

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE LYRICS OF THE TOP 10 AFRICAN LANGUAGE POP
SONGS ON UMHLOBO WENENE IN 2016**

BY

ANELE GOBODWANA

(ANLGOB001)

Faculty of Humanities

University of Cape Town

2018



A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the
Degree of Master of Arts in African Languages and Literatures

Supervisors

Dr. Tessa Dowling

Ms Somikazi Deyi

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Contents

COMPULSORY DECLARATION	6
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	7
ABSTRACT.....	8
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION.....	9
1.1 Introduction	9
1.2 Problem statement.....	9
1.3 Aims of the study	10
1.4 Hypothesis	10
1.5 Survey of literature review.....	11
1.6 Survey of methodology	11
1.7 Contribution of the study	12
1.8 Chapter conclusion	13
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Lyrics changing as cultures undergo psychological change.....	14
2.3 Lyrics in global and local settings.....	22
2.4 Lyrics evolving over time, showing unity of purpose	23
2.5 Gender role in lyrics.....	24
2.6 Linguistic analyses of lyrics	25
2.7 The production of aesthetic difference	27
2.8 Purpose of lyrics to teenagers	28
2.9 Lyrics of South African pop singers singing in Xhosa	29
2.10 Translation and code switching in the lyrics of bilingual popular songs.....	31
2.11 Chapter conclusion.....	37
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	38
3.1 Introduction	38
3.2 Quantitative data collection tools	38
3.3 Qualitative data collection tools.....	38
3.4 Ethical considerations	39
3.5 Selection of songs.....	39
3.6 Background to artists	40
3.7 Chapter conclusion	48

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS	49
4.1 Introduction	49
SONG 1: AMAZULU	50
Analysis	51
Title	51
Theme	51
Language and lexicon	52
Conclusion	52
SONG 2: INGQONDO	53
Analysis	54
Title	54
Theme	55
Language and lexicon	56
Conclusion	60
SONG 3: NDIKUTHANDILE.....	60
Analysis	61
Title	61
Theme	61
Language and lexicon	63
Conclusion	65
SONG 4: DONSA NKABI	66
Analysis	67
Title	67
Theme	67
Language and lexicon	68
Conclusion	69
SONG 5: NGIFIKE	69
Analysis	70
Title	70
Theme	70
Language and lexicon	71
Conclusion	74
SONG 6: BABY PLEASE.....	74
Analysis	75
Title	75
Theme	75

Language and lexicon	76
Conclusion	77
SONG 7: KUCHEZA	78
Analysis	80
Title	80
Theme	81
Language and lexicon	83
Conclusion	84
SONG 8: AMAGAMA	84
Analysis	85
Title	85
Theme	86
Language and lexicon	86
Conclusion	90
SONG 9: AKULALEKI	90
Analysis	90
Title	90
Theme	91
Language and lexicon	91
Conclusion	92
SONG 10: UMSINDO.....	93
Analysis	93
Title	93
Theme	93
Language and lexicon	94
Conclusion	95
Chapter conclusion	95
CHAPTER FIVE: SURVEY WITH TEENAGERS	96
5.1 Introduction	96
5.2 Methodology	96
5.3 Research setting	96
5.4 Questions	96
5.5 Results	97
5.6 Chapter conclusion	101
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION	102
6.1 Introduction	102

6.2 Trending themes: Love and money	102
6.3 Grammar of the songs: It's all about me and you.....	103
6.4 Culture not so important?	104
6.5 Languages used: Standard vs Urban varieties	104
6.6 No intellectual or emotional development	105
REFERENCES	107

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____

Signed by candidate

Date: 28 November 2018

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to my family for their unfailing support always. God, church members of the Seventh-day Adventist for believing and trusting, praying for me till this far. Mr M.Tshabalala (the principal of Lukhanyo Primary, the school where I teach), for encouraging me and releasing me from work when it was required during this time.

I also thank my supervisors Dr Tessa Dowling and Ms Somikazi Deyi. Dr Dowling for her academic knowledge, meticulous attention to detail and for always reading each section of the thesis thoroughly and commenting in detail. Ms Deyi for always being there if I needed support or advice, particularly with regard to traditional lyrics or complex Xhosa phraseology.

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I critically analyse the lyrics of the top 10 songs (sung in an indigenous African language) aired on uMhlobo weNene (the national broadcast station for the Xhosa language) during 2016 . Before the analysis of the songs I discuss various academic works on pop lyrics generally – ranging from a discussion of the production of aesthetic difference, lyrics in global and local settings, the changing lexicon of pop lyrics over the years, the purpose of lyrics to teenagers and the issue of translation and code switching in the lyrics of bilingual popular songs. In the main body of the thesis I apply a thematic and detailed linguistic analysis of the top 10 songs after which I provide an analysis of interviews conducted with Xhosa-speaking teenagers with regard to their linguistic preferences as applicable to contemporary lyrics. The conclusion includes a summary of the dominant themes of the lyrics studied and a focus on what the grammar of the songs (e.g. the predominance of the first person pronoun in all of the lyrics) can tell us about the increasingly individualistic nature of contemporary lyrics sung in African languages.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Popular music is listened to by the youth for a number of different reasons, including a desire for belonging, comfort and other emotionally inspired motivations (see Rentfrow et al., 2003). Sometimes the publicity around an artist's background engages otherwise rootless young people, to find identity and to be able to relate who they are to the singer's own journey and background. It can be argued that using local vernaculars 'is an act of cultural resistance and preservation of ethnic autonomy' (Mitchell, 2000:53).

The arrangement of lyrics penned in African languages in particular allows listeners to have a sense of self-belonging, and can encourage self-development of character. Listening to any popular song, sung in your own language, immediately encourages you to relate and to have vivid identification, and, if the song is about Xhosa customs or ways of seeing the world, to feel closer to a distinct African identity and to an involvement with ritual narratives.

This thesis will, through detailed analyses of lyrics and via interviews with listeners, discover how and why certain songs appeal to people and thus will conjecture as to the reasons for their commercial appeal. Also important for this study is to discover what contemporary South African popular music, with indigenous African language lyrics, means to people and to ascertain what kind of emotions they display while listening.

1.2 Problem statement

While globally scholars have shown great interest in the lyrics of popular songs enjoyed by the youth (De Wall et al., 2011; Brackett, 2002; Larkey 2000) there is a dearth of research on the lyrics of popular songs sung in South Africa's indigenous African languages (Dowling and Stinson, 2011). In order to understand popular songs as being one way into understanding contemporary South African urban youth preoccupations it is important that an in-depth analysis of the most popular songs sung in the vernacular is undertaken. A central question that the research undertaken in this thesis hopes to address is whether the lyrics of popular Xhosa songs are becoming more individualistic, or whether there are still lyrics that make reference to Xhosa traditional cultural practices.

1.3 Aims of the study

This thesis focuses on understanding the lyrics of the most popular vernacular language songs given airtime in 2016 on South Africa's national radio station for the Xhosa language, uMhlobo weNene. In this thesis I will unpack how the themes and language used in these songs might have contributed to their popularity, and pay particular attention to the lexicon, grammar and stylistics of the lyrics. The aim of the study is also to ascertain whether the hypotheses arrived at by scholars of international pop songs are applicable for those sung in South Africa's indigenous African languages.

1.4 Hypothesis

Research into the lyrics of popular songs internationally suggests that vernacular languages are often used alongside English for specific reasons – mainly to appeal to the psychological and emotional make-up of contemporary youth listeners. As Hornberger and Swinehart argue even when away from the “homelands” :

newer generations who are spending their lives in urban, globalizing contexts are increasingly unwilling to give up the language and identity practices that define who they are (Hornberger & Swinehart, 2012: 500).

In this thesis I test the hypothesis that Xhosa-speaking youth prefer listening to popular lyrics in the vernacular not because the content has any specific cultural value but because the language itself is a marker of their identity. I will, in this thesis, compare the different languages used in any one song, analysing the statistics of the frequency of language used (i.e. isiXhosa to English) and the type of words (e.g. emotional, grammatical) employed in order to test the hypothesis that the vernacular language is used for specific reasons. In this study I will also focus on the semantics of the vocabulary chosen by the writers of the lyrics of the top 10 songs on uMhlobo weNene in 2016 – to what extent do these writers focus on an individual and to what extent are their messages personal rather than public? In my study I look at the importance of lyrics that are not only in Xhosa, but that reflect a Xhosa world view and the influence this choice of lexicon will have on the commercial success of an album or song. I hope to explore whether people are attracted or repelled by indigenous African lyrics that often that require a deep knowledge of indigenous African languages and cultures and to find out their reasons for enjoying songs sung in Xhosa. I will also test the hypothesis that Xhosa-speaking youth still enjoy pop songs in the vernacular by finding out what their reasons for such preferences are,

and whether these reasons are purely linguistic, or whether there are any other influencing factors.

1.5 Survey of literature review

In the literature review I discuss texts that deal with lyrics changing as culture undergoes psychological change (here I will provide an in-depth discussion on the Somagwaza ritual initiation song which was commercialized by pop artist Stompi Mavi). The review also includes literature that discusses lyrics in global and local settings, the notion of lyrics evolving over time, lyrics showing unity of purpose as well as research on analytical linguistic treatments of the words of songs. I also make reference to how aesthetic difference is produced in lyrical content and the purpose of this content for teenagers. I then hone my literature survey down to discuss scholarship on the lyrics of contemporary South African pop singers and the phenomenon of translation and code-switching in the lyrics of bilingual popular songs.

1.6 Survey of methodology

The methodology included the following tools to gather both quantitative and qualitative data:

- Questionnaires with questionnaires on both the original Somagwaza initiation song and the Stompie Mavi version, distributed to 12 Xhosa-speaking Cape Town residents (3 females and 9 males all over the age of 20).
- A selection process – here I describe how I selected the songs chosen for analysis.
- A transcription and translation process – here I detail how the lyrics were transcribed and translated into English
- Background data to artists – this data is provided in order to locate the artist both in terms of his or her cultural background as well as linguistic influences
- Interviews with 11 Xhosa-speaking teenagers about what languages they like their pop songs to be sung in.

1.7 Contribution of the study

As there is a dearth of literature and research on the use of South Africa's indigenous African Languages in popular lyrics this study makes a significant contribution to:

- locating the preoccupations of local artists and their fan bases – without these translations, transcriptions and analyses the field of popular South African music in indigenous languages remains closed to international scholars of culture and society as well as to the general field of linguistics
- understanding what the preoccupations of contemporary young Xhosa speakers are – whether the lyrics are heavy with cultural content, or whether they reflect a more individualistic, “me-centred” society
- establishing whether young Xhosa-speakers are attracted to contemporary pop songs sung in their mother-tongue
- providing second-language teachers of Xhosa texts (lyrics) that are easily accessible in terms of current discourses and with their morphology fully described

1.8 Dissertation outline

Chapter 1 will introduce the topic and locate the study as relevant to contemporary understanding of youth psychologies. This chapter also maps out the rest of the thesis in terms of the topics to be covered in each chapter.

Chapter 2 is the literature review providing an in-depth discussion of literature on the lyrics of pop songs. This chapter also provides a case study of a Xhosa pop song, Somagwaza, sung by the late Stompie Mavi. This song has its roots in the Xhosa initiation ceremony and therefore in this chapter I interrogate the literature that locates the practice within the ritual space.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology for the data collection, and includes a brief background to each of the artists.

Chapter 4 includes transcriptions and English translations of all the lyrics which is followed by detailed thematic, lexical and grammatical analyses.

Chapter 5 tabulates listeners' responses to the lyrics of the songs.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion in which I attempt to thematise the lyrics, provide an analysis of the kind of vernaculars favoured by contemporary pop artists singing in African languages in South Africa and a brief discussion of how African language lyrics resonate with contemporary audiences.

1.8 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I have located Xhosa pop lyrics as a viable topic for academic study in that while a considerable body of research exists for pop lyrics in English and other languages, there is a scarcity of research into pop lyrics in South Africa's African languages. I highlight the main aim of the study being to understand the predominant themes of contemporary Xhosa pop lyrics and to test whether the individualistic tendencies evident in global lyrics can also be detected in our local languages. I describe the literature to be surveyed in terms of the kind of research into lyrics that has been conducted to date, and then explain the methodological tools that I use to focus attention on contemporary Xhosa pop lyrics. I give a brief description of what to expect in each chapter and also suggest what the contributions of such a study could be, i.e. to bring Xhosa pop lyrics into the international arena by analysing them academic rigour and to bring to the fore the role of indigenous African languages in contemporary youth cultures.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In my literature review I will summarize scholarship that focuses on analyses of lyrics globally and nationally and the relevance these works have for my own study which is focussed specifically on contemporary lyrics of ten popular songs using African languages played on uMhlobo weNene (the national broadcaster for Xhosa-speaking listeners) in 2016.

I will group the literature discussed under the following headings:

- Lyrics changing as culture undergoes psychological change (here I will provide an in-depth discussion on the Somagwaza ritual initiation song which was commercialized by pop artist Stompi Mavi)
- Lyrics in global and local settings
- Lyrics evolving over time, showing unity of purpose
- Linguistic analyses of lyrics
- The production of aesthetic difference
- Purpose of lyrics to teenagers
- Lyrics of South African pop singers singing in Xhosa
- Translation and Code Switching in the Lyrics of bilingual popular songs

2.2 Lyrics changing as cultures undergo psychological change

De Wall et al (2011:200) note that the words in songs may change if the culture undergoes psychological change. I found this article relevant to my study as one of my hypotheses is that as Xhosa culture changes so too may the linguistic content of contemporary Xhosa pop songs also undergo some alteration. For example, Xhosa culture as we know it, with its many traditional practices and rituals, including rites of passage such as *ukwaluka*, *intonjane* (male and female initiation) and the forging of new family relationships through marriage via *lobola* (bride price) and linguistic cultural artefacts as embedded in *izaci* and *amaqhalo* (sayings and proverbs) may not influence contemporary writers of Xhosa lyrics as much as universal (individualistic) preoccupations such as love, money and relationships. On the other hand, pop singers like Zahara might be drawing on their cultural heritage when creating new lyrics.

For instance, *Loliwe* by Zahara, is accompanied by guitar, piano, and other Western instruments, though historically, when elements of the same song were sung by Xhosa-speakers, the accompaniment was created by hand clapping and *izigodlo* (horns). As Xhosa culture changes, it can be argued that the consumers of contemporary Xhosa music might also have undergone a psychological change and be more inclined to buy music that reflects their individuality, rather than their communality or their sense of relating to a particular ethnic group.

De Wall et al (2011:201-202) question whether song lyrics are becoming “more self-focused over time” and looked at song lyrics for the 10 most popular songs for each year between 1980 to 2007 in the US. It has been useful for me also to go back in history when considering language in South African pop songs. The Xhosa language has always been a successful medium for pop lyrics: we can look at Brenda Fassie’s best selling album *Memeza* containing the hit songs *Sumbulala* and *Vulindlela*, Ringo’s *Sondelani* released in 1997 with the ever popular *Sondela* and more recently Simphiwe Dana’s 2004 album *Zandisile* with the iconic *Ndiredi* and Zahara’s 2011 smash hit *Loliwe* featuring songs like *Umthwalo* and *Xa bendingenamama*.

My reason for focussing on pop songs of 2016 was that that year was very turbulent with #FeesMustFall¹ and other protests, and I conjecture that this unsettling of the political arena might have had some psychological impact on the youth: I wanted to know whether this affected their choice of song or whether the youth, in their private listening time, still are preoccupied not so much by the political but by the personal.

If we look at cultural change among the Xhosa it is important to note that while many Xhosa customs and rituals are still practiced, there has been a change in their content with many families actively wanting:

¹ #FeesMustFall is a protest movement that started at the University of Witwatersrand in October 2015. The main objection of the movement was the increase in tuition fees. The protest spread to other universities, including the University of Cape Town. Students stopped protesting when the South African government confirmed that there would be no tuition fee increases for 2016 but they started protesting again in 2016 when the South African Minister of Higher Education announced that there would be a fee increase in 2017.

their children to be absorbed into the system, they **want** them to be assimilated into a single unified national culture which will probably be Western to the core. (De Klerk, 2000:no page)

But even with this huge drive towards assimilation, it is important to note that ancestors are still at the thematic heart of much traditional (but not pop) Xhosa music as it is still practiced today. In order for ancestors to respond to those still living, music is performed as a way of communicating with them (Levine, 2005: 19). In this next section I hope to provide an analysis of the interesting case study of the Somagwaza male initiation song which was turned into a pop song by the late Stompie Mavi.

Commercial appropriation of cultural songs – the Somagwaza case study²

The *amaXhosa* when they send *inkwenkwe ehlathini* (a boy to the forest) for circumcision, will start by singing *Somagwaza*, who legend has it, was the first boy to go for circumcision. Ntombana quotes one of his elderly informants as saying:

Long, long ago there lived a well-respected man named Somagwaza; he raped a woman in the community. Due to his upright and well-behaved life, the community was amazed at the incident. He was not punished but given a warning. In response to his action he punished himself by cutting his foreskin as a sign of guilt and repentance (Ntombana, 2011:86).

Ntombana appears reluctant to accept this explanation as there is no concrete evidence to support the veracity of any of the claims. He concludes that “after listening to the Somagwaza stories I concluded that Somagwaza is nothing more than a mythical ancestor”(Ntombana, 2011:85). Even though Ntombana does not believe the stories surrounding the origin of the Somagwaza song, he nevertheless views the “myth” as positive:

The myth of the Somagwaza story illustrates a positive value attached to the initiation practice, in the sense that after Somagwaza realised that he was not punished for his actions, he circumcised himself as a sign of repentance. This action associates the initiation practice with responsibility and building up the moral fibre of men (Ntombana, 2011:108).

Ntombana further argues that the singing of Somagwaza unites people, as traditionally, when it is heard:

² This section is largely taken from an article I co-authored with Tessa Dowling and Somikazi Deyi **When Culturally Significant Songs Are Decontextualised: The Initiation Song *Somagwaza*—A Case Study**. The article has been submitted to the *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* and has been accepted for publication in Vol.28(2).

All people joined together in celebration and in some cases people did not even know which initiate was graduating but the Somagwaza song brought people together. The moment the song is heard people know that there is a boy graduating from initiation. Men were playing with sticks and women were ululating and doing *ukutshayelela* (sweeping, using clothes and garments as a sign of welcoming the new men) (Ntombana, 2011:199).

Ntombana suggests that one of the most important functions of the Somagwaza song is the fact that it is a symbol of initiation (Ntombana, 2011:215). His research shows that there is, however, some disagreement as to the correct time at which to sing the song (see also Mhlahlo, 2009, on the same topic of timing of the song as discussed above).

In some regions of the Eastern Cape (such as Butterworth) people would only sing the song as the boys entered the initiation school, while others (from urban areas such as East London) would also sing it at the end, when the boys were leaving the school (Ntombana, 2011:215-216). This suggests that even in terms of the song being sung in its traditional setting (initiation) its ritual placement is sometimes decontextualized.

Ntombana discusses the fact that there are arguments for and against the singing of the song both at the start of the initiation process and at the end. He suggests that it could be argued that if it is sung at the end it is more of an identity marker for *ukwaluka* “reminding men of their days of initiation” and the values attached to it (Ntombana, 2011:216). Finally, he gives the opinion of an old man who feels that both views of when to sing Somagwaza are correct, particularly since other songs were sung, and Somagwaza was part of the initiation musical repertoire.

The informant mentioned that Somagwaza was first and foremost a person not the song. The eponymous song came into being after he had circumcised himself, this act of cutting off his own foreskin demonstrating his great bravery and perseverance. The song was traditionally sung by the men, both young and old, of the village, and hinted at the activities that would unfold at initiation school in terms of teaching and practising manhood.

It could be argued that the lyrics of Somagwaza reflect the psychological preoccupations of the amaXhosa at that time, but these lyrics remain popular even today since initiation is still a very important liminal rite in Xhosa culture.

Has the culture of the amaXhosa changed from one in which both the living and the dead are part of a community, to one of an individualistic society? It is the aim of this study to try to answer this question. De Wall et al (2011: 200), with reference to the US, note that:

recent research using self-report measures suggests, ... that U.S. culture has changed substantially in the past few decades, enough that individualistic traits such as extraversion, self-esteem, narcissism, and agency have risen over time.

This observation has resonance for this study as the lyrics used by South African Afro pop artists also seem to reflect a change in preoccupations with a move away from lyrics that suggest a communality of experience towards those that demonstrate a focus on “individualistic traits”. It is important for this research to gauge the extent of the effects of cultural change on lyrics in Xhosa (or vice versa) as this will allow an insight into current preoccupations with the youth. It is important to note that, according to De Wall et al. (2011:201), cultural products can also illustrate how groups of the same people change over time. For example, the music of the Beatles had a tremendous impact on U.S. culture, and their lyrics demonstrate changes in their linguistic lyrical styles over time that reflected different psychological and social concerns (see Petrie, Pennebaker and Sivertsen, 2008).

The original lyrics of Somagwaza were not accessible, for various reasons. A 55-year old male informant of mine was of the opinion that the traditional lyrics used to be hostile and sung only by men, but that the new, popular Stompie Mavi version had somehow feminised the song because the boy could now be accompanied by his mother to the initiation lodge. The informant did not, however, elaborate on exactly how the Mavi lyrics had accomplished this feminising process, but rather stressed the harshness of the original song *engekho mnandi konke konke* ‘not being at all nice’:

Inkwenkwe ke leyo izakuthi yoluke, izakuhamba namadoda asele olukile, ayingqange ukwenzele ingaboni apho iyakhona, nalapho isuka khona. Le nto yenzelwa okokuba inkwenkwe ifunde ukuzimele apha ebomini. Oku ke yingqalo yobunzima, nokufundiswa ukuthatha izingqibo ngobom bakho uwedwa. Le ngoma iculwayo yingoma engekho mnandi konke konke, kuba amazwi laa ayo axela ubungozi bento umntu azakudibana nayo.

Mhlawumbi kule mihla inkwenkwe iza kuya esuthwini ihamba nonina, ngenxa yokuba le nto yolwaluko ayixabise kangaka nangenxa yenguqu yeli lizwe. Kule mihla zonke izinto zezasemzini kwaye zikhumshile ngenxa yokutshintsha kwamaxesha

The boy would be surrounded by men to make sure he could not see where he was going and where he was coming from. This was done so that the boy could learn how to be independent in life. This was an introduction to hardship, to the process of learning to make your own decisions in life. The Somagwaza song was never friendly because the lyrics carry a heavy load that told of the danger of the thing that the person was going to encounter.

Maybe these days the boy will go with his mother because these practices are not treasured because of extreme transformation in our country. Nowadays everything and everyone is modern or westernised.

Many of the discussants used the word *imfazwe* ‘war’ in relation to the traditional song, further emphasizing the masculinity of the rite, for example, one informant said *Ubuhle bale nto yokwambathiswa kwengubo emhlophe, bubonisa okokuba uza emfazweni* (The beauty of this thing of clothing him with a white blanket was to show that he was coming to a war.)

