AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURE IN PRACTICE
Only study guide for **AFL1502**

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POWER Style

Contents

Introduction

Welcome to the AFL1502 module. Let's take the journey together!

You are asked to treat this study guide as your map for intercultural understanding. The best way to do this is to start understanding what we say in this study guide right from the beginning. Make sure you understand what we are advising you to do in this first section – the introduction. As you move on to the first study unit which deals with **ubuntu**, you will be ushered into an open class where you should learn to be a nation builder. Then you will be introduced to the different systems of **education** from the period of the **traditional African** system to the **modern education** system where the medium of instruction plays a significant role. And we shall also touch on **colonisation** and the **missionary period** when **English** and **Afrikaans** took an unfair advantage over the South African indigenous languages. Lastly, we will also look at **the democratic era**, during which time there are ongoing efforts to revive **indigenous knowledge**. You will then come to study unit 3, which focuses on **folklore**. Here you will be introduced to various aspects of folklore, their nature and their functions. In study unit 4 you will be introduced to **modern literature** which ties well with folklore as it developed from it. You will notice some similarities with some minor differences. Study unit 5 will introduce you to **persuasive expressions** such as **praises** of various kinds, like praise names, clan praises, slogans and advertisements. You may ''find'' yourself somewhere in the process, because this study unit deals with aspects of personal identity.

The last study unit, study unit 6, will link everything you have studied about **ubuntu**, because this study unit specifically deals with **morality and metaphors**. Ubuntu is a concept and in order to recognise and experience it, one should live it not only through his or her use of language but also through the other acceptable values that people in general live by.

Purpose of the study guide and what you will gain from studying it

This is the first-level study guide in which you will enjoy intercultural communication in African languages. You will enjoy crisscrossing through African languages and moving over to other languages. You will also notice how easy it is to build bridges across languages, even from your very own.

This study guide deals with language as a means of communication. People use language differently to communicate because they have different intentions when they communicate. You will find it interesting to read how people live and communicate. We as a people, communicate in order to establish

relationships with other people, our families, extended families, communities, in the workplaces and beyond. You will also appreciate that it is always possible to come across the people who speak the same language as we do but interpret things differently. We know also through experience that in similar settings we do also meet other people who do not speak our languages; yet there must be communication through speaking and/or writing. This module is therefore well structured to prepare you for any of the scenarios mentioned above.

This study guide tries to face these challenges and meet the demands of a future that holds great things for the whole African nation. As you page through the study guide from the first study unit to the last, open your heart so as to observe and learn. You will not necessarily learn about African civilisations and cultures only, but the module will also guide you through the equally important intercultural route. We want to introduce you to the world as you live and experience it. You will need to see and interpret issues not just as an African or a European or any other nationality only, but rather learn to see things from another angle, which may be totally foreign to you.

In this module we try to marry civilisations and cultures. You will notice that in our daily communication these days, we code-switch with ease. We often greet in what is known as ''Flytaal'' or ''Tsotsitaal'' with waves of ''Heita!'' and code switch to Spanish as we chant ''Hola!'' in daily greetings. Other languages contribute as well, depending on the setting and scene. As you can see, the module deals with language issues that will enable you to build bridges across language and culture. You will start to appreciate not only the languages, but other cultures too. Whatever you are doing, be it in the workplace, place of worship, sportsfield, political, education, economic, cultural or any other arena, this module will build bridges for you to cross over, and back, to your own space.

Your journey through the study guide

We all know either through our own experience or by default that when an African child is born, members of her or his family including the community at large where she or he is growing up, teach him or her how to communicate with different stakeholders. Right from the beginning when the child is taught how to greet, to say ''goodbye'', learn people's names, including his or her own, the philosophy of ubuntu is inculcated in his or her life. The child, from a young age, is also taught how to share with others and say that in his or her home language. There are many things that would be taught to a child. A child could be taught how to give, run errands, engage others in conversation – all this is also accompanied by the use a particular language that a child would be expected to communicate in when he or she is grown up.

In this study guide, you will also come across a section on morality and metaphoric use of language. The concept of ubuntu/botho/vhuthu/vunhu is carried by elements such as proverbs, idioms, metaphors in African languages. Each one of them carries a lesson that a child learns while playing, doing household chores, telling stories, being taught in class, carrying out duties and so on.

You will again get to see how children, long ago, were prepared the passage from childhood to adulthood through informative education from the home, the community and the different types of schools that she or he was exposed to.

Ngugi (1976), for example, marvels at the education he received at home in the evenings when elders narrated folktales, and fascinating games were played both in the evening and during the day. He mentions what many went through as they looked after their flocks, as they called them by their names and chanted their praises. Both home and community became ''other'' classrooms. Language played a central role throughout and very small children could chant their family's praises, an easy way to learn their history.

Growing up in African communities meant moving from one level of education to the other. Children learnt language and how to use it through not only tales and praises, but the song coded more challenging education that opened other avenues. There were games which were reserved for a particular gender, as well as the games for both sexes. And these games had their own ''curricula''. There were games where young boys would play the role of a dad and young girls or moms while others will be ''their'' children. While playing these games, older boys and girls instilled the family values that they themselves had been taught while they were still very young. This avenue opened up another chapter of parental functions as children learnt kinship terms and their functions, marital responsibilities and parenthood. All these games involved the use of language.

In the process, children learnt how to use expressions to refer to themselves and others, whether familiar or strangers. In African communities, people are called by their names differently. Children are called by their names, sometimes accompanied by their praises. At some stage they get new names that befit their status and as adults they are called by titles, kin terms and/or names and surnames or clan names. All this explains the philosophy of ubuntu.

It is important to note that Africans have not lived in isolation. Africans have different ethnic groups, all of whom use language slightly differently from one another. Moreover, for years now they have lived with Europeans who came with their own civilisations and cultures, which are different from the indigenous ones. Admittedly, European's use of language is also different from the way Africans use it. You will recognise examples of what we mean as you work through this study guide.

Europeans introduced their own type of education to Africans, which meant that children had to learn new languages and cultures. Much of what they were taught in their homes and communities was put aside – and not necessarily replaced by European education. The narration of folktales took a different dimension; praises and songs were then only meant for the families and communities and did not feature much in the school curricula; the church, school and workplace introduced new names for people and African names became second names and in some instances were completely done away with. The new wave of civilisation engulfed almost the whole of Africa. Before one could even think of it, two worlds were created.

Studies show that the new era did not only disturb African way of life, but also greatly interfered with the African people's civilisation and cultures. While some people were still amazed by all this change which had caught them off guard, certain school subjects could not be taught in African languages because Africans were thought as not being capable of learning those school subjects. Some African were told in no uncertain terms that their names were not suitably Christian. Soon, Africans were made to realise that they were subhuman, had no history and were considered wanderers with a backward culture. All these stereotypes were met with serious resistance from many quarters of the African society as they seemed to hold people back, making them not only incapable but also incompetent. All the linguistic abilities that Africans prided themselves in seemed to have dissipated. But they persevered.

Now that the wrongs of the past are visited in this democratic era, there are concerted efforts to revisit African civilisations and cultures. How things have changed! Suddenly black is beautiful again; African names are being tied to their clan names again; African names are also Christian names; children are able to chant praises like their elders; now they speak their languages with pride like they did before; the old songs are being sung again and folktales are part of the school curricula as they were in the past.

The line that created two worlds has been erased; people from both sides, black and white, are now learning about one another's civilisations and cultures; they are singing one another's songs and some exchanging names. Some white children now also attend African initiation schools, thereby learning African values and taking on new African names, all accompanied by their praises. African indigenous languages are now part of the eleven official languages in the country and they no longer play second fiddle to English and Afrikaans. During the dark days of South Africa, an African indigenous language would just be taught as a mere third language to be learnt through the use of strict and rigid grammatical rules, but can also be taught as spoken languages to both black and white.

Synergy of this study guide and other study material

As you work through this study guide, you will come across illustrative **examples** that will help you progress further in understanding the study material. Learn to integrate what you see in these examples with what is being presented. Sometimes you will be challenged to work on a case study or an example in a creative way. Please take part in all these, for your own good! You may also be referred to **CDs** which will facilitate your journey through the study guide and challenge you to think creatively as well. Remember that this study guide will not be complete without **your involvement**. Make sure that you do **all** the activities in it. These are questions that invite you to go an extra mile required as you travel through the study guide together with us. Get involved and try to answer the questions to test your understanding of the study material – but you are free to come up with other ideas too and channel them to your lecturers.

Finally, please bear in mind that this course too has **assignments** that you will be required to do and submit before the due dates. Assignments should be seen

as another means of communication; a dialogue between you and your lecturers. Above all, we must all talk and take part in this encounter: we are supposed to be partners in language.

Learning approach

This module deals with language as a means of communication. As we communicate, we often learn new things, create problems both consciously and unconsciously, solve problems in many ways, win or lose friends and so on. To understand how all this happens, you need **a learning approach**. The best way to start is to read through the entire study guide. Read the **literature** referred to in the guide, read the **newspapers** and **magazines**, listen to the **radio** and watch **TV**. Listen to **people** and ask them to explain what you do not understand, and engage them further so that you understand more. Check if there are **other students** you can discuss issues with in your area and ask if you can start a discussion group. Finally, contact us by phone or e-mail whenever you need help with your studies.

Integration of module outcomes and assessment strategies

When you have worked through all the study units you will understand concepts such as ubuntu, as well as the main reasons behind the use of African languages as media of instruction and how the forceful use of English and Afrikaans interfered with basic learning right for the majority of South Africans. At the end of this module, you would have gained an understanding of how to use expressions to refer to yourself and others appropriately in different settings and circumstances. You will also realise the depth and richness in African languages. The module touches on different things such as praises and slogans which are often used to enhance people's status. From what you know about advertisements and slogans you would also have seen that people can identify themselves in any language and can say and sell anything using any language of their choice. Learning more about other people's cultures and languages will show that it is easier to understand the way of doing things in those cultures and languages within particular contexts. In the end you will understand the values that people in different African languages cherish through the idioms of their languages, because you will have gained an understanding of the use of proverbs and other idiomatic elements. Finally, you will understand both verbal and nonverbal interactions that make it possible to live harmoniously with your neighbours.

The study material, with the case studies, examples, multimedia, activities and supplementary material, is all designed to help you complete your assignments and eventually the examination. The learning outcomes and assessment strategies incorporated in this study guide allow for a smooth transition from doing the activities and assignments to the final examination.

Study unit 1

The concept of Ubuntu

Prof Saule

Learning outcomes

After you have worked through study unit 1, you should be able to:

● discuss the concept of ubuntu

● engage in debates about the concept of ubuntu

● identify with the diverse global spectrum of the country in nation building

1. The concept of ubuntu

A student has come to register at university. He approaches one of the university officials for assistance. Here is what transpires:

Student: Excuse me, officer, could you please help me?

Officer: What is your problem? (Looking at the piece of paper in the student's hand).

Student: By the way, my name is Ronald. Ronald Bakker. I hate calling you officer; what is yours, if you can give it to me, please?

Officer: I'm the information officer here; you should have no fears calling me that.

Student: Yes, I know, but it is more polite to call a person by his or her first name.

Officer: (Smiling) I am Buntu. Buntu Madiba.

Student: Madiba? Are you by any chance related to Mandela?

Officer: No. Not at all. It is just a coincidence. I do not even have ubuntu that he has.

Student: Now, I don't understand. I thought Buntu is just a name like all other names.

Officer:	Well, to us Africans, there is more to it than just a name. It is a philosophy, our way of life, our culture.
Student:	Is that so? That sounds very interesting and I would like to know about it, especially as I am from a different cultural background.
Officer:	Well, if that is you wish why then don't you register for AFL1502? It will give you a better picture.
Student:	Do you think so?
Officer:	Absolutely!
Student:	I'll think about it. Thank you so much.
Officer:	You're welcome. Now, let's look at your problem ...

1.1   The concept of ubuntu in context

You have chosen this module because among other things you want to know more about what other people think, why they live the way they do and whether you can relate to them or not. If that is the case, you are curious to know about ubuntu.

How is this module going to help you in your day-to-day activities? Two main things are involved. First, as a student, you will be able to engage in all the debates, whether theoretical or practical, in the interrogation of the concept of ubuntu. Second, with this information as a tool for social empowerment, you will be in a position to identify with the diverse global spectrum of the country in nation building and resourceful citizenship.

1.2   Definition of ubuntu

You are certainly asking yourself what this ubuntu is all about. Where is it found? Who has it? Is it something that you learn or acquire? To understand it better you need to think about it in concrete terms. Briefly, irrespective of race, colour or creed, ubuntu is about:

- peace
- working together
- forgiveness
- nation building
- respect
- becoming a united people

In the words of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu,

[ubuntu] means the essence of being human. You know when it is there, and you know when it is absent. It speaks about humanness, gentleness, hospitality, putting you out on behalf of others, being vulnerable; it embraces compassion and toughness. It recognises that any humanity is bound up with yours. It

means not nursing grudges, but [being] willing to accept others as they are and being thankful for them. It excludes grasping competitiveness, harsh aggressiveness, being concerned for oneself, abrasiveness.

Today, the name of ubuntu appears in many places. Many people have made it a trade name:

> Ubuntu Security, Ubuntu Tavern, Ubuntu Dry cleaners, Ubuntu Escort Agency, Ubuntu Builders, Ubuntu Holiday Resort, Ubuntu Taxi Rank, Ubuntu Holdings, Ubuntu Small Business Enterprises. The list is endless.

You wonder why many people want to name their companies and businesses using the word ''ubuntu''. You may even ask yourself: is there some magic in the word or [are] they just using it purely for political correctness?

Be that as it may, it is interesting to note that there are certain acts that are attributed to the absence of ubuntu. Such acts include among others: violence and child abuse, women abuse, police brutality, mob justice, etcetera.

It is generally believed that when there is ubuntu, there is life, peace, happiness, joy, education and general understanding. Of course there has to be a place or places which are the cradle of ubuntu: Such places would be traditional institutions, courts of law, schools, initiation schools, marriage ceremonies, church services, villages, homesteads and townships.

The way these institutions usher in and nurture ubuntu will need another platform but suffice to say that is in these very institutions where it all begins.

1.3   The language of ubuntu

You will agree that ubuntu is indeed noteworthy, to be recognised and emulated. A living example of ubuntu is none other than former president of the country, Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela who, after spending 27 years of his life in prison, still maintained that he had no bitterness against his captors and oppressors, only against the system. He could easily be described as a symbolic icon of ubuntu. King Moshesh is another example in African history. When a group of men who had attacked, killed and devoured his ailing father's flesh were brought before him, he gave them cattle to rear and slaughter for meat rather than eating human flesh. So they ceased to be man-eaters. It is one thing for a person or individual to do acts of ubuntu, but another to have ubuntu. It has always been said that in an African community, there are no orphans. As a member of the community, every child is your child. You might be familiar with the following African saying:

> *umfazi uzalela omnye* (one woman's child is another woman's child/
> your child is my child)

(isiXhosa)............ (isiZulu)................ (Sesotho)............. (Setswana)........ (North Sotho)....... Tshivenda .... Xitsonga .... siSwati............. (isiNdebele)...............

This can be loosely translated as meaning that a mother is a mother to all. Have you heard of the following terms/idioms/proverbs associated with acts of ubuntu?

Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu (a person is a person because of people) (isiZulu)

Inimba mayibenye bafazi

Umfazi obele linye

Umhambi akagxothwa (isiXhosa) (a visitor is never driven away)

(IsiXhosa)

IsiZulu

Sesotho

Setswana

Northern Sotho

Tshivenda

Xitsonga

SiSwati

IsiNdebele

Not only general language is permeated with these expressions but also traditional music, customs and rituals. In an ubuntu environment, a dissenter is not judged by individuals but by the society as a whole. If a troublemaker is ejected by the community, no one can stand against the decision. For such a culprit a specific ritual is usually performed by his or her father and it is termed as – ukusikelwa indlebe yenja – which loosely translates as ''to be given a dog's ear''. It is a sign that that particular person is an outcast. He or she is no longer wanted within that community. It is a sign of expulsion. As a student registered for AF1502, it will be recommended if you can try and relate these experiences into experiences of your daily life.

Could you see that ubuntu manifests itself in various ways?

It is important to note that ubuntu should not be seen as something that **was**. It continues to exist and to operate even today. However, there is a need to put things into context since things have changed with the passage of time — one culture influences another, languages change as new concepts emerge, etcetera.

Activity 1.1

1. Would you say that ubuntu still exist even today? Give examples to support your view.
2. Briefly discuss how ubuntu can be a catalyst for change in society.
3. Why is it important to know and understand other people's cultures?
4. Can you name other powerful people in other parts of the world whom you could associate with ubuntu?

5. Do you have any idea why a person would call his or her child Buntu or his or her business Buntu?

In the discussions that follow, you will find out how ubuntu can be applied in various scenarios. We encourage you to engage in vigorous debate about how others perceive phenomena relating to this concept as well as how they see themselves fitting into the ubuntu environment with regard to their background. Please write down all your findings and share them with your lecturer or a friend.

1.4   Understanding ubuntu

From what you have gathered/studied so far in our discussions, you will agree that ubuntu is a crucial phenomenon for African people and that there are few differences in how one group or the other understands and puts it into practice. One would therefore not be far from the truth if one assumes that ubuntu is indeed an ''African thing''. It is a yet-to-be-explored philosophy, critically, so to speak. It is attributed to the society's behavioural patterns and takes cultural background into account, which is why there are few differences about ubuntu from one African society to another. Cowley (1991:44) gives the following interesting definition of ubuntu:

> *Ubuntu (''Botho'' in Sotho, ''Vhuthu'' in Tshivenda, etc) is like the English person-hood, an abstract term;* **it manifests itself through various visible human acts** *in different social situations. In short, the quality of Ubuntu is manifested in every human act* **which has community building as its objective orientation***. Any act that destroys the community, any anti-social behaviour cannot, in any way be described as Ubuntu [our own emphasis].*

In ubuntu what matters most is not necessarily the acceptance of the individual's act by the community, but how that act is put to work. It should work as a link that binds people together with a view to creating an enduring, caring and sharing relationship. In the quotation above, ubuntu is highlighted as an agent or as one of the means of community building, an idea of a sharing relationship which should transcend all prejudices. The depth of ubuntu as a people's philosophy with strong leanings towards African thought is further revealed by Cowley (1991:44):

> *Ubuntu is more than just an attribute of individual acts. It is a basic humanistic orientation towards one's fellow men [and women]. Put differently Ubuntu is some kind of humanism – African humanism.*

Therefore ubuntu is something that springs within oneself or, better still, within society. Across the world, societies could realise this notion because they are knit together by a social fabric which encourages a collective behavioural pattern. In the quotation mentioned earlier on, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu in defining ubuntu stresses the principle of human relations. In fact this is only part of a greater whole of a people's philosophy that needs to be experienced before it could be fully understood.

Ubuntu does not happen by chance. It is the end result of a process of traditional values that has remained with the people from the past. Ubuntu could also be interpreted as a system of values that affects all facets of life, especially in education (whether modern or traditional), politics, economy and in everyday social life.

We may see ubuntu as a sum total of human behaviours inculcated in the individual by society through established traditional institutions over a period of time. Such traditional institutions play an important role especially in instilling the spirit of ubuntu in the young and losing them could bring the country to its knees. For instance, young women and men in traditional society (and today even in some less traditional parts of South Africa) enter initiation schools in order to learn more about traditional values and other customary practices. They also receive training about the behaviour expected of them in adulthood. In the process they come to understand the significance of being humane, gentle, hospitable, of putting yourself out on behalf of others, being responsive, compassionate and resilient. The importance of these qualities is reinforced by the many unwritten rules of society. Fortunately, with the changes being experienced in South Africa's diverse society, there is now an interest in writing about and recording all these things.

Ubuntu is strongly founded on one's traditional values, beliefs and practices acquired from childhood and into adulthood. Do you agree with this statement?

1.5   Ubuntu in context

So we may view ubuntu against a background of some of the following descriptions of what it should be, some of which explain the plight of cultural practitioners across a wide spectrum in South Africa and elsewhere. In a traditional sense (which is still pertinent to today's standards or scenario):

● It is a sign of ubuntu for someone who has many cattle to give some to those who have none, for them to keep and care for. It is believed that in this way the cattle of the giver will multiply and that the giver would then become more prosperous. The principle here is to help others, so that they can help themselves.

Some of today's self-help schemes are based on ubuntu principles. It is unfortunate that some people take advantage of these noble deeds and corrupt these schemes, or simply become selfish and take advantage for themselves. Many townships have establishments such as funeral clubs, social clubs and committees, whose cardinal objective is not gain, but humanitarian or ubuntu.

● In any African household a stranger or a visitor is a respected person. This person is treated cordially, given water to wash, food to eat even a place to sleep. He or she would in turn spread the good news about that particular household.

But how is this practice viewed and interpreted in today's South Africa? At present, with the escalating crime in our country, a stranger cannot be easily trusted anymore. Has ubuntu taken a back seat, or not?

- It is ubuntu to care for your neighbour's belongings. Keep an eye on your neighbour's house when he or she is absent. Cattle and sheep should not be left to damage other people's property because the owner is not there to look after them.

  In urban areas especially, respect for another person's property may now seem unheard of. Why? People may barricade themselves behind high walls and fences, but their homes are still broken into by thugs and thieves. Why? We need to discuss a case of circumstances militating against ubuntu with regard to this practice.

- Ubuntu emphasises that disciplining the youth is a collective effort. It is the responsibility of all the elders to call bad behaviour to order. It is an act of ubuntu to accept that anyone's child is everyone's child. No child abuse was ever experienced in traditional societies.

- Old people must be cared for and given the respect due to them. Nothing untoward should occur in their presence. Nowadays, however, old people are victimised by their own children.

- It is ubuntu for those who have to share with those who do not have. The weak, the sick and the lame must not be exploited. They must be helped. Giving all of yourself and expecting nothing in return is ubuntu.

  The word we live in today is known as ''dog eats dog'' world. People use phrases such as ''every man for himself''. Be that as it may, many members of society are still very generous. However, some take advantage of this generosity. Countrywide, people engage in begging in order to survive.

- Ubuntu also emphasises that, irrespective of their diverse cultural and social backgrounds, people should live together in peace and trust.

- Ubuntu is opposed to greed, jealousy, stealing, treachery, untrustworthiness, holding grudges, laziness, backbiting, gossiping, looking down on others and any other form of disrespect.

However, all of the above need to be considered with the changing times in mind. Resources that were used as markers and determiners of ubuntu have now been replaced by others or simply no longer exist. Therefore some of the above can only be realised symbolically. For instance, in a modern milieu, it would be ridiculous to use the giving of cattle to demonstrate the concept of ubuntu. Furthermore, ubuntu is averse to a number of factors which are brought about by circumstances beyond our control and sometimes our understanding. These factors could be attributed to political and economic instability. Nevertheless, a person endowed with ubuntu should be flexible and resilient enough to survive these tests.

Any person who adheres to the ubuntu code of conduct will not necessarily see any compensation from society, but may look forward to an intrinsically significant reward.

Activity 1.2

1. Would you agree that ubuntu operates within a given environment?
2. What would be the causes of the absence of ubuntu?
3. Would you regard a person who has ubuntu as weak or strong? Why do you think so?
4. In your own words, how would you describe ubuntu?

1.6 Conclusion

You have seen how ubuntu defines and interprets people's ways of life whether in a traditional or modern sense. It is bound up with their culture and how that culture relates to other cultures. Ubuntu is in all men and women who respect the rights of each and every individual, which is what a judicial system should uphold in any society.

Activity 1.3

1. What are the chances of ubuntu working today?
2. How do you think ubuntu could help curb criminal activities in our society?
3. Do you think that ubuntu could help build better relationships in South Africa's diverse society?

Study unit 2

Education systems in South Africa

Prof DS Matjila and Ms KY Ladzani
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PHASES OF EDUCATION

TRADITIONALISATION (00–1652)

COLONISATION

DUTCHIFICATION (1652–1795)

ANGLICISATION (1795–1948)

AFRIKANERISATION (1948–1994

DEMOCRATISATION (1994–)

Learning outcomes

After you have worked through unit 2 you will be able to:

- explain why the use of English and Afrikaans as a medium of instruction interfered with the basic learning programmes of South Africans.

