



CENTRE FOR COMMUNICATION,
MEDIA AND SOCIETY

**Examining the Construction of [Lead] Female Characters in South African
Soap Opera: A Case Study of *Uzalo***

Special Topics CCMS770

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Plagiarism Declaration

I, Shannon Landers, declare that the work presented in this assignment is my own, and that any work done by other persons has been duly acknowledged.

Shannon Landers

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Acknowledgements

This project is dedicated to my loving parents who have been my anchor during this time-thank you. To my supervisor, Professor Ruth Teer-Tomaselli, your input has been invaluable. I am grateful for your constant encouragement and confidence in me.

Abstract

Soap operas have been described as modern myths through which meaning is inscribed. Just like the role of folktales and pictography, previously, the soap opera genre has managed to propagate ideologies as unquestionable facts through its mundane portrayal of the everyday world, therein lies the danger because such depictions have the ability to influence social relations which can characterise women as being inferior to men.

Extensive studies have been undertaken on the genre. The most popular work pertains to soap opera's construction of femininity against the backdrop of male hegemony. It is only through deconstructing the oppositions located in narratives, that it becomes possible to identify the underlying tensions.

This research project examines the construction of the two lead female characters in *Uzalo* (a popular South African soap opera). The aim was to establish whether the two characters conform to, or challenge hegemony in their characterisations. By employing structuralist narrative theory, the project reviewed the function of the character types, in relation to the action, in order to elucidate the ideological implications of this.

Key terms: Soap opera, patriarchy, hegemony, *Uzalo*.

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Introduction

The soap opera is a very popular genre which rose to prominence in the 1930s and 1940s as serialised domestic radio dramas for female – housewife -- audiences in the United States of America (Ahmed, 2012). It has metamorphosed into a widely consumed genre, with a multiplicity of interpretations to suit diverse audiences worldwide. According to Aaliya Ahmed (2012: 1), soap operas can be divided into two narrative types: ‘open’ and ‘closed’. The former refers to narratives with continuous and unresolved plots (‘soap operas’) while the latter refers to narratives that eventually close (‘telenovelas’).

Although the genre has a large female appeal, it has been criticised by feminist theorist Laura Mulvey (1981) for creating a world for [of] women which still largely propagates predominant patriarchal ideologies, as discourses embedded in most soap operas construct female characters as subordinates to their male counterparts. In spite of the genre being female based, it is assumed that it keeps women in their place (Brown, 1994: 7). This begs the question of whether strong female storylines challenge hegemonic power structures, or conform to them. This question is rooted in the notion of tradition which seeks to naturalise dominant patriarchal discourses on gender roles (Rivkin and Ryan, 2004: 90).

Female roles in South African soap opera are often developed within heteronormative discourses creating oppressive binaries where the role of a woman is in subordination to men (Neophytou, 2012: 2). Almost all female storylines are situated around their male counterparts with very little attention given to their internal struggles (Modleski, 1979). This is particularly true in the television ‘telenovela’, *Uzalo*, where the construction of the two lead female characters, MaNgobo (played by Dawn King) and MaNzuza (played by Leleti Khumalo), is rooted in the existence of the male figures in their lives.

This research project aims to elucidate whether the female-centred ‘soap opera’ genre challenges discourses on male hegemony¹ through the character construction of the two lead characters, MaNgobo and MaNzuza, in the television programme, *Uzalo*. It must be noted that, although *Uzalo* is described as a ‘telenovela,’ in the synopsis of the programme (SABC

¹ Hegemony- in this context- not only includes cultural and ideological control through the propagation of dominant beliefs and ideas, but extends to the entire lived experience of an individual, permeating all levels of consciousness. It is at this point that beliefs and ideas manifest as unquestioned facts in society which is presented as common sense (Brown, 1994: 3-4).

1 website, 2015). This project will situate *Uzalo* as soap opera because it conforms to the codes and conventions of this format which will be illustrated in the literature review.

Background to the Study

Earlier soap operas, such as *As the World Turns* situated men as active subjects while females were reduced to passive spectacles (Parry, 1991: 108-109); this was further accentuated through the overtly patriarchal order, placing females as the 'other' in society. Through this social order, women were constantly viewed as subordinates to males. Soap opera texts were no different; they encouraged this one-dimensional disposition of females through the *mis-en-scene*, portraying women in the domestic setting and verbal text where central discourses revolved around domestic (paternalistic) issues and gossip. This promulgated two important ideologies, consumerism and patriarchy² which are both deeply rooted in the capitalist system (Brown, 1994; Modleski, 1979).

As the 'soap opera' format has evolved, the characterisation of females has become more nuanced. There are extended constructions of female characters as independent and empowered figures, being in control of their sexuality and an increased portrayal of single mothers, among others; this is linked with efforts to showcase social realism, as opposed to escapist entertainment (Brunsdon, 1995). Female roles have thus become complex enough to exist without central male characters. In spite of this progression, female characterisation is still modelled along patriarchal discourses. For example, recycled relationships, evident in most serials including soap operas, asserts the view that women are incomplete without men (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003).

Additionally, female roles are constructed along binary oppositions (good versus evil; submissive versus dominant; attractive versus unattractive) which further perpetuates ideological myths. Patriarchy, in this context, serves a latent function through female characterisation. Therefore, the binary nature of the narrative extends beyond male versus female towards the construction of female oppositions as well where male discourses manage to creep into the text (Modleski, 1979; Acosta-Alzuru, 2003).

This is evident in the television programme, *Uzalo*, (Season Two) where MaNzuza and MaNgobo are characterised by a good versus evil binary which is shaped by their husbands' legacy. Although the patriarchs have been written out of the serial, their influence still exists

² Patriarchy is defined by "a family, group or government controlled by a man or group of men" (Merriam-Webb dictionary) <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/patriarchy>.

through these two figures. This showcases the intrinsic, yet dominant, existence of patriarchal hegemony in serial narratives.

Alternatively, the absence of the two female characters' husbands presents the opportunity for their views to be strengthened due to an increase in screen time, and their prominent role in the household, subverting common assumptions associated with docile feminine constructions. This perception is linked to the thoughts of Charlotte Brundson and Tania Modleski, who contend that, far from being mindless entertainment, soap operas provide a platform for female discourses to emerge through the domestic setting (Geraghty, 2006).

The television programme, *Uzalo*, is a starting point for this shift in narrative discourses, especially in the South African context, where gender roles have become a critical point of discussion in public fora. More important, is the attempt to highlight the challenge of creating a strong feminine voice through institutional and structural conditions which continue to be smothered by patriarchy.

Research Aims and Objectives

Using the literature on soap operas as a starting point, the purpose of the research project is to examine the construction of gender roles and identities in *Uzalo* which -- to a large extent is positioned along patriarchal lines -- in order to understand the latent function of myths and the role they play in perpetuating male hegemony (Allen, 1987: 217). This study was conducted at two levels. The first was to examine the binary between good versus evil in order to see which perspective was more prominent. On a second level, the study attempted to look at the male/female binary to ascertain whether the women are empowered without their husbands, and whether their storylines addressed issues pertinent to them, or people (particularly male characters) around them.

Research Questions

1. Do the lead female characters of *Uzalo* conform or challenge discourses around patriarchy?
2. Does more voice time for lead female characters allow for male hegemony to be challenged or do the females conform to male hegemony, with particular reference to the Zulu culture?
3. Most feminist critique of Soap operas hail from the Western world (North America, Europe and Australia), how do these critiques fair outside this context (in the developing world) where gender relations are different?

Literature Review

We need to take stories seriously: they are our fairytales and our myths, our moral tales, the burning fire of our imagination whose flames... gives warmth to our cold and wretched life (Buonanno, 2008: 71).

Introduction

Soap operas have been referred to as a 'gynocentric' or female-centred genre because of its acute focus on female issues. This has led to debates around whether the format is empowering to females or whether it upholds dominant patriarchal values, with the illusion of giving females a voice (Modleski, 1979; Geraghty, 2006; Brundson, 1995; Kuhn, 1994)

This discussion will focus on the narrative and generic structure of soap operas while examining the function of female characterisation. It is important to note that soap operas have been exported to many different countries. This essay will discuss the most prominent exporters of this format: America, Britain, Australia and the Latin American telenovela. *Uzalo* is a South African programme, defined as a telenovela in its synopsis (SABC one, 2016). This view will be contested in the literature review as it also subscribes to the codes and conventions of the soap opera genre. This will be elaborated further in the discussion.

Narrative and Genre

Narrative and genre play a critical role in the production of film and television programmes, and are inextricably linked. They are quintessential to the plot, and how the action develops within the plot. The narrative is the sequential arrangement of the time and events of a story (Newcomb, 2004: 419). Genre, on the other hand, can be defined as a system of classification of various works, including literature, film and television programmes (Feuer, 1992: 129). Genres are usually categorised by their codes and conventions, and repeated traits, including costumes, lighting and narrative structure (Newcomb, 2004: 423). According to Newcomb (2004: 420) every aspect of television resides within a particular genre, whether it be a sports show or a serial, all television programmes follow some generic structure.

Genre

Beyond the similarities within genres, the form is also praised for its economic value, which in part is due to its predictability and repeated formulaic structure, hence the *guaranteed* support of a niche audience (Newcomb, 2000: 425). This generic structure can be attributed to setting, recurring themes and audience reception (De Anda, 2009: 6). However, the generic structure also has the ability to influence social behaviour because of its popularity (Newcomb, 2000: 425). Therefore, the ideologies espoused in soap operas are more significant than whether it is a male or female genre. (Brown, 1994: 4). In this sense, storylines tend to play an even bigger role in the way audiences engage with content they view, and how they relate it to their own reality.

Two important generic features of soap operas include their domestic settings and their low production costs and romantic themes, although these are not universal. In terms of production, there is an emphasis on the close-up shot of the face; the purpose of this is to capture the emotional tension (Slade and Beckenham, 2005: 6).

Narrative

The serialised multi-narrative structure of soap opera genre breaks away from the classical narrative form where the structure includes a beginning, middle and end. Soap opera plots have no ending. Therefore, the conflict is never resolved. Instead, the lack of resolve leads to more action in the plot. Kuhn (1994: 18), writes that the classic soap opera narrative proposes:

Competing and intertwining plot lines introduced as the serial progresses. Each plot develops at a different pace, thus preventing any clear resolution of conflict. The completion of one story generally leads into others, and on-going plots often incorporate parts of semi-resolved conflicts.