Table 1: Comparison of the traditional Somagwaza initiation lyrics with those of Stompie Mavi

SOMAGWAZA (TRADITIONAL LYRICS)	SOMAGWAZA (STOMPIE MAVI LYRICS)
<i>Somagwaza</i>	<i>Uk’zala kuzolula vumani</i> (Giving birth grows the self, sing)
<i>ndakugwaza ngalo mkhonto</i> (I will pierce you with this spear)	<i>babhem</i> (people ³)
<i>Awheehhhh! Iyhoo ho hoooo!</i> <i>Awheehhh!</i> ⁴ <i>Somagwaza</i>	<i>Aweh hoholololo hayo aweh</i> <i>Somagwaza</i>
<i>ndakugwaza ngalo mkhonto</i> (I will pierce you with this spear)	<i>Somagwaza khawuchophe sigalele</i> (Somagwaza please sit down and we will speak sense)
	<i>Aweh</i> (Yes)
	<i>amav’obudoda</i> (experiences of manhood)
	<i>Aweh Somagwaza</i> (Yes, Somagwaza)
	<i>Unendleb’ethwel’ulwane unetyala</i> (You have the ability to listen acutely—you need to take account/responsibility)
	<i>Aweh</i> (Yes)
	<i>elakho lobudoda</i> (your manhood)
	<i>Aweh Somagwaza</i> (Yes Somagwaza)

Comparison of the Traditional Song vs the Stompie Mavi Version

³ *Babhem* = Mpondo dialect for “people”

⁴ These are untranslatable vocalizations

Mavi breaches ritual secrecy

Discussants were generally of the opinion that by producing his version of *Somagwaza*, Stompie Mavi had made public what was normally considered a secret song for young men at Xhosa initiation ceremonies, thus violating the ritual secrecy of this rite. One man noted that by using a number of different Xhosa dialects, Stompie Mavi was making the song more accessible to a greater number of people (e.g. *Khawuchophe* instead of *Khawuhlale*—isiHlubi; *Babhem* instead of *Bantu*—isiMpondo). A 55-year-old man said:

Ingoma ke le kaSomagwaza phaya endulo ibixabisekile kwaye ingaculwa nje, kwaye yayingavamanga ukuculwa nanguye nabani na umntu ekuhlaleni, yayiyimfihlo.

The song was cherished back then, it was not sung by just anyone in the community, it was a secret.

Mavi decontextualises a ritual

Some of the older discussants complained that *Somagwaza*, which used to be sung only at initiation schools, could now be heard on radio and YouTube. This decontextualisation of a ritual performance and its lack of ritual placing was further criticised as bleaching the song of its ceremonial significance.

Mavi's reference to experience is important

Discussants appreciated Mavi's references to experience and education, which are absent in the original lyrics. A 35-year-old man told us, in a mixture of English and Xhosa:

Going to initiation school was a physical symbol of maturity. That this particular boy is ready for any responsibility given. He accepted the challenges that would face him. He would be taught how to become a principled man, and how to progress in life. The [Mavi] song lyrics had said it all that you are ready for any obstacle given or experienced.

Remember the boy has been pierced by the *umkhonto*, *kwaye umntwana wanyamezela*. *Ukuculwa kuka Somagwaza kuzele yimfundiso emntwaneni osandula ukuba yindoda.*

Remember the boy has been pierced by the shield, and the child endured. The singing of *Somagwaza* is full of education for the child who has just become a man.

A 42-year-old man noted:

Xa siqaphela kule ngoma ithi 'Somagwaza' ngumzekeliso, okanye ukutyhilelwa, kwalowo uthe wazahlula ebudodeni ukuthi aze angothuki kwizinto azodibana nazo okanye kwiingxaki, aze acinge indawo asuka kuyo nakunye nendlela athe wayihamba wenza ngako kwizinto athe wadibana nazo kuyo le ndawo asuka kuyo, nezi iingxaki aza kuzo ekuphileni kwakhe. Ziza kuba ngumqobo kodwa ofuna anyamezele.

When we take note of this song *Somagwaza* it is an example, or a revelation, of him also separating himself in manhood so that he should not be alarmed by the things or problems he will encounter and should think of where he comes from and the journey he has taken and take [experiences] to the problems he will come across in his life. They will sustain him who needs to persevere.

Mavi's version encourages good behaviour

A 32-year-old man told us that Mavi's version of *Somagwaza* encourages good behaviour and discipline by suggesting to the young man that he now has the strength to deal with the vicissitudes of life:

Yindlela yokuziphatha phakathi kwabantu bokuhlala naxa ungaphandle kwekhaya. Loo nto ithi ithelele nako bubomi usandula ukuqala njengomntu omtsha ongene kwisigaba apho khona izinto neengxaki zixananazile ziphathwa ngendlela eyohlukileyo kumntu ubunguye ngaphambili.

It is a way of behaving among people even when you are away from home. And that refers to the life you have just embarked upon as a young person who has entered a phase [of life] where there will be problems and difficulties which will be handled differently from the person who you were before.

It could be argued that instead of the traditional *Somagwaza* song being secularised, the opposite has happened. As argued by Ncaca (2014, 33) the original lyrics have lost "their exact meanings" so any new interpretation could only build on the emotion of the song. Thus, Stompie Mavi's popular version exploits the fact that the lyrics are "felt rather than understood" (Ncaca 2014, 33) and, through our discussions, it would appear to have an important message for young male Xhosa men undergoing initiation. It can therefore be argued that the popularised version of the *Somagwaza* song still contains a non-secular, religious dimension. As Marini (2003, 4) contends, "the harnessing of musical expression to mythic content defines sacred song"; Stompie Mavi's *Somagwaza* still harnesses the "mythic content" of the *Somagwaza* legend and the sacredness of the initiation ritual, and can therefore be considered a musical interpretation of a sacred event, although his lyrics add greater complexity. This, according to

Marini (2003: 5), is not the hallmark of sacred music, which is characterised more by “redundancy and simplicity rather than ... complexity and originality”. Stompie Mavi’s song increases the complexity of the original lyrics, allowing the central message of Xhosa male initiation to be expanded upon. At the same time, though, it could be that this very complexity has removed some of the song’s sacred import.

Returning to the discussion of pop songs and culture in the global arena, it has been argued that popular American song lyrics:

represent cultural products that provide useful information regarding cultural values and mental states. Popular song lyrics in China, for example, contain more themes related to collectivism than do popular song lyrics in the U.S. (De Wall et al., 2011:201)

I would look at this statement and say: in South African pop artists are no longer singing about culture but rather, most of them are singing about their life experiences, with all the usual preoccupations of young people (such as love, money, sex). Some contemporary pop artists (singing in indigenous African languages), like Stompie Mavi and more recently Camagwini sing about cultural practices, but they are an exception, rather than the norm (see Dowling and Stinson, 2011).

2.3 Lyrics in global and local settings

Following on from the previous discussion, it is necessary to discuss the antagonism between global and local forces and how popular artists can use their own social contexts while at the same time exploiting global culture to produce music that still speaks to his or her culture:

globalisation encourages popular musical practices to look towards global styles for possible inspiration, whilst also looking inwards to (re)create national music styles and forms. (Ho, 2003: 144)

Ho (2003:144-145) uses the word “dislocation” to explain how and why different musicians in one country might incorporate musical styles and instruments from other cultures, “fusing different elements” and different “linguistic backgrounds” to create a “third culture” and argues that globalization means that territories, and therefore the cultures that belong in those territories, are no longer “bounded”, because technology, and global markets, allow for an easy

flow of products via “linked networks”. Discussing Cantopop in Hong Kong, Ho (2003:144) explains that Cantopop developed in the early 1970s because Hong Kong audiences wanted popular music in their own dialect, Cantonese, and that this style of music incorporating this dialect was actively promoted on radio and by television stations and musicians. She concludes that this advancement of the Cantonese language led to some singers abandoning English lyrics in preference to those in Cantonese (Ho, 2003:147). Local Cantopop music concerts were established and became very popular and lucrative and were more like spectacles than pop concerts (Ho, 2003:148). Cantonese pop music therefore flourished as “a consumer product promoted by international and local music companies” (Ho, 2003:148).

The downside of all of this success is that Cantopop was not considered to be very innovative or original (Ho, 2003:149) but it can still be argued to be the product of a “negotiated cultural identity, as expressed in the language of Cantonese” (Ho, 2003:154). In my thesis I want to explore whether similar forces have led to South African pop singers preferring to sing in their own languages, and to what extent dialects are exploited, if at all to index and appeal to a certain cultural identity. Or, do Xhosa pop singers, for example, prefer to sing in standard isiXhosa because if they sang in isiMpondo, for instance, would they be alienating, or attracting their target audience?

In my study I will be doing a linguistic and thematic analysis of songs sung in isiXhosa and I will attempt to discover whether the lyrics are thought-provoking and emotionally challenging, or whether they have become “formulaic romantic ballads” as Ho describes some Cantopop (Ho, 2003:151).

2.4 Lyrics evolving over time, showing unity of purpose

Petrie et al. (2008:197) analyse the lyrics of the Beatles’ three songwriters, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison, who “together and separately evolved in their lyrical styles over time”. The researchers used computer text analyses to address how the various members changed their writing styles over time. Although I will not be looking at one band like the Beatles, text analysis is still important for my work as I consider the lyrical styles of South African songwriters and how they overlap and evolve. I concur with the above statement by Petrie et al (2008:197), in that it hints at the fact that, contrary to speculation often portrayed

in the media entertainment pages, pop singers are not jealous of one another; they share their ideas when they write and sometimes their styles merge and overlap.

Remember in South Africa during the 2010 FIFA world cup, it was a beautiful picture to see all South African pop, rap, hip-pop, gospel and Kwaito artists performing together, (*abamhlophe, nabamnyama* – black and white). They were showing unity, love, *ubuntu*, caring, a positive branding of our country to foreigners. This unity of purpose, demonstrated by musical collaborations is important to remember in times of social tension and xenophobic attacks.

2.5 Gender role in lyrics

An early study on gender roles in lyrics (Freudiger & Almquist, 1978:58) notes that:

Women in Soul music are identified by their nonconformity to the submissive and dependent traits. The urban Black subculture, which these lyrics possibly mirror, emphasizes the independence and assertiveness of women.

The authors note that since most writers of lyrics are male, they tend to fantasise the way they would prefer the “female role to be portrayed” (Freudiger & Almquist, 1978:58). A second proposition is that since writers of lyrics had generally been male, they portrayed women in their songs according to their own biases and prejudices. It is important for my study to consider this kind of research into the difference between male and female song writing since the top ten pop songs on uMhlobo weNene in 2016 were penned by both males and females. Also key to this is an understanding of the tensions that exist when a female artist, such as Zahara or Amanda Black, who still strongly identify with a patriarchal society (Xhosa) but have become symbols of female power. The following quote is thus significant in trying to understand the contradictions within her feminism:

the strategy of appropriating girlhood, like the word girl itself, signifies ambiguously: as a mode of culturally voiced resistance to patriarchal femininity; as a token of a sort of "gestural feminism" that is complicit with the trivialization, marginalization, and eroticization of women within rock music cultures; and as an expression of postmodern "gender trouble" that potentially recuperates girlhood in universalizing, ethnocentric terms (Wald, 1998:588).

Wald concludes that no matter what the contradictions or “gender trouble” female pop artists offer girls important “sources of emotional sanctuary” and “outlets for the expression of rage and pleasure, frustration and hope” (Wald, 1998: 608).

2.6 Linguistic analyses of lyrics

De Wall et al. (2011:201-203) predict that popular song lyrics will reflect a decrease over time in words related to social connection and an increase in words related to anger and antisocial behaviour and reach the conclusion that their linguistic analyses offered them “evidence that changes in popular song lyrics mirror psychological changes in U.S. culture regarding decreases in positive emotion”. In addition, relating this finding to linguistic analyses they found that “Although we use first-person plural pronouns as our measure of other-focus, it is possible that third-person pronouns are also used to focus attention on others” (De Wall et al. 2011:203).

It is therefore possible that popular song lyrics have included more positive emotion words over time. Yet there is reason to predict the opposite—namely, that the use of positive emotion in popular songs has dwindled over time. A growing body of evidence suggests that individual mental health has decreased substantially over time (De Wall et al., 2011:201). In De Wall et al.’s study (2011:202) a central finding of their linguistic analysis was that “just as people report greater rates of loneliness and social isolation over time, popular song lyrics changed over time to include fewer words related to social interactions.” I am hoping in my study to be able to focus not only on the core vocabulary of popular contemporary Xhosa lyrics, but also on the pronouns, adjectives, tenses and moods. This kind of linguistic analysis will allow me insights into how isiXhosa is culturally invested or disinvested in contemporary popular songs played on radio.

Computer analyses of lyrics

Petrie et al. (2008:199) note that lyrics contain conceptual linguistic categories: emotional tone, cognitive dynamics, social/identity processes, and time orientation. They also make mention of two different ways of doing textual analyses. Firstly, for their study of the Beatles’ lyrics, they relied on a textual analysis computer programme – Linguistic Enquiry and Word Count (LIWC) and secondly they used a word pattern analysis (Petrie et al., 2008:198). They argue that word pattern strategies “covary across samples of text” (Foltz, 2003 in Petrie et

al.2008:198). They argue that this methodology was traditionally used to calculate how similar two texts were in terms of their content because:

by establishing the factor structure of word use within a large number of writing samples, it is possible to learn how any new writing samples are similar to one another (Petrie et al. 2008:198).

While I do not have the computational expertise to perform such analyses,

Petrie et al (2008) discovered that the lyrics of the Beatles became more complex and intellectual over time. While their early songs were related to personal experiences and feelings, their later songs were more often written about other people (Petrie et al., 2008:200). While I will not be able to conduct a similar analysis of one group, I nevertheless hope to discover whether there is any intellectual or emotional development in the top ten isiXhosa lyrics over the space of one year. In other words, are the lyrics of the most popular song at the end of the year more complex and intellectual than those appearing in the most popular songs featuring at the beginning of the year? Or did nothing change even in this year of political turmoil for the youth? Although not possible for this thesis, computerised statistical analyses of lyrics help answer questions such as to how musicians, as they grow in the industry prefer to relate to the current affairs of the nation and the way in which they articulate their individual experiences.

Did they gradually change, and, as they changed, did they become more comfortable having explored the world? This would be important an important area of scholarship for future researchers.

Vocabulary, semantics, grammar and framework of lyrics

Werner (2012) also conducted a corpus-based study of pop lyrics. Werner notes that earlier research into the language of pop lyrics identified non-standard grammar and vocabulary but argued that the “studies were based on either a comparatively small amount of data or involve corpora that are still at preliminary state (Kreyer and Mukherjee, 2007).

Logan et al. (2004) conducted a semantic analysis of song lyrics and discovered that the most frequently occurring words for songs in Reggae, Country, New Age, Rap and Rock were “I’m”, “know” and “love” (Logan et al., 2004:2).

Mahedero, Martinez, Cano, Koppenberger, and Gouyon (2005: n/p) note that lyrics are generally divided into the following structure:

Introduction (Intro): usually one verse composed by three or four phrases used to introduce the main theme or to give a context to the listener

Verse: verse roughly corresponds with a poetic stanza. Lyrics in verses tend to repeat less than they do in choruses.

Chorus: the refrain of a song. It assumes a higher level of dynamics and activity. When two or more sections of a lyric have almost identical text, these sections are instances of the chorus. A verse repeats at least twice with none or little differences between repetitions, becoming then, the most repetitive part of a lyric. It is also where the main theme is more explicit. As well as what happens with music, it is also the part which listeners tend to remember.

Bridge: In song writing, a bridge is an interlude that connects two parts of that song. As verses repeat at least twice, the bridge may then replace the 3rd verse or follow it thus delaying the chorus. In both cases it leads into the chorus.

Outro: not always present, this part is located at the end

DeWall et al. (2011:2) ask the question whether lyrics are becoming more narcissistic and angrier than they used to be. The authors worked with the song lyrics of the 10 most popular U.S. songs between 1980 and 2007. They investigated the lyrics as to the frequency of first person singular pronouns (I, me, mine), first person plural pronouns (we, us our), social interactions, anger and antisocial behaviour, and positive emotions. Their study showed that over time the lyrics had become more self-focussed, less socially connected, increasingly angry with less positive emotions (DeWall et al., 2011:202-203). Popular song lyrics showed changes toward more first-person singular pronouns and fewer first-person plural pronouns over time. Popular song lyrics include fewer words related to social interactions and positive emotions over time (DeWall et al., 2011: 204).

2.7 The production of aesthetic difference

Erlmann (1994:166) argues that we need to look at South African music in the context of the ‘ideology of world music’ and the way in which ‘pop aesthetics’ in this country are the result

of a ‘complex historical process’ which included the necessary commodification of ‘difference’. Erlmann’s argument has resonance for this study, particularly with reference to the way in which the top ten isiXhosa pop songs in 2016 use traditional elements of culture to market themselves. For example, the ethnically specific clothing items that many pop performers wear, and even the inclusion of traditional musical instruments are all designed to get the attention of the listener, and to appeal to his or her sense of identity and need to belong (Vannini and Myers, 2002). Erlmann uses the international tours of the South African choir in the 1890s to give a historical context to current pop music tendencies to exploit cultural and linguistic differences of black performers. The choir that toured England in the 1890s had both conform to normative Western culture but also to manifest signs of an exotic, African “native” difference (Erlmann, 1994:171).

Erlmann asks the question “But what exactly did this relationship between local tradition and its modern metamorphosis for international consumption look like? How did songs that had emerged from the culture of the missions come to represent the 'native?' (Erlmann, 1994:171). This is an extremely important question that has relevance for my study, as I want to understand whether consumers of contemporary Xhosa popular songs still want songs that that forge a relationship between “local tradition and its modern metamorphosis for international consumption”. It is imperative that I establish whether the African continent is represented in contemporary isiXhosa pop lyrics by way of the performers clothes, linguistic choice for lyrics and via the incorporation of traditional musical instruments and rhythm: (*amagubu, amaxilongo, imilozi, ukuqhwaba izandla, ukuxhentsa, ukubetha izigodlo nemirhubhe, njalo-njalo*).

2.8 Purpose of lyrics to teenagers

According to Vannini and Myers (2002:no page) parent groups and political representatives hold popular music responsible for fostering deviant attitudes and behaviours in teenagers through “the glamorization of violence, drug use, sex, and rebellion”. It will be interesting to look at the lyrics of the top ten most popular songs on UMhlobo weNene in 2016 and see whether this accusation holds true for them or not. What is important to note is that once songs are written and sung in an indigenous African language there is a different process happening, as the vernacular is associated with cultural identity and traditional values, and would therefore

be less likely to be used to encourage aberrant behaviours. Vannini and Myers argue that the specific language used in the lyrics of popular songs consumed by teenagers neither reflects their existing ideals or preoccupations, nor is it manufacturing something new, but rather it is

a reality that is socially constructed by the interplay among mainstream mores and values, consumption practices, and subjective interpretation of its meanings by its audiences. (Vaninini & Myers, 2002:no page)

The questions raised by Vaninini and Myers (2002) are also significant for my own study that will look specifically at the vocabulary of contemporary pop singers who use African languages that are experiencing rapid change in urban areas (see Dowling & Stinson, 2011; Calteaux, 1996; Koopman, 1994).

I would also like to explore whether those who listen to contemporary pop songs (and in the case of this study, pop songs sung in isiXhosa) have regressed to a “child-like” consumption of the lyrics, fixating only on the “quotations” in the lyrics which Adorno (1991:44-45, cited in Vannini & Myers, 2002: no page) describes as an uncritical consumption characterized by “a trancelike state of effortless thinking focused on accepting and obsessing with a song’s hooks – the catchiest and most recurrent verses and melody passages.”

Vannini and Myers (2002:no page) argue that music is “meaningful to adolescents because it represents a vast source of meanings for the definition of personal and social identity”. What are these meanings in contemporary popular songs sung in indigenous African languages and how do listeners use these meanings to “structure and definite their everyday sense of reality” and how does choosing this particular genre of music (popular music sung in indigenous African languages) “define who one is within youth culture”? All these questions are relevant to my study and will direct the way in which I analyse the lyrics as well as responses to the lyrics by teenage isiXhosa-speaking listeners.

2.9 Lyrics of South African pop singers singing in Xhosa

There is a dearth of research on the lyrics of South African pop singers singing in isiXhosa. Dowling and Stinson’s study (2011) focusses on the “healing power of the vernacular” and the way in which a contemporary Afro-Soul singer, Camagwini’s lexicon, which they describe as “non-secular” and which:

firmly situates her within an ideological framework that underscores a commitment to, and belief in, a social experience specific to Xhosa healers. (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:177)

Dowling & Stinson (2011) argue that the vernacular is therapeutic and curative for both the singer and her fans. The authors note that although the singer operates “within an ideological framework that underscores a commitment to, and belief in, a social experience specific to Xhosa healers” her music does not employ “traditional musical divination style” (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:177). The authors note that Camagwini was influenced by “folklore songs” (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:180).

Important for my own study is the attention to the way in which Camagwini markets herself. Dowling and Stinson note that on the CD *Zivile* (They Have Heard) Camagwini attempts to look “like a contemporary *igqirha* or *sangoma*” (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:179). I have noticed that the aesthetic appeal, the deliberate African styling of many pop singers can influence the South African youth.

In recent years, contemporary isiXhosa pop singers such as Zahara, Lira, Camagwini, Mafikizolo, Ringo, Ntando and Vusi Nova are frequently seen adorning traditional regalia (*imibhaco*, *iqhiya nentsimbi* – traditional Xhosa skirts, headdress and beads). My observations are that the youth are positively influenced by this as more of them are now embracing and incorporating their traditional attire to formal western occasions like their matric dances. This shows a renewed sense of pride in their culture.

Camagwini was clearly influenced by isiXhosa ‘folklore songs’ performed by elderly women in the rural Eastern Cape and also positioned herself:

as someone with a calling (*ukuthwasa*) to become a traditional healer makes it interesting to explore parallels between traditional Xhosa music, particularly that relating to divination practices, and the musical style employed by Camagwini in her songs (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:180).

The results of urbanisation are visible in the abandonment of traditional cultural practices by the Xhosa people. However, I disagree with the statements by Dowling & Stinson (2011) that location is the primary stimulus for encouraging a pop artist to write. There are pop artists that were born and bred in urban areas but are nevertheless inspired by an African world view they have researched and for which they feel a deep affinity.

While Camagwini's music does not sound like traditional Xhosa healer music, "it is symbolic of a new South African music which Coplan has described as "urbanised but not fundamentally Westernised" (Coplan, 2007, 312). This departure from "Westernization" can be found in the central themes of Camagwini. Her central theme, in both CDs, *Zivile* (They Have Heard) and *Emandulo* (Ancient Times) is that she speaks through the ancestors. In 'Ndiyimvumi' (I am a Singer) on her first CD, *Zivile*, Camagwini "positions herself as a witness of the traditional healer, a person who helps the suffering" (Dowling & Stinson, 2011:182).