- describe how language develops over a period of time

- discuss the significance of language as a component of culture

- explain why language is important as a medium of instruction

2.1   Introduction

In this study unit we are going to look at the different phases of education systems in South Africa, namely, traditionalisation, colonisation, Afrikanerisation and democratisation whose aim was to develop people. The aim of traditional education was to develop ubuntu/botho while that of other systems cannot be clearly defined. The basic theme that ran through traditional schools was to inculcate the element of ubuntu that the child should have, for instance, respect, value things which can be environment, love of history, love of fellow

people, love of culture and build a prosperous environment in which there is future. The following diagram illustrates the development of ubuntu/botho from birth to death.
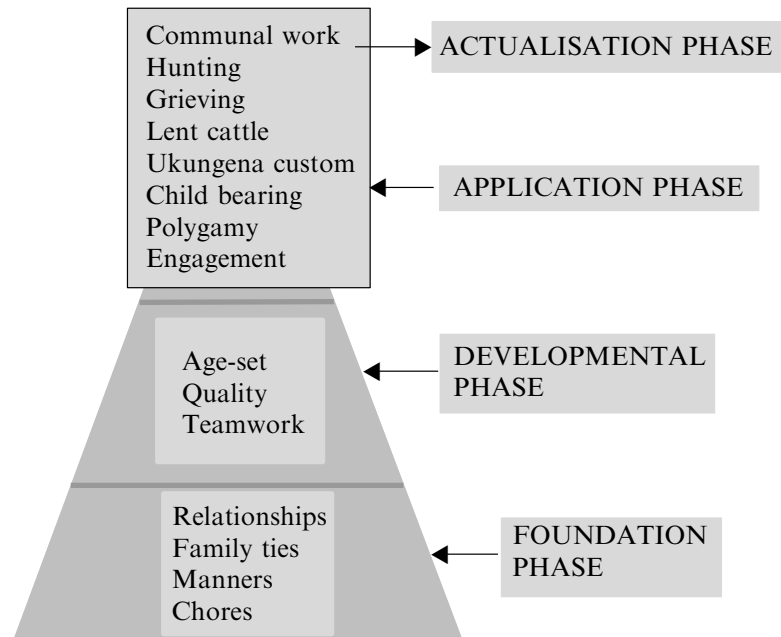
Pre-knowledge Questions

(1) In your own words, without using any reference or quoting anyone, please tell us what you understand by the following educational terms:

- Traditional education/ Indigenous education
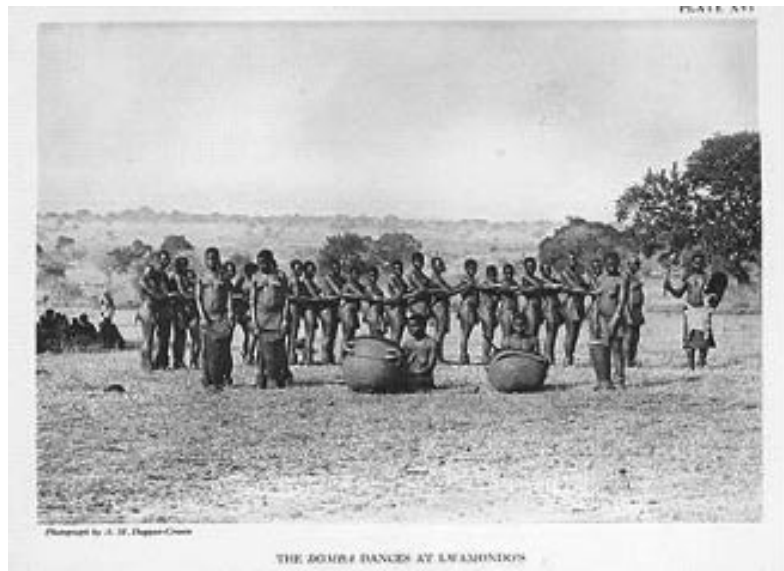
- Dutch education
- English education
- Bantu education
- New curriculum statement

We hope after the discussion that follows you will be able to get a better understanding of these concepts.

2.2   Primary and secondary phases of traditional education

The aims of traditional education were and are still the following:

- unity of the person, unity of the tribe, and unity with nature

- development of social responsibility

- development of character

- development of spiritual power

The methods which could be used to foster the traditional education system are the following:

- separation

- location

- symbolic death and burial

- testing revelation

- testing

- resurrection (symbolic)

- reintroduction of the culture of initiation into society

In a traditional education system:

- mother tongue was and still could be used as a medium of instruction

- initiates were deeply immersed in a comprehensive process

- an interactive process was employed

- there were always healthy interactions among students and interactions between students and teachers

- time was spent on areas such as storytelling, examinations of signs, symbols, proverbs, the use of songs, dances and so forth

- all the above named were used to convey values and convey special view of the world

- teachers and masters always modelled the behaviour that they expected the initiates to exhibit

Expected outcome:

In the traditional education system the expected outcome was the making of umuntu/motho/muthu (a person) in totality with a real spirit of ubuntu/botho/ buthu. This person in turn was expected to:

control his thoughts

control his actions

be steadfast and purposeful in life

identify with the spiritual life

have evidence of having a mission in life

have evidence of being able to yield to spiritual orders

have the guts to withstand persecutio

have confidence in the power of his or her teacher who is his or her master

have confidence in his or her own ability to learn

be always ready and be prepared to face life challenges

Notes and activities

Notes:

In African traditional culture, it was the role of parents to educate their children. The parents played a significant role in the formation of their children's character. Parents were regarded as primary teachers and disciplinarians. There was an intense concern for educating the young in the ways of their ancestors, that they may also transmit the same ways of their descendants. It was the duty of every parent to love and promote the welfare of their children under the watchful eye of *badimo* (ancestors).

Education was transmitted by word of mouth. Every day when all the household chores were done, the whole family would sit around the fire place. Older people, especially grandmothers and grandfathers would start narrating folktales to the young. The listeners also participated by singing folksongs, clapping their hands and dancing if a need arose. The medium of instruction was mother tongue, and this made it easy for learners to understand and grasp the learning material. It is through mother tongue that these children built a stable relationship between themselves and the other people in general. They could also differentiate between right and wrong, and also be able to build the concepts of life.

Childminders also sang lullaby songs, performed folktales and riddles to children that they were looking after using the mother tongue. All these were intended to teach children their indigenous languages which are known to be rich in idioms, proverbs, etc. Mother tongue instruction has always played an important role among Africans since it is used to train children from very early age in life.

Education also took place through association with other children. They associate with others through different types of games like for example; playing **''ndode/umasigende/amagende''** a pebble of five-stone game played by girls, by tossing up and intercepted while other pebbles must be scratched out of a circle, picked up etc. These pebbles have got names, and those names given are in their languages.

Education was practical because children were expected to initiate projects and parents would then guide and correct them. For example, boys herd sheep and goats and later cattle. During this period they would learn the vocabulary used by herd-boys in their respective languages. They would also compose their own praise songs to communicate with these domestic animals. The girls fetched water and took charge of their younger siblings. They also learned the

names of different utensils used in the household in their languages. Active participation in ritual introduced them to the basic values of their society and to the correct emotional attitudes to animals and crops. The primary concern of education was industriousness and compatibility with others. The older children learned responsibility, the younger learned to be dependent and to show gratitude, for example when somebody gives one food one must lean down and say, ''Ke a leboga'' (Setswana) ''Ngiyabonga'' (isiZulu) and ''Ndi a livhuwa'' (Tshivenda), meaning ''Thank you''.

A younger mother was taught not to be overprotective towards her first child, as the child becomes hurt in the process of playing with others. Children learnt to depend on one another.

As they grow into puberty girls began to receive guidance at home in home economics, feminine hygiene and the graces of womanhood. Responsibility for this revolved upon all the womenfolk of the community, ''motse'' and ''kgoro''. Hence a saying: ''mmamotse o bonwa mantlwaneng'' (A true woman is detected in her early childhood) When girls played ''mahundwane'' (Tshivenda) or ''mantlwane'' (Setswana) this helped them see the family setup and roles of people in perspective. The boys spent most of their time with cattle and were harshly disciplined by their elders, brothers, cousins, uncles and any other seniors in their community. An old man passing where younger boys were herding cattle, would simply call them and find an excuse for thrashing them. Such an incident would never be reported to their parents. To learn obedience to seniors, to carry one's own burden of pain and suffering these were the true qualities of manhood; a goal that was constantly held by the boy from a very early stage. ''Monna ke nku o swela teng'' (A man is like a sheep. He does not cry out even if he is in pain). This in Zulu is: ''indoda ayikhali''. During these times adulthood was understood not as the attainment of age, but as the qualification for, and admission into full participation in, the life of society.

Specific attention was paid to the conduct and behaviour of children. Children were always expected to be trustworthy, responsible, truthful and honest. They were taught to respect all elderly people. Hence the introduction of the concept ''botho'' in Sotho languages (humane), ''ubuntu'' in Nguni languages and ''vhuthu'' in Tshivenda. Children were taught ubuntu from a very early age, and this was done through mother tongue.

Initiation in most African cultures was the way of life for both boys and girls. It was a long and arduous process starting at puberty, lasting for three years before the final intensive period of between two and six months training in the ''mophato'' (initiation school). One aspect of initiation period was an intensification of the training of girls in the house chores. This training was communal in nature, and done in age groups. Young men of a particular age who were still herding the cattle, were allowed to partake in communal talks by the kgotla (tribal assembly) of the ''morafe'' (community). These young men would also be sent to collect firewood for some feast, and look after stray cattle which would otherwise destroy crops. Depending on a particular tribe, these young men in some tribes would also weed chief's (now inkosi or kgosi) fields. Mophato may be called to ''kgotla'' to be whipped, for a flimsy reason, like if one of them was said to have been disrespectful of elders, or for warding

off a blow when his father or his uncle wanted to punish him physically. The thrashing was often done with lashes which had been plucked from the trees. In doing all this, the elders were putting into practice an old adage: ''le ojwa le sa le metsi'' (Setswana) or ''libunjwa liseva'' (isiZulu) (bend the twig while it is still green/young which loosely corresponds to an old popular biblical adage spare the rod and spoil the child) is a much quoted adage.

As part of teaching boys and girls about their culture and thus instilling the values of ubuntu, kgosi and kgotla would set up a ''mophato'' or initiation school in the veldt where boys and girls, separately, would camp under the guidance of approved instructors. Instructors would be meticulously selected. An instructor would be a respected man or woman who is very knowledgeable in mekgwa of morafe (lore and custom of the community). Instructors were expected to lead an exemplary life. Instructors would be allowed to have several assistants, one of whom, in the case of male initiands, would be a well-known expert in the use of the knife. The primary duty of this traditional surgeon would be to circumcise these young men when the mophato training reaches the point of circumcision. Circumcision would take place either at the beginning of the course or at the end of it, depending on the preference of that particular ''morafe'' (community). The traditional surgeon was known as ''rathipana'' (loosely translated as knifeman), in isiXhosa the same person was and is still known as ''incibi''. And then there would be a traditional community doctor known as the ''ngaka'' of ''morafe''. The ''ngaka'' of ''morafe'' would be a person well trained in traditional medicine and his primary function would be to strengthen the site of the school of circumcision with ''lenaka'' (horn) before any ritual is performed there. The ''ngaka'' of ''morafe'' would also oversee the ''mophato'' while it lasts. In other words the ''ngaka'' of ''morafe'' would be a consultant in all matters pertaining to the health of the initiands and he would also act as a go-between between the initiands and the initiates and their ''badimo'' (ancestors) while they are at the initiation school.

What was remarkable about these initiation schools was that all initiands and initiates were grouped together children of chiefs and commoners, rich and poor. There was and there is still no discrimination. The faces of initiands and initiates would be covered with masks of grass and reeds, and their bodies would all be daubed with white ochre. This would make it difficult to distinguish boys from one another as they would generally be all of the same age group. They would all be covered with a shroud of sameness and would continue from there to shoulder the blame equally and also share the joy and the glory of anyone in their group.

The aim of all this was that of common adulthood. It was believed, and it is still the case even today in the African setup that a good man is the one who promotes the wellbeing of his own society, and this would form the basic core of the teachings at the ''mophato''. Young men would be taught about what was expected of them in the community and also being responsible towards. African peoples are communal in nature. A man or a woman had to learn from an early age that freedom is almost impossible outside the close comfort of the group.

It is clear that the ''mophato'' was the greatest single effort on the part of the Africans to mould the young and make them the future generation. The existence of this type of schooling was another way for Africans to school their oneness and ubuntu.

To this day, ''mophato'' is still part of many South Africans. But looking at the way things are done now and the way they were done then, one can see that there is a huge difference. Today, people say ''dilo di bitswa ka maina a tsona'' (a spade is now called a spade). Today teaching in these schools is direct and overt and no longer by implication and suggestion. However, some things have not changed, for instance, both the initiands and initiates of either sex are thoroughly drilled in ''mekgwa ya borrarona'' (the ways and customs of our fathers).This is the tradition where older generations pass on valuable information that they themselves inherited from their parents to the younger generation. Strangely though, the method of teaching is often negative, emphasising the do not part. Initiands and initiates are taught respect, avoidance of taboo as well as consequences for wayward behaviour. Repetition is used and song and dance are used for traditional drills, thus instilling the spirit of unity, ubuntu and communality among the young men and women.

In the ''mophato'', initiands and initiates would generally be given lessons about sexual behaviour and relationship including what would be expected from them after their graduation. When young men are at ''mophato'', people of opposite sex are not allowed even to come near there. When, as it would occasionally happen, women bring food to the initands and initiates, they would leave food at a distance in a particular place in the veld. No woman dare come closer to the ''mophato'' as every woman is aware of the consequences of doing the same. Women bringing foodstuff would always be secretly watched to see if they adhere to the required distance. Any deviation from this rule would be regarded as an open invitation of thrashing by initiands and initiates. Traditionally, the offender who has since transgressed this rule has no recourse in indigenous law.

It could be mentioned that in actual sense attending ''mophato'' is a form of progression from the life of youth to the threshold of adulthood. Attending ''mophato'' prepares the attendees emotionally, moulds them into responsible adults. The presence of ''mophato'' helps strengthen the authority of government by imparting much-needed social and cultural values such as respect for elders, respect for the opposite sex, abstinence and so forth. At the same time initiates are also gradually introduced to the world of adulthood and taught to respect adults. It is when they reach a particular age of adulthood that they are taught the trick of communicating directly with ''badimo'' (the ancestors) who play such an integral part in their lives. In contrast, a person who has not attended ''mophato'', who is therefore not initiated, will, for all intense and purpose, remain a child. In other words, a male figure will be humiliated by being called ''mosimane'' loosely meaning a boy and a female will be called ''lethisa''. In the past an uninitiated person would not even marry, and could also not take part in the councils of men and women. Uninitiated men were usually spurned by women as incomplete beings and uninitiated women were despised by men and other women.

The opprobrium which among the Israelites attached itself to the uncircum-cised, exercises no less powerful influence on the Batswana. They long for the hour when they shall forever be delivered from the detestable appellation of ''basimane'' (boys) which exposes them to incessant raillery, stigmatises them as unfit for the rational business of life, and renders them real pariahs.

There are many rituals associated with the stage of preparing the young boys into manhood. As they would be sitting in their specially built huts, these huts would be burnt very early in the morning of the last day of the ''mophato''. The elders would pretend as if the huts in which the initiates were living had caught fire by accident. Someone would then loudly shout stating that the huts were on fire. The initiates would then run out of the huts naked. They would run out nude like rats, as if they are in a race, without looking back, until they reach the village. This would be part of their homecoming, as they would be running towards the village. Therefore every vestige of their old clothing or any belongings they may have brought like the herd boys' sticks are destroyed in the fire. As the male initiates approach the village, they would be met by a crowd of grownup men who would then escort them in a tight circle, so that nobody can see through, to the kgotla where they are hidden from the public in one of the huts in the precincts. Their relatives especially the malome (uncles) bring them new clothes. During this period, the initiates are fed toasted ''bohobe'' (bread) prepared as roughly as they had it at ''mophato''. Meanwhile the preparations for the celebrations would be in motion. Bullocks from the kgosi's herd would be slaughtered and women of various ''dikgoro'' (households) would carry traditional beer to the kgotla. The ceremony would resemble a traditional mini wedding with women ululating. And then the time that everyone would have been waiting for, would come. The ''makolwane'' or young men, and in some instances the ''bojale'' or young women would come out of the hut dressed in their new clothes as a sign of them being new beings. Relatives especially of the opposite sex, would swarm to see the new initiates for the first time since they entered the ''mophato'' and there would be much rejoicing. Sadly to some, thus would be the time for mourning as the heartbreaking news would be delivered to them at this time. They would hear for the first time that their relative died in the ''mophato''. The death of an initiand or initiate at the ''mophato'' would always be a closely guarded secret. As a general rule, reporting about what was happening in the ''mophato'' was and is still forbidden. Women and non-initiates are strictly not allowed to hear any happenings in a mophato. This is called ''koma'', that is, a secrecy only shared by a particular age-set.

During the celebration, the initiates would entertain the crowds to songs learned at the ''mophato'' mixed with traditional dance. Towards the end of the day the initiates would then be called to come inside the enclosure of the kgotla where all the men are congregated in a ''pitso'' (convocation), presided over by the chief. In this ''pitso'', the men are seated according to their age-sets, which they do only on these occasions and on those of a ''pitso'' to discuss war. The purpose of the ''pitso'', which is usually very short, is for the chief to announce publicly a name for the new age-set, previously decided by the kgotla. At the same time, the chief would also publicly announce the leader of the new age-set. The leader would usually be someone very close to the chief in kinship. The new initiates would now enjoy a particular status in

society and would not be lightly told to dismiss, as it was the case before attending the ''mophato''. From this time then, the initiates would be regarded as having graduated from being ''bawa'' (youth) to being full ''botho'' (adults). Biologically these boys would have reached puberty stage and would have thus become men and girls women. After this, the initiates would be thought to have been prepared both physically and sexually for any hardship that comes with life. When the male initiates perform the traditional dance, grown up men would also participate as a further sign of welcoming them into manhood, and showing the initiates that they are now part of men.

In general, formal or informal education was done through the mother tongue. For example games like ''tshifasi'' (in Tshivenda) or ''borankana'' (in Setswana) is performed through the medium of one's language. Names given at various levels were also in the languages spoken by the initiates. Mother tongue instruction was used to train children from very early in life.

Activity 2.1

1. (a) Did traditional societies have any form of education?
    (b) If your answer to the question above: then was the education relevant?

2. Think about this:
    (a) Can you differentiate between different educational values in the African traditional practices discussed above?
    (b) What, in your opinion, is the educational value of each of these traditional practices?
    (c) You are the principal of an exclusive girls' high school. A girl wishes to enrol in the bojale/intonjane school that will take place in April. How would you handle the situation?
    (d) What role does language play in naming and conceptualising the customs, beliefs and systems in the African tradition?

## 2.3   Colonialism

2.3.1 Dutchification

South Africa was colonised by the Dutch when Jan van Riebeeck and his entourage arrived in the Cape on 06 April 1652. In other words, South Africa was effectively colonised by the Dutch in the years 1652–1795. During this period, only the knowledge of Dutch, hence the dutchification, served as a catalyst for access to resources and employment in the civil service. Dutchification came to an end in 1795 when the territory came under the British control. In 1803, however, the British returned the colony to the Dutch, but took control of the territory again in 1806 to prevent it from falling into the hands of the French. During the dutchification only Dutch served as the language of rule. This period did not have much impact on South African society like anglicisation.

2.3.2 Anglicisation

Anglicisation started as a process when English was declared the sole official language of the Cape Colony in 1822 thus replacing Dutch, and the stated language policy of the government of the time was one of anglicisation of the region. On the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, which united the former Boer republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State with the Cape and Natal colonies, English was made the official language together with Dutch which was later replaced by Afrikaans in 1925. During the height of the era of Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid, as well as after the establishment of the Republic of South Africa in 1961, this policy continued, and the African indigenous languages were accorded no official status. However, in the ''independent homelands'' (established as part of the apartheid policy of ''separate development''), English rather than Afrikaans was typically utilised by homeland authorities as an official language, together with one or more African languages of the region. The following linguistic developments promoted the use of English among the black Africa:

(1) Teaching was done in English.

(2) Primary and secondary sources were all in English.

(3) There was a huge consumption of English literature by Africans.

(4) Africans were literally forced to adapt to a foreign culture, which was in English.

Look at the following picture of a flag of a particular country and then answer the questions that follow:
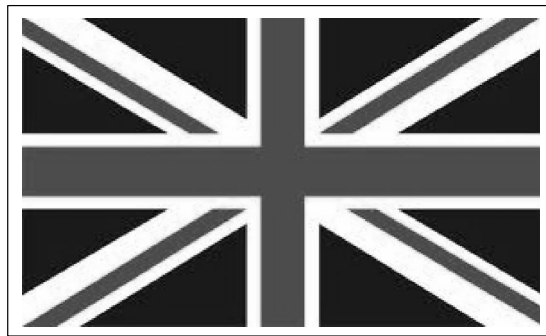
Activity 2.2

(a) Which country does the flag represent?

(b) What feelings are evoked when you look at the above picture?

(c) In your own view, do you think colonial education brought improvement or deterioration to Africa's development?

Feedback

The above picture depicts colonialism in Africa and other parts of the world. From the 16th century onwards, most parts of Africa, Asia and America came under the dominance of colonial powers (eg Britain; France; Portugal;

Netherlands) just to name a few. Some scholars say for years colonialism was a problematic issue and called it ''importation of European ideas'' in terms of language, religion, culture and thought. It was not all lost though as missionaries played a significant role in recording the languages of South Africa. Orthographies were established and grammars were written down.

All the above mentioned colonial powers introduced their own languages as medium of instruction to their colonies. This factor hindered the development of indigenous languages of those colonies. If we can name few countries in Africa which were colonised, they are as follows:

African country	Colonial power	Language introduced
Angola	Portugal	Portuguese
Benin	France	French
Zaire	Belgium	Flemish
South Africa	Netherlands/ Britain	Dutch/ English

2.4 A brief exposition of colonial education

An interesting if not satirical comment by one David Bullard in *The Sunday Times* (14 May 2000) column entitled *Out to Lunch* reads thus:

> The whole point of the British Empire was to share the benefits of civilisation with those who hadn't had the good fortune to win first prize in life's lottery by being born English. Being invaded and made a member of the British Empire was a sort of consolation prize.

Bullard's observation applied to other colonial powers as well. Colonial educators were instructed to school the natives in the ways of the mother countries. The planners of colonial education came from the mother countries. They decided among themselves that the Africans had no valuable education. They therefore planned to ''educate'' the Africans so that they too could speak like the colonial masters, dress like them, develop their eating habits, practice their religion, read and enjoy their literature, and generally behave like them. The language of the mother country was used as the medium of instruction, even for the teaching of African languages themselves. African students were encouraged at all costs to be fluent in the language of the mother country, and to have a relatively good working knowledge of other European languages. There was no similar pressure on the students of other races to learn African languages.

Colonial education ignored all forms of traditional education because these were regarded as ''heathen''. Colonial administrators firmly believed that Africans were not religious. They vehemently discouraged ancestor worship in favour of Christianity. The Christian faith was endorsed in all educational institutions, and that is how these centres of learning fell under the administration of different religious denominations. Parents instilled traditional education and religion while the colonialists instilled Christianity and western values.

From the writings of some African writers it is clear that colonial rule was regarded as a source of destruction to the African people. In protesting against colonial rule, the Xhosa national bard SEK Mqhayi (1993:73) exclaims:

Hay' kodw' iBritan' eNkulu, Yeza nebhotile neBhayibhile;

Yeza nomfundis' exhag' ijoni

[Alas! Great Britain

She brought the liquor bottle and the Bible

With the Minister of Religion hugging a soldier]

Colonialists were widely criticised for practicing double standards, hence Mqhayi's reference to the ''bottle and the Bible''. These double standards, according to many Africans like Mqhayi, were responsible for the half-hearted commitment of Africans to the foreign colonial education and religion. Mqhayi says that people become committed to what they know and understand well. Since colonial education and religion were foreign to Africans, and their own was branded barbaric and atheistic by Christian leaders, traditionalists would be only ''half-committed'' to the new, and colonial education would fail.

Today most Christian converts in Africa have abandoned the African educational and religious practices that their forefathers knew and understood, and they follow a new and foreign religion. It is doubtful whether they are as committed to the foreign education as their forefathers were to the original traditional education.

Children were made to play games which were foreign to them which were also taught in foreign language. Those who were converted to Christianity were also expected to change their African names which had meanings that they understood better and use European names which had no meaning to them at all. All these were aimed at making Africans aspire to become Europeans than successful Africans. There was also a concerted efforts to separate the converted and educated from their communities, for example; if one was educated and converted into Christianity, one was expected to move out of one's own community and go and stay with others who were also Christians and educated so that one would be able to speak English with them.

When one looks at how marriages are conducted today, for instance, in accordance with the foreign religion, and are far removed from the African traditional religion, one is struck by a lack of commitment on the side of the in-laws. Could this be, one wonders, because they do not really understand the foreign culture? Furthermore, there is argument that many Africans living in urban settlements pursue traditional practices in secret, yet publicly claim that such practices are outdated. It is not uncommon for urbanised Africans to criticise ancestor worshiping ceremonies while in the company of other urbanites, yet they escape to their rural homes time and again to conduct the same activities that they criticise. Colonial education together with urbanisation has played a significant role in promoting misunderstanding between people and a resultant decay of morals for people generally, and for youth in particular.

The double standards that are practised by adult urban Africans cause confusion and anxiety in their children. Children who are born of parents who seem embarrassed by some aspects of their background cannot avoid being attracted to groups with wayward behavioural trends where they will be accepted without questions.

