

**AFL1504**

**Department of African Languages**

**LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS  
ACQUISITION IN AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE II**

**GUIDE FOR ZULU**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA  
PRETORIA**

© 2009 University of South Africa  
All rights reserved  
Printed and published by  
The University of South Africa  
Muckleneuk, Pretoria

AFL1504

Compiler: Prof IM Kosch  
Dr MR Masubelele

Editor: Dr P M Kotzé

Acknowledgements: Prof SE Bosch  
Ms DM Mampuru  
Mr FM Maseko  
Dr ML Mojapelo  
Ms MM Mokhwesana  
Dr TN Ntshinga  
Mrs NB Sekere

# Contents

**LITERATURE  
INTRODUCTION**

**STUDY UNIT 1**

**LESSON 1  
EXPLORING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORIC  
BACKGROUND OF ZULU AND ITS ORAL  
LITERATURE**

**LESSON 2  
ORAL LITERATURE IN ZULU (1)  
THE FOLKTALE**

**LESSON 3  
ORAL LITERATURE IN ZULU (2)  
PRAISE POETRY, SONGS, RIDDLES, PROVERBS AND  
IDIOMS**

**STUDY UNIT 2**

**COMPREHENSION, TRANSLATION, CREATIVE  
WRITING AND THE MEDIA**

**LESSON 4  
COMPREHENSION AND TRANSLATION**

**LESSON 5  
CREATIVE WRITING**

**LESSON 6  
ZULU IN THE MEDIA**

# LITERATURE

## INTRODUCTION

We would like to extend a warm word of welcome to you as we introduce you to some aspects of the literature of Zulu! Not only will you get to know more about Zulu literature, but in the process you will also be able to extend your knowledge of the grammar of the language and continue to develop your speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. In addition to this, you will gain insight into some matters of cultural interest and increase your understanding of the Zulu speakers and their way of life. This is especially important for your day-to-day interaction with Zulus.

This guide is equipped with links to audio recordings of folktales, songs, etc. in Zulu which you can listen to while reading the text on your screen and reference is made mainly to Zulu examples since you selected to study Zulu.

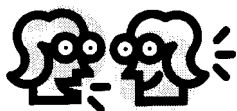
### LEARNING OUTCOMES



After the completion of this module you should be able to:

- read a Zulu text and grasp its overall contents, without necessarily knowing the meaning of every word;
- understand an increased number of vocabulary items;
- demonstrate insight into a number of literary genres;
- recognise grammatical constructions, without necessarily being able to analyse and explain them;
- give the content of Zulu passages in your own words;
- think and write creatively in Zulu
- answer content-based questions on Zulu texts;
- demonstrate a greater cultural awareness of the Zulu speaking community.

### EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



What is your greatest ambition as a language learner? Think about it for a moment ... Is it just to get to know the rules of a language as an intellectual exercise or would you like to aim for something more?

Imagine a person who studies the manual of a car for years until he/she knows everything about its performance off by heart, but he/she never gets to driving the car to experience its performance for him-/herself. If I were this person, I would certainly feel very unfulfilled and disappointed. In the same way, the

basic grammatical equipment which you have acquired in the first module of the beginner's course will be of no practical value and bring you no sense of satisfaction, unless you constantly put it to use.

As you develop a habit of applying your acquired knowledge, you will eventually be rewarded in that you will be able to communicate effectively and express your ideas in the new language. As a non-mother tongue speaker, I remember the thrill of actually beginning to understand what a Zulu speaker was saying in his/her language.

This experience can also be yours and it will be worth all the hard work! The road to success may be a long one, but you have already achieved much by completing the first module. All that remains now is dedication, perseverance and practice, practice, practice.

In this module you will have many opportunities of improving your reading skills, demonstrating your comprehension of Zulu texts, writing creatively and translating passages. Sharpen your listening skills and practise the correct pronunciation as you listen to and repeat the recorded passages. As you listen, speak, read and write, your vocabulary will be extended and you will find it increasingly easy to communicate with a mother-tongue speaker of Zulu on common everyday topics. Remember, communication improves relationships and changes attitudes. We hope that you will find your study stimulating and meaningful and that it will help you grow in your personal and professional capacity.

## **START TO THINK IN ZULU**



At first you will tend to think in your mother tongue when speaking and writing, and you will want to express your thoughts by attempting to do direct translations. May we discourage you from doing that with your still limited knowledge of grammar, since you will only become frustrated at your inability to literally express what you have in mind. Let your knowledge of already learnt structures guide you and the sooner you start thinking in the new language, the better. You will discover that the African languages have their own way of expressing ideas and you need to make every effort to express yourself in the idiom of the specific language. Where constructions that you may not have been exposed to yet, are used, grammatical analyses will be given where necessary. However, in selecting the reading material, we have tried to select simple, accessible passages.

## CONTENTS OF THE GUIDE



We have divided the guide into two study units. Each study unit is divided further into three lessons:

### Study Unit 1:

In this study unit you will be introduced to aspects of Zulu history, culture and folklore.

**Lesson 1:** In this lesson you will acquire some background on the cultural and historical origins of Zulu speaking people and the close relationship between languages which belong to the same language family. You will remember some of this information from the AFL1503 module. You will also gain insight as to why it is important in a beginner's course to engage in a study of literature.

**Lesson 2:** In this lesson you will get to know aspects of Zulu folklore and discover what folktales are all about.

**Lesson 3:** In this lesson you will share in the excitement of praise poetry, songs and riddles and their characteristics. You will also be able to learn more about the culture of the Zulu people through a number of well-known idioms and proverbs.

### Study Unit 2

This study unit offers you opportunities for developing your reading, listening and writing skills further.

**Lesson 4:** You will be able to develop and improve your reading and comprehension skills based on simple Zulu passages on everyday topics. You will learn the techniques of translating from Zulu to English and from English to Zulu.

**Lesson 5:** You will be exposed to the essay, paragraph, dialogue and friendly letter as types of creative writing.

**Lesson 6:** You will gain insight into the use of Zulu in the media (found in readers, magazines, pamphlets, advertisements, newspapers, television, radio, etc.).

## STRUCTURE OF LESSONS

In each lesson there are a number of activities to stimulate your inquiring mind and to allow you to develop the skills needed to communicate effectively in Zulu. These are followed by the lecturer's feedback, response or evaluation of your understanding.

**PRESCRIBED BOOK AND RECOMMENDED DICTIONARY**

Your prescribed book for this module is:

Daly, N. 1991. *Ungangishiyi phela Shongololo*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Your recommended dictionary for Zulu is:

Dent & Nyembezi, S. 1995. Scholar's Zulu Dictionary: English-Zulu/  
Zulu-English. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.





# STUDY UNIT 1

## LESSON 1

### EXPLORING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND OF THE ZULU LANGUAGE AND ITS ORAL LITERATURE

#### 1.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



At the end of this lesson you will:

- be able to give reasons as to why the African languages are said to belong to the same language family;
- have gained greater understanding of some cultural issues of Zulu speaking people;
- be able to motivate why it is important to study Zulu literature.

#### 1.2 ORIGINS



In this country the term 'African languages' is preferred to 'Bantu languages' due to the negative connotations attached to the latter during the apartheid era. However, for purely linguistic, classificatory purposes, the term Bantu is still used internationally. It seems that available evidence points to the fact that there was first one single parent language of the Bantu languages. Linguists have given it the name Ur-Bantu or Proto-Bantu and it is said to have been located in the region of the Great Lakes in Central Africa about five centuries ago. Researchers are of the opinion that migrations occurred in a succession of waves rather than all at once. It appears that the great Sotho migrations preceded the Nguni migrations. It is assumed that the Kgalagadi were the first Sotho speaking people, and probably also the first Bantu speaking people to reach Southern Africa, around the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. They settled in the present Botswana and interbred with the Bushmen.

### 1.3 AFFINITY BETWEEN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

The Bantu languages of South Africa share the same characteristics with a large number of other languages in Africa. Due to striking correlations in their syntax, morphology and sound systems, these languages have been grouped together into what is known as a language family, namely the Bantu language family. The most striking feature of these languages is that they make use of a so-called class system, according to which nouns are divided into a number of classes. The nouns generate concordial morphemes which are responsible for establishing agreement between elements in a sentence.

#### 1.3.1 Activity



Click [here](#) to listen to the sound clip and see if you can detect any pattern as you compare the consonants in the following Zulu and Southern Sotho examples:

Sesotho:	rata	Zulu:	thanda	'love'
	tharo		thathu	'three'
	roma		thuma	'send'
	rwala		thwala	'carry'
	leta		linda	'wait'

#### 1.3.2 Feedback

I'm sure you had no difficulty in recognising that *r* in Sesotho is realised as *th* in the given Zulu words, and that *t* is realised as *nd*. You will find similar systematic patterns emerging if you start comparing the sounds of other African languages. The composition of the word and the way in which sentences are structured also show that these languages are closely related and thus belong to the same language family.

### 1.4 SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND PRACTICES



In African culture, extreme individualism is something which is frowned upon. The prevailing philosophy is that individuals owe their existence to the existence of the group. Many proverbs bear this out, as seen in Zulu proverb *Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is what he is because of other people), respectively. The importance of independence and individualism is not denied, but the social group in which a person exists is regarded as important for the success of the individual. The family and extended family play a crucial role in the social organisation. Terms to indicate family relationships are very specific, for example, the word for *uncle* cannot simply be translated into Zulu, without the specification as to what the nature of the relationship is, i.e. *umalume* (mother's brother), *ubaba omncane* (father's younger brother) or *ubaba omkhulu* (father's older brother).

Traditionally all activities are permeated by ritual, be they marriage rites, initiation or rain-making ceremonies, economic activities, political gatherings or

legal proceedings. Special customs are observed at certain occasions and certain times of the year. For example, a year after the death of a woman's husband, a special ceremony is held to mark the end of her mourning period. This period may be reduced due to circumstances or other events taking place in the village or in the family. During her period of mourning she would not have shaved her hair and she would have worn mourning clothes (generally black – but also navy or dark green). The dark clothes serve to make members of the community aware of her widowhood and alert them to be sensitive and considerate when they are around her. At the ceremony another woman from her family, who also has to be a widow, would shave the widow's hair as a sign of cleansing. In Zulu this ceremony is called *ukukhumula inzilo*. There are several other dialectal equivalents to denote this cleansing ceremony. At the ceremony the widow may be presented with gifts, mostly in the form of clothes or blankets.

## 1.5 LANGUAGE AND INTERPRETATION OF REALITY



A nation's language reveals the cognitive processes, cultural needs, philosophy of life and world view of members of a community, in other words, how they perceive, interpret and analyse reality. For example, the existence of a complex system of colour terms for domestic animals in many African communities arose out of a cultural need. Much of traditional African life revolves around cattle and goats and specific terms were needed to distinguish unambiguously between livestock. The absence of such fine colour distinctions in most Western cultures, clearly points to the absence of such a cultural need with regard to domestic animals in these communities. No single equivalent term exists in English, for example, to capture all the detail expressed by just one term in an African language.

There are also instances where only one term may exist in an African language, for more than one meaning in Western culture. For example, one and the same basic term may be used in Zulu for 'blue' and 'green', namely *-luhlaza*. This does not mean that speakers of the language are unable to distinguish perceptually between these two colours, but that the distinction between 'blue' and 'green' was not a needful one in their culture.

In Zulu tradition, the use of the passive sentence, rather than the active one, is preferred in order to set an individual free from any liability under disagreeable circumstances. In this way any direct blame is directed away from the individual to an unidentifiable agent beyond his/her control. Instead of, for example, 'I missed the train' or 'I lost my knife', the preferred expressions in Zulu would be 'I was left behind by the train', i.e. *Ngishiywe yisitimela* or 'I was lost for by my knife (my knife got lost)', i.e. *Ngilahlekelwe ngummese wami*.

## 1.6 WHY IS A KNOWLEDGE OF AFRICAN LITERATURE IMPORTANT?

### 1.6.1 Development of proficiency

Foreign language learners usually shy away from engaging in a study of the literature of a language. You too might regard it as 'difficult', because you may

not recognise the simple language structures which you have been exposed to in your introductory grammar lessons. Literature is language operating on the highest level of expression and it is therefore true that simple structures do not usually appear in literary works, but this does not mean that a study of literature should be discarded as a non-profitable exercise in acquiring proficiency.

### 1.6.2 Grammar in action

Literary texts show how the grammatical constructions which you have acquired are actually applied in a functional way. There are obviously degrees of complexity and it would be inappropriate to confront you at the outset of your studies with intricate texts which contain complicated structures and idiomatic expressions. In this module we strive for simplicity and have purposefully chosen literature intended for the younger child. The stories are not too long and usually have an easy-to-follow theme and a few central characters. Many folktales are part of children's literature. They are especially suitable for foreign language learners, because the sentences are simple, usually in the same tense. A lot of repetition also occurs. In addition to this some of the folktales make extensive use of dialogues. This gives you an opportunity of learning about different forms of taking turns in a conversation and of appropriate expressions which you may use in your own conversation. Where more complicated phrases do occur, explanations will be provided. As a student of an African language you should not feel offended to study children's literature. It is a good starting point for anyone learning a new language, even if you are a grown-up person.

### 1.6.3 Cultural insight

Literature studies, including literature written for or told to African children, are an invaluable source of cultural insight, which will assist you to communicate more effectively with native speakers in Zulu. Learning one of these languages may remain a purely academic exercise, or it may blossom into a rewarding engagement with a new culture and society as you embrace all the modes of expression of the language you have chosen to study, including its literature. We conclude this section with the following quotation from Msomi (1996:45):

“... literature enlarges the learners' background knowledge and at the same time helps the learners explore the culture in which the native speakers live. It also helps them appreciate and tolerate cultural differences. Put otherwise, literature enhances understanding of cultural values and thus promotes tolerance. And this, in turn, promotes successful communication between the L2 learners and native speakers because the L2 learners would be aware of the natives' culture and values.”

