingoma, etshila eqongeni uMfundisi Dela, latshovwa ucango olube luvaliwe... Uthe ugosa elubuyisa lambetha wabetheka ngenqentsu kuloo mgangatho wesamente. "Makhwenkwe akuGubevu uYesu uzalelwe nina." Uthe nje egqiba elesixhenxe uHlazo waguqa phambi komfundisi. (p.28)

Just at midnight, the church being at its full capacity, while the hymn sung and Reverend Dela was preaching on the pulpit, the door was forced wide open. The elder tried to close the door which in return Banged, thus hitting him, causing him to collapse, hitting the back of his head on the cement floor. Reverend Dela ordered the boys to respect God because Jesus was born for them. Without any hesitation Hlazo bowed down in front of the Reverend.

In this incident, Rev. Dela as representative of the word of God, is the victor. Hlazo and his followers loose the contest. Hlazo becomes converted to Christianity, which means that he will refrain from stealing any fruit in the future.

Unfortunately some of the stories under discussion do not have a climax at all. In the story “Sifike kweny’ indawo” (Merile in Magona, 2007) for instance, the reader is given information on the situation of black people at Nyanga West (Gugulethu) in the Western Cape during the pre-1994 period. Black people are living under difficult circumstances and they are often ill-treated and harassed by police, with forced removals becoming at the order of the day.

The author says:

...bebengabantu abangazaniyo konke, besuka kwiindawo ngeendawo ngokubhaciswa Yinkqubo karhulumente, edoncula abantu kwimizi neziphaluka abazima ngononqaku, ebaswantsulisa, ebaxhixhimbisa, ebenza iimbacu elizweni lokuzalwa kwabo... (p.41)

...these are people who do not know one another at all, coming from various places as a result of apartheid laws of forced removals from their places of birth harassed as strangers by the government policies and programmes in their country of birth...

Merile in this story presents a conflict situation between man and the state. The state is suppressing and oppressing people. The reader experiences a definite emotional shock when he/she discovers that all the accused people in the white man’s court are blacks. Only blacks are arrested for not having pass-books. All of them are given the same sentence, R30.00 each:

Amashumi amathathu eerandi eso isisigwebo sokuba umntu engenayo imvume yokuba ngaphakathi kwisixeko saseKapa. (p.43)

The sum of R30.00 each is the fine for a person who does not have permission to live in Cape Town.

In the story Merile has not succeeded in presenting an effective climax. In this story there are clear signs of conflict between the two racial groups namely, whites and

blacks. There is even conflict at the personal level between a black woman and a white man, when the white man demands that she must sleep with him in order to get a pass-book. In spite of all the conflict that has been built into the story, the tension never reaches boiling point and there is no final clash between the two parties where one of the parties is defeated whilst the other emerges as the victor. It should be borne in mind however that this story was written by one of Magona's trainees and that one should not be too harsh in his/her criticism of such a young writer. The story simply ends where it is stated:

Waya laa mini inye, waqala wabe ugqibelisile.
Kwathini na ke ukuba alungelwe
kangakanana? Loo nto, anganeli nje
kulungelwa, yena qobo, koko kusinde
nesikhosikazi siphela. (p.48)

She went there for a day only that was first
and last. What happened for her to benefit so
much? This did not only benefit her, but the
entire women folk were saved.

In conclusion it could be stated that some authors in the six selected anthologies portray the climax in their stories perfectly well, whilst some have failed to show the final outcome of the main conflict.

5.5.4 Ending

Joseph (1928:29) claims that anything that follows after the climax is known as either the denouement or the conclusion. It functions as a phase which represents that part of the story in which the author explains or unravels what has happened up to the climax. In other words "... it gives us the outcome of the conflict, the solution to the problem and the basis of a new stability" (Brooks and Warren, 1979:36). Since instability normally occurs throughout the story, the ending has to normalise and stabilise the situation. And since the tension rises in the story, there is a gradual decline at the end as the outcome of events is explained to us.

The ending of the short story normally differs from the ending of other genres. According to Hills (1987:106 -107) "the ending of the modern short story does not

require a long summary of what happened afterwards”. In some instances, the ending of the story could even coincide with the climax phase. This means that the story ends at the conclusion of the events that represent the climax of the story. The utilisation of this narrative strategy by the short story writer, normally contributes towards the economy and internal unity of the story.

The short stories selected from the six anthologies almost all end on an interesting note. This therefore, satisfies the requirements of the short story genre. One of the stories that fulfil the requirements of the short story genre, for example, is the story “Ubufazi! Ubufazi” (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998). In this story there is a clear confrontation between two parties which culminates in a situation where one party is defeated, whilst the other emerges as a victor. The story concludes when peace and stability is restored and the foundation is laid for a new beginning phase to commence. In this story, there is conflict between Noluntu and her husband, Mandlakapheli. The wife is subjected to severe hardship, but with the support of her family, she succeeds in obtaining a university degree, which assisted her in finding employment and earn a decent salary. A new form of stability has now been established. The wife is now ready to enter a new stage in her life.

In some instances the climax phase also coincides with the ending of the story. In such instances there is no definite conclusion that follows after the climax phase. In the story “Amakhwenkwe” (Duka, 2003), the narrator narrates for instance, about the boys of Gubevu that steal fruits from various household orchards. Their behaviour annoys Reverend Dela. Hlazo is the leader of these boys. He influenced the boys to steal more from Reverend Dela’s orchard. One night the boys led by Hlazo interrupted the church service where Reverend Dela was preaching. Reverend Dela encouraged his congregation not to give up, but to stand and fight the devil. Thanks to prayers, Dela and his congregation are eventually seen to be victorious. Hlazo the ring leader, is seen surrendering and becoming a convert. This incident is described as follows:

Uthe nje egqiba elesixhenxe uHlazo
waguqa phambi komfundisi. Alandela
amahlakani akhe sele ezo mbawula
neezofolokhwe ziphantsi zizalise

iqonga. Amakhwenkwe azinikela phantsi kwebhanile yobuKrestu. (p.29)

Soon after the seventh word Hlazo bowed down before the Reverend. His friends followed suit and put down their home made heaters and forks on the stage. They were all converted to Christianity.

During the discussion of the climax phase, it was argued that this incident between the church elders and the naughty boys represents the climax of the story. The rationale for this interpretation was provided fully. However, it now transpires that this same incident may also be regarded as the conclusion of the story. There are no further incidents and the stability is reached since the boys have decided to abandon their delinquent behaviour and convert themselves to Christianity.