AC Jordan's famous novel *Ingqumbo Yeminyanya* (The Wrath of the Ancestors) depicts how colonial education indirectly brings disaster to the Mpondomise nation in the Eastern Cape Province. The main character of this novel, a young prince, Zwelinzima and his supporters, mainly his beloved wife, disregard traditional practices because they have received colonial education. They look down upon the traditionalists, who in turn distance themselves from the prince. The breakdown in communication between the prince and his subjects has disastrous repercussions. The princess becomes mentally deranged, and drowns herself and their son and heir. In trying to save them, the prince's cousin is swept to his death by the strong river current. The prince is so heartbroken that he commits suicide. This scenario brings that kingdom to an end, seeing that the prince, the heir and the closest cousin to the throne are all dead. When the search for the body of the prince's son has proved fruitless, a wise old man called Ngxabane remarks:

> *Nizixhamla nje! Loo mntwana ulande isiko elidala lamaMpondomise. Iinkosi zethu kakade zazingcwatywa emanzini. Yinkosi le. Oomawokhulu basikhumbuza ngalo mntwana – laa masiko sawalahlayo. Kanye le nto yokuba eyele nonina yintando yeminyanya. Iminyanya iqumbile. Ngunina walo mntwana owafika wanyathel'amasiko ngeenyawo. Ke iminyanya ithe ukumbiza kwayo lo mntwana yathanda ukuba makeziswe ngunina kanye, amzise kweli siko ahlekisa ngalo.* (Jordan 1960:16)

[You're just wasting your time! That child has died according to an old Mpondomise custom. Originally, our chiefs were buried in the water. This is a chief. Our forefathers are reminding us through this child – the customs that we abandoned. The fact that he drowned with his mother means that this was permitted by the ancestors. The ancestors are angry. It is this child's mother who came here and trashed our customs. Now the ancestors have chosen her to bring their child to them, to the very custom that she made a mockery of.]

Many lessons taught during the colonial education era were designed to elevate the status of the mother countries and to expose the ''foolishness'' of the Africans. An example of such lessons concerns the well known 1857 Xhosa national suicide. History books of the time reported that this disaster was caused by a witchdoctor's daughter named Nongqawuse who told people that she had met her ancestors near the river. According to her, the ancestors had apparently instructed her to tell people to destroy all their belongings if they wanted to be blessed with much more. The Xhosa people then killed all their livestock, burned their crops and barns. In no time they were reduced to beggars because nothing came of the girl's predictions. Present day historians on the other hand claim that Governor Sir George Grey's reign was threatened by resistant Xhosas who did not want to succumb to colonialism. In order to subordinate them a plan was put into action whereby some people disguised

themselves as ''ancestors'' and then gave the girl the instructions as related above. The two reports of the same event show how education was manipulated by colonial politicians to further their agendas.

Activity 2.3

Think about this:

(a) How best can the present society live with the effects of colonial education?
(b) How successful can the following be: a mature re-appropriation of past and present manifestations of African culture within in spite of oppressive and racist conditions?

DP Moloto one of the foremost Setswana writers in his novel *Motimedi* (The lost one) depicts how colonial education indirectly brings disaster to the African people by making them to look down on their language and cherish the English language.

Moloto reflects on how one's parents and some teachers disregard through ignorance the importance of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the primary schooling of a child. Molatlhegi, the main character, in the novel, encounters serious problems from pupils and parents who believe or were made to believe that sound education could only be obtained through the use of English as a language of teaching and learning. Some parents believe that African languages are inferior and they are therefore not prepared to let their children be taught in African languages.

Moloto employs satire to expose the conflict between the teacher and the parent. The teacher believes that mother tongue forms good foundation in the child's education while the parent believes that English is the language of power and influence. The parents are victims of a system of education which undermined the language and the culture of the indigenous people. Molatlhegi, the teacher, battles in vain to educate the community about the importance of African languages and cultures.

Motheo a pioneer of the English language has been preparing his daughter to master the English language. Unfortunately he does not know the correct pronunciation, spelling and word order. The following sentences show how pathetic the whole exercise has been:

Version 1: De Khad sad on the mad

Version 2: The cat sat on the mat

The above statement by the learner clearly indicates that the learner did not understand the meaning of the words, there was no linking with the learner's experience from home and thus becomes abstract knowledge which results in parrot learning.

Version 1: De han tsu bok wi de ka

Version 2: The hunter shoots the goat with a gun

Version 1: De kats kot a fad rot

Version 2: The cat caught a fat rat

The words in version 1 above indicate confusion, abstract words with no meaning to the learner. The learner was trying to give the message portrayed in version 2. The language used by Motheo as shown in version 1, is a clear indication of memorisation of the word without understanding the meaning.

The following words were used throughout the text to show how little Motheo knew the language he claimed to master:

Version 1:	**Version 2:**
Widow	Windows
Thamets	damage
Thitha	Teacher
Khod	God

Motheo believes that his knowledge of English elevated his position in the society irrespective of how he used the language. He also gave an English name to his daughter; not only because it was required by authorities when applying for a birth certificate, but because he also worshipped the English language and culture. This is prevalent throughout the book where he also addressed his own daughter by code-switching to English:

Version 1: O batla eng my Bouti?
Version 2: What do you want my Beauty

The word Bouti in the above sentence is Motheo's version of Beauty. His endearment name for his lovely daughter is Lof a version of Love. Motheo exposes his ignorance and makes himself an embarrassment to people who have the knowledge. Motheo has already influenced his daughter to undermine her mother tongue. When the teacher sends her back to collect her book at home this is what she says:

Go a bo go ntse go twe re tle go tsaya dikwalo tsa disotho.

It is said that we should come and fetch Sotho books.

The choice of the plural disotho instead of Sesotho indicates perjorative attitude towards Sotho language. The father also says:

Ka rre lesele le le tagwa ke skomfana.

I swear in my father's name that this foreigner is under the influence of liquor.

The words lesele (foreigner) and tagwa (be drunk) indicate how Motheo hates and despises the teacher and everything he stands for. He does not like the teachers ideas of teaching learners in the language of the people. Beauty says:

Ga twe ke go bolele gore Ingdis Tiksnari ga e rutwe mo sekolong e bile a re ke selo.

He also says I should tell you that English dictionary is not taught at school. He even says it is a thing.

From the above statement, it is inferred that Motheo and some parents expected Molatlhegi to teach learners the English dictionary and possibly, let them commit its vocabulary to memory without understanding. Had Molatlhegi aligned himself with Motheo's demand, the learners were going to be just like Motheo, speaking a language like parrots and yet unable to express their thoughts clearly.

It is ironic that Motheo has changed his name to Pillar which is a translation of his Setswana name Motheo but the name is mispronounced as Phila.

From the examples stated above it is very clear that mother tongue instruction is very significant, especially at foundation phase. When learners use a foreign language as a medium of teaching and learning they encounter two problems, namely, the strange language and the new subject material. Permanent damage may result from learning in a foreign medium in the formative stages of learners as it is revealed by Motheo and his daughter's use of English.

The author shows that Motheo is a victim of a system of education advocating a foreign medium in the primary education of learners. The author shows how the South African education system fails the learner to master both the foreign and his own language. The system produces a product of Motheo caliber who does not know either English or an African language.

Moloto continues to show us how the language can be used to achieve political goals rather than its linguistic function, namely, communication from man to man. The author reveals through character dialogue, that certain race groups undermine others through the use of abusive language which creates racial hatred and lack of trust.

Moloto also uses the term, Setshwana (that of black people) instead of accepted term which is, Setswana. He uses language as people would understand it. He is trying to discourage ethnicity and adherence to a particular ethnic language. The author on the other hand in his book, is trying to show that education is controlled by people in power. When the book was written the government of South Africa was white, and it wanted everybody to know and master the language of oppression so that everybody could be able to take instructions from their white masters, the government of the day.

Anglicisation period was about promoting education at all costs. Children were made to play games which were foreign to them and instructed in foreign language. They were expected to change their African names and adopt new European ones because African names were regarded as heathen.

It is for this reason that some black people aspired to be white in colour, for example, by applying skin lighteners in their faces so as to be light in complexion.

There was also a concerted effort to separate the educated from their communities (for example if one was educated, one was expected to move out of Mavunde (rural community) and go and stay at (Tshitasini Tshitereke, Maungani, Tshakhuma, etc) with the learned so that one could speak English with them.

2.5   Bantu education

This system stated that the Bantu must be guided to serve his community in all respects. This type of education stated that there is no place for a ''bantu'' or ''native'' in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors were widely open. A black person at the time, would be subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze. Dr HF Verwoerd, as the Minister of Native Affairs, on 7 June 1954, introduced the system of Bantu Education, a system designed, explicitly and without reservation, to keep black people in South Africa subservient to whites, and to provide them with a vastly inferior education. (http://www.scribd.com/doc/6008415/What-Was-Bantu-Education 28.02.2012)

Bantu education was not good for the black people of South Africa as it:

- introduced Afrikaans as medium of instruction

- was inappropriate to African culture

- prevented Africans from attaining higher levels of education

- reduced educated black Africans into mere servants

http://mspoliticalcommentary.blogspot.com/2010/05/02/opening-pandoras-apartheid-box-part-11.html

Bantu education was still a form of the continuation of colonialism, but more emphasis this time was on Afrikaans. The question of **languages** used as media of instruction was a thorny issue in Bantu education. Afrikaans and English were the only official languages. English had enjoyed a privileged position under the British colonial education. So the officials of Bantu education had to promote Afrikaans and raise it to the same high status that had been enjoyed by English during the colonial regime. Schools were obliged to teach a number of subjects through the medium of Afrikaans, for example

subjects like Agriculture, History and Mathematics, since these were taught in Afrikaans and they were called, Landbou, Geskiedenis and Matesis respectively. Many teachers had received no training in the Afrikaans language, so teaching in Afrikaans was difficult. Very few schools in the black areas had libraries and laboratories. Students in such schools and those who had been having difficulty in mastering science subjects without the use of laboratories, for example, were faced with the extra problem of having to learn those subjects in Afrikaans.

According to the recommendations of the Eiselen Report of 1951, the people of South Africa would best benefit by receiving education that pertained to their different cultures. This recommendation implied a need for different education departments, which were to be structured along racial lines, with different syllabi for Africans, coloureds, Indians and whites.

The chief architects of Bantu education in Dr HF Verwoerd's government believed that different races should be schooled in such a way that people would be kept apart in the job market. Education was to prepare students for professions that were considered ''suitable'' for their race groups. Subjects that would prepare blacks for careers that were considered to be very prestigious, like engineering, for instance, were not readily available in black schools because the training of black teachers in such subjects was grossly inadequate.

The **language problem** became an educational problem, and that educational problem adversely affected the entire South African society before it erupted into the black student riots of 1976.

The hostility of black students to Afrikaans as a language of instruction resulted in the hostility of blacks to Afrikaners in general. Politicians used the language problem in educational institutions to score political points. They painted a grim picture of black students as lacking in restraint or discipline. Attitudes of South Africans and the world in general were dramatically

affected by this language issue. The fact that education was compartmentalised meant that the students outside the affected ''compartment'' had no full understanding of what was going on in the troubled ''compartment''. It was therefore easy for them to blame their black counterparts. They criticised and reacted in anger because they thought that those who laid blame were hypocrites who knew of their problems, but pretended not to.

In order to normalise this volatile situation which destabilised South African education for all the years of the apartheid regime, the present government has had to pay special attention to the language issue. Seeing that language in education contributed greatly to destroying normal relations among people of South Africa, the ANC government had to use language in education again to rebuild those relations. Their proposal to allow a learner to receive education in the language of his/her choice is meant to meet the needs of different learners.

Another effect was to borrow more words from Afrikaans than English. In 1976 the worst came when Afrikaans was supposed to be the super official language. Black people rejected this. Around this period there was an emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement led by, among others, Steve Biko. During this period slogans such as ''Black is Beautiful'' emerged. Blacks were discouraged to use skin lighteners, to be proud of who they are and their rainbow languages. It was during this period that people started to revert back to African names. Children were also given struggle names like Kenyatta, Samora, etc. African-inspired names also were given after their grandparents.

2.6   Democratisation

Then, in 1994, a new era began in South Africa. The country had a democratic government and a brand new constitution. The constitution enshrines plurilingualism: the former language dispensation based on official bilingualism was replaced by official multilingualism. The country today, as we speak, has 11 official languages. Equal rights are entrenched for the 11 languages used by 99% of the South African population. These languages are the two former official languages, English and Afrikaans, and nine African indigenous languages, namely: Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. The constitution prescribes affirmative action for the African indigenous languages that were marginalised in the past: these languages ''must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably''. In order to right the wrongs of the past, the democratic government passed the language policy.

The aims of the new language policy are as follows:

- to promote and recognise exceptional work in the promotion of all official and other South African languages

- to promote and highlight the importance of multilingualism in South Africa

- to enhance the equal use of all official languages

- to raise awareness of the role of languages in general in uniting the people of South Africa
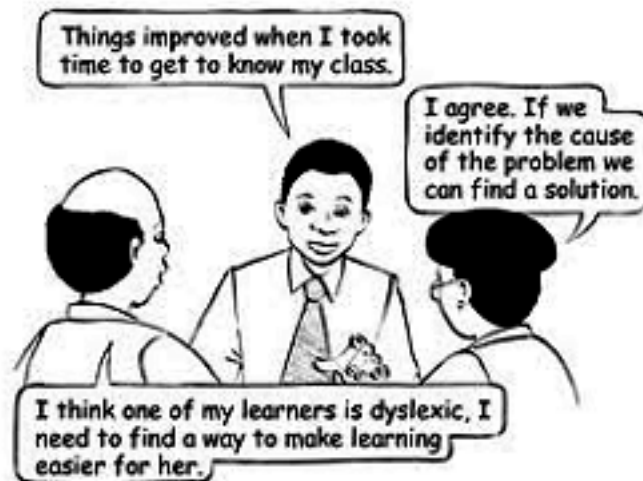
www.ourcivilisation.com/dumb/dumb3.htm

When the democratic government came into power, the question of medium of instruction became a focal point. During colonialism and Bantu education eras English and Afrikaans were media of instruction. The new government, led by African people for the very first time, felt that the language of the majority should be given attention. After deliberations and negotiations the government of South Africa adopted a policy of 11 official languages. These languages officially enjoy equal status. Mbeki opines that:

> We celebrate this achievement as an important part of what we have to do as a people to fashion our national identity, to formulate an image of ourselves, refusing to be defined by others. We have to do this in the context of our unqualified respect for the fact of our unity in diversity, and our common resolve to achieve national reconciliation, national and social cohesion. There is no better time, as President Mbeki would always say in his speeches. The time is now!

''As an important part of this, each of our language/cultural groups should make an effort not only to understand itself, its language, culture and customs, but also the languages, cultures and customs of the other compatriot formations, so that our shared understanding of one another serves as the cement we need to bond our new nation'' (http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at38.txt)

President Thabo Mbeki continued to explain the current state of affairs by saying:

> Quite correctly, many in our country have expressed concern about the place of the African languages in our society. This relates to such important matters as mother-tongue instruction in our schools, the study of African languages at the school and university levels, publication of books and magazines in the African languages, the further development of these languages for use as media of instruction at higher levels of education, multi-lingualism, the use of indigenous languages in our state institutions, in the public discourse and public communication, and so on (http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/200710.22 /text/at38.txt)

There is no doubt that as part of the process of our redefinition of ourselves, we must do everything possible to spread knowledge of literature and other material written or recorded in the African languages since this material began to be published in our country from the beginning of the 19th century. Among other things, this would expose all of us to important lessons about how the traditional value system of ubuntu, and the sense of identity and self-pride among the oppressed, responded to colonial and apartheid domination through the period from at least the 18th to the present century. It is critically important that we open our ears and our minds to what the victims of this domination, the inheritors of the value system of ubuntu, said with regard to all these matters, in their own languages.

(http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at38.txt

The White Paper on Education and Training (March 1995) states that:

> The overall goal of the curriculum is to provide children with opportunities to develop to their full potential as active, responsible and fulfilled citizens who can play a constructive role in a democratic, non-racist and equitable society. The development of the child in totality should lead to a balanced personality so that he/she may be equipped with the necessary life skills.

This is the period most people regard it as the rebirth of the society. Most of the black South Africans start to discover themselves. The concept of Renaissance started to be the talk of the day. It was during the beginning of this era that most parents started to name their new born names of African Languages. It was during this era after the long reign of Apartheid ended in 1994 the new government of South Africa transformed its language policy to include Indigenous Languages. Kwamwangamalu (2006:1) explains this as follows:

> ... with the demise of apartheid in 1994, the new government has adopted a multilingual language policy giving recognition not only to English and Afrikaans but also to nine African languages: Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele, Swati, Tswana, Sotho, Pedi, Venda and Tsonga.

The main objective of this new language policy was to promote the status of the nine African languages, by using them as medium of instruction in all spheres, especially in the education sector. The language-in-education policy also makes the following statements:

- The parents exercise the language choice on behalf of the minor leaner.

- Learners must choose their language of teaching upon admission to a school.

- Where a certain language is not available, learners may request the provincial education department to make provision for instruction in the chosen language.

- School governing bodies must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through the use of more than one language of learning and teaching, or by offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects, or

applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes, or through other means approved by the head of the provincial education department, etc. (http://www.cyberserv.co.za)

Most South African citizens were in favour of the introduction of the eleven languages because they believe that one's first language makes one understand things better. Mmgqwashu (2008:2) quoting Prah (2002) remarks:

> The need for the rehabilitation of African Languages is a simple one. Africans learn best in their own languages, the languages they know from their parents, from home. It is in these languages that they can best create and innovate. Such innovation and creativity are crucial not only for development in an economic sense, but also necessary for the flourishing of democracy at a cultural level; they are languages which successfully engage the imagination of mass society. It is in these languages that culture and histories of African people from time immemorial has been constructed. It is in these languages that knowledge intended for the upliftment of the larger masses of African society can be affected.

Kwamwangamula retorts that despite the government's commitment for multilingualism and the promotion of language rights in all spheres of public life, the education sector does not totally reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. That is why we ask ourselves whether the government's commitment of using indigenous languages in education sector is a reality or an ideological import. Can you believe it's more than ten years since the language policy was enshrined in the country's new constitution, but it seems that not much progress has been made yet in attempts to fully implement the policy, especially with respect to the issue of mother tongue education? Rather the status quo prevails: English and Afrikaans remain the medium of learning in English-medium and Afrikaans medium schools, respectively, much as they were in the apartheid era. The African indigenous languages are offered as medium of learning from first grade to fourth grade in predominantly black schools only.

The debate about the revival of mother tongue as medium of instruction both at home and schools was opened up. Traditional schools were also revived. It was also felt that traditional games such as ''ndode'' or ''umagende'' (five stones or knuckle bones- played by girls tossing them), ''kgati'' (skipping rope) and many others be reintroduced.

Activity 2.4

(a) Identify the factors that led to the creation of the policy of 11 official languages in South Africa.

(b) What has the democratic government of South Africa done to promote African indigenous languages?

(c) Do a survey and visit your local bookstore and check how many books are on the shelves written in African indigenous languages and compare them with the books written in English and Afrikaans respectively. Briefly give your own opinion on what you observed.

(d) How has the language you speak affected your education?

(e) How has the language you speak affected your ability to get a job?

2.7   Conclusion

The Education system in South Africa has evolved over a period of time. This chapter has attempted to trace the role of language and its effect on black South Africans. The traditional cultural education using mother tongue as medium of education had laid a good foundation for creativity and application of knowledge. Language and culture were inculcated from a very early age through folk stories, riddles, idioms and proverbs.

The colonial education disrupted the African system of education. The aim of colonial education was to colonise and convert Africans into Christianity. The education was Eurocentric and undermined all practices of the indigenous cultures. The medium of instruction was English and learners were subjected to appreciate and embrace foreign culture. More emphasis was on the English literature and sensibilities of the English people. Fortunately, Africans did not abandon their languages and cultures and some continued to write literature in their own languages.

Bantu education was another attempt by the white minority government to subjugate black people. The aim of education was to reduce black people to manual labourers and servants who would forever be subservient to their white masters. The introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in 1976 was the last straw. The student revolt of 1976 forced the government to reverse its decision and to revert to English as medium of teaching and learning.

In 1994 South Africa was liberated and the first democratic government was installed. The new political dispensation provided new educational landscape for the country. For the first time in South African history, and the world as a whole, 11 official languages were introduced. The languages of the majority which have been sidelined for many years were now on the centre stage again.

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Study unit 3

Introduction to folklore

Dr N Masuku

Learning outcomes

At the end of this module you should be able to:

- define what folklore is
- classify traditional literature according to various genres
- distinguish the differences between myth, legend and folktale
- give a definition of a proverb, idiom and riddle
- give a few examples of traditional poetry

3.1   Introduction

In African traditional culture, it was the role of the parents to educate their children. The parents played a significant role in the formation of their children's character. They were teachers who were teachers and disciplinarians. There was an intense focus on educating the young in the ways of the ancestors, so that they, in turn, could transmit these ways to their descendants. It was the duty of all parents to love and promote the welfare of children under the watchful eye of the ancestors.

Education happened by word of mouth. Every day of the week, with daily household chores done, the whole family would sit around the fireplace. Older people, especially grandmothers and grandfathers would start narrating folktales. The listeners participated, singing folksongs, clapping their hands and even dancing if the need arose. Instruction was in the mother tongue, which made it easy for learners to grasp the learning material. Through mother tongue instruction these children learnt to establish relationships with others. They also learnt to tell between right and wrong, and to build life concepts.

It is against this background that this study unit will explain the traditional role played by folklore in moulding the character of the child or individual in a particular society. Before we explain the various types of folklores, let us first explain what oral or traditional literature is.

3.2   What is oral literature?

According to Okpewho (1992:1), the topic under discussion may be defined by terms such as **oral literature, orature, traditional literature** and **folklore**. These terms simply imply that this is literature that is ''delivered by word of mouth''. For the purpose of this discussion we will use the term traditional literature. Traditional literature puts emphasis on the fact that this form of literature comes from the past and was handed down from one generation to another. Folk literature identifies creators of this literature as the folk, by which it means the uneducated people mostly in villages or rural communities.

''Oral literature may be defined as those utterances, whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit the artistic characteristics of accurate imagination and ingenious expression'' Okpewho (1992:1). The discussion below will focus on the various types of folklore and the examples from each aspect will be provided.

3.2.1 Characteristic features of traditional literature

In discussing the characteristic features of folklore, it is important to look at issues that are highly relevant to it, such as its definition and aspects that constitute the total performance such as **performer, audience and occasion**.

Folklore is generally defined by scholars such as Okpewho (1992:42), as ''a form of art which is delivered by word of mouth from generation to generation and later reproduced verbatim from memory''. This definition is limited only to the verbal aspect of folklore and excludes other elements such as non-verbal aspects of a performance. Finnegan (1970:15) therefore modifies it when she says that ''in folklore, the bare words cannot be left to speak for themselves'', implying that words alone are not enough in folklore. She furthermore says that folklore is one type of literature characterised by specific features which have to do with performance, transmission and social context. This means that it is in performance that the total art is looked at as it is experienced and transmitted from various contexts such as its social, educational and historical functions.

As mentioned earlier, folklore is dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion. Since it is evident that it is only in performance that the full merit of folklore as an aesthetic event is realised, it is now imperative to look at the elements that constitute the total performance, namely the performer, the audience and the occasion. Various factors can influence the creativity of the oral performer. These include non-verbal resources or features such as facial expressions, body movements, physical gestures and physical appearance, as well as musical instruments. Other resources that can affect the quality of a performance include people known as backing musicians. The use of facial expressions can illustrate different kinds of moods like sadness, fear, happiness and anxiety, while the use of other features may show behaviours of different characters in a story or an act. All these features make the narration more vivid, interesting and convincing. All

the techniques employed by the narrators show that every performer is at liberty to use any style he or she wishes to use in the performance to suit the genre in question.

The audience is the most important and most influential feature in the oral performance. Okpewho (1992:57) emphasises this when he states that ''an oral performance truly exists where there is an audience that compels the respect of the performer and puts the performance on record, whether from memory or from tape''. This means that audience involvement is a very important aspect of folklore, and that if it is removed it renders any oral performance meaningless. Since the audience is directly involved in the performance, it may influence the choice of subject matter, style and even the use of non-verbal resources. Members of the audience can do this by asking questions or by interrupting to correct historical facts, for instance. The audience's behaviour resulting from boredom, such as leaving the performer in action, may affect the performance, leading the performer to cut down the performance.

Like the audience, the occasion is a very important aspect of the oral performance. Without an occasion, a performance may be considered inappropriate for the simple reason that an oral piece is not composed for, but in, performance. This means that the composition of an oral piece takes place in the very act of performing it or is directly involved in the occasion of its actual utterance. Occasions when oral pieces can be composed include weddings, funerals, celebrations of victory and even soothing a baby or lulling the baby to sleep. A poet can compose a praise poem for a chief during the installation ceremony, or a baby-sitter may compose a lullaby for a child who cries.

3.2.2 Aspects of traditional prose

The term ''traditional prose'' is a blanket term used to refer to all types of folk narratives. Traditional prose is divided into streams. We have prose narrative and stylised prose. Examples of prose narratives are myth, legend and folktales. When we refer to stylised prose we refer to idioms, riddles and proverbs. All these were not written down in traditional societies but were handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. A cursory discussion on prose narratives and stylised prose will be provided.

3.3   Classification of prose narratives

3.3.1 Myth

A myth is a narrative dealing with gods, demigods or culture heroes. The myth is concerned with creation of the world, the establishment of the present order, origins of people, tribe or culture trait. Canonici (1996:78) says the following about myths:

> Myths are sacred tales, told as truth and believed as fact; they contain explanations of life phenomena. As for time, mythical events are supposed to have taken place long, long ago. As for place, they are supposed to have

taken place in a world different, or other, than the present one. As for characters: the principal ones are mostly nonhuman, possibly divine; these interact with humans, animals and other natural forces.