## 1.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of any examples to support the claim that language holds the key to a better understanding of a nation's culture, philosophies and perception of reality?
2. Give three reasons why you think it is important to study African literature in a beginner's course.

Sources consulted:

Louwrens, L.J. 2000. Anthropocentrism, utilitarianism and supernaturalism in African world view: some linguistic evidence. *South African Journal of Ethnology* 23 (2/3):91-101.

Msomi, P. 1996. Literature and L2 teaching: towards a literary approach. *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies*.7:42-47.

## LESSON 2

### ORAL LITERATURE IN ZULU (1) THE FOLKTALE

#### 2.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- list a number of genres which are regarded as 'folklore';
- demonstrate a better understanding of the oral tradition of the Zulu folktale;
- recognise certain formulae which characterise folktales;
- read a Zulu folktale and grasp its overall contents, without necessarily knowing the meaning of every word;
- answer questions in English relating to the content of some of the folktales.

#### 2.2 ACTIVITY

If you were asked to ensure that a story will remain preserved for future generations, what methods would you employ? Write down a few suggestions before looking at my feedback.

#### 2.3 FEEDBACK

With modern technology there is more than one way of ensuring that a story will be preserved. I'm sure your suggestions included the written medium, audio and video recordings. Have you thought about how you would have managed in a world without a writing system or recording devices? These media were not available on the African scene for many centuries, and yet stories remained alive from one generation to another. Before the development of a written form of African languages just over a century ago, the only means by which communities could preserve their history and folklore for posterity, was by reciting the stories at suitable occasions so that the younger generation would be able to hear them and in turn convey them to their children. This required excellent memorising skills.

#### 2.4 FOLKLORE

**Folklore** is essentially verbal art which is produced, preserved and handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another. Examples of folklore are **folktales, myths, fables, legends, praise poems, folk songs, proverbs, idioms and riddles**. Different types of folklore are associated with a specific time of the day or year. They are told under different circumstances, for different purposes in different social settings. They also differ in the degree of creative freedom allowed. In folktales, for example, it is quite acceptable for narrators to add to a text, thereby giving their own personal touch to the way the story is presented. The message, however, remains basically the same.

In Zulu we may distinguish four types of narrations which are part of folklore, namely:

- folktales,
- myths,
- fables and
- legends.

The folktale is the most common type of narration, and you will learn more about it in this lesson. In Lesson 3 you will get to know other types of genres which are also part of oral tradition, namely the praise poem, song, riddle, proverb and idiom.

## **2.5 VALUE AND PURPOSE OF FOLKTALES**

Folktales are narrated to entertain, educate and instruct both children and adults. From an early age children learn to relate to their natural and social environment through the spoken word. Through storytelling social values are instilled and encouraged, while malpractices are condemned. In African culture storytelling has always been an important vehicle of cultural preservation. Though the stories happened a long time ago and the setting is usually in an unreal world, they still have timeless messages and universal qualities. They are usually a means of introducing subjects for discussion, such as moral issues and warnings about anti-social behaviour. Abrahams (1983: xvi) sums up the nature of stories concisely by stating that they: “embody the inherited wisdom - social, personal and moral - of the people whose world we see through the filter of folklore.”

## **2.6 STORYTELLER - AUDIENCE INTERPLAY**

### **2.6.1 Activity**

What type of relationship do you think exists between a storyteller and his/her audience in Zulu culture? Try to write down a few thoughts which come to mind.

### **2.6.2 Feedback**

Before giving you my answer, let me first ask you the following: Have you ever noticed that in Zulu culture a narrator is often interrupted by the audience in a public performance? If so, what was your feeling about this? Did you perceive the audience's interjections as inappropriate? If you come from the same Western background as I do, you might well consider the interruption of a performance as a sign of disrespect. This is because in Western culture different norms apply. In Western culture the audience is expected to listen attentively and in silence up to the end of a storyteller's tale, before applauding. In African culture interruptions, which are often delivered in choir-like fashion by the audience, are not a sign of disrespect, but rather one of politeness in that through it the audience assures the storyteller that he/she still has their attention. In fact, if they cease to respond, the narrator will not continue with his/her story.



Folktales are traditionally narrated in the evenings around the fire place while the family members sit together enjoying each other's company. In

African culture oral communication is highly valued and storytelling constitutes a crucial part of daily life. The listeners usually consist of an extended family and the grandmother is usually the narrator.

## 2.7 THE STRUCTURE OF A FOLKTALE

Folktales have formulae, i.e. words that uniquely mark the introduction, the response and the ending. As an introduction, the narrator would usually say *Kwesukesukela* in Zulu. As explained above, the listeners of folktales are not supposed to be passive. Throughout the narration they respond by singing with the storyteller in order to show that they are following the story and are not falling asleep. This storyteller-audience interplay establishes a strong sense of mutual supportiveness. The narrator uses various gestures and tones of voice to imitate and to portray the characters. To mark the end of the folktale the narrator says in Zulu will say "*Cosu cosu iyaphela*". This phrase is intended to bring the listeners back from a world of fantasy to reality.

Stories often end with a message or a truth to remember for the future as one grapples with life's problems. In Western culture, stories generally have a strong and definite conclusion. In African culture, however, a sense of closure is not a requirement and is indeed often absent, as the purpose of the narration is to invite further debate and thought on the issues of life. This open-ended story structure, is further underlined by interruptive repetitions which are encouraged. In a community, traditional stories may be so familiar that they might merely be referred to rather than told in full, as a way of making a point in a conversation or in an argument.

## 2.8 THEMES OF FOLKTALES

Folktales always contain a theme that educates or that raises some kind of awareness on very important issues in life. People are educated about the dangers of jealousy, arrogance, greed, unfaithfulness, cruelty, laziness, etc., while on the other hand, the importance of qualities like wisdom, bravery, cooperation, love, kindness, patience, obedience, etc. is highlighted. The choice of characters and the correct setting (milieu) help the theme to make a life-long educational impact.

## 2.9 TYPES OF FOLKTALES



Folktales may be classified according to themes or characters. As regards characters, the following types are the most common: cannibal tales, trickster tales, monster or ogre tales, human tales and animal tales. There is usually an interaction between types in a given folktale, for example, between human and animal characters, between cannibals and ordinary human beings, between ogres and humans, between tricksters and animals, and so on. Animals usually display human character traits, i.e. they compete with and talk to each other and to human beings.



## 2.10 THE FUTURE OF THE FOLKTALE

It appears that storytelling in the traditional sense is slowly declining. Away from the fireside and family circle where stories were always told, often accompanied by singing, the folktale cannot maintain itself very long. Any attempts at preserving folktales through the written medium inevitably lose the quality of immediacy, since they cannot reflect all the elements which directly or indirectly contribute to the impact which an oral performance makes on the audience (e.g. through sight, sound, smell, touch, etc.). When reading a verbatim transcription of an oral performance, the reader may easily get bored with the numerous repetitions and hesitations so uncharacteristic of a written style, yet so typical of the live performance. Anyone attempting to render a live performance in a readable and enjoyable form therefore, is indeed faced with a big challenge.

Stories will continue to be told, only the settings and characters will change with urbanisation and modernisation. New styles and new forms will constantly evolve out of the old to provide entertainment and to pass on knowledge.

## 2.11 EXAMPLES OF FOLKTALES

To depict the typical characteristics of a folktale, we have selected 2 examples of Zulu folktales. A detailed (quite literal) English translation is supplied, followed by a summary of the main theme of the folktale. In some cases we also supply a glossary in which the more complex grammatical structures and idiomatic expressions are explained. Do not be overly concerned if you are not familiar with all the grammatical structures. You do not have to learn the grammatical structures and rules and you will not be examined on them, but you need to be able to recognise them in a text. The analyses are given for the sake of completeness.

We would like to suggest that, before reading the translation, you listen to each folktale by clicking on the hyperlink while following the text in your prescribed book or in the text below. Thereafter you can test how much of the contents you have grasped by looking at the translation, analysis and grammatical explanations. The grammatical explanations (of which only those are given where you might encounter difficulties) are kept simple, as we feel that this module is not the right place to introduce new and intricate linguistic terminology. Once you know what the story is about, sit back and enjoy listening to the recording again.

### 2.11.1 UZenzile noZenziwe

Kwakukhona inkosikazi eyayinezingane ezimbili. Lezi zingane kwakungumfana nentombazane, uZenzile noZenziwe. Kwathi ekuhambeni kwesikhathi umama walezi zingane washona, ubaba wazo wase ethatha omunye unkosikazi. Le nkosikazi entsha yayimzonda kakhulu uZenzile ngoba ehlananiphile. Le nkosikazi yenza nukuthi ubaba wezingane amzonde uZenzile. Ngelinye ilanga benza icebo lokumbulala. Ngenkathi benza icebo lokubulala uZenzile, uZenziwe wayeseduze ezwa konke abakushoyo ngomfowabo. UZenzile wayehamba ekuseni nsuku zonke eyokwelusa izinkomo zikababa wakhe. Ngelinye ilanga le nkosikazi entsha nobaba wakhe benza icebo lokumfaka ubuthi emasini kaZenzile. Uthe ukuba ekweluseni uZenzile wahlangana noZenziwe ecula iculo elithi:

Awoqaphela mntakababa,  
Awoqaphela mntakababa,

Amasi akho anobuthi obubulalayo,  
Amasi akho anobuthi obubulalayo.

UZenzile walizwa iculo eliculwa ngudadewabo, wangawadla amasi abebekelwe wona.

Ngakusasa ngenkathi uZenzile esekweluseni, le nkosikazi nobaba wakhe benza icebo lokubulala umfana. Bavumelana ngokuthi bembe umgodi omkhulu ehlathini, ukuze umfana awele ngaphakathi, ngoba lo mgodi wawujulile wayezokufa engabonwa muntu umfana. Namanje babekhuluma bengaboni ukuthi uZenziwe useduze ulalele konke abakushoyo ngomfowabo. Uthe ebuya ekweluseni uZenzile wahlangana noZenziwe ecula iculo elithi:

Awoqaphela mntakababa,  
Awoqaphela mntakababa,  
Indlela obuya ngayo inomsele obulalayo,  
Indlela obuya ngayo inomsele obulalayo.

UZenzile walizwa iculo eliculwa ngudadewabo, wabuya ngenye indlela.

Bebona ukuthi amacebo abo kawasebenzi, inkosikazi nomnyeni wayo bathi, “Manje sizokwenzenjani?” Benza elinye futhi icebo, indoda yathi kunkosikazi wayo kuzomele ukuba indoda ilinde umfana elawini lakhe uma ebuya ekweluseni ntambama, bese embulala ngenkathi engena elawini lakhe. Uthe ebuya ekweluseni uZenzile wahlangana noZenziwe ecula iculo elithi:

Awoqaphela mntakababa,  
Awoqaphela mntakababa,  
Ilawu lakho linomuntu obulalayo,  
Ilawu lakho linomuntu obulalayo.

UZenzile walizwa iculo eliculwa ngudadewabo, wedlula wangangeni elawini lakhe. Indoda yaphuma elawini lomfana yabaleka ngoba yesaba ukuthi umfana uzoyibulala. Cosu, Cosu iyaphela.

### 2.11.1.1 Activity

Click [here](#) to listen to the folktale before looking at the translation provided in 2.11.1.2. Scroll up to follow the text on your screen.

### 2.11.1.2 Translation

#### Zenzile and Zenziwe

Long ago there lived a woman who had two kids, a boy Zenzile and a girl Zenziwe. After a while this woman died and their father married another wife. This woman did not like the boy because he was very clever. The woman also influenced their father against the boy. One day they made a plan to kill the boy. At the time they were planning to kill the boy, Zenziwe was sitting nearby and heard all that was said about her brother. Zenzile left everyday early in the morning to herd his father's cattle. One day this woman and their father decide to put poison in the boy's sour milk. When Zenzile came from the grazing land, he met Zenziwe singing a song warning him not to eat the poisoned sour milk. Zenzile heard the song and did not eat the milk. The following day when Zenzile went to the grazing land, their parents decided that they will dig a very deep ditch into which the boy would fall and where he will die and not be seen by anyone. Zenziwe heard this and when Zenzile came back from the grazing land, he met Zenziwe singing a song warning him not to take his usual path back home because he will fall into a ditch that will kill him. Zenzile heard the song

and did not use his usual path back home the following day. Seeing that their plans were not working, they decided to kill the boy when he came back from the grazing land. The father will hide in the boy's hut and attack him as he enters. Zenziwe heard what was planned and when her brother came home that evening he met her singing a song warning him not to enter his hut because there was a killer inside. Zenzile heard the song and passed his hut. The boy's father went out of the hut and ran away, frightened that the boy will kill him.

### 2.11.1.3 Analysis

In this story we see how jealousy drove the new wife to hatred. This hatred made the women to think of evil deeds which they would use to eliminate the boy. Unwary about the girl's presence, they planned to poison the boy's food, to dig a big hole into which he would fall and to lay in wait for him to enter his room and kill him. The girl heard all their plans and each time warned her brother of the danger that awaited him. As a result the brother was able to avert all the danger that was to befall him. People should always know that good overcomes evil. Never plan evil deeds because evil is always defeated.