This makes the soap opera unique to other genres because the open-ended narrative structure allow it to explore multiple plots and engage with many characters, in a more balanced way than other genres (Brown, 1987). In fact, Modleski (1982) argues that this disruptive, unresolved structure is feminine and can be linked to feminist thought because it creates a platform for female voices to be heard. Furthermore, the allusion to daily experience adds a sense of ‘realness’ to the narrative form (Barbatsis and Guy, 1991: 59).

Although narrative in soap operas is complex, the chain of events still forms a consequential sequence in which meaning is produced. This can be understood in terms of Vladimir Propp’s (1968), conception of syntagmatic narrative structure (Prinsloo, 2009: 216).

History of Soap Opera

The Soap opera originated from American 'daytime dramatic serials' as a genre in the late 1930s. Although the term was often characterised as being less significant to other genres, it has become a very prominent feature in narrative studies and discourse. The 'soap' of 'soap opera' derives from the sponsorship of detergent companies to the genre; the format was -- and still is -- driven by advertising needs (Slade and Beckenham, 2005: 337). The use of the word 'opera' is ironic because while 'soap' carries connotations of selling humble commodities, 'opera' is the most elite narrative of all art forms which appeals to an educated elite class, and the soap opera has a broad appeal to "the hardworking housewife", which is perceived to be the antithesis of this claim (Allen, 1985: 9).

Although storylines can include financially empowered female characters, for the most part, engaging personal and domestic crises, tension is created in challenging patriarchal structures such as female roles being indebted to their male counterparts (Brown, 1987). This has often resulted in widespread criticism of the genre, which on one hand has been positioned as a genre for women to address 'women' issues. However, Geraghty (1991: 1-3) argues that the innate presence of male hegemony impedes the ability of soap operas to fully challenge patriarchal dominance. Furthermore, the genre has been criticised for its excessive use of melodrama to which has resulted in critics labelling it as trash[y] entertainment (Brown, 1987).

Soap Operas around the World

American Daytime Soap Opera

American daytime 'soap operas' promoted the ideal nuclear family with the heroic patriarch and the hardworking, caring matriarch. The function of this was to create escapist entertainment, with the intention of marketing products and the *ideal* lifestyle: 'the American dream'. This was propagated by the sponsorship of Procter and Gamble (an American consumer goods company) which injected money into soap operas to market their cleaning detergents (Allen, 1985: 9-11). As the genre progressed, it increasingly produced melodramatic storylines, most prominent, were the recycled romances (*Dynasty*, *Dallas* and *Days of our Lives*, among others). Therefore, although women could be financially empowered in the narrative, their characterisation could only be complete if they were in (heterosexual) relationships (Parry, 1991: 106-107).

Australian Soap Opera

The Australian soap opera *Neighbours* (1980 and 1990s) is similar to the American daytime 'soap opera' in the sense that they portrayed idealistic, conservative white middle-class aspirations; however, the similarities end there. *Neighbours* was widely popular for its obedient characters living together harmoniously, with limited social ills. The uncontested storylines reveal the underlying influence of male hegemony, where uncompromising values associate femininity with being nurturing, good mothers, in heterosexual relationships. *Neighbours* was exported to over 25 countries, showcasing how such narratives have a broad appeal (Crofts, 1995: 99-100).

British Soap Opera

British soap operas, on the other hand, broke away from this model of escapist entertainment in the 1960s, and directed attention towards portraying social realism. This was evident in the British soap operas, *Coronation Street* (1960), *Brookside* (1982) and *EastEnders* (1985) which all focussed on pertinent social and political issues in Britain, such as working class struggles, race, sexuality, health issues. 'Soap operas', in this context, were no longer about individual pleasure (Geraghty, 1995). The producer of *EastEnders* asserted: "we don't [sic] make life, we reflect it" (Geraghty, 1995 67). The fundamental difference between American daytime 'soap opera' and British realist 'soap opera', is that the former depicts an individualist harmonious society, with little friction, while the latter portrays how pertinent issues disrupt social cohesion. Interestingly, the Australian idealistic soap opera, *Neighbours*, tussled with *EastEnders* for the top spot in ratings between 1988 and 1992, proving that unquestioned idealism is a deeply inculcated rhetoric.

Latin American Telenovelas

The 'telenovela' emanates from Mexico (1940s), and was popularised throughout Latin America in the 1970s. The format was established in opposition to the American 'soap opera' as a result of its financial and ideological dominance. However, it has managed to achieve the same level of success through the support of multinational media conglomerates, *Televisa* (Mexico), *TV-Globo* (Brazil) and, internationally, through *Telemundo* (United States) (Lopez, 1995: 256). More fundamentally, 'telenovelas' have had major international success, with local adaptations from countries in the global south, where negotiation of gender identity is along similar lines (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003: 270).

The biggest difference between the 'telenovela' and the 'soap opera' is that 'telenovelas' consist of a finite number of episodes (120-200) with definite narrative closure at the end of a

series. Also, unlike the American daytime ‘soap opera’ (which is seen as second best to film), starring in a ‘telenovela’ is tantamount to reaching the apex of one’s career (Lopez, 1995:258; Acosta-Alzuru, 2003: 270). Another critical element of the telenovela is the portrayal of the Manichean social order, particularly between good and evil where the former is characterised as the heroine who is virtuous and naïve, while the latter is characterised as the villain who is pure evil (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003: 271). Representation of the latter in the Latin American format is usually ascribed to women who subvert traditional gender roles, feminists (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003: 277).

Similar to ‘soap operas’, ‘telenovelas’ rely on melodramatic (heightened sense of the dramatic) storylines with huge emphasis on heterosexual relationships- both romantic and unromantic. Acosta-Alzuru (2003: 270) contests the claim by Modleski (1979) that the soap opera’s style, aesthetic and discourses are feminist thoughts, and therefore, empowering to women. She, instead, states that the ‘telenovela’ is representative of the paternalistic hegemonic gender relations in Latin America. Hegemony, in this context, is rooted in Gramsci’s (1971) definition as: “the production of consensus for cultural practices and ideas that will sustain power relations” (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003: 270). It is therefore important to not conflate the terms feminine and feminist; this differentiation is key because the latter challenges male hegemonic discourses which could be perceived as threatening.

South African Soap Operas

South African soap operas can be argued to be a hybrid of the previously discussed examples. Much like the escapist element of the daytime American soap opera, the South African format has played a significant role in advancing the nation-building project which was spearheaded by the former President, Nelson Mandela, and Arch-Bishop, Desmond Tutu. This has resulted in portrayals of a highly cosmopolitan, ahistorical and, often deracialised, South Africa (Isidingo and 7de Laan). However, the South African soap opera adopts a social realist approach by showcasing characters grappling with social issues such crime, substance abuse, rape and domestic violence, among others (Marx, 2008)

Typical to the construction of femininity in soap operas, internationally, South African texts are usually characterised by family and romantic interests (Marx, 2008: 84). Although female characters can be financially independent, there is still the sense that they can only be complete through romantic affection. Hannelie Marx (2008: 84) references Lee Haynes’ posthumous character in the popular soap opera, *Isidingo*, to illustrate this point. Furthermore, Vanessa Neophytou (2012: 9-10) suggests that femininities are characterised by

heteronormative standards. In her study on gender roles in *Generations*, she found that all character types conformed to heteronormative expectations.

Uzalo

Uzalo is a South African soap opera written by Duma Ndlovu and produced by Gugulethu Zuma-Ncube and Pepsi Pokane. It is aired on SABC 1 Monday through Wednesday, weekly. The programme is located in KwaMashu, a township 32 kilometres north of Durban. The plot situates two contradictory families, the first family is the God-fearing, Mdletshe's, headed by the patriarch and charismatic pastor, Melusi Mdletshe (played by Bheki Mkhwane) and the second family is headed by Muzi Xulu (played by Mpumelelo Bhulose) who is invested in a life of crime. The two families are unknowingly bound together by their sons who were accidentally swapped at birth, this is revealed at the end of Season One (SABC website)³.

The programme is currently in its second season which has introduced significant changes. The most notable is that both patriarchs have been written out of the programme, leaving their wives to take over the lead role. However, the legacy of the men continues to exist because both female characters are shaped by their husband's characteristics, situating the binary through their wives. Secondly, although *Uzalo* is defined as a telenovela, literature suggests otherwise because telenovelas usually end after one season- Season Three of *Uzalo* will be aired in 2017 making a compelling argument for it to be discussed as a soap opera.

It is important when examining gender roles to be conscious of context. *Uzalo* is situated in KwaZulu Natal and has a Zulu-centric focus; therefore, it must be acknowledged that the construction of the characters is located in their social context. It is important to take cognisance of the fact that culture is a critical aspect of identity which varies in different contexts, and therefore when assessing femininities, this needs to be acknowledged (Parry, 1991: 110).

Femininities and Feminism

Discussing male hegemony is difficult without discussing the notion of feminism -- a movement against male dominant power relations -- and femininity -- qualities associated with being female -- however this is a controversial topic because Western discourses around femininity and feminism are presented as 'the golden standard' which marginalises women who do not subscribe to these values. Furthermore, some feminist discourses (radical feminism) purport an essentialist position on gender/sex identity which further increases

³ <http://www.sabc1.co.za/sabc/home/sabc1/shows/details?id=506da553-f3b0-4a0b-9da4-1c0dbcd14acf&title=uzalo>

gender binaries (Hooks, 1982). Careful attention needs to be directed towards conceptions of femininity that reside outside mainstream discourses because femininity is not a homogenous concept. Ndlovu (2008) in '*Zulu Identities: Past and Present*', argues that Zulu femininity is often misrepresented as being docile and submissive in feminist scholarship, yet certain practices include women, such as the regent Queen Mnkabayi kaJama who is included in 'traditional networks of authority'.

Conclusion

The literature produced two contradictory views, the first that soap operas do construct an empowered female through its disruptive narrative structure, binary characters and aesthetic appeal (Modleski, 1979). The second view is that soap operas exist to propel male hegemony through the construction of femininity. Furthermore, literature suggests that there needs to be deeper inquiry into the role of feminist scholarship in tackling issues on female discourses in soap opera as they could also further perpetuate oppressive power structures.

The lead female characters of *Uzalo* have created a platform through which this power dialectic can be explored because for the first time in a South African soap opera two females are leading the narrative without a patriarch.

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Many theorists have contributed to the expansive body of research on narrative texts. The current research will focus specifically on the work of structuralist narrative theorists, Claude Lévi -Strauss (1978) and Vladimir Propp (1928; 1968). It must be acknowledged that Propp's work was premature to the inception of structuralism, although it contributed significantly to structuralist studies of narrative theory (1968). The study also makes use of critical feminist criticism of television.