3.3.2 Legend

A historical story or narrative that contains a nucleus of historical fact such as the name of a particular character but whose historical existence is now shrouded in mystery, as to be almost mythical or semi-mythical. For this reason, it may also ''be said to be distorted history'' in that the memory of historical fact in it has been distorted and elaborated by various elements derived from myths.

3.3.3 Folktale

A fable is a fictitious or untrue story that features personified animals or natural objects as characters. Fables always end with an explicit moral message. This means that fables are instructive tales that contain moral messages about human social behaviour. The context of a fable is unspecific as to time and space.

3.3.4 Characters in prose narratives

Although most characters in tales are human beings and non-human beings, they differ according to the various subtypes. In myths, characters are human beings and animals with supernatural powers: for instance, human beings, the deity and animals such as the chameleon and millipede. In legends, characters are human beings, usually heroes with supernatural power. In folktales, characters are human beings, non-humans such as reptiles (snakes, lizards, crocodiles etc), inanimate objects such as rivers, logs and trees, and ogres or monsters.

3.3.5 Animal characters

Animals are portrayed as thinking and acting like human beings in a human setting. Big animal characters include lion, elephant, tiger and jackal. Lion: strong, powerful but not particularly bright, king of the animals. Elephant: heavy, ponderous and rather slow. Hyena: brute force, stupid, constantly duped by little quick animals. Leopard: untrustworthy and vicious; often tricked in spite of his cunning.

The big animals are oppressive. They are strong but stupid. The lion, the elephant and more frequently, the hyena are foiled and duped, whose strength and fierceness are no match for the nimble wits of the little hare and the slow, patient wisdom of the tortoise.

The smaller animals include hare, tortoise and weasel. They cheat and defeat the larger and more powerful beasts. They cheat them in a race. They cheat them in a tug of war.

3.3.6 Human characters

Human characters are typically kings, husbands, wives and children. Women are co-wives who clash over one man. There is dishonesty, jealousy, negligence, interference or mere nagging in their behaviour. Husbands are unfaithful to their families and can become irresponsible. They might eat alone during famine but are eventually found out. Parents have an advantage over their children. They decide on the rules to be adhered to, they can rob their children (for instance, of their clothes) but are eventually exposed. Children can be weak, ignorant, ambitious, poor or orphaned; they are, however, wise at times and very helpful. They often come out heroes. They are defended by animals and at times have magical powers that save them, their families or the whole tribe.

Activity 3.1

(a) What do you understand by the term folklore, orature, folk literature or traditional literature?

(b) Give an example of the following from your language:

- Myth
- Legend and a
- Folktale.

(c) What type of characters do we find in folktales?

(d) Do you think characters found in folktales represent reality? Give reasons for your answer.

(e) Mention the characteristic features of folklore.

3.4 Stylised didactic prose

Stylised didactic prose is part of the culture of a people, hence it is an aspect of folklore. Since stylised didactic prose is considered to be an art form, it is rightly classified as a genre of traditional prose comprising **riddles, proverbs** and **idioms**. These subtypes of stylised didactic prose are said to be stylised because they are conveyed in metaphorical language, and didactic because they their aim is to teach. This section will define what a riddle is. The content of both the idiom and the proverb will be discussed. The section will further explain to the social setting of the riddle, proverb and idiom, and to their social and literary value in society.

3.4.1 The riddle

Riddles are so plentiful in African cultures that we find one or more terms for a riddle in each of the nine African languages. In Tsonga a riddle is known as ''ntayili'' or ''xitekatekisani''. In Zulu, it is ''isiphicaphicwano''; ''imfumbe'' or ''impicabadala''; while others speak of ''isiqandelo'' and ''ingqayingqayi'' (Hadebe 1978:2). The Northern Sotho use ''thai'' or ''nyepo'' for a riddle, and the Venda also use ''thai''. On the other hand, the Tswana use

''thamalakwane''; and in Southern Sotho they are called ''dilotho''; and in Xhosa a riddle is an ''iqhina''. Finally the Shona refer to it as ''chirhwe'' (Zezuru), ''chirbwe'' (Karanga) or ''chipri'' (Manyika).

> A riddle is as ''a traditional verbal expression which contains one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition; the referent of the elements is to be guessed'' (Georges & Dundes 1963:113).

In almost all societies, riddling takes place in the evening, indoors, around a fire. Since in most communities we do not find any taboos associated with riddling, we assume that the evening is selected for convenience. At this time the daily chores have been completed or suspended and people can afford to relax or indulge in pastimes. Indeed, if need be, riddles may be propounded at any place, at any time throughout the year. Performers and audience are normally children. However, they may be joined by adults, especially their parents or relatives. It must be emphasised that adults alone seldom, if ever, engage in riddling.

Since riddling is a game, it is to be expected that the audience cannot remain passive. Everyone gets a turn to submit a riddle; usually it is the one who has just solved a riddle who is given an opportunity to ask a question. The result is that those who never succeed in solving a riddle never get a chance of asking one. Of course this may differ from society to society. Secondly, every member of the audience has a right to object if the performer asks a question which is difficult which makes it difficult to guess the answer. Thirdly, members of the audience may help a struggling riddler by reminding him of or giving him the necessary detail.

3.4.2 Classification of a riddle according to form

Riddles can be classified according to two types: the long and the simple riddle. Others distinguish three types: the simple, the problem and the song riddle (Doke, 1947:117–120). Following Hadebe (1978:69–78), we shall divide the riddles into four groups: the simple riddle, the long riddle, the simple problem riddle, and the argumentative problem riddle or conundrum.

The simple riddle. The precedent of this type of a riddle consists of a phrase or simple sentence with only one predicate. Usually its sequent is a single word or a short phrase, for instance

> Tope e paqang haholo (Southern Sotho)
>
> (A girl who gives vigorously)
>
> **Answer**: Pitsa ha e bela (A pot on the boil)
>
> Ke swa ke sutela (Northern Sotho)
>
> (I burnt and kept on drawing nearer)
>
> **Answer**: Masekgo (Hearth-stones)
>
> Tukara tunoburana (Shona)
>
> (Wild beasts poke one another)
>
> **Answer**: Minzwa (Thorns)

3.4.3 The long riddle

The precedent of this type of riddle is normally a long complex sentence with two or more clauses. It as an extended metaphor which gives a detailed hint about the sequence in order to clarify it. What is more, the sequence to this type of a riddle is not normally a single word but a sentence in which the sequent is motivated.

(i)   Nginiphicaphica ngenkunzi yami ebomvu, ehlaba emnyama, emmyama ihlabe emhlophe yeqe uthango (isiZulu).

(I puzzle you by my red bull that gores a black bull; the black one gores a white bull; and the white one jumps the fence).

Inkunzi ebomvu umlilo kanti emnyama yibhodwe kanti emhlophe yiphalishi elixhaphazelayo.

(The red bull is the fire; the black one is the pot (on fire) and the white bull is the spluttering porridge).

3.4.4 The simple problem riddle

Hadebe (1978:75) describes this riddle as one which demands an answer without elaborating on or arguing about it. He cites the following example:

Kuyiqiniso yini ukuthi uma imbila uyibambe ngomsila aphuma onke amazinyo ayo? (isiZulu)

Sequent: Imbila ayinawo umsila

(Is it true that if you catch a rock-rabbit by the tail all its teeth fall out?)

Sequent: The rock-rabbit has no tail

3.4.5 The argumentative problem riddle

This is a type of story riddle in which a set of data is presented. From these, the audience must debate and argue until they arrive at a solution to the problem. A typical example is found in Guma (1967:46–47):

(a)   Monna ya tsamayang le nkwe, podi le letsepa. Nkwe e ja podi, podi e ja letsepa. Ba fihla nokeng eo ba tshwanelang ho e tshela. Ho na le sekepenyana se lekaneng batho ba babedi feela ka nako. Ba tla tshela jwang? (Southern Sotho)

(A man is travelling with a leopard, goat and the plume and the ear of a sweet reed. The leopard eats a goat: the goat eats sweet reed. They come to a river which they have to cross. There is a little boat that is big enough for two people only at a time. How will they cross?)

Solution

(ii)   Monna a tla nka podi a tshele le yona, a fihle a e siye ka nqane. A kgutle le sekepe a fihle a nke nkwe a e tshedise. Ebe a kgutla le podi; a fihla a e

theola; a nke letsepa a le tshedisetse ka ho nkwe. A kgutle, a tlo lata podi, a fihle a theohe le yona ka kwana, ba tsamaye.

(The man will take the goat, cross with it and leave it on the opposite bank. He returns with the boat, takes the leopard and ferries it across. He returns with the goat and deposits it on the opposite bank. Then he takes the sweet reed and ferries it across to the leopard. He returns alone to fetch the goat. They both alight on the opposite bank and go.)

The above discussion has focused on the definition of a riddle, its structure and the classification of riddles. Our next discussion will be on the proverb and the idiom.

3.5   The proverb

3.5.1   The definition of a proverb

Mieder (1993:5) defines the proverb as follows: ''A proverb is a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation''.

In the same vein, Norrick (1985:31) has this to say about the proverb: ''Proverbs are consistently described as self-contained, pithy, traditional expressions with didactic content and fixed poetic form''. What comes out loud and clear about the proverb in these definitions are the following:

It expresses a general truth.

Its wording is compact and forceful.

It is figurative.

It enjoys general acceptance in the culture group.

3.5.2 Use and function of proverbs

Proverbs are mainly used to comment on social situations. A social situation is that situation where a human being interacts with another human being. Such interaction may take place at home, in the work situation, in court or anywhere else. A speaker may comment positively or negatively on a situation, depending on his evaluation or assessment of all the relevant facts pertaining to it. Such a comment may serve to warn, encourage, discourage, orient, recommend a course of action, or give advice to an individual. Proverbs also serve a didactic function as well as the perpetuation of the social system.

Besides the functions mentioned above, proverbs are used to promote speech. They serve as an effective and picturesque way of putting ideas across.

Activity 3.2

(a) Give a definition of a proverb.
(b) Give functions of a proverb.
(c) Which proverbs would you use in your languages:

   (i) when there is a death. Give three examples.
  (ii) to warn a person who refuses to heed advise. Give two examples.
 (iii) to encourage a person to do better. Give two examples.
 (iv) to portray proverbs that pertains to marriage.
  (v) to portray proverbs that pertain to the raising of children.

3.6 Idioms

3.6.1 The definition of an idiom

Guma (1967:66) says this about an idiom: ''Idioms are characteristic indigenous expressions, whose meanings cannot be ordinarily deduced or inferred from a knowledge of the individual words that make them up. They are native to a language, and have the stylistic effect of giving it a typical native.''

The idiom is a fixed structural form or a fixed phrasal pattern of words which go together, peculiar to the genius of a language as regards grammatical structure, accepted usage, and the meaning of which cannot be logically or literally ascertained from its component part (Ntsanwisi, 1967).

3.6.2 Form of the idiom

An outstanding feature of an idiom is that it is a phrase and does not have a fixed and regular form to which it adheres at all times.

3.6.3 Function of idioms

Idioms are a linguistic form used to add colour to speech. In so doing, they render linguistic expression more effective. Note that you should be able to compare proverbs and idioms with regard to their various aspects, for example, form, content and use. For example

Activity 3.3

(a) What are the differences between a proverb and an idiom.
(b) Give examples of three idioms in your own language.
(c) Use the idioms named in (b) above, in a sentence to show your understanding of their meaning.

3.7   Traditional poetry

The discussion of the definition of poetry refers to poetry as a rhythmical form of words which express the imaginative, emotional and intellectual experience of the writer in a way that creates a similar experience in the mind of the reader or listener. This utterances show that the poet uses a combination of word-symbols to convey his ideas. Oral poetry is transmitted orally rather than written means. In contrast to written poetry, its distribution, composition or performance is by word of mouth and not through reliance on the written or printed word.

Praises are chanted or recited by elderly people, although younger people also chant them. Parents or elderly people chant praises at ritual ceremonies. They also chant them when another member of the tribe or family has done well in serving the community or family. When two or even more people meet after a long period, they greet and welcome each other by chanting praises or praise names. At village fights, fighters are praised according to their kind of names by the onlookers. In the villages, when herd boys come home with cattle, goats, sheep and donkeys, even horses, they shout and whistle the praise names of the livestock either appreciating or pitying the animals or their owners. Traditional poetry has various examples. These are the praises of kings or queens, clan praises, lullabies, address names, war songs, and working songs. A few examples of traditional poetry will be discussed.

3.7.1   Clan praises

A clan is a section of a tribe, a group of families which share a common ancestor. Marivate (1979:31) defines a clan as follows: ''The families are linked by patrilineal ties between their male heads and can be regarded as one large family''. The founder of a clan is usually their king or chief, whose surname they share. The surname is his personal name and can have a praise behind it, for instance Nkuna (Tsonga), Buthelezi (Zulu), Mukwevho (Venda) or Bakali (Lemba in Venda). Many people who share an original surname have other surnames. The reason is that in the past there were wars, quarrels, immigrations and so forth which led to the disintegration of the clan and as some members of the clan left, they decided to use their personal names as surnames. Marivate (1978:32) writes that nearly every clan name (xivongo in Tsonga, isibongo in Zulu and isiduko in Xhosa isibongo) has a history which its members should master. If he is asked to identify himself, then he should be able to provide the patrilineal links from his name to his immediate surname and all the others before it until the clan name. For instance, he indicates that if Muhlari were asked to identify himself, he would say:

''Hi mina Muhlari wa Xoxoloko wa Kulaleni wa Rinono wa Nkuna.''

(I am Muhlari (son) of Xoxoloko of Kulaleni of Rinono of Nkuna)

3.7.2 Address name

Most clan names have an address name, called xithopo in Tsonga and isithakazelo in Zulu. This is said to be a formula of honour attached to the clan

name. Marivate (1978:34) holds that if a Xipalana were to do good to his visitors, they would shout ''Dzungeni!'' in admiration, to which Xipalana or any of his clan members would respond by saying 'Sibongo sihle!' (a good clan name). Students should do research on address names in other languages.

3.7.3 Praise poems

Praise poems were originally oral compositions about chiefs and warriors. Their main purpose was to praise these chiefs and heroes for deeds of bravery they displayed in war. So, most of the praise poems were inspired by war. Individual chiefs composed their own praise poems, but in some cases a seroki, mmoki, sereti or imbongi/ inyosi (praise singer) composed such poems. Before the difaqane wars, young warriors had to prove their manhood by undertaking cattle-raiding, which usually sparked off fierce fighting. After such fights, the party which won composed praise poems to celebrate its victory.

Praise poems are referred to by different terms in the seven African languages of southern Africa. In Tswana they are known as ''maboko'' (*leboko* in the singular), in Northern Sotho they are ''direto'' (sereto in the singular), in Southern Sotho they are ''dithoko'' (thoko in the singular), in Zulu and Xhosa ''izibongo'' (sibongo in the singular), in Tsonga ''swiphato'' (xiphato in the singular) and ''zwikhodo'' (tshikhodo in the singular) in Venda. Scholars of traditional literature use different terms to describe praise poetry. Finnegan (1970) identifies three types: poetry and patronage; panegyrics and special purpose poetry. Panegyric poetry is synonymous with praise poetry and eulogises the exploits of kings, chiefs or warriors in battles against the enemy. Kunene (1971) prefers the term heroic poetry to praise poetry. He argues that the two terms emphasise two completely different, but related, things: heroic can be used for ''both the deeds of the hero'' (heroic deeds) and the lines composed for him as a result (heroic poem)! But in essence heroic poetry is as suitable a term for praise poetry as panegyric poetry.

3.7.4 Classification

Praise poems (in Sotho and Nguni) are classified as follows:

(a) Praise poems for chiefs, heroes or great warriors who were involved in wars among the various Nguni and Sotho tribes, as well as between the Boers and British people in the 18th and 19th centuries.

(b) Praise poems for outstanding leaders who distinguished themselves in academic or other spheres in their communities refers to such poems as *dithoko tsa bahlalefi* (praises of wise men).

(c) Praise poems for animals, birds, foodstuffs, divination, rainmaking and medicine.

(d) Praises of boy-initiates.

3.7.5 Occasions of delivery

Praise poems were usually chanted at gatherings before such gatherings commenced. At times they were also chanted after these gatherings. Praise poems were further chanted at work parties after the people had laboured on the chief's lands.

It was customary for the ''seroki/imbongi'' to rise early in the morning and walk to the chief's court, chanting praises about him. When one chief visited another, his ''seroki/imbongi'', who usually accompanied him, said praises to announce their arrival

3.7.6 Functions

Praise names are used by various people at various places and occasions and for various purposes. Their functions therefore depend on the context in which they are used. Some of these functions are linguistic, social, historical or didactic. It is clear from the praise names that some words are found in their sister languages, and this indicates a close affinity between such languages. Some praise names are used as proverbs and others abound in symbolism, for instance in metaphors. Most of these are based on the striking characteristics found in wild animals, beasts, birds etc. Also, praise names are chanted during special occasions to pledge solidarity, to encourage others, to praise and to honor. Some praise names praise historical figures and their places of origin, and also reflect on the philosophy of the people. In conclusion, praise names stimulate one's mind, teach and delight.

3.8   Conclusion

This study unit has given you an overview of the various aspects of folklore. The study unit has briefly discussed folktales, proverbs, idioms, riddles and praise poetry. It was mentioned that traditional literature can be defined in various terms. Some prefer folklore, whereas some refer to it as traditional literature or orature. It was also mentioned that traditional literature is divided into traditional prose and traditional poetry. The features of traditional prose and poetry have been cursorily discussed. At level 2, an in depth discussion of the above genres will be provided. More will be said about the structure of the proverb, the structure of traditional poetry and the relevance of folklore in the 21st century.

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Study unit 4

Introduction to modern literature

Ms KY Ladzani and Ms SR Mdluli

4.1   Introduction

Learning outcomes

After you have worked through Unit 4 you will able to:

- understand and appreciate literature
- differentiate different types of modern literature
- know and understand the characteristics or elements of a novel, short story, essay, poetry and drama.

The purpose of this study unit is to:

- introduce you to modern literature; prose (novel, short story and essays), drama and poetry
- introduce poetry as a genre of modern literature
- point out key elements of modern poetry
- describe drama as a genre of modern literature
- discuss key elements of drama

The first questions that you might be asking yourself are the following:

- What is literature?
- What is modern literature?
- Why do we read it?
- Why is literature important?
- Where do authors get their inspiration to write from?

What is literature?

Literature is a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, ''literature'' is used to describe anything from creative writing to

more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction (Abrams, MH [1981], Cohen, BB [1973], Mayhead, R [1955]).

What is modern literature?

Modern literature is literature that explains things, or shows things, in a more recent light. For example, where there used to be very defined social classes they have become more loose over the years and the less defined classes would be discussed. Modern literature is defined as writing about the world from the 16th century until now. www.ask.com/answers

Why do we read literature?

Literature represents a language or a people: culture and tradition. But, literature is more important than just a historical or cultural artifact. Literature introduces us to new worlds of experience. We learn about books and literature; we enjoy the comedies and the tragedies of poems, stories, and plays; and we may even grow and evolve through our literary journey with books. Ultimately, we may discover meaning in literature by looking at what the author says and how he/she says it. We may interpret the author's message. In our situation (academic circles), this decoding of the text is often carried out through the use of literary theory, using for instance a mythological, sociological, psychological, historical, or other approach.

Why is literature important?

Literature is important to us because it speaks to us, it is universal and it affects us. Even when it is ugly, literature is beautiful.

Where do authors get their inspiration to write from?

Authors are inspired by what they experience in their everyday lives. You know very well that our lives revolve around education, religion, politics, health, agriculture, the environment, history, geography, socio-cultural issues, sports, arts recreation, governments, human relations, wars and many others. It is from these issues that authors get their inspiration to write the literature you so much enjoy.

As mentioned above, modern literature is divided into the following three categories:

- prose
- drama; and
- poetry

4.2 Prose

Prose is divided into three types: **the novel**, **short story** and **essay**. Even though these types of prose are similar in many respects, each has its own characteristics which differ from those of the others. It is important for modern prose students to know these characteristics.

4.2.1 The novel

The novel falls under the category of literature known as fiction. That means the novel is an art form which springs from the imagination. It also means the fact that, it is a form of art that has something more to it than just a story.

4.2.1.1 Introduction

Various definitions of a novel by various scholars exist. Lever (1961:16) when defining a novel says:

> A novel is a form of written prose narrative of considerable length involving the reader in an imagined real world which is new because it has been created by the author.

Whereas Freedman (1969:59) states:

> Novels are usually associated with storytelling: the reader looks for characters with whom he can identify, for action in which he may become engaged, or for ideas and moral choices he may see dramatised.

You have probably read novels and dramas by various authors in your life. When reading these types of literary works, did you notice the style in which they were written?

When we look at the writing styles of a drama and a novel we can see that they are different. The difference lies on the structure. A novel is divided into chapters and is distinguished by the presence of the narrator of the events. The narration of events is similar to that of folktales. In folktales there is one narrator and the listeners. It is the same in a novel; there is one narrator who narrates the story to the readers. In both forms of literature, the novel and the folktale, the narrator can use other characters to bring out the message of the story.

The novel is only one of many possible prose narrative forms. It shares with other narratives, like the epic and the romance, two basic characteristics: a story and a story-teller. The epic tells a traditional story and is an amalgam of myth, history, and fiction. Its heroes are gods and goddesses and extraordinary men and women. The romance also tells stories of larger-than-life characters. It emphasises adventure and often involves a quest for an ideal or the pursuit of an enemy. The events seem to project in symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors of the human mind and are, therefore, analogous to the materials of dream, myth, and ritual. Although this is true of some novels as

well, what distinguishes the novel from the romance is its realistic treatment of life and manners. Its heroes are men and women like us. www.academic. brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/csi6/novel

The novel is longer than other types of prose narrative. But this does not mean that the novel is a long short story. Maxwell-Mahon (1984:11) emphasises the above statement by saying;

> The novel is not an extended short story, nor is it a collection of short stories with a multiplicity of characters and a diversity of incidents.

What Maxwell-Mahon means is that a novel is not made up of a number of short stories, with unrelated events. The novel is made up of logical action, with the main characters remaining constant from the beginning to the end.

4.2.2 Types of the novels

There are several types of novels. www.britannica.com identifies the following types of novels, but for the purpose of our module, we are not going to discuss these in detail.

Historical novel, picaresque novel, sentimental novel, sociological novel, political novel, documentary novel, feminist novel, regional novel, confessional novel, comic novel, gothic novel, psychological novel, the novel of manners, epistolary novel, pastoral novel, apprenticeship novel, roman a' clef novel, anti-novel novel, cult, or coterie, novels novel, detective, mystery, thriller novel, western novel, fantasy and prophesy novel, proletarian novel, etc.

Activity 4.1

In your study groups or alone as an individual, please go and do research about the types of the novels above and briefly discuss or explain each in full and if you know any other novel in your specific language you can also give it as an example. You can check with others, your lecturers, literary books, in the internet, encyclopaedias and other literary dictionaries.

4.2.3 Elements of a novel

A good novel needs to have certain characteristics or elements. The following are the basic elements that one looks at when one is analysing a novel.

4.2.3.1 Plot

There are many definitions of a plot, but the plot is essentially the story or the events that make up what the novel is about. Some scholars describe the plot as the movement in a story toward the resolution.

Brooks and Warren (1959:69) describe a plot as;

> An author's arrangement of the events in a narrative for a planned effect, as distinguished story or story line, which retains the order in which the events occurred.

Maxwell-Mahon (1984:32) when talking about the plot has this to say:

> The term comes from a French word 'complot' meaning a conspiracy. To conspire against something involves planning actions to achieve a certain purpose, good or bad. Conspirators discuss what they each will do and when and what they will do will take place. So cause and effect are essential for a plot.

> The question that you might be asking about a plot is: how can we determine that this is a good plot. A plot can be determined by you as reader when you realise that you do not want to stop reading your novel. By doing this, you will be indicating that you are reading a good story. When a series of events in a story/novel provide conflict within a story/novel, that part is called a plot.

There are four parts that distinguish the plot:

(i) Exposition

The exposition is the author's providing of some background information to the audience about the plot, characters' histories, setting, and theme. According to Maxwell-Mahon (1984:31) our exposition of life is a period of childhood, when we receive our first sensory impressions from which thoughts are formed. In a story, the author presents the main characters, their problems and the milieu and the beginning of the conflict. The reader/audience comes across these things for the first time.

(ii) Rising action/ complication

Rising action is the series of events that lead to the climax of the story, usually the conflicts or struggles of the protagonist. Maxwell-Mahon (1984:16) states that:

> The conflict may exist within the main character. He could be plunged into doubts and uncertainties by conflicting ideas and beliefs; on the other hand, the conflict might be externalised in the relationships between various characters in the novel.

Maxwell-Mahon (1984:32) when explaining complication in real life says that it comes when we grow older. Life becomes complex as scenes change. Our sensory and intellectual responses grow and we are challenged to take decisions. Often if not always in a story, conflict starts to develop as characters fall into groups. As the story continues, all actions initiated by the characters carry the theme which is piloted by the conflict, and the author here uses the plot to reveal his characters.

(iii) Climax

Climax is the turning point in the story, which in turn leads to the resolution. According to Cohen (1973: 69):

> A climax in a story may be a moment of disaster, of joyous discovery or of sober recognition of a truth previously unknown to the character.