### 2.11.1.4 Grammatical explanations

The following nouns have been used in this folktale:

<b>Noun</b>	<b>Brief explanation</b>
<i>inkosikazi ; intombazane</i>	class 9 nouns in singular form, plural in class 6, <i>amakhosikazi; amantombazane</i>
<i>izingane</i>	class 10 noun in plural form, singular in class 9, <i>ingane</i>
<i>umfana</i>	class 1 noun in singular form, plural in class 2, <i>abafana</i>
<i>ubaba; umama</i>	class 1a) nouns in singular form, plural in class 2a), <i>obaba; omama</i>
<i>icebo; ilanga, iculo</i>	class 5 nouns in singular form, plural in class 6, <i>amacebo; amalanga; amaculo</i>

### 2.11.1.5 Useful vocabulary

Some usefull expressions and items of vocabulary occur in this folktale. Click [here](#) to listen to the recording and try to pronounce the words afterwards

<i>kwakukhona ... –</i>	English equivalent of 'Once upon a time there was ...'
<i>ekuhambeni kwesikhathi –</i>	as time went on
<i>washona –</i>	she died
<i>wase ethatha –</i>	he then married
<i>omunye unkosikazi -</i>	another wife
<i>ngoba ehlakaniphile –</i>	because he was clever
<i>yayimzonda kakhulu –</i>	she hated him very much
<i>icebo lokumbulala –</i>	a plan to kill the boy

<i>nsuku zonke</i> –	every day
<i>eduze</i> –	nearby
<i>abakushoyo</i> –	what they said
<i>ukwelusa</i> –	to take cattle out to graze
<i>icebo lokufaka ubuthi emasini</i> –	a plan to poison his sour milk
<i>amasi</i> –	sour milk
<i>iculo</i> –	a song
<i>awoqaphela</i> –	just be careful
<i>mntakababa</i> –	my father's child
<i>ubuthi obubulalayo</i> –	poison that kills
<i>bavumelana</i> –	they agreed between themselves
<i>bembe umgodini</i> –	they dug a hole
<i>ehlathini</i> –	in the forest
<i>indlela</i> –	a path
<i>awele phakathi</i> –	fall inside
<i>elawini</i> –	inside the hut

### 2.11.2 Izikweletu ezingazange zikhokhelwe

Kwesukasukela!

Cosu!

Kwakhona izilwane ezintathu, imbongoloinja nembuzi. Lezi zilwane zathatha uhambo ngezinyawo. Zahamba zahamba, kwathi sezisendleleni zakhathala. Kwase kuqhamuka imoto, zayimisa zacela ukugibela. Umnikazi wemoto wabuza ukuthi zinayo yini imali yokumkhokhela, izilwane zathi yebo zinayo, ngoba zikhathale futhi liselide nebanga ezazisazolihamba.

Umnikazi wemoto wathi zingagibela. Yahamba-ke imoto, yaze yayofika lapho zazizokwehla khona. Zathi uma zehla, imbongolo yakhokha imali yayo eyayibizwe umshayeli wemoto, yasuka yahamba. Wajabula umnikazi wemoto ngesenzo sembongolo. Inja nayo yakhokha imali yayo kodwa kwatholakala ukuthi imali yayo ihlangene, umnikazi wemoto wathi kuzomele ilinde ukuze ithole ushintshi wayo. Imbuzi yona yabasathe mpumpu, lutho imali. Yabona ukuthi akukho okuzoyisiza, yathi galo yephuka, yayongena ehlathini.

Isenzo sembuzi samthukuthelisa umshayeli wemoto. Washaya wachitha engasayinikangainja ushintshi wayo. Isenzo somshayela sashiyainja ithukuthale nayo ngoba ingasawutholanga ushintshi wayo. Yabona kufanele ukuthi igijimise imoto hleze umshayeli eme, ithole ushintshi wayo. Yagijimainja, yagijima yaze yakhathala. Ukusuka ngalolo suku, ithi ingabona imotoinja, ithathale ngemuva kwayo ngethemba lokuthi izowuthola ushintshi wayo.

Nayo imbuzi futhi ithi ingabona imoto, ithi ngaze ngavelelwa. Ibaleke ngesikhulu isivinini. Kanti izimbongolo zona, aziyigqize qakala imoto, ngisho ingaqhamuka indiza, ziyazimele nje zinganyakazi nakunyakazangoba ziyazi ukuthi zasikhokhela sonke isikweletu sazo.

Cosu, cosu, iyaphela.

#### 2.11.2.2 Activity

Click [here](#) to listen to the folktale before looking at the translation provided in 2.11.2.2 below. Scroll up to follow the text on your screen.

### 2.11.2.2 Translation

#### Money owed

Long ago three animals, a donkey, a dog and a goat took a trip by foot. After walking a very long distance they felt tired. A car came by, and the animals asked for a lift. The owner of the car asked if the animals had money to pay for the trip. The animals responded with a big yes, being very tired and thinking of the distance they still had to cover. The animals were then given a lift to their destination. Then the animals got off the car. The donkey paid his due in full. The dog paid but had to wait for his change. The goat researched for the money, but could not find any. Seeing that there was no money to pay for his trip, the donkey decided to run for his life. Feeling very annoyed by what the goat has done, the owner of the car, drove off at a very great speed. This angered the dog, because it was still looking at receiving his change. The dog decided to chase after the car. From that day, dogs always chase after cars with the hope that they will get their change. It is the opposite with goats. On seeing a car, they always take flight, afraid that the owner of the car will ask them of his money. Because donkeys feel that they do not owe the owner of the car anything, just they remain put when a car approaches and will not move away from the road.

### 2.11.2.3 Analysis

This story shows that it is a good thing to be trustworthy at all times. If you don't owe anyone anything, like the donkey in the story, you do not have a reason to panic. On the contrary if you have been untrustworthy or unfaithful your conscience will always trouble you.

### 2.11.2.4 Grammatical explanations

Since folktales are narratives which tell about past events, the narrator will always use the narrative past tense in her narration. This is illustrated by the use of the following past tense verbs:

zathatha uhambo  
zahamba  
zakhathala  
zayimisa;  
zacela ukugibela

The subject concord which is used with class 10 nouns is **zi-**. To form the past, the past tense **-a** is used, e.g. **zi-** + **a** > **za-**. In narrative the vowel of the concord is longer.

### 2.11.2.5 Useful vocabulary

Some useful expressions and items of vocabulary occur in this folktale. Click [here](#) to listen to the recording and try to pronounce the words afterwards

<i>ukugibela</i> –	to get onto a car
<i>umnikazi wemoto</i> –	the owner of the car
<i>imali yokumkhokhela</i> –	money to pay him
<i>zazizokwehla khona</i> –	where they were going to get off the car
<i>umshayeli wemoto</i> –	the driver of the car

<i>yabasathe mpumpu, lutho imali</i>	– it looked everywhere for the money, and the money was nowhere to be found
<i>yathi galo yephuka</i>	– it ran away
<i>yamthukuthelisa</i>	– it annoyed him
<i>engasayinikangainja ushintshi wayo</i>	– he had not given the dog its change
<i>ngaze ngavelelwa</i>	– danger is looming near
<i>isivinini</i>	– great speed
<i>aziyigqize qakala imoto</i>	– they do not bother at all about a car

## 2.12 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Briefly explain what you understand by oral tradition.
2. What role do the narrator and the audience play during the narration of a folktale?
3. How were folktales used to solve problems in the past and how do they apply in a contemporary situation?
4. What does it mean when we say folktales have an open-ended structure?
5. Which four types of narrations are distinguished in African languages?
6. Are folktales told by anyone, anywhere, anytime? Write an explanatory paragraph regarding these issues.
7. Folktales are recognised by particular structural elements. Explain.

Source consulted:

Abrahams, R.D. 1983. *African folktales: The traditional stories of the Black world*. New York: Pantheon Books.

# LESSON 3

## ORAL LITERATURE IN ZULU (2) PRAISE POETRY, SONGS, RIDDLES, PROVERBS AND IDIOMS

### 3.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- explain the nature of a praise poem;
- recognise the features of a typical Zulu song;
- describe the nature and purpose of riddles;
- indicate the use and function of proverbs and idioms;
- distinguish between proverbs and idioms.

### 3.2 PRAISE POETRY

#### 3.2.1 Activity

In your opinion, what would you say are the characteristics which make poetry to differ from, say, prose? Write down a few elements which you would expect to find specifically in a poem.

.....

.....

.....

.....

#### 3.2.2 Feedback

If your background is English or Afrikaans, for example, you would probably have mentioned the following elements as typical characteristics of a poem: rhythm, metre, rhyme and stanzas. You will be interested to learn that these characteristics are not universal requirements for a piece of work to be classified as a poem. As you will find out soon, totally other criteria apply in the poetry of the African languages.

#### 3.2.3 Structural features



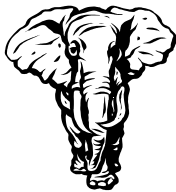
*Rhythm* is an important factor in all poetry. It refers to a sense of movement created by the writer's use of emphasis and tempo. It may be realised in many different ways in various languages. In Afrikaans and English, for example, rhythm is achieved by the manipulation of stress patterns in the lines of verse. In Zulu movement is created by means of syllable length and

high tone. The long syllables in a line of verse act as a “beat” or “pulse”. Together with syllable length, high tone on a syllable acts as a secondary beat. In order to appreciate the rhythm and beauty of a poem it must ideally be read out aloud. It will only find its full expression in an oral performance.

*Rhyming* in Zulu must be approached in a totally different way to rhyming in Afrikaans or English. The latter have a wealth of vowel and diphthong sounds which may be used to create rhyme, especially end-rhyme. Zulu, on the other hand, have at the most seven vowel sounds, which makes rhyming in these languages rather difficult. Tone rhyme may be employed, however, in which two verse lines correspond by having the same tone pattern, irrespective of what the vowel or consonant qualities may be. Alliteration (repetition of similar sounds in a line) and assonance (repetition of the same vowel sounds) are the easiest sound patterns one can pick up. They serve to link words expressing related ideas or they may be used for emphasis. Repetition of sounds can also suggest certain movements or feelings in the poem.

### 3.2.4 Themes and functions

Poems have a social function, expressing a nation’s deepest thoughts about matters of common interest. They generally embrace a people’s philosophy of life and may also contain history, tell about a person’s character, express criticism or protest. It is a misconception that every poem must be didactic. Poems may contain instructions on human behaviour, but this is not the prime aim of poetry. Poetry is there to be enjoyed.



Praise poetry is a special type of poetry, which is part of the folklore of a nation. A praise poem is composed in honour of a specific person or persons. A ruler in a society will usually be likened to an animal or object for its admirable qualities or physical appearance (e.g. the lion, the elephant, the sun, stars, etc.). Either a praiser will compose a poem for a chief, or individual chiefs may compose their own poems. Apart from kings, chiefs and prominent warriors, poems may also be written about animals, birds, mountains, rivers, etc. in which these are praised for their wisdom, bravery, strength or beauty. Praise poems are usually chanted at ritual ceremonies and gatherings and are intended for adults, not children.

### 3.2.5 Composers

Traditional praise poetry is orally composed, recited and carried on to the next generation. As a result, the original composers of some of the well-known praise poems are not known. It is possible for several people to have contributed to the composition of a single praise poem.

### 3.2.6 Formulae and linguistic devices

Most traditional praise poems have specific formulae as an introduction, a response, and as a conclusion.



Compound nouns, comparisons, repetition of words and phrases, metaphor, figures of speech and imagery are often used in praise poetry. The writer organises his words in such a way that his perceptions, reflections and experiences strike us as being original and artistic. He is free to manipulate the syntax of the language to suit his purpose, as long as it still has a pleasing effect on the reader or listener and doesn't become too forced or unnatural. He may, for instance, use a sentence without a predicate (verb) in order to enhance conciseness and compactness. The essence of poetry is that it is a concentrated and intense form of expression.

### 3.2.7 A traditional praise poem

We have selected a traditional praise poem in Zulu in order to familiarise you with some of the characteristics of this form of oral art. An analysis of the selected poem as well as explanations will follow below. (Remember that only traditional poetry, but not modern poetry, is regarded as constituting folklore.) Click [here](#) to listen to the poem while following the text on your screen.

#### ***Izibongo zikaShaka (Shaka's praise poem)***

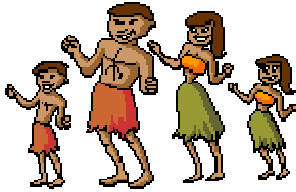
1. *UDlungwana kaNdaba!*
2. *UDlungwana woMbelebele,*
3. *Odlung' emanxulumeni,*
4. *Kwaze kwas' amanxulum' esibikelana.*
5. *UNodumehlezi kaMenzi,*
6. *UShaka kasishayeki,*
7. *Ilemb' eleq' amany' amalembe ngokukhalipha;*
8. *UShaka ngiyesab' ukuthi nguShaka,*
9. *UShaka kwakuyinkosi yasemaShobeni.*

1. Dlungwana son of Ndaba!
2. Ferocious one of the Mbelebele brigade,
3. Who raged among the large kraals,
4. So that until dawn the huts were turned upside-down.
5. He who is famous as he sits, son of Menzi,
6. He who beats but is not beaten,
7. An axe that surpasses other axes in sharpness;
8. Shaka, I fear to say he is Shaka,
9. Shaka was the chief of the Shoba people

## Analysis of the praise poem

The word *izibongo* means 'praises'. It is a plural noun of which the singular *isibongo* means 'surname'. *Isibongo* is the name on one's clan. Praise poems are naturally inclined to be in praise of a person, but they may as well be in criticism of him. These are simply short sentences in remembrance of notable actions and events in the life of the person who is praised. Shaka's praise poem introduces him as uDlungwane kaNdaba. Shaka was most often known as 'the rager' or 'the ferocious one'. UDLungwane is derived from the verb *-dlunga* (to rage). UNodumehlezi 'He who is famous as he sits' was bestowed on Shaka while he was still living amongst the Mthethwa tribe, where illustrated deeds of bravery by killing a leopard using his bare hands.

### 3.3 SONGS



#### 3.3.1 Function of songs

Traditional songs are also part of a people's cultural heritage. They are composed and sung for various reasons at various occasions, e.g. in work groups, when asking for rain, in times of war, for weddings and other traditional ceremonies, and for children. For each of these types of songs there is a relevant rhythm to suit the mood. For instance, a struggle song has a totally different rhythm from a lullaby. The lyrics of these songs have emotional connotations, e.g. happiness, suffering, courage, praise, etc. Work songs associated with African cultures throughout the world display the value of collaborative activity and coordination of efforts in the execution of manual labour, for example in grinding corn, pounding, sifting, cultivating fields or herding cattle. Songs serve to encourage workers and to combat tiredness. They increase the effectiveness of an action by setting a continuous pace. One person normally takes the lead in chanting, to which the others respond, generally before the leader has finished. The role of song leader may be seized by anyone (or more than one person), but normally someone with a strong voice will do the leading. Songs can be purely for recreation or amusement. Children's songs may be used in children's games or to train them to develop certain skills.