In some instances however, the story does not have a satisfactory ending. The events are left hanging in the air (so to speak) and there is no clear solution to the problems that were identified in the story. The story, "UGalatyan' utyebile" (Mtuze, 2003) for instance, is about the naughty boys of Tshatshu, a village near King William's Town. These older boys pose a threat to the people at Tshatshu. They rob people on their way to work. People here mostly work at Da Gama clothing factory and in King William's Town. The boys steal fowls from various households. They also steal fruit from the orchards in the village. They are often arrested, but they do not stop stealing. Nyelezi, one of the elders of the village, realises that the boys are actually fighting for freedom and says:

"Nilibele kukunyemba nokwakha umkhanya nje, la makhwenkwe atoyitoyela enkululekweni, nisale nina nithe gcobho kobo bukhoboka benu." (p.24)

"Whilst criticising and distancing yourselves, the boys are marching to freedom thus leaving you behind in your state of slavery."

These words of Nyelenzi represent the end of the story. The author has failed to conclude this story in a satisfactory manner. The events that happened in the story

are just hanging in the air. No solution is found to the threat of instability in the village.

Thematically, the ending of the stories under discussion can be divided into two categories, namely, those with happy endings and those with unhappy endings. In some instances these happy endings are of a political nature and they deal with the transformation that took place after 1994. The following stories of Mtuze (2003) belong to this category: "Ixsha" and "Loo Mhla Zibuyayo." In "Loo Mhla Zibuyayo" for instance, the role of a group of freedom fighters in the Grahamstown region is depicted during the struggle period.

Mtuze (2003:10) in the story "Loo Mhla Zibuyayo" (The Day they return) narrates how volatile the situation was in South Africa before the advent of democracy. After a long period of suffering, whilst the black people were fighting for liberation, ultimately the oppressed people became victorious. Most of the freedom fighters had gone into exile. On their return to the country they were called "terrorists". When seen and attacked by the apartheid forces, they responded with vicious counterattacks. But, after 1994 all South Africans enjoyed the fruits of freedom whether you were a freedom fighter or not. Showing the happy ending after the struggle for freedom, the writer writes as follows:

Akukho nto imbi kwaphela wena phantsi
kwelanga naxa ezinye zisizela
kabuhlungu nje, kambe ziyabenza bona
ubusi, ngoku sikhululekile, side sanayo
nefreedom of speech. Siyakwazi ukuthi
umnqolobi ngumnqolobi. (p.10)

There is nothing that is entirely bad in
life, although some inflict pain, but they
do produce good results. We are now
free, we have the freedom of speech. We
are able to call a terrorist a terrorist.

The excerpt above shows that after hard work one wins sweet fruits. The freedom fighter and the oppressed fought hard against the apartheid forces. In the end they became the victors, they attained freedom in 1994. This story ends therefore on a pleasant note when all freedom movements such as ANC, PAC, etc were unbanned

and legalised. This meant that these freedom fighters could go back into civilian life without the fear of being prosecuted.

In the story “Ixsha” (Mtuze, 2003) the writer narrates about how apartheid laws prevailed in the small town of Hofmeyr before 1994. The Hofmeyr court had only white staff. The narrator of this story is the interpreter of the court and the first black official in Hofmeyr magistrates’ court. A black man is not allowed to summon a white man. The plaintiff, Mr Koekemoer lays a complaint against the black interpreter for summoning him to court. After 1994 however, black magistrates, prosecutors, even interpreters enjoy the freedom of summoning all people irrespective of their colour. The writer puts it as follows:

“Hayi asiyazi into efunwa ngala maBhulu efama, ndatsho mhla ndaxelelwa ukuba laphela emoyeni elo tyala kuba kwaya kwacaca ukuba uKoekemoer akanamihla ba yakumangala nokuba angafumane amangale akanamihlaba yakuba agwetyelwe yiyo nayiphi na inkundla.”
(p.118)

“We do not know what these Afrikaner farmers want, I said when I was told that there was no case because it is clear that Koekemoer has no ground to lay a charge, even if he can lay a charge, the court has no grounds to convict me.”

The pre-1994 period in Hofmeyr was bad for black people. Public places had “non-whites” and “whites” only symbols. The court in Hofmeyr had white staff only. But after 1994 all apartheid laws were abolished, thus giving everybody freedom of movement. This represents a happy ending.

Dudumashe-Luthango’s (1998:43) story, “Umhla we-10 kuCanzibe ngowe-1994” is also a story of a political nature that shows a happy ending. Oppressive laws prevailed in South Africa for almost 48 years. The apartheid laws prevailed in the country. Organizations such as the African National Congress, Pan Africanist Congress etc. continued to fight for liberation of the black people. 1994 became the year of democracy in South Africa when the country commenced to enjoy freedom.

On 10 May 1994 the joy of the people of South Africa reached a climax when the first black president Nelson Mandela, was inaugurated. The ceremony is described as follows:

Iqukunjelwe ngemisitho ngemisitho,
kaloku ukusuka apha iindwendwe
ezibekekileyo zazimenyelwe kwisidlo
sasemini. Izithebe zazisindana mfondi
ni zizitya ezilungiselelwe iintlanga eza-
hlukeneyo. (p.43)

The function concluded with festivities,
important guests were served with
lunch various types of food suitable for
various racial groups.

Some stories that are of a non-political, social nature also show a happy ending. Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) narrates how in the story “Ubufazi! Ubufazi” for instance, Noluntu spends a long time without her husband because he blames her of failing to control Nontombi who is now seen to be pregnant. She is forced to leave home and look for work as she is starving. She gets work at Mthatha. After some time her husband persuaded her to resign and go back home. The husband left her starving at Cofimvaba. She decides to take her children and find a place of safety in her brother’s house in Port Elizabeth. She decides to go back to school. Her brother gives her the necessary financial assistance. She obtains a B.A. degree in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare. The situation becomes normalized in that she is now able to live an independent life. Dudumashe-Luthango has not neglected the fact that this is a short story, and as a result the ending is very brief and there are no further explanations after Noluntu has obtained her degree. The ending of this story leaves us with a single impression, namely that “good always triumphs over evil”. The author puts it as follows:

Okunene umsile umnakwabo eFort Hare.
Kaloku le yayiyindoda engaxakekanga,
inamashishini. (p. 5)

Indeed her brother sent her to Fort Hare.
This was a man who did not have
financial problems because he owns
businesses.

In spite of several challenges, Noluntu's life has now reached new stability. The story is therefore concluded in a brief but satisfactory manner in accordance with the requirements of the short story. The ending of this story provides us not only with the solution to the problem, but also with the basis for a new stability. Dudumashe-Luthango provides a happy ending to this story.