Narrative Theory

Narratives play an integral role in any material that uses gesture, images and language as a medium to communicate stories. It can be found in a variety of genres, including myth, tragedy and novellas. However, it is often the most taken-for-granted aspect of the television programme because it serves a latent function. In modern history, television has become the principle storyteller (Kozloff, 1987: 67). It has thus become a critical point of study.

According to Sarah Kozloff (cited in Wigston, 1991: 70), in order to understand how television programming works, it is necessary to review it piece by piece. The fact that narratives are complex means that the field can be studied in various ways. Arguably, the most notable contribution has been from the field of structuralism. Scholars such as Vladimir Propp, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes and Tzvetan Todorov have contributed significantly to the field narrative theory through the use of structuralist discourses. Although the latter two theorists have added great value to work on narrative theory, this study will rely on the contribution of Lévi -Strauss and Propp (Wigston, 1991: 70).

Vladimir Propp

The aim of narrative analysis is not to merit how the work is presented, but rather to grid the underlying laws within narrative structure. Just like language has a set of laws through which its application depends, so too do narratives; this was first identified in the Russian Formalist, Vladimir Propp's book *Morphologies of Folktales* which was published in 1928, and later translated to English in 1958. In this book, Propp reported on his study of hundreds of Russian folktales, through which he discovered a sequential structure emerge. He established that although the folktales differed, the structure of the narrative and the character types remained constant (Propp, 1968: 22; Prinsloo, 1992: 69; Dundes, 1997). Propp thus

established the latent laws of narrative structure which he suggested follows a chronological sequence from A to Z which he argued remain uniform all tales (Propp, 1968: 22).

This is understood to be 'syntagmatic' structural analysis which is borrowed from syntax in the study of language, referring to grammatical codes inscribed language. Syntagmatic systems usually follow a sequence which is governed by a meta-system. In the context of narrative, Vladimir Propp asserted that all folktales follow the same syntagmatic sequence, even if they are different. This approach was later adapted in other narrative forms where it was argued that the same law applies (Propp, 1968: xv).

Propp identified 31 narrative story functions which are used to advance the action. These story functions exist in all narratives although they may be applied differently. He also identified seven that archetype characters consisting of the villain, donor or provider, helper, princess, helper, princess, dispatcher, hero or victim and false hero. He, however, disregarded the personal traits (psychological function) of the characters and - instead - focussed on their role as participants in discourse (Prinsloo, 1992: 67). In other words, the characters are located in the action, therefore, their function is moulded by the sequence of events in the narrative (Prinsloo, 2009: 229). This research project will only focus on the character functions and not the story functions, owing to the lack of space,

Claude Lévi -Strauss

Lévi-Strauss, unlike Propp, seeks to understand the pattern that underlies folklorist texts. He achieves this through a 'paradigmatic' analytic schema which he argues exists in binary oppositions (Dundes, 1997: 40). Also, unlike Propp, Lévi-Strauss contended that the linear approach could disrupt the ability to establish the underlying message. Therefore, to approach the study of narratives, he asserted that one has to break away from the formalist tradition, and rather approach texts as one would an orchestra score; making sense out of disorder (Levi-Strauss, 1978: 11-12). He used structural anthropology in *Myth and Meaning* (1978) to explore the role of myths where discussed how myths play an integral role Native American tribes. These myths are often premised on binaries, good/evil, civilised/uncivilised (Lévi-Strauss, 1978: 27).

Lévi-Strauss (1978) was interested in the unquestioning value of mythical beliefs, and how these beliefs become concretised in a society. Furthermore, Lévi-Strauss argued that when readers or audiences are immersed in their reality, they are unable to objectively identify the

function/role of myths because they appear arbitrary. He thus stressed the importance of deconstructing myths in order to understand their latent function (Prinsloo, 2009: 237).

It can be argued that television is a modern purveyor of mythic structures that need to be deconstructed in this way (De Anda, 2009). The purpose of mythical thoughts is always to work from the awareness of opposition towards mediation (Dundes, 1997: 40). The theory of Lévi-Strauss is a useful way of breaking down the 'obvious', the 'everyday' and the opaque, and of recovering the mythical meanings under the surface of television programming; in this case, the gendered relationship between the two female protagonists in *Uzalo*.

Feminist Criticism Perspective in television

Feminism, according to Parry, (1991: 96) cannot be described as a theory or a methodology, but rather as a plurality of perspectives. Although feminism is a diverse concept, this paper will specifically focus on feminist criticism of television. This critique resides in the fact that although soap opera is a female-centred genre, their roles are still subordinate to, and devalued in relation to men. This is propelled by the political system of language and through the division of labour which dictate female roles in society (Parry, 1991: 95).

The philosophical underpinning of feminism is located in an essentialist and anti-essentialist framework. The former is characterised by three politically embedded concepts where women's oppression is principally located in patriarchal structures. The theories associated with essentialist feminism are Marxist feminism, radical feminism and post-structuralist feminism. These three theories contend that female empowerment can only be effective if women break away from the binding patriarchal systems which function at an economic, social and institutional level.

Anti-essentialism is not necessarily fixated on the political basis of feminist discourses, but rather on the social construction of gender, and the effect this has on society. Instead of viewing femininity as something that exists outside of patriarchy, the perception is that these social constructions need to be debunked because they exist in symbiosis. Therefore, in order to breakdown constructions of power relations between male/female, masculine/feminine binaries, it is important to understand how these social constructions come into existence.

Tania Modleski (cited in Parry, 1991: 108) uses psychoanalytic theory to understand the role of women in soap opera. In her reading, she argues that soap operas provide a platform for female voices to be heard. She contends that it is in soap operas that women can challenge the ideological systems embedded in patriarchy. For Modleski, soap operas and feminist theories

do not need to be divorced from each other because the genre provides a platform-stylistically, aesthetically and structurally for female empowerment. This is largely achieved through the unresolved, multiple narrative structure with decentralised characters which breakdowns power relations (Modleski, 1979: 14). Therefore, the pronounced role of the villainess and the nurturing role of the mother create a nuanced portrayal of women.

Laura Mulvey (cited in Parry, 1991: 108) also adopts a psychoanalytical theory to narratives in cinema which are suitable to soap operas. She observes that the camera lens plays a significant role in the construction of subject/male and object/female through the voyeuristic male gaze of the camera, largely emanating from a masculine perspective. This can only be resolved, according to radical feminists, if females control the gaze. Her observation is rooted in the work of Sigmund Freud (1908) and Jacques Lacan (1949) who argued that the phallus becomes a symbol of desire because of the power associated with it. This construction results in females being perceived as the 'other' who are subjected to passivity as a result of not having a penis. This gives credence to Freud's work on penis envy which can be argued as part of the reason of female resistance to patriarchy.

Feminist theories have also been contentious among women because they have been argued to homogenise female struggles, from a largely white middle-class western experience, which ignores the oppression of minority groups. People's identifications span beyond their gender roles. In fact, Parry (1991: 110) argues that many black South African women have formulated their identity around race and not only class and gender. In this sense, they may link their oppression to race rather than gender which could place white females in opposition to them. This point is fundamental to this study because examining gender roles in *Uzalo* requires an examination of what the general interpretation of soap opera is in relation to what this means in a context which differs culturally, socially and economically from the spaces where the aforementioned discourses have been conceived.

Relevance of theories to this study

In this paper, *Uzalo* will be discussed as a soap opera because it conforms to the codes and conventions of soap opera narratives. More particularly, season two (the sample for this study) the lead roles are taken over by the matriarchs who are presented as binary characters good versus evil. The significance of this is that the female leads are played by the matriarchs - which are written about extensively in literature on soap operas (see Modleski, 1979; Kaplan, 1987; Geraghty, 1991).

The rationale for using narrative theory is because, although soap opera narratives are open-ended, they employ a sequential structure which is specific to the genre, such as addressing domestic issues, prominent female characters, the existence of a matriarchs and patriarchs, among others. Although the plots may vary, there are constants that ascribe to the soap opera genre.

For the purpose of this research, the use of Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss will serve a significant function for two reasons. First, the former will attempt to understand the character functions of the two principle characters. It must be noted that because soap operas do not have resolutions, the Proppian character functions are able to interchange. This was elaborated by the executive director of *Uzalo* (Interview, Thulie Zuma, 2016) who explained that characters can at different points inhabit qualities outside of their character type. This attempts to showcase a more complex, rounded character. By this, she explained, that good has the potential to be bad, while bad can also be good. These character functions are constantly negotiated in soap opera texts which with the use of Lévi-Strauss' analysis of myths attempts to make sense of the emergent paradigmatic elements which emerge from these character functions which have explicitly been set up as binary opposition.

The relevance of the feminist critical perspective is to explore whether the construction of these characters conform to, or challenge hegemonic structures. Interestingly enough, both female characters are constructed in the image of their (now absent) husbands. This is in line with the arguments purported by feminist theories on film and television who assert that females play a subordinate and devalued role in society (Parry, 1991: 97). Given the fact that two females play the lead role in *Uzalo*, this study seeks to explore whether these characters challenge the hegemonic world these characters exist in, or whether they serve a passive role in this world.

METHODOLOGY

This section will examine the research methods employed in the study by discussing the research paradigm, design, sample, data collection and analysis. The discussion will illustrate why and how specific methods were chosen for this particular study. Therefore, this section will outline the planning of the research, while assessing the reliability and validity of the study.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was conceived in the early 20th Century by the field of sociology and anthropology. It has since evolved into a more rigorous approach crosscutting through multiple disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. This type of inquiry situates the researcher in the study and not as an objective onlooker (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002: 2). Qualitative inquiry is generally characterised by material practices incorporating an interpretive, naturalistic approach. The idea is to study phenomena in their natural settings in order to interpret the meaning people ascribe to them. The aim of this is to create a montage, or solve a puzzle out of complex social relations (Neuman, 2011: 166; Denzin and Lincoln, 2002: 5). This process makes defining qualitative research difficult because it has no set theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002).

Qualitative, unlike quantitative research, explores how social experience is constructed and given meaning. Researchers examine the qualities of entities and the processes which inscribe meaning, as opposed to an emphasis on measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables as would be the case in quantitative approaches. It can thus be asserted that qualitative studies seek to scratch beneath the surface of social phenomena to understand intrinsic meanings; this makes qualitative research non-linear and opaque (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002: 8).