#### 3.3.2 Structure

Folk-songs are not rigid. Flexibility and variability characterise the tune as well as the text. Different singers may give different renditions of the same song or the same folk-singer may sing a song somewhat differently on different occasions. The same song may also differ according to the area in which the song is sung. A number of lines or parts of lines are usually repeated throughout the song.

#### 3.3.3 Examples of Zulu songs

You will now be introduced to two songs. Familiarise yourself first with the contents and purpose of each song before listening to the recordings.

### 3.3.3.1 [Song 1](#)

#### Childrens' song

Sizinyoni thina sizinyoni,  
 Sizinyoni thina sizinyoni,  
 Siyahlala, siyasuka,  
 Sizinyoni.  
*(We are birds, we are birds,  
 We are birds, we are birds,  
 We sit, we move,  
 We are birds.)*

Sizinyoni thina sizinyoni,  
 Sizinyoni thina sizinyoni,  
 Siyahlala, siyasuka,  
 Sizinyoni.  
*(We are birds, we are birds,  
 We are birds, we are birds,  
 We sit, we move,  
 We are birds.)*

Children will usually sing this song when they mimic the movement of birds. As they sing the hop and jump, hop and jump imitating how birds hop and jump as the move on the ground.

### 3.3.3.2 [Song 2](#)

#### Wedding song

Niboyigcina, niboyigcina,  
 Hhayi niboyigcina,  
 Le ntandane.  
*(Please treat the orphan well  
 Please treat the orphan well)*

Niboyigcina, niboyigcina,  
 Hhayi niboyigcina,  
 Le ntandane.  
*(Please treat the orphan well  
 Please treat the orphan well)*

Kusasa nizoth' uyeba,  
 Nith' uyathakatha,  
 Nithi'udl'amaqanda' umakoti.  
*(Tomorrow you will say she steals,  
 She is a witch or has eaten the eggs of her in-laws)*

Kusasa nizoth' uyeba,  
 Nith' uyathakatha,  
 Nithi'udl'amaqanda' umakoti.  
*(Tomorrow you will say she steals,  
 She is a witch or has eaten the eggs of her in-laws)*

This song is sung at a wedding by the bridal party. Although it is a song of delight, it also carries a message to the groom's party that they should look well after the orphan. If this does not happen, there are many allegations that will be directed to the bride. They will accuse her of stealing, of being a witch and of eating the eggs of her in-laws before a cow is slaughtered to give her permission to eat certain foods in her-in-laws household..

### 3.3.3.3 Listening exercise

Now that you have read the explanations, you are in a better position to visualise the traditional setting and conditions under which the working songs were sung. Click [here](#) for Song 1 and [here](#) for Song 2. Scroll up to follow the texts on your screen.

## 3.4 RIDDLES



Riddles are part of folklore and are meant for entertainment, as are the folktale, praise poem and song. In African cultures riddles are plentiful. Doke (1947:117) says that among the Africans

“the propounding of riddles constitutes a form of entertainment, an indoor game, commonly indulged in around the fire at night, particularly by the young folk of the village. The riddle describes something in obscure metaphor and calls for the exercise of intellectual skill in answering it.”

### 3.4.1 Function of riddles

Riddles serve a three-fold function:

- they are a form of entertainment and combat boredom
- they fulfil a very important social and moral function
- they play a very significant educational role, as they are meant to stimulate and sharpen the intellect of the young so that they would be able to listen carefully, and after careful analysis of a riddle, come up with a well thought-out answer. Riddles also encourage the youth to study their environment and their culture.

### 3.4.2 General setting and participants

Almost in all traditional societies, riddling takes place in the evening around a fire. At this time people can afford to relax, having completed their chores. It is believed that if you ask a riddle during daytime, you will grow horns or become an imbecile. The performers and audience are normally children. However, they may be joined by adults, especially their parents or relatives.

There is always a team and it is very rare to find just two people riddling each other. The audience naturally does not remain passive. They take turns to propound a riddle.

### 3.4.3 Nature and structure of riddles

Riddles are questions that should be answered, but they may not necessarily be in the form of a question. They are often in the form of simple statements. The contents of a riddle provide clues towards finding the answer.

A stereotyped phrase is usually used to introduce a riddle. The questioner starts by saying *Ngiyakuphica* in Zulu, and then the audience has to guess the correct answer to the statement or question being posed. A variety of poetic devices may be encountered in riddles, such as parallelism (similarity in successive passages), contrast, ideophones (e.g. sound imitations), repetitions, compound words, interjectives, personification, metaphors and direct speech.

#### 3.4.4 Examples of riddles in Zulu

Click [here](#) to listen to the following riddles and their answers. Practise to pronounce them correctly. Could you have guessed the answers?

1. Ngikuphica ngehashi lami elingahambi uma lingenamsila (I trick you with my horse which does not move when it has no tail).

Impendulo: Inalithi (a needle)  
(A needle is likened to a horse and the thread is likened to the horse's tail. The needle will never sew if it has no thread).

2. Ngikuphica ngamawele ami ahlala elandelana njalo. (I trick you with my twins who follow each other all the time.)

Impendulo: Amasondo ebhayisikili (Bicycle wheels)

3. Kuyiqiniso yini ukuthi uma imbila uyibamba ngomsila, aphuma wonke amazinyo ayo? (Is it true that when you hold a rock-rabbit by its tail, it loses all its teeth?)

Impendulo: (Imbila kayinawo umsila (The rock rabbit has no tail)

4. Ngikuphica ngenyoni yami ethi uma ihamba ingawashayi amaphiko. (I trick you with my bird which when flying does not flap its wings.)

Impendulo: Ibhanoyi (An aeroplane)

5. Ngikuphica ngenkosikazi ethi uma ingena emasangweni ikikize. (I trick you with a woman who ululates when she enters at the gates.)

Impendulo: Yisitimela uma singena esiteshini (It is the train when entering a station)

6. Ngikuphica ngabantu ababili abakhe ngaphansi kwentaba, omunye ngapha kuthi omunye ngale. (I trick you with two people who stay below a mountain, one on each side of the mountain.)

Impendulo: Izindlebe zombili (Both ears – one on each side of the head)

7. Ngikuphica ngekhehla lami eliphihlike izilonda wonke umzimba. (I trick you with my old man who has sores all over his body)

Impendulo: Imbawula (A brazier)

8. Ngikuphica ngemizi yami emibili ephahle igquma. (I trick you with my two homes on each side of the hill.)

Impendulo: Amehlo (Eyes – the ridge of the nose is the hill)

9. Ngikuphica ngabantu bami abamhlophe qwa. Bahlala endlini emnyama bhuge. Inkosi yabo ibomvu tebhu. (I trick you with my people who are snow white. They live in a pitch black house. Their king is red.)

Impendulo: Amazinyo, nolimi emlonyeni. (Teeth with the tongue inside the mouth)

10. Ngikuphica ngezimbali zami ezihlobise isibhakabhaka. (I trick you with my flowers adorning the sky.)

Impendulo: Izinkanyezi (The stars)

11. Ngikuphica ngenkunzi ebomvu ehlala esibayeni esakhiwe ngamatshe amhlophe. (I trick you with a red bull that stays in a kraal made of white stones.)

Impendulo: Inkunzi bowulimi, isibaya ngamazinyo amhlophe. (The red bull is the tongue and white kraal are the teeth)

12. Ngikuphica ngomuntu wami ohamba ngezinyawo ezine ekuseni, kuthi emini ahambe ngezimbili bese ehamba ngezintathu ntambama. (I trick you with my person who walks on four in the morning, at noon he walks on two and just before sun set he walks on three.)

Impendulo: Umuntu, esemncane ugaqa ngezandla nezinyawo, uma esekhulile uhamba ngezinyawo uma esemdala ahambe nangodondolo. ( A human being, when very young he crawls using both hands and feet, on growing up he walks on two feet and when old he also uses a stick. )

13. Ngikuphica ngomuntu wami ongakwazi ukuma aqonde uma elambile. (I trick you with my person who cannot stand upright when hungry.)

Impendulo: Isaka, uma lingenalutho alikwazi ukuma liqonde. (A sack cannot be upright when empty)

14. Ngikuphica ngendlu yami engenawo umnyango. (I trick you with my house which has no door.)

Impendulo: Iqanda (An egg)

15. Ngikuphica ngomame wami othi angakhala, ingane ibaleke. (I trick you with my woman who after making a loud sound, her child runs away.)

Impendulo: Isibhamu (A gun)

16. Ngikuphica ngomuntu wami owela umfula ugcwele. (I trick you with my person who goes over a full river.)

Impendulo: Amehlo. (Eyes)

17. Ngikuphica ngomcondo kamesisi. (I trick you with the madam's thin legs.)

Impendulo: Inalithi (A needle)

18. Ngikuphica ngamakholwa ami asonta eZayoni. (I trick you with my Christians who are attending indigenous Africa churches.)

Impendulo: Amalanda (White herons)

19. Ngikuphica ngabantu bami abaphikisana ngalokho abakwenzayo. (I trick you with my people who compete about what they do.)

Impendulo: Izinyawo (Feet)

10. Ngikuphica ngehlathi lami elimnyama elisequmeni. (I trick you with my black forest which is on a hill.)

Impendulo: Izinwele (Hair)

### 3.5 PROVERBS

#### Nature and function of the proverb



The proverb

- expresses a general truth
- makes use of wording which is compact and forceful
- is figurative
- enjoys general acceptance in the culture group
- makes use of a range of topics to create imagery and parallels for comparison

The proverb serves various purposes, such as to express general truths, to warn, advise or encourage to do good. It is mainly used to comment on a social situation where a human being interacts with another human being. It also serves a didactic function. Its impact may be positive (encouraging, advisory) or negative (warning, judgmental). Proverbs serve as an effective and picturesque way of putting across ideas and their messages reflect on the culture of a people. Many of the images used in proverbs stem from traditional settings and customs.

Click [here](#) to listen to the recording of the following Zulu proverbs while reading them on your screen, repeat them and memorise those which appeal to you in particular. They may come in handy in your written work such as essays and letters. After each proverb the (a) literal translation and (b) the English equivalent in meaning will be given.

- i) *Umendo kawuthunyelwa gundane.* (lit. No mouse is sent when one is to marry.) When a young woman leaves her home to be married, she goes with the hope that she will find life married life a happy life. Troubles which may be in store for her cannot be

predicted. Not even a mouse may be sent out to check how bearable her life would be before she takes the plunge. If this was possible to do, many tragedies would have been averted.

- ii) *Inja iyawaqeda amanzi ngolimi.* (lit. The dog finishes water with its tongue.)

Unlike big animals which take big mouthfuls of water at a time, the dog has to lap it with his tongue. It may be a slow process it is drinking all the same. This is an expression of encouragement.

- iii) *Akulahlwa mbeleko ngakufelwa.* (lit. The child's carry-skin is not throw away because of death.)

The skin used for carrying a child on the back is called *imbeleko*. If a child dies, the skin the skin is not thrown away, because there is always a hope that another child may be coming. This is an expression of encouragement.

- iv) *Umuthi ugotshwa usemanzi.* (lit. The tree is bent whilst young.)

A sapling is flexible and may easily bent without breaking. Any attempt to break an old tree will break and destroy it. This proverb is used in bringing up children. A child should be properly trained in the mode of behaviour the parents want of him, and when the child is old, he/she will find no difficulty in behaving as he/she is expected. Left until too late, it may never be possible to train a child properly.

- v) *Ukhamba lufuza imbiza.* (lit. The small pot is like the big one.)

This saying is used when the child has taken after the parents in good things or bad things.

- vi) *Wakhahlelwa yihashi esifubeni.* (lit. He was kicked by a horse on the chest.)

This is proverb is used when a person cannot keep a secret.

- vii) *Unyawo alunampumulo.* (lit. The foot has no nose.)

Treat strangers with kindness because one never knows where his feet will carry him one day.

- viii) *Ikhotha eyikhothayo.* (lit. A cow will lick one that licks it.)

Cattle are often seen standing and licking one another. The idea of reciprocity is illustrated here. A person will often help one who helps him/her and not the one who does not help.

- ix) *Ukwanda kwaliwa ngumthakathi.* (lit. Increase (of people) is hated by a wizard.)

Witches and wizards practise their witchcraft to the detriment of other people because they destroy life. This proverb is used as an expression of gratitude for a gift, or in appreciation of services rendered. It means that it is a good thing to have many people who will offer such help. It could also be used by a person who



has received an act of kindness to his helper all prosperity unless the wizards cripple him.

- x) *Bangamathe nolimi.* (lit. They are like saliva and the tongue.)  
This proverb describes very intimate friendship, just as the tongue and saliva are intimate.
- xi) *Bayikati negundane.* (lit. They are like a cat and a mouse.)  
A cat and a mouse are natural enemies. This proverb is used to refer to bitter enemies.
- xii) *Ukhomba ngophakathi.* (lit. He/she points with the middle finger.)  
This describes a person who is well off, a person who lacks nothing.
- xiii) *Igula lendlebe kaligcwali.* (lit. the calabash of the ear is never full.)  
The calabash into which milk is poured to make it sour does get full, but the ear which is also a calabash that stores all that is heard, unlike other calabashes never gets full. One may listen from morning till night, the ear will still take in more.
- xiv) *Iningi liyabona ububunde.* (lit. Many people spoil the blood-broth.)  
When a beast is slaughtered among the Zulu people, the blood is collected and cooked together with other parts of the slaughtered beast. This expression is the equivalent of the English saying, 'Too many cooks spoil the broth'.
- xv) *Umlomo yisihlangu sokuzivikela.* (lit. The mouth is a shield to protect oneself with.)  
It is by means of the mouth that one defends oneself. A person should not be blamed for speaking in his own defence.
- xvi) *Sobohla Manyosi.* (lit. It (stomach) will go down Manyosi.) Living during the time of Shaka was Manyosi, son of Diekezele Mbatha. He was a brave and distinguished fighter in battle. He was capable of eating, all by himself, the whole carcass of a goat, and still take large quantities of beer after that. Even in the time of Dingane Manyosi was treated with consideration, and was allowed as much food as he wanted, because he made good use of it in battle. Then there came a time when the Zulu people split, one section going away with Mpande and the other remaining with Dingane. Manyosi followed Mpande. With Mpande he could no longer get the same consideration he got with Dingane. Then people began to taunt him saying his belly would go down. The expression eventually became a standing proverb describing a person who has cause to regret his past actions. It is also used of people who because they find themselves prosperous, live recklessly and not caring to provide for the morrow.