2.10 Translation and code switching in the lyrics of bilingual popular songs

According to Davies and Bentahila (2008:274) pop songs are items for mass consumption, targeting an audience which may be local or international, and are likely to be adapted to the requirements of the public(s) they target.

The research done by Davies and Bentahila(2008) is important since it deals with bilingual lyrics which has resonance for my study which will look at the 10 most popular songs played on uMhlobo weNene in 2016, some of which will contain lyrics in more than one language. The bilingualism displayed by these lyrics will help us understand how and why these pop artists were selected by music industry at uMhlobo weNene and to what extent lyrics sung in local languages employ code-switching in order to accommodate and appeal to listeners of other languages. The expressive function of code-switching has been noted by Romaine (2000:59) while Babalola and Taiwo (2009) in discussing code-switching in Nigerian hip-hop conclude that it reflects the country's ethnolinguistic diversity and argue that "the employment of code-switching serves the dual purpose of globalization and localization of the music" (Babalola & Taiwo, 2009:20).

According to Davies and Bentahila (2008:247):

The lyrics of popular songs, then, can be expected to reflect the cultural background, tastes and values of the community they originate from; and the choice of language for the lyrics can be expected to play an important role in determining their appeal for the relevant audiences.

South African lyrics are localized; South Africa has 11 official languages and because our local artists tend to sing about themes that emotionally affect people, or what they themselves have personally experienced throughout lifetime the language used might switch to whatever code best depicts the emotion or experience.

Davies and Bentahila (2008:248) argue that “while recent trends towards the globalization of mass media may have encouraged the creation of bilingual songs, they are certainly not a new phenomenon” and they cite medieval carols which combined Latin with European vernaculars. The authors note that many studies on the language of lyrics focus on the connection between language and identity, and about globalization and localization (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:248). The authors argue that a critique of bilingual songs can also be discussed with regard to the linguistic issue of code switching in general, and the “structural constraints on switching and its rhetorical functions and social significance” (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:248-249).

I would argue that during the time when our elders worked on the mines, because they came from different places they formulated a middle language Fanakalo which became a kind of lingua franca, a language spoken by people who speak different languages, used for communication purposes. Adendorff (2002:179) refers to Fanakalo as “an interactional resource which is employed for a range of purposes and in a range of settings.”

We could argue that rap music is like that, it’s an informal language used by a certain group of people in a certain context. Many rap artists employ one or more languages within one song just to absorb the concentration of their audience. It is important to note that where the mixed language lyrics are arrived at via translation from one language, the words can appear as artificial and can be subject to criticism in much the same way as when this kind of “translation” happens in conversational speech (Davies & Bentahila., 2008:251). The authors make the important observation that lyrics might reflect the conversational styles of the singers:

Bilingual lyrics would reflect the bilingualism of the artistes [sic] performing the songs, the songwriters producing the lyrics, the communities in which the songs originate, and/or the audiences they target (Davies & Bentahila., 2008:251).

It can be argued that:

ensuring the audience understanding of a text does not seem so crucial in the case of song lyrics, since comprehension of the words is not the only or even perhaps the most important aspect of the song's impact on the audience (Davies & Bentahila., 2008:250).

Davies and Bentahila (2008:250) also argue that people who listen to pop songs are more able to accept language variation and unusual language choices. It is also important to note that the kind of code-switching that happens in songs is marked and conscious while that which happens in speech is often unconscious and spontaneous (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:250) and can therefore be seen as deliberate stylistic devices or as a means to attract a particular listening audience for commercial reasons. Songwriters may also deliberately have the lyrics in two languages in order to repeat the message in different codes, and that is why the original and the translation are often presented alongside each other (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:251).

It can also happen that a song involving two languages does not necessarily require a performer who can speak two languages, because the different languages can be sung by different individuals (in a duet, as a solo or in a chorus) and the translated line is used to emphasise the meaning while avoiding singing the same words (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:251-253). An example of this can be found in the chorus to Ringo's *Baleka*⁵ (Ringo Madlingozi) in which the Xhosa is followed by a Venda translation:

- 1 *Uthi uyandithanda (You say you love me)*
- 2 *Baleka mama (Run mother)*
- 3 *Isizathu andisiboni (I don't see a reason)*
- 4 *Khaw'leza (Hurry)*
- 5 *Uth'uyandithanda (You say you love me)*
- 6 *Baleka*
- 7 *Mhmm*
- 8 *Uri wani randza*
- 9 *Thsuthsuma*
- 10 *Shivhangelo anisiboni*
- 11 *Hatlisa*
- 12 *Uri wani randza*
- 13 *Thsuthsuma*

Sometimes there is a more complex use of more than one language, where the translation does not immediately follow and the translation is used just to give a summary of what has been

⁵ //bimba.co.za/ringo-madlingozi/ringo-singles/baleka

sung in the other language (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:254). In Amanda Black's lyrics for *Amazulu* (Amanda Black, 2016)⁶ we can see evidence of this when she does not translate the words “*Ndizothath 'umthwalo/Ndimbeke emqolo mama/ubomi bunzima*” but these words are summed up by “I'm barely coping/I'm feeling closed in”.

AMAZULU

(translations in italics in brackets)

- 1 Drifting
- 2 I'm drifting away
- 3 Into the darkness
- 4 Ndizothath 'umthwalo (*I will take the load*)
- 5 Ndimbeke emqolo mama (*And put it on the back mother*)
- 6 Ubomi bunzima (*life is difficult*)
- 7 So I lift my head up high
- 8 Open my eyes
- 9 And I will fly ohh
- 10 I'm barely coping
- 11 I'm feelin' closed in
- 12 Looking up hoping
- 13 The heavens will open
- 14 Mdali wezulu (*Creator of heaven*)
- 15 Ndikhalela kuwe (*I cry to you*)
- 16 Open up, open up
- 17 I'm feeling closer now
- 18 The light shining brighter but I'm losing my flow

- 19 Kudala ndisiwa ndivuka (*I have been falling and waking for a long time*)
- 20 Ndifuna nolu thando (*I want this love too*)
- 21 Ndifuna nolu thando mmn (*I want this love too*)
- 22 Kudala ndifuna ubomi buvume (*I have been wanting life to agree*)
- 23 Vungama ngonyama (*Growl lion*)
- 24 Vungama ohh (*Growl oh*)

- 25 Vuleka vuleka (*Open open*)
- 26 Vuleka vuleka vuleka amazulu (*Open, open, open heavens*)
- 27 Vuleka amazulu (x2) [*Open heavens*]
- 28 Oh...
- 29 Vuleka vuleka vuleka
- 30 Vuleka amazulu (x3)

- 31 I'm giving
- 32 They're taking
- 33 Tripping I'm falling
- 34 Tell me I'm nothing

⁶ <https://genius.com/Amanda-black-amazulu-lyrics>

- 35 Don't care what they're saying
 36 And I'm begging you darling
 37 Stop losing your flow
 38 Ey no more drifting
- 39 No more drifting away
 40 Livumil'icamagu (*the ancestral spirit has agreed*)
 41 Avulekile amazulu (*the heavens have opened*)
 42 I'm fighting for survival
 43 Ndiliqhawe, ndiliqhawe (*I am a hero, I am a hero*)
 44 Ndiyingo-nya-ma (*I am a lion*)
 45 Ehh., Oo... ho
 46 Oh, ho o. ohh
- 47 Vuleka vuleka (*open open*)
 48 Vuleka vuleka vuleka amazulu(*open open open heavens*)
 49 Vuleka amazulu (x2)(*open heavens*)
 50 Oh...
 51 Vuleka vuleka vuleka (*open open open*)
 52 Vuleka amazulu (x3)

Sometimes the verses are translated while the refrain is sung in the original language (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:255) as can be witnessed in *Amazulu's* chorus *Vuleka amazulu* with the verses comprising mostly English lyrics.

Davies et al. argue that “In other cases, the distribution of the translated elements appears less systematic, and may result in an uneven mixture of languages within the verses, within the refrain, or within single lines of the song” (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:255) as can also be witnessed in the sudden insertion of “I’m fighting for survival” in *Amazulu's* lyrics, Line 44 in the verse starting “I’m giving, they’re taking” where the line before (Line 43) to it is in isiXhosa *Avulekile amazulu* and the line directly after it (Line 45) is also in isiXhosa *Ndiliqhawe, ndiliqhawe*. As Davies & Bentahila (2008:256) reflect “A partial translation of a song may be taken as an opportunity to experiment with variations in its content.” Yet again, sometimes if there is a change of meaning in the translation this could be due to cultural considerations (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:257). So when Amanda Black sings, in Lines 4-5, *Ndizothath'umthwalo/Ndimbeke emqolo mama* (I will take the load and put it on the back mother) this is very culturally specific to an African context in which women carry loads on their backs. It would sound inappropriate and awkward if it had been directly translated into English.

Davies & Bentahila (2008:252) define code-switching as not involving translation:

Rather, those who move back and forth between two languages are considered to have both languages simultaneously activated, merely choosing, consciously or unconsciously, to express parts of their message in one code and parts in the other.

This observation is important for my study as I will attempt to analyse what motivates a particular choice of code, and whether this choice is unconscious or conscious. It is also important to bear in mind that many pop singers in South Africa will have access to a wide range of linguistic resources, and this facility of theirs, to sing in many languages, helps them reach different groups of people from different corners of the country – both urban and rural. The pop artist who knows different languages can exploit them to get across different messages, different nuances of meaning and in turn enables them to spice up the narrative by including lexical items that lend a freshness of expression because they are from a lesser known language.

Davies and Bentahila, (2008:260) argue that sometimes songs containing more than one language may require the listener to seek for translation in “in order to achieve a full understanding of the lyrics” and they may go to “internet lyrics forums” in order to obtain these translations – thus I would argue that their role as audience has changed to that of student.

The authors also content that using a certain language may be culturally exclusive, or, on the other hand, be a device to open the song up to a wider audience:

While performers may choose to use a variety associated with their own community, thereby withholding full access to the meaning of their songs from those outside this community, in other cases artistes may use a language unrelated to their own heritage, in order to open up their song to a wider audience. (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:262)

I would argue that South African writers of lyrics will try to understand their target market – who does the singer appeal to? Where are his/her roots and to what extent does his/her language reflect those roots – both culturally and socially? Will the artist be touring – for example will s/he be singing in a rural area or in an urban hub? These considerations will affect the kind of language that is used by the writer of the lyrics.

Critical to this study is the question as to why South African singers would choose to sing in English if the majority of South Africans do not have English as a first-language (see Census

2011) and whether the most popular songs do indeed contain English, or not. Why would South African pop performers sing in English? What would they gain? Who are they singing to and where is the audience they want to reach? We have to bear in mind that singing in an unfamiliar language would dent the appeal of stage performer singing in King William's Town, for example, and this, I would argue is a central issue to this study: the struggle to reach the widest audience possible whilst still reconnecting with an identity to which you and others can relate. It has been argued that both translation and code-switching:

can be used to achieve similar effects, and that demarcation lines are not always clear. It is not always possible to decide where 'translation' ends and 'rewriting' begins, whether a mixed language text has been created through code switching or translation, or which is the source/target text (Davies & Bentahila, 2008:267).

2.11 Chapter conclusion

I have hoped to show, in this literature review, that the scholarship that presently exists in the analysis of contemporary pop songs is wide-reaching and covers various fields of discipline such as culture, psychology, politics and linguistic analysis. Some lyrics will be very influential in terms of what a person has gone through in his personal life, others might release stress and other traumatic events in their lives.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the methodological tools I used in my study to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. I also discuss the selection process and give a statistical analysis of the number of indigenous African languages in each of the chosen songs. Also in this section is a background to each of the featured artists.

3.2 Quantitative data collection tools

- a selection process that included not only choosing the top 10 songs played in uMhlobo weNene's top ten slot, but also their transcription and translation and noting the exact number of words that were in an indigenous African language in each song;
- a statistical analysis of language preference for pop songs with 11 Xhosa-speaking teenagers (see Chapter 5)

3.3 Qualitative data collection tools

- questionnaires on both the original and the Stompie Mavi song, distributed to 12 Xhosa-speaking Cape Town residents (3 females and 9 males all over the age of 20) (see Chapter 2 - Literature Review);
- a background narrative to each of the individual artists in order to locate their social, cultural and musical influences;
- a detailed linguistic analysis (morphology, syntax and semantics) of each of the songs (see Chapter 3 – Analysis);
- interviews with 11 Xhosa-speaking teenagers about their reasons for liking indigenous languages lyrics in contemporary pop songs (see Chapter 5)

3.4 Ethical considerations

For all interviews and questionnaires I first obtained ethical clearance from the School of Languages and Literatures Ethics Committee. In addition participants were informed about the aims of the study, that they could withdraw at any stage of the research process and their anonymity guaranteed. For the interviews with the teenagers at the school ethical clearance was obtained from the school principal and participants' parents.

3.5 Selection of songs

In order to select representative popular songs, sung in African languages, I trawled the uMhlobo weNene Facebook *Zintle Zolishumi* (The ten best) weekly list of the top songs featured for November and December 2016 (8 weeks). I listed all the songs that featured in those 8 weeks, and then narrowed down my selection to:

- those songs that occurred most frequently in the top 10 weekly list;
- those songs that were sung in a Southern African indigenous African language, or at least had a percentage of the lyrics in a Southern African indigenous African language

These are the 10 songs that I have identified. I number the song, give the singer/s names, and the song title and the percentage of African language words in the song to English words:

Table 2: Songs and percentage of African language words to English

Number	Singer	Name of song	Languages used in lyrics	Percentage of African Language words to English words
1	Amanda Black	Amazulu	English/Xhosa	43
2	Busiswa	Inqondo	Xhosa/English	98
3	Vusi Nova	Ndikuthandile	Xhosa/English	98
4	Big Zulu ft. Zakwe and Mzulu	Donsa Nkabi	Zulu	100
5	Mpumi	Ngifike	Zulu	100
6	Robbi Malinga ft. Kelly Khumalo	Baby please	Zulu/English	60
7	Mafikizolo	Kucheza	Xhosa/English	4
8	Nathi	Amagama	Xhosa	100
9	DR Malinga	Akulaleki	Xhosa	100
10	Durban's Finest	Umsindo	Xhosa/English	74

3.5 Transcription and translation of songs

The lyrics of the songs were accessed by various websites such as www.genius.com and www.metrolyrics.com. When I was unable to access the lyrics via a website I listened and transcribed the lyrics myself. I checked the spelling for all the lyrics obtained via websites. The lyrics, transcriptions and translations are included in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

3.6 Background to artists

3.6.1 Amanda Black



Singer-songwriter Amanda Black was born Amanda Benedicta Antony on July 24th, 1993. She started singing for her family at a very young age but it was at church that her talent was first discovered. She started performing publically at the the age of 12 and taught herself the guitar. She was made famous by taking part in South African idols in 2015 and by 2016 her hit single *Amazulu* (Heavens) was nominated for a number of awards. The song has powerful lyrics and a distinctly African beat. The singer is musically educated having graduated in 2015 from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University with a Diploma in Music Education.⁷

⁷ <http://ambitiouz.co.za/assets/amanda-b-bio.pdf>

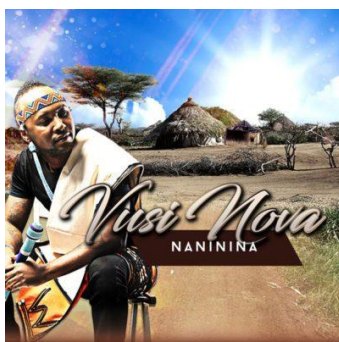
3.6.2 Busiswa



Busiswa Gquli is a song writer and performance poet who identifies as being “Xhosa in every way possible, stereotypes and all”⁸ was born in Mthatha and became known for her performance poetry which started when she joined the collective Young Basadzi Women of Poetry in 2005. In addition to her music and poetry, Busiswa also works for Art for Humanity (AFH) where she provides poetry and visual arts appreciation workshops for school children

DJ Clap (in UHURU now) and Sir Bubzin suggested she try doing her poetry on their tracks. Siyaphambana was released on the 1st Kalawa Jazmee Dance compilation in 2011, and she was called to record *My Name Is* later that year.⁹ *Ingqondo* (translated by the singer as Mind games) was released in 2016.

3.6.3 Vusi Nova



Vusi Nova, was born Vusi Nongxo in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape. As a child he had many different musical influences, the most important being his churchgoing mother and

⁸ <http://www.youthvillage.co.za/2014/09/10-things-didnt-know-busiswa/>

⁹ <https://www.bona.co.za/catching-up-with-busiswa/>

grandparents who encouraged him to join the church choir. Other important influences were Brenda Fassie and Ringo Madlingozi both of whom used multilingual lyrics¹⁰. Vusi Nova became a star with his critically acclaimed debut album *Walk into the light* (2013) and his commercial success which produced the chart topping single “I’d Rather Go Blind”¹¹ but he is mainly known for his romantic Xhosa ballads, such as *Ndikuthandile*.

3.6.4 Big Zulu



Vernacular rapper Big Zulu was born Siyabonga Nene, in KwaZulu-Natal. He has commented on the fact that his rural childhood and experiences as a taxi driver have both influenced his music. He refers to his brand of SA hip hop as “Nkabi rap” and likes to use the slogan “*Ushun wenkabi inkani*” (the hitman’s success lies in his stubbornness). “Those who know what an inkabi is will tell you that it’s a combination of a taxi industry hitman as well as an uncontrollable raging bull”. He told *The New Age* that “I am a deadly force on the microphone. I kill people lyrically and musically through my rap,”¹²

Donsa Nkabi, was recorded in collaboration rapper Zakwe and the rapper hopes the lyrics will motivate the youth and encourage them to deal with life’s hardships with bravery.

¹⁰ http://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/2017/08/25/three-things-you-need-to-know-about-vusi-nova_a_23179230/

¹¹ <http://muthalandentertainment.co.za/artists/vusi-nova/>

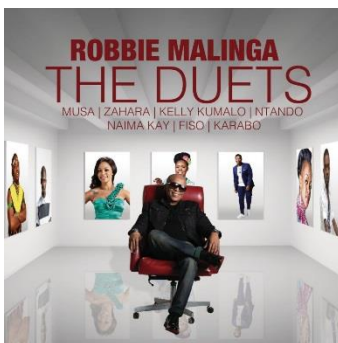
¹² <http://www.ann7.com/the-most-stubborn-rapper/>

3.6.5 Mpumi



Nompumelelo (Mpumi) Mzobe was born on the 15th June 1984 in Ndwedwe, KwaZulu-Natal. She was mostly brought up by her mother since her father left the family when she was still a little girl. Mpumi sang in concerts at school and relates that sometimes she couldn't even afford the little money they would charge for the concert that she herself was singing in. Mpumi eventually joined Mbongeni Ngema's Academy of Performing Arts where she honed both her singing and acting skills.

3.6.6 Robbie Malinga¹³



The late Robbie Malinga was born in Meadowlands Soweto in 1970. His involvement in music started at a young age and in 1998 he released his debut album *The Heavyweight* which contained the huge hit *Insimbi*.

¹³ <https://africanmania.com/safrica/robbie-malinga/>
<http://www.thenewage.co.za/robbie-malinga-a-life-devoted-to-music/>

Malinga then moved to producing some of the biggest artists of the 90s, saying that he moved from producing Kwaito to producing Afro Soul because he wanted to produce high-quality music that would be loved by his fans.

He then established his own Record label, Robbie Malinga Entertainment to discover young and unknown talent. Among the many awards and accolades Malinga received for his work in the music industry was Best Remix in 2015 for *Indlela Yam* by DJ Sbu and Mojalefa and Best Producer in 2016 for Zahara's *Country Girl* Album.

In 2015 SAMA for Best Remix of the Year, *Indlela Yam* by DJ Sbu and Mojalefa. In 2016 he released *The Duets* which featured Malinga in song with artists like Kelly Khumalo, Ntando, Musa, Naima Kay, Zahara and Fiso and in 2017 released his self-titled album *Robbie Malinga*. Malinga died on Christmas day 2017.

3.6.7 Mafikizolo¹⁴



Three-time winners of the South African Music Award for Group or Duo of the Year, Theo Kgosinkwe and Nhlanhla Nciza are the two singers and composers who make up the band Mafikizolo. The third member of the original Mafikizolo, Tebogo Benedict Madingoane, was shot dead in a road incident in 2004.

Mafikizolo often feature other artists, like Hugh Masekela who appeared with them in their music video *Kwela*. Mafikizolo hits include – *Ndihamba nawe*, *Meet Me at the River* and *Marabi*. Mafikizolo's album *Love potion* was released in 2017. Their compositions include songs in various South African languages such as isiZulu, isiXhosa, urban varieties of African languages as well as English and Afrikaans.

¹⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mafikizolo>
<https://www.last.fm/music/Mafikizolo/+wiki>

Mafikizolo's music is also influenced by kwaito and has been described as kwaito-cum-marabi house music. Thematically, their lyrics cover pressing social issues such as the abuse of women and children, poverty, education and dangers of casual sex. The duo frequently visits HIV/AIDS Care Centres and Youth Centres and also supports community work and youth development through the Youth Development Troika of National Youth Commission, South African Youth Council and Umsobovu Youth Fund.

Their hit track *Ndihamba Nawe* which was inspired by Sophie Mgcina's 1960's recording of *Mmangwane* has been one of the most popular African songs of the 21st century. Subsequent albums like *Sibongile*, *Kwela*, *Van toeka af* and *Six Mabone* have also been hugely successful.

3.6.8 Nathi¹⁵



Nkosinathi Mankayi (born 23 December 1982), professionally known as Nathi, is a South African singer-songwriter and artist who became famous with his critically acclaimed song titled *Nomvula* off his album *Buyelekhaya* (meaning 'return home'). He later released his second album titled *Umbulelo Wam* on 28 October 2016. He is presently signed under Ghetto Ruff/Muthaland Entertainment, a South African independent record label.

Nkosinathi Mankayi, was born in Mthatha, Eastern Cape, and was raised by his single mother in Maclear where he also went to school. At school he developed an interest in music and drawing but his creative plans came to an end in 2006, when he was sentenced

¹⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathi>

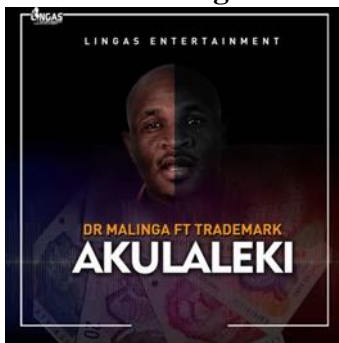
to eight years in prison for a 2002 robbery-related crime. He was however released after serving 4 years.

Nathi competed in, and won a local music competition known as "Dare to Dream" and then in November 2014 after hearing him sing, Vusi Nova insisted on featuring him on a song titled *Noma Kanjani*. The song became a huge hit and was played on many radio stations around South Africa.

Nathi started recording *Buyelekhaya* in late 2014, releasing *Nomvula* as its lead single in 2015. *Nomvula* was an instant hit and won the "Best Selling Full-Track Download" at the 22nd South African Music Awards. *Buyelekhaya* went platinum within six weeks of its release, and at the 22nd South African Music Awards, it was voted "Best-Selling Album of the Year" and "Best R&B / Soul / Reggae Album"

On 28 October 2016, Nathi released his album *Umbulelo Wam* which charted on #2 on iTunes and sold over 35,000 units.