The story, "Eyunivesithi" (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998) also belongs to this category. It is a narration about life at university and how Khanyisa Ziqqa encountered challenges and how she ultimately overcame them. As a new student fresh from high school, Khanyisa is exposed to bad influences from the senior students that presented themselves as friends to her. Khanyisa attended parties, drinking alcohol with her friends. She became pregnant, not even knowing who the father of the child is. Eventually she became a dropout. After a year she re-registered for her BSc degree. She reformed. She achieved wonders in her school work. She managed to complete her BSc degree. The writer describes a happy ending when she says:

Uphindile esikolweni. Hayi ufike waqwenga ngoku engulaa Khanyisa waziwayo. Usigqibile ngephanyazo isidanga sakhe sobuNzululwazi (BSc). (p.2)

She returned to school. On arrival, she achieved wonders showing her true colours as the Khanyisa we know. She swiftly acquired her degree in Science (BSc).

Some of these short stories have unhappy endings. In most cases, however, these endings are logical in terms of what precedes them and by the fullness of revelation they afford. In a story such as "UZenzile" (Duka, 2003), for instance, Zenzile takes part in criminal activities. This results in confrontation with the police where he is killed. This story has an unhappy ending but because the events are logically arranged and represented, the sad ending is quite acceptable.

Perrine (1978: 46) gives two justifications which may be made for an unhappy ending:

Many situations in real life have unhappy endings, therefore, if fiction is to illuminate life, it must present defeat as well as triumph. The unhappy ending has a peculiar value for writers who so wish to ponder life.

The reader needs, therefore, to understand and expect defeat as well as victory in the short story. An unhappy ending may cause the reader to brood over the results, to go over them in his/her mind and thus by searching out its implications, to derive more from it. We can also see more deeply into life when it is pried open for inspection because it deals with significant issues. In the ending of the above-mentioned story the reader is once again made aware of the tragedy which may be caused by joining gangsters. The author puts it as follows:

“NdinguSuperintendent wecandelo eliphanda ngobuqhetseba, ubugulukudu nobugwinta. Ndizokunazisa ukuba u-Zenzile Lugxa udutyulwe wakhaba umrhaji.” (p.47)

“I am the Superintendent in charge of the corruption section, thuggery and murder. I have come to inform you that Zenzile Lugxa has been shot dead.”

It is true to say the result of sin is death. The excerpt above shows how Zenzile has been punished after all the bad things he has been doing in the community.

In the story, “Lowo Mvulo” (Sayedwa, in Magona, 2007) the writer narrates about Mr. Majola, the principal of Rainbow High School who is seen addressing the learners during morning assembly. In his address the principal is telling the learners of the school about the alarming news of Yolisa Madlondlo’s untimely death. Yolisa was one of the grade 12 learners. The previous night she attended a party with her friends. They were seen drunk. Yolisa got raped and killed. The writer, describing the situation, shows sadness and writes as follows:

Emva komthandazo lowo, bakhululeka abafundi, abo bakhetha ukuya eziklasini zabo zesiqhelo, benjenjalo. Abakhetha ukuya kudibana neekhawunsila eziya, benjenjeya ukuya kulaa magumbi ebexeliwe. (p.67)

After the morning prayer learners who chose to go to their classrooms could do so and others who choose to meet councillors went to the designated classrooms.

In this story it is clearly shown that Yolisa failed to yield to the warning and good teachings of her school teachers. She continued to attend parties and consume liquor with her friends. This irresponsible behaviour resulted in her untimely and tragic death. Whilst this story has an unhappy ending, it also has a positive effect because it shows involvement of teachers and the school with the well-being of learners, thus fulfilling their roles as nation builders.

Looking at the denouement of the story, “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha” (Yekela, 1997) it is true to say, a sin is rewarded by death. After committing a robbery, Vuyisile and his friends are found guilty by a court of law. They are sentenced to 20 years in jail. Vuyisile’s parents died, still leaving him in jail. The writer tells us about the sad and unhappy ending as follows:

Wafika umhla wamatyala, bafunyanwa benetyala lokuphanga nokubulala baza bagwetywa iminyaka engamashumi mabini emnye bedontsa entolongweni. Babhubha abazali bakaVuyisile zidanda-thekile iintliziyo zabo, yena enkolonkoloza kwesimnyama sona isisele. (p.10)

On the day of the case, they were found guilty of robbery and murder they are given twenty years sentence each. Vuyisile’s parents died having sore hearts, leaving him in the dark cells of the prison.

This story clearly shows an unhappy ending because Vuyisile is locked up in jail for 20 years and his parents were left grieving over him. He stayed in prison and did not even have the privilege of burying his parents. On the other hand, there is also a positive element to this ending, since it confirms the fact that anyone who commits crime is severely punished by law and the citizens of this country are protected against criminal elements.

The two stories above have similar endings. Whilst they both end on a tragic and unhappy note, they do have positive elements. In the first story “Lowo Mvulo” (Sayedwa, in Magona, 2007), the positive involvement of teachers with the well-being of the learners is illustrated, whilst in the second story, “Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha” (Yekela, 1997), the positive functioning of the justice system in the protection of the country’s citizens is underlined.

5.6 Micro Structure

The micro structure represents the second important component of the total plot structure. In this section the main features of the micro structure will firstly be interpreted theoretically. The main features of the component, as found in the six selected anthologies, will then be investigated and critically evaluated. The micro structure of the short story consists of three main elements, namely: sequence, selection and tension and suspense. Discussion of these main elements will now be undertaken in the paragraphs that follow.

5.6.1 Sequence

The success of the story is determined, to a large extent, by the sequence according to which the events are presented in the story. The notion of time is closely related to that of narrative sequence and the time element is therefore a most important part of the narrative. The story develops or unfolds from its beginning through the middle phase to the end; a story therefore is a movement through time. It is an experience that unfolds in time, like a play or a musical composition (Liddell, as quoted by Kannemeyer, 1965:141). Forster (1980:44) says: “a story is a narrative of events arranged in time-sequence”.

In older narratives, the events were generally presented in their original, chronological sequence. In these stories there are not many signs of improvisation or experimentation with the time element, and these stories are often characterised by simplicity and lack of complication (Botha, 1986:175). The sequence of events in these stories can be represented as follows (where each letter of the alphabet represents a particular event):

Real life situation: ABCDEFGH

The narrative sequence: ABCDEFGH

Since the beginning of the 20th century, however, narrators have become more conscious of the important role of the time element in narrative prose. The mere chronological representation of the events is not adhered to as rigidly any longer and the sequence of events is changed, in accordance with the demands of the particular story that is being narrated (Botha, 1986:175). In these stories the sequence of events can be represented as follows (where each letter of the alphabet represents a particular event):

Real life situation: ABCDEFGH

The narrative sequence: HABCGDEF

According to Bal (1988:52), all written texts are linear in that one word follows the other and one sentence of the text follows the other, as opposed to other creations such as an art work, where all the details may be observed simultaneously. At the same time, events in the real world, upon which the narrative text is based, are also linear, since they occur in chronological sequence. Bal (1988) therefore prefers the use of the term “double linearity” which incorporates the linear nature of the written text, as well as the linear order of events in the real world. However, whilst events in the real world occur in a fixed, unchangeable sequence, the order of events in the real world can be changed and amended in accordance with the requirements of the story. In the modern narrative, the author does not limit himself/herself to the mere chronological presentation of events. The narrator may, for instance, interrupt the normal stream of events in order to report on other events that took place

simultaneously with the main events. The modern narrator may also alter the sequence of events as found in the real world. This means that the story may commence *in medias res*, from which point it may move backwards and forwards in time, as the narrative progresses. The concluding part of the story may even be presented during the exposition phase, while the remaining part of the narrative may be devoted to the presentation of the circumstances that gave rise to this specific outcome of events (Bal, 1988:53).