- xvii) *Ingwe idla ngamabala.* (lit. The leopard eats by means of its spots.)

Although the leopard is a vicious animal, it is liked for its skin which is beautifully decorated. This proverb means that one must have features which distinguish him/her from others.

- xviii) *Indlu yegagu iyanetha.* (lit. The house of a person who speaks a lot lets rain in)

A person who talks a lot has little time to do other things. As a result, even the very elementary and necessary home duties are neglected. Just as the house will let water in, a talkative person often crumble down under test.

- xix) *Zifa ngamvunye* (lit. They (sheep) die because of one.)

If one sheep in a flock has a disease, the others will also get the infection. This saying is used when many people suffer because of the faults or folly of one individual.

- xx) *Abake babonana babuye babonane.* (lit. Those who have met before will meet again in future.)

This expression is used by people who are parting, and there is no likelihood of their meeting in the near future.

- xxi) *Enethunga ayisengelwa phansi* (lit. The one (cow) with a pail is not milked onto the ground.)

This means that one is not prepared to suffer when he/she has his/her own things, just as the cow with a milk pail should not be milked onto the ground.

- xxii) *Iso liwela umfula ugcwele* (lit. The eye crosses a flooded river.)

Our wishes and desires very often go beyond the limits. Like eyes the heart will nurse desires not easily accessible.

- xxiii) *Ithi ingadla ithambo yejwayele.* (lit. Once it (dog) eats a bone, it frequents the place.)

Dogs are known to be very fond of bones. A dog will always go back to a place where it has picked up a bone, to see if its luck will still hold. This expression is used by a person seeking a second favour.

- xxiv) *Ungadinwa nangomuso.* (lit. Do not be weary even tomorrow.)

This is an expression of thanks. One is requested not to get tired of doing good.

- xxv) *Ukupha ukuzibekela.* (lit. To give is to store for oneself.)

Giving is like keeping something in store, where one will be able to resort to in time of need.

- xxvi) *Iqaqa alizizwa ukunuka.* (lit. The polecat does not feel its own smell.)

The polecat has a very offensive smell which it is not aware of and does not seem to be inconvenienced by it. This proverb also means that nobody recognises his own faults.

- xxvii) *Akahlalwa mpukane.* (lit. He is not sat on by a fly.)

This proverb describes a person who is very particular about his appearance, a person of clean habits.

- xxviii) *Soyicela ivuthiwe.* (lit. We shall ask for it (meat) when it is cooked.)

When a person who cannot cook meat blunders, and will not take advice, people simply turn aside and say “We shall ask of the meat when it is cooked.” This implies that the way he/she is following is not correct and that the meat will not cook properly.

- xxix) *Udlala ngegeja kuziliwe.* (lit. He plays with a hoe at a time of abstinence.)

Days of abstinence were greatly respected by the people of old. Such days were usually associated with certain rites. Anyone who dared behave in a manner not in keeping with the occasion would be seriously reprimanded for treating lightly what should be regarded as serious.

- xxx) *Uhambela nxanye njengelanga lasebusika.* (lit. He walks sideways like the winter sun.)

### 3.6 IDIOMS



#### Function and structure of idioms

Idioms are linguistic forms which add colour to speech and render expressions more effective. They are used to enrich a person's language. Another reason why they may be used is euphemism, i.e. as polite ways of saying things. They consist of a fixed pattern of words which go together, but they are not as rigid in form as proverbs. They may change form, for example, when an idiom is used in a sentence it conforms to the tense or mood (verb form) of that sentence.

An idiom's meaning cannot be logically or literally ascertained from its component parts.

#### Examples of idioms and idiomatic expressions

Click [here](#) to listen to the pronunciation of the idioms and [here](#) for the idiomatic expressions and practise them until your pronunciation sounds like that in the recording. Scroll down to follow the text on your screen.

### Idioms

1. Ukubeletha izinyawo – to run away
2. ukuthatha ngozipho – to steal
3. ukudliwa yizintaba – to go missing
4. ukuhamba ngezinqe – to lack basic commodities
5. ukufaka impama – to slap
6. ukufaka unyawo – to kick
7. ukufaka isandla – to help
8. ukuqina idolo – to be courageous
9. ukudla amabele – to be alive
10. ukudla ubuthongo – to sleep
11. ukulala ngamanzi – to sleep without eating anything
12. ukubeka isandla – to beat
13. ukubeka indlebe – to listen
14. ukubeka icala – to lay a charge
15. ukudliwa yinduku – to get a hiding
16. ukudonsa ngendlebe – to advise
17. ukungenwa yinyoni – to be scared
18. ukungena indlela – to walk away
19. ukuthathwa wukufa – to die
20. ukushaya ngoCetshwayo – to walk barefoot

### Other idiomatic expressions

1. Ngabeletha izinyawo ngenkathi ubaba efuna ukungishaya (I ran away when my father wanted to give me a hiding.)
2. Lo mfana uthatha ngozipho. (This boy is a thief.)
3. Umfowethu wadliwa yizintaba kudala (My brother went missing long time ago.)
4. Laba bantu beswele bahamba ngezinqe. (These people do not have anything they lack basic commodities .)
5. Ubaba wamfaka impama ngokuqamba amanga . (Father slapped him for lying.)
6. UThemba wayifaka unyawo ingane ngoba ikhuluma kakhulu. (Themba kicked the child because he talked a lot.)
7. Amakhosikazi esonto afaka isandla ukuze kungcwatshwe isalukazi esingenazingane. (The church women helped to bury an old woman who had no children.)
8. Bamkhuthaza bathi akaqine idolo. (They gave him encouraging words.)
9. Usawadla amabele noma agule kakhulu nje. (He is still alive though he was very ill.)
10. Le ngane iyabudla ubuthongo. (This child sleeps a lot.)
11. Izolo balele ngamanzi bengenakudla . (They slept without eating anything yesterday.)
12. Indoda ebeka isandla unkosikazi wayo ayithandeki. (A man who beats his wife is not lovable.)
13. Awongibekela indlebe uma kukhulunywa ngezemindeni. (Please listen on my behalf when families are discussed.)

14. Wangibeka icala lokweba izinkomo zakhe. (He laid a charge of cattle theft against me.)
15. Umfana wadliwa yinduku ngokungayi esikoleni. (The boy was given a hiding for not going to school.)
16. Umama wamdonsa ngendlebe ukuthi angiphinde ahambe nabangane abangafanele.  
(His mother advise not to be in the company of bad friends.)
17. Wangenwa yinyoni ebona ibhubesi phambi kwakhe. (He was scared to see a lion in front of him.)
18. UKhulekani wangena indlela wabashiya bemangele. (Khulekani walked away and left them in surprise.)
19. Unina wathathwa ukufa basebancane. (Their mother died when they were still small.)
20. Bahlangana naye eshaya ngoCetshwayo. (They met him walking barefoot.)

### 3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. How are praise poems composed?
2. Which formulae are characteristic of the traditional praise poem?
3. What was the purpose of a song in a traditional setting?
4. Use the knowledge you gained about folk songs in this lesson to write a song of your own. Choose your own theme.
5. What is the function and nature of a riddle?
6. Why are proverbs said to reflect on the culture of a people? Choose any appropriate proverb to explain this statement.
7. Explain in what way proverbs differ from idioms.
8. Choose any three idioms and use them in one or more Zulu sentences of your own. Your sentence(s) must show that the idiom has been used in an appropriate context.

Sources consulted:

Abrahams, R.D. 1983. *African folktales: Traditional stories of the Black world*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Doke, C.M. 1947. Bantu wisdom lore. *African Studies* Vol. 6, No.3.

## STUDY UNIT 2

# COMPREHENSION, TRANSLATION, CREATIVE WRITING AND THE MEDIA

## LESSON 4

### COMPREHENSION AND TRANSLATION



In this lesson we would like you to achieve the following goals, namely to be able to:

- read a Zulu text with understanding;
- grasp the overall contents of a text, without necessarily knowing the meaning of every word;
- answer Zulu questions based on the given texts;
- translate passages from a Zulu text into English;
- translate simple sentences from English into Zulu;
- paraphrase the contents of a Zulu text in English;
- improve your listening skills.

#### 4.1 READING WITH COMPREHENSION

Before being able to write your own short paragraphs, dialogues, letters or essays (see lesson 5), you need to be able to read given passages with comprehension, so that you will become increasingly familiar with the way vocabulary and phrases are used in Zulu.

#### How to tackle the reading work

I'm sure that many of you have tried to read a continuous piece of Zulu, only to find your progress halted by words and constructions you do not know yet. Don't let this discourage you. We want to suggest that you tackle the reading work as follows:

- (a) Read through the reading lesson a couple of times and then try to form a picture in your mind about its contents. Listen to the recording while following the text in your guide. Obviously, when you read texts in everyday life, no recorded versions are supplied, but in this module the recordings are added for your benefit to help you tune your ear to the correct pronunciation.
- (b) If you still do not know what has been said in the lesson, read the English translation.
- (c) Read through the Zulu text again without looking at the translation. It should be much easier for you because now you know what the lesson is all about. You should, however, still avoid trying to translate every

word. Keep in mind that the aim of this reading work is *reading with comprehension* and not *translation*.

- (d) If you still do not understand certain parts of the Zulu text, you may compare these parts with the translations in order to find the correct English translation. You should always go back to the Zulu text and try to read it with comprehension.
- (e) Read all the reading lessons in this way and try progressively to make less use of the English translation. The more you read, the more you will comprehend and often you will be able to deduce the meaning from the broader context.

#### 4.1.2 Activity

Read the following lessons in the way described above, while listening to the recording. (Click on the title of each lesson to hear the audio.) Write your own short summary in English of what you think the passage is all about, before looking at the translation for the first time, to establish how much of the passage you have been able to understand.

##### 4.1.2.1 Reading lesson 1: [Umshado kadadewethu](#)

Yisonto ekuseni. Abantu abaningi beze emshadweni kadadewethu. Kugcwele ngaphandle endlini yesonto. Umakoti ufike ngemoto entsha, enhle eluhlaza eyiBMW. Ugqoke ingubo yakhe enhle emhlophe. Umkhwenyane umlinde phakathi esontweni, ugqoke isudi yakhe emnyama.

Ekhaya, amakhosikazi apheke izinhlobo ezehlukene zokudla okumnandi ngoba lolu wusuku olukhethekile. Amakhosikazi aphise utshwala obuningi, futhi enze neziphuzo eziningi ezimnandi. Abeke nekhekhe elikhulu elimhlophe nezimbali ezinhle ezibomvu etafuleni elide elembozwe ngendwangu emhlophe.

Abantu baphe abashadayo izipho ezinhle ezidulile, babafisela nenhlanhla ezimpilweni zabo. Abesilisa babegiya, abantwana abancane bacula amacula amnandi omshado. Bonke abantu babejabulile emshadweni kadadewethu.

##### 4.1.2.2 Translation of reading lesson 1

###### **My sister's wedding**

*It is a Sunday morning. Many people have come to my sister's wedding. It is full outside the church building. The bride arrive in anew, blue BMW. She is wearing a beautiful white bridal gown. The bridegroom is waiting inside the church. He is wearing his black suit .*

*At home, the women have cooked different types of delicious food because this is a special day. The women have brewed a lot of beer and have made a lot of delicious drinks. They have put a big white cake and beautiful red flowers on a long table which is covered in a cloth.*

*People gave the newly-weds beautiful and expensive gifts, and wished them well in their lives. Men danced, children sang nice wedding songs. All the people were happy at my sister's wedding.*

#### 4.1.2.3 Reading lesson 2: [Ukuya olwandle](#)

Izingane ezifunda eTholulwazi ziye olwandle ngamaholide. Zazilujabulele kakhulu lolu hambo. Lwathi lufika usuku ezazizohamba ngalo, konke kwasekulungisiwe. Umphako ezazizowudla endleleni yiwona owalungiswa kuqala. Izingane zapaka amapotimende ezimpahla zokugqoka kanye nezokubhukuda olwandle.

Ngosuku okwakuzohanjwa ngalo, izingane zalala zingalele. Zaziphupha izinhlobonhlobo zamaphupho. Zikhona ezaziphupha sezishiywe yibhasi, zisele zingasazi ukuthi zenzeni ukuze ziyofika olwandle. Zithi uma ziphaphama zijabule ukuthi kanti bekuyiphupho nje leli. Ezinye zaziphupha sezililinde isikhathi eside ibhasi lingafiki. Selize lashona nelanga ibhasi lingafiki. Uma lingafiki sanhlobo ibhasi sezizokwenzenjani nje? Zizofika kanjani kodwa olwande? Zithi uma ziphapha zijabule ukuthi kanti beyiphupho nje leli.

Zafika esikoleni zibonakala nasemehlweni ukuthi zijabulile. Zafaka amapotimende ebhasini, zangena zahlala nabangane bazo. Ezifike kuqala zahlala ngasemafasiteleni ukuze zibone konke ngamafasitela. Ezinye zazixoxa nabangane bazo kumnandi kunjeya.

Lahamba ibhasi lithubeleza ledlula izimfunda namagquma. Lawela imifula, ladundubala izintaba. Yilo leliya selibheke eThekwini kwelamagagasi.