Limitations to qualitative research

Although qualitative approaches have been used in many social science and humanities disciplines, they have been subjected to widespread criticism. Firstly, they have been linked to the colonial project, born out of sociology and anthropology, in an attempt to study the 'other' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). This other was usually characterised as an exotic and primitive non-white, perceived to be less civilised by the researcher. Quantitative researchers also accused qualitative research of being unscientific because of their perceived subjectivity. Critics argue that the approach is more like fiction than science; this is because verification is

more subjective (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002). These critiques ought to be considered when applying a qualitative approach to a research project.

Research Paradigm and Design

The current research adopted a social constructionist paradigm. Constructionism is characterised by the principle that people and their placement in the world are not accidental processes, but rather brought into being. In this sense, reality is constructed through shared meaning which is relative to cultural contexts (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Neuman, 2011; Schwandt, 2000). It is important to acknowledge that Neuman (2011: 101) views interpretivism as the paradigm under which constructionism is placed. This particular study will rely on the interpretation of Denzin and Lincoln in "*Handbook of Qualitative Research*" (2002) which positions constructionism as a paradigm under which interpretivism falls. This distinction is important because the research makes reference to both texts.

Social constructionism has been widely used in qualitative research; however this may be a limitation because it can lead to the approach becoming too diverse and diffuse resulting in a weakening of its epistemological bearings (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011: 341). According to Schwadt (2000: 199-200) the most important challenge for constructionism to overcome is finding a balance between descriptive and normative approaches. For example, while there may be varying perspectives on feminism, it is important to adopt an approach that is able to be prescribed within its relative context while being theoretically sound at the same time.

Sampling

Two major mistakes need to be avoided when choosing a sample:

"The first is to conduct sampling in a sloppy or improper manner; the second is to choose a type of sample inappropriate for a study's purpose" (Neuman, 2011: 242).

This study makes use of a qualitative sampling method which seeks to gain a deeper understanding of relationships in a social context. The purpose of sampling is to develop new theoretical insights around people in their social settings while trying to further understand complex phenomena. It is important to note that -- in qualitative research -- relevance to the research topic takes precedence over representativeness. This determines the selection of a sample to a particular study (Neuman, 2011: 241).

This research project adopted a purposive/ judgmental approach which is mostly used in exploratory or field research. The aim of this approach is to select cases that are applicable to the research. The cases selected usually do not represent an entire population; therefore they

have to be appropriate to the research in order to gain a fuller understanding of the subject matter (Neuman, 2011: 268).

There are a number of reasons why the television programme, *Uzalo*, proved to be a compelling case study. The first reason for choosing this case study is because it has achieved tremendous success since its debut on SABC one in February 2015. Recent ratings show that it enjoys a viewership of over 8 million people, excluding online viewership (TVSA blogsite). This is illustrated in Table One, below. Although Table One refers to *Uzalo* as a ‘drama’, it is referred to as a ‘soap opera’⁴. Secondly, *Uzalo* is filmed in KwaMashu, a township located 32 kilometres north of Durban with a Zulu-centric focus. This is the first time that a South African prime time programme has been filmed in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, which has created new opportunities for the local film and television industry. Also, isiZulu is one of the most widely spoken languages in South Africa which is largely because it can be understood by other Nguni language speakers (isiXhosa, Ndebele and SiSwati) and because it is the biggest ethnic group in South Africa. However, the programme also makes use of subtitles.


 Top 20 Programs All Adults 15+ September 2016 Prime time 17h30-22h00										
Adults 15+ years U:34088 S:8772										
Day	Date	From	To	Station	Programme Title	Genre	AR	Viewers	Share	
Tue	20/09/2016	2004	2035	S1	Generations the Legacy	Soap	23.9	8168891	66.6	
Mon	19/09/2016	2031	2102	S1	Uzalo	Dram	23.9	8155068	65.6	
Wed	21/09/2016	1833	1904	S1	Skeem Saam	Dram	20.1	6869105	60.1	
Tue	06/09/2016	1905	2117	S1	Nelson Mandela Challenge:South Af	Spor	14.9	5091225	43.1	
Tue	06/09/2016	1854	1857	S1	Vodacom Millionaires	Quiz	13.7	4671841	54.9	

Table 1: SABC 1 Audience ratings for prime time television, September 2016.

Source: TV SA Blog⁵, (see Appendix B)

⁴ *Uzalo* is a hybrid of genre because it encompasses elements of different genres.

⁵ <http://www.tvsa.co.za/>

Method

It would be difficult to measure an entire season of *Uzalo*, firstly, because of time constraints and, secondly, due to the fact that this was an intensive, rather than extensive study. The reason for this is to obtain an in-depth micro analysis (Neuman, 2011). Therefore, data was gathered through a scene-by-scene analysis of the two female protagonists, MaNzuza and MaNgobo.

The current study adopted the same method used by (Butler, 1986: 55) in his publication: “*Notes on the Soap Opera Apparatus: Televisual Style and ‘As the World Turns’*” which examined the *style* of soap opera in terms of its diegetic segments as well as the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships formed in these segments. The research relied on a close analysis of five episodes, focussing on space (*mis-en-scene* and videographic properties), time (editing) and sound (dialogue, music, and ‘noise’ or ‘sound effects’). A small sample allows the researcher to do more intensive analysis of the data.

The current study adapted the methodology used in Butler (1986: 55) by tabulating data obtained from each episode (see Appendices) and separating the data into themes. The themes include, the scenes in which MaNgobo and MaNzuza appeared (face time and voice time); time (duration of the scene); location (*mis-en-scene*); the characters who appear in the scene with the two protagonists; lighting and camera angles/shot composition (their ideological function); and verbal and non-verbal interaction in each scene (gestures, body language, physical attitudes and voice inflection). The themes were selected because of their common reference in soap opera literature (*mis-en-scene*, visual aesthetics, character interactions and style) (see Modleski, 1979; Kaplan, 1987; Feuer, 1987; Parry, 1991). The aim was to examine how these themes are signified in *Uzalo*.

Data collection

The data was collected from the first five episodes of *Uzalo* (Season Two) on YouTube. The selected episodes were identified as being important to the study because the story is at a crucial juncture. The two matriarchs have become the head of their households while trying to deal with domestic perils in the absence of their husbands. Both women are also trying to come to terms with the revelation that their sons were swapped at birth. This point is critical to the narrative because the two women have to adjust to these significant changes in their lives, as well as mediate the intersection of their binary worlds (Prinsloo, 2009: 236).

Data sifting

Content analysis

Content analysis has become a widely used method in qualitative research since the late 1990s in a wide variety of disciplines, ranging from media studies to the health profession, specifically nursing. Qualitative content analysis “focusses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: 128). The purpose of qualitative content analysis is to move beyond counting words in texts, towards examining language in order to organise data into a conceptual system; this can be through explicit or latent communication. The aim of latent communication is to pay attention to communication outside of conversation, such as silence, gestures, noise and posture which often carry connotations (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008: 109).

This project applied visual content analysis to interpret the frequent generalisations about the two lead female characters in *Uzalo* including representations of their class, roles and the situations or events they are involved in (Heish and Shannon, 2005: 13). Although this approach appears to be a simplistic way to generate meaning, it still requires a technical process of inquiry to support findings. To achieve this, the study relied on common themes found in soap opera literature and adapted them to the television programme, *Uzalo* alluded above (see Modleski, 1979; Mulvey, Kaplan, 1987, Geraghty, 2006; Brown, 1994; Kuhn, 1984; Butler, 1986).

One of the limitations of content analysis is that it can produce interpretive ambiguity because the themes suggest little about the implicit aesthetic and cultural connotations which is relative to different contexts (Weber, 1990). In order to resolve this, the study has employed a semiotic analysis to understand how social meaning is constructed through the latent function of these themes.

Semiotic analysis

Semiotics is the systematic analysis of symbolic signs, the rules that govern them and how they create meaning. Signs are communicated through language which includes: words, music, traffic signs, images and much more (Seiter, 1987: 17) The field of semiotics seeks to find the link between the arbitrary existence of signs and the conceptual meanings associated to them. Semiotics therefore seeks to determine the underlying function of signs in order to ascertain their ideological value (Fourie, 2009). Many theorists have contributed to semiotics

studies (see Saussure, 1958; Pierce, 1930; Barthes, 1964, 1972; Fiske, 1982; Tomaselli, 1996 Chandler, 2007).

Semiotics was first coined by the American philosopher, Charles Saunders Pierce (1839-1914) in the late 19th century, although his work gained prominence, posthumously, in the early 20th century. He was interested in the production of meaning through signs. In this sense, he applied a pragmatic approach to semiotics. Pierce asserted that meaning is generated through the interpretation of signs. “The *sign* refers to something other than itself- the *object*, and is understood by somebody: that is, it has an effect in the mind of the user- the *interpretant*” (Fiske, 1982: 45). Interpretant, here, refers to *context*. This approach to semiotics suggests that meaning is inscribed by the sign and a person’s experience with the sign. Pierce, however, focusses on the production of signs devoid of their historical and social contexts. This could be problematic when analysing the role of signs in television, especially since it serves a great ideological function.

The Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, is also acknowledged as the founder of semiotics, through the posthumous publication of his book: “*Course in General Linguistics*” (1959) where he advocated for a new science, semiology. Saussure sought to understand how signs (words) relate to other signs. In this sense, he viewed language as an instrument of thought in culture that communicates shared signs. Signs – here -- are dyadic, and consist of a *signifier* and a *signified* (Reyburn, 2013)The signifier is the sign’s image as perceived by a person. The signified is the mental conception of the sign. The relationship between the two concepts is completely arbitrary; the conception of the sign becomes common through shared meaning (Fiske, 1982: 44). The arbitrary relationship between the signifier and signified lends itself to the possibility for signs to be polysemic, they could contain many different meanings; this is because meaning is subjective (Reyburn, 2013: 60).

For Saussure, signs exist within a sign system: he used the terms *Langue* and *Parole* to explain this system. *Langue* refers to system of rules in language. *Parole* refers to any element of the sign that operates in the system. In language, each sign is defined by what it is not (Reyburn, 2013: 61), indicating its essentially binary nature.

Roland Barthes (1973), is a second generation semiotician who studied the influence of signs in popular culture and their relation to myths in his book, “*Mythologies*”. Myth, according to Barthes, (1973: 117) “is a system of communication”. Myths can be applied to folktales, pictographical stories, drawings, and television programmes (soap opera). Myth, in this

context, can be split into two semiological systems: *linguistic*, which is the basic language system and *myth* which Barthes described as a metalanguage because it is a second language built on the first. Simply understood, language can only be meaningful when mythic meaning is inscribed.