Maxwell-Mahon (1984:32) in his approach, says that the climax is our stage of adulthood, which brings with it a number of personal crises or climatic movements that require decisions and resolutions in order that we can go on living meaningfully. In a novel/story, this is the point of resolution. The main character is faced with major decisions and challenges. It is a moment of crisis. In certain stories, we read about deaths while in others we read about happiness. Abrams (1971:139) defines climax as the crisis, or turning point

(iv) Denouement

According to Maxwell-Mahon's approach, this is the last act of our life; death brings down the curtain. In a novel/story, this is the final scene. The protagonist ends in success or failure. All the misunderstandings are cleared and the plots unraveled. Some scholars define denouement as the final outcome of the main complication in a novel/story.

4.2.3.2 Theme

Theme is the message the author wishes to convey or the lesson he/she wants the reader to learn. Theme is revealed through the values of characters when confronting obstacles and resolving conflict in pursuit of their goal. It can be considered the foundation and purpose of the novel. Without purpose, the story becomes trivial. Perrine (1959:118) defines a theme as:

> The central and unifying concept of a story it must account for all major details of the story The theme must not rely upon supposed facts, facts not actually stated or clearly implied by the story. Theme must exist inside, not outside the story. It must be based on the data of the story itself, not on assumptions supplied from our own experience.

Mafela (1996:230) observes that:

> ... the theme can be defined as a meaningful central idea, whose main function is to unify all elements in a story and which ultimately result in generalizations about life and experience.

In short, a theme is the main idea that the author expresses or the central topic addressed in a story. Though many authors when writing their novels they cannot portray one main theme, and when reading their works you find numerous themes spread throughout the text. At this stage we do not expect you to analyse any novel, instead this will only be done in level two.

Activity 4.2

In your study groups or alone as an individual, look at the novel that you have read in your previous grade and check if the author was able to portray the theme or if there are numerous themes in that novel. By doing this you will be preparing yourself for level two.

4.2.3.3 Characterisation

Characters in a story/novel are not real people, but are made to live a life like real people. Since they are made to live a life like real people whatever they do should have a motivation. Scholes et al (1978:18) says:

> The motivation of characters, the workings of conscience and consciousness, have been the focal point of most novels and short stories.

Some scholars when describing characters say, ''characters can be fictional or based on real, historical entities. It can be human, supernatural, mythical, divine, animal or personifications of an abstraction''. This means that as we read to understand characters, we should check their actions, against ours. In real life, we come across hardliners, snobs, boring, serious and amusing people, and in the same light, we should expect to meet such in literature. Some scholars when describing characters they say, characters in a novel are realistic and have full human attributes. A character is one of the most important of the novel, because it is through them that the author tells the story.

4.2.3.3.1 Character depiction/portrayal

One of the best things about being an author is introducing his/her characters to his/her audience/readers. Characters in a novel can be depicted through the following techniques:

(i) Name giving technique

It is very important for an author to choose the name which is very appropriate. There are also aspects that when naming the characters the author should look at they are the following:

- Make the name age-appropriate do not choose a character name that is not age-appropriate.

- Choose a name which has a meaning.

- When writing your novel ovoid loaded names (celebrity or well known people in your area) since it is very sensitive.

Authors often give their characters names that have significance in the story. Choosing a name by meaning could reflect major personality traits, or the character's role in the story.

(ii) Expository technique

This is the technique that many authors use when depicting characters. Here, the author provides some background information about the character. According to Wikipedia website, ''exposition is a type of oral or written discourse that is used to explain, describe, give information or inform on what is being discussed it tells audience/readers about the information in the selection.''

(iii) Dramatic technique

This is where the author allows his characters to talk or to react to various situations in the novel. He does not describe their actions and manners. The author gives the characters chance to reveal their nature through speech.

(iv) Character revealed by other characters

This is where other characters in the text talk about the main character. They gossip about him/her without knowing. Sometimes they go to an extent of giving him a nickname.

4.2.3.3.2 Types of characters

There are different types of characters in a novel. There are main characters and ordinary characters.

(i) Protagonist

The protagonist is the main character in a story/novel, drama or any other literary work. The protagonist is the character around whom the entire plot of the story revolves. According to Abhijit Naik in www.buzzle.com:

> The term ''protagonist'' is derived from ''protagonists'' a Greek word meaning one who plays the first part or the chief actor. While the protagonist is a good guy in most of the stories, he can be a bad guy (or an anti-hero) as well. If the protagonist is a hero, the audience is expected to share empathy with him and this has to be kept in mind when writing his character. If the protagonist is an anti-hero the audience will not have sympathy for him and therefore the character has to be gripping enough to keep the audience interested.
>
> The protagonist may not achieve his goal, but by pursuing it, he moves the plot forward. He also undergoes character development during the course of the story.

(ii) Antagonist

The antagonist is a character that represents opposition which the protagonist is expected to stand up against. In other words he is the opponent who always

opposes the main character of the story. In a novel this is the character that introduces the problem and triggers conflict. He is not always a person, sometimes the antagonist can be anything that opposes the main character. According to Abhijit Naik in www.buzzle.com:

> An antagonist does not need to be evel or even malicious, but he needs to be a suitable impediment for the protagonist in order to generate high stakes of conflict within the story.

(iii) Foil

Abhijit Naik in www.buzzle.com describes foil as follows:

> The foil is the protagonist's counterpart, who helps the story generate additional dramatic or comic tension. While the antagonist is directly opposed to the protagonist's aims, the foil serves as more of contrast to the protagonist's personality.

> Often, the foil brings out the protagonist's lighter side, or causes the protagonist to think about the story's problems in a new way.

(iv) Minor characters/Stock characters

Most stories and novels have roles for minor characters, which can be quickly characterised and made familiar to the audiences of their era. These characters do not develop dramatically to the extent the protagonist does, but perform more limited roles to help advance the story.

4.2.3.4 Point of view

According to Hess (1978:155), point of view is important for several reasons: (1) It determines what will be noticed and what will not, what will be considered important and unimportant. (2) It determines the reader's relation to the story, how involved the character will become, how must it be inferred. (3) It determines the tone of the story. (4) It determines the writer's closeness to the subject. Is the author personal or impersonal, involved or uninvolved? (5) It determines how much the author can interpret for the reader.

In a novel point of view is the related experience of the narrator. Sometimes narration occurs from the first person, second person or third persons point of view.

4.2.3.5 Setting

Setting is the place and time where the action is taking place. Setting must be connected with the characters. We do not expect characters that do not match the setting portrayed in the story. For example, we cannot expect a setting in Limpopo Province in a novel that is talking about people travelling to work in a Gautrain or an author narrating about the youth of 1925 listening and dancing to Kwaito music. Instead we expect today's youth doing the above.

It is important to make sure that the novel caters for the following:

Time and place.

Activity 4.3

(i) In your study groups or alone as an individual, please go and do research from the books that you have read (novels) and choose one that the author has portrayed the setting in an excellent manner and discuss it among yourselves.

(ii) Did the author of the book you chose manage to satisfy time and place?

4.2.3.6 Conflict

Conflict is the heart of any plot. The conflict can be between the protagonist and another character, the antagonist; between the protagonist and nature; or the protagonist and the society. Sometimes the conflict can be internal or external.

Scott and Modden (1968:6) when describing a conflict says that:

> ... (a) conflict simply means that a story brings together two opposing forces, which we call a protagonist and an antagonist, and then develops and resolves the struggle between the two forces.

4.2.3.7 Language and style

Middleton Murray (1976:65) when describing language and style say that:

> Style is a quality of language which communicates precisely, emotions or thoughts, peculiar to the author.

Style is not so much what is written, but how it is written and interpreted. **Style** in a novel refers to language conventions used to construct the story. A novel writer may manipulate diction, sentence structure, phrasing, dialogue, and other aspects of language to create style or mood. The communicative effect created by the author's style is sometimes referred to as the story's voice. Every writer has his or her own unique style, or voice (Provost 1988:8). Style is sometimes listed as one of the fundamental elements of a novel.

Style is kind of like the techniques used by the author. It could be to reinforce something etc, but it nearly always has an impact on the reader due to the technique used.

4.2.3.8 Dialogue

Writing effective dialogue is often what distinguishes the professional writer from the not quite. This is no surprise because dialogue is probably the most difficult novel element to master. And everything hinges upon it, if your dialogue fails, so will your story. (Findingfatherhood.com)

Dialogue plays a pivotal function in literature, displaying characters' personalities and moving a plot forward. Dialogue should also be well organised.

(http://www.ehow.com/how_8628379_cite-dialogue-novel.html# ixzz1nEGIR4d7)

Dialogue in the novel must do one of the following:

Establish the tone or mood, provide exposition or back story, reveal character and motivation, create immediacy and intimacy (build reader empathy), move the plot forward and/or increase its pace, create or add to existing conflict, remind the reader of things they may have forgotten, foreshadow. (http://www.ehow.com/how 8628379cite-dialogue-novel. html#ixzz1nEgir4d7)

4.3   Short story

This is a story which is short. According to Finlayson, R et al (1980:133):

It was only in the 19th century that the short story was identified from other types of stories. In 1842 Edgar Allan Poe formulated a few principles which govern a short story. In his view a short story should be read and completed within an hour so that a reader can finish without being interrupted.

4.3.1 Introduction

According to Wikipedia website, ''a short story is a work of fiction that is usually written in prose, often in narrative form.'' This means that a short story is a short work of fiction.

4.3.2 Types of Short stories

The following are the types of short stories:

Ancient tales, fantasy, humor, satire, education story, history, biography, local color, and so forth.

Activity 4.4

We hope that in your previous grades you did learn about short stories. On your own, try to remember everything that you learnt about this genre, and write it down in your book which you use when studying. This will serve as pre-knowledge.

4.3.3 Elements of the short story

4.3.3.1 Plot

In a short story a plot is how the author arranges events to develop his basic idea. It is the sequence of events in a short story. The author before writing his short story must first plan it so that it can have logical series of events having a beginning, middle and end. It is supposed to have one plot so that it can be read in one sitting. Plot has got five essential parts which are the following:

(i) Introduction

This is the beginning of the story where characters and setting are revealed.

(ii) Rising action

This is where the events in the story become complicated and the conflict in the story is revealed.

(iii) Climax

This is the highest point of interest and the turning point of the story. Here the audience/readers wonders what will happen next; will the conflict be resolved or not?

(iv) Falling action

The events and complications begin to resolve themselves. The audience/ readers know what will happen next and if the conflict will resolved or not.

(v) Denouement

This is the final outcome or untangling of events in the story.

4.3.3.2 Theme

The theme is the central idea expressed directly or indirectly in a short story. The theme answers the question, ''What did you learn about this short story?'' In most short stories you will find that the meaning can be implied, explicitly suggested or embodied in the story.

You might be asking yourselves how can we identify a theme in a short story? Sometimes the author crafts a story with the central idea, in which the theme is easy to identify and understand, such as love, education, hatred, death, technology, etc.

Often authors craft stories in which the theme is implied, not easily identified. This means that the theme can often be understood in the plot of the story through the characters of the story and also by understanding the conflict. Readers must analyse a story in order to determine its theme.

4.3.3.3 Conflict

Conflict is the struggle of opposing forces in a story. It is what creates the drama and action that moves the story from beginning to conclusion. Every story has conflict; without conflict, there is no story.

http://www.ehow.com/facts_5949306_definition-conflict-story.html# ixzz1nHey68rr

Some define conflict as a struggle between two people or things in a short story. The main character is usually on one side of the central conflict. On the other side, the main character may struggle against another important character, against nature, against society, or even against something inside himself or herself (feelings, emotions, illness, etc). A struggle that the character might have with the force outside one's self is called External conflict, whereas a struggle within one's self, where a person must make some decisions, overcome pain, resist an urge, etc, is called Internal conflict.

4.3.3.4 Characters

A character is a person, or sometimes even an animal, who takes part in the action of a short story or other literary work. In a short story like other prose narratives there is the main character called the protagonist who is introduced in the first paragraph of the short story and is faced with the problem from the beginning. There is also the antagonist is the principal character in opposition to the protagonist or hero of a narrative.

Characterisation plays a very important role in short stories. It is necessary to study how characters are revealed while studying characterisation as an art. Often characters are revealed to audience/readers through: description, dialogue, thoughts and feelings, actions and reactions, imagery and symbols.

4.3.3.5 Setting

Setting refers to the time and place that the event(s) in the story takes place. Though in a short story we do not expect the author to portray events happening in different places since the short story is short and is expected to be read in one sitting.

Go back in the previous pages and read about setting which is under the novel.

4.3.3.6 Point of view

This is an angle from which the story is told.

4.4 Essay

An essay is a short literary composition on a single subject, usually presenting the personal view of the author.

4.4.1 Introduction

An essay is a piece of writing which is often written from an author's personal point of view. Some define the essay as a ''prose composition with a focused subject of discussion'' or a ''Long, systematic discourse''. Abrams (1981:55) when defining the essay says it is:

> A brief composition in prose that undertakes to discuss a matter, express a point of view, or persuade us to accept a thesis on any subject whatever.

4.4.2 Types of essays

We believe that in your previous years of studying you did learn about the types of essays. The following are the types of essays:

> Expository essay, persuasive essay, informal essay, argumentative essay, narrative essay, research essay, descriptive essay, cause and effect essay, compare and contrast essay, observation essay, reflective essay, etc.

4.4.3 Elements of an essay

4.4.3.1 Topic

The topic of an essay is what the author wants to talk about with his audience/readers. All the events in an essay revolve around it.

4.4.3.2 One main idea

The main idea sentence is the key to cohesive, effective writing. The main idea is the leading point that guides your readers so they easily can decipher the point of your writing.

4.4.3.3 Structure of an essay

(i) Introduction

As it is, the first part of an essay that readers will first encounter, we expect it to grab their attention so that they can continue reading. Introduction serves to introduce to readers the central ideas expressed by the essay. In this regards, if it is a good introduction it provides the background information which is necessary for making sense of the argument that will be provided in the body of an essay. Briefly a good introduction requires several elements:

- opening sentences introducing the topic of an essay

- background information leading to the analysed aspect of the theme

- literature techniques to grab the reader's attention (www.legacy.blue-grass.ketes.edu)

(ii) Body

The body paragraphs will explain the essay's topic. Each of the main ideas that are listed in the outline will become a paragraph in an essay. If the outline contained three main ideas, there will be three body paragraphs. It is vital to keep in mind that each paragraph is supposed to have one main argument to analyse and has to reveal it in one solid thought in a sentence. Therefore the amount of the body paragraphs equals the amount of topic sentences. Each body paragraph must be connected to following one with a logical link. This means that a well-structured essay should consist of a series of paragraphs which progress logically through the series of points that you intend to cover. Obviously, the difficult part is working out what that order should be. In essence, an essay is an argument, so your structure should be based on what your argument is. Remember that good essays do not just give evidence for their point of view, but also demonstrate why opposing views are flawed. Imagine a reader, and then try to predict their objections to your argument, and then demonstrate why they are wrong.

(iii) Conclusion

This is the last part of an essay. This is the part that drives home the central idea of an essay. This is the part that it must be memorable by the readers. This is where you summarise what you have said in your essay, stating what your answer to the question is and why. Often, there is no simple answer (which is why you are writing an essay, and not a two-mark answer on a class test), so you should state what the complexities of the issue are. You may feel that you are repeating yourself, as the body of your essay should have made your argument clear already, but the reader will appreciate a good summary.

4.4.3.4 Theme

The theme refers to the broad issues that the essay is about. What does the essay have to say about the human condition, about life, in general? Theme is developed through plot (what people do in the story), character (who does what, and what kind of people they are), and dialogue (what people say to each other). Theme can also be developed through mood (the atmosphere between and around people), and imagery (symbolism).

4.4.3.5 Language and style

What constitutes ''good style'' is one of the hardest things to state explicitly, and is perhaps the criterion most open to personal variation.

The following are few pointers to consider:

● **Be explicit**

Remember that you should be writing your essay for someone who has a general background in the general subject area, but doesn't necessarily specialise in that particular topic. Also, don't leave the reader to infer your conclusions: state them explicitly.

● **Use signposts**

Make your essay easy to read by being explicit (that word again!) about your essay structure, for example, you can write as follows: ''In the next section we will ..., 'As we have argued previously...'.''

● **Avoid long sentences**

Be wary of convoluted syntactic structures: they might be fun to analyse, but they can be difficult to read. Go for short sentences: if you have a sentence more than three or four lines long, then it probably needs breaking up into simpler structures.

● **Avoid long paragraphs**

Try to avoid writing paragraphs of more than 10 or 15 lines in length. Long blocks of text have a negative subconscious effect on the reader. Of course, sometimes points take more space to make, but if you find yourself writing a long paragraph, ask yourself: Should I break this point in to sub-points? You could then connect the sub-points with linking sentences at the beginning and/ or end of each of the smaller paragraphs.

● **Don't imagine that the reader knows what you mean**

If you imagine a reader, don't imagine the marker, whose knowledge you will probably exaggerate! Imagine another student in your class. This should help you to be explicit about definitions and helpful about sign-posting.

● **Spelling**

Poor spelling, reasonably or not, gives the impression of carelessness and laziness. Take the time to proofread your essay carefully as well. (webmaster@ling.ed.ac.uk)

4.5 Poetry

4.5.1 Introduction

Poetry is another genre of modern literature. This section will focus on introducing you to poetry as a genre with specific features. The section will further discuss the different elements of poetry and how they make a text poetic. This is to make you understand why there are different genres under one umbrella of modern literature.

Read the following text:

Heavenly pebbles   **Edmund Tembe**

Behold the moon in the sky

Rolling and gliding on the fluffy wool

Rolling like the waves in the sea.

Behold the moon in the sky
Cutting and dissipating the wool
Illuming the fire of Zokhele, self ignition

There the moon is out
The stars twinkly like far away little fires
The heavenly glory is fulfilled

Now the moon comes closer
There it goes past the village of *Masabasaba*
It is a messenger, on a very long journey

There you see it giving light
Very lovely in its majesty
In that regal nocturnal ambience.

Earth you are such a failure
You can never explain what the eye sees,
This glitter and glitz in the heavens.

(Zodwa Motsa ed.)

4.5.2 What makes poetry poetic?

I hope you have enjoyed reading the two texts above. What is clear with it is that it tells a particular story like any other piece of literature. However, this text shows some differences from the texts that you have learnt about at the beginning of this unit. This is called a poem and it has obvious features some of which you are able to see by just looking at it. As readers we have our own preferences in terms of literature genres. Some readers prefer to be told a story in a narrative manner. Other readers will prefer to be told a story in the form of a poem as in the above text. In other words there are different forms of telling the same story to the reader. We can see that this text is about a particular subject matter. A subject matter of a poem is according to Boynton (1973:8) describes as whatever the poem is about. It is after reading the whole poem that as a reader you are able to get the theme of the poem which is the general content contained in the poem.

In a narrative text as you have seen in the other section of this study unit the story is told with no special manner of tone, and the writer does not need to go into the trouble of arranging words in any particular manner. Poetry as a genre becomes different in that it is created in a special technique or expressions. Although it uses the same language or words as in ordinary prose, the words in this genre are organised differently from non-poetic text. The success of

writing a poem comes as a result of employment of various artistic devices. The use of metaphors, sound and verbal repetitions immediately come to mind here, but the mere use of such does not turn any piece of discourse into poetry. For example, metaphors and repetitions are also found in ordinary conversation and prose works and any specialised genre of literature.

The first difference that is obvious even to a reader who would not understand the language is that it has a specialised structure. The poem is made of lines that may not be taken to be sentences as some lines do not give a complete sentence. Each line does not go up to the end of the page. The lines are arranged in groups that are called stanzas. These lines are presented in a manner that attracts the eye of the reader. The arrangement of words also has a purpose as there is use of words, sounds and rhythm that give effect to the message presented by the poem.

It is of significance to take note that Africans have always composed and recited poetry. This is the type that we call traditional poetry. This type has been discussed in another chapter. Because of its nature poetry is always a genre that is accompanied by emotions.

4.5.3 Poetry and its form

When we talk of form we are talking about the external form we are referring to the way of using language form of speech, a way of expressing or an arrangement of words and sounds in a way that is effective in the transmission of the message. Elements that fall under poetic form are among others the title, line, stanza, rhythmic pattern and arrangements of sounds, syllables, some parts of words and words that give parallelism and/or linking. When you look at text two these elements are evident and can be seen even by a person who does not understand the language used.

Activity 4.5

(a) Get back to the poem above and try to identify some of these poetic devices that you think make the poem qualify as a good poem.

(b) Do you think the given text would have a better effect to a reader as compared to if it was written as prose? Support your explanation.

4.5.4 Sound devices

These are the sounds that you can hear by the ear when the poem is read. In most cases the poet uses certain sounds to highlight, accentuate or give emphasis to what is being said in the line or in the whole poem.

Sound devices include among others alliteration which is the repetition of sounds that sound similar but not vowels. Assonance is the skill of using repetition of vowels. Another outstanding sound device is onomatopoeia in which the poet uses sounds that are identical to the meaning carried by those

words. Such often assists in creating the rhythm of the poem. The other important fact is the existence of rhyme which comes out through the use of words that sound the same or alike.

4.5.5 Types of poems

Poetry can differ according to the content or the theme carried by the poem. In some instances poems differ according to their structure and performance. This is when we end up having a number of types that include the ones we will briefly discuss below.

(a) The lyric

This is the type that a poet uses to give expression to his/her thoughts and feelings. This is a very common type in our African languages. You may find a different structured poem doing the same i.e. expressing the feelings of the poet.

(b) The epic

This type is based in history as it tells a historic event. It is well known for its length. A good example would be the epic by Mazisi Kunene's *Emperor Shaka The Great*. This type can include historical events and challenges that were faced by a nation or of a hero.

(c) The ballad

This type often tells a sad story or a sad incidence. It may tell of a violent or an exciting event in the form of a story.

(d) The eulegy

An eulegy is a poem that is about death. Such a poem often laments the death of an important person. Such a person can be a friend, a colleague or a relative. In this poem the poet expresses the grief of people around the deceased person. This is the type that is often composed and recited at a funeral.

(e) The ode

This is a poem that praises an individual for good performances. One may describe this type as a way of praising a person for his or her good deeds.

(f) The sonnet

This is a type that is based on its structure. A sonnet consists of one stanza that is made of 14 lines. They have a particular structure that is often difficult for African language's poets. In most cases our poets just satisfy the single stanza and the 14 lines requirements in their sonnets.

Activity 4.6

Try to write answers for the questions that follow:

(a) Name the type of the poem given at the beginning of this discussion? Explain in detail.

(b) In a few words explain how poetry differs from a prose text.

4.5.6 Poetic language

(a) Imagery

It is important to understand what imagery is. Many scholars have tried to define imagery from different angles. Imagery is made up of words used in our everyday language. Imagery is the art of creating mental pictures in the mind of the reader. Poetry being a compressed genre is successfully created with the use of imagery. Imagery is created by using figures speech such as metaphor, simile, personification, symbolism, and others. Some of them will be briefly discussed below.

(b) Simile

If you are keen to read and understand a poem you need to know what a simile is. A simile is the art of comparing something with another by the use of a function word such as like or as. A simile compares two things by saying that one is like the other. We have a range of these morphemes that are used to create the idea of comparison between the two objects. For example:

Menzi walks like a sick donkey.

(c) Metaphor

A metaphor is also a figure of speech in which two things are likened. A metaphor compares two objects by identifying one object and calling it with the other object's name. This art creates imaginative pictures that assist the poet in expressing what he/she intends to highlight. Unlike in a simile in a metaphor there are no function words used. An object is described by using another thing with which it can bring the intended comparison. For example:

Lungelo is a lion.

(d) Personification

Personification is close to a metaphor in that two things are made one. As the name says in Personification, a thing or an abstract concept is given human qualities. This can be achieved by making an object have human features or make it do things that can only be done by human beings. For example:

The flowers taught me to love.

(e) Symbolism

Symbolism is a figure of speech in which one thing represents another thing. It has to be a known thing, that if you see this item it becomes known that it symbolises that particular thing or concept. It has become an accepted fact that the cross symbolises or stands for Christianity. The same symbol is used to refer to a hospital. In our African culture *emajobo* (men's ware made of hide skin) is a symbol of manhood. There are even colours that symbolise certain things and/or concepts. For instance the red rose is associated with love and the color black, is associated with death. Some animals like a lion are regarded as a symbol of power.

(f) Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that exaggerates. It is used in speech or writing to create an effect. In hyperbole the truth is exaggerated so that the reader/listener is made aware of its significance in the text. For example:

A pool of tears rolled down her face.

(g) Apostrophe

Is an exclamatory rhetorical figure of speech when a writer or a speaker breaks off and directs speech to an imaginary person or abstract quality or idea. For example: Education you are the light.

There are many other ways of making something or a concept be perceived as significant so as to be recognised. More of these will be dealt in detail in the next levels of your studies.

Activity 4.7 _____ Answer the following questions, using your own examples.

(a) What is imagery? Explain in detail.
(b) What is the difference between a metaphor and a simile?
(c) In your own understanding, why do you think imagery is important in the writing of a poem?

4.6 Drama

Read the following dialogue:

A peal of girlish laughter from the kitchen

JIM: I'm not right sure I know what you're talking about. What kind of glass is it?