According to Bal (1988:53), the differences between the sequence of events in the story and those found in real life may be referred to as chronological deviations or anachronies. These are found in most modern novels as well as in short stories. Events that are presented in the form of substantial anachronies may be situated either in the past (retroversion) or in allusions to the future (anticipation). Furthermore, narrative anachrony may also occur in the form of momentary flashbacks (or instances of retroversion), or by cases of flashforward or anticipation.

In modern narrative texts, there is a particular relationship between the sequence of events as found in the story and their chronological order in the real world. The extent to which the chronology of events is amended, will be determined by the complexity of the narrative material, as well as by the specific effects the narrator wishes to achieve in the presentation of the story. According to Bal (1988:52), the aim of this strategy could be to encourage the reader to read more intensively. Amendment of the narrative sequence is a means towards drawing attention to certain things, to emphasise and to bring about certain aesthetic or psychological effects.

In the short story as in the case of other narrative forms, the events may either be presented chronologically or non-chronologically. Short stories are often told out of chronological order, starting with an event that happened chronologically, in the middle of the action, then flashing back to explain how the character ended up in that situation. The story: "A Christmas Carol" shows this well—it starts in the "present day" of Ebenezer Scrooge, explaining what he is like and starting the events of the story in motion; then it takes him back to his own past so he (and we) can see why he ended up as he did in the present

[http://www.holmdel.k12.nj.us/schools/satz/eng_dept/Elements%20of%](http://www.holmdel.k12.nj.us/schools/satz/eng_dept/Elements%20of%20) (Accessed on 2013/08/20).

It is clear that most of the short stories under discussion are narrated chronologically. In these stories the events commence at a particular point in time, from where they progress chronologically through time, towards the conclusion. In the story “Lowu Mvulo” (Sayedwa, in Magona, 2007) for instance, the narration commences where the school day begins with assembly and prayers. The school principal addresses the learners, warning them about dangers of alcohol and drugs. He tells them about the recent incident where one of the school learners was found dead and empty bottles of liquor were seen next to the deceased. Learners are shocked. They are told to go to their classes but some decide to go to councillors that are in one of the classrooms.

Similarly, in the story “Inguquko” (Yekela, 1997) the events commence with an introduction to the town of Ventersdorp where Jan van der Westhuizen was born. He grew up in an environment that hates black people. The white people of Ventersdorp had a belief that the authority they have over black people was given to them by God. Working at Telkom in Germiston, Jan does not want to rub shoulders with blacks that also work there. But, after some time Jan’s attitude towards black people changed, such that he married a black woman. These events are all related in their original, chronological order.

There is a clear tendency towards the chronological presentation of events in the stories under discussion. There is a reluctance to deviate from this method of narration and to change the order of events in accordance with the requirements of the specific story. It would have been quite interesting for the reader if the authors had followed different narrative strategies with regard to the designing of the time sequence of their stories. In the story “Intlekele yaseBhisho” (Bongela, 1998) for instance, the author could have experimented more effectively with the time sequence. The story could have commenced with the scene where the marchers enter the Bhisho stadium. They are confronted by the homeland security forces and a number of them are shot and killed, whilst the others are seriously wounded. Having presented this dramatic opening scene, the author could then have reversed

the chronology of events by presenting an outline of previous events that gave rise to this tragic massacre. This could include references to the homeland government of L.L. Sebe and the coup by Brigadier Gqozo. This gave rise to the involvement of the tripartite alliance, the converging of protesters at the Victoria Grounds in King William's Town and the march to Bhisho. The normal chronological order could then have been restored with the description of the outcome of the Bhisho massacre. By following this strategy Bongela (1998) could also have succeeded in capturing the interest of the reader from the outset. The reader would be encouraged to establish what caused this tragic incident, and he/she would be interested to read the story up to the end. Bongela could have proved himself to be a skilled author who is prepared to experiment with the time sequence of his narration, in order to awaken and stimulate the interest and the imagination of the reader.

5.6.2 Selection

Phillips (1974:37) writes:

Details, episodes and incidents that have no bearing on the direct line of movement of the story in hand, no matter how much we may cherish them, or how beautiful and effective they may be in themselves, ruthlessly must be thrown aside.

By selection of facts is meant the inclusion of only those facts that seem more useful for the particular purpose of the story. The writer cannot include all the facts that form part of a specific situation. Selection of facts plays an even more important role in the short story in that it provides vividness and significance to the story. In agreement Perrine (1978:47) states:

There must be nothing in the story that is irrelevant, that does not contribute to the total meaning, nothing that is there only for its own sake or its own excitement.

Brooks and Warren (1979:35) concur with Perrine on the function of selection, by saying:

The vivid detail that catches the imagination helps to create the special quality, the 'feel' of a story, and this 'feel', this atmosphere is an element of the meaning.

It is therefore important for the writer to select the details that he thinks are important, relevant and suggestive since an action involves an infinite mass of detailed characteristics of events in the real world. Notestein (1974:51) claims that selection is even more important in the short story plot, since it differs from that of larger narrative forms. The plot of the short story is marked by briefness and compactness. Careful selection, therefore, is required. Bound by one of the essentials of a short story, namely "condensation" the writer has no alternative but to select only the most relevant events, making his work more effective and enabling him to achieve the most by means of the least: "umbhali esebenzisa isixhobo esiluqulunganiso lwezinto ezininzi kumazwi ambalwa" (Satyo, 1989:242). (...the author using the system of condensation by referring to many things with few words).

The six authors in all the selected anthologies of the short stories maintained the principle of selectivity quite strictly, omitting most of the redundant facts. In the story, "ICwengile Junior Secondary School" (Dudumashe–Luthango, 1998), the central character is Cwenga who serves as principal. The conflict is mainly between the principal and the learners. In this story we find the depiction of one specific situation and one central character, Cwenga in the school, which means that the features of the short story are largely adhered to. The author, also, does not go into the detail of the situation in the story. For instance, he presents one real conflict between Cwenga and the students. The conflict arises from the fact that the students want an SRC to be elected at the school.