Linked to the first order and second order meaning is the notion of denotation and connotation. Denotation can be understood as the literal meaning of the sign, whereas connotation adds value to the literal meaning of the sign which tends to serve a latent ideological function.

Barthes appropriated Pierce's types of signs to extend his analysis of myth; these include iconic, symbolic or indexical signs. *Iconic signs* are usually characterised by pictorial or visual images. The sign resembles the referent, speakers of all languages will be able to identify the sign for its meaning. These signs are usually denotative (literal). However, because the iconic sign resembles a literal thing it may be accepted as fact. This is often the case in film and television texts. *Symbolic signs* often imply meaning through symbols, there is no direct link between the sign and the referent except the meaning embedded in the sign which is usually learnt through shared conceptual interpretations. *Indexical signs* attach a causal relationship between the sign and the referent. For example, in nature, smoke signifies fire. These signs are constantly used in television and often work simultaneously. This simultaneous interaction often manipulates myth and reality. This is particularly true for camera angle shots where the visual can appear as iconic and indexical (Fourie, 2009: 52).

This research project applied the basic semiotic model proposed by third generation semiotician, Daniel Chandler (2008), to analyse the themes ascertained through the content analysis. Chandler's model includes (a) selection and identification of the text (b) description of purpose of analysis (c) description of signifiers in the text (d) description of the sign system (e) description of the codes in the text (f) the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations in the text (g) the meaning in the text.

Chandler's work is helpful because it provides guideline through which the insights advanced by earlier theorists can be applied. It is more a model of application than a theoretical framework.

Data Analysis

Introduction

The following section will discuss the findings from the data collection by doing a content analysis which will be facilitated with a semiotic analysis.

The table below gives a brief description of the findings in the data collection:

Characterisation of the two lead females in <i>Uzalo</i>	
MaNzuza	MaNgobo
Both are indebted to their children (sons); their children are their greatest weakness. They are willing to sacrifice anything for their children	
Hero[ine]	Villain[ess]
Virtuous	Conniving
Submissive/fragile	Assertive/strong
Lighting in her scenes is bright	Lighting in her scenes is dark
Principally located in domestic setting	Principally located outside the domestic setting
Naïve	Street smart
Modest	Materialistic
Nothing mentioned about her husband- Melusi Mdletshe	Always mentions her husband- Muzi Xulu
Camera angles/shots are similar (mostly medium close-up and vectors)	

Table 2: Summary of findings of the two lead female characters in *Uzalo* (see Appendix A)

Syntagmatic Relevance

There is evidence of Vladimir Propp's (1968) character functions in the soap opera *Uzalo*, with MaNzuza being characterised as the heroine and MaNgobo as the villainess. Propp's character functions are not necessarily defined by their characterisation, but rather through the way they relate to the action. In this sense, the *heroine* is not defined by her noble intentions; rather, her role is acknowledged through the sphere of action she is located. The same can be applied to the function of the *villainess* (Prinsloo, 2009: 226). This is linked to the syntagmatic approach adopted by Propp, who asserted that character functions manifest in relation to the events in the narrative.

For Propp, there are two kinds of heroes; the first is the hero's role as a *seeker* which often results in a contestation with the villain. Secondly, is the hero's role as a *victim* who encounters adversity. The narrative, in this context, is linked to the hero's fate. *Uzalo* is more in line with the latter, albeit the narrative is not exclusively situated around the hero (Prinsloo, 2009: 30). Both MaNzuza and MaNgobo share a similar amount of screen time. Furthermore, although both characters are polar opposites, they equally have endured a significant amount of hardship, making them both victims. This paints a more nuanced picture of the two female's characterisation. It also alludes to the fact that soap opera characters can adopt multiple character functions which is largely testament to the genre's open-ended structure, a point asserted by Tania Modleski (1979).

A limitation of Propp's character function approach is its orientation towards a male *hero*. The only visible female function is the *princess* whose function is characterised by the need to be saved and protected by a male character (Wigston, 1991, 82-83). This advances paternalistic discourses which often position women as subordinates to males. This is evident in *Uzalo* where the construction of the two lead female characters is situated in the image of their husbands. This is also symbolic of the latent function of male hegemony that exists in reality. For example, when women get married they often drop their surname and take on her husband's last name.

The syntagmatic approach adopted Propp does not resolve the issue of how one can make sense of the purpose of the character functions. This can only be achieved through examining the thematic inferences through which binaries are constructed. This analysis is referred to as the paradigmatic approach which can be used consequentially to the formalist approach of Propp.

Paradigmatic Relevance

The paradigmatic approach departs from the formalist structure of Propp, and focusses primarily on the content thus locating the data into a political and ideological framework. It is thus concerned with meaning as opposed to establishing the sequence of events. Meaning, in this context, is constructed through the system of binary oppositions, good and bad, male and female (Prinsloo, 2009: 236). According to Claude Lévi-Strauss (1978) it is only once myths are mediated that one can understand their latent function. This can be analysed through lighting and camera compositions which can be argued as an additional character function in *Uzalo*.

Lighting

Additional to situating MaNzuza and MaNgobo in binary opposition, there are also aesthetic binaries, through lighting techniques, dress code and *mis-en-scene*.

Light and dark plays a huge role in *Uzalo*; it can be acknowledged as an additional character because of its role in creating perception. du Plooy (2009: 109) states that colour has common associations among people. She further asserts that dark colours are linked to unpredictability and tension, whereas light colours are associated with warmth and security. This is significant because these colour contrasts are evident in *Uzalo*. The interior of MaNzuza's house (see Figure One for illustration) is painted light blue/purple connoting modest homeliness. MaNgobo's house (see Figure Two for illustration) has dark furniture embellished with fancy fixtures connoting materialism, but it looks dark and mysterious. Lighting is also used to further illustrate these differences, the brightness of MaNzuza's home can be associated to femininity, while MaNgobo's has a hard masculine aesthetic (du Plooy, 2009: 151).



Figure One Mdletshe home (MaNzuza)



Figure Two Xulu home (MaNgobo)



Figure Three MaNzuza and MaNgobo

The aesthetics in Figures One and Two symbolise the characteristics of these two women. Their houses take on the symbolic traits of each character type. Therefore, the props become characters in themselves. The modesty of MaNzuza (see Figure Three) is reflected in the aesthetics of her house; the same can be said about the boldness of MaNgobo.

The contrast of light played a huge role in episode four of Season Two. During this episode, Mxolisi (MaNzuza's son, brought up by MaNgobo) and MaNgobo are trying to dispose of Nkosinathi's body, Mxolisi's biological brother, who he accidentally killed. The contrasting scenes between the Mdletshe household and the Xulu Panel beaters shop are symbolic of the existing good and evil binary. This storyline also has intertextual reference to the Biblical story of Cain and Abel, where the former killed the latter violently. This story is also a metaphor of good and evil (see Appendix A, episode four).

Camera angles and shots

The camera viewpoint is another critical aesthetic in television studies because it is the point of view the audience sees. This has a major ideological impact on the way something is portrayed. It can indicate separation or intimacy through the wide-shot and close-shot lens. Qualities such as inferiority and superiority can also be ascertained through framing, such as the placing of the camera below eye-level which diminishes a character putting them in position of inferiority. Whereas positioning a camera above eye-level portrays an enlarged view of a character showcasing a position of power (du Plooy, 2009: 161).

Two shots are commonly used in *Uzalo*: the medium close-up and vector shots. The former captures the character from chest level to slightly above the head. This shot is referred to as the talking head shot, and is meaningful to this programme since dialogue is critical to the narrative. This camera shot is popularly used in soap operas because of the genre's acute focus on conversation (Modleski, 1982; Kaplan, 1987; Kuhn, 1984).

The use of vector shots is used in the case where one's eyes are transported from one point to another with a shifting camera focus; the direction can either be inside or outside the frame. Vectors are distinguished by three types: graphic, index and motion. In television, the motion vector is used; the direction of these shots can either be convergent or divergent. Convergent shots are usually characterised by people having a face to face conversation where the camera oscillates between the two people. Alternatively, convergent shots can be used in confrontational contexts. Divergent shots show people in the same shot looking in different directions (du Plooy, 2009: 160-161), in other words, they look 'past' each other rather than 'at' each other, indicating a lack of true interaction. This usually happens in *Uzalo* when MaNgobo is disobeying authority where she shifts the focus away from the character talking to her (Dhlomo, the police officer). This type of camera composition is also evident when MaNgobo is in conversation with her daughter, Nosipho. During these conversations she rarely makes eye contact with Nosipho. A wide-angle shot is used in this instance; the physical distance is symbolic of the emotional distance between mother and daughter (see Appendix A). This is in juxtaposition to the shots of MaNgobo with Mxolisi where close-up shots are used which show her emotion, but also her closeness to him.

This is not only specific to MaNgobo, the same can be said about MaNzuza who has a special bond with her sons, Ayanda and Nkosinathi. She is also beginning to develop a relationship with her newly revealed biological son, Mxolisi, who she is grown fond of. These relationships reflect the special bond between the two mothers and their sons, but also highlight the fact that in spite of their stark differences, their primary role is being a mother.

Exploring New Femininities

The fundamental question of this project is to ascertain whether the two female characters conform to, or challenge male hegemony. This is a difficult task because, as discussed earlier, conceptions around femininity are relative to individual contexts.

Uzalo is an interesting case study because it departs from traditional Zulu female roles, such as the presence of a strong male figure in the narrative, now that there are no longer patriarchs. This is indicative of cultural hybridity and the influence of globalisation on local adaptations of international genres like the soap opera. However, being a mother is the primary function of both women; this is reflected throughout the narrative (see Appendix A). Furthermore, conversations and explored topics revolve around domestic issues which are a popular feature in soap operas.

This research explicitly highlights the latent function of male hegemony, not only in soap opera, but also in reality. While there are aspects of assertiveness and rejection of male dominance, there are significant aspects of conformity. This is particularly evident where the two females have taken on the character traits of their husbands. This, to a large extent, impedes their ability to develop characters outside the constraints of male hegemony.

Developing an empowered femininity does not necessarily mean divorcing females from males, but it means being able to critically assess the codes that dictate the relationships between the two genders (Kaplan, 1987: 221; Lévi-Strauss, 1955). It requires deconstructing arbitrary mythic beliefs that people unconsciously ascribe meaning to and questioning how they perpetuate oppressive power structures. However, it must also be acknowledged that power is a dialectical process, and therefore constructing an empowered femininity necessitates a critical analysis of the function of power which includes racial, economic, environmental and social structures.