3.6.9 DR Malinga¹⁶



DR Malinga (referred to as an Afro-pop, Jazz and Gospel singer/songwriter) was born Doctor Goodwill Malinga in Hammanskraal in 1980. While working for a furniture shop as a young man he entered music competitions and won the Mbabane Cultural Calabash Competition three times. He also won the Voice of Choice held on Thobela Radio. His career took off when his song *Casanova* with Dj Choice was nominated for record of the year. That success was followed by another hit song, *Father to be* with Black Motion. Big music producers like Oskido began to notice him

¹⁶ <http://southafricanbuzz.com/wiki/dr-malinga-biography-see-his-age-date-of-birth-wife-labels/>
<http://www.mybiohub.com/2018/02/dr-malinga-biography-wiki-profile.html>

and in 2011 he signed a contract with Kalawa. Dr Malinga released his first album, *First Injection*, in 2014.

3.6.10 Durban's Finest¹⁷¹⁸¹⁹



Durban's Finest comprises two of Durban's most popular disc jockeys, Mthokozi Khathi (DJ Tira) who was born in 1976 and Mbusi Sokhela (DJ Sox), born in 1977.

While studying Human Resources at the University of Natal DJ Tira developed an interest in deejaying and soon he was playing at varsity parties, weddings, private parties and popular nightclubs. DJ Tira was also part of the team that formed M1 Entertainment, that pioneered exclusive parties for Durban's affluent black market.

After completing his Human Resources degree, DJ Tira pursued postgraduate studies in Public Relations but later decided to focus his energies on deejaying and events management. In 2000 & 2001 DJ Tira won the prestigious Smirnoff SA DJ Knockout competition and released his first CD *Real Makoya* a house compilation with the late DJ Khabzela.

DJ Sox developed and interest in deejaying and organising parties while still at school. After high school he went to study Business Management at ML Sultan Technikon and started playing at the parties there. In 1998 while still studying he started his entertainment company called Dope Jam Entertainment that focused on throwing big parties around the

¹⁷ <http://www.axecess.com/articles/dj-tira>

¹⁸ <http://hdsentertainment.co.za/index.php/dj-sox-2/>

¹⁹ <http://www.factdurbanrocks.com/site/durbans-finest/>

city. One of these was the annual Underground Party that is still very popular. The reputation of his company grew and he became a major player in the industry.

He is now a partner of Signature Events, an events management company responsible for numerous events around KZN.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I explain the selection process that led to the final selection of the ten songs featuring in this thesis. I also do a statistical analysis of the languages used in each song and describe the other methodological tools used in collecting data for the thesis (interviews with adults about the Somagwaza song, questionnaires with teenagers as to whether they enjoy Xhosa pop lyrics and linguistic analyses).

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The 10 sets of lyrics as transcribed and translated in Chapter Three will be analysed according to the following criteria:

- Their lexicon: what words do they use and what is the semantic content of these words?
- Their language and grammar: do they code-switch between Xhosa and Zulu, or Xhosa and English – what grammatical constructions do they favour: do they state facts or do they suggest possibilities
- Does the fact that the song lyrics are in an indigenous African language in any way affect the tone, style and message conveyed?
- Their cultural references – to what extent is their Xhosa heritages acknowledged in these songs were most popular – what are their overwhelming themes.
- Their emotions – what feelings do they talk about in their songs and how do they do this?
- How do they represent their own personality, sense of failure and redemption?

SONG 1: AMAZULU

- 1 Drifting
- 2 I'm drifting away
- 3 Into the darkness
- 4 *Ndizothath 'umthwalo* (I will take the load)
- 5 *Ndimbeke emqolo mama* (And put it on the back mother)
- 6 *Ubomi bunzima* (Life is difficult)
- 7 So I lift my head up high
- 8 Open my eyes
- 9 And I will fly ohh
- 10 I'm barely coping
- 11 I'm feelin' closed in
- 12 Looking up hoping
- 13 The heavens will open
- 14 *Mdali wezulu* (Creator of heaven)
- 15 *Ndikhalela kuwe* (I cry to you)
- 16 Open up, open up
- 17 I'm feeling closer now
- 18 The light shining brighter but I'm losing my flow

- 19 *Kudala ndisiwa ndivuka* (I have been falling and waking for a long time)
- 20 *Ndifuna nolu thando* (I want this love too)
- 21 *Ndifuna nolu thando mmn* (I want this love too)
- 22 *Kudala ndifuna ubomi buvume* (I have been wanting life to agree)
- 23 *Vungama ngonyama* (Growl lion)
- 24 *Vungama ohh* (Growl oh)

- 25 *Vuleka vuleka* (Open open)
- 26 *Vuleka vuleka vuleka amazulu* (Open, open, open heavens)
- 27 *Vuleka amazulu (x2)* (Open heavens)
- 28 Oh...
- 29 *Vuleka vuleka vuleka*
- 30 *Vuleka amazulu (x3)*

- 31 I'm giving
- 32 They're taking
- 33 Tripping I'm falling
- 34 Tell me I'm nothing
- 35 Don't care what they're saying
- 36 And I'm begging you darling
- 37 Stop losing your flow
- 38 Ey no more drifting

- 39 No more drifting away
- 40 *Livumil'icamagu* (the ancestral spirit has agreed)
- 41 *Avulekile amazulu* (the heavens have opened)

- 42 I'm fighting for survival
 43 Ndiliqhawe, ndiliqhawe (I am a hero, I am a hero)
 44 Ndiyingo-nya-ma (I am a lion)
 45 Ehh., Oo... ho
 46 Oh, ho o. ohh
- 47 Vuleka vuleka
 48 Vuleka vuleka vuleka amazulu
 49 Vuleka amazulu (x2)
 50 Oh...
 51 Vuleka vuleka vuleka
 52 Vuleka amazulu (x3)

Analysis

Title

The title of the song is an Nguni word which refers either to a) the Zulu people b) the heavens. The ambiguity is resolved in the lyrics in lines 7 and 13 where the singer refers to lifting 'my head up high' and 'the heavens will open' clearly referring to the heavens.

Theme

There are two main themes in this song:

- a) Personal struggle, feeling abandoned by the person she loves
- b) Spiritual journey, both in terms of Christian religion and connecting to her ancestors

The words she uses to describe her personal struggle are in both English and isiXhosa, e.g. (Lines 1-3 in English, Lines 4-6 in Xhosa). The isiXhosa words refer to a load *umthwalo* and the fact that life is difficult *ubomi bunzima* whereas the English words are more metaphorical, referring to a sense of 'drifting'. In Lines 14 and 15 she chooses isiXhosa to describe her hope in a spiritual being with whom she has a personal relationship *Ndikhalela kuwe* – so she speaks of the emptiness of relying on human love, and the possibilities and strength in being in love with the creator – *Mdali wezulu* (Line 14). This contrast and tension between her human life and her spiritual life can be found in the words 'darkness' (Line 3) and 'light' (Line 18).

From Lines 19 to 22 she speaks in isiXhosa of her quest for love, but then, also in isiXhosa, she moves that quest to a higher level, again using a metaphor, this time of the growl of the lion (*vungama ingonyama*) making indirect reference to the Lion of Juda – Lines 23-24 that

appears in the Book of Genesis in the Bible. Lines 25-30 are a direct plea, in the vernacular, to a higher being to open the doors of heaven, while the English in Lines 31-39 can be read as a more personal expression of her feeling of being abandoned and lost. For example, in Line 36 she speaks of ‘darling’ – clearly referring to a lover, not a spiritual being.

The singer resolves her personal drifting by reconciling with her ancestors, referred to in Line 40 (*livumil’icamagu* – the ancestor has agreed).

Language and lexicon

The word *vuleka* repeated in Lines 25-29 have intertextual resonance for most Xhosa speakers in that it is found in other religious pop songs (e.g. *Avulekile masango* – The gates of heaven are open – Rebecca Malope) which Amanda Black finally renders as *avulekile amazulu* in line 41. Even the word ‘drifting’ (Lines 1-2) has intertextual reference in English pop songs like Roy Orbison’s ‘Drifting away’. Intertextuality can also be found in line 9 ‘And I will fly oh’ which echoes R. Kelly’s lyrics in ‘I believe I can fly’ but has vernacular resonances with Simphiwe Dana’s *Ndiredi ukundiza, ndiph’ umoya* (I am ready to fly, give me air).

The future tense is only used in Line 4, represented by the contracted future formative *-zo-* (*Ndizothath’umthwalo*) followed by the subjunctive mood indicating sequence in *ndimbeke emqolo*. Interestingly the non-standard *-m-* for the OC for Class 3 (*umthwalo*) is used when one would expect the standard *-wu-*. In Line 6 the noun *ubomi* in Class 14 is qualified by the underived relative stem *-nzima*, using a descriptive copulative *bu-*. The vocative is used in Line 14 *Mdali wezulu* to indicate she is directly appealing to her creator. From Lines 19 to 22, by using *Kudala* with the participial mood she indicates that her suffering and longing for love has been going on for some time. The metastative potential *-ek-* in *Vuleka* (in Lines 25-30) occurs again in Line 41, but this time in its stative form to indicate that the action of opening is now complete *Avulekile*. Finally, she uses the copulative of the Class 5 noun *iqhawe* with the first person subject concord *ndi-* realized in Line 43 as *ndiliqhawe* (I am a hero) followed by another copulative *ndiyingonyama* in Line 44. The grammar thus allows us to feel both the process and final resolution of her spiritual accomplishment.

Conclusion

The English lyrics speak to the singer’s feeling of abandonment and rejection by the people she loves and relies on. The isiXhosa lyrics echo these feelings but then provide her with

stability in the form of being able to carry such a burden on her back (*ndimbeke emqolo*) as amaXhosa do with their children and reach for a higher, spiritual fulfilment in *amazulu* which she asks to *vuleka* (become open) for her. The English again allows her to reflect on her feeling out of control as in Line 10 ‘I am barely coping’ but the isiXhosa provides her with solace *livumile icamagu* (Line 39) coming straight after ‘No more drifting away’ in Line 38. Thus the English and the Xhosa come together to bring her a point of acceptance, not only of her condition, but also of her spiritual need and journey.

SONG 2: INGQONDO

- 1 *Ndihleli ndodwa* (I am sitting alone)
- 2 *Ndithathwe ziingcinga zam* (Lost in thought)
- 3 *Ndibona uncumo lwakho lodwa* (I only see your smile)
- 4 *Ndivele ndincume nam* (I quickly smile back at you)
- 5 *Ndisuke ndicinge iintsuku zethu zokuqala* (I begin to think our first days)
- 6 *Ndikukroba ngelihlo elinye* (I peep at you with one eye)
- 7 *Ndivele ndincume nam* (I quickly smile back at you)
- 8 *Ndisakudlala ingqondo* (I’m still playing your mind)
- 9 *Ndithi ndiyakuthanda* (I say I love you)
- 10 *Ndiphinde ndithi anditsho* (Then again, I say I don’t)
- 11 *Uncumo lwakho* (Your smile)
- 12 *Lindibek’emoyeni* (Puts me in the air)
- 13 *Andisakwazi nokucinga le nto oyenzayo irongo* (I can no longer think what you are doing is wrong)
- 14 *Ndifuna sibe sodwa’ elizweni elingaziwayo* (I want us to be alone in an unknown country)
- 15 *Apho kunentyatyambo zodwa iinyembezi zingaziwayo* (Where there are only flowers, no tears known)

(Chorus)

- 16 *Ndisakudlala ingqondo ndithi ndiyakuthanda* (I’m playing with your mind saying I love you)
- 17 *Ndiphinde ndithi anditsho* (Then again, I say I don’t)
- 18 *Ncumo lwakho lindibeka emoyeni* (Your smile puts me in the air)
- 19 *Andisakwazi nokucinga le nto uyenzayo irongo* (I can no longer think what you are doing is wrong)
- 20 *Ndifuna sibe sodwa elizweni elingaziwayo* (I want us to be alone in an unknown country)
- 21 *Apho kunentyatyambo zodwa iinyembezi zingaziwayo* (Where there are only flowers, no tears known)
- 22 *Asoze siphinde sihambe sishiyane (shiyane shiyane shiyane)* (We will never leave each other) (leave each other, leave each other, leave each other)
- 23 *Ixesha elide esizolihlala* (We will be a long time together)
- 24 *Sofa silahlane* (Until death do us apart)

(Chorus)

25 *Ndikudlala ingqondo* (I'm playing with your mind)

26 *Thanda phinde ndithi anditshongo* (Love, then again I say I didn't say so)

27 *'ncumo lwakho lindibeka emoyeni* (your smile puts me in the air)

28 *'Cinga le nto oyenzayo irong* (to think what you are doing is wrong)

Analysis

Title

Ingqondo in isiXhosa means “understanding/intelligence/mind” and is an apt title for a song which is about the mind games that are often played between two people in the seduction process. The lyrics closely focus on the fact that often what goes on between two potential lovers is ludic, a playful manipulation of emotions via the mind, for example, saying you love someone, then again saying you don't (as in Lines 9 and 10):

Line 9 *Ndithi ndiyakuthanda* (I say I love you)

Line 10 *Ndiphinde ndithi anditsho* (Then again, I say I don't)

In Line 1 the singer opens the song by defining the situation she is in, *Ndihleli ndodwa* (I am sitting alone). in many case humans use their minds more strategically when they are unaccompanied, they contemplate more deeply and reflect on what they desire or on what has just transpired. In this song we are allowed glimpses into the mind of the singer who has met someone who might be attached and who possibly should not be flirting (see Line 13 *Andisakwazi nokucinga le nto oyenzayo irongo* (I can no longer think what you are doing is wrong). The title is apt here for she is playing with her own mind, convincing herself that cheating is not wrong. At the same time, she continues to toy with her lover's mind, confusing him and destabilizing him, by saying one thing, and then later contradicting what she has just said (as in Lines 9 and 10 discussed above).

Lines 20-24 are also relevant to the title *Ingqondo* as they allow us to see that apart from the mind games and playful flirtation, she has serious feelings for this man, and that she wishes they could be together for ever. There is a sadness in her mind and a wistfulness for what she knows they cannot have in this world:

Line 20 *Ndifuna sibe sodwa elizweni elingaziwayo* (I want us to be alone in an unknown country)

Line 21 *Apho kunentyatyambo zodwa iinyembezi zingaziwayo* (Where there are only flowers, no tears known)

Line 22 *Asoze siphinde sihambe sishiyane (shiyane shiyane shiyane)* (We will never leave each other) (leave each other, leave each other, leave each other)

Line 23 *Ixesha elide esizolihlala* (We will be a long time together)

Line 24 *Sofa silahlane* (Until death do us apart)

Theme

There are three main themes in this song:

- a) Mind games and the role of cognition in romantic love
- b) The playfulness of flirtation
- c) Forbidden love

The lyrics speak of a woman sitting there, contemplating how to approach the person she loves, and going over in her mind how she fell love with this person. In Lines 2 and 3 she vividly demonstrates her thoughts which are full of images of her lover:

Line 2 *Ndithathwe ziingcinga zam* (I lost in thought)

Line 3 *Ndibona uncumo lwakho lodwa* (I only see your smile)

The lyrics indicate that the woman has met a person and she is thinking of the early days of their relationship. Lovers habitually smile at each other because they are attracted to each other, and this fact is clearly captured by the lyrics in Line 3 *ndibona uncumo lwakho lodwa* (I only see your smile) which shows how, no matter what else may be going on, she can only mentally focus on her lover's reaction to her – this symbolized by his smile. It is the particularity of her lover's smile that has branded itself in her mind and which metaphorically lifts her off the ground:

Line 12 *Lindibek'emoyeni* (It puts me in the air)

The playfulness of flirtation is brought out in Lines 8-10 in which she says she loves him, but then counters this declaration by says she does not – she appears to be unsure of the decision she wants to take. She is playing her mind and the lover's mind as well.

These lines sound so confused but at the same time, they artfully describe the confusion and madness of early love affairs.

The lover reflects on all the good times she had made (memories) with the person. Now, as she is sitting there in her mirror looking at herself, she is in love with the past. She contemplates of the way her mate used to smile at her, and how she would respond to the smile. As her mind goes over this attraction and flirtation, there is a hint that the man might not have been unattached, that this might have been a forbidden love, and this is brought out by her mentioning that what he was doing could be construed of as “wrong”:

Line 13 *Andisakwazi nokucinga le nto oyenzayo irongo* (I can no longer think what you are doing is wrong)

This sense that what they might be doing is forbidden is further strengthened by Line 14 in which she wishes they were alone in an unknown country (obviously where their affair would not be scrutinized and judged).

Line 14 *Ndifuna sibe sodwa' elizweni elingaziwayo* (I want us to be alone in an unknown country)

Clearly there have been tears and some sad times in the relationship for her to wish for such a thing and this is further underscored in Line 15 where she imagines this fictional country where there is no sorrow:

Line 15 *Apho kunentyatyambo zodwa iinyembezi zingaziwayo* (Where there are only flowers, no tears known)

Language and lexicon

The song (written in isiXhosa) makes extensive use of the first person singular subject concord *ndi-* “I”. In fact the first 10 lines of the song are all headed by the first person singular, giving an indication as to how focussed she is on herself and her own actions and reactions:

- Line 1 *Ndihleli ndodwa* (I am sitting alone)
 Line 2 *Ndithathwe ziingcinga zam* (Lost in thought)
 Line 3 *Ndibona uncumo lwakho lodwa* (I only see your smile)
 Line 4 *Ndivele ndincume nam* (I quickly smile back at you)
 Line 5 *Ndisuke ndicinge iintsuku zethu zokuqala* (I begin to think about our first days)
 Line 6 *Ndikukroba ngelihlo elinye* (I peep at you with one eye)
 Line 7 *Ndivele ndincume nam* (I quickly smile back at you)
 Line 8 *Ndisakudlala ingqondo* (I'm still playing your mind)
 Line 9 *Ndithi ndiyakuthanda* (I say I love you)
 Line 10 *Ndiphinde ndithi anditsho* (Then again, I say I don't)

The quantitative adverb for first person singular *ndodwa* in Line 1 gives us an indication as to how the singer might be feeling lonely, and in order to dispel her feelings of loneliness is conjuring up an image of her first encounter with her lover. The fact that she is not responsible for her thoughts, that they are overtaking her, is nicely conveyed in isiXhosa by the use of the passive extension *-we* in Line 2 – the line literally means “I have been taken by my thoughts”.

In Line 3 the quantitative adverb for Class 11, *lodwa* referring to the smile *uncumo* rhymes with and balances the adverb *ndodwa* in Line 1.

The object concord for second person singular *-ku-* is used in Lines 6, 8 and 9 – the fact that no other object concords are employed indicates the centrality of the second person (you) to the singer.

There is clearly a deliberate attempt at rhyming in the lyrics, see for example not only Lines 1 and 3, but also Line 2 ending in *zam* rhyming with *nam* in Line 4, and the final syllable of *ingqondo* in Line 8 rhyming with the final syllable in *anditsho* in Line 10.

The use of the auxiliaries *-vele* and *-suke* (both in the subjunctive and followed by the subjunctive) in Lines 4,5 and 7 are significant and will be discussed separately.

The *Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Vol.3* (Pahl et al., 1989:495) gives the following gloss for *ukuvela* as an auxiliary verb followed by the subjunctive mood:

- 1 to indicate commencement: do first, commence by doing, start off with
- 2 to denote doing without previous indication, unexpectedly, in an unusual, uncalled-for, improper or inappropriate manner
- 3 to indicate doing immediately, promptly, there and then, without delay, without hesitation

4 to indicate doing something heedlessly, without due regard, without due consideration, haphazardly, carelessly, thoughtlessly, without caring, without regard to consequences

As is evident from the dictionary entry, the semantic field of *-vele* is wide, but we can infer that her smiling was something that she did “immediately” (gloss 3) she responded to his smile by instantly smiling back (we know he must have smiled first because of the associative *na-* with the first person absolute pronoun without the stabilizer: *na-+mna = nam* – “me too”).

The auxiliary *-suka* (rendered as *-suke* in the subjunctive to indicate a subsequent action) directly following *-vele* further emphasises the quickness and promptness of the woman’s falling into a reverie about the early days of their love affair. The glosses for *-suka* (apart from one) are the same as for *-vele* noted above. The variant gloss is:

2 to indicate immediate subsequent action: and then, thereupon, subsequently (Pahl et al., 1989:228)

Again, the sense that is conveyed by this auxiliary is one a quick movement from one thought to the next, as if, after remembering their first smiles, she is projected into those halcyon days when they were first falling in love.

The lexicon employed from Lines 6 to 10 weaves a narrative of a skittish romance that is characterized by eye contact and mind games. The verb *-kroba* in Line 6 has the meaning of “peep” so the addition of *ngelihlo elinye* (the adverbial formative *nga-* being prefixed to the isiHlubi word for “eye” being *ilihlo* (see Pahl et al. 1971:252) is almost redundant.

Line 6 *Ndikukroba ngelihlo elinye* (I peep at you with one eye)

In Line 8 the singer uses the progressive aspect *-sa-* to indicate that the action is still continuing, so we can assume that the affair has not abated and that the back-and-forth of her mind games (in Lines 9 and 10) are also still a part of her romantic narrative:

Line 9 *Ndithi ndiyakuthanda* (I say I love you)
Line 10 *Ndiphinde ndithi anditsho* (Then again, I say I don’t)

The verb *-tsho* in Line 10 has many meanings (see Pahl et al., 1989:401-403) the most common being “say so” or “mean”. So Line 10 could be retranslated into English as “Then again, I say I don’t mean it”. Lines 11 and 12 should be read as one statement: *Uncumo lwakho / Lindibek’emoyeni* and are metaphorical since smiles do not have any physical force to propel

anyone into the air. She uses the Class 5 subject concord *li-* (in *Lindibeka*) for a Class 11 noun *uncumo* which could also be due to dialectal factors (see Dowling and Gowlett, 2016:301).

In Line 13 the progressive *-sa-* is used in a negative construction to mean “no longer” followed by *na-* + infinitive (*na-ukucinga* → *nokucinga*) – “to even think”. This is then followed by an indirect relative clause of objectival relationship in which the antecedent (le nto) is represented in the relative clause by the object concord of Class 9 *-yi-* which is contracted to *-y-* when preceding a vowel verb. This clause is then followed by the predicate *irongo* “is wrong”). It is interesting that the writer of the lyrics chooses to use a borrowed word *-rongo* (although this word has entered the isiXhosa lexicon, see Pahl, et al., 1989:147) in a song that is otherwise written in almost standard isiXhosa. I would argue that, as evidenced by its dictionary entry, this word is considered an isiXhosa word, and, because it is much shorter than the standard *ayifanelekanga* is easier to incorporate into a catchy, fast moving tune. The word also has intertextual resonances with Zahara’s 2015 hit song *Bendirongo* (I was wrong).