#### 4.1.2.4 Translation of reading lesson 2

##### **Going to the sea**

*Children who attend school at Tholulwazi went on a trip to the sea. They were very happy about the trip. When the day on which they were to take the trip arrived, everything had been prepared. Provision for the road was prepared first. The children packed suitcases containing clothes and swimwear.*

*On the day of the trip, the children did not sleep well. They dreamt different dreams. Some had dreams of being left behind by the bus, left behind not knowing how they will reach the coast. The children got very happy to awake, and found out that it was only a dream. Others dreamt about waiting endlessly for the bus which was not arriving. The sun has even set with the bus still not arriving. If the bus does not arrive what are they going to do. How are they going to reach the coast? The children got very happy to awake, and found out that it was only a dream.*

*They arrive at school looking very happy. They loaded their suitcases onto the bus, entered the bus and sat with their friends. Those who arrived first sat by the windows to see everything through the windows. Others were engaged in discussions with their friends, it was a nice experience.*

*The bus went over valleys and hills. It crossed rivers and mountains going towards Durban the city of waves.*

#### 4.1.2.5 Reading lesson 3: [Amalimi](#)

Inkinga yokuba namalimi ifike icace, iggame kahle esikoleni. Kuba nzima kakhulu emabangeni aphantsi uma sekufundwa ithebula, sekufanele nilazi ngekhandu. Usezoza-ke uthisha ephethe uswazi. Kuhamba ngomugqa noma ngohlu lokuhlala kwenu. Aze afike kuwe, abuze. Kuvele kuthi ngqi emlonyeni. Uyayazi njalo impendulo. Wo, ayifake induku. Adlulele phambili. Kwenye inkathi aze abuye futhi. Abuze. Ubambeke futhi. Ishe induku. Uyayazi belu impendulo.



Kuze kube ngcono uma uthisha esekwazi ukuthi unamalimi futhi kuvamile ukuthi ungayazi impendulo enembayo. Usezothi-ke uma efika kuwe usabambekile, adlulele phambili. Uyothi eqambe ebuya, hhawu usuqaqekile emlonyeni, usumnikeza impendulo abeyifuna.

Ngangilisebenzisa –ke ithuba elinjengaleli. Ikakhulukazi uma kuyimibuzo enzima engase ingidlise ngenduku. Sengizovele ngizenze umuntu osevukwe yila malimi amakhulu uma uthisha esephambi kwami nenduku. Usezokwedlulela kwabanye-ke uthisha, mina ngibe ngithola ithuba lokukhumbula kahle impendulo. Kokunye uze uphendulwe ngabanye umbuzo obungimise kanzinyana. Hhawu, ngisinde kanjalo-ke endukwini.

(From: *Amalangabi*, N G Sibiya, pp 2)

#### 4.1.2.6 Translation of reading lesson 3

##### Stuttering

*The problem of stuttering becomes very clear and obvious at school. It becomes very difficult in the lower classes when the times table are taught, and when one is expected to know it off by heart. The teacher will come holding a stick. She asks learner row by row according to how they are seated. She will come to you and ask a question. Then you will start stuttering. She will give you a hiding for not giving the answer quick enough, although you know the answer to the question asked. She will pass and ask other learners. At other times she may come back to you and ask you a question. You will stutter again, and she will again give you a hiding for not giving the answer quick enough, although you know the answer.*

*It becomes easier if the teacher knows that you stutter and that you often know the correct answer to the questions asked. On such occasion when the teacher approaches you while you stutter, she usually pass and ask other learners the question. By the time she comes back, your stutter will be over, and you will give her the answer she was expecting.*

*Such an opportunity worked to my advantage. Especially if the question are too difficult and I may be punished for not getting the answers correct. I would pretend to be stuttering very badly when the teacher is in front of me with the stick. The teacher will pass to other learners, at that time I will find an opportunity to remember the answer. At times the difficult question will even be answered by other learners. In this manner I will escape being punished.*

## 4.2 COMPREHENSION TEST

### 4.2.1 The purpose of a comprehension test

What would you do if you wanted to test someone's insight into a passage that he/she has read? You could expect the person to narrate the passage in his/her own words, but better still, in order to assess the degree of his/her comprehension, you would have to ask context and content related questions. Comprehension entails being able to state not only what is said, but also to interpret what is meant in a written passage.

The purpose of comprehension exercises is to test whether you are able to read with understanding. To accomplish this, you need to:

- study words, phrases and sentences in their contexts;
- get at the meaning, i.e. the thought behind the words;

- detect the relations of the meanings and parts of the sentence, or situation;
- discover the purpose of the words and structure - the purpose envisaged by the writer;
- demonstrate a knowledge of question words by applying them correctly;
- answer questions based on the text.

#### 4.2.2 How to do a comprehension test

- First read through the given passage so that you know what it is all about.
- Then read through the questions that follow. The questions provide further clues as to what the passage deals with. Make sure that you understand every question that has been asked.
- Read through the quoted passage again before you answer the questions one by one in Zulu. Pay attention to the mood (verb form) and tense of the verbs in the questions, because this will in most cases determine the mood and tense in which your answer will have to appear.
- Remember to answer the questions in full sentences.
- Familiarise yourself with the set of question words (interrogatives) in Zulu and make sure that you use the correct word order in your answers.
- Establish whether the question demands a straightforward answer or rather an interpretation. In the latter case, ensure that your opinion is expressed clearly and coherently.
- Check all your answers. Make sure that they are well formulated. Check whether you have explained words in context.

#### 4.2.3 Degrees of insight

Comprehension tests differ in the degree of insight which they want to test. In some cases the questions and their answers may be quite transparent, since they emanate directly from the given text. In other cases, your ability to make deductions and interpretations may be put to the test, when the given text forms an extract from a larger text. The questions posed may not be derivable from the actual given text, but from the story from which the passage has been extracted.

#### 4.2.4 Question words

In order to be able to do a comprehension test successfully, you need to know the meaning of the Zulu question words. The following is a list of common and frequently used question words:

Ubani? (Who?) Singular  
 Obani? (Who?) Plural  
 Yiphi? (Which one?) Singular  
 Ziphi? (Which ones) Plural  
 Kuphi? (Where?)  
 Ini? (What?)  
 Ngani? (With what?)  
 Nini? (When?)  
 Ngasikhathi sini? (At what time?)

Kanjani? (How?)

### Activity words

The following phrases are not necessarily questions, but may be included in the comprehension test in order to test your insight. These phrases may require of you to comment on certain issues or statements or explain some words or phrases:

- *Chaza izinto ezenzeka emshadweni kadadewethu.* (Explain things that happened at my sister's wedding.)
- *Shono izizathu ezenza ukuthi usuku lomshado lube ngolukhethekile.* (Give reasons why a wedding day is considered special.)
- *Xoxa ngokulungiselela uhambo.* (Discuss ways in which one prepares for a trip.)

#### 4.2.5 Activity

Listen to the following questions based on reading lesson 1 by clicking [here](#) before you answer them in full Zulu sentences. Our written answers appear in the paragraph below. We realise that the formulation of your answers may differ slightly from ours, but the content should be more or less the same.

- i) Abantu abaningi beze emshadweni kabani?
- ii) Umakoti uhambe ngani ukuya esontweni?
- iii) Umakoti uhambe ngemoto enjani?
- iv) Umkhwanyane umlinde kuphi umakoti?
- v) Ngobani abaphise utshwala obuningi?
- vi) Enze nani?
- vii) Yini ebekwe etafuleni elide?
- viii) Abantu babaphani abashadayo?
- ix) Abantu babafiseleni abashadayo?
- x) Ngamaculo anjani aculwe ngabantwana abancane?

#### 4.2.6 Feedback

**Le mibuzo kumele iphendulwe ngemisho egcwele.  
These questions should be answered in full sentences.**

- i) Abantu abaningi beze emshadweni kadadewethu.
- ii) Umakoti uhambe ngemotoukuya esontweni.

- iii) Umakoti uhambe ngemoto entsha eluhlaza eyiBMW.
- iv) Umkhwanyane umlinda phakathi esontweni umakoti.
- v) Amakhosikazi aphise utshwala obuningi.
- vi) Enze neziphuzi eziningi ezimnandi.
- vii) Ikhekhe elikhulu libekwe etafuleni elide.
- viii) Abantu babapha izipho ezinhle ezidulile.
- ix) Abantu babafisela inhlanhla ezimpilweni zabo abashadayo.
- x) Ngamaculo amnandi omshado aculwe ngabantwana abancane?

### 4.3 TRANSLATION

#### 4.3.1 Aims of translation

The ideal aims of a translation are:

- to express as clearly as possible the ideas or thoughts expressed in the original text;
- to produce a translation which is stylistically good and which preserves the meaning of the original as closely as possible;
- to produce a translation which is properly informed by the overall context.

#### 4.3.2 Important aspects of translation

##### 4.3.2.1 Literal translation

When asked to do translations, you as a learner of Zulu, will naturally, as a first step, want to establish the exact equivalent for each word. Keep in mind, however, that no two languages are the same, and that it is not always possible to provide a word for word translation. The literal translations need to be rephrased in order to convey the intended meaning of the original sentences.

The role of context is also one of the most important aspects to be considered when translating. Each sentence forms part of a larger paragraph and each paragraph forms part of a larger text. These sentences and paragraphs can only be translated correctly, if their meaning is interpreted against the background of the larger context in which they occur.

Isibonelo (Example):

*Uthathe zonke izimpahla zami lo mfokazi, nami ngisabe ukumlandela ngenxa yokwazi izidumo zalapha eThekwini. Sizifunda emaphepheni sikhona lena kwaZulu.*

He took all my belongings, this fellow, and I was afraid to follow him due to the knowing the bad things that happen here in Durban. We read about them in newspapers when we are there in Zululand.

#### 4.3.2.2 Idiomatic translation

Literal translations will help you to understand what a passage is all about, but the real test lies in reproducing the contents as a meaningful, stylistically well-formed whole. This step could be referred to as idiomatic translation.

#### Activity

Translate the following passage into good, idiomatic English. The sentences have been numbered to help you follow the explanatory remarks which have been added to assist you with the translation. Write down your translation as best you can before consulting our feedback. Remember that a word-for-word translation is not expected here, but the meaning should be as close to the original as possible.

1. *Amadoda asebenza kanzima aye amakhaya.*
  2. *Izingane ezincane zivame ukugula kakhulu ebusika.*
  3. *Umntu onamalimi uphindaphinda amagama enkulumeni yakhe.*
  4. *Amaqembu ezombusazwe akhankasela ukhetho.*
  5. *Ngezikhathi ezilukhuni bayasizana.*
1. The hard working men went home.
  2. Babies fall very ill in winter.
  3. A stutterer repeats words.
  4. Political parties campaign for elections.
  5. During trying times, they assist one another.

#### 4.3.3 Translating from Zulu into English

##### Guidelines

- Read through the given passage to get an idea of what it is all about.
- Now start with a draft. Read each sentence carefully and write down the literal meaning of every word. If you cannot translate a particular construction, leave it out and go on to the next phrase or sentence.
- When you have gone through the whole passage, go back to those words that you could not translate initially. Try to establish from the context what the meaning of each word should be. Also, if a literal meaning of a form doesn't make sense, try to determine what the author is trying to convey.
- If you come across a Zulu idiom, use an equivalent English one. If you do not know any English equivalent, give a literal translation of the Zulu idiom, or explain the idiom.
- Now rewrite your draft into good, idiomatic English.
- Finally, read through your translation carefully and check for any mistakes.

Follow the above guidelines and translate the passage below into English. (Complete the exercise before comparing your version with the one we have given.)

*Muhle umisi Ntsibande osifundisa isiNgisi lapha eKucathuleni. Unamazinyo amahle amhlophe qwa. Ufaka izibuko ezingasuki emehlweni. Ikhanda lakhe lihlala lilungiswe kahle njalo. Uthi lapho ehamba kube kwangathi uyadansa.*

### Feedback

According to the steps explained above you had to:

- Read the passage and write down a few main thoughts
- Read every sentence, determine the meaning of every word, and write down those words which are unknown to you. Make use of a dictionary where necessary and refer to the grammatical structures which were presented to you in the first module of this course.

#### *Literal translation*

Miss Ntsibande who teaches us English is beautiful. She has teeth as white as milk. She wears glasses which she do not take off her eyes. Her head is always neatly prepared. When she walks it is as if she is dancing.

#### *Idiomatic translation.*

Miss Ntsibande who teaches us English is a beauty. Her teeth are pure white. Her glasses are always on her face. Her hair is always neatly combed. She walks like she's dancing.

### 4.3.4 Translating from English into Zulu

#### 4.3.4.1 Guidelines

- Read through the given passage attentively to see what it is all about.
- Now go through the passage, sentence by sentence, and translate every word or construction (literally, if it would help you). While doing this keep in mind the correct sequence of words in Zulu, for example,

English: The big boys saw me.

Zulu sequence:  
The boys big me saw.

Zulu:  
*Abafana abakhulu bangibonile.*

Leave out those forms that you cannot translate and go on to the next phrase or sentence.

- When you have gone through the whole passage, go back to those forms you left out and try to translate them. If you cannot translate the English into an equivalent Zulu form, try alternatives, i.e. try to say the same thing in a different way. For instance, if you have to translate 'The sun is very hot today' and you can't remember the word for 'sun' *ilanga* in Zulu, then

translate the sentence as *Kushisa kakhulu namuhla* 'It is very hot today'.

- Now rewrite your (literal, preliminary) translation into grammatically acceptable Zulu (You might not have to change it much). Stick to simple sentences and concentrate while you write, so that your translation is as grammatically correct as possible.
- Read through your translation carefully and check for any concordial or spelling errors.

#### 4.3.4.2 Activity



Now try to translate the following into Zulu on your own, before looking at our answer:

- (1) The children and their parents are on the road in (with) the car.
- (2) They are going to visit uncle.
- (3) They are glad, because they like their uncle very much.
- (4) Father is watching the speed of the car, because he doesn't want to break (cross over) the law.
- (5) After a little while father reduces (weakens) speed when he sees the road is full of cars.
- (6) A policeman stops them (causes them to stand still) and says to father that there is a big hole in the road because of the rain of the previous night (of the night that had passed).