LAURA: Little articles of it, they're ornaments mostly! Most of them are little animals made out of glass, the tiniest little animals in the world. Mother calls them a glass menagerie! Here's an example

of one, if you'd like to see it! This one is the oldest. It's nearly thirteen. (*He stretches out his hand.*) (Music: ''THE GLASS MENAGERIE.'') Oh, be careful if you breathe, it breaks!

JIM: I'd better not take it. I'm pretty clumsy with things.

LAURA.   Go on. I trust you with him! (*Places it in his palm.*) There now you're holding him gently! Hold him over the light, he loves the light! You see how the light shines through him?

JIM: It sure does shine!

LAURA: I shouldn't be partial, but he is my favorite one.

JIM: What kind of a thing is this one supposed to be?

LAURA: Haven't you noticed the single horn on his forehead?

JIM: A Unicorn, huh?

LAURA: Mmm-hmmm!

JIM: Unicorns, aren't they extinct in the modern world?

LAURA: I know!

JIM: Poor little fellow, he must feel sort of lonesome.

LAURA: (*Smiling*). Well, if he does he doesn't complain about it. He stays on a shelf with some horses that don't have horns and all of them seem to get along nicely together.

JIM: How do you know?

4.6.1 Introduction

Drama is a genre that is written to be performed. The medium through which drama is performed for the audience gives a range of different types of drama. From the mode of performance we have television dramas, radio dramas, stage dramas and films. The type of a drama determines the stage directions. Stage directions are the phrases and sentences that are written in between the lines of a drama. They keep the performer informed of what to do and how to do it. Dialogue and action are responsible for the development of the message or theme of the whole drama.

It is vital that we learn about the different types of drama as we listen and watch dramas on many occasions.

(a) Stage drama

A stage drama is the type that is delivered to its audience though performing on stage. While the drama is performed on stage the stage directions are supposed to be restricted to the stage only. On a stage performance it would not be possible to see racing cars, burning of forests. In other words when you look at a drama it is important to know whether it is made for stage or other medium of performance.

(b) A television drama or film

A drama meant for television has more flexibility in that a broader spectrum of events can be portrayed in a television drama or a film. Burning forests, racing cars can also be shown without a problem. In fact, the TV drama can have a setting all over the world yet that becomes a limitation to the stage drama.

(c) The radio drama

Radio drama does not have that much advantage because it depends on sound. If the stage director is creative enough he/she will gather sounds to play in the different scenes and they will convincingly be heard on air. By the way in this drama all is revealed through the spoken word. The ear becomes the important carrier of the message. The limitations on this type of drama are those events that cannot be performed or be seen.

The other issue is that a drama is written for stage performance, a dramatist needs to control the length of the drama by using time. A drama should not exceed certain time limits otherwise the audience would lose interest in watching it.

(d) One act play

This is a drama that consists of one act and a number of scenes. This type is called a one-act play. This type of drama is in some ways similar to a short story. It covers one event in the life of a character and has a limited number of supporting characters.

The other way of differentiating types of drama is by looking at the theme that is covered by the drama.

Some of the aspects of this work of literature are not different from those discussed in the section under the novel. Aspects such as language and style, plot, characters, and setting are similar to those discussed with regard to the novel in the previous section. In this discussion it is important to focus on some of the elements that are particular to drama. These will include among others the plot structure, dialogue, stage directions, conflict, dramatic irony and that which comes as an element of surprise.

A drama differs from the other forms of literature in that it does not have chapters but it consists of acts and scenes. Each act consists of different scenes that have an important function in that they take care of handling the movements from one scene to another. Scenes are often determined by the place in which the events take place. It changes if the place setting changes. Each scene should begin with clear stage directions, describing the setting and preparing the reader or audience about what the appearance of characters.

4.6.2 Plot

As stated above drama consists among other things the plot which is the structuring of events in an artistic manner that enables the main theme to

develop. Significant stages of the plot consist of the exposition, rising action, climax and resolution. The dramatist is expected to show the beginning of the conflict, its development and how it is resolved at the end.

(a) Exposition

The exposition should be the first act. The main problem and characters are to be introduced in the scenes of the first act. This is the part of the play that provides all the necessary on the action that is about to be performed. Such information may include among others background information and the cause of the conflict.

(b) Rising action

The rising action is the stage in which conflict is initiated and intensifies as the drama develops. Events in this stage of the plot should contribute to the development of the theme of the drama.

(c) Climax

This part of the plot constitutes the climax of the conflict. At the climax the complication of events should be complicated enough that the conflict reaches its highest point. It is imperative for the dramatist to select events and activities that will be heightening the conflict to a point that one of the two conflicting characters either accepts defeat or is eliminated from the drama either by fleeing or death. What is important is that it marks the end of conflict.

(d) Resolution

What is included at this level is pulling together the strings. Instead of leaving the drama at climax it makes sense to create a neat conclusion which gives information on how the problem has been resolved. However that does not mean the dramatis should give every detail about the ending. A good writer will be able to use suspense, where the audience or readers are free to fill in their own interpretation of the ending.

4.6.3 Conflict

The plot is expected to have events and actions that are in constant conflict. Drama basically exists because there is conflict. This therefore makes conflict to be at the centre of the existence of drama. Conflict comes in various manners. It may be between a person with another person. It can be between a person and some force. At times it is between a character and his environment. There is also conflict that comes from within the individual. What is important is that the conflict should not move at one level but it must rise or complicate higher. That is brought about by a dramatist who is aware of sustaining the conflict as well as making it complicated towards the climax.

4.6.4 Characters

Characters are responsible for carrying the drama from the beginning to the end. Since drama is created for performance and the characters are the individuals tasked with the process of acting out the conflicting events. Dialogue and stage directions are responsible for the development of the character.

In drama there are main characters namely: the protagonist, antagonist and tritagonist. These are the characters who if they were to be absent the drama could not go ahead. They serve as pillars of the conflict and act according to the stage directions.

4.6.5 Dialogue

As stated above the audience or readers get to know what is taking place though dialogue. The development of the action, the setting and all other contextual information are revealed in the dialogue. We can conclude that dialogue is responsible for the development of action in a drama. It is however dangerous to use dialogue for too long a period, as that can lead to boredom on the side of the audience. Dialogue should be short and exciting which will keep the audience glued to the stage, screen or radio.

$\mathsf{A}^{\mathsf{ctivity}}$ 4.8 **Try to write answers for the questions that follow:**

(a) Why does a drama demand the use of dialogue? Use a drama that is published in your own language to support your view.
(b) What is the difference between a radio drama and a stage drama?
(c) What is the role or function of conflict in a drama? Use a published drama from your own language to support your argument.

4.7 Conclusion

In a nutshell, the discussion above has successfully introduced the various forms of prose. You were also given a glimpse into the elements of the various prose narratives. Poetry as a genre sends out the intended message in very artistic words. The different types of poems are to enable you understand the features that qualify a poem to be of that particular type. The skill of using different poetic devices assists the poet to highlight and put emphasis on what is important in his/her message. Imagery assists the poet in presenting his/her message in form of mental pictures. The external arrangement of words and sounds all highlight and foreground the message in its mood.

The section under drama introduced you to this genre. It also looked at the different types of drama and their brief descriptions. The section went further to bring you a brief understanding of what drama is made of.

This was meant to introduce you to these forms of literature as they will be discussed in detail at higher levels. The different genres of modern literature all entertain as well as educate the readership.

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Study unit 5

Persuasive expressions

Dr TM Sengani

Learning outcomes

After you have worked through study unit 5 you should be able to:

● describe the nature and functional values of praise names, clan praises and praise poems

● explain the emotional function of slogans

● discuss the impact of advertisements in the media

5.1   Introduction

Caption of crowds of people pointing at the slogan/advert:

TATA MACHANCE TATA MAMILLION

You may have seen the above caption somewhere. Look at it carefully and respond to the following questions:

(1) What is the purpose of the advert named above?

(2) Justify your response to the above question.

(3) Explain the content of the words, that is, the meaning of the words in the advert.

(4) Why do you think this code-switching language was used?

(5) Why were these particular words or actions chosen?

(6) What are the feelings of the people involved?

In your response you could have mentioned some of the following issues:

Individuals, families, communities, groups such as football clubs, shops, companies, political parties all try their best to persuade people to support them or buy their products. Take the case of the betting ''lotto'' above. Persuasive

expressions are used in various ways to encourage people to buy a certain product or support some cause. There are many types of persuasive expressions. Now look at the following table and complete the empty blocks.

Persuasion	Example	Elements
Praises	Bafana Bafana	
Advertisements	National freedom day	A group of happy people
Slogans	Black person with a clenched fist	
Religious sermons	Christian cross	

From the blocks above, you must have noticed associations between slogans and advertisements on the one side, and the objects they represent and how they are portrayed on the other. All these elements remain static until people decide to chant slogans and advertisements. The chants are the persuasive expressions that in the end are associated with the cause or the product. All these praises, advertisements, slogans and religious sermons have persuasive overtones.

These expressions are associated with speakers, the message, the addressees and the effect of the message.

Activity 5.1

1. What would you say about the personality above? Refer to the points below:
   - the speaker: his image and status
   - the message: usually full of emotion and very effective – the structure of the advert or slogan, the language, its colour, with a central message
   - the addressees: the persuadable

2. List a number of praises you know in your language or any other language and name the people who use them, the reason for using them and whom or what they are used for.

3. Name people or leaders you know and write down praises associated with them and further explain the contents thereof.

4. Where did you hear slogans being chanted? What were they about and who chanted them?

5. Choose any advertisement that you have seen or heard and answer the following questions:

- When/where did you see or hear the advertisement that you mentioned above and why do you think it was aired/placed there?
- What is the advertisement about?
- Who do you think is the target of the advertisement you mentioned in (5) above?
- Which language is used in that advertisement?

Feedback and insight

It is important for us to know that advertisements and slogans or praises are things that people live by. In our everyday life, praises are sung everywhere. People chant them as they greet others, arrive somewhere, say goodbye, offer blessings or bury the deceased. Adverts and slogans fill our roads, stadia, shopping complexes and homes and we hear them on the radio and see them daily on TV. All these are different. While others encourage us to do something, others invite us to buy products or support causes. All this show how powerful persuasive expressions can be: they can move us to act, to look around, to take action and to change direction.

5.2   Praises

- Who is this man in the picture above? Write his names in full.
- What is his clan (praise) name?

Happy birthday, Mr Mandela!

Here are your birthday messages for Nelson Mandela, who turned 88 on 18 July 2006.

Page 9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Thank you all for your support!

Dear Mr Mandela: How do I love thee? Qala, baza-baza Madiba, Let me count the ways. I love thee to the depth and breadth and height my vuvuzela can reach, woza-woza, viva. You are never out of sight. For the ends of halakasha and

half tiger. I love thee, to the level of everyday. Most quiet need, by achaar and candlelight. I love thee with ithopa, as women strive for right; I love thee purely, Nkalakatha, as you turn from praise wena, I love thee with a phashasha put to use.

Name:	Sophie Mayer
Place:	Jozi
Dear Mr Mandela:	Best wishes for the future, Madiba!!! You are an international peace legend ... love you lots!!!
Name:	Hazel
Place:	England
Dear Mr Mandela:	VIVA VIVA MKHULU WESIZWE SASE-AFRIKA, HAPPY HAPPY BIRTHDAY MADIBA, (WENA WAPHAKAMISA ILIZWE LABANTU ABAMNYA-MA.) WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST IN YOUR LIFE. ENJOY YOUR DAY!!!
Name:	Thulani Sijaji
Place:	BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND. UK
Dear Mr Mandela:	My very best birthday wishes to you, and may you continue to inspire us and the world with your great wisdom for many years to come! South Africa is truly blessed by your presence!
Name:	Sally Arnold
Place:	Luxembourg/South Africa

We think the first message would be interesting to study and discuss. Do you think we can use it?

5.2.1 Clan praises

African communities use various types of praises: praise names, clan praises and ultimately praise poems to identify themselves more fully. The praises are not confined to persons only, but to other things associated with them, such as their animals, wild and domestic, their habitat, which includes rivers, mountains, valleys, as well as things like football clubs, companies, etcetera.

African families or clans have names with code praises in them. These names are associated with totemic animals. Most clans are associated with animals such as lions, tigers, crocodiles, cattle, goats, rhinos, elephants, etcetera. These are the animals that they venerate. However others use pure names like Madiba, Mbedzi, Munyai, Ndou, Sambo, Mnwanati, Mofokeng, Mokwena, Mokgalaka, Kolobe, Bakali, Sambo, Mntungwa, Nyambose, Mohlalerwa, Ndabezitha, Mutavhatsindi, Tlou and Mabuza.

All these have praises behind them. See the clan praises below:

- Mutavhatsindi wa gono musina ndevhe a tshi vhona (Tshivenda)

  [Mutavhatsindi, a master of issues around him or her, who would even keep quiet while experiencing very excruciating pain]

- Bakali Mashenzhele, chilala cha runako va ka lu pa na vana (Shona for Lemba)

  [Bakali of Mashenzhele the watershed of beauty which they also pass over to their children]

- Nkuna Mabuza ubusa ngenduku (isiZulu).

  [Nkuna is Mabuza the one who rules by the stick.]

- Nkuna Mavutana u vuta ai twile (Xitsonga).

  [Nkuna is the one who does not just get married unless he has first been given a taste.]

- Mabuza Shabalala Donga laMavuso (isiZulu).

  [Mabuza is of Shabalala and of Donga, all of Mavuso.]

- Tlou Letebele lekonkwane la hloka kgomo le ja motho (North Sotho).

  [Tlou is a Letebele who, if desparate for cattle and fails to get them, then eats up a person.]

- Mntungwa Mbulazi othi edla ebe eyenga umuntu ngendaba (isiZulu).

  [Mntungwa is a Mbulazi who eats while slandering someone.]

- Khabo mokgatla, ga e namele e je borekhu (Setswana).

  [Monkey, the mokhatla, let it climb and eat the tree gum.]

The following are examples of Basotho clan praises.

Mosia (Mosia clan praise):

Ke thelleng,

Ke le Mosia, Motubatsi,

Motho wa Mantsha-thebe-di-ome,

Di-se-nna-di-omela-mokgwabo-tlung,

Motho wa boLebajwa le Letuka,

Ka Tshele nka tshella mang?

[(Why should I pay homage,

Being a descendant of Mosia, a-Swearer-by-the-porcupine,

One of those Take-out-the-shields-to-dry,

And-should-not-dry-in-the-wet-places-of-the-huts,

One of the family of Lebajwa le Letuka,

Swearing by Tshele, who can I pay homage to?]

Bakwena (Bakwena clan praise):

Mokwena wa ha Mantsane a Monaheng,

Maila-ho-ngwathelwa,

Majapolokwe-kaofela!

[One of the Crocodile people of Ntsane, son of Monaheng,

Abstainers-from-being-given-food,

Eaters-of-the-whole-round-bread!]

Motaung (Bataung clan praise):

Ke thelleng,

Ke le Motaung wa Maloisane,

A kgomo ya lebese!

[Why do I pay homage,

Being one of the Lion people of Maloisane,

Those of the milk bovine!]

Mofokeng (Bafokeng clan praise):

Mofokeng wa Mantsukunyane,

A Kata a Sefiri,

Bakgwejana ba titima mabitleng!

[One of the Bafokeng, the descendants of Ntsukunyane,

Son of Kata, son of Sefiri,

The young Kgwele people run on top of the graves!]

Feedback and insight

Clan praises developed from names of leaders within particular groups. In the past vast numbers of people left certain groups. These people, usually within certain families, would have a particular leader and would end up being the people of that particular leader. As they separated themselves from the original group, they then called themselves by the names of their leaders and then these names became their clan names, with praises behind them. In other cases, the same group would be associated with certain animals, which they venerated and would eventually be called after these animals. However, these people would still be tied to the original group.

Clan praises are chanted when people go to war, when they return victorious; when a long-lost person comes home, when the clan is rejoicing and therefore pledging solidarity, when they are encouraging one another, when a new baby arrives or when someone passes away.

The main aim of chanting clan praises is to teach the clan their history, their culture, and their heritage, as well as ubuntu.

5.2.2 Names of individuals and their praises

Individuals have personal names that are characterised by persuasive expressions. These are praise names. Whereas people are usually called by these names, when someone else appreciates another for his or her presence or simply wants such a person to perform some duty very well, they usually chant their praises and the process encourages them to do better. The person ''targeted'' will want to do as the name preaches. See the praise names below:

- maitazwitoma ha fani na madzulafhedzi [the ever-busy one who is not like the ever-loafing one]

- matevhutevhu mavhele a si na vhushelo [the everflowing mealies that are so full that there is nowhere to pour]

- ramudzuli ano toda ndimo a sa todi shango la muthu [the one who settles in need of a track of ploughing land with no claim to anyone's land]

- mangimani xifaki xa mumu [the short one, the mealies of the hot summer]

Feedback and insight

These praises are for the individual names of people. Each proper African name in a particular community has a praise behind it. The praises, unlike the clan praise which is linked to the clan, focus on the individual rather than on the group. These praises talk about people's relationships in the families or communities. They can code messages about the family's history, politics, religion, scandals, successes and so on.

These praises are used to encourage children and those associated with them. They may reprimand, scorn, warn, alert, express appreciation and so on.

5.2.3 Praises for natural phenomena and villages/towns/cities

Villages, mountains, valleys and countries too have names with their praises. These phenomena get their names from the landscape: in the case of a river, how it came into existence, how its waters flow or some other characteristic. When people chant these praises, there is usually some association with the people of the area. This therefore becomes a sort of indirect praise for the people rather than the phenomenon.

Name of village/town/city praise

Nzhelele Nzhelele mitangaumani!

[Nzhelele, the home of Mitanauma trees]

Tshitandani Tshitandani tsha ha Nyatsitsa nwana u bebe pholisa.

[Tshitandani, where you put down the baby and carry a policeman on your back]

Tshwane Tshwane ya Mamelodi [Tshwane of Mamelodi]

Johannesburg Kwanyama ayipheli kuphela amazinyo endoda [Where meat is aplenty and only a man's teeth get tired of eating it]

Polokwane Polokwane a Maraba! [Polokwane, home of Maraba]

Praises for villages/towns/cities, as well as of countries, are always associated with the people who live there or once lived there. In a way this puts on record

that places of all kinds belong to a people. Again it registers a point that there are no specific places without owners. You will notice there are places with more than one name, the second being a European name, but the praises would always be in an African indigenous language. This explains that when Europeans arrived at the area, they ignored the original name and imposed theirs. Some of the areas have names or praises that display characteristics associated with the people who live there, which indicates that the particular place is closely tied to them and to no one else.

Activity 5.2

- What differences do you notice in the contents of praises of individuals and clan praises?
- What elements show us that a clan praise goes above and beyond an ordinary praise name of an individual?
- What associations do you spot in praises for places? Explain and support your answer with suitable examples.
- Do you know your clan praise? Write it down and explain the contents thereof.
- Looking at your clan praise, do you find it aligning itself with the history of your family?
- Does your area have a praise? Name it, give its contents and show how they are related to the area.
- Some people claim that praises are irrelevant today. Do you agree or disagree? Support your views with suitable examples.

Feedback and insight

The main aim of the use of these praises is to create solidarity among the inhabitants, to encourage one another, to defend the area and to warn or put strangers on the alert. It is important to look at the linguistic structures used in these praises: most show a possessive relationship between the people and the area, that is a possessive stem which is the name of the owner and the possession, which is the area.

5.2.4 Praises for animals

Animals, both domestic and wild, have names with praises behind them:

- Lion: Malazwivhisi! [The one who devours uncooked food.]

- Baboon: Wa ha nyamutsangadavhi wa lombe! [The one who climbs down swinging from one branch to the other!]

- Hare: Randevhe [Mr Hare] or Sankambe; Ramahlale [The deceiver.]

Activity 5.3

What do praises of animals tell you about the people who praise them?

Feedback and insight

Animals are associated with people in many ways, be they domestic or wild. People have praises for all these animals, whether they own them as domestic animals or whether these animals are in fact man-eaters. Each group or nationality tends see animals differently, although there are areas of commonality. These animals are named and praised based on the characteristics they display. Usually when people talk about characteristics such as strength, laziness, speed, treachery, humility and so on among themselves, they use the same ones they have noticed in animals. In the same manner, they praise them just like they do people – as we see in their use of similes and metaphors.

5.2.5 Praises/slogans for sporting activities

AMAKHOSI   AMABHAKABHAKA   SKY IS THE LIMIT

Football clubs have names, but they also have slogans that sing their praises. The praises behind football clubs take a similar route to names of clans or tribes. The names tend to follow certain characteristics that are found in the club: perhaps associated with their gear, the animal (mascot) or people they associate with, how they win or lose, or even their persistence, their style of play or the area they come from. The following are names and praises of various soccer and rugby teams:

Name	Praise
Orlando Pirates	Ezimnyama ngenkani, ezikaMagebhula!
	[The black one through cheek] or [Happy people!]
Kaizer Chiefs	Amakhosi amahle [The beautiful chiefs]
Moroka Swallows	Don't follow me, follow the birds!
Black Leopards	Lidoda duvha [The day of reckoning will come]
Golden Arrows	Abafana besithende! [Heel extension boys!]
Bloemfontein Celtics	Masokolara! Phunya selesele Bana ba o shebile
	[Pierce through Celtics, the beautiful youngsters are watching]
Mamelodi Sundowns	The sky is the limit!
Manchester United	The Red Devils!
Arsenal	The Gunners
Chelsea	The Blues!
Liverpool	The Reds

The South African national rugby team	The Springboks / Amabhokobhoko!
South African national soccer team	Bafana Bafana [Boys Oh Boys]
Senegalese national soccer team	The Lions of Taranga
Egyptian national soccer team	The Pharaohs!
Lesotho national soccer team	Likoena [The Champions]

Activity 5.4

- What is the relationship between the slogan or praise of the soccer teams and the elements they are associated with? Choose any three and explain.
- In some of the praises, the teams are associated with real danger and yet the people associated with them express joy and victory in them. What does this tell you?
- The South African national soccer team is praised as Bafana Bafana (Boys Oh Boys) and those of Senegal and Lesotho as The Lions of Taranga and Likoena (Champions) respectively. Does the association of a soccer team with boys and/ or lions have an effect on their play? Explain and support your answer with suitable examples.
- Most teams and players have English names and slogans. What does this explain in a country like South Africa?
- It is said that culture carries language and language carries culture. Would you say this is happening with praise names?

Feedback and insight

In the praises for sporting activities we see clearly how these activities are associated with objects, both animate and inanimate, and with the dangerous and the strong, the able and the successful. If a sporting activity is associated with failure, the words used will transform it into an apparent success. If associated with negativity the wording chosen will make it all seem positive.

In this use of language, it is important to note that words themselves do not have meanings on their own, but that people give them such meanings. People decide on the range of meaning of any word.

5.2.6 Praises for football and other sporting activities

In the world of entertainment, especially football and other sporting activities, players are encouraged to excel through the chants of the spectators. Most of them have nicknames, which are chanted to get them to give their best on the football pitch. Deafening cheers fill the stadium as supporters in their thousands chant the names of their idols, urging the players to excel. The names are descriptive and some are given them by supporters, based on how a player runs or dribbles, for example. The following lists some footballers' names and praise names:

Name	Praise name
Kaizer Motaung	Tshintshaa Guluva!

Jomo Sono	Troublemake!!
Lucas Moripe	Masterpiece or Modimo wa !olo!
Johnny Mokoena	Magwegw!
Durant	Os!
Abednigo Ngcobo	UShaka akashayeki [The unbeatable Shaka]
Valdez is coming	

Activity 5.5

- Choose any four sports personalities and explain their sporting praise names.
- What is the relationship between the player and the elements that are described in his or her praise name? Choose any three and explain.
- African personal names have praises in their specific languages, but nicknames or praise names for sports personalities are in English and Afrikaans as well as African languages. Please explain this diversity.
- Most praise names for players in various sporting activities have passed on to their children or relatives, and even to other players too. Can you explain why? Do these new carriers of praise names ever live up to the names of their forebearers? Choose any two you know and explain.
- Identify a sports hero in your community. Interview him or her. How does he or she feel when called by his or her praise name?

Feedback and insight

Besides having their own personal names, different sports players give themselves nicknames or are given them by their supporters. These nicknames become their praise names which are used when they are playing and showing off their skills on the field, but these nicknames tend to stick and become as important as their personal names. You have seen how praise names describe players' particular skills as they demonstrate them on the field. The fans cheer them on with these praise names, to a point where it seems the words used in them describe exactly what the players are in fact achieving – therefore the players end up achieving what the words in the praise name describe. Those words themselves, which describe the player's qualities, actually drive the players to excel in these same qualities. This proves again that words do not have meaning in isolation: it is people who give them meaning. This explains the importance of knowing that the meaning of a word is as determined by the context in which is used.

5.3   Slogans

You have heard of the word ''slogan''. What do you think it means? Do you know any slogans? List them. What do you associate slogans with?

We referred to the term slogan earlier. From what we have said we see that it does not differ much from a praise name. Indeed slogans are full of promise: they fire the imagination.

Activity 5.6

- Do you know of a group of people that have a slogan?
- What is the slogan used for?
- Name the speaker and the audience.