The tone of the song changes in Lines 14 and 15 as the singer wistfully imagines them as lovers being able to display their love openly in a country that is not known (indirectly referring to the fact that in South Africa they are known). This is the third time the quantitative stem *-dwa* is used, this time not for a singular noun, but for first person plural “we alone” – *sodwa*. The wanting verb *-funa* is followed by the subjunctive of the verb to be with the first person plural subject concord *sibe* and then the locative of *ilizwe* → *elizweni* qualified by a direct relative in the negative *elingawaziyo*.

In Line 15 the singer uses the grammatical construction *kuna-*noun instead of *kukho* + noun and follows it with another quantitative pronoun *zodwa* qualifying *iintyatyambo*. It is interesting that this word is preferred over what most speakers use these days for flowers *iiflawa* and speaks to the lyricists ability to use standard isiXhosa. The joy and celebration conjured up by the word *iintyatyambo* are put in stark contrast with the noun *iinyembezi* which is qualified again by a direct relative similar to that used in Line 14, thus creating a rhyme with *elingawaziyo* and *zingaziwayo*.

Lines 23 to 24 speak of the singer’s longing for unity with her lover, they have clearly had to suffer separation a lot in the past. The auxiliary *Asoze* in Line 22 followed by the subjunctive indicates a clear desire for this to happen in the future, that they never again get parted. The

reciprocal extension *-ana* in the subjunctive *-ane* suffixed to the verb *-shiy-* (leave) powerfully conveys both their togetherness and the pain of their separation. *-Shiyane* in Line 22 rhymes with *sihlahlane* in Line 24, the one contrasting with the other – both indicating a separation. The first a physical separation while on earth, the second a separation by death only. The singer imagines for themselves a long life together (see Line 23) and Sofa *silahlane* (literally “We will die and become separated) in Line 24 has intertextual reference to the *phrase* “till death us do part” that is common in wedding vows.

Conclusion

The first part of this song employs a lexicon and a style that tells the story of a coquettish women flirting with a man, making his head spin with confusing and conflicting messages. The second half of the song speaks to her wistfulness at not being together, at her desire not to be separated from him and a wish for eternal love. The song is sung almost entirely in good standard isiXhosa which underscores the romance of the encounter by speaking indirectly to its purity, via the purity of the language used.

SONG 3: NDIKUTHANDILE

- 1 *Thatha, nants'intliziyo yam* (Take here is my heart)
- 2 *Thatha nal'uthando lolwakho* (Take here is love – it is yours)
- 3 *Thatha nants'intliziyo yam* (Take here is my heart)

- 4 *Zuyiphathe njengeqanda* (Handle it like an egg)
- 5 *S'thandwa, andenzi ngabom* (Beloved, I am not doing it intentionally)
- 6 *Ndiyaz'thandela apha kuwe* (I am in love with you)
- 7 *Heeybo andenzi ngabom yooh, ndicel'* (I am not doing it intentionally, please)

- 8 *Ndikuthandile standwa sam* (I have loved you beloved)
- 9 *Ngentliziyo yami yonke* (With all my heart)
- 10 *Nditsh'uthando endinalo* (The love I have)
- 11 *Soze luphele* (Will never cease) x2

- 12 *Indlela ondithanda ngayo* (The way you love me)
- 13 *Kukhw'indlela ondibamba ngayo* (Also the way you hold me)
- 14 *Baby indlela ondiyonga ngayo* (Baby the way you look at me)
- 15 *Baby iyandigqiba yeah* (Baby it finishes me)
- 16 *S'thandwa andenzi ngabom yeah* (Beloved I am not doing it intentionally)

- 17 *Andiphathwa naziintlani* (I am not even shy)
 18 *Xa ndifun 'ukubamba, ndifun 'ukukuthanda* (When I want to hold you; I want to love you)
 19 *Ngaske lingatshoni* (Wish [the sun] not to set)
- 20 *Ndikuthandile* (I have loved you)
 21 *S'thandwa sam* (my beloved)
 22 *Ngentliziyo yami yonke* (With all my heart)
 23 *Nditsh'uthando endinalo* (I mean the love I have)
 24 *Soze luphele* (Will never end)
- 25 *Uthath'umphfumlo wam* (You have taken my soul)
 26 *'thulisile, ebusuku nemini* (quieten to me during the day and night)
 27 *ndiphupha ngawe* (I dream about you) (X2)
- 28 *Ndikuthandile* (I have loved you)
 29 (*Ndikuthandile*) (I have loved you)
 30 *S'thandwa sam ngentliziyo yami yonke* (Babe with all my heart)
 31 *Nditsh'uthando (nditsh'uthando)* (I mean the love)
 32 *Endinalo* (that I have)
 33 *Soze luphele* (Will never end)

Analysis

Title

The title of the song, *Ndikuthandile*, is ambiguous since it could mean both “I have loved you” and “I love you”. Although the verb *-thanda* is not normally used in the stative (with the suffix *-ile*) to indicate a present tense (we would normally expect *Ndiyakuthanda*) the title conveys an intensity of emotion that express that a process of falling in love happened, and that now perfect love has been arrived at. The song is about promised love, and the consequences of true love. The chorus is the heart of the song-lyrics and the substance of what the lyrics are about and the message the artist sends across is that when one really loves someone there is complete generosity and a lack of selfishness.

Theme

- The emotional generosity of love
- The fragility of love
- The uniqueness of love
- The endlessness of real love

Line 1 opens by using the isiXhosa verb for “take” *thatha* showing that the lover is willing to give himself unreservedly to his lover. It gives instruction to that particular person to own whatever is being offered by the partner. By telling his lover to take his heart, Line 1 *Thatha, nants'intliziyo yam* “Take here is my heart” the singer emphasises how he wants his beloved to know that she has total ownership of his love. This line *Thatha nantsi' intliziyo yam* is repeated in Line 3 – it could be argued that it is impossible to take the heart of a living person, that in order for one person to take ownership of another’s heart that person has to be killed or die. This death is, of course, metaphorical: the person is willing to “kill” any non-monogamous feelings he may ever get: the person is saying that no-one else will ever come into his heart.

Once a heart is received the singer acknowledges that it has to be handled with care because its fragile as in Line 4 *zuyiphathe njengeqanda* (handle it like an egg). There is a sense that although the singer is confident of his lover’s affections, he is still concerned that he could be hurt, he wants his lover to protect his heart because it could still get damaged if she were to treat him and his love lightly, just as an egg can be broken by the slightest careless action.

The manner in which people see their lover’s affectionate actions as being uniquely loveable is expressed by the following:

Line 12 *indlela ondithanda ngayo* (the way you love me)

Line 13 *kukhw'indlela ondibamba ngayo* (also the way you hold me)

Line 14 *baby indlela ondjonga ngayo* (baby the way you look at me)

Line 15 *baby iyandigqiba yeah* (baby it finishes me)

The artist gives a clear picture that the love he had is a two-way street, meaning I give you love and you receive my love. Line 12 *indlela ondithandayo ngayo* this is to say: the way you love me, is un-explainable nobody can see or identify it, it is beyond my control, it is uniquely to this particular relationship. The words in Line 15 refer to the completeness the singer feels when he is with his lover and speaks to the endlessness of their love which is again alluded to in Lines 11, 24 and 33 *Soze luphele* “It will never end”.

Language and lexicon

The upbringing of the artist occasionally binds him to write lyrics that are a tribute to his mother-tongue and this we can assume of Vusi Nova who does not resort to using slang or code-switching in his lyrics.

The lexicon and morphemes used in the first line follow a set pattern. The free morpheme of the imperative mood *thatha* followed by the presentatives *nantsi/nalu* – *nantsi* for the Class 9 noun *intliziyo* and *nalu* for the Class 11 noun *uthando*.

Line 1 *Thatha, nants'intliziyo yam* (Take here is my heart)

Line 2 *thatha nal'uthando lolwakho* (Take here is love – it is yours)

Line 3 *thatha nants'intliziyo yam* (Take here is my heart)

The possessive *ya-* in Lines 1 and 3 concords with the noun *intliziyo*, while the copulative of the possessive pronoun in Line 2 concords with *uthando* and is prefixed to the possessive stem for second person singular *-kho*. Thus: *L-o-lwa-kho*.

In Line 4 there is another instruction, but this time uttered with the auxiliary *-ze*, which in its non-contracted form would have been *Uze* but here is contracted to join with the next word, in the subjunctive mood (since the auxiliary *-ze* is always followed by the subjunctive mood) *uyiphathe*. The *u-* is the second person singular subject concord and the *-yi-* refers to the *intliziyo* which he has just metaphorically handed to his lover.

In Line 5 he addresses his beloved in the vocative as *S'thandwa* and then tells her that he is not doing it deliberately, or intentionally and to convey this sense he uses the adverb *ngabom*. This adverb releases him from being guilty of any premeditated reasons that his lover might suspect of him (needing sex or money as a reward for this outpouring of love for example). In Line 6 he explains this more specifically, *ndiyaz'thandela apha kuwe* (I am in love with you) - by using the first person subject concord *ndi-* with the object concord *-zi-* followed by the verb *-thand-* in its extended form via the applied *-el-*. Pahl et al. in the *Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Vol.3* note that the applied extension is used:

in conjunction with the reflexive formative *-zi-* to indicate that the doer performs the action of the verb by himself “spontaneously, ie without the action or influence of any external agency”. (Pahl et al. 1989:710)

The use of the adverb of place *apha* “here” intensifies the closeness the singer feels to his lover which is further underscored by the locative prefix *ku-* followed by the absolute pronoun *wena* without the stabilizer *-na*: *ku-wena* → *kuwe*. The locative *kuwe* is required rather than the associative *nawe* because of the preceding verb with the applied extension which in this context would require a following locative. Line 8 echoes the song title and again *Ndikuthandile* (I have loved/I love you) with the added *s'thandwa sam* (my beloved) while Line 9 brings in the word “heart” again, this time in conjunction with the adverbial formative *nga-+intliziyo* → *ngentliziyo* (with heart) and the quantitative pronoun *yonke* “all” referring to *intliziyo*, a Class 9 noun. Just as *intliziyo* has been taken up again in this verse, so too is the noun *uthando* in Line 10 which is qualified in an indirect relative clause of associative relationship *endi-* relative subject concord first person singular *-na-* associative copulative *-lo* from the absolute pronoun *lona* referring to a noun in Class 11, in this instance *uthando*. In Line 11 there is the auxiliary *soze* which indicates “never” (in the future) which is followed by the subject concord of Class 11 referring to *uthando* and the verb *phela* in the subjunctive with the final vowel *-e*: *soze luphele* “it will never end”. These lines are repeated in Lines 20-24.

Lines 12-14 also make use of the indirect relative construction of instrumental relationship (*nga-* prefixed to the absolute pronoun that refers back to the antecedent, in this case *indlela*) to qualify “the way” – *indlela*. The use of the morpheme *-kwa-* to indicate “also” is contracted in Line 13 to form *kukhw'indlela ondibamba ngayo* (also the way you hold me) which demonstrates there is not just one thing that his lover does that draws her to him.

Line 15 uses the subject concord of Class 9 *i-* to refer to *indlela* followed by the present tense formative *-ya-* and the object concord for first person singular *-ndi-* with the verb *-gqiba* “finish/complete”.

In Line 17 he confesses he is not shy of his love and in order to do this he uses the negative formative *a-* followed by the subject concord of first person singular *ndi-* together with the verb *-phath-* meaning “hold” with the passive extension *-wa* (I am not held). This construction must necessarily be followed by the copulative of the agent *iintloni* (shyness) → *ziintloni* but the *na-* prefixed to this means “not even”: *andiphathwa naziintloni* (I am not even shy)

In Lines 18 to 19 the artist elaborates by alluding to the fact that he needs to hold and love his beloved, this indicated by the object concord of second person singular *-ku-* in *ukukuthanda* (to love you).

The singer uses the auxiliary *ngaske* which indicates a wish or desire and follows it with a negative subjunctive that does not explicitly name the sun, but implies it by the employment of the subject concord of Class 5 (which is used for *ilanga* “the sun”) and the verb *-tshon-* “set” followed by the negative suffix of the present subjunctive *-i*.

Line 19 *ngaske lingatshoni* (Wish [the sun] it not to set)

In Lines 25 and 26 the singer refers to past events, again using the verb *-thath-* (take) in the short form *Uthathe* → *Uthath'* with the object of the taking being the Class 3 noun *umphefumlo*, which can refer to breath, spirit or soul.

Line 25 *Uthath'umphefumlo wam* (You have taken my soul)

In Line 26 he elides the second person singular subject concord *U-* as well as the first person object concord *-ndi-* to form the contracted *'thulisile* from the verb *-thula* “be quiet” with the causative extension *-is-*, thus *-thulisa* “cause to be quiet” in the perfect tense *Undithulisile* contracted to *'thulisile*. The temporal adverbs *ebusuku* “at night” and *emini* “during the day” give a sense of the sustained calming effect that his lover has on him. He carries us deeper into the night by referring to his dreams in Line 27 *ndiphupha ngawe* “I dream about you” which has intertextual resonances with Caiphus Semenya’s *Ziph'iinkomo* when he sings *ndiphupha ngaye* “I dream about her”.

Conclusion

The song is about both the present and the past, as *Ndikuthandile* could refer both to the fact that he fell in love with the woman, or that he is still in love with her.

The isiXhosa in the song is standard (apart from the ambiguity of the sentence *Ndikuthandile*), there is no use of slang or any other variety, as if the singer is trying to convey, through the purity of his language, the purity of his emotion for his beloved.

SONG 4: DONSA NKABI

- 1 *Bathi yabhodl'eyomZulu ukub'eyam inkabi iyatshokoza nizwa iyabhodla*
(When the Zulu one (ox) burps, that my ox is vomiting and groaning)
- 2 *Siyathokoza kufik'abomakhonya silokh'esiya kokotha siyanqonqoza ni-busy niyabhobhoza*
(We are greeting happily the great people have arrived and we keep knocking and you are busy piercing)
- 3 *Ngithol'ikheli lakwaKhumalo senze sibulal'amadoda*
(Find me the Khumalo's address,so that we can kill the men)
- 4 *Kusil'okungaliwa kukhala iqhude akunankomo yobuthongo azibuyel'ezo nkomo zingiph'ukhono*
(The morning has arrived the crow is roosting and there is no cow gained from sleeping or those cows must go back to give me a skill)
- 5 *Zibuya futhi uphondo siphuza kuloyo mthombo sogob'iintloko yiyo leyo mhlolo i-team*
(They come back again drinking from that well and break the horn wanting to drink looking down that team was a wonder)
- 6 *edliw'ukudlul'ipapa cha! Wena Jomo unesono*
(that was eaten/overcome when eating porridge no! You Jomo have sinned)
- 7 *Bayozwa seliqhuma nobona bevuma ma lingaduma zoqoma segula sokhuza sobuka masingadlula*
(They will hear an exploding sound, you will see them agreeing if it thunders we will fall in love even when sick we will wonder and watch if we can pass)
- 8 *zoguga, zoguma, sobuka, segubha, mazingavuma isifo se-EBOLA, ngithatha i-cover ye-LADUMA,*
(they will grow old, they will stand, we will celebrate, we will watch, if they allow the Ebola disease I take a cover of Laduma)
- 9 *'thiwa akana-flow yinja le khala nabo PRO yinkinga FOR SURE*
(They say he does not have a flow, a dog that moves with PRO the problem FOR SURE)
- 10 *ngen'uZulu kudilika nesinakwa Zulu abana-bomb, thul'ubheke this year am gonna blow Hip-Hop*
(Zulu comes on board and everyone who is held in high esteem has no oomph, shut up and see this year am going to blow Hip-pop)
- 11 *'inginik'udilika jele kuthwa sibulala i-PE okay!*
(They have imprisoned me to death because we have killed PE okay!)
- 12 *Nginiken'ispikiri ngishay'iskhonkwane sokugcina uZulu oyogcina wena qina sobamba seshis*
(Give me a nail to knock the nail; to keep me a Zulu, you need to be strong and hold it like that as you hang in there)
- 13 *Inkabi iyabandisa bayaphika thula bayafihla bathi anginayo ne-fan eyodwa kodwa*
(The Ox is bringing the cold they deny it, keep quiet and they are hiding they say I do not even have one fan but...)
- 14 *Bayangifakela ukushisa*
(They put pressure on me)
- 15 *Ngigijima nengoma manje ngigxil'emasikweni nganithule nibabheke'eMabheleni*
(I am running with a song, but now I'm emphasising on the tradition, keep quiet and watch them in that village Mabheleni)
- 16 *Azibuy'amagebeni ziyolala emngceleni, emadwaleni anikhuz'aniyeke.*
(They must return from wonderland and sleep on the border,on the rocks be reprimanded and stop)
- 17 *Bathi angiwuqedanga u-Matric kodwa bangifun'emaphepheni.*
(They say I did not finish Grade 12, but they want to see me in the paper)
- 18 *Gqobho ndiyagqobhoza koko ngiyakokotha sikokotel'intloko ngiya yihlokoza isiphongo*
(Going through, I'm piercing but I'm knocking and am challenging its forehead)
- 19 *Ngiyasibhokroza basibhokroza kwijongo lokoza igazi labhobhoza libhobhozeke sdakwa slokhele*
(I am knocking they are knocking they bleed, we get drunk and the drunkard is locked in)
- 20 *EKalawa uph'uspikiri akokotele?*

(At Kalawa where is the nail to sort out the matter?)

21 *Bafana niyangizuma animazi umphathi we-ANC, lana kuyonqamka amagaja uma nisukel'i-IFP*

(Brothers you are shocking me, you don't know the leader of ANC if you challenge the IFP all hell will break loose)

22 *Khona oyofak'inzila ye-DA for my city ngoba semi'ngihlel'esifubeni ukodlula i-badge le-ZCC.*

(Someone will introduce mourning for the DA because my city is sitting on my chest like a ZCC badge)

Analysis

Title

This song is in isiZulu and is about a strong character. The title of the song is used metaphorically to encourage anyone going through a difficult time, and exhorts people to be strong and resolute, like an ox. The title is in the imperative mood – consisting of the verb *donsa* (pull/strive) followed the vocative of the noun *inkabi* which literally is a castrated male cow but figuratively refers to a hitman – someone who is hired to kill someone. The title *Donsa Nkabi* would mean ‘pull/strive hitman’. The semantics of *donsa* suggest both a physical pulling but also a perpetual striving forward, no matter what the situation. Stand firm and continue overcoming all obstacles, even if people put pressure on you (see Line 14 *Bayangifakela ukushisa* - They put pressure on me). The title is open to ambiguous interpretations, however, in this context it means, “pull hitman and put up with things, you will eventually be victorious”.

Theme

African societies perceive and value the *inkabi* as being the strongest male cow that is able to pull the plough. It has strength and greater focus than other cattle. This is because this male cow, (inclusive of all livestock) does not waste its energy on impregnating a female, whereas a bull does the opposite. The preoccupations embodied in the title and in some of the lyrics suggest the following themes:

- Endurance is key.
- Never be a coward
- Fight for what you want
- Fulfil your dream

These lyrics are addressing a person who has undergone hardship in life, even the first line talks of hardship but it sends encouraging words to the listener not to give up in life.

When the Zulu one (ox) burps, that my ox is vomiting and groaning

This line refers to the fact that when the Zulu ox burps it is feeling the pressure that has been loaded on its shoulders through the yoke. The ox is always the one who works the land, ploughing, and fulfilling other important agricultural practices such as irrigating and carrying logs. Zakwe in these lyrics addresses the ox that is feeling the pressure – the ox is a metaphor for a person who is undergoing extremely pressured situations at work or in life.

Language and lexicon

I tried to consult a wide variety of reference books to help me understand these lyrics, and in addition asked isiZulu-speakers to assist me interpret the words and phrases as I was struggling to navigate their intricate semantics. Nevertheless, the response I received was that Zakwe used a deep and “first-grade” isiZulu language whose meaning was not always transparent. Another argument that was forwarded was that the language he used was an ancestral language – one that was spoken by his forefathers – and was thus difficult to interpret. There was some debate too as to how this kind of lyric-writing is used to hide more complex meanings, and it was suggested that perhaps the writer of the lyrics had a hidden agenda. Although there are indeed many lines in which the exact meaning is not clear, in this song we realise that Zakwe really wants to connect with the particular audience he is talking to through this song. The song is directed at someone who has not tried to get what they want in this life with as much focus as the ox, and the writer wants to urge this person to do things regardless of how difficult or heavy these tasks might be. The ultimate message is that, like the ox, even if you are buckling and burping under the weight of a heavy yoke, you can still breakthrough, regardless of life limitations. The line that most strongly embodies this sentiment is Line 12:

12 Nginiken 'ispikiri ngishay'iskhonkwane sokugcina uZulu oyogcina wena qina sobamba seshis
(Give me a nail to knock the nail; to keep me a Zulu, you need to be strong and hold it like that as you hang in there)

Here the writer is deliberately telling the person to whom he is directing the lyrics to “hang in there”, like something fastened by a nail, you might not always feel secure, but the strength of your conviction (like the strength of the nail) will keep you on track and in the right position to achieve your goal. Finally it is important to note that the verbs in the song have frequent reference to loud noises such as “knocking”, e.g. in Line 2 *siyanqonqoza* (we are knocking) and “exploding sounds” and “thundering” in Line 7 *Bayozwa seliqhuma nobona bevuma ma lingaduma zoqoma segula sokhuza sobuka*

masingadlula (They will hear an exploding sound, you will see them agreeing if it thunders). These loud noises might refer to the fact that if one manages to pull through the tough times with persistent pressure (i.e. knocking) there might be thunderous applause for one's endeavours.

Conclusion

In this song Zakwe uses a variety of words that are encouraging and reassuring. He starts by speaking about the ups and downs of life but channels one to see opportunities too. Irrespective of these ups and downs, he encourages people to find their niche, cling to it and stay focused. He finds a way of downplaying the severity of these challenges by using words that are simple and have reference to an isiZulu-speaker's everyday experiences. The manner in which he chooses to describe pressure, for example, as the ZCC pin on his chest, is well known. Everyone who listens to this song would understand that he is referring to things that are challenging day in and out.

SONG 5: NGIFIKE

- 1 *Ng'zohamba ngifike lapho ukhona* (I will go and arrive, where you are)
- 2 *Ng'zohamba ngifike lapho ukhona* (I will go and arrive, where you are)
- 3 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' isithandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)
- 4 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' is'thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)

- 5 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)
- 6 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)
- 7 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive.)
- 8 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

- 9 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' s'thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)
- 10 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' is'thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)
- 11 *Ng'zohamba ng'fike ng'zohamba ng'fike* (I will go and arrive)
- 12 *Ng'zohamba ng'fike* (I will go and arrive).
- 13 *Ng'zohamba ng'fike* (I will go and arrive).
- 14 *Ng'zohamba ng'fike* (I will go and arrive).