Conclusion

This research shows that while soap operas have been constructed for females, and to an extent provides a platform for female issues to be discussed, it still conforms to paternalistic conditions.

Furthermore, while strong binaries exist between the two protagonists, this does not necessarily have any value because both women are portrayed evenly without any dominant perspectives being espoused. In fact, this paper suggests that the characters are more alike than dissimilar. They are both mothers who are indebted to their children, although they have two opposite dispositions due to their lifestyles --this is the dominant storyline.

Although their different dispositions are in line with Modleski's (1979) assertion that soap operas are empowering because of the balanced depiction of protagonists; the issue is that the context in which they are situated continues to propel male hegemony.

Therefore, careful attention ought to be directed towards the arbitrary nature of myths which are taken for granted as facts. More fundamentally, it highlights the latent function of male hegemony which permeates throughout society in an implicit but powerful way.

This research can be extended to an ethnographic study in order to determine the effects by understanding how the audience makes sense of the purported myths. This would add more nuance to the work.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Data Collection

Appendix B: Top 20 ratings of SABC One Programmes, September 2016

UZALO: SEASON 2 EPISODE 1

SCENE	TIME/ DURATION	SETTING	CHARACTER(S)	ACTION/MOOD	DIALOGUE/BODY LANGUAGE
2	03:35-03:59 (24 seconds)	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	Watching Dhlomo being honoured for good service in the KwaMashu police force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No dialogue ➤ Worried/Nervous
4	05:21-05:43 (22 seconds)	Mdletshe house Lounge	MaNzuza and Nkosinathi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relieved that Gxabashe has finally been locked up ➤ She expresses that there need to be more men like Dhlomo
9	10:01-12:06 (2 minutes 5 seconds)	Mdletshe house Lounge	MaNzuza, Ayanda and Nkosinathi	Sitting together and talking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General conversation about Nkosinathi going to the University of Cape Town (UCT) to study ➤ MaNzuza talks about going to pick up Mxolisi from Prison which is met with disapproval from her two sons
10	12:08-13:41 (1 minute 33 seconds)	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They both appear nervous and stressed out ➤ An employee walks into the office which creates tension in the scene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Employee asks for money owed to him ➤ MaNgcobo stands up to him and challenges him
12	15:32-17:16 MaNgcobo enters at 16:16 (1minute) (2 min 16 seconds)	Outside Prison	MaNzuza, Mxolisi and MaNgcobo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza awaits nervously ➤ When MaNgcobo enters she is shocked to see that Mxolisi has been released from Prison ➤ This camera shot is close up which captures the emotional intensity of the scene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is happy to see Mxolisi. They happily embrace each other ➤ MaNgcobo and Mxolisi's interaction is restrained ➤ This is the first time the audience sees the two lead female characters in a scene together. The atmosphere is tense when they encounter each other
14	17:24-19:10 (2 minutes 14 seconds)	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo walks into the office looking irritated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She expresses how upset she is with Mxolisi for not wanting anything to do with her, and for choosing MaNzuza over her. She explains how she has provided for him his entire life ➤ They talk about their financial woes

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She explains to Nosipho that they have to resort to crime; although Nosipho disagrees, it appears to be the only option they have
15	19:11-20:31 (1 minute 20 seconds)	Mdletshe home	MaNzuza, Ayanda and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza and Mxolisi enter the house together ➤ Mxolisi and Ayanda are hostile towards each other ➤ They both stand on either side of MaNzuza. There is deep tension- it is evident in their facial expression which is captured by close camera angles ➤ MaNzuza looks at both of them helplessly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza tries introducing Mxolisi to Ayanda as his brother. This is a tense moment
17	21:12-23:23 (2 minutes 11 seconds) Ayanda and Nkosinathi enter at 22:31	Mdletshe home	MaNzuza, Mxolisi, Ayanda and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is sitting around the table while Mxolisi sets the table ➤ When Ayanda and Nkosinathi enter they all sit around the table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They have a general conversation, getting to know each other ➤ Ayanda feels out of place when MaNzuza refers to all of them as her sons because he has come to find out that he is a Xulu

UZALO SEASON 2 EPISODE 2

SCENE	TIME/ DURATION	SETTING	CHARACTER(S)	ACTION/MOOD	DIALOGUE/ BODY LANGUAGE
2	02:42-05:17 (2 minutes 25 seconds)	KwaMashu Street	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo jumps out of flashy car to talk to Mxolisi ➤ They stand at a distance from each other which also indicates their emotional distance ➤ MaNgcobo is visibly hurt- it is one of the few times she reveals her vulnerable side to another character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She tries engaging in conversation with him but he is dismissive ➤ She pleads with him to accept her as his mother as she has raised him, but he refuses to accept as his mother
3	05:38-06:42 (1 minute 4 seconds) Mxolisi enters at 06:18	Mdletshe home- the living room	MaNzuza, Nkosinathi, Ayanda and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The mood is tense because it is revealed that Gxabashe escaped from prison ➤ MaNzuza starts by standing, but chooses to sit down. Although she is sitting, she is positioned slightly higher than her than her sons showcasing power relations ➤ She is soft, yet assertive ➤ When Mxolisi enters the tension mounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The conversation is about Gxabashe's escape from prison which is disconcerting for the Mdletshe family ➤ MaNzuza is sitting next to Ayanda and Nkosinathi, while Mxolisi is sitting on the opposite couch. ➤ This is the first time that MaNzuza seems to choose a side between her sons
4	06:43-07:06 (23 seconds)	Xulu home- the kitchen	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nosipho is sitting down while MaNgcobo is standing on the opposite side ➤ Nosipho and MaNgcobo always stand at a distance from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo is speaking about her disappointment towards Mxolisi for not wanting anything to do with her
5	07:07-08:36 (1 minute 39 seconds)	Xulu home- the kitchen	MaNgcobo, officer Dhlomo and Nosipho, Mondli and other police officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dhlomo and MaNgcobo stand face to face, she has an attitude with him ➤ She is never scared of people in power/authority ➤ MaNgcobo is optimistic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dhlomo informs MaNgcobo that Gxabashe has escaped from prison. She appears shocked, but he looks sceptical ➤ Officers are instructed to search the house but they find nothing ➤ He instructs them to

				<p>views this as an opportunity to get out of their financial problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She feels compelled to tell Mxolisi 	<p>call him if Gxabashe tries to get hold of them, and tells them that he is watching them like a hawk</p>
6	<p>08:37-10:03 (1 minute 26 seconds)</p> <p>Ayanda enters at 09:10</p>	Mdletshe home-living room	MaNzuza, Mxolisi, Ayanda and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sitting on the sofa. Yet again, Nkosinathi and MaNzuza are sitting next to each other while Mxolisi sits opposite them ➤ Mxolisi's phone rings- it's MaNgcobo ➤ MaNgcobo respects this and tells him to take the call in private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are talking about Gxabashe's escape ➤ MaNzuza is concerned that he might target her family ➤ It is interesting that when Mxolisi and Nkosinathi speak, MaNgcobo looks ahead ➤ When Ayanda enters, he expresses his distrust for Mxolisi since he has been brought up by the Xulu's
9	<p>13:21-15:15 (1 minute 54 seconds)</p>	Xulu house-living room	Nosipho and MaNgcobo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo is sitting on the staircase looking worried- the house is dark ➤ Nosipho comes running into the house looking outside the window frantically ➤ The viewer looks at them from a distance. The viewer bears witness to their fear ➤ The lighting is borrowed from the Thriller genre ➤ Yet again, the audience witnesses a cold relationship between mother and daughter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nosipho tells her mother that she thinks they are being watched by the police ➤ This is the first time she is seen next to her mother, but her mother's back is towards her ➤ MaNgcobo is waiting for Gxabashe to call- she is irritated that he has not called as yet ➤ Nosipho tells her that maybe he has gone and left them behind, but MaNgcobo refuses to believe that ➤ She tells her daughter to not touch her ➤ Eventually an sms is sent by Gxabashe and MaNgcobo rushes off- the viewer can see that he is the only person who has a hold on her
13	<p>18:37-20:18 (1 minute 41 seconds)</p> <p>Mxolisi enters at 19:29</p>	Mdletshe home-the kitchen	MaNzuza, Ayanda, Nkosinathi and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The mood is jovial and light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza, Ayanda and Nkosinathi are having a general conversation ➤ When Mxolisi enters the mood gets tense leaving MaNzuza to

					have to politely ask them to stop being rude to one another
15	20:28-22:27 (1 minute 59 seconds)	Mdletshe home- Nkosinathi's bedroom	MaNzuza and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Both are sitting on the bed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza pleads with Nkosinathi to accept Mxolisi as his brother ➤ He reasons with her and says that he only wants to protect her
16	22:28-23:55 (1 minute 27 seconds)	Veld- night time	MaNgcobo, Gxabashe and the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo is standing opposite Gxabashe ➤ It is dark and they are both wearing disguises ➤ They embrace ➤ Police find them and arrest MaNgcobo, while Gxabashe runs away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She explains to him how tough it has been on her and Nosipho since he has been away- he puts her finger to her mouth indicating that she must stop talking

UZALO SEASON 2 EPISODE 3

SCENE	TIME/ DURATION	SETTING	CHARACTER(S)	ACTION/MOOD	DIALOGUE
1	00:35-01:16 41 seconds	Durban Beachfront South/North beach and MaNzuza's bedroom	Nkosinathi and MaNzuza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mother and son are seen walking along the beach ➤ They suddenly head in opposite directions. MaNzuza starts drowning while he does nothing to help her- there is a sense of helplessness ➤ MaNzuza wakes up in looking perplexed and in shock ➤ It is important to note her room is dark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no dialogue but her body language showcases fear and shock
3	01:49-03:38 1 minute 49 seconds	Police station (interrogation room)	MaNgcobo, Mondli and Dhlomo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The room is dark with no windows (as in a crime drama) ➤ Mondli sits opposite her while Dhlomo stands over her (power relations) ➤ Close range camera angle ➤ She sits stubborn, and does not give into their demands- even Dhlomo raises his voice she does not back down ➤ She has attitude with the cops ➤ She does not respect authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Police are interrogating her ➤ When Mondli talks to her she stands up and has attitude with him ➤ Although he respects her as an older woman- which is mandatory in Zulu culture- she has attitude with him ➤ Interesting observation: when Dhlomo asks her why she, as a married woman, would meet a man other than her husband at night, she quickly relents and implies that it was her husband ➤ She will defend her husband at all costs
4	04:21-06:51 2 minutes 30 seconds	KwaMashu street	MaNzuza, MaMlambo and Street Vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is seen buying fruit ➤ MaNzuza meets up with MaMlambo ➤ Almost three quarters of their body is displayed ➤ They are standing next to each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaMlambo talks to MaNzuza about her hardships ➤ MaMlambo tells MaNzuza that she wants to gossip ➤ MaNzuza talks about her sons ➤ MaMlambo has a