#### Feedback

- (1) Abantwana nabazali babo basendleleni bahamba ngemoto.
- (2) Bayovakashela umalume wabo.
- (3) Bajabulile ngoba bamthanda kakhulu umalume wabo.
- (4) Ubaba ubheke isivinini semoto, ngoba akafuni ukweqa umthetho.
- (5) Ngemuva kwesikhashana ehlise isivinini, ubone izimoto zigcwele emgwaqweni.
- (6) Iphoyisa liyabamisa, litshela ubaba ukuthi kunomgodini omkhulu emgwaqweni ngoba kune imvula eningi izolo ebusuku.

#### 4.3.5 Paraphrasing

“Paraphrase” roughly means “sameness of meaning”. Therefore, to paraphrase, means to reproduce the content of a passage in your own words. This reproduction may be done within the same language (e.g. a restatement of a Zulu passage in Zulu) or it may be done in a different language, in which case paraphrasing goes hand in hand with translation (e.g. a restatement of a Zulu passage in English).

When it is expected of you to paraphrase a Zulu text in English, the aim is to determine whether you know the translation of words, whether you have mastered certain grammatical structures and whether you understand the content of the text. Though you may translate the given text literally as a first step, the aim is for you to move from the literal translation to a free translation

(paraphrase), which will render the contents more understandable and stylistically correct. The free translation is not bound to the form and language structure of the original text. On the other hand, if a passage is translated too “freely” into another language, some of the meaning of the original passage may be lost in the process. One should thus strive to strike a happy balance between a literal translation and one which is too broad.

Paraphrase and translation are not only instruments to test your knowledge of the vocabulary of Zulu, they also help you to get more familiar with certain grammatical structures and idiomatic expressions in the language. Knowledge gained in this manner is permanent, because it can never be a matter of memorising only. It is always a challenge and you must view it as such.

### **Activity**

Paraphrase (write in your own words) the folktale of *uZenzile noZenziwe*. Remember that when you paraphrase, you are not expected to give a word for word translation. You should indicate the contents of the text in your own words in good idiomatic English. Our answer follows in the next feedback.

### **Feedback**

Zenzile’s step-mother hated him to an extent that she robed his father to decide on plans to kill him. Most of their plans did not work because Zenzile. Sister, Zenziwe always tipped him about what they had planned. After their last plan to kill Zenzile was thwarted, his father ran away fearful that Zenzile will kill him.



## LESSON 5

### CREATIVE WRITING

#### 5.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



In this lesson we aim to enable you to:

- develop your ability to communicate in Zulu by means of the written word;
- write your own short paragraph, dialogue, letter and essay;
- improve your listening skills.

#### 5.2 CREATIVE WRITING ACTIVITIES

Creative writing covers a large spectrum, but in this section we shall only concentrate on the writing of an essay, a dialogue, a letter and a paragraph. We could say that the writing of essays and dialogues in particular is perhaps the most creative activity in language. Especially dialogues, as you may know, are very important in foreign language learning as they equip a person with everyday communication skills. Some students enjoy this activity, others do not particularly like it, the reason being that their knowledge of the application of language is not on the expected level. You as a foreign language student should, however, not be discouraged as we won't expect you to know as much about the language as a mother-tongue speaker. To enrich your creative writing skill a knowledge of proverbs, idioms and idiomatic expressions will come in handy.

#### 5.3 WRITING AN ESSAY

##### 5.3.1 What is an essay?

For our purposes we regard an essay as a text that deals with a single topic, written in a natural style and which forms an integrated whole within the limits of the prescribed number of pages or words.

##### 5.3.2 Language usage and content

Of great importance when writing an essay is the use of simple, though correct language. Give attention to the usage of mood and tense. Most of the time a narrative essay is written in the consecutive or in the indicative past tense, while the factual descriptive essay can be written in either the present or the past tense. Decide in advance which tense you are going to use and stick to it. Where possible use short and well planned sentences. See to it that the contents of the essay is applicable to the topic throughout the essay. The essay must form an integrated whole. The same line of thought must flow from one sentence into the following in order to develop a central or main idea. A series of unrelated sentences is less satisfactory.

### 5.3.3 Orthography

It is important that you use the correct orthography (symbols) when writing an essay in Zulu. If you follow the orthography on this CD-ROM, there is nothing to worry about.

### 5.3.4 Planning

Most of us are inclined to start writing an essay immediately without drafting a well planned framework. There are, however, a few important things to keep in mind before writing an essay. Firstly, it is very important that you make the right choice when selecting a topic.

You need to ask yourself the following questions, before deciding on a topic:

- Do I understand the given topic?
- Do I have the knowledge of what the topic entails?
- Do I possess the necessary vocabulary that is needed to write on this topic?
- Will I be able to express my ideas on the topic with my present knowledge of the African language?

### 5.3.5 Style

Insufficient vocabulary gives rise to another problem, namely style. Owing to insufficient vocabulary, students are inclined to think in English. Some are even tempted to draft their essay in English and then translate it into Zulu. The result is often an unimpressive literal translation which lacks coherence. Remember that an essay in which language usage is flawless (e.g. correct concords, constructions, spelling, idiom) will, in spite of poor content (i.e. lack of originality or limited vocabulary), earn considerably more marks than one which is rich in content but poor in language usage. It is possible to write a touching, lyrical or even a pompous essay, but this is not expected from you as someone who tackles Zulu for the first time. Your main concern is correct language usage in a natural style, using short and well planned sentences.

Try to think in Zulu, because by doing so you will eliminate a lot of problems.

### 5.3.6 Bridging the gap



Although the ideal situation would be for you to think and write in Zulu right from the start (instead of translating from your own language), we cannot deny the fact that you will want to bridge the gap from the familiar to the unfamiliar by resorting to your own language in the planning phase. There is nothing wrong with that, as long as you remember that most of your English sentences cannot be translated literally and need to be adapted to the way thoughts are expressed in Zulu. Compare the following sentence:

- In English: "I started going to high school last week."
- In Zulu English: "I started to enter school which is raised (elevated) week of to pass by."

- In idiomatic Zulu: “Ngiqale ukufunda esikoleni esiphakeme ngesonto eledlule.”

You will soon develop a natural feeling for this way of expression if you read Zulu regularly.

### 5.3.7 Structure

When you have decided on a particular topic, write down everything that you want to say on the topic. Arrange these thoughts by grouping together the ideas that belong together. Any essay is usually divided into an *introduction*, a *body* and a *conclusion*.

### 5.3.8 Activity

Write a short descriptive essay of about 10 lines, using simple Zulu sentences on one of the topics indicated below. The reason why we specify that you write a *descriptive* essay, is because that allows you to use the present tense for most of the time, unlike in a *narrative* essay, where you would be expected to make use of the past tense, which you may not be so comfortable with yet:

- I love my home town
- A dog is a man's best friend

## 5.4 WRITING A DIALOGUE



### 5.4.1 Planning

As in the case of the essay, you need to plan the structure and content of your dialogue. In a dialogue thoughts are exchanged on a certain topic (normally between two people, but several people can also participate). After the appropriate greetings the topic is introduced by one of the speakers and the conversation centres around it. The dialogue is concluded by a farewell. Depending on the situation, however, a dialogue may assume various forms and the exchange of greetings and farewells may not necessarily be included.

### 5.4.2 Examples of dialogues

#### 5.4.2.1 Engadini

*Ubaba: Ngizotshala izimbali ezinhle namuhla engadini yami.  
Umama: Nhloboni yezimbali ozozitshala, baba?*

*Ubaba: Ngizotshala izimbali ezinemibala emihle.  
Umama: Mina ngithanda izimbali ezinemikhala ekhangayo.*

*Ubaba: Yebo, ngizotshala zona izimbali ezinemibala emihle ekhangayo.  
Umama: Ngithanda umbala oliphuzi, ophinki nomhlophe.*

*Ubaba: Izimbali zami zizokuba naleyo mibala uma seziqhakazile.  
Umama: Ngabe uzoyitshala yini imifino, baba?*

*Ubaba: Yebo, ngizoyitshala.  
Umama: Kuhle ukuthi ungatshala namazambane notamatisi.*

#### Translation

Father: I am going to plant beautiful flowers today in my garden.  
Mother: What type of flowers are you going to plant, darling?

Father: I am going to plant flowers with beautiful colours.  
Mother: I love flowers with attractive colours.

Father: Yes, I am going to plant flowers with attractive colours.  
Mother: I love yellow, pink and white colours.

Father: My flowers will have those colours when in bloom.  
Mother: Are you also going to plant vegetables, darling?

Father: Yes, I am going to.  
Mother: It will be nice if you can also plant potatoes and tomatoes.

**5.4.2.2 Egalaji**

- Bheki:* Sawubona, mnumzane.  
*Peter:* Yebo, sawubona nsizwa.
- Bheki:* Ngingakusiza ngani namuhla, mnumzane?  
*Peter:* Ngifuna uphitheloli.
- Bheki:* Ufuna uphethiloli wamalini?  
*Peter:* Thela uphethiloli ka-R200.
- Bheki:* Ngizohlola umoya, uwoyela namanzi.  
*Peter:* Yebo, ngicela unghlolele.
- Bheki:* Kulungile konke, mnumzane  
*Peter:* Ngiyabonga.
- Bheki:* Uhambe kahle mnumzane.  
*Peter:* Usale kahle, nsizwa.

**Translation**

- Bheki:* Good morning/day/evening, sir.  
*Peter:* Good morning/day/evening, young man.
- Bheki:* With what can I help you today, sir?  
*Peter:* I want petrol.
- Bheki:* How much petrol do you want?  
*Peter:* R200.
- Bheki:* I will also check the air, the oil and the water.  
*Peter:* Yes, please check those for me.
- Bheki:* All is fine.  
*Peter:* Thank you.
- Bheki:* Goodbye, sir.  
*Peter:* Goodbye, young man.

**5.4.2.3 Isiguli nodokotela**

- Udokotela:* Sawubona, gogo.  
*Isiguli:* Sawubona dokotela. Ngiyagula.
- Udokotela:* Siphethwe yini isalikazi sami namuhla?  
*Isiguli:* Ngiphethwe wumkhuhlane, dokotela.
- Udokotela:* Ukuqale nini?  
*Isiguli:* Ungiqale izolo ebusuku. Isifuba sami sibuhlungu. Ngikhwehlela kakhulu.
- Udokotela:* Awulale lapha embhedeni, ngikuhlole.  
*Isiguli:* Kulungile dokotela.

*Udokotela: Isifuba sakho sinezilonda. Ngizokunika umuthi kanye namaphilisi.*

*Isiguli: Ngiyabonga, dokotela.*

*Udokotela: Kufanele uphuze umuthi wakho namaphilisi kabili ngosuku.*

*Isiguli: Kulungile, dokotela.*

*Udokotela: Ngizokubona kusasa, uhambe kahle.*

*Isiguli: Usale kahle, dokotela.*

### **Translation**

Doctor: Good morning, granny.

Patient: Good morning doctor, I am not feeling well.

Doctor: What is my old lady suffering from, today?

Patient: I have a flu, doctor?

Doctor: When did that start?

Patient: It started yesterday night. My chest is painful. I cough a lot.

Doctor: Please sleep on the bed, I want to check you.

Patient: It is OK doctor.

Doctor: Your chest has sores. I will give you medicine and pills.

Patient: Thank you, doctor.

Doctor: You should drink your medicine two times a day.

Patient: It is OK doctor.

Doctor: I will see you tomorrow, goodbye.

Patient: Goodbye doctor.

## **5.5 WRITING A LETTER**



### **5.5.1 The nature of a letter**

The nature of letters may differ depending on the purpose which they need to fulfil, e.g. a formal business letter, an informal letter to a friend, a request or report which needs to be put in writing, etc. However, what most of them have in common is a form of address, the main part or body of the letter which deals with one or more topics and finally a conclusion in which the addressee is bid farewell, followed by the name of the writer.

### 5.5.2 Example of a friendly letter

78 Masina Street  
Mpelazwe  
8000  
12 Febhruwari 2009

Nozizwe

*Ngiyethemba ukuthi wahamba kahle mhla sehlukana sengiya eyunivesithi. Nami ngahamba kahle, noma ngafika ebusuku nje.*

*Kunjani esikoleni? Baphi oKhanyisile benoBona? Ngiyethemba ukuthi nabo basophile kahle futhi bakuthokozela kakhulu ukufunda.*

*Mningi umsebenzi lapha eyunivesithi. Umuntu akasitholi nesikhathi sokunibhalela. Phela umsebenzi walapha wehlukile kunowasesikoleni. Abafundisi balapha kabanaso isineke njengabafundisi ababesifundisa lapho. Uma usala akuyona indaba yabo leyo, badlulela phambili. Kufanele ukuthi umuntu asebenze njalo ukuthi angasaleli ngemuva.*

*Ngizokuxoxela ngakho konke okwaseyunivesithi uma ngifika ngamaholide ePhasika. Ubakhonze bonke abangane bethu.*

*Yimina umngane wakho  
UTHobile*

### 5.5.3 Translation

78 Masina Street  
Mpelazwe  
8000  
12 February 2009

Nozizwe

I hope your journey was a pleasant one, the day we parted when I was going to the university. Mine was also pleasant, though I arrived at night.

How is it at school? Where are our friends, Khanyisile and Bona? I hope that they are also well, and still enjoy learning.

There is a lot of work here at the university. A person does not even find time to write you a letter. By the way, the work here is different from school work. The lecturers here do not exercise patient as those who taught us there. They do not care if one lags behind, they go ahead with the work. A peron should always be working in order not to lag behind.

I will tell you all about university life when I arrive during the Easter holidays. Greet all our friends.