- 15 *Sekungamane kudume izul'* ([Rather let] Lighting and thunder occur)
- 16 *Kunokuth uhambe* (Than you go)
- 17 *Ng'zobiza amabuth'* (I'll ask around)
- 18 *enhliziyi ngilwel' uthando lwakho* (where your heart is and fight for your love)
- 19 *Buya; buya buya kimi ng'zogudla* (Come, come back to me I will pass by)

20 *amazwe ng'ba nguwe* (countries because it's you)

21 *Nguw' ubambo lwam* (You are my soulmate)

22 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

23 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

24 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

25 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

26 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

27 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

28 *Ng'zogamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

29 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive)

30 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' is'thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)

31 *Uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' is'thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)

32 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive).×8

33 *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive).×8

Analysis

Title

The title of the song, *Ngifike*, is in isiZulu, like the rest of the lyrics, and means “I have arrived” but is actually the second part of his recurring phrase *Ng'zohamba ngifike* I will go and arrive, thus indicating a journey and a final resolution to the journey. *Ngifike* could also mean, if uttered with the tones of the subjunctive mood “I must arrive” thus showing the lover’s resolution to reach her beloved.

Theme

This song clearly shows two people in love with each other, the main problem in their relationship being the physical distance there is between them. The fact that they are in two different physical spaces hinders them from seeing each as often as they would wish to.

The song unpacks these themes:

- a) Long distance relationships
- b) Tenacity and perseverance

She describes the journey she is about to take as a very difficult one, but because of her love she is willing to travel with no fear. Line 3 gives an indication that there are huge obstacles,

while Line 15 suggests there might be metaphorically stormy conditions *Sekungamane kudume izul'* (Lighting and thunder may occur). She is very vigorous and committed woman who is eager to fight for what she believes in, that is love.

She refers to the *intaba* (mountain) in Lines 3,4,10, 30 and 31 and this appears as the biggest obstacle between her and her loved one. While mountains are tall and have dangerous wild omnivores, she is willing to overlook all of this to reach the person she is in love with. Metaphorically the mountain could stand for other things that often beset relationships, for example: differences of age, nationality, language, education, economic status.

The song is dominated by the words *ng' zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive) which speak to an absolute resoluteness and determination to go for love, regardless of the obstacles at hand. The singer is longing for her arrival despite the pain, sorrow, mourning, and other obstacles she might encounter on her journey – she is very sure she will sooner or later arrive and be with her loved one. Again Line 15 *Sekungamane kudume izul'* (Lighting and thunder may occur) speaks to this firmness of purpose: regardless of hailstorms, lighting or any natural disaster (which as discussed can also metaphorically stand for other kind of relationship problems), she would rather take the risk and climb that mountain and pass through those horrible experiences to be with her soulmate, described in Line 21 literally as her “rib” 21 *nguw' ubambo lwam* (You are my soulmate).

The song talks of unstoppable love and unpacks the fact that the way to reach that love is not as easy as one could wish. In order for you to reach your loved one you need to continue on your journey despite the obstacles in your way, the reward will be that you will finally forcefully break through all obstacles to reach the person you have chosen as your partner.

Language and lexicon

The repetition in the lyrics, particularly of the line *Ng'zohamba ngifike* (I will go and arrive) which occurs in 20 of the 33 lines is significant. If one unpacks the grammar one finds a future tense, characterized by the formative *-zo-* followed by the verb in the subjunctive mood with its final vowel *-e* (*ngifike*), indicating a sequence of actions in the future.

The other 13 lines, that deviate from this one statement are:

Line 3: *uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' isithandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)

Line 4 *uyadela wena ntaba ngokufihl' is' thandwa sam* (I hate you mountain, for hiding my love)

(Lines 3 and 4 are repeated in Lines 9 and 10 and 30 and 31)

In the above lines the mountain is being directly addressed, as if it were a person. This we can see by the use of the vocative in *ntaba* – the noun is used without its initial vowel *i-* (see Doke, 1945:281 on the formation of the vocative in isiZulu).

The verb *-dela* in isiZulu has several meanings (see Doke et al., 1990:142) the most relevant for these lyrics is the gloss “Condemn, turn against”. What is interesting is that although we know it is the singer who condemns the mountain, she uses the second person subject concord *u-* in *uyadela* as if to see it is the mountain that condemns or abandons her. I have taken the liberty to translate the condemnation as coming from the singer. The reason for the condemnation is made clear by the following phrase *ngokufihl' isithandwa sam* – the adverbial formative *nga-* is followed by the gerundive *ukufihla* “hiding” – *nga-* + *ukufihla* → *ngokufihla* and the noun *isithandwa* which is a deverbative from the verb *-thanda* in the passive *-thandwa* in Class 7 *isi-* thus: *isi-thand-wa* (the one who is loved). The closeness of the beloved to the singer is intensified by the possessive *sam* – the possessive concord of Class 7 *sa-* concurring with *isithandwa* and the possessive stem of first person singular *-m*. Thus the singer addresses the mountain directly and gives a reason for her hatred of it – it hides her love.

Lines 15-19 introduce new ideas. In Line 15 we have *Sekungamane kudume izul'* (Lightning and thunder may occur) which is followed by Line 16 *kunokuth uhambe...* (than you go). Here we have the completive aspect *se-* followed by indefinite subject concord *ku-* and the deficient verb *-mane* literally translating to “it could already be continually”. This is then followed again by the indefinite subject concord *ku-* followed by the verb *-duma* (thunder) in the subjunctive which is characterized by the *-e* suffix – *kudume* and the Class 5 noun *izulu* referring to the heavens or the weather. This line segues into the next which makes use of the comparative formative *kuna-* with *ukuthi* (literally: than you just) and the subject concord of 2nd person singular with the verb in the subjunctive *uhambe* (you go). Thus: I would rather endure thunder and lightning (i.e. tumultuous events) than just let go of you.

17 *ng'zobiza amabuth* (I'll ask around)

18 *enhliziyi ngilwel' uthando lwakho...* (where your heart is and fight for your love)

Lines 17 and 18 should also be read together, as one sentence: *Ng'zobiza amabuth' enhliziyo, ngilwel' uthando lwakho*. This could literally be translated as “I will call the regiments/warriors of the heart, and fight for your love”.

The writer of the lyrics is using poetic licence in that she says she will “call” *ngizobiza* the “regiments” (*amabutho* in isiZulu refers to “regiments, warriors, soldiers” – see Doke et al. 1990:94) followed by the possessive concord *a-* referring to the *amabutho* which is possessed by the noun *inhliziyo* – thus *a+inhliziyo* → *enhliziyo*. This is then followed by the verb *-lw-* “fight” with the applied extension *-el-* to indicate “fight for” *ngilwel'* and the object of this fighting is the abstract noun in Class 11 *uthando* “love” followed by the possessive concord *lwa-* referring to the *uthando* and the possessive stem for second person singular *-kho*.

Lines 19 to 20 should also be read as one sentence:

buya; buya buya kimi ng'zogudla amazwe ng'ba nguwe (Come, come back to me I will pass by countries, because it is you)

The imperative mood is used *buya* “come back” and is repeated twice followed by the locative formative *ki-* followed by the absolute pronoun *mina* minus the stabilizer *-na*:

Ki+mina → *kimi* (to me).

The future tense is again used in *ng'zogudla* which in English actually means “skirt” (see Doke et al., 1990:272) the meaning of the verb “skirt” in English being “pass along the edge of” (see Chambers Dictionary, 1998:1550).

The final statement shows the extent of the connection the singer feels, referring to her lover as her rib, which must have biblical undertones and is also interesting in terms of gender politics because in the Old Testament (Genesis 2:19-24²⁰) Adam forms Eve from his rib, whereas in this song, the woman indirectly refers to the man as her rib:

21 *ngu'w' ubambo lwam* (You are my soulmate)

Nguwe is the copulative of the absolute pronoun for second person singular *ngu-+wena* → *nguwe* with the deletion of the stabilizer *-na* followed by the Class 11 noun *ubambo* (rib) which

²⁰ *Walwakha ke uYehova uThixo ubambo abeluthabathe endodeni lwaba ngumfazi* (Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man)

precedes the possessive concord *lwa-* referring to *ubambo* prefixed to the possessive stem for first person singular -m. It is interesting that in isiZulu it would normally be *lwami* but here the final vowel -i is elided.

Conclusion

The song is about finding a soulmate and clinging to that mate no matter the odds. The song shows that the woman is longing for love and is desirous to go through life's raging storms and challenges to arrive at her destination – union with her true love. The song's lyrics suggest a person who has faith and hope and a determination to arrive at a place that will bring her closer to her partner. It may appear that her hope is built on nothing else but love, but the power of this love is paramount – there is nothing that can stop her in this endeavour - she trusts that soon her loved one will appear. The intensity of the lyrics which suggest an unwavering metaphysical love have intertextual relevance to more spiritual songs, such as William Batchelder Bradbury and Robert Crichtley's "On Christ the Solid Rock"²¹: Even if darkness veils his lovely face she will rest of his unchanging grace, in every high stormy gale, her anchor holds within the veil.

SONG 6: BABY PLEASE

- 1 Oh baby please *ngicel' usmile njalo* (Please smile like that always)
- 2 *Yeka la bantu basixabanisayo* (Don't listen to these people who make us fight)
- 3 And I don't care, *ngiyokuthanda njalo* (And I don't care, I will love you always)
- 4 *Ma wenze njalo mina I love you more* (If you do that)

- 5 *Oh baby please ngicel' ungithembe njalo* (Oh baby please trust me always)
- 6 *Bebengekho la bantu ma sishelana* (These people were not here when we were talking)
- 7 *Ma ngithi ngiyakuthanda, naw' uthi uyangithanda* (I say I love you and you say love me too)
- 8 *Ma wenze njalo mina I love you more.* (If you do that I love you more)
- 9 Oh baby please *khohlwa yila bantu* (Oh baby please ignore these people)
- 10 *Bathand' ukukhuluma ngeendaba zabantu.* (They like to gossip a lot)
- 11 *Mina ngiyakuthanda. vele ngiyazi uyangithanda* (I love you and I know you love me too)
- 12 *Kohlala kunjalo and I'll love you more.* (It will always be like that and I'll love you more)

- 13 *Bathi side le sikhathi sisonke* (They are saying we've been together for quite some time now)
- 14 And why *ungakhulumi ngelobolo* (And why don't you talk about lobola negotiations)
- 15 And *ngabatshela ukuthi mina ngiyakuthamba* (And I told them that I trust you)
- 16 It's a matter of time, time will tell
- 17 Baby

²¹ <https://www.weareworship.com/uk/songs/song-library/showsong/1228>

- 18 And *izolo lokhu bengihleli nomalume* (And yesterday I was talking to uncle)
 19 *Sikhuluma ngeendaba zelobolo* (we spoke about the lobola issue)
 20 *Ngoba ngiyakuthanda* and *ngiyazi uyangithanda* (because I love you, and I know you love me too)
 21 *Sengifun' ukuba nawe* everyday (I already want to be with you)

Analysis

Title

The song title is English; the song captures the details of begging for love. The man is begging and supplicating himself to the woman. Their love is mingled with the presence of a third person, which has contributed to their love weakening and for marriage negotiations to be delayed. This song is about reconciling love.

Theme

- a) Love
- b) Other people in a relationship
- c) Trust

The lyrics speak of people who are in love but are having problems. The opening lines (Lines 1-4) speak of love that has a third involvement. The inclusion of lobola and lobola negotiations in the lyrics makes this song relevant to South African young people wanting to marry according to custom.

In many cases love can turn bad and people tend to lose the hope and faith they have towards each other because of third parties. See Line 2: “*Yeka la bantu basixabanisayo*” (Don’t listen to these people who make us fight). The man and the woman sing about what is happening currently: many relationships are falling apart, not only because of other lovers, but because people involve friends and relations in their love. The chorus (opening Lines 1 and 2) carries the song meaning throughout “*please ngi’cel’usmile njalo/ yeka la bantu basixabanisayo*” (Please smile like that/don’t listen to these people who make us fight)

In order to get a nuanced interpretation of the lyrics it is helpful to view the official music video²² featuring the performers, Kelly Khumalo and Robbie Malinga. When Robbie Malinga sings Line 9 “*Oh baby please khohlwa yila bantu*” (Ignore these people – Literally: forget about these people) the listener is brought into the gossip that has probably been circulating about the man’s affairs, but one is also made aware that he has identified the problem, and is dealing with it – he is asking for her trust back and is trying to show his sincerity by talking about lobola negotiations which will lead to marriage.

Sometimes our love as young people is at stake because of in-laws, friends and colleagues, this song sends out a message to young people to try not to listen to gossip but to restore relationships through the correct channels.

Language and lexicon

The lexicon of this song shows that the writer is completely at home with contemporary township varieties of isiZulu (the main language of the song) as there are a significant number of borrowed words (e.g. Line 1 *usmile*) as well as instances of code-switching (e.g. Line 8 *Ma wenze njalo mina* I love you more – If you do that I love you more).

The song writer refers to the two people involved by using them in balanced phrases in which the subject concord *ngi-* (I) and the object concord *-ku-* (you) are reversed when the object becomes the subject *u-* (you) and the subject becomes the object (*-ngi-*):

Line 7: *ngiyakuthanda, naw' uthi uyangithanda* (I love you, and you love me)

There are also instructions to his beloved, one such command is that she must smile. For this instruction he uses the verb *-cela* to indicate a polite request (Line 1) but with the other, in which he is exhorting her to ignore other people he uses the imperative mood, in Line 2: *Yeka la bantu*

²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqATz2qXomY>

We are made aware that things have been happening behind the woman's back by the recent past continuous tense in Line 6 *bebengekho* (they were not there) and Line 18 *bengihleli nomalume* (I was sitting with uncle).

The words used in the semantic field of communication are:

Line 6: *sishelana*, the word *-shela* has the sense of “wooing” (Doke et al., 1990:736) and used with the reciprocal extension *-ana* means “wooing each other”.

Line 10: *bathand' ukukhuluma ngeendaba zabantu* (they like to talk about peoples' affairs)

Line 14: *ungakhulumi* (...you don't talk)

Line 15: *ngabatshela* (I told them)

The isiZulu word for “trust” is used in Lines 5 (*ngicel' ungithembe* – please trust me) and Line 15 (*mina ngiyakuthemba* – I trust you).

There are a number of words and constructions that conjure up the notion of “always” or an “everlasting” time through the use of the adverb *njalo*, the auxiliary *-hlala* and the noun *isikhathi* followed by the quantitative *sonke*:

Lines 1 and 3: *njalo* (always)

Line 12: *Kohlala kunjalo* (it will always be like that)

Line 13: *side le sikhathi isonke* (it has been a long time we have been together)

What is interesting is the *iindaba* which refers indirectly to “affairs” in Line 10 is used with the adverbial formative *nga-* *ngeendaba* followed by the possessive *za-abantu* → *zabantu*, changes its semantic import in Line 19 to *ngeendaba zelobolo* – exactly the same grammatical construction, but this time the noun following the possessive *za-* is *ilobolo* → *zelobolo*. Thus the lyrics writer is able to take the listener from a feeling of discomfort that comes from being talked about by strangers, to one of comfort – being talked about by family for the purpose of marriage.

Conclusion

As discussed, the lyrics in this song are both negative and positive, and the backing instruments make a joyful sound that appear to underscore the new trust and commitment the couple have found.

SONG 7: KUCHEZA

- 1 Hooooooo
- 2 My baby
- 3 My baby, my baby, my baby

- 4 Sitting on a chair
- 5 And I'm thinking
- 6 Damn
- 7 What did we do last night
- 8 We lost control

- 9 There's something about you, babe
- 10 And I can't explain it
- 11 I think about you almost daily
- 12 The way you call me baby
- 13 Drives me crazy

- 14 *Jonga sana!* (Look babe!)
- 15 *Xa ulibele udlala ngami* (If you forget and play with me)
- 16 *Uzolimala!* (You will get hurt)
- 17 *Bathi* (They say)
- 18 That is all about your love, jou
- 19 Don't wanna die alone, jou
- 20 Live our life, hey yo
- 21 *Wena uthini ngale ndaba?* (And what do you say about this matter?)
- 22 Eh, jou

- 23 You make me wanna
- 24 (sing hallelujah)
- 25 When I think about you
- 26 (In hamalia)
- 27 You make me lose control
- 28 (yeah yay)
- 29 And I'd like to hold ya
- 30 (yeah yay)

- 31 You make me wanna
- 32 (sing hallelujah)
- 33 When I think about you
- 34 (In hamalia)
- 35 I'll be your number one diva
- 36 (yeah yay)
- 37 I'll die for you like a soldier
- 38 (yeah yay)

- 39 Oh yeah yeah yeah
- 40 Oh yeah yeah yeah
- 41 Oh yeah yeah yeah

42 Oh yeah yeah

43 Hooo yeah

44 Babe, *wena undenza ntoni?* (What are you doing to me?)

45 *Phela mina ngihlala ngicabanga ngawe* (I am always thinking about you)

46 Hai yay yay yay

47 I lose control

48 I like it when you whine for me

49 Slowdown that pace

50 Cause I want to see

51 Ai yah yah yay

52 You make me wanna hold ya

53 Let me love you, love you, love you

54 Let's stay focused on just us two

55 There's no other one like you

56 Together there's nothing that we can't do

57 Let me love you, love you, love you

58 Let's stay focused on just us two

59 There's no other one like you

60 Together there's nothing that we can't do

61 You make me wanna

62(sing hallelujah)

63 When I think about you

64 (In hamalia)

65 You make me lose control

66 (yeah yay)

67 And I'd like to hold ya

68 (yeah yay)

69 You make me wanna

70 (sing hallelujah)

71 When I think about you

72 (In hamalia)

73 I'll be your number one diva

74 (yeah yay)

75 I'll die for you like a soldier

76 (yeah yay)

77Oh yeah yeah yeah

78 Oh yeah yeah yeah

79 Oh yeah yeah yeah

80 Oh yeah yeah

81 Hooo yeah

82 *Naku waza kila shiku* (I think about you every day)

83Hai yah yah yay

84 *Muki wangu* (my love)

85 Baby let me hold ya

86 I say I'll be good

87 I'll be good
 88 *Kucheza nawe we* (I am playing with you)
 89 I lose control

90 Let me love you, love you, love you
 91 Let's stay focused on just us two
 92 There's no other one like you
 93 Together there's nothing that we can't do

94 Let me love you, love you, love you
 95 Let's stay focused on just us two
 96 There's no other one like you
 97 Together there's nothing that we can't do

98 Hai yah yah yay
 99 I lose control
 100 Hai yah yah yay
 101 And I'd like to hold ya

102 Hai yah yah yay
 103 I lose control
 104 Hai yah yah yay
 105 And I'd like to hold ya

106 Oh yeah yeah yeah
 107 Oh yeah yeah yeah
 108 Oh yeah yeah yeah
 109 Oh yeah yeah
 110 Hooo yeah

Analysis

Title

Kucheza is a Swahili term, means to “to play/playing”. IsiXhosa-speakers may also use the word informally to mean “to peel” something or sometimes “to eat” or “to hide” from someone. even if ayikho incwadi ethetha ngo-cheza, mhlawumbi ungathi “Young, generally male, Xhosa-speakers like myself, sometimes use the term informally to mean “peel something” or “eat” or “hide from someone”. As there is no literature to support this definition of the word we could consider it a lexical item that has entered our particular idiolect – further research would have to be done in order to determine whether it is an accepted and current word used by isiXhosa youth.

Theme

The lyrics address the following themes:

- a) The playfulness of love
- b) The duplicitousness of love

Watching official song video²³ enabled me to understand the lyrics in terms of the settings and relationships to which they refer, as well as the framework of the tune and how it is applicable to the youth of South Africa. The lyrics talks of love and how to love - this is a pure truth and vivid, as it is exposed in the video.

Mafikizolo writes this song to invite other youth to absorb their music, and in order to do so, they include a few lines in another African language that is spoken outside of South Africa: Lines 82, 84 and 88 are in Kiswahili, a major Bantu language in Africa (Pawliková-Vilhanová, 1996). To me, as a young Xhosa man, the Swahili people represent culture, tradition, loyalty, honesty and trustworthiness, but in reality, like any other language, Kiswahili is merely a vehicle through which to communicate contemporary realities. Ntarangwi (2009:43) argues that by using local languages, pop artists enter into “a local moral and cognitive conception that marks the importance of African modernity.” In a sense, it is the isiXhosa, isiZulu and Kiswahili lyrics in the song that provide it with its local content, because without these languages, the lyrics could be talking about any people, anywhere in the globe. The fact is, most of the lyrics are actually in English and the kind of people the musicians are trying to appeal to (highly bilingual African youth) may not find the local languages relevant to them. On the other hand, the introduction of isiXhosa, isiZulu and Kiswahili may serve the purpose of instilling the song with a particular Pan-African ethos.

The song context as I have highlighted above, particularly when listened to together with the video, is very subtly saying it's acceptable for a female to be in love with two men at the same time. If one only concentrates on the lyrics it would be difficult to pick up this message, but the video expresses something else. Purely analysing the lyrics in isolation from the video, however, one can pick up a feeling of regret for past indiscretions:

(Pre-Chorus: Nhlanhla & Theo)

53 Let me love you, love you, love you

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUy3FYqx8fs>

54 Let's stay focused on just us two
 55 There's no other one like you
 56 Together there's nothing that we can't do
 57 Let me love you, love you, love you
 58 Let's stay focused on just us two
 59 There's no other one like you
 60 Together there's nothing that we can't do

The lyrics in Lines 53-60 for me indicate that the woman is feeling guilty about falling in love with two people at the same time, although this is nowhere evident in the words. This shows that the lyrics speak to people in different emotional states and they may come to their own meanings, regardless of the actual words. However the singer's constant repetition of words that speak to loving just "you" could be taken to be hyperbolic, the reiterations of second person singular pronouns are her effort at convincing the man that he is the only one she will ever love. The following line (Line 54) is evidence of this: *Let's stay focused on just us two*. Though she knows she is the one that is not loyal, she is almost making a love blackmailing statement so that the man can believe that she belongs to him alone.

I would argue that the female speaks in riddles because of the guilty conscious she has, and in a way, the writer of the lyrics is being gender unbiased since here it is the man, not the woman who is the victim of a cheating partner. As Kwatsha argues, we can longer view women in African society as having to be celibate if single (although in the lyrics the woman has partner), they are able to have associates just as men do (Kwatsha, 2015).

Although these lyrics speak of a future in which two lovers are together, the other lyrics which speak of losing control and the possibility of getting hurt (see Line 16:*uzolimala*) show a lack of satisfaction, reckless behaviour when a person is hungry for love. The video demonstrates that as she sings, she is with someone else, and in love with that person as well. She is hiding that she is having an affair, henceforth the title *kucheza*. The woman is playing with her lover and he is not aware of that, because he is blinded by love and thinks he is the best amongst other men. If he would carefully grasp the words that are said by the woman, he would probably understand what was literally going on in their relationship. Most of these lyrics speaks of a lady who is cheating and does not want this secret to be known by her lover. She is playing with that man's heart by using good and promising words.

Language and lexicon

For the purposes of this dissertation I will only look at the lyrics in African languages, i.e. isiZulu, isiXhosa and Kiswahili in this song.