Nguna (1997:96) states that there are shorter short stories as well as longer short stories. This also applies to the short stories under discussion in this study. The average length of the stories in the six selected anthologies is six pages. Length, however, should not be regarded as the only valid literary criterion. Some short

stories might be shorter in length whilst others might be longer. There are, therefore, generally shorter stories and longer short stories. Dudumashe-Luthango's stories tend to be shorter than six pages, for instance, the story "Ubufazi Ubufazi" has five pages and "ICwengile Junious Secondary School" has also five pages, whilst Mtuze and Yekela have written longer stories. Their stories are longer than six pages, for instance: "Loo Mhla zibuyayo" (Mtuze, 2003) has ten pages, "Umthathi uyawuzala umlotha" (Yekela, 1997) also has 10 pages. This shows that an author such as Dudumashe-Luthango is more selective in her presentation of facts, whilst authors such as Mtuze and Yekela are less selective than other authors studied here. All these stories are however, successful in their own, unique manner.

5.6.3 Tension and suspense

In the short story the events should not only be linked together logically but should also be linked together on the basis of rising tension and suspense. This is one of the main factors which keep the reader involved and interested in the events which unfold in front of him. In the story the sequence of events should be conceivable. The only way to obtain tension in a story is for the writer to deal with one issue throughout from beginning to end and not to narrate several unrelated incidents in one story (Mtuze, 1986:83). Shipley (1970:331) confirms this idea by describing tension as:

Strain, excitement or suspense, caused by a movement in many poems, novels, and perhaps all plays: an initial promise and expectancy, the inception of action followed by acceleration (with keyed-up anticipation) until the resolution or consummation, and a decline or 'cadential finish.'

The reader is, therefore, kept in a state of expectancy and anticipation or doubt. The movement that Shipley writes about is the growing conflict between the opposing characters or forces which results in or causes tension and suspense in the plot of the story. Interest is built up through this rising conflict or complication of the conflict. Conflict means a clash of ideas and it suggests opposition. Perrine (1978:42) states that conflict may be between two individuals or between an individual and society or within an individual himself/herself. Conflict is usually characterised by a clash of

interests. In the story “Icwengile Junior Secondary School” (Dudumashe-Luthango 1998: 17) for instance, the unexpected arrival of the students in the morning demanding the school keys from Cwenga creates a tense atmosphere. The tension grows when students lock him up in his office, shouting, “We are not yet finished.” The nature of the conflict is clearly observable in the following excerpt:

Zithe zifika ezinye iititshala labe ihashe
likatitshal’ omkhulu lithe zinzi phantsi
lifestile zaziphelile. Ingoma yayisavutha
njengezolo kodwa namhlanje
yayahlukile isithi: “Halala ngoCosas!
phantsi ngoCwenga!” (p.17)

On arrival of the other teachers, the principal’s car was seen to be lying down on its chassis. School windows were broken and the song was still as aggressive as the day before but today it was different because it went: “Up with Cosas! Down with Cwenga!”

It becomes clear that the tension is reaching boiling-point as neither of the parties is prepared to yield to the demands of the other. It is evident that in this story Dudumashe-Luthango achieved a successful degree of growing tension and suspense. Other stories where this is also achieved are “Ubufazi! Ubufazi!” (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998), “Amakhwenkwe” (Duka, 2003) and “Sifike kweny’indawo” (Sayedwa in Magona, 2007).

In some stories the conflict is of a physical, external nature. In other stories however, the conflict is not visible externally. It consists out of an inner, mental or spiritual clash between two parties. In the story, “Amakhwenkwe,” (Duka, 2003) the final confrontation between the naughty boys and the congregation is introduced by a physical confrontation that is initiated by the boys. The author describes the situation as follows:

Akubangakho bani uchola igosa elibe liwe
isiduli. Yaba sisijwili iyimbondembonde, abanemitsi ngeefestile, yangumntu enyathela ole-leyo. Ophume phandle acele kwabasi-catyana. (p.28)

There was nobody to pick up the elder, who had collapsed, people were crying, some running towards the windows and people falling upon other people. The ones who managed to get outside ran as fast as they could.

This situation now becomes non-violent where he (the preacher) continues undisturbed with his sermon as follows:

Ngelo xesha loqulukubhode umfundisi Dela, umile uyashumayela ecela ibandla lingankwentyiswa ngamagunya obumnyama, wabe yena umntu esithi, "Oohili" omnye athi "Imikholonjane" Umfundisi yena esithi, "Usana luzalelwa loyise onke amagunya obumnyama nooSathana aba bageza endlwini yeNkosi."
(p.28)

Reverend Dela remained preaching asking the congregation not to feel threatened by the forces of darkness, one person saying "devils" another one "ghost" The pastor kept on saying the child is born to fight all the authorities of darkness including the ones you see disturbing in the house of God.

The naughty boys are moved by Dela's sermon, such that their leader Hlazo became converted instantly and other followed his example. In the excerpt above Duka depicts no physical clash between the youth and the church elders. The final confrontation is of a non-physical nature. Reverend Dela just preached and the naughty boys are converted to Christianity. Moral victory is achieved rather than physical victory. The conflict is presented in a more sophisticated manner. There is no physical clash. The clash is between the boys of Gubevu and the word of God, where Hlazo the leader of the naughty boys, is converted.

There are other stories where the conflict is not developed satisfactorily. There are at least two stories that were found not to have a well developed pattern of tension and conflict. (Dudumashe-Luthango, 1998)'s short story "Umhla we 10 KuCanzibe ngowe-1994", is more of a sketch than a short story. There is no definite clash. It is just a vivid and clear description of events during the ceremonial transition to

democracy in South Africa in 1994 (see also the discussion of this in paragraph 5.5.3).

In the second story “Sifike kweny’indawo” (Merile in Magona 2007) conflict is between man and the state. The state is oppressing and suppressing people, but the tension never reaches boiling point and there is no final clash. Blacks are simply portrayed as people who were harmless during that era, whilst this is not a true reflection of the status quo. There were many uprisings in the Western Cape townships during the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the main structural patterns found in the chosen short stories in the six selected anthologies in order to determine how events and incidents of everyday life are dynamically intensified and developed into successful plot structures.

This chapter was introduced with a theoretical discussion on the plot of the short story. A definition of the term “plot” was provided and the unique features of the plot of the short story were identified and discussed. It was mentioned that the short story is a genre that has specific requirements. These requirements are firmly based on the principles of economy, brevity and compression. This means that there is no room in this genre for the presentation of too much details or lengthy description.