Your friend  
Thobile

### 5.5.3 Activity

Write a letter to your friend, informing him/her about one of the following:

- the new neighbours that have moved in;
- that you would like to visit him/her;
- why you decided to study Zulu

Make a list of a few suitable vocabulary items, before starting to write. This will help you to get your thoughts organised.

## 5.6 WRITING A PARAGRAPH

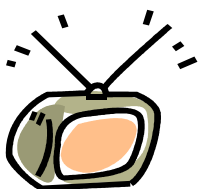
The hints which have already been given to you for writing an essay or a letter, are also relevant when you are expected to write a paragraph in Zulu on a specific topic. The requirements for a good paragraph are the following:

- It must form a unit. All sentences must be connected with one another and must be centered on one main thought.
- The main thought must be developed clearly and logically through the way that every sentence leads naturally and clearly to the next.
- The first sentence of a paragraph usually introduces the main thought (it does not necessarily have to be the case). The other sentences may be explanatory regarding the main idea.
- A paragraph must be clear and brief. Therefore use, as far as possible, short, but well-considered sentences.

### 5.6.1 Activity

Write a paragraph of about five Zulu sentences on each of the following topics:

#### 5.6.1.1 Television



#### 5.6.1.2 The bicycle



#### 5.6.1.3 Our doctor





### 5.6.2 Comment

Here follows our suggestions for the paragraphs you had to write about the topics above but we urge you to first write down a few sentences of your own, before looking at our examples.

#### **Umabonakude**

*Umabonakude uyisimanga esikhulu kwezobuchwepheshe. Ngaleli bhokisana sazi okuningi okwenzeka ezweni lakithi kanye nangokunye okwenzeka kwamanye amazwe omhlaba. Silethelwa izindaba ngezehlakalo zemvelo ezidale umonakalo kwamanye amazwe, silethelwe nezindaba eziphathelene nezepolitiki, ezolimo, kanye nezinye. Siyasazi nesimo sezulu sansuku zonke. Kumabonakude nezingane zifunda okuningi ngazo izindatshana ezixoxelwa izingane nsuku zonke.*

#### **Ibhayisikili**

*Ubaba ungithengele ibhayisikili elisha. Leli bhayisikili lihle linombala olubomvu. Ngiyalithanda kakhulu ibhayisikili lami. Ngiyaligibela ekuseni uma ngiya esikoleni. Kungcono ukuya esikoleni ngebhayisikili kunokuhamba ngezinyawo. Ngisheshe ngifike esikoleni uma ngishova ibhayisikili lami. Ziningi izingane ezinamabhayisikili esikoleni. Amabhayisikili ethu siwabeka endaweni okubekwa kuwo amabhayisikili esikoleni. Uma umama engithuma esitolo ngihamba ngalo ibhayisikili lami. Uma ngingena esitolo ngilibophela esigxotsheni ukuze abantu bangalintshontshi.*

#### **Udokotela wethu**

*Sinodokotela wethu esihamba kuye ekhaya. Lona nguDokotela uMagagula. UDokotela uMagagula unomusa. Uma siya kuye siphethwe umkhuhlane noma okunye ukugula, uDokotela uMagagula ukhuluma kahle nathi asipopole, asinike imithi. Akavamile ukusijova uDokotela UMagagula. Izingane ezincane nazo ukhuluma kahle nazo, aziphethe noswidi uma eseqedile ukuzipopola. Imithi yakhe iyashesha ukusipolisa. Siyamthanda uDkt uMagagula.*

### Translations

#### **Television**

Television is a great technological wonder. Through this little box we know a lot about things happening in our country as well as about those happening in other conyties in the world. News about catastrophic natural events are brought to us, we also get gets relating to politics, agriculture as well as those related to other things. We also know about daily weather conditions. Through television children also learn by the stories they are told daily.

#### **A bicycle**

Father has bought me a new bicycle. This bicycle is beautiful and is red in colour. I love my bicycle a lot. I ride it in the morning when going to school. It is

better to go to school by bicycle rather than by foot. Our school is very far from our home. I arrive quicker when I ride my bicycle. There are many kids who have bicycles at school. We park our bicycles at a place intended for that at school. When my mother sends me to the shops I go there with my bicycle. When I enter the shop, I fasten my bicycle against a pole with a chain so that it is not stolen by people.

## 5.7 DESCRIBING A PICTURE

Pictures and illustrations can be used effectively to improve your writing and comprehension skills. This is actually a very creative exercise, because you have to use your imagination to interpret the picture in order to gradually put your original ideas in writing. As a foreign language learner you should interpret a given picture in Zulu, using the vocabulary you have at your disposal. We are going to guide you in tackling this type of activity by using the following picture:



### 5.7.1 Activity

Look at the above picture and imagine a few topics that could be appropriate or originate from it.

Compile a list of vocabulary items which would suit the topic of your picture-type of essay.

### 5.7.2 Feedback

The central topic is obviously the garden, but it lends itself to many varied essay topics such as:

- A Saturday at home (NgoMgqibelo ekhaya)
- A happy household (Umdeni onentokozo)
- Summer holidays (Amaholide asehlobo)

Whatever topic you may choose for this picture, you are likely to make use of the majority of the following vocabulary items:

<b>ubaba</b>	father
<b>umama</b>	mother
<b>ingadi</b>	garden
<b>izimbali</b>	flowers
<b>-sika</b>	cut
<b>-kha</b>	pick
<b>-tshala</b>	plant
<b>utshani</b>	grass, lawn
<b>imifino</b>	vegetables
<b>imfologo yasengadini</b>	garden fork
<b>umshini wokugunda utshani</b>	lawnmower
<b>isihlahla esinomthunzi</b>	shady tree
<b>ilanga</b>	sun
<b>abafana</b>	boys
<b>ibhola</b>	ball
<b>ukudlala ibhola</b>	to play ball
<b>kuyashisa</b>	it is hot
<b>-sebenza</b>	work
<b>ngaphandle</b>	outside
<b>inja</b>	dog
<b>ikati</b>	cat
<b>ukuzijabulisa</b>	to enjoy oneself

## LESSON 6

### AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN THE MEDIA

#### 6.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES



At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- appreciate the use of different forms of the media in Zulu;
- understand the use of Zulu in the South African multicultural and multilingual context which the media is part of;
- appreciate that Zulu is used in the media to accomplish different goals, such as informing, teaching, instructing and entertaining.

#### 6.2 ACTIVITY

Tune into a news bulletin which is presented in an African language on television (consult a TV guide to find out which news bulletins are read in Zulu). How much do you grasp of what is being said by listening to the presenter? Try another experiment by first watching a news bulletin in English or Afrikaans and thereafter tuning into a later broadcast of the same news in an African language. Do you now recognise any words or phrases in the stream of speech of the Zulu presenter?

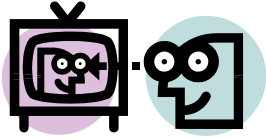
#### 6.3 FEEDBACK

I'm sure that your second experiment was more rewarding. Having first watched the news in a language familiar to you, it would now have been easier for you to anticipate certain phrases and items of vocabulary used in association with particular headlines in the news reports. Watching the news in the way suggested here, will help you to identify familiar words and expressions as they are used in natural speech. Especially the presenter's form of greeting, e.g. *Sanibonani ekhaya* 'Good day/evening, (to you) at home)', should be something you can pick up quickly, because it is used often at the beginning of the news reading.

#### 6.4 RANGE OF MEDIA

There are different forms of the media, such as television, film, radio, newspapers, magazines and of late, the internet. They are used to perform different functions like advertising, informing, teaching and entertaining.

#### 6.5 THE AUDIO-VISUAL MEDIA



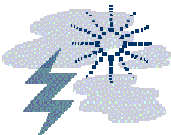
Different programmes are presented on television, such as sitcoms, dramas, talk shows, news, sport and educational programmes. Sitcoms, dramas, talk shows and educational programmes are characterised by code-switching and codemixing. This means that African languages as well as English and Afrikaans are used in one and the same conversational topic. By code-switching and code-mixing the writers and producers may try to reach as wide a target audience as possible in their sitcoms and dramas. In talk shows code-switching and code-mixing is a common occurrence and reflects the way in which people actually talk in everyday situations, for example, an interviewee might say regarding some unfortunate people who have lost their home:

***What I'm actually saying is that labo bantu baneproblem enkulu. Sizodecida ukuthi sizoccontacta ubani ngalokho. (Zulu)***

As far as news bulletins are concerned, you will find that the language(s) in which a bulletin is presented appears in brackets in the TV guide, for example Sotho/Tswana/Sepedi (implying Southern Sotho, Tswana and Northern Sotho respectively). This may be confusing to you as you may not be in a position to identify which of the three Sotho languages is being used. However, you will see the caption "Ditaba" during the broadcast if the news is in Northern Sotho or Southern Sotho or "Dikgang" when the news is presented in Tswana. The caption will be "Izindaba" for Zulu and "iindaba" for Xhosa. The main presenter(s) will usually adhere to one language throughout the reading of the news, but it is possible that the other African languages may also be heard, since reporters make use of their preferred language as they comment on topics of the day. Some lexical items may be clear pointers regarding the language in which a report is presented, for example, a Northern Sotho reporter would use *lehono, bolela, dula, phela, rena* and *lena*, while a Tswana reporter would use *gompieno, bua, nna, tshela, rona* and *lona* whereas a Zulu reporter would use *namuhla, khuluma, phila, thina* and *nina* and a Xhosa reporter would use *namhlanje, thetha, hlala, phila, thina* respectively for 'today', 'talk', 'sit', 'live', 'we' and 'you'.

The news bulletins which are presented make use of a more standard type of language than the dramas and sitcoms mentioned above.

Weather reports generally make use of a predictable list of vocabulary items. Click [here](#) to listen to a few expressions which you may find useful in describing weather conditions:



**Sinjani isimo sezulu namuhla?**

How is the weather today?

**Sihle.**

It is fine.

**Kuyana/Liyana izulu/ Imvula iyana.**

It is raining.

**Kuyashisa/ Ilanga liyashisa**

It is hot.

**Kushisa kakhulu/Ilanga lishisa kakhulu.**

It is very hot.

**Kuyabanda/Liyadanda**  
**Kunamafu/ Lisibekele.**  
**(Izulu) lina ngesichotho.**  
**Liyabaneka.**  
**(Izulu) liyaduma.**  
**Kunomoya.**  
**Isimo sezulu sibi.**

It is cold.  
 It is overcast.  
 It is hailing.  
 There is lightning.  
 It is thundering.  
 The wind is blowing.  
 The weather is bad.

Film, which paved the way for television, is obviously also part of audio-visual communication, as are videos, video games and computer games.

## 6.6 THE AUDITIVE MEDIA



The most wide-spread and common medium of information and entertainment is the radio. It is the most affordable medium to most people. Although it only addresses the sense of hearing, it also makes an impression on other faculties such as visual imagination, as explained further on. The African language stations provide entertainment, information and education and offer a mixture of news, music, current affairs, talk shows, education, dramas and serials, sport, weather and traffic reports.

Sport programmes provide popular entertainment, especially those covering soccer matches and horse races.

The music repertoire consists of Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Kwaito, House, Gospel and African traditional music.

Talk shows look at various issues of public interest. Different topics are addressed in the programmes, such as politics, religion, arts, culture, science, technology, agriculture, youth issues, family and health issues and other issues of national interest. The programmes afford the public an opportunity of voicing their views on the relevant topic. Experts and other people who have authority in respective fields are either invited to the studio or are interviewed telephonically. The use of standard Zulu is promoted on these stations, although it is inevitable that code-switching and code-mixing will occur in interviews and talk shows.

Radio plays are very popular. The radio playwright has no restrictions regarding place, setting, number of characters, kind of actions or movement of time. The writer can take the audience anywhere and make the characters do anything, as the radio has no visual limitations (contrary to the situation in a stage play with its décor, costumes and make-up) and no physical space limitations. The primary dramatical elements, i.e. the word and sound, are the only carriers of meaning. The invisibility of the characters has its advantages, since it offers great freedom to the listeners' imagination. Listeners can create their own fantasy picture of the characters and décor.

## 6.7 THE PRINTED MEDIA



What applies to the media of television and radio, equally applies to the printed media in African languages. The printed word serves to inform, teach, instruct, advertise and entertain.

The government's campaign to make pamphlets on different issues such as health, elections, finance, agriculture, arts and culture available in all of the nine official African languages, has led to an increase in the production of, African language texts. Advertisements and instructions on the use of products may in some cases also appear in African languages.

### *Activities:*

- As you go about your daily business, make a list of indigenous business names which come to your attention and find out what they mean. Approach the owners of the business if necessary and ask them.
- Use an automatic teller machine at any ABSA Bank and select Zulu. Follow the prompts further and see if you can understand them. If you feel uncertain about an instruction, you can always cancel the transaction, but at least you will get familiar with the different options on the ATM machine in Zulu.
- Try to read familiar passages in a Zulu Bible on a regular basis. You will be amazed at how quickly you will pick up vocabulary, seeing that you already know the contents.

## 6.8 THE INTERNET



All computer-based programmes are multidimensional as they involve sight, sound, animation and the written medium to varying degrees. Although English is the global language of the internet, African linguists have spent much energy and innovative thinking on the development of computer software which gives prompts in the indigenous African languages. This presents quite a challenge as there are not always exact equivalents to prompts like “undo” and “save”, “insert” and “paste”, to mention but a few.

In response to government's campaign to develop and promote African languages, there has been an increased offer on the market of language teaching programmes to non-mother-tongue speakers. These programmes come with a CD-ROM and offer the learner the best of three worlds, i.e. the written, visual (this may include animation) and the auditive media. A further advantage of this form of self-instruction, is that it can be done at the learner's own pace and can be repeated as often as is needed.

## **6.9 CONCLUSION**

The last few decades have brought a revolution in the media. Great developments continue to take place such as the development of programmes which make the conversion of written text to spoken language possible. Answering systems are being investigated which will be able to interpret spoken telephonic queries automatically and to give appropriate vocal responses (for example when a client makes a booking for a hotel accommodation).