Lines 14 to 17 could be in either isiZulu or isiXhosa because the lexicon is found in both languages (apart from the clear isiZulu *ngami* in Line 15 which would be *ngam* in isiXhosa)

14 *Jonga sana!* (Look babe!)

15 *Xa ulibele udlala ngami* (If you forget and play with me)

16 *Uzolimala!* (You will get hurt)

17 *Bathi* (They say)

Line 21 *Wena uthini ngale ndaba?* (And what do you say about this matter?) again could be either in isiZulu or in isiXhosa, since although in isiXhosa the word *indaba* is often seen in the plural *iindaba* as ‘news’ it can also refer to a ‘matter’ in the singular (as a variant of *udaba*) (*Greater Dictionary of isiXhosa, Volume 2:464*). The warning in Line 16 *Uzolimala!* is uttered as a possible future event, evidence by the future formative *-zo-*.

In Line 44 there is again a sentence that could be said to be either in isiZulu or in isiXhosa *Wena undenza ntoni?* (What are you doing to me?). The positioning of the absolute pronoun for the second person singular again, as an emphazier for the 2nd person singular subject concord *u-* in *undenza* allows the singer to stress the importance of the second person, the you, in the singer’s life. At the same time, the singer becomes the object, represented by the first person object concord *-ndi-* in the verb *u-ndi-enza* → *undenza*. It is significant that while in English we say “what are you doing TO me” in Nguni languages the “to” is implicit in the verb *-enza* but can also be taken to mean “what are you making me”?

In Line 45. *Phela mina ngihlala ngicabanga ngawe* (I am always thinking about you) we have a clear isiZulu sentence.

Phela is the isiZulu word that can mean “empty”, often seen in its intransitive stative form *iphelile* (it is finished) but, in the context of this statement can also mean “finish up/end up”. This is a free morpheme that can carry the sense of “I will empty myself for us to work as a couple”, which is supported by the following phrase within that line *mina ngihlala ngicabanga*

ngawe (I always think about you). She is empty and what she fills is the presence of the man, (her + man = completed.)

The isiZulu absolute pronoun for first person singular *mina* further underscores and strengthens the intensity of the singer's personal resolve and is balanced by the adverbial formative *nga-* followed by the contracted absolute pronoun for second person singular, *wena* → *ngawe*.

Mina (me) – *Wena* (you)

The sentiment expressed in isiZulu in Line 45 is picked up in Kiswahili in Line 82 thereby providing a multilingual unity of purpose and expression of how a lover can consume one's thoughts: *Naku waza kila shiku* (I think about you every day).

Conclusion

This song has ended being listed as one of the ten top most popular songs played on *Umhlobo weNene* in 2016. I would argue that since this song was easily accessible by everybody in the country and neighbouring countries, by virtue of the simplicity of the English, the topicality of the themes and the inclusion of Kiswahili, it was able to gather momentum and become a favourite with diverse viewers that year. Mafikizolo made a wise decision to choose a simple theme (cheating in love) but to concentrate on the madness and obsessiveness of love as an overarching theme, and by writing about this topic mainly in English but adding local and Pan-African relevance by introducing Nguni and Kiswahili.

Young people would listen to the music of this song and not being aware of the lyrics but once they follow the rhythm and fall in love with the song they will start to be curious to find out more about the meaning of the words they are not familiar with. In this way the song writer is able to educate listeners to acknowledge that there are many languages in Africa and that they are beautiful and romantic and not as different from our own languages as they might imagine.

SONG 8: AMAGAMA

- 1 *Makuded' ubumnyama kuvel' ukukhanya e'ndleleni zam* (Let the dark give way to light on my paths)
- 2 *Ndiyayazi ilizwi lendod' engenamali alivakali* (I know the voice of a man without money is very silent)
- 3 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)
- 4 *Ndiyakuthanda manyan nyani* (I really love you)
- 5 *Andazi ndenze kanjani* (I don't know what to do)

- 6 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)

- 7 *Mna ndiyakuthanda manyan nyani* (I really love you)
 8 *Andazi ndenze kanjani* (I don't know what I should do)
- 9 *Ngamagama, oh* (They are words, oh)
 10 *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama, hayi* (I have run out of words, no)
 11 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)
 12 *Ndiyakthanda manyan nyani* (I really love you)
 13 *Andazi ndenze kanjani* (I don't know what I should do)
- 14 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)
 15 *Mna ndiyakthanda manyan nyani* (I really, really love you)
 16 *Andazi ndenze kanjani* (I don't know what to do)
 17 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)
 18 *Mna ndiyakuthanda manyani nyani* (I really, really love you)
 19 *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama, hayi* (I have run out of words, no) (x4)
 20 *Amagama, amagama, amagama* (Words, words, words) (x3)
- 21 *Usistofu sam samalahle esind'khusel' ezingqeleni zobusika* (You are my coal heater, that protects me from cold winters)
 22 *Usisambulela sam selang' esindikhusel' emalangen' asehlotyeni* (You are my umbrella that protects me from the summer suns)
 23 *Uligungqu lam letshokoletshi, limnandi njengeTofoluks* (You are my chocolate sweet, as tasty as Toff-o-luxe)
 24 *Andazi ndenze njani* (I don't know how I should do it)
 25 *Ndifun' amagama anenyani* (I want honest words)
 26 *Ndifun' amagam' anencasa* (I want tasty words)
 27 *Ndifun' amagama anothando* (I want words of love)
 28 *Ndifun' amagama anamandla* (I want powerful words)
 29 *Ndifun' amagama anothando* (I want words of love)
 30 *'Smakad' uzokukhusela phakathi kwezaqhwithela* (Strong one you will protect [me] from obstacles)
 31 *Phakathi kwezaphuselane* (Amongst immature young men)
- 32 *Ngqu mhakho ndiyakuthanda mna* (I pledge I love you)
 33 *Ngqu mhakho uyandichaza mna* (I pledge, you complete me)
 34 *Ngqu mhakho ndiyakuthanda mna* (I pledge I love you)
- 35 *Amagama, amagama, amagama* (Words, words, words)
 36 *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama* (I have run out of words)(x8)
 37 *Amagama, amagama, amagama* (Words, words, words)
 38 *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama* (I have run out of words) (x4)
- 40 *Amagam' anenyani* (Real words)
 41 *Amagam' anencasa* (Words with taste)
 42 *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama* (I have run out of words)

Analysis

Title

Amagama in isiXhosa means ‘names’ or ‘words’. In the context of this song it is more likely that Nathi had a stronger connection to the semantics of “words” as he refers to the fact that he has run out of them *ndiphelelwa ngamagama*.

Theme

The song is about the following:

- a) Praising a lover (he makes the repetition of *Ndiyakuthanda* and *Ndifuna amagama* almost poetic, creating self-contained stanzas)
- b) The gist of the song is about having faith and wanting honesty (*amagama anenyani*)
- c) The song speaks to the fact that sometimes we cannot express what we feel

Language and lexicon

Line 1 opens the song dramatically with *Makuded' ubumnyama kuvel' ukukhanya e'ndleleni zam* (Let the dark give way to light on my paths). This sounds like the cry from a person who has been experiencing challenges already, in his personal life. This phrase can be traced back to the traditional ritual of brewing Xhosa beer (*umqombothi*) for the ancestors when one experiences difficulties and challenges in life. The ancestors are requested to remove darkness and bring light. This plea is usually shouted by isiXhosa-speakers, when life has not favoured them. The fact that the subjunctive is used with *Ma-* indicates that the singer is directly addressing someone, and here we can assume it is those who have gone before him, the *izinyanya*, the ancestors. The fact that the second verb in the sentence is *kuvele* encourages the listener to anticipate lyrics that will take him/her out of the darkness and into an ever-brightening light.

In Line 2 *Ndiyayazi ilizwi lendod' engenamali alivakali* (The voice of a man without money is very silent) Nathi here, in a similar way to Dr Malinga in *Akulaleki* mentions the debilitating effect of not having money. In this song the effect is it takes away one's ability to voice one's feelings, whereas in *Akulaleki* it is about a general dissatisfaction with life. When a man is going through financial challenges he perceives himself as being useless and less valuable to those he used to love the most and to those who used to respect him. This line addresses the main challenge or problem Nathi is going through in his life, but the statement is softened by

the hope that is alluded to in line 1, that after darkness light will follow. Some of this light is expressed in Lines 3-4 which offer a sincere declaration of love:

Line 3-4:

3 *Ndiyakuthanda ntombazana* (I love you girl)

4 *Ndiyakuthanda manyan nyani* (I really love you)

The artist makes listeners aware of what he meant in the previous lines. There's darkness, which in reality is the financial instability that holds him back from getting involved with the woman he is in love with. He is very much aware that most women don't want to associate themselves with men who are unable to provide for them. In Line 5 the artist sounds like a person who is about to give up on love *andazi ndenze kanjani* – he seems to be saying that he shouldn't be in love if and the implication is that he knows that he is in a hopeless predicament, he doesn't have vision, he doesn't see the future.

5 *Andazi ndenze kanjani* (I don't know what I should do)

In line 10 Nathi is now becoming speechless as he doesn't know what to say anymore.

10 *Ndiphelwa ngamagama* (I have run out of words)

He has identified the problem that he is having and now he wants her to understand him, that the lack of money has silenced him, he is unable to find the right words to tell her how much he loves her.

Lines 11-20 just repeat this conundrum, almost as if the singer is allowing us into his head, where the same issues repeat themselves endlessly, I love you, I don't have words, I don't know what to do.

Suddenly there is a change of words, and from lines 21-23 he is praising her, using not his own words, but traditional words of praise for a woman which have, in fact, been used by other artists²⁴.

²⁴ See Mbongeni Ngema's *Stimela saseZola and the Soil's Stove sam samalahle*

21 *Usistofu sam samalahle esind'khusel' ezingqeleni zobusika* (You are my coal heater that protects me from cold winters)

22 *Usisambulela sam selang' esindikhusel' emalangen' asehlotyeni* (You are my umbrella that protects me from the summer suns)

23 *Uligungqu lam letshokoletshi, limnandi njengetofoluks* (You are my chocolate sweet, taste like Toff-o-luxe)

Then from Lines 25 onwards he seems to have found his own words, what he really wants to say. Praising her makes it easier for him to understand the kind of words he is looking for (honest, tasty, loving, powerful):

25 *Ndifun' amagama anenyani* (I want honest words)

26 *Ndifun' amagam' anencasa* (I want tasty words)

27 *Ndifun' amagama anothando* (I want words of love)

28 *Ndifun' amagama anamandla* (I want powerful words)

29 *Ndifun' amagama anothando* (I want words of love)

Lines 30-31 give us his final declaration – he is looking for someone to protect him, to shield him from immature young men:

30 *'Smakad' uzokukhusela phakathi kwezaqhwithela* (Strong one you will protect [me] from obstacles)

31 *Phakathi kwezaphuselane* (Amongst immature young men)

The noun *izaqhwithi/izaqhwithela* in Line 30 literally refers to a storm, specifically a hurricane, this metaphor thus conjuring up the image of things being totally destroyed and the singular of *izaphuselane* in Line 31 is glossed in the *Greater Dictionary of Xhosa Vol. 1* (Tshabe & Shoba, 2006:51) as a word used:

derisively of a young fellow who as no experience of life, and who has therefore no clear understanding of the right course of action; an immature person.

The song is written in good, standard isiXhosa. The artist is clearly targeting isiXhosa speakers who will identify with his struggle to express himself, his longing to find ways of talking about

love in his own language. His isiXhosa language finally provides him with the honesty and faith that he needs to have when it comes to love.

Grammatically the song is interesting. As already mentioned, the opening line starts with the subjunctive mood, a clear statement that a particular event ought to happen. It is then followed by, in Line 2, a statement of fact in the indicative mood, with a relative clause using the associative *-na-* [*engenamali* – who is without money] this qualificative explaining to us the whole reason for his silence and loss of words. The other relatives, also using the associative *-na-* are all used in relation to *amagama* (words). The only passive construction in the lyrics is *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama* (I have run out of words) which occurs in Lines 10, 19, 36, 38 and 42.

In Lines 21 and 22 the folk expression uses the metaphors of a coal stove (*Usisitofu sam samalahle*) and an umbrella (*Usisambulela sam selanga*) which are each identificative copulatives followed by possessive constructions:

u-si-(i)sambulela

u-si-(i)tofu

sa-amalahle

sa-ilanga (selanga)

These noun phrases are then followed by relative clauses, in Line 21 *esind'khusel' ezingqeleni zobusika* (which protects me from the winter cold) and in Line 22 *esindikhusel' emalangen' asehlotyeni* (that protects me from the summer suns. The contrast of *ezingqeleni zobusika* with *emalangen' asehlotyeni* is effective in that it gives the sense of constant, year-round protection. In Line 23 another metaphor is used, that of a sweet *Uligungqu lam letshokoletshi*, again an identificative copulative:

u-li-(i)gungqu

which is followed by a possessive as in the previous metaphors.

In this final metaphor, however there is not a verbal relative, but a simple relative *limnandi* followed by the comparative marker *njenga-* prefixed to *itofoluks*.

Grammatically Lines 30-31 are interesting as they appear to be addressing someone, the vocative being used as evidenced by the loss of the initial vowel in '*Smakad*':

30 '*Smakad' uzokukhusela phakathi kwezaqhwithela*

(Strong one protect me from obstacles)

31 *Phakathi kwezaphuselane* (Amongst immature young men)

Important to note is the locative position *phakathi kwa-* used together with powerful nouns both in Cl.8 with the *iza-* allomorph:

Phakathi kwa-izaqhwithela

Phakathi kwa-izaphuselane

Conclusion

Sometimes it is difficult to fall in love. In contemporary society sometimes a man feels he can only indulge in love when he has all the resources to support a mate. He finds obstacles that are somehow stopping him from love, but he promises himself to fight the raging storms that are blocking his way to love. He wrestles with vocabulary, desperate to find the best, most sincere way of expressing his affections to his beloved. Finally, in this song, after using clichés and traditional expressions, he is able to plunge the depths of his heart and find an original way of declaring his true feelings.

SONG 9: AKULALEKI

1 *Akulaleki unemali akulaleki, akulaleki unemali akulaleki* (You don't sleep when you have money) x5

2 *Abenganamali uzobezwa bathi kuyabhora lana as'ambe lana* (Those who don't have money you will hear them say it is boring here, let's leave this place)

3 *Kuyabhora kodwa ma unemali uzobezwa bathi kumnandi ziyakhipha lana* (It's boring here, but if they have money you will hear them say it's fun here)

Analysis

Title

Akulaleki means “there is no sleeping” or less literally “you don’t sleep”. Although there are not many actual words in this song, there many meanings that can be drawn from even the title alone. You don’t sleep because of a contact that says someone has deposited money in your bank account, this is another meaning: mean “You don’t sleep because you need to constantly check your bank account to see whether someone has deposited money or not”? Or because you are worried about money, tossing and turning wondering how you are going to pay the bills. *Akulaleki* because of the heat, or cold. *Akulaleki* because of mosquitos. It could also refer to the fact that you don’t sleep because in this place where you stay there are so many people, it is hard to get enough peace and quiet to fall asleep. It could also refer to the fact that your life is so busy – *akulaleki* - you are studying, driving, cooking, playing, talking, singing, partying and falling in and out of love.

Theme

The song is about money. The artist draws a picture of what money does to a person. Money can render a person inhuman, encourages them to become dissatisfied with life if they feel they don’t have enough. In the song, the lack of money creates a feeling of boredom and restlessness, as if somehow moving somewhere else will make life better. As the lyrics suggest, once you have money suddenly everything changes and the same place and people can suddenly become attractive and “fun”. Another theme could be that one needs to work hard to create enough money to be able to enjoy the place one is in, both literally and figuratively. Otherwise worry about money can hasten on a feeling of being lonely and loveless, and a tendency to be full of anger and hatred towards those who do have money.

Language and lexicon

Although the title would suggest this is an isiXhosa song, in fact *Akulaleki* means “you do not sleep” in both isiXhosa and isiZulu. The metastative potential extension *-ek-* used together with the verb *-lal-* indicates that the process of falling asleep is not achievable.

A closer analysis of the lyrics reveals that the song is indeed in Zulu. For example:

isiZulu: *uzobezwa* (you will hear them) → isiXhosa *uzobeva*

isiZulu: *ma* (when) → isiXhosa *xa*

The lyrics communicate a style of speaking that is peculiar to urban youth complaining about a lack of action and even gossiping about the way they talk, e.g. *bathi* (they say). The “they”

under discussion are reported as saying *Kuyabhora* it is boring) and then the lyricist gives us how they would summon their friends to leave, clipping their syllables, as in *as'ambe* (Let's go).

Lana in isiZulu is the demonstrative pronoun for Class 6 (with the stabilizer *-na*) but in this context could be used as an alternative for *lapha*.

Kumnandi in Line 3 contrasts with *kuyabhora* in Line 2.

The use of the slang word *ziyakhapha* again is used to make the words of the young men come alive, to show their particular stylistics and swagger. As one Facebook post puts it (in a discussion on *Ziyawa* but *Ziyakhapha* is also mentioned):

Ziyawa to me means diatswa,ziyakhapha! Go monate. Its everything nice and fun! Its the ultimate summer experience,when ppl live it up.the essence of when is Life is Good!²⁵

Conclusion

The lyrics of this song speak to the restless of the urban youth – the sense that they always need to be on the move, their fear of missing out on the action. The title of the song, *Akulaleki* suggests that for this group of people much of the excitement in their lives happens in the night and also that much of their enjoyment of life depends on how much money they have – thus life is boring (*kuyabhora*) when one does not have money, and one therefore tends to view one's environment as boring, but once one's financial situation changes the same environment can suddenly seem desirable and attractive (*kumnandi*).

²⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/LGSouthAfrica/posts/490340660999025>

SONG 10: UMSINDO

1 Eish another killer

2 dankie Prof

3 *Kalawa Jazzmee, zowuz'umsindo* (Kalawa Jazzmee you will hear the noise)

4 *ila bashana baseAfro* (These guys from Afro)

Chorus

5 *We Tira ninoSox nina ninomsindo* (Tira and Sox you have the noise)

6 *Afrotainment neKalawa ninomsindo* (Afrotainment and Kalawa you have the noise)

7 *We Tira ninoSox kodwa ninomsindo* (Tira and Sox but you have the noise)

8 *Afrotainment neKalawa ninomsindo* (Afrotainment and Kalawa you have the noise)

9 *Ekaban' le party es'phethe ryt?* (Whose party is this that is so entertaining?)

10 *Ekaban'lenkwar'esphethe moja* (Whose party is this one that is so good?)

11 *Sikuphi la, obani laba?* (Where are we here, who are these?)

12 *Woza woza shona phansi maw'thanda x2* (Come and come and get down, if you can)

Analysis

Title

Umsindo in two African languages can refer both to anger, or to noise. In isiZulu *Umsindo* means “noise, din, uproar” (Doke et al. 1990:758). In isiXhosa it means anger, the outward show of rage.

Theme

The song lyrics are written in English and Tsotsitaal, an informal language of South African townships. By using this particular urban variety of language, the artist manages to capture the interest of young people. This song is about:

- a) Partying, happiness, having fun, drinking
- b) DJs

There is code switching from the beginning till the end of the song. The writer uses it to invite even speakers of other languages to listen to their lyrics and the story they are telling which is about having a good time. giving it a fresh, urban, real-life feel. The fact that DJ Tira and DJ

Sox (and DJ Nkoh's Abashana base Afro) are mentioned by name in the song suggests that this song is actually advertising or branding their kind of parties, the music that is played there and the sense of heightened excitement that be experienced there.

The use of words like *ekabani leparty es'phethe ryt*, demonstrates the urban environment that this song appeals to, and also firmly situate the narrative in a township atmosphere.

This song is accessible to everybody who likes kwaito music because these lyrics have both hip pop and kwaito.

Language and lexicon

Apart from the opening two lines which are in English and Afrikaans, the song is sung in Tsotsitaal which has been described as being markedly different from standard varieties of African languages in that:

Speakers are primarily young – and define themselves by difference from the older generation.

Speakers are primarily urban – and define themselves against the rural.

Speakers are primarily black – and define themselves in opposition to white or European culture, and its cultural expressions (e.g. music, clothes).

Speakers are primarily male – and define themselves in the sense of a particular masculinity, which involves being 'streetwise' or 'clever'. (Hurst, 2009:250)

The song is very casual, it is celebrating the sounds of pop and kwaito that targets really young especially when they are slightly inebriated and feeling a bit reckless.

In Line 9 the singer uses the English word for party but in Line 10 uses the Tsotsitaal term *nkwar*'. Both of these words are qualified by a direct relative that directly translates as "that treats us" which is further qualified by the Tsotsitaal adverb *moja* (really well).

The final lines are challenging the listeners to start dancing:

11 *Sikuphi la, obani laba?* (Where are we here, who are these?)

12 *Woza woza shona phansi maw'thanda* x2

The questions *sikuphi la?*, *obani laba?* are rhetorical and segue into the imperative mood of the verb *-za* (come) in isiZulu *Woza woza* followed by another command *shona phansi* indicating that the dancers must get down low, but allows them some discretion by the inclusion

of *maw'thanda* (Literally: if you like). It is significant that this last Line, which includes a polite request, could be read as being in standard isiZulu, suggesting that although the club is hectic, there is still respect for the individual's choice to dance or not.

Conclusion

The song is about partying in a certain style with particular DJs and music that captures the imagination of a certain group of young people. The lyrics of the song concentrate on the names of certain DJs and links the *umsindo* to them and is clearly marketing their particular brand of party music. A close examination of the official video for the number reveals the subaltern role the women play to the men who dominate the direction of the action and who openly flaunt their riches and sex appeal.



Chapter conclusion

An analysis of the lyrics of the top 10 songs played on uMhlobo weNene in 2016 shows that Xhosa lyricists are mainly concerned with personal relationships and circumstances and that the majority of the words are from a standard Xhosa vocabulary. The scanty lyrics for the more upbeat songs (Akulaleki, Donsa Nkabi and Umsindo) suggest that when the topic is not romantic love or personal journies, the words act more as a background to the music, rather than the other way round.

CHAPTER FIVE: SURVEY WITH TEENAGERS

Indicingisa nge past yam ‘It makes me think of my past’

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I set out the questionnaire I developed for teenagers to gauge their level of appreciation of isiXhosa lyrics. I tabulate their answers as to why they like isiXhosa lyrics under the following headings: Ease of remembering the lyrics, ease of understanding the song, motivating one to understand, making you feel like dancing, because it is your language, identity/heritage and emotional depth. In the second table I give their narrative responses to the questions in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the teenagers’ reactions.

5.2 Methodology

Written answer questions with 11 teenagers.

- 8 thirteen year olds
- 2 fourteen year olds
- 1 twelve year old

5.3 Research setting

An English medium school in Woodstock, Cape Town, serving mainly Afrikaans and isiXhosa-speaking learners.

My motivation for selecting this school, rather than an isiXhosa-speaking medium school was that I wanted to ascertain whether isiXhosa-speaking youth who are exposed to a wide range of English discourses are still interested and attracted by isiXhosa lyrics.