Feedback and insight

People live by so many things and yet ignore them or never take them seriously. Slogans are used in our everyday life. They appear on billboards, we hear them in our homes and communities and on radio and TV. We may chant slogans when we meet with friends and support sporting activities. We also use them to praise, or mock, others and we do the same when our team wins or loses.

Political slogans:

Look at the above picture. What do you think was the occasion? Support your answer. Read the placards and comment.

The purpose of political slogans is to win electoral votes. Speakers use political metaphors, rhetoric and encourage applause. When there is an election, political parties come up with new slogans. Note the following three elements associated with sloganeering:

- the speaker

- slogan and delivery/chanting

- the receiver or audience

Slogans are chanted by both politicians and their supporters to encode the history and culture of the group. They help people see the bigger picture about their group's mission. For instance, during the apartheid regime the Nationalist Party had a slogan *Swart gevaar*, in which black people were perceived to be dangerous by white people – which prompted them to vote for leaders who would keep black people out of their system of government. In other words, the slogan encoded a lot of content that made them see more than what they were hearing. In response black people chanted *Amandla* with replies of

Ngawethu, accompanied by clenched fists raised high. The UDF (United Democratic Front) sang *Siyaya ePitoli*. Marchers would run through the streets singing with fists raised high. The PAC have the slogan *Afrika for Africans* and the youth had *One settler, one bullet*; at some stage the Afrikaanse Weerstand Beweging or AWB had *One settler, one taxi* in reply.

When the democratic era dawned and parties were out to win votes, the ANC chanted *Ke nako*! but the *Amandla* and its chorus *Ngawethu* were chanted in support. The New Nationalist Party came up with *Get South Africa working* and at some time the Democratic Alliance chanted *Fighting back!* The UDM, formed by General Bantu Holomisa and Roelf Meyer who left the ANC and Nationalst Party respectively, went on to create *Do what is best for South Africa*. In the meantime, the Afrikaanse Eenheid Beweging chanted *Eenheid is krag*. At the time of writing, the two US Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton and Barrack Obama seem to be singing a song that is the same and yet different, as they chant *Solutions for the American economy* and *Change we can believe in*. Recently in Zimbabwe, Zanu-PF had *Our land, our sovereign* and the MDC had *Morgan has more*.

Activity 5.7

1. Slogans are used to empower, encourage or incite people. They can also be dangerous and misleading. Identify slogans which can elicit these responses and demonstrate how they would do so.
2. Identify two slogans that reflect victory and success and discuss their historical content.
3. Slogans are often linked with certain personalities in political parties. Why do you think party adherents do this?
4. Identify two or three slogans that create a dialogue between two or three opposing groups and explain the content of the discourse.
5. Can you explain in detail the association between a clenched fist and some of the slogans given above?
6. How do Clinton's and Obama's slogans affect us in South Africa?
7. What is your view on the Zanu-PF and MDC slogans?
8. Certain slogans reflect anger and are defensive. Identify three from three different political parties and explain why this happens.
9. Write down three slogans and clan praises and compare them, what differences or similarities do you notice? Explain briefly.

Feedback and insight

In both political and religious arenas, speakers have a tendency to invite audience applause. An audience may also applaud spontaneously at certain times: when a speaker first appears, stands to speak, offers praise for their group/ cause or attacks opponents. In a discussion or debate, applause can also mark the different points at which speakers take turns to speak. Speakers or leaders may themselves chant slogans on their first appearance, or chant them at intervals during their address or at the end.

People often chant slogans with placards carried high for all to see. They may be supporting or dissenting around a leader, the government or a business organisation. What they are doing is displaying an ''open letter'' to whoever may be interested; the addressee is expected to take note and respond.

In church circles, preachers often chant an ''Amen ... Allelujah'' series, when they rise, during the sermon when they feel they have said something important, or at the end of the sermon. The congregation in turn will reply with ''Amen ... Allelujah'', some just raising their hands while others stand and raise their hands.

The congregation too can chant Amen or Allelujah when they feel the preacher has said something meaningful, or preacher and congregation may alternate in response to one another with an Amen or Allelujah. The congregation may chant when the preacher mentions the name of Jehovah or Jesus, or attacks the devil. Also, certain participants or congregants have their own particular slogans which they shout at political gatherings or church services.

In the Muslim community, if a speaker chants ''Allah Akbar'', the worshippers or audience chant in return, repeating the same chant.

Here are some case studies for you to think about.

Have you heard of the song *Mshini wami*? What do you associate it with? This song used to be a battle cry for the ANC when it was a liberation movement fighting the apartheid regime from exile. It commands the fighting comrade to give his co-fighter his machine gun, so that he can shoot his way back into his own country.

This song was sung even after liberation, when comrades were commemorating the days of the struggle. However during 2000, the song became a trademark song for President Jacob Zuma in almost all his rallies. During his trial after he had been relieved of his position as deputy president of the country, it became a rallying cry before and after court appearances for Jacob Zuma and his supporters.

Others, such as the then Minister of Defence, Mosioua Lekota, claimed the song was irrelevant because the ANC were no longer out there fighting in the bush. Lekota felt it should be dropped, but this opinion made it even more popular during the 52nd National Conference of the African National Congress (ANC) which was held in Polokwane, Limpopo to elect new leadership of the ANC.

Activity 5.8

- Why was Zuma's *M'shini wami* successful during his trials?
- Does it still have the same effect today?
- Do you know of a similar song or slogan? If so, explain the politics behind it in detail.
- Comment on the words used in this song.

Feedback and insight

The songs that we heard our elders sing while we were growing up are songs they too heard years ago, when they were growing up. Some of these songs were war songs chanted by soldiers preparing for war, ready to attack, or returning home victorious. Most of the songs we sing today are not really new ones. The tune might be different but the theme remains the same (although adapted to suit the time and place). There is an element of intertextuality in most of the songs, meaning that much is carried over from the original ones to what we hear today.

The song *Mshini wami* is associated with Jacob Zuma, but it is not his song – he heard it somewhere as a freedom fighter. The same can be said of whoever started the song – he or she put words together that had been heard in another song. The freedom fighters sang this song under different conditions, but it remains relevant in Zuma's case and will continue to be sung in the future.

The expression ''Hit me! Hit me! Rape me! Rape me!'' is a persuasive expression, albeit a negative one. It encourages children to imitate hitting and raping one another, but in the process it instils elements of violence in them. Though a game, it was found to be damaging to the children. The participants are children, and to them it is a game and the song is characterised by alliterative words – very melodic and memorable, but deadly. The children are playing with dynamite.

The commission indicates that to the children this is a game, and that violence is normal; but in reality it obstructs their rights to basic education.

> ''This game demonstrates the extent and level ... [of] brutalisation the youth has reached and how endemic sexual violence has become in South Africa'' says the report.

The Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Programme came across what they were told were ''sexually transmitted marks'' or STMs, where learners engage in sexual activities with teachers in exchange for marks.

They interpreted from this a situation of forced sexual relations which constitutes rape, with teachers as perpetrators but learners seeing it as normal and harmless.

The sexual activities between teachers and learners were found to have done a lot of damage in the classroom, some learners openly stating that they had lost respect for their teachers because they believed they had abused them.

To the children, ''Hit me! Hit me! Rape me! Rape me!'' is a game, but to adults it is violence. Discuss this statement in the following activity, looking at both sides of the picture and supporting your answer with suitable examples.

Activity 5.9

1.   Briefly explain why the song above is a game to children, whereas parents see it as abuse.

2. Please explain the association between what has been termed "STMs" and teachers and learners.

3. STMs is modelled on STDs. STMs refers to teachers' abuse of learners for gain. STD refers to something that has dread results. Against this background explain the association between the two.

Feedback and insight

Children learn to use language through play. They learn about being adults in the same way: they play at being adults. When it comes to their use of language we may often be shocked when they are playful about using insulting words, for example. In their play about being adults, children imitate everything they see adults do without any sense of shame – after all it is a game to them.

The story above is a case in point. As they play and sing ''Hit me! Hit me! Rape me! Rape me!'' they end up playing at something closer to real hitting and raping; they are imitating what they have witnessed. To them it is a game, but they are actually reporting about serious cases that need attention.

However, while children are playing a game about a serious issue, adults are making allowances or being ironic about the situation. In the story above, the adults have used an abbreviation that points to a deadly disease (STDs, for ''Sexually Transmitted Diseases'') and adapted it to STMs, for ''Sexually Transmitted Marks''. By associating a deadly disease with abuse and corruption in this way, they have made a joke out of a serious case. They have perhaps used language in a frivolous way to report a very serious case. This is a case of association and transference occurring between the two phenomena.

5.4   Advertisements

Earlier we talked about advertisements as persuasive expressions. Adverts are used to persuade, like slogans.

Activity 5.10

1. Where do you always see advertisements?
2. Can you explain why they are placed there?
3. Who are the agents of these advertisements?
4. Who are the targets of these advertisements and why?
5. What is the content of their message and how has it been communicated?
6. Identify the attention-getting devices used and explain fully why they have been used.

Feedback and insight

The word ''advertisement'' comes from the Latin verb *advertere* which means ''to turn towards''. This implies that adverts make people turn towards the product; in other words they are made to draw people towards the product.

Adverts appear on billboards along main roads and places of entertainment, and in the media, both print (eg magazines and newspapers) and electronic (eg radio and TV). They are chanted, sung and spoken.

Advertisements use participants, among other things, such as the speaker and addressees, as well as the message or advert.
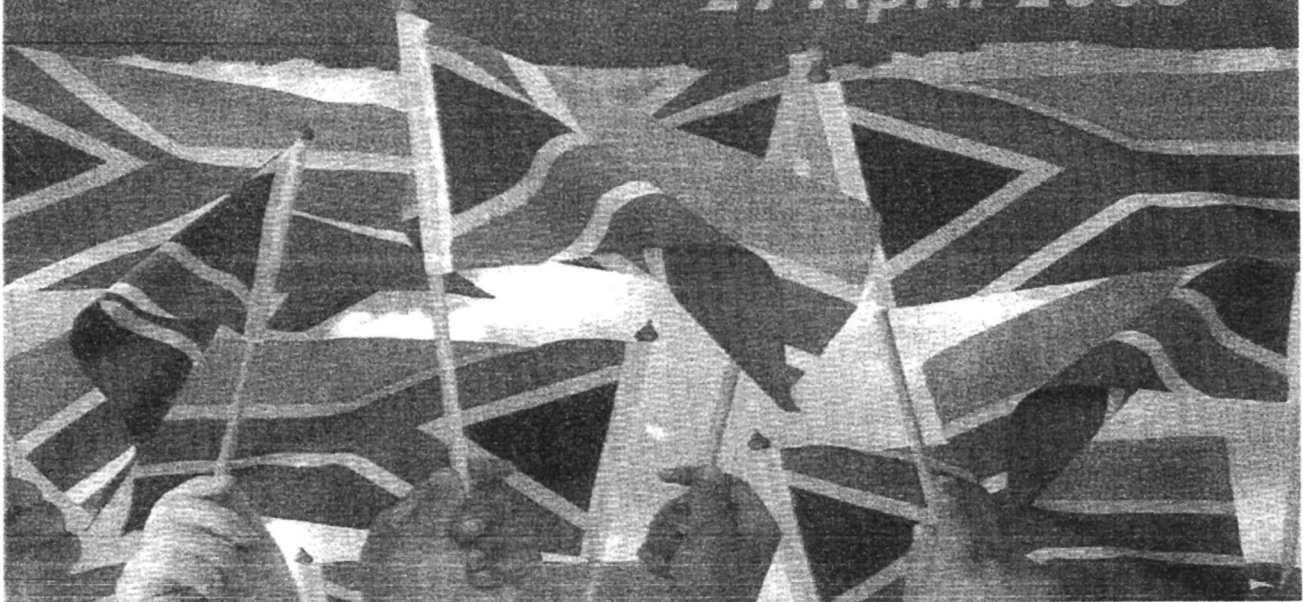
The speaker relays the advertising agency's message. Various famous personalities are used here:

- David Beckham
- Lucas Radebe
- Nelson Mandela
- Desmond Tutu
- Oliver Tambo
- Yvone Chaka Chaka
- Charlize Theron
- Marcia Turner
- Lira
- Unisa's advert featuring Mandela, etcetera.

NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY
27 April 2008

Robert Mugabe

Nelson Mandela

Activity 5.11

1. Why do you think adverts use personalities like these?
2. Sometimes "ordinary" people feature in adverts, mimicking famous people. What is the effect on the product?
3. Why do you think women are used for certain products and men for others? Pick two adverts and explain.
4. Do you think there are adverts for Africans and adverts for white people? Pick two and explain your observations.
5. Identify advertisements with proverbs, idioms or metaphors and comment about their use.
6. Do you ever see any relationship between an advertisement and a title of a book in your language? Choose any two from each and compare them.

Feedback and insight

Advertisements are meant to sell products. Besides the personalities, advertising agencies focus on the advertisment's message. The message includes elements like the language, form or format, and the characteristics of the product. As already noted, some adverts are spoken, some sung and others chanted. The other difference is that in the print media they are supposed to be seen and read, while in the electronic media they are heard on radio or seen, read and heard on TV. Some advertisements do not last because they are found unacceptable: there are complaints that they undermine certain groups of people. Companies tend to target different categories of people and have these clients in mind when they plan their advertisements. However, an ad message that goes beyond the bounds of accepted cultural and language norms may have to be withdrawn from circulation.

Activity 5.12

1. Do you know of any advertisements in your language that are not acceptable in your culture because certain objects or animals have been used? Identify them and explain the unfortunate associations.

2. Which animals are useful to advertising in your language and why? Identify two adverts and explain.

3. Many advertisements may be written in a language that is not your own. Are you or people around you able to buy into them, despite the language issue? Explain fully.

4. Do you think people from different languages and cultures are able to sell products in other languages and cultures?

5. Have you noticed specific products for black or white people in any advertisements? Pick two and discuss.

6. Have you come across advertisements that are offensive? Give two examples and explain briefly.

7. Identify advertisements that contain expressions such as proverbs, idioms and or metaphors and explain their use.

Read the case below and answer the question in the activity.

An advert on a cake in Northern Sotho had a short spell some years ago and was then removed because women felt that it violated them.

The advert went like this: Bona kuku yaka e monate bjang, e mabothobotho e a bothosela [Just have a look at my delicious cake; it is so soft and indeed very, very soft].

Activity 5.13

Can you explain what went wrong in the above Northern Sotho advert? Was it lost in translation? Explain.

Feedback and insight

Different objects are interpreted differently in different languages. Words are also used differently within one language, and even differently within the same language depending on the region where that language is spoken. For instance, the word *bogobe/bohobe* in Northern Sotho and Setswana refers to porridge, but in Southern Sotho it also refers to bread, whereas in all these languages *borotho* refers to bread.

It is therefore important for any language user to learn how words are used and what they represent in different languages (or else you may end up hurling insults at people without even knowing). This also means that companies should always conduct research before they design adverts. Not every advertisement we see on the billboards, hear over the radio or see on TV will sell; some do not work; people find them annoying or insulting, or ignore them. Then there are those that do sell, which people pay attention to, enjoy and admire.

Consider the following development. Sometime in 2008 the ANCYL (ANC Youth League) spoke out against alcohol advertisements, suggesting that they be banned. Actually they were advocating a restriction on the sale of alcohol to

certain hours, to curb a drinking spree that had gone overboard. Their spokesperson at the time, Zizi Kodwa, had the following to say: ''Advertisements play an important role in shaping attitudes. In every alcohol advert an impression is created that, after working hard, the only way to relax is by drinking a beer.'' (*Sowetan* 2008:6). The ANCYL's suggestion met with resistance.

The ANCYL had been drumming up support from traditional and church leaders and met with the then Minister of Health to ask for support of a ban on selling liquor on Sundays.

Activity 5.14

Do you agree with the ANCYL's suggestion? Identify and study alcohol advertisements in all the media. Write down your own view on the ANCYL's suggestion.

Feedback and insight

In all languages praises are used as a means to sell a product like beer. Beer companies put out advertisements and slogans which we then see on billboards, listen to over the radio and watch on TV. The picture on the billboards is appealing, the tune catchy and the message engaging. These adverts often feature people relaxing with a beer after a hard day's work.

Now there is an outcry that these advertisements are sending the wrong message – because these days people of all ages are drinking too much beer. Adults and parents are said to be spending their days at pubs and taverns, children are bunking classes to drink, and many who drink and drive never reach their destinations.

It is important to look at the language in these advertisements and different people's reactions to it. Some are persuaded to buy, while others may read the advert as a message of destruction. Again these different interpretations show how language is like clay: in the hands of an artist it can be used to persuade – although the audience may still read danger in its message.

ATTACK: Hillary Clinton in Pennsylvania.
PHOTO: REUTERS

ITTING BACK: Democratic residential hopeful Barack

This is the headline that followed an advertisement by the Hillary Clinton campaign for the US presidential nomination of the Democratic Party aired before the Texas primary vote, which Clinton later won. The advertisement is about a phone call at 3 am, while a young girl of eight is fast asleep. It asks who would answer the call. In this advertisement, Clinton is implying that she would be the person to wake up and answer it. According to reporters the advertisement implied that Barack Obama lacked experience, therefore Clinton would be the one doing all the work.

The advertisement was later said to have been made when the girl in it, Casey Knowles, now about to turn 18, was eight years old. The Clinton campaign were said to have bought it from Getty Images. It was originally shot for a railroad company advertisement.

The advertisement appeared on a TV satire programme, ABC's *Good Morning America Weekend Edition on a Sunday* presented by Jon Stewart, and members of Casey's family saw it. Later Casey expressed shock about the advertisement, stating that: ''What I don't like about the ad is that it's fear-mongering.'' She made it known that she supported Obama and not Clinton because, she stated, ''I really prefer Obama's message of looking forward to a bright future.'' Later on, the Obama campaign was said to have contacted her and she was later to add, ''I mentioned that we should make a counter ad, me and Obama, against Hillary.'' She, however, added that in the end she would still vote for whoever won the Democratic nomination (*Pretoria News* 2008:16).

Activity 5.15

1. What do you think the advert did for Clinton when it was aired for the first time? Give reasons for your answer.
2. After Casey Knowles appeared on the scene, what do you think happened to both campaigns? Who won and who lost and why?
3. With the advert above in mind, would you say different people can interpret multiple messages in an advert differently? Explain in detail.
4. What do you see as the role of the language in the advertisement?
5. Do you know of a similar case in your language, in your or another country? What happened in the end?

Feedback and insight

We have stressed the issue of advertisements that are designed with the sole purpose of selling products or drawing people to support a cause. We have indicated clearly and unambiguously that although some of these adverts may sell, they often also elicit negative responses from their target market. The advertisement above was made when Casey Knowles was very young and she had no control over its message and intention. It is possible that it sold products in their millions at the time. However, this time the advert did not sell:

although she has made it clear that she would vote for the chosen Democratic candidate, be it Obama or Clinton, Casey Knowles, now 18 years old, was now intending to vote for the man that the advert was supposed to work against.

The outcome of the story above indicates that advertisements move with the times. Some may succeed and last, but some are short-lived. In the past decisions were made for Casey Knowles, but as she grew up, she was making her own decisions in her life. Although the language in the advert remained the same, the person changed because she grew up.

Activity 5.16

Look at the following praises or writings:

>   Don't talk to me, talk to my lawyer

>   Tata machance tata mamillion

1.   Are these adverts or slogans? Explain.
2.   Looking at the words in the above written praises, what emotions do they elicit in the addressee or audience? Explain your answer.
3.   Have you ever come across competing adverts?
4.   Name the companies that designed them and explain the competition between them, focusing on the language they use in their slogans.
5.   Identify three advertisements that appear in your language and explain the emotions they elicit among the speakers of the language.

Feedback and insight

In this study unit we discussed how people see, hear and read things differently. In the same vein, people may interpret the examples given above as advertisements while others regard them as slogans. Some may also have reasons why they regard these examples as both adverts and slogans. Note that a clenched fist can represent black power, with shouts of *Amandla!* (*Power*) and cheers of *Ngawethu!* (*It's ours*). This example is open to interpretation: it may be a threat by your enemy warning you of future defeat; or it may an encouragement to you, as a supporter, to hold on for success. Clearly, therefore, we need to know that the people behind advertisements have their own agendas, which are not necessarily ours. They want us to support their cause. Equally, though, a slogan or an advertisement may work for our good. The watchword, when it comes to advertising, is: Whatever the case, look before you leap.

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Study unit 6

Morality and metaphor

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Learning outcomes

After you have worked through study unit 6 you should be able to:

- give an overview of the concept of morality

- explain how morality is the foundation of any society

- discuss how ubuntu and morality are intertwined and can be regarded as the ''watchdog'' of a person's conscience

- understand elements of folklore that express morality

6.1   Introduction

Welcome to this study unit. In the previous study units you dealt with issues around ubuntu, education systems, family relations and interpersonal communication. In this study unit, we will deal with morality and metaphor. But before we start, please take 15 minutes to write a paragraph on key issues you learnt about in the previous study units.

Activity 6.1

Write down all the key issues you learnt about in the previous study units. Write a paragraph on each issue.

Feedback and insight

In your responses to the above activity we hope you included what you have identified to be based on the concept of ubuntu.

So far, you have learnt about how to successfully interact with others in a multicultural society. You did this successfully through your use of language. You have learnt how language influences education, politics and the media. You now know that showing respect goes a long way in avoiding unnecessary cultural conflicts and misunderstandings among people from different cultures. Traditional education and important principles, as well as fundamental values, norms and philosophies of life, have been transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth. You learnt how understanding people's languages and culture, as well as helping one another during bad and good times, is the basis of African philosophy and the spirit of ubuntu.

In this study unit, we are going to learn how ubuntu is sustained by sound moral principles. By the end of this study unit you will have a solid knowledge and understanding of the term morality as a means to differentiate good and bad morals. We also want you to explore the language of metaphor, which will help you to successfully interact with people of other cultures.

Activity 6.2

Look at the following cartoon from *The Times* (13 April 2008).

Mbalula apologises for behaviour of uncouth League.

Now read the following short extract from *The Times* (7 April 2008):

Outgoing president of the ANC youth league Fikile Mbalula has apologised to the country for the disgraceful behaviour of its members at the league's congress this weekend. ''We apologise to the ANC and the people of the country for the action of uncouth and disruptive elements in the congress'' he said yesterday as the congress was due to start winding up. ''We take collective responsibility, as the leadership, for everything that happened,'' Mbalula said.

What do you think the members of the youth league did to spark the public outcry suggested in the cartoon and apology?

This extract and cartoon illustrate behaviour that is entirely unacceptable in African society. The African National Congress Youth League's behaviour was uncouth; it's disgraceful behaviour was socially unacceptable. Moral codes had been broken.

In your culture, how would this behaviour have been dealt with – in organisations, in the press and in society in general? Was the behaviour described above indeed morally reprehensible, or may we see it as just the irresponsibility of youth?

Now that we have thought about the incident above, let's consider the concept of morality and its applications. By working through this study unit, completing the activities, reading and doing research, you will learn how to identify and avoid the type of behaviour demonstrated by the cartoon above. In this study unit we are going to discuss three main issues: proper behaviour, respect for other people and the use of metaphor in the teaching of proper behaviour.

6.2   Morality

You know the word morality. What does the word make you think of?

Proper behaviour is based on morality. Morality refers to a code of conduct that is authoritative in matters of right or wrong, whether according to society, philosophy, religion or individual conscience.

The term morality comes from the Latin *mortalitus* meaning ''manner, character, proper behaviour'' and has three principal meanings. In its descriptive usage, morality – as already stated – refers to a code of conduct held to be authoritative in matters of right or wrong, whether by society, philosophy, religion or individual conscience. In its second and third meanings, morality is synonymous with ethics, the systematic philosophical study of the moral domain. Ethics seeks to address questions such as how a moral outcome can be achieved in a specific situation, how moral values should be determined, what morals people actually abide by, what is the fundamental nature of ethics or morality itself, including whether it has any objective justification, and how moral capacity or moral agency develops and what its nature is.

Read the following ideas about morality (http://hyeforum.com/).

What is "morality"?

Choose the correct options in the following ''a to z''. Give reasons for your choice.

(a) The opposite of ''fun''.

(b) Morality is the way everyone else thinks we should be

(c) Morality is the way we think everyone else should be.

(d) Something few people really speak about with much confidence any more, except when they're saying nobody should judge anybody. You must conquer your animal nature.

(e) Morality is a way that unhappy old folks enjoy making young folks unhappy too.

(f) Whatever I do, or have done in the past, is what is ''right'' ... and whatever you or anybody else does – or has done – that ticks me off, is ''wrong.''

(g) Morality is a set of rules given by a higher authority; if you conform to them, you will be rewarded; if you don't conform to them, you will be punished.

(h) ''Who are you to judge me?'' – it's something that inherently implies ''judging'' other people ... and judging other people is immoral ... so therefore, morality is ... immoral.

(i) It's whatever or whoever we ''would'' be, if we could ever just summon up enough willpower.

(j) It doesn't matter what it is, because we're all going to do whatever we feel like anyway.

(k) It's something none of us equally know anything about, also known as Moral Flatland.

(l) Whatever it is, just don't ''impose'' it on someone else, or you're accused of being evil (also known as really immoral).

(m) A description for the way we learn to act, usually learned from television, movies, peers, songs, and commercials.

(n) What a prude uses to rationalise being a prude.