The macro structure, also known as the external structure, is composed of different phases, namely, exposition, rising action, climax and denouement or ending. In the exposition phase, the six authors of the selected anthologies have generally been successful in introducing the time and place of the action, and the characters involved in it, as well as the cause and suggestive lines of conflict. Situations are realistically presented through the use of settings and backgrounds commonly known to the reader. In these stories rural settings as well as urban settings are depicted. It was found that an author such as Yekela is particularly versatile, since he is able to depict both of these background categories with equal success. It was however; also found that the stories under discussion do not reflect the full spectrum

of South African life adequately enough. Stories which for instance, are set against the background of the health sector (hospitals, medical surgeries, clinics, etc.), political sector (the legislature, government departments, correctional services etc.) as well as commercial farming sector (Land question, inadequate provision of grants or subsidies and working conditions of farm labourers) could not be found amongst those that were analysed for the purpose of this study. Apart from these deficiencies, the authors have been able to indicate in the exposition what type of story one should expect, thus ensuring the reader's interest in the development of the events. The exposition is generally clearly and effectively presented.

The selected short stories generally reflect a definite pattern of rising action and escalating tension. The intensity of both tension and conflict keep the reader in suspense. In some of the stories, however, the conflict is not well developed and re-adjusted. This is often a result of unequally matched conflicting characters in the stories concerned. Except for minor weaknesses such as these, the authors have generally been successful in presenting this second phase. In most of these stories, an effective climax resulting in the experiencing of an emotional shock on the part of the reader has been successfully presented. In general, in the six selected anthologies the climax was presented satisfactorily, convincingly and as near to the end as possible. The narrative leaves the reader with a sense of completeness when he/she reaches the end because there are no loose ends. The ending of the chosen stories from the six selected anthologies are presented quite successfully and effectively. There is a marked variation in the way these stories come to an end. Authors employ various techniques in creating the ending. For instance, some stories end happily whilst others end unhappily, thereby illuminating life and helping the reader to see more deeply into it. In some stories there is an absence of a formal ending because the reader is left satisfied by the climax which restores the equilibrium of the events. What is most impressive about the chosen stories' endings is that they generally leave the reader with a single unified impression.

Since a short story is a unique genre, the basic requirements pertaining to the micro structure were discussed comprehensively. It was pointed out that the short story needs careful selection of all its parts because of its conciseness and compactness. Short stories rarely have complex plots and therefore, a single series of events

which are causally related to one another should be presented and the author should remain with it throughout, employing only the relevant facts. The principle of selectivity is quite satisfactorily employed and maintained in the selected stories whilst redundancy is largely avoided. Mostly the authors of the chosen stories adhere strictly to the law of causality, thereby developing the story in an interesting fashion to a logical conclusion.

The authors in the six chosen anthologies have observed the principle of brevity, economy, unity, and conciseness in their stories. In most of their stories the authors have used the “dive-in” technique. This system of pruning away every non-essential word or phrase and driving straight for the story climax with all possible economic means, represents the essential aim of the short story.

The authors in the six chosen anthologies have mostly adhered to the strict selection of relevant events. In these stories there is only one theme, single unified plot and no sub-plots. A reader generally only notices two or three characters in the stories, the aim being to maintain economy and brevity. In the story, “UGalatyan’ Utyebile” (Mtuzze, 2003) for instance, there is only one theme, namely “iintlondi (delinquent behaviour) yamakhwenkwe” and no sub-plots. Similarly, in the story “UZenzile” (Duka, 2003) there are only two main characters, Zenzile and Magaba, so as to maintain economy and compression.

In conclusion it may be stated that the short stories in the six chosen anthologies possess the required degree of richness and conciseness. The writers of these stories have succeeded in expressing much in few words and the overall structural design of these stories is satisfactory.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to make a critical analysis of the modern Xhosa short story. During the course of the investigation the basic elements of the short story were analysed, including narrative style, plot structure, theme and characterisation.

The rationale for this study was based upon recognition of the fact that the short story is a genre that is frequently read by modern readers. This is done due to the shortness and compactness of this form of narrative. Furthermore, the rationale for this study arises from recognition of the fact that the existing studies on the Xhosa short story are rather outdated, with the most recent one having been completed as long as 16 years ago. Therefore, there was an urgent need for a critical analysis of those stories that were published subsequent to the completion of these studies.

The methodology of this study consisted out of, firstly a thorough analysis and understanding of the most important theoretical considerations upon which the short story is based. The resources that are kept by various academic libraries in this region as well as by NAHECS at the University of Fort Hare, were consulted for this purpose. This study focused on the Xhosa short story texts that were published from the mid-1990s up to the time of the commencement of this study. Since it was not possible to analyse all the short story collections that were published during this era, only six of the collections that are regarded as the most representative of this era, were identified and analysed. The respective authors were interviewed where possible and short biographies were provided on each of them.

This last chapter therefore, contains observations and suggestions drawn from the entire study, such as the critical reviews and generalisations that prompted the researcher to undertake this study.

In the first chapter of this study, the aim was identified and the methodology that would be followed in the pursuance of the objectives of the study was explained.

Biographical information on the relevant authors was provided. This included information on their personal backgrounds, as well as information on their contributions to Xhosa literature. Finally, this chapter provided information on the various short story collections that were studied. This includes information on the general content of each collection.

Chapter 2 of this study consists out of a theoretical analysis of the literary features of the short story. A definition of this literary genre, as provided by well-known critics such as Mpahlele, Satyo, May etc. was provided. It was found that the short story is based upon traditional narratives that existed in most societies over a period of thousands of years. However, the short story in its modern form only emerged during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The features of the modern short story were discussed. It was found that the short story is based upon the principles of brevity, economy and compression. It is these principles that distinguish the short story from other literary genres and which provide it with its unique literary form.

The history of the modern Xhosa short story was also provided in this chapter. This section was introduced with some brief remarks on the manner in which the modern form emerged from traditional Xhosa narratives. The contributions of authors such as Soga, during the 19th century as well as those of Gqoba and Rubusana during the early 20th century received brief attention. Collections that appeared later in the century such as those of Mtuze and Siwisa were also mentioned. In a subsequent section the basic literary features of the modern Xhosa short story were identified and discussed. This discussion was based on the findings of scholars such as Botha (1978), Sotashe (1979) and Mtuze (1986). Mtuze refers in particular to the importance of stylistic methods applied by the Xhosa short story writers such as the metaphor, simile, personification, etc. Sotashe (1979) pays attention to aspects such as plot, character, theme, etc. He comes to the conclusion that Xhosa short stories have their roots firmly in folklore and other forms of early narratives.

This chapter was concluded with a brief discussion on the criteria that should be used in the evaluation of African literature. It was found that African literature has its roots in the African cultural tradition. At the same time however, African literature also possesses features that are of a universal literary nature. Both African and

universal techniques should therefore be used for the evaluation of African literary texts.