5.4 Questions

1. *Uyazithanda na iingoma ezibhalwa ngesiXhosa (umzekelo Ndikuthandile nguVusi Nova). (Tikisha impendulo efana neyakho) (Do you like songs written in Xhosa (example Ndikuthandile by Vusi Nova)?*

2. *Ukuba uphendule uEwe, kutheni usitsho nje? Nika izizathu zokuthanda ukumamela iingoma zanamhlanje (pop songs) eziculwa ngesiXhosa.* (If you answered “Yes”, why? Give reasons for liking contemporary pop songs sung in Xhosa.)
3. *Ukuba uphendule uHayi, kutheni usitsho nje? Nika izizathu zokungathandi ukumamela iingoma zanamhlanje eziculwa ngesiXhosa.* (If you answered “No”, why? Give reasons for not liking contemporary pop songs in Xhosa.)

5.5 Results

100% of respondents answered in the affirmative that they enjoyed listening to pop songs that used isiXhosa lyrics.

Table 3a: Teenager reasons for liking isiXhosa lyrics (Main reasons)

Note that sometimes respondents gave a number of different reasons, and sometimes both reasons would relate to a similar topic (e.g. identity/heritage).

Note that the reason for liking isiXhosa lyrics was simply because they were in isiXhosa.

Ease of remembering/catching the lyrics	Ease of understanding song	Motivating you to understand	Make you feel like dancing	Because it is in your language	Identity/Heritage	Emotional depth
3	4	1	2	7	5	5

In Table 3b I give the actual responses as written down (I have retained the spelling and orthographical errors for authenticity).

Table 3b: Actual written responses by teenagers

Age	Response	Overall response EWE or HAYI
13	<p>Respondent 1: Ndithanda ingoma zesiXhosa ngoba uyakhawuleza ukuwazi amagama engoma and zinalo vibe and kulula uyi understand ingoma. Zinalanto zikwenza ufune uyiva.</p> <p><i>“I love the song written in isiXhosa because you quickly capture the lyrics of the song and they have this vibe and it’s easy to understand the song. They also motivate you to understand it”.</i></p>	EWE

13	<p>Respondent 2: Ndithanda ingoma zesiXhosa kuba zinala ndawo zikwenza ujive ngaphakathi kwe ngoma.</p> <p>Kulula uyiva ingoma yomxhosa kuba lilwimi lakho losiko.</p> <p><i>“I love Xhosa songs because they make you jive in between the song. It is easy to understand the Xhosa song because it is written in your language”.</i></p>	EWE
13	<p>Respondent 3: Lengoma enabuthando iya bonisa ukuthanda abantu, abazali banga yithanda lengoma for bona.</p> <p>Ewe, mabafake iEnglish for abanye abanga kwazi ukuyiva ngesiXhosa.</p> <p><i>“This song it’s about love it shows people who love one another, parents would like this song for them. Yes, they should add English lyrics for those who cannot understand isiXhosa.</i></p>	EWE
13	<p>Respondent 4: Ngoba indicingisa nge past yam, futhi ndiyazithanda ingoma zolwimi lam.</p> <p>Ezi ngoma zimnandi kufuneka zibe ne video ukuyenza mnandi kakhulu.</p> <p><i>“Because this make me think of my past and I love these songs they are in my language.</i></p> <p><i>These songs needs video so that they can be nicer”.</i></p>	EWE
14	<p>Respondent 5: Ngoba langoma iculwa ngesiXhosa futhi ithetha nango thando u-Vusi Nova ingoma zakhe ndiyazithanda.</p> <p>Ewe ingoma zesiXhosa ndiyazithanda kakhulu.</p> <p><i>“Because these lyrics talks about love, Vusa Nova’s song I love so dearly. I love African songs.</i></p>	EWE
14	<p>Respondent 6: Ngoba ze zesiXhosa futhi ngezo thando. Ndiyazithanda ngoba ngezeseXhosa.</p> <p><i>“They are in Xhosa and speak about love. I love these songs because they are written in Xhosa”.</i></p>	EWE
13	<p>Respondent 7: Njengokuba ndizithanda iingoma eziculwa ngesiXhosa ngoba ndiyakwazi uba zithini i-meaning yazo futhi</p>	

	<p>ndiyazi jayivela ezolwimi lam ngoba siyazazi futhi siyakhawuleza uzazi ezinye ingoma nje nge siNgesi asikhawulezi uzi qonda.</p> <p>Ewe ikhona ezingoma zezolwimi lwethu zindenza ndikhululeke ndibenovuyo ku-life nje ngengoma zika Sjava zichaza into ngempilo mhlawumbi ikhona into eyayenzeke kuwe zizakwenza ukhululeke ubenovuyo</p> <p><i>“I love these songs sung in isiXhosa because I can hear or understand their meaning and I also jive, because they are written in my language, I get to follow the lyrics quicker than English ones.</i></p> <p><i>Yes these songs in my language make me to be free and be happy in life, just like Sjava songs that explain your life or something that happened to you, they will make you relaxed and happy.</i></p>	EWE
13	<p>Respondent 8: Azikhoninzi ingoma eziculwa ngesiXhosa .Mna ndiyathanda ukumamela iingoma eziculwa ngesiXhosa kuba mna ndikhule kwindlu yesiXhosa. Ezinye iingoma eziculwa ngelinye ilwimi kuba ndiphoxa isiko lam.</p> <p>Mna andithandi ukubona umzekelo ooNasty bacula ngelinye ulwimi kuba iyakhathaza, mna ndiyathanda umntu ocula ngesiXhosa.</p> <p><i>“There are not so many songs sung in vernacular, I like isiXhosa songs because I grew up in isiXhosa society. Others songs that are sung in in other languages I don’t like them.</i></p> <p><i>I don’t like to see people like Nasty who sings in other languages, because it pains me because I like isiXhosa songs”</i></p>	EWE
13	<p>Respondent 9: ingxaki kumnandi ukumamela ingoma zosiko lwakho. Zikwenza ukhululeke emphemfumlweni wakho uzive uhlambulukile.</p> <p>Ingoma zesiXhosa zinemfundiso kwaye ziyathandwa ngabantu besiXhosa.</p> <p><i>“It is good to listen songs in your language. They make you free and revived in the soul. African songs have a message and loved by many Xhosa people”.</i></p>	EWE

13	<p>Respondent 10: IsiXhosa lulwimi lwam lo thetha so ingoma iyakhawuleza ukungena engqondweni yam andinidi ukuzikhumbula ilyrics zengoma. Ngamanye amaxesha ingoma iculwa ngento eqhubekayo empilweni yakho okanye seyenzekile kuwe.</p> <p>Ingoma inge feelings ne emotions zakho okanye into eyenzekileyo kuwe.</p> <p><i>“isiXhosa is my home language therefore the lyrics are quicker to be memorise. Sometimes the lyrics are referred something that is happening to ones life. The song is about feelings and emotions a person go through”.</i></p>	EWE
12	<p>Respondent 11: Ngoba ndiyakwazi ukuva into eziculwayo. Into endiyithandayo ngesiXhosa amagama ndiwabamba ngoku. Into endiyithandayo nge (pop-songs) ziyakwazi uku hambelana nento le ukuyo.</p> <p>Ndiyayithanda ngoba ingolwimi lam. Xa umphefumlo wam ungamandanga ndiyakwazi ukumamela iingoma zesiXhosa.</p> <p><i>“I can hear the lyrics clearly. What I like the most is that it’s easy to memorise lyrics. These lyrics can relate to any situation a person undergo. I love it because it’s my own language. When I am emotional down Xhosa lyrics can lift me up”.</i></p>	EWE

5.6 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I give the results of a questionnaire conducted with teenagers as to whether they enjoy Xhosa pop lyrics. The respondents all answered overwhelmingly that they did enjoy hearing their mother-tongue in this medium and the main reason offered for this was because they liked hearing their mother-tongue “because it is my language”, which could be argued is self-explanatory but is still nevertheless heartening in this age of increasing globalization of the youth.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter I discuss the most popular themes that the lyrics of the top 10 isiXhosa songs of 2016 dealt with – primarily being love and money. I then discuss the grammar of the songs and how the morphology points to a preoccupation with first and second person. The grammatical discussion also looks at trends in terms of colloquial forms (i.e. contracted future tense). I also discuss the issue of cultural references in the lyrics and urbanization and language change. Finally the lyrics suggest that the lyricists of 2016's isiXhosa pop songs were not engaged in challenging their young listeners politically or emotionally but went along the route of tried and tested formulaic romantic ballads.

6.2 Trending themes: Love and money

In this thesis, through a thorough analysis of the lexicon, I am able to conclude that the majority of the top 10 isiXhosa pop songs aired on uMhlobo weNene in 2016 were about love (6 out of 10 had as their theme a topic relating to romantic relationships). The songs that were not about love included one that was about a spiritual journey (*Amazulu*) and three that were about money and township life (*Umsindo*, *Akulaleki*, *Donsa Nkabi*). The fact that this was a year of political turmoil, particularly for the youth, in South Africa, did not result in any lyrics speaking to the broader scope of youth issues in South Africa, neither did it detract from the appeal of songs that spoke to the personal, not the political. The fact that some of the songs make reference to cultural practices (e.g. *lobola* in *Baby Please*, *icamagu* in *Amazulu*) or include idiomatic expressions (e.g. *Usistofu sam samalahle esind'khusel' ezingqeleni zobusika* - You are my coal heater, that protects me from cold winters in *Amagama*) suggests that the writers of the lyrics have not made a complete break with their roots – they still feel connected to traditional ways of doing things and sometimes use local registers.

6.3 Grammar of the songs: It's all about me and you

In addition, a close examination of the grammatical morphemes of the song suggest that writers of lyrics focus on the first person subject concord *Ndi-* 'I', the 2nd person singular subject concord *U-* 'you' and the object concord for 2nd person singular *-ku-* 'you'. The songs about township life are the only three that extend the pronoun scope to include 3rd person plural *ba-* 'they'. This concentration on the self and the significant other would suggest that isiXhosa-speaking artists are becoming more individualistic, less community centred. And indeed, even if one compares the lyrics of Brenda Fassie's 1997 hit song *Vulindlela* (Clear the Way) with those present in this study, it is evident that those lyrics were about a love match in the context of an interested wider community to a far greater extent than contemporary pop songs. See how many times, for example, other people are referred to, instead of just the first person singular in *Vulindlela*:

Vul'indlela wemamgobhozi (Open the gates, Miss Gossip)²⁶
He unyana wam (My baby boy)
Helele uyashada namhlanje (Is getting married today)
Vul'indlela wela ma ngiyabuza (Open the gates please)
Msuba nomona (Don't be jealous)
Unyana wami uthathile (My son has had a good catch)
Bengingazi ngiyombon'umakoti (I never thought I'd see a daughter in law)
Unyana wam eh ujongile this time (My son has been accepted (woman said yes))
Makgadi fele usenzo s'cede (Help us finish the ceremony (you are welcome))
Uz' emshadweni ngiyashadisa namhlanje (Come to the wedding, I'm taking my son to the altar today)
Bebesithi unyana wam lisoka (People said my son is (someone who doesn't get women))
Bebesithi angeke ashade vul'indlela (People said he would never get married but open the gates)

A further linguistic analysis of the lyrics in this study reveals that the future tense is used (in its contracted form) a number of times, for example in the song *Amazulu* we have *Ndizothath'umthwalo* (I will carry the load) while in *Ngifike* there is *Ngizohamba* (I will go), in *Kucheza Uzolimala* (You will get hurt) and in *Akulaleki Uzobezwa* (You will hear them). Note the instances of isiZulu with *Ng-* instead of *Ndi-* and *-zwa* (instead of *-va*).

²⁶ Lyrics available at <http://pancocojams.blogspot.co.za/2013/01/south-african-vocalist-brenda-faisse.html>

The active voice is preferred to the passive by most of the lyricists under study in this thesis but there are examples of the passive in Ingqondo with *Ndithathwe ziingcinga zam* (Literally: I am taken by my thoughts; Figuratively: I am lost in thought) and in *Amagama* we have *Ndiphelelwa ngamagama* (Literally: I am finished to my detriment by words; Figuratively: I am at a loss for words.) The imperative mood features distinctly, suggesting that the lyricists want the listeners to feel that they are being directly communicated with. For example, in Kucheza there is *Jonga sana!* (Look babe!), in Amazulu we have *Vululeka* (Become opened!) and the isiZulu imperatives *Woza woza* (Come, come) in Umsindo. The imperative is also found in Ndikuthandle with *Thatha nantsi intliziyo yam* (Take here is my heart) and *Buya Buya* (Come back, come back) in Ngifike.

6.4 Culture not so important?

De Wall et al. (2011:203) reached the conclusion that their linguistic analyses offered them “evidence that changes in popular song lyrics mirror psychological changes in U.S. culture regarding decreases in positive emotion”. In my study I have been able to focus not only on the core vocabulary of popular contemporary Xhosa lyrics, but also on the grammar which has also lead me to conclude that the songs have become more inward focussed and individual, with a massive focus on love relationships. The lexicon is largely a standard romantic one: for example the statement *ndiyakuthanda* (I love you) appears no less than 11 times in the song *Amagama*. There are a few culturally specific references such as *lobola* and *icamagu* but these words are in the minority.

6.5 Languages used: Standard vs Urban varieties

An analysis of the language in the lyrics shows a standard use of isiXhosa, with contracted forms of some tenses. Slang is used *Kucheza*, *Akulaleki* and *Donsa Nkabi*. There is often a shift from isiXhosa to isiZulu and this would suggest that these Nguni languages are seen as interchangeable. The fact that the top 10 songs on uMhlobo weNene were all sung in indigenous African languages would suggest that these popular artists understand their target audience and want to make a connection with them via their mother tongues.

To answer the question whether abandoning English can lead to lyrics becoming less meaningful, and songs consequently becoming more “formulaic romantic ballads” as Wai-

chung Ho describes some Cantopop (Ho, 2003:151) I would argue that this is not the case with isiXhosa. In fact, I would argue that the isiXhosa allows the singer to bring in a more spiritual, culturally appropriate discourse, but this feature of the songs is not best represented by the 2016 selection. The research has also identified the fact that if lyrics are too modern it makes it difficult for listeners to follow, or to access them, such as the case with Kucheza and Donsa Nkabi the lyrics of which are very difficult to understand since they are not in standard Xhosa. The fact that 75% of the language used in these top 10 songs of 2016 was isiXhosa would suggest that the music industry is aware that consumers of popular music are still linguistically invested in their mother tongues.

6.6 No intellectual or emotional development

What my in-depth analyses were not able to establish was any evidence of intellectual or emotional development in the top ten isiXhosa lyrics over the space of one year.

It is my understanding that consumers of contemporary isiXhosa popular songs still want songs that speak to the way in which they articulate their current personal issues, with a huge emphasis on romantic love.

I would also argue that some of the “quotations” in the lyrics (Adorno, 1991:44-45, cited in Vannini & Myers, 2002: no page) are sometimes aimed at an uncritical consumption characterized by “a trancelike state of effortless thinking focused on accepting and obsessing with a song’s hooks – the catchiest and most recurrent verses and melody passages.”

Kuhn’s research (1980) showed that young people listen to music for various reasons including, but not limited to relaxation, meditation and a deeper self-awareness. In South Africa, my study shows that due to urbanisation and a transition to a more westernised way of life youths could be listening to African language lyrics because they seek a deeper understanding of their cultural identity. This cultural identity is undergoing change as the mother tongue itself undergoes change: my research has shown that the grammar and vocabulary of a contemporary pop singers singing in isiXhosa while generally standard, particularly for romantic ballads, nevertheless does reflect changes when urban lifestyles are being depicted (see Donsa Nkabi, Akulaleki and Umsindo).

I would argue that South African writers of lyrics will try to understand their target market – who does the singer appeal to? Where are his/her roots and to what extent does his/her

language reflect those roots – both culturally and socially? Will the artist be touring – for example will s/he be singing in a rural area or in an urban hub? These considerations will affect the kind of language that is used by the writer of the lyrics.

This research has identified that most Xhosa pop songs are targeted at the youth who need such lyrical ballads in order to articulate their current preoccupations, those being love and money. Political realities or issues did not feature at all in the songs, which would suggest that this particular medium is not productive for commentary on social or economic issues, apart from those few lyrics that spoke indirectly of the debilitating effects of penury on romantic and social well-being.

More focussed research needs to be conducted with young, Xhosa-speaking consumers of music to understand whether these songs are reaching all of their intellectual and emotional needs. Finally, computerised analyses of Xhosa pop songs sung by a particular artist (e.g. Ringo) over a specific decade would also enable researchers to track the lyrical content of the songs and the extent to which the songwriter's emotions stayed the same, or were no longer the same as they were before.

REFERENCES

- Adendorff, R., 2002. Fanakalo: a pidgin in South Africa. In Mesthrie, R (ed.) *Language in South Africa*, pp.179-198.
- Babalola, E.T. and Taiwo, R., 2009. Code-switching in contemporary Nigerian hip-hop music. *Itupale-online journal of African Studies*, 1, pp.1-26.
- Brackett, D., 2002. 'Where's It At': Postmodern Theory and the Contemporary Musical Field. *Postmodern music/postmodern thought*, pp.207-231.
- Calteaux, K., 1996. *Standard and Non-Standard African Language Varieties in the Urban Areas of South Africa. Main Report for the STANON Research Programme*. HSRC Publishers, 134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria 0001, South Africa.
- Chambers Dictionary, 1998. Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Ltd.
- Coplan, D. B. 2007. *In township tonight! Three centuries of South African black city music and theatre*, 2, Johannesburg: Jacana.
- Davies, E.E. and Bentahila, A., 2008. Translation and code switching in the lyrics of bilingual popular songs. *The Translator*, 14(2), pp.247-272.
- De Klerk, V., 2000. To be Xhosa or not to be Xhosa... that is the question. *Journal of multilingual and multicultural development*, 21(3), pp.198-215.
- De Wall, C.N., Pond Jr, R.S., Campbell, W.K. and Twenge, J.M., 2011. Tuning in to psychological change: Linguistic markers of psychological traits and emotions over time in popular US song lyrics. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 200–207.
- Doke, C. M., 1945. *Text-book of Zulu Grammar*. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.
- Doke, C.M., Malcolm, D.M. and Sikakana, J.M., First combined edition, 1990 [1958]. *English-Zulu Dictionary*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Dowling, T. and Stinson, K., 2011. Pop singer as healer: The use of Xhosa lyrics as cultural self-realization. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 23(2), pp.177-188.
- Dowling, T. and Gowlett, D., 2016. Problems in the acquisition of Noun Class 11 among Xhosa children. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 34(4), pp.289-309.
- Erlmann, V., 1994. 'Africa civilised, Africa uncivilised': local culture, world system and South African music. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 20(2), pp.165-179.

- Freudiger, P. and Almquist, E.M., 1978. Male and female roles in the lyrics of three genres of contemporary music. *Sex Roles*, 4(1), pp.51-65.
- Ho, W.C., 2003. Between globalisation and localisation: a study of Hong Kong popular music. *Popular music*, 22(2), pp.143-157.
- Hornberger, N.H. and Swinehart, K.F., 2012. Bilingual intercultural education and Andean hip hop: Transnational sites for indigenous language and identity. *Language in Society*, 41(4), pp.499-525.
- Hurst, E., 2009. Tsotsitaal, global culture and local style: identity and recontextualisation in twenty-first century South African townships. *Social Dynamics*, 35(2), pp.244-257.
- Koopman, A., 1994. Lexical adoptives in Zulu. (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg)
- Kreyer, R. and Mukherjee, J., 2007. The style of pop song lyrics: A corpus-linguistic pilot study. *Anglia-Zeitschrift für englische Philologie*, 125(1), pp.31-58.
- Kuhn, T.L., 1980. Instrumentation for the measurement of music attitudes. *Contributions to Music Education*, (8), pp.2-38.
- Kwatsha, L., 2015. The portrayal of single women characters in selected African literary texts. *Literator*, 36(1), pp.114-115.
- Larkey, E., 2000. Just for fun? Language choice in German popular music. *Popular Music & Society*, 24(3), pp.1-20.
- Levine, L., 2005. *The Drumcafe's traditional music of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.
- Logan, B., Kositsky, A. and Moreno, P., 2004. Semantic analysis of song lyrics. In *Multimedia and Expo, 2004. ICME'04. 2004 IEEE International Conference on Multimedia and Expo* (Vol. 2, pp. 827-830).
- Mahedero, J.P., Martínez, Á. Cano, P., Koppenberger, M. and Gouyon, F., 2005, November. Natural language processing of lyrics. In *Proceedings of the 13th annual ACM international conference on Multimedia* (pp. 475-478). ACM.
- Marini, S.A., 2003. *Sacred song in America: religion, music, and public culture* (Vol. 12). Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.
- Mhlahlo, A.P., 2009. *What is manhood?: the significance of traditional circumcision in the Xhosa initiation ritual* (Unpublished PhD, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch).
- Mitchell, T., 2000. Doin' damage in my native language: The use of "resistance vernaculars" in hip hop in France, Italy, and Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Popular Music & Society*, 24(3), pp.41-54.

Ncaca, M., 2014. Yithi Uyindoda! (Say, you are a man!) (Unpublished MA thesis in Religion and Culture, University of Stellenbosch.)

Ntarangwi, M., 2009. *East African hip hop: Youth culture and globalization* (Vol. 57). Champaign Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Ntombana, L., 2011. An investigation into the role of Xhosa male initiation in moral regeneration. (Unpublished PhD thesis, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University).

Pahl, H.W., S M Burns-Ncamashe; D M Ntusi IsiXhosa sebanga lematriki. 1971. Johannesburg:Bona-press.

Pahl, H.W., Pienaar, A.M., & Ndungane, T.A. (Eds.). 1989. *The Greater Dictionary of isiXhosa Volume 3: Q to Z*. Alice, South Africa: University of Fort Hare.

Pawliková-Vilhanová, V., 1996. Swahili and the dilemma of Ugandan language policy. *Asian and African Studies*, 5(2), pp.158-170.

Petrie, K.J., Pennebaker, J.W. and Sivertsen, B., 2008. Things we said today: A linguistic analysis of the Beatles. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 2(4), p.197-202

Rentfrow, P.J. and Gosling, S.D., 2003. The do re mi's of everyday life: the structure and personality correlates of music preferences. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 84(6), p.1236.

Romaine, S., 2000. *Language in society: An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Tshabe, S.L. and Shoba, F.M., 2006. *The Greater Dictionary of Xhosa, Vol.1 A-J*. Alice: University of Fort Hare.

Vannini, P. and Myers, S.M., 2002. Crazy about you: Reflections on the meanings of contemporary teen pop music. *Electronic Journal of Sociology*, 6(2) (no page numbers).

Wald, G., 1998. Just a girl? Rock music, feminism, and the cultural construction of female youth. *Signs*, 23(3), pp.585-610.

Werner, V., 2012. Love is all around: a corpus-based study of pop lyrics. *Corpora*, 7(1), pp.19-50.