(o) An arbitrary set of rules which acts as the glue of a community, also known as a social contract which different parties, human or animal, agree on.

(p) Morality is the effort to make yourself into what you are not, and failing.

(q)   Morality is the systematic imposition, by political leaders and parents, of their own agenda to which you either conform or rebel.

(r)   Morality is the ritual suppression of pleasure.

(s)   A predictable way for one person or group of people to regularly feel superior to another person or group of people.

(t)   HG Wells: ''Jealousy with a halo.''

(u)   Morality is the inner battle between the self (interest/indulgence) and duty – and choosing duty.

(v)   It's Moral Flatland, or everyone pretending not to judge or even have an opinion on anyone else. (In other words, all human beings are equally ignorant regarding moral absolutes, and therefore have no right to comment upon the process for others, ie Mother Theresa is equal to Adolf Hitler.)

(w)   It's an illusion, also known as just do whatever you please. If it turns out you did something wrong, you can get off the hook by pleading ignorance, claiming to be a victim, or denying it ever happened. If none of that works, hey, just ask for forgiveness.

(x)   It's essentially a kind of cosmic economic model, also known as Blockbuster Morality: you're free to keep the movie an extra day or two, but you have to pay the late fee.

(y)   Morality is the process of internalising and identifying with the prohibitions, rules, values, and preferences of one's parents and of society at large.

(z)   Morality is a way for one person or set of persons to control another person or set of persons through skilful tactics of inducing fear, peer pressure, confusion, dependency, helplessness, or guilt.

I hope you found the exercise useful and thought-provoking.

In conclusion, we may say that morality is concerned with ideas about what is good or bad, or right or wrong. It refers to the do's and don'ts of society. These notions which have a great deal of influence on the conduct of members of a society are usually based on some recognised authority whose sanctions are accepted and obeyed.

Now we are going to learn about those features that determine morality. It is however true that morality flows from religion and society. Now is the time to look in detail at how religion and society influence morality.

6.2.1 Sources of morality

Read the following newspaper article. Consider the ''Africanness'' of what the author is saying. Notice, too, how the concepts of morality and culture are interwoven.

SOWETAN SUNDAY WORLD (22 SEPTEMBER 2002)

We must bring back ancient African calendar

MATHOLE MOTSHEKGA

AFRICANS have, from time immemorial, developed a cosmic world-view inspired by the natural order and cycles of time.

This worldview has informed their religious festivals and how these are carried out.

It is based on the philosophy of African holism and its underlying principles of solidarity and humanism.

This philosophy is a prerequisite for African moral and social regeneration and its revival would require the re-establishment of the African calendar, together with cultural and spiritual holidays. The moral degeneration and social disintegration of African communities result from cultural alienation and assimilation into foreign cultures through the use of foreign calendars and cultural and religious festivals that alienate Africans from their ancestors, gods and God.

The movement of the planets around the sun determined architectural and dance patterns, while the rising of stars determined the time of ploughing, harvesting and thanksgiving.

The lunar and solar cycles were used to fix the lunar and solar calendars, which regulated African cultural practices.

The sun and the moon were regarded as father and mother, respectively, of the earth with all living things (including humanity) as their offspring.

The African winter occurs in the first quarter (May/June) of the year when forces of nature are at rest or dead. Their rebirth occurs in the second quarter (August/October) of the year.

In August the gods are reborn and in September the African New year starts. The October full moon marks the beginning of ploughing time.

The preparations for the rain seasons, New Year celebrations and planting were preceded by spiritual rituals that renewed African morality and communion with ancestors, gods and God.

The third quarter (November/January) was the time of germination and ripening of the fruits of nature and procreation.

On December 25th, the sun enters the African Zodiac sign Leo (Tau or Simba) after the rising of the stars of the Orion belt (Makolobeng) and the star Sirius A (Mphatlalatsane).

The rising of these stars announces the birth of the Lion King of the universe (Tau or Simba), whose temples are Taupye (Botswana), Great Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe) and Abu Simba (Egypt).

This gods remained in seclusion until January 6, when it was celebrated.

In the fourth quarter (February–April) the fruits of the year were harvested and first fruit ceremonies took place.

This communion between the living and ancestors restored and sustained harmony between communities, gods, God and the environment.

The animal kingdom also played a major cultural role. The most important animals are cattle, goats, sheep and birds. The symbols of the four quarters of the universe represent the four gods who intercede with God on behalf of humanity.

Furthermore it is important to note that morality in African culture is expressed in all aspects of folklore such as folk tales, fables, stylised prose, proverbs, idioms, praises and songs.

Activity 6.3

1. In your own words explain what you understand by the ancestors.
2. Some call the ancestors, the living dead. What do you think?
3. What role does the concept of ancestors have in your society?
4. Can you think of any religious or cultural belief that is similar to that of ancestors?
5. What are your views about the article?
6. Identify five themes in folk tales and fables that express morality.
7. Write down five riddles and five games in which morality is portrayed and explain how it has been done.
8. Name and explain six proverbs that educate children on manners.
9. Identify five proverbs that could be used in a traditional court to express corrective measures.
10. Do you know of praises or songs that are chanted/sung to express morality? Mention two of each and explain briefly.

Feedback and insight

Some scholars see morality as being derived from society. Morality is regarded as a device to keep society alive and its machinery running smoothly. According to west African scholars morality is essentially a product of religion, but we in southern Africa should not confuse that religion with western religion. These scholars are referring to the African traditional religion of the African culture.

Now that you have studied interpersonal relationships, what can you tell us about culture and its values? Our discussion of morality in this study unit will help clarify what we mean by values, referring to beliefs about what is right and wrong and the best way to behave.

6.2.1.1 God and morality

In most African societies a major religious source of morality is the Supreme Being. Africans believe that moral values are derived from His nature. After creating humans He endows them with the sense of good and bad or right and wrong. God is pure, perfect king, good, kind, loving, holy and generous. His first nature is virtue. He is the supreme judge. Social and moral ordinances reveal the will of God. Therefore humankind depends entirely on God for morality.

6.2.1.2 The gods and morality

The gods constitute another religious source of moral values. They are guardians of God's moral laws or taboos or regulations which regulate people's lives. So they reward and punish individuals and society for what they do. Sacrifices and prayers are therefore offered up to propitiate them and avoid anger and punishment. Therefore the gods are feared, and this fear promotes high moral standards among individuals.

Activity 6.4

Many of you are from a cultural background in which sacrifices are offered to either God or the gods. Write some notes in your learning journal about this.

6.2.1.3 Ancestors and morality in traditional African society

The ancestors are also a source of morality. They have an ethical relationship with humankind and are invisible guardians of moral values. They give approval of any proposed action of the living or show disapproval/displeasure of anything evil and disruptive. They can reward and punish. They can summon living relatives to appear before them to account for their bad behaviour. Therefore the ancestors ensure the moral uprightness of relatives.

So now we see how religion is a critical factor in safeguarding moral values: Africans adhere to moral values because of the fear of the Supreme Being, the gods and the ancestors who will punish them when they offend the moral code; punishment comes in the form of ill-health, poverty or death and reward in the form of long life, prosperity, good health, potency and fertility. However, Africans do not do good or avoid evil because of the attendant religious consequences only.

The following discussion about proverbs is concerned with prescriptions on how to act or exercise moral judgement in difficult times. For instance, a proverb cited at an appropriate time during an argument can settle a dispute instantly. Proverbs are believed to have been handed down by our ancestors and forebears, to whom we owe our communal experience and wisdom.

6.2.1.4 Proverbs and sayings on morality from a religious view

Many truisms, axioms (sayings) and proverbs about morality and ethics are contained in proverbs as part of the ''cultural'' language of different groups. Some Southern African proverbs show how the above applies to our culture.

Read the following extract from a folktale ''Ledile le Sewela'' by Kgobe (1992):

> Ditlogolo: Jonna-Jo! Sewela wa batho! Keleketla, koko!!!
>
> Ledile: Le a bona, bana ba ka, batala ba rile ba bolela ba re: Nyatšamolala
>
> E hwetše molaleng Sewela o nyaditše molala, o hwela molaleng. Matepe a a bolaya, bana ba ka.
>
> [Ditlogolo (Kids): Their surprised response about what happened to Sewela!!!
>
> Ledile (Narrator): You see, my children, the elders said, ''If you don't listen, you will fall into trouble'' Sewela did not listen and she fell into trouble. Bad temperedness kills my children.

The short extract above gives a direct answer about an important virtue such as obedience. Sewela was a sulky, moody and bad-tempered child and in the end she died because she did not listen when the elders gave her the right directions. The proverb says ''Nyatsamolala e hwetse molaleng'' [If you do not listen you will perish]. And in the same proverb in isiZulu would be ''Isalakutshelwa sibona ngomopho''.

Important virtues of society such as obedience, respect and faithfulness are expressed in proverbs or folktales with a moral. Here we investigate possible thematic links between indigenous proverbs and Christian messages for example, which are mainly directed at the discipline of children and supporting values. We should note the close similarities of proverbs from many languages; their messages are often compatible.

There are indeed many similarities between the proverbs from different cultures. Some proverbs from Xhosa, Northern Sotho, Zulu and Venda, in particular, show noticeable similarities with biblical wisdom. Consider the following themes, for example.

a. Disciplining and nurturing children

The importance of this theme stands out in sayings of both the Christian and the African culture; this is because the family is the basic social unit in all societies. A healthy family is therefore essential to a healthy society.

Activity 6.5

Please read the following proverbs which stress respect for the parents. You will agree that it would not be pleasant to be attacked by ravens for showing disrespect!

Proverbs 30:17 Ihlo la kwera tat'alo, la gana go kwa mmalo, le tlo gongwa ke magokobu nokeng, le tlo lewa ke mafoto a manong.

Iliso eligculela uyise, lidele ukumlulamela unina, uyakulikrukra Amahlungulu asemlangeni alidle amathole exhalanga.

[The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked

out by the ravens of the valley.]

IsiXhosa equivalent: Uyakutyiwa ngamaxhalanga.

[You will be eaten by vultures/ Undesirable behaviour towards parents will be visited by punishment.]

Many of these kinds of proverbs are characterised by admonitions such as "If you behave this way, you will be ... [rewarded or punished]" or "If such happens the result is ... So do not ..." and so on. Finnegan (1976:420) sees the same pattern when she says:

– Very many proverbs have patterns

– If ... then ... Where there is ... there is ...

– Or give a rule of conduct with the impersonal pronoun "one".

Admonitions regarding behaviour in proverbs concern respect for adults in particular. In both cultures, Christian and African, the tradition of respect for parents presupposes respect for God and/or the gods. Children are supposed to obey their parents' instructions while parents, in turn, have a responsibility to teach their children the commandments/rules of life.

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b. You reap what you sow

Activity 6.6

The next proverb to consider is: "You reap what you sow". We all know that the death penalty has been abolished in South Africa as well as in many other countries, but what do you think of this proverb, especially in light of the abolition of the death penalty? Should a person be put to death because he or she has caused the death of another? There are many similarities in the proverbs and sayings in both Christian and African cultures that concern this question. Please read the following examples:

Matthew 26:51/2: Gobane e a swarago tšhoša, o tlo bolawa ka yona.

– Owenza ngekrele uyakutshabalala ngekrele.

– [All who take the sword will die by the sword.]

Sotho equivalent: Legotlo le lefa ka setopo.

IsiXhosa: Ingcibi yamanzi ifa ngamanzi/ eyekrele ngekrele.

[An expert in the use of a sword will die by the sword/A sinner will die of his or her sins.]

Genesis 3:19: Bogobe o tlo bo ja ka dikudumela tša sefahlogo sa gago.

Uyakutya ukubila kwebunzi lakho.

[You will have to work hard and sweat to make the soil produce anything.]

Sesotho equivalent: Kodumela moepathutse ga go lehumo le tšwago kgauswi.

IsiZulu: Akukho nkwali yaphandela énye.

[One has to work for one's own good and not expect others to work for one's benefit.]

Axioms or proverbs couched in the negative are a popular form in African language proverbs. Everyone has to look after his or her own wellbeing. For example, the key idea underlying the above proverbs, as well as others, is that success is a result of working hard, while wickedness and laziness lead to trouble.

6.2.1.5 Covenants

Covenants help to establish a union between a person and his or her fellow human beings as well as between human beings and the divinities, and between the ancestors and the Supreme Being. This is because person-to-person and divinity-to-person relationships are largely based on covenants.

Covenants help to promote peace and harmony in African societies, especially in west African communities. People who enter into a covenant relationship refrain from antisocial practices. Since these people now have moral obligations they do not steal or commit murder or adultery, and they behave well towards others.

Consider the following wedding vows:

Bridegroom:

I, SCORPION MADUDA, take you [BRIDE], to be my wife, to have and to hold you from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health.

I further promise to love you and cherish you, and be faithful to you for as long as we both shall live.

Bride:

I, SPIDER MTUBAMTUBA, take you [BRIDEGROOM], to be my husband, to have and to hold you from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health.

I further promise to love you and cherish you, and be faithful to you for as long as we both shall live.

If you made this vow how would you live? What things would you observe and respect?

A covenant between husband and wife or between pastor and worshippers demands respect, obedience, loyalty, faithfulness, truthfulness and honesty.

6.2.2 Society

There are scholars who argue that morality is a product of society. It is seen to be influenced by the social sanctions that are imposed on members of a society. These scholars see morality as based on a horizontal relationship between human beings and their fellow human beings.

Non-religious determinants of morality include:

● customs and traditions

● public opinion

● individual conscience

● proverbs and everyday sayings regarding morality

6.2.2.1 Customs and traditions

Every society has its own norms, in cultural and customary practices, which influence human behaviour. Reward and punishment are meted out based on social norms and traditions. Reward takes the form of praise and honour for the deserving, while punishment takes the form of a physical penalty or fine imposed by the civil authorities on violators of social norms and traditions. For instance, a man who sleeps with his neighbour's wife would be fined by the civil authorities. The prospect of punishment serves as a deterrent and a warning to people to respect community norms. These norms are based on the community's own beliefs, experience and native good judgement.

6.2.2.2 Public opinion

Behaviour may be determined by public opinion, which may be expressed in different ways. Public opinion may take the form of public ridicule or social disapproval. Offenders may be ostracised or banished from society. Fear of ridicule or of being ostracised or banished cautions people to avoid antisocial behaviour. The communal response is an important factor in a moral value system: public opinion or community feeling frowns on disrespect for authority and old age, on the crimes of adultery, prostitution, rape, incest, murder and suicide, as well as of unfaithfulness, stealing, black magic and witchcraft.

Think about your community. How do you deal with issues like these?

Read the following newspaper report.

Couple burned alive for ''witchcraft''

May 04 2007 at 12:34PM

Hyderabad – An elderly couple in southern India were burnt to death on a pyre by a local mob who believed the two were practising witchcraft, police said on Friday.

Sayilu Pandla, 70, and his wife Pochamma, 65, were dragged out of their hut in the village of Upputimmayapalli, beaten and then set on fire by the crowd that included some of their relatives, said district superintendent of police RB Naik.

Upputimmayapalli is 150km north of Hyderabad, the capital of India's Andhra Pradesh state.

Naik said witnesses reported that the mob comprising a few dozen people was led by a relative of the two, Rajaiah Pandla, who accused them of casting spells to make his daughter ill.

Despite their protestations of innocence, they were killed, he said. The incident took place on Thursday, Naik said.

Rajaiah and some others were arrested and charged with murder.

''This is an uncivilised act and it will be dealt with very sternly,'' Naik said.

While Indian cities like Hyderabad are leading the country's charge into the information age, rural areas of India remain deeply superstitious – Sapa-AP.

Activity 6.7

1. What do you think of the actions of the local mob described in the passage?
2. Comment on community feelings as expressed by the people in the story.
3. Had this been your community what do you think would have happened?
4. Look at the following issues:

   - disrespect of authority and/or old age
   - adultery
   - prostitution
   - rape
   - incest
   - murder
   - suicide
   - unfaithfulness
   - stealing
   - black magic
   - witchcraft

How would public opinion in your community respond to each of these issues?

Feedback and insight

Community feeling requires people to be kind, generous, honest, hospitable, humble, hardworking, etcetera. Therefore the fear of incurring the displeasure

of the community, which would result in one being ostracised, beaten, ridiculed or fined, encourages people to obey the social norms of their community.

6.2.2.3 Individual conscience

Moral values are based on the individual conscience. Our conscience makes it possible for us to distinguish between good and bad or right and wrong. Our conscience tells us to be kind, good, faithful and obedient or tells us not to rape, steal, murder or commit adultery. Our individual conscience determines our actions and their consequences. A person who commits an offence is disturbed by a guilty conscience, a stressful state which may bring on sickness. A person who commits no offence has a clear conscience, which promotes personal happiness and composure.

Do you have a personal example of where your conscience has troubled you?

We have seen how morality originates in a society, as part of its social sanctions. Morality is based on a person-to-person relationship, that is on how human beings relate to their fellow human beings. Moral values are derived from society's customs and traditions: described as the ''ways of the forefathers''. Also, communal teaching is an important factor in a moral value system. We see too that the individual conscience is a non-religious determinant of morality. This summary should clarify how we look at those everyday sayings which illustrate the social origin of moral values.

6.2.2.4 Proverbs and everyday sayings regarding morality

Proverbs and everyday sayings demonstrate the social origin of moral values. They may be described as ''situational'' and are derived from social experience. People's own experiences and observations, as well as those of others, will all help towards their building of a moral code. Our experiences and observations help us get to know the do's and dont's of the society. Agreeing about the do's and dont's contained in a proverb, Guma (1967:65) has the following to say:

> A proverb is a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. It serves to express some homely truth or moral lesson in such an appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words could have been used to describe the particular situation.

They address the truths experienced by the society. Finnegan (1970:422) adds the following:

> Proverbs are phrased and are primarily drawn from observation of human behavior, of the way of animals, and of other things in the natural environment.

Many proverbs were formed or derived from the titles of folktales which themselves deal with moral themes.

Look for example at the the folktale ''Pela e hlokile mosela ka go romeletša'' or ''Imbila yeswela umsila ngokulayezela'' in isiZulu [The rock-rabbit is without a tail because of sending others]. The theme in this folktale is that if someone is used to sending others off to bring valuable things for him (or do important things for him that he should do himself), he may fail to get them because of his laziness. The message is a warning.

Another proverb which comes from the title of a folktale is ''Ngwanamagana go botšwa o wetše komeng a re koma ke tšešo'' [A child who does not listen will always get into trouble]. It is a direct warning to children who do not want to listen to their parents. The tale is of two little girls who were specifically instructed not to use a certain road when they were sent to their grandmother to fetch some groundnuts. They took the wrong road and were captured by a cannibal who took them deep into the forest.

Another tells of a person who does not want to leave his or her bad habits and is associated with a tortoise which will not live without its shell: ''Khudu ga e lahle legapi la yona.''

Schoolchildren can be encouraged to work harder by the following proverb:

''Kodumela moepathutse ga go lehumo le tšwago kgauswi'' (literally ''go deep, the digger of *thutse*, for there is no wealth which comes from the neighbourhood'', ie good things are got only through hard work and perseverance). This proverb is used to encourage someone who has started a piece of work but wants to give up because of a problem.

6.3   Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech which is used for its special effect in language.

6.3.1   Definition of metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech where a particular object is described through with which it is compared.

Activity 6.8

Read the following extract from a poem by Puleng from a collection of poems by Kgobe and see if you can identify any metaphors:

Mmamosamaria! O mokhwi wa malaeledi a sephiri,

O letsha la Mahlomola, o motshediši wa banna le basadi,

Ka wena ba tla bona phologo.

[The Samaritan! You are sent in secret,

You are a sad lake, the redeemer of men and women,

Through you they will be forgiven.]

How many metaphors did you spot? Can you tell us what they mean?

In the extract, the Good Samaritan is associated with a sad lake and, actually, he is the lake. Because the lake always has enough water for all the living, it redeems the living.

Metaphor is language that directly compares seemingly unrelated subjects. Let's think of examples. In the poem above, the Samaritan is compared to the lake. Put simply, this says the following: ''The first [subject] is the second [subject].'' A metaphor is a rhetorical trope that describes the first subject as being or equal to the second subject in some way. This makes it possible to describe the first subject in a brief and concise way, because implicit and explicit attributes from the second subject are used to enhance the description of the first subject. Metaphor is a common literary device, utilised especially in poetry, where in a few words, emotions and associations in one context are associated with objects and entities in a different context.

Read the following extract by Puleng, from Kgobe's collection:

A hleng Leobu ke mo ratile

Le ge a mpeta?

A hleng Leobu ke mo hlaotše

Go ba mma wa bobedi,

Bjale o nthaga bokamolahlaleboya?

[And how I loved the Chameleon even if she was older?

And how I have chosen the Chameleon

To be my second mother,

Now she is kicking me out like a donkey?]

In the extract, the wife of the poet is compared with the chameleon. She is indeed the chameleon. Do you know why? What does a chameleon make you think of?

According to Richards (1936), in the discipline of rhetoric, metaphor consists of two parts: the tenor and the vehicle. (In this context, we refer to **tenor** in the linguistic sense – not to the tenor of a person's singing voice; and we refer to **vehicle** in the linguistic sense – not to *koloi/imoto*.) Looking at the extract above, we have the following:

Tenor (ground): the wife is the subject to which attributes are ascribed.

Vehicle (figure): the chameleon is the subject from which attributes are borrowed.

Metaphors are also referred to as comparisons that do not use the words ''like'' or ''as''. Metaphors and similes are two of the best-known tropes used in

linguistic expression. They are often mentioned together as examples of rhetorical devices – for example ''He eats like a pig'' or ''He is as ugly as a baboon''. Both describe a comparison: the only difference between the two is that a simile makes the comparison explicit by using ''like'' or ''as''. *The Colombia encyclopedia* explains the difference:

A simile states that A is like B, a metaphor states that A is B or substitutes B for A.

According to this definition, and using our last extract, then ''O Leobu la ka'' is a metaphor, whereas ''bokamolahlaleboya'' is a simile. However, some describe similes as simply a specific type of metaphor. Most dictionary definitions of metaphor and simile support the classification of similes as a type of metaphor, and historically it appears the two terms were used essentially as synonyms. How do we define a metaphor in this study guide?

In the next section we deal with language and metaphor. What do you think the main issues will be?

6.3.2 The language of metaphor

Activity 6.9

Now that you have learnt something about metaphors, do you think you could write a poem? Could you use metaphors to formulate your own proverb?

Metaphor is an important figure of speech for the formulation of proverbs. Why do you think this is so? For example: "Mosadi ke pudi, monna ke nku" [A woman is a goat, and a man is a sheep]. The usual interpretation is that when confronted with a problem a woman is noisy like a goat, while the man will keep it close to his heart like a sheep and die quietly.

What do you make of the following example?

  Mosadi ke tshwene o lewa mabogo.

  [A woman is a monkey; we eat her hands.]

Old people formulated this proverb to show that the beauty of a woman is in the hard work she does to feed her husband and children. She is encouraged to work even harder without complaining.

Do you see the comparison we are making here? Whether you do or don't, do you think the comparison is justified?

You should have realised by now that we are always comparing two things that are not similar: this is the art of metaphor. Here is another proverb in which a man is associated with a baboon:

  Monna ke tshwene o ja ka matsogo a mabedi.

  [A man is a baboon that eats with both hands.]

Similarly, another proverb says

> Monna ke thaka o a naba.

> [A man is a runner and he stretches out.]

In both proverbs, the elders, aware of the mistakes that men make, formulated proverbs to protect them from their wives. In the first example, that a man is a baboon who eats with both hands, the proverb simply means that a man can go and marry another wife outside his marriage. In the second example, the man is associated with a runner plant which creeps all over and does not have any boundaries: the meaning is that a man should not be prevented from having as many wives as he is able.

Activity 6.10

1. Read the following proverbs and explain their meanings:
   - "Kgomo e swarwa ka kgole, motho o swarwa ka molomo." (Literally: "The beast is held by a thong, a person is held by mouth.")
   - "O se bone go akalala ga bonong, go wa fase ke ga bona." (Literally: "Do not see the going up of the vulture, the falling down is theirs.")
   - "Moletangwedi ke moleta lefsifsi" (Literally: "One who waits for the moon waits for darkness.")
   - "Moreba mogolo ke botlatla" (Literally: "Big stubbornness is foolishness.")
   - "Wa lehwaneng o bušwa ke wa lehwaneng." (Literally: "The one on the small wooden spoon is brought back by the one on the small wooden spoon.")

2. Do you think these proverbs help social interaction? Justify your answer.
3. What lessons do we get from these proverbs?

It is said that proverbs are used to smooth over social difficulties and friction. Do you agree? Engage your colleagues in this discussion.

6.4   Conclusion

Proverbs capture a people's experience. They are made up of the language of metaphors. They are usually in a pithy sentence (or sentences) that have a general bearing on life. Proverbs represent a validation of accepted values, a criticism of behaviour that does not conform to those values, a rule book for successful living and an ongoing commentary, all conveyed to us by means of the beautiful symbolic language of metaphor. Through proverbs we experience the metaphorical representation or description of the situation about which it speaks. We have learnt that metaphors appear in virtually all branches of discourse and few would dismiss metaphors as mere semantic decorations or rhetorical devices. They are fundamental tools of thought and reasoning, as we have seen in the examples of the proverbs discussed in the final study unit of this study guide.

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