The various themes that are found in the stories under discussion were identified and discussed in Chapter 3. The aim of this chapter was to analyse the views of the respective authors with regard to reigning socio-economic conditions in the new South Africa. This chapter therefore analysed the role of the author as a social commentator. The chapter was introduced with a discussion on the role of theme in the short story. The views of Madamombe and others were alluded to. It was made clear that the modern South African authors have a duty and responsibility to pass comments on matters affecting society in their stories. In the past, authors such as Sinxo and Mqhayi have responded favourably to this challenge by dealing with pertinent social issues in their work.

It is clear that authors such as Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) Duka (2003) and Mtuze (2003) have engaged themselves to a certain extent with the social challenges that are found in the new South Africa. Dudumashe-Luthango (1998) writes about moral degeneration in the new South African school system and the reluctance of learners to submit themselves to the authority of teachers and parents. This conduct on the part of the learners is based upon a distorted view of the concept of democracy. The events portrayed in this short story therefore are indicative of reigning circumstances in the new South Africa.

An author such as Duka (2003) exposes the phenomenon of teenagers who are forced to stay with their grandparents due to unstable marriages or divorce. This often leads to moral degeneration among the youth which in the end affects all of the society. The extremely high crime levels which are currently experienced in South Africa (this country has the largest jail population in Africa) may be attributed to the multiplicity of unstable marriages in the country. Duka (2003) therefore succeeds in addressing the matter of the escalation of crime in the new South Africa in a most pertinent manner in this story.

The rebellious behaviour of the youth in South African society is reflected accurately in the work of Mtuze (2003). Mtuze shows how the youth often toy-toy in the villages

without any fear of arrestation by the police. The behaviour of the unruly and undisciplined youth in the new South Africa is marked by incidents such as theft and robbery. The author also wishes to identify another challenge, namely the general leniency of the South African police towards criminals. It seems as if there is a lack of political will to control the unruly masses. It is clear that citizens of the country are not adequately protected. Other social challenges such as liquor abuse as well as the smoking of dagga are also depicted in the stories of Yekela (1997) and Magona (2007).

In some of the stories under discussion, certain positive aspects of the new South African society are however, also depicted. The focus is not solely on the negative aspects of the new South Africa. There is reconciliation between blacks and whites. Some of the authors clearly show in their stories that after 1994, positive atmosphere and healthy relationships between the citizens of South Africa prevailed. Even in towns like Ventersdorp in the former Transvaal harmony and peace prevails.

In spite of the positive aspects referred to above, it is clear that the authors under discussion do not involve themselves adequately enough with social conditions in the new South Africa. Areas that are not satisfactorily addressed in the stories under discussion include corruption, education, the land issue and housing. The authors have failed to expose corruption in government in areas such as embezzlement of state funds and awarding tenders to friends (nepotism). It would be better if the authors had illustrated how those found guilty of corruption are often not punished or removed from government offices. The authors have also lacked depth in addressing the state of affairs in education, such as poor grade12 results and lack of facilities and equipment. Most learners in public schools are unable to read and write satisfactorily. Many schools have neither libraries nor laboratories. In the rural Eastern Cape Province there are still schools consisting out of mud structures. Learners learn under appalling conditions. In order to improve the situation, the government should provide funding for establishment or erection of proper school buildings. These pressing issues are not dealt with adequately by the authors under discussion.

The stylistic devices that were employed by the various authors were explored in Chapter 4. This chapter was introduced with a theoretical discussion on the concept of style. A definition of the concept was provided and the role that is assigned to language as the primary medium of the literary text was explained. It was argued that the author has the right to choose his/her own words to express his/her feelings. Style therefore is a revelation of an author's personality or of his/her uniqueness.

It was also argued that the short story has specific stylistic features that differentiate it from other literary genres. The language of the short story is based upon the principle of word economy. This necessitates the use of stylistic devices such as idioms, proverbs and ideophones that generally encourage economy.

The various figures of speech that are found in the short story were also discussed. This includes repetition, interjection, simile, etc. The stylistic features of the short stories under discussion were evaluated in this chapter. It was found that the various figures of speech play an important role in the stories under discussion. This applies in particular to figures of speech such as the interjection and repetition. In some instances it could be observed how two different figures of speech are used in combination with each other in order to achieve a particular effect. The ideophone plays an important role in the work of Duka, whilst an author such as Yekela often makes use of figures of speech to formulate the titles of his stories. It is clear that the stories under discussion are of good stylistic quality and the various figures of speech have been used in such a manner that they contribute to the economy and brevity of the stories under discussion.

The structural patterns of the stories under discussion were analysed and discussed in Chapter 5. The discussion was introduced with a definition of the concept of plot. It was found that the plot represents the meaningful restructuring of the narrative material in order to achieve a particular effect. It was argued that the plot of the story consists of the two main elements, namely the macro structure and the micro-structure. The macro structure consists of four units, namely exposition, rising action, climax and denouement.

The analysis of the stories under discussion shows that the exposition phase of most stories is constructed satisfactorily. The reader is introduced to the background of the story as well as the characters that are involved. In some of the stories however, the background has not been depicted satisfactorily and the reader fails to form a clear picture in his/her mind of the background. The full spectrum of South African life is also not reflected satisfactorily in these stories. Environments such as the health sector, political sector and commercial farming sector received little attention in these stories.

An author such as Yekela introduces one of his stories in a creative manner by means of a protest song. This song sets the tone effectively for the events that are to follow. The exposition phase of other stories however, is less successful. In these stories it is not clear from the outset what it is going to be about. The climax phase of most of the stories is presented satisfactorily. In some of the stories however, the events do not lead up to a climax. This includes Dudumashe Luthango's (1994) "Umhla we-10 Canzibe" which may be regarded as a sketch rather than a short story. The endings of most stories are satisfactory and in some stories the end coincides with the climax of the story, thereby contributing to the unity and economy of the story.

The second element of the plot structure that was discussed here is the micro-structure. It was found that this element consists of three sub-elements, namely sequence, selection, tension and suspense. Most of the stories under discussion are presented chronologically and there seems to be limited experimentation with the time sequence. In most of the stories under discussion however, the principle of selection has been adhered to quite satisfactorily. Only the most important events are selected for inclusion into the story. Authors such as Mtuze and Yekela are however less selective than the others.

In the stories under discussion, the conflict is generally caused by a clash of interest between the parties involved. In some of the stories these clashes are between school learners and teachers, whilst others are between husband and wife. In some stories however conflict and suspense is not developed well enough since there are no clearly defined opposing parties in the story.

The aim of this study was to make a critical analysis of a number of Xhosa short stories that were published shortly before the commencement of this study, as at the end of the previous millennium and the commencement of the current one. The objective was to determine whether there has been sufficient growth and development in this sector of Xhosa literature since the advent of the new South Africa in 1994. The rationale was that authors are now in terms of the new democracy, free to write about topics of their choice.