					<p>premonition that something bad is about to happen in MaNzuza's family. She warns her to pray that she will not drown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza walks away and dismisses MaMlambo
5	06:52-08:20 1 minute 25 seconds Nosipho enters at 07:54	Xulu home-Kitchen	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo looks worriedly at her phone ➤ She is irritated that Gxabashe has not called again ➤ They are standing at a distance from each other ➤ Camera lens shows intensity on their faces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When Gxabashe eventually calls he blames her for the police finding them, and abruptly ends the call ➤ When Nosipho enters, she expresses that she was worried when MaNgcobo was not at home the night before, but MaNgcobo walks away in frustration
6	08:21-10:30 2 minutes 9 seconds	Mdletshe home-Kitchen	MaNzuza, Ayanda, Mxolisi and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza sits at the head of the table (this is an interesting placement) while Ayanda and Mxolisi sit opposite each other ➤ The viewer can see the hostility between them- many close-up shots between the two boys ➤ Camera shots are at a distance from MaNzuza ➤ When Nkosinathi enters he sits at the other end of the table, but on the side of the boys ➤ It also shows a split between the boys from their mother 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General conversation about Nkosinathi's farewell ➤ Lighting is bright- it is breakfast time
7	10:31-11:05	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo, Mxolisi Vo and panel beaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo walks into the panel beaters in a rage, she shouts at the employee because she stumbles over equipment ➤ She is standing up opposite a male employee while 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo shouts at an employee for not cleaning up ➤ She uses foul language

				shouting at him	
9	13:15-15:13 1 minute 58 seconds Dhlomo enters at 13:55	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Dhlomo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo is sitting at the desk in her office ➤ She looks nostalgic and vulnerable ➤ When Dhlomo enters, she puts on a strong/brave front 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When Dhlomo enters, he tells her that police caught Gxabashe at the Mozambican border, and that he is in solitary confinement at a Pretoria prison- where he will serve his sentence
10	15:14-16:11 57 seconds	Mdletshe home-Kitchen /Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He is making tea when he receives a call from MaNgcobo ➤ She sounds vulnerable and desperate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi tells her to stop calling him, but she tells him about Gxabashe's imprisonment ➤ He agrees to meet her
13	19:09-21:04 1 minute 55 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo, Mxolisi and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The room is dark ➤ MaNgcobo is standing looking nervous ➤ While she is talking to Mxolisi he turns his head away from her ➤ They hug coldly ➤ She is drinking whiskey ➤ She cries and hugs him in desperation ➤ They eventually see Nkosinathi and look shocked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She begs him to help her and Nosipho financially (stealing cars) ➤ He reluctantly gives in and tells her that he will help them
14	21:05-22:03 58 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo, Mxolisi and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He is angry at Mxolisi ➤ He walks away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nkosinathi explains that the Mdletshe's have finally accepted him, now he wants to become a criminal again ➤ MaNgcobo and Mxolisi tell him to leave, but he disobeys their instructions
15	22:04-22:42 38 seconds	Mdletshe home- living room and kitchen	MaNzuza and Ayanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is preparing for Nkosinathi's farewell ➤ Ayanda is sitting relaxed watching television 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are talking about how relieved they are that Gxabashe has been caught
16	22:44-23:56 1 minute 12 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo, Mxolisi and Nkosinathi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is eerie ➤ Mxolisi and MaNgcobo follow Nkosinathi as he walks away ➤ The scene is intense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo tells Mxolisi to leave Nkosinathi as no one believe him if he tells them what he heard

				and emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nkosinathi pulls out his phones and makes them listen to the recording of Mxolisi agreeing to steal one more car for her which leads to the boys fighting over the phone. Nkosinathi falls onto something sharp and is killed instantly ➤ MaNgcobo and Mxolisi are in a panic. Mxolisi wants to call the police, but MaNgcobo convinces him not to as it will only get him into trouble considering his past.
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UZALO SEASON 2 EPISODE 4					
SCENE	TIME/	SETTING	CHARACTER(S)	MOOD/ACTION	DIALOGUE

	DURATION				
1	01:06-01:50 44 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi Nkosinathi's body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The setting is dark ➤ MaNgcobo and Mxolisi are panicking ➤ They hover over the body ➤ Mxolisi is distraught ➤ MaNgcobo puts on a brave face and gives him orders about what to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo tells Mxolisi that they have to get rid of the body ➤ He is conflicted because deep down he wants to transform his life which is why he wants to tell the police
2	02:28-04:08 1 minute 40 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi Nkosinathi's body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The setting is dark ➤ MaNgcobo is strong, she takes charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She orders Mxolisi to find a shovel and bury the body ➤ She also tells him that they must bury the body beneath the office because no one will find him
3	04:09-04:43 44 seconds MaMlambo enters at 04:21	Mdletshe home- Kitchen	MaNzuza, Ayanda and MaMlambo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lighting is bright ➤ MaNzuza and Ayanda are waiting for Nkosinathi and Mxolisi to come home for the surprise farewell ➤ MaMlambo comes to visit Ayanda (church pastor) ➤ She appears very happy ➤ As MaMlambo leaves, it is evident that her premonition makes Ayanda and MaNzuza nervous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is getting slightly impatient as she waits for Nkosinathi and Mxolisi ➤ MaMlambo has another premonition and tells MaNzuza to pray ➤ MaNzuza tells her to stop thinking negative thought
4	04:44-06:40 1 minute 58 seconds MaNzuza calls at 05:25	Zulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi Nkosinathi's body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Setting is dark ➤ MaNgcobo is in control of the situation ➤ They both carry the body to the place it will be buried ➤ MaNgcobo appears affected that he chose not to tell MaNzuza- she seems jealous over the fact that he cares about MaNzuza 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi is emotional, MaNgcobo demands him to follow her orders ➤ MaNgcobo calls him weak, and tells him to man up ➤ When MaNzuza phones, he is tempted to tell her but, instead, he tells her that he will be home soon ➤ She asks him why he did not tell her about Mxolisi's death
5	06:41-08:00 1 minute 9 seconds	Mdletshe home- kitchen and living room	MaNzuza, Ayanda and MaMlambo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza looks worried ➤ MaMlambo is about to leave when she has another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaMlambo tells MaNzuza and Ayanda that there is a dark cloud hanging over their

				premonition about the Mdletshe's	house, and that something bad is about to happen ➤ The viewer witnesses MaNzuza raise her voice for the first time as she tells MaMlambo to stop talking about dark clouds and visions ➤ It is evident now that she is starting to get worried about Nkosinathi's whereabouts
6	08:01-08:51 50 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi Nkosinathi's body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Setting is dark ➤ They are flustered ➤ She is strong yet he appears to be weak ➤ He gets a flashback to his childhood in a similar situation where his father tells him that he is weak (the viewer witnesses his disconnect with the Xulu's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She orders him to dig a deeper hole
8	09:05-10:18 1 minute 13 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi Nkosinathi's nosy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi and MaNgcobo are burying the body ➤ MaNgcobo is looking messy ➤ She appears heartless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi hesitates once again but she tells him to follow her orders
9	10:19-11:16 57 seconds	Mdletshe home-kitchen	MaNzuza, Ayanda, GC, Smangele and Thobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Guests arrive for the farewell party ➤ MaNzuza appears anxious waiting for Nkosinathi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The guests ask where Nkosinathi is, Ayanda whispers to them that he is at Gateway meeting with a girlfriend
10	11:17-12:14 57 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo and Nkosinathi continue digging the grave, he is about to bury the body ➤ They are standing opposite each other, but do not make eye contact ➤ There is great intensity in this scene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She shouts at him and tells him to toughen up
11	12:15-13:08 58 seconds	Mdletshe home	MaNzuza, Ayanda, GC, Smangele and Thobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza is very worried at this point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She demands to know what is going on ➤ Ayanda tells her

					<p>that Nkosinathi is with his girlfriend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza angrily takes off her apron and goes to bedroom
12	13:09-16:40 31 seconds	Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi is retiling the office floor ➤ He stands over his brother's 'grave' site ➤ MaNgcobo fetches a mop and bucket and starts mopping the floor ➤ Mxolisi has proven himself to be a Xulu after what he has done (initiation) ➤ Mxolisi is so mortified by what he has done that he gets physically ill ➤ MaNgcobo is irritated by the fact that Mxolisi is not being emotionally strong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo applauds his work. She tells him that she is proud of him ➤ She is satisfied that no one will ever find the body. This has become their secret. This is the bond that ties them to each other ➤ She encourages Mxolisi to take his feelings out of the situation ➤ MaNgcobo tells him to toughen up because they had a tough decision to make and they chose the best decision
13	16:21-18:07 26 seconds	Mdletshe home- MaNzuza's bedroom	MaNzuza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza tries to call Nkosinathi but she cannot get hold of him ➤ She lays on her bed looking at his picture ➤ This is the first time the audience witnesses darkness in the Mdletshe home (symbolic lighting effect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza leaves a voice message on his phone ➤ She scolds Nkosinathi for not being home and then tells him how proud she is of him
14	18:08-23:18 5 minutes 10 seconds	Backyard of Xulu Panel beaters	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are burning Mxolisi's clothes outside ➤ Mxolisi looks disturbed ➤ The viewer cannot see MaNgcobo's facial expression because the smoke distorts her face, but Mxolisi's face is in full view of the audience ➤ It is only when she speaks about how they are bound together that the audience witnesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi says that they have killed his brother ➤ He talks about how he is buried beneath them under the office they work in ➤ She says that they had no choice, Nkosinathi was going to destroy them. She tells him that they are one (she is crying) ➤ She tells him that fate has brought them together, that they are united

				emotion from MaNgcobo, but even still, her expression is not captured	through this death. This is their secret
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UZALO SEASON 2 EPISODE 5

SCENE	TIME/ DURATION	SETTING	CHARACTER(S)	ACTION/MOOD	DIALOGUE
1	00:40-01:54 1 minute 14 seconds MaNzuza enters at 00:55	Mdletshe home- living room	MaNzuza, Ayanda and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The house is dark ➤ The mood is hostile ➤ Ayanda gets physical with Mxolisi ➤ MaNzuza comes rushing upon hearing the scuffle- she separates the two boys. MaNzuza thinks that its Nkosinathi coming in ➤ MaNzuza comforts Mxolisi- she holds him and tries to keep him calm ➤ Ayanda watches as she comforts him 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ayanda is sceptical about Mxolisi's whereabouts ➤ He questions him about sneaking home late ➤ She asks them why they are fighting ➤ MaNzuza assures him that everything is going to be fine ➤ He tells her that he is trying his best to get to know the Mdletshe, and that maybe he should leave because he doesn't seem to fit in ➤ Ayanda tells him to go, but MaNzuza instructs him to stay because she is his mother
2	02:25-03:20 1 minute 5 seconds	Mdletshe home- Kitchen	MaNzuza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The lighting is bright ➤ MaNzuza is sitting at the kitchen table with her one hand placed on the Bible praying ➤ She has a smile on her face ➤ She is calm and peaceful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She prays for the protection of all her sons ➤ She prays for peace and happiness
4	03:56-06:09 2 minutes 13 seconds Mxolisi enters at 04:37	Mdletshe home- living room/lounge	MaNzuza, Ayanda and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNzuza looks very stressed, while she is sitting on the couch stirring her tea ➤ She appears to be in deep thought ➤ It is becoming clear that something bad may have happened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When Ayanda walks sits next to her, she tells him that Nkosinathi is not back yet. Ayanda tries to comfort her and make light of the situation

				<p>to Nkosinathi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When Mxolisi enters it is clear that he is guilty, his body language is jittery ➤ Ayanda desperately attempt calling him but the call goes to voice mail again ➤ When Ayanda leaves, it is just Mxolisi and MaNzuza left behind at home, she tells him to sit down. He is visibly uneasy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi greets MaNzuza and asks her if she slept- MaNzuza replies that she didn't sleep a wink the previous night ➤ MaNzuza tells Ayanda to look for him. His disappearance reminds of the first time he went missing and he landed p in hospital- she is worried
5	<p>06:11- 08:00 1 minute 49 seconds</p> <p>Nosipho enters at 06:48</p>	Xulu home-kitchen	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The house is dark ➤ MaNgcobo appears deep in thought ➤ Her hair is messy ➤ She is unlike her usual glamorous self ➤ She tries calling Mxolisi- but his phone goes straight to voicemail ➤ Nosipho enters in excitedly ➤ They are yet again standing at a distance ➤ Nosipho is stunned when her mother shouts at her for no reason ➤ MaNgcobo looks like a crazy woman. It is apparent that she is not as cold as she has appeared to be in previous episodes ➤ Nosipho realises that it is best to walk away ➤ MaNgcobo goes back into deep thought as the scene draws to an end 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She tells Mxolisi that she hopes he has not done anything stupid. She instructs him to call her back ➤ Nosipho excitedly talks about how she would like to start jogging (typical girl talk) ➤ MaNgcobo is deep in thought, she ignores Nosipho ➤ Nosipho senses that something is wrong and asks her mother what is wrong. MaNgcobo replies that there is nothing wrong ➤ MaNgcobo eventually breaks and starts screaming telling Nosipho to leave her alone
6	<p>08:02-12:25 4 minutes 23 seconds</p> <p>Ayanda enters at 09:52</p>	Church	MaNgcobo and Ayanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo enters the church- she walks down the aisle slowly ➤ She eventually sits down and starts singing ➤ She then proceeds to her knees and starts praying ➤ Ayanda walks up to her unexpectedly- she stands up from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She is crying and begging God for forgiveness for her sins (crying) ➤ He is shocked to see her at the church since she has not been there in months ➤ She is shocked that he has observed that

				ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He rejects MaNgcobo as his mother. He tells her that in spite of the fact that he has Xulu blood running through his veins, he is a Mdletshe ➤ It is ironic that when Ayanda rejects MaNgcobo, he speaks of the fact that he does not want to be a murderer and car thief like Mxolisi ➤ She thinks that he is referring to Nkosinathi's murder, but Ayanda tells he that Mxolisi is a broken man from the way he was raised
7	12:26- 14:47 2 minutes 21 seconds MaNzuza enters at 12:56	Mdletshe home-Nkosinathi's bedroom	Mxolisi and MaNzuza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi is sitting on the bed with remorse ➤ MaNzuza walks in and sits beside him ➤ Mxolisi cannot look her in the eye- he is distant (due to his guilt) ➤ She is optimistic that nothing is wrong with Nkosinathi ➤ At the end of the scene, she shows concern about Nkosinathi again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She merrily reminisces about a time when he came for dinner after he had fixed a car for their family ➤ It is ironic that she is speaking about the relationship between Nkosinathi and Mxolisi
8	14:48- 16:13 2 minutes 25 seconds Nosipho enters at 14:54	Xulu Panel beaters- office	MaNgcobo and Nosipho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MaNgcobo is sitting at her desk on her phone ➤ She has tried to call Mxolisi again but his phone is still going to voicemail ➤ She looks concerned- she sinks into her chair ➤ She gets a fright when Nosipho walks into the office ➤ Nosipho senses that something is wrong ➤ They are standing at a distance again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ She asks Nosipho why she is sneaking up on her ➤ She responds sarcastically and lists all the troubles she is experiencing, but Nosipho probes and says that she suspects it's something more ➤ MaNgcobo is stubborn and refuses to enlighten her

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nosipho notices that there is a new carpet in the office ➤ As Nosipho exists, the viewer can see the fear on MaNgcobo's face 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ about what has happened ➤ Nosipho tells her mother that she is going for a job interview ➤ MaNgcobo wishes her luck for the interview
11	20:13-21:03 50 seconds	Xulu home-kitchen	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are standing opposite each other ➤ Mxolisi wants to redeem himself – he wants to do the right thing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are arguing about reporting the crime ➤ Mxolisi wants to tell MaNzuza, but MaNgcobo wants him to protect her
13	21:17-22:00 1 minute 17 seconds	Xulu home-kitchen	MaNgcobo and Mxolisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They are still standing opposite each other ➤ When he leaves, MaNgcobo is left seemingly worried ➤ The scene is intense ➤ The camera lens is close up. The viewer feels as if they are intruding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ He is adamant that he wants to tell MaNzuza ➤ MaNgcobo is defiant, she wants him to protect her ➤ He says that maybe if they go to jail for killing Nkosinathi, the family can have a chance a new life, away from crime
14	22:02-23:56 1 minute 44 seconds	Mdletshe home-	MaNzuza, Mxolisi and Ayanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The lighting is slightly dull ➤ Walks into the living room with Nkosinathi's luggage ➤ She hopes that it is he who has walked through the door, instead it is Mxolisi ➤ When Ayanda comes in without Nkosinathi, MaNzuza realises that he is probably missing- that something bad has happened ➤ MaNzuza looks helpless and weak ➤ She starts crying and screaming for them to find her baby ➤ Ayanda is holding her, trying to pacify her but she falls to the ground ➤ The scene is very emotional ➤ Mxolisi seems out of place- he does not know what to do. His body language is very 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mxolisi informs her that he has something to tell her about Nkosinathi, but Ayanda walks in before he gets the chance to say anything ➤ Both Ayanda and Nkosinathi say that cannot find him ➤ She says that she wants them to find Nkosinathi

				uncertain ➤ This scene is very dramatic and emotional	
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OBJECTIVES

- 1.) In what setting do the two women appear?
- 2.) What do they talk about?
- 3.) Who do they talk to? (If male, is it family or outsiders?)
- 4.) How often do they appear onscreen?
- 5.) Do the conversations revolve around them or other characters?
- 6.) What is their body language/position/gestures during a conversation?
- 7.) Does their body language/position/gesture change between male and females?
- 8.) What is the length of their scenes?
- 9.) How is the camera positioned during their scenes?
- 10.) How similar or different is the lighting in the two characters' scenes?



**Top 20 Programs All Adults 15+
September 2016 Prime time 17h30-22h00**

Adults 15+ years U:34088 S:8772

Day	Date	From	To	Station	Programme Title	Genre	AR	Viewers	Share
Tue	20/09/2016	2004	2035	S1	Generations the Legacy	Soap	23.9	8168891	66.6
Mon	19/09/2016	2031	2102	S1	Uzalo	Dram	23.9	8155068	65.6
Wed	21/09/2016	1833	1904	S1	Skeem Saam	Dram	20.1	6869105	60.1
Tue	06/09/2016	1905	2117	S1	Nelson Mandela Challenge:South Af	Spor	14.9	5091225	43.1
Tue	06/09/2016	1854	1857	S1	Vodacom Millionaires	Quiz	13.7	4671841	54.9
Thur	01/09/2016	2030	2100	S1	Mutual Friends	Dram	13.3	4470713	43.3
Wed	21/09/2016	1933	2003	S1	Thandekas Diary	Real	13	4454132	38.6
Tue	20/09/2016	1903	1934	S1	Xhosa News	News	12.6	4287164	36.8
Tue	20/09/2016	1934	2004	S1	Selimathunzi	Vari	12.5	4263200	37.1
Fri	09/09/2016	1801	1859	S1	Fan Base	Musi	12.2	4182371	49.3
Wed	21/09/2016	1904	1933	S1	Zulu News	News	12.2	4173485	37.3
Tue	06/09/2016	1858	1905	S1	Soccer Build- up	Spor	12	4087547	39.9
Thur	29/09/2016	1931	2001	S1	Zaziwa	Vari	11.3	3867487	33.9
Fri	30/09/2016	2030	2058	S1	Shuga	Dram	11.2	3835669	37.4
Fri	23/09/2016	1931	2001	S1	Live Amp	Musi	10.8	3693540	34.2
Fri	02/09/2016	1900	2101	S1	Afcon Qualifiers 2017:South Africa vs	Spor	10.2	3433664	33.6
Sat	17/09/2016	1800	1859	S1	Friends Like These	Vari	9.8	3336178	39.9
Tue	06/09/2016	1759	1828	S1	Rise Talk Show -R	Real	9.2	3153399	38.9
Sat	17/09/2016	1930	1959	S1	Real Goboza	Maga	8	2729245	28.9
Sat	24/09/2016	1859	2130	S1	Caf Champions League 2016:Mamed	Spor	7.8	2646361	29.4