These authors are also free and at liberty to present their stories in the manner they wish to present them. In some areas there has been positive growth and development. This applies *inter alia* to the style of the stories that were analysed. Most of the authors have shown that they have in-depth knowledge of the Xhosa language and they are able to apply the idioms of the language effectively in their stories. Other areas of strength include the exposition phase of these stories and the manner in which the reader is drawn into the reading of the story from the outset. The titles of the various collections as well as those of the individual stories are well formulated. This means that the reader is encouraged to purchase these collections and to read the stories.

The stories under discussion do however, also show some definite weaknesses. There has not been enough progress with regard to the literary quality of the stories since the advent of democracy in 1994. The authors have not made adequate use of opportunities that were granted to them under the new dispensation. Thematically, these authors have not succeeded to explore the full spectrum of South African life. Serious health issues such as the HIV/AIDS scourge were for instance, not dealt with at all. Other important questions such as corruption and legalisation of abortion were also not explored by authors. This topic (abortion) was experimented with by an author such as Peteni in his novel "KwaZidenge" back in the 1960's, but these modern authors have failed to follow up on this important work that was done by one of their predecessors. Finally, other important issues such as the Gay debate and homophobia as well as xenophobia were not touched upon either in these stories.

It is evident that there is a need for effective literary training programmes that need to be provided to budding Xhosa writers. The important work that is being done by a

recognised author such as Sindiwe Magona in the Western Cape with regard to the training of young authors is acknowledged with appreciation, but much more still needs to be done to ensure that good authors are produced.

Various measures could be put in place to achieve this goal. The involvement of universities in the form of community outreach programmes that are aimed at the training of prospective authors should be encouraged. In this regard the Bhala Writers' Skills workshop which was established at the University of Fort Hare a few years ago is a good example. In the formal sector, government involvement through the relevant national and provincial departments could also play an important role in the training of future authors.

The private sector could also make a significant contribution in this regard. The leading publishing houses could arrange creative writing workshops where both teachers and learners could be capacitated to become successful authors.

Finally, the role of literary prizes and awards in the encouragement and development of literary excellence should not be underestimated. An example of this is the well-known South African author J.M. Coetzee, who recently received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of the outstanding quality of his creative work. This award has encouraged young South Africans to consider a career as the authors of literary texts. The introduction of a set of local awards aimed specifically at the recognition of the contributions of emerging writers in Xhosa, should be considered. Literary prizes and awards could be established in recognition of the production of good literary texts. This will encourage budding authors to produce manuscripts for submission to the publishers.

The government could also do more to encourage a culture of writing and reading in the country. Reading is the foundation of knowledge in any society. The government could strengthen this culture of writing and reading through the abolishment of VAT on books that are sold in bookshops. This will result in a reduction of 14% in the price of books, which will contribute towards a more vibrant book market that will encourage Xhosa writers to produce literature of a good quality.

The government could also improve public access to books in libraries by increasing the funds that are budgeted for libraries on an annual basis. The majority of Xhosa-speaking people are financially disadvantaged. They are not in a position to purchase their own books or newspapers. These people are highly reliant on the services provided by public libraries. The provision of effective library services is therefore of utmost importance for the growth and stimulation of a reading culture in Xhosa society.

The researcher trusts that this study will pose a challenge to new writers to make a substantive, in-depth depiction of socio-political tendencies in the modern South Africa dispensation.

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1962 "Amabali angemigudu" (L. K. Siwisa)	Cape Town: Via Afrika
1964 "Isitiya" (G.B. Sinxo)	Lovedale: Lovedale Press
1971 "Isiphetho sombulali kukufa..." (H.N. Yako)	Cape Town: Via Afrika
1973 "Apha naphaya" (D. M. Jongilanga)	Cape Town: Via Afrika
1974 "Kwezo Mpindo ZeTsitsa" (A.C. Jordan)	Lovedale: Lovedale Press
1975 "Izimanga zalomhlaba" (L.K. Siwisa)	Cape Town: Via Afrika
1977 "Amathol'eendaba" (P.T. Mtuze)	Johannesburg: Educum
1980 "Khawufan'ucinge" (G.S. Budaza)	Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
1982 "Umhlinzeko" (K.S. Bongela)	Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
1982 "Ingwe emabalabala" (G.S. Buzana)	Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
1982 "Intsengwanekazi" (L.S. Ngcangata)	Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman
1983 "Ngxatsho ke Lawundini" (T.A. Ndungane)	Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
1984 "Umphehlulu" (P.T. Mtuze)	Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman
1984 "He! He! Ndiyeva Lawundini" (H.N. Mjamba)	Pretoria: De Jager and Haum

- 1985** "Inxili" (K.S. Bongela) Pretoria: De Jager and Haum
- 1986** "Lo mhlaba uyajikeleza" (D.M. Lupawana) Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman
- 1989** "Amahla-ndinyuka" (M.V. Mabusela) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
- 1989** "UMakhwekhwetha" (R. Mcimeli) Johannesburg: Educum
- 1990** "Sh-s-sh-h Ungakhe uxelele mntu" (P.T. Mtuze) Johannesburg Skotaville
- 1990** "Yivani ezi Ndaba (Yivani Bantu nonke)" (S.C. Satyo) Cape Town Viaeberg
- 1990** "Amabalana amafutshane neentsonyana zamaXhosa" (J.S. Zeka) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter
- 1991** "Imiba yobomi" (M.V. Mabusela) Pietermaritzburg: Reach out Publications
- 1992** "Ndibuzeni amatyala" (E.M.Mbobo) Pietermaritzburg: Reach out Publications
- 1993** "Bunjani ubomi" (L.S. Ngcangata) Umtata: Shuter & Shooter
- 1993** "Kuphel'isizungu" (L.S. Ngcangata) Umtata: Shuter & Shooter
- 1995** "Amaqabaza eNgxwengxa" (B.B.Mkonto) Alice: Lovedale Press
- 1995** "Uzungatsho" (W.N. Mbovane) Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- 1997** "Ndiboleke indlebe" (M.Yekela) Pretoria: Via Afrika
- 1998** "Iimbali zikaMpahleni" (K.S. Bongela) Cape Town: Afro Publishers.
- 1998** "Ngapha Komkhusane"(N.P. Dudumashe-Luthango) Cape Town: Afro Publishers.
- 2003** "Loo mhla Zibuyayo" (P.T. Mtuze) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter.
- 2003** "Ubusi" (M.M.M. Duka) Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter.
- 2007** "Umthi Ngamnye Unentlaka Yawo" (S. Magona) Athlone Industria 1: L.P. Printers.