

**CURIOSITY OF CHILDREN CHARACTERS IN SISWATI FOLKTALES**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

in the subject

**AFRICAN LANGUAGES**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**JANUARY 2022**

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### CURIOSITY OF CHILDREN CHARACTERS IN SISWATI FOLKTALES

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my wife Dr. Remah Lubambo whom I love so dearly, and who supported me throughout my studies, and to my children Musawenkosi and Nondumiso.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to thank my promoter Prof TM Sengani for his patience, guidance and motivation through the entire study. Without his trust in me this study would not have been possible to complete. I also extend my gratitude to my co-promoter, Prof FS Madonsela who worked together with my promoter for the success of this study.

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to investigate the curiosity of children in Siswati folktales. The study seeks to uncover the occurrence and causes of children's curiosity in Siswati folktales. Furthermore, the study investigates the relatedness of curiosity of children characters in folktales with curiosity of children in real life. In order to achieve the objectives, the researcher used qualitative research methods to collect data. Data was collected from Siswati folktales using the purposive method Functionalism theory as well as Neuman's (2000) analytic approach were used to analyze the data collected in Siswati folktales. Reflecting on the findings of the research it was discovered that curiosity still prevails in real-life children even though the setting is different. It is therefore recommended that folktales continue to be taught since they still convey educational lessons to children that might help both parents and children to deal with curiosity of children in different settings.

**KEY TERMS:** curiosity, characters, children, folktales, folklore characters, narration

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional literature is the oldest type of literature one can come across. It originated as part of an oral tradition and was written down at a later date so that readers can have a record of this literature at hand. Traditional literature includes traditional poetry and traditional prose narratives. The present study will concentrate on prose narratives since it will be investigating the curiosity of children in folktales. This type of literature is oral in nature, passed down from one generation to another by word of mouth. Historically, such folktales were frequently altered slightly in each retelling, in order to satisfy the needs of the community. This is the reason why they were told for different purposes. This is attested by Savory (1974:11) when he says that:

From the deep, dark ages of man, there have been tales told and retold; they have become the traditional folklore of the nations concerned. Sometimes these tales were told as a means of recording a historical event; sometimes they were simply tales to amuse, tales of valor, adventure, magic or to instill morals ... these tales were eventually recorded, and have thus been preserved for all time.

The main focus of this research will be folk narratives as they were told within the emaSwati community. Any folktale may be narrated differently depending on the objectives of the teller and the needs of the audience, and the narration is mostly influenced by the lessons or morals the community intends to teach to their young ones.

The origin of folktales can be traced back to the origins of humanity itself. They relate the adventures, both plausible and implausible, of humans, animals and monsters. The situation and characteristics of folktales are based on historical people and places and they are drawn from religious beliefs, customs and values. Folktales were usually passed down from generation to generation, each culture making the stories their own.

Many tales were written in response to the times and mirrored the feelings people had and what they wanted to impart to the new generation. Rothlein and Meinbach (1991:107) affirm the idea that folktales are usually passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation in societies where the most important communications are oral rather than written. As the focus of this study is Siswati folktales, the following paragraph will give an overview of Siswati as a written and spoken language.

Siswati, is one of the former marginalized indigenous languages in Southern Africa. It comprises a number of dialects: The Siswati of Eswatini, that of the Southern Transvaal (now Gauteng), and that of the Sumayela Ndebele of the Northern Transvaal now called Limpopo Province. That the language was marginalized is evidenced by the fact that its folktales were not documented for many years, but continued to be transmitted from one generation to another until the late date of 1976, when it formally became a language of teaching and learning in schools in the former Eastern Transvaal which is now called Mpumalanga. From that time, a few anthologies of folklore were published, such as *Lukhobo Lwemfene* by T.T. Ginindza in 1981, *Kwesukasukela* by M.D. Ndlela and S.M. Magagula in 1987, and *Sekuhlonywe tents* by N.S. Ntuli and G.A. Malindzisa in 1988. Fortunately, in 1994, Siswati gained the status of being one of the official languages in South Africa. Previously, the emaSwati community used folktales to teach their children to conform to certain expected behavior's. Folktale narration was their way of enforcing the rules, and was also used as a measure to communicate how those who deviate from them are punished. This is attested by Buscon (in Dundes 1965:294) when he says that folktales are narrated to apply social pressures on those individuals who do not conform to the accepted pattern of behavior and pressure is exerted on those individuals who attempt to deviate from social conventions. Despite the new challenges brought by modern times and technology, the emaSwati are still using folktales to instruct the youth.

Thus, as elsewhere, the aim of narrating folktales was to inculcate culture and educate children on the norms and values of their own society. Through the narration of folktales children learned what was expected of them according to the traditional standards of emaSwati culture. This is attested by Obiechina (1973:103–104) when he says:

The narration of folktales is an essential way of introducing young people to the customs of their people, their beliefs and prohibitions, their positive

**Commented [A1]:** It only makes sense to distinguish a sub-heading if it is going to be followed up by at least one more sub-heading. This is not the case, so you can just as well include the information that follows below under your heading **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

values, their ideas and ideals and everything that constitutes their moral and ethical view of the world.

Historically, folktales were the best informal education that emaSwati children received, since there was no formal education. From folktales, children learned life skills, and that those who did not conform to set rules were punished and those who complied were appreciated by elders and the community. As De Bruin (2002:200) observes:

Children learn about the norms and culture by means of folktales. In folktales, unworthy characters are always punished, whereas worthy characters receive some kind of reward.

The above extracts show that scholars agree that folktales have a very important role to play in the lives of children, since history, customs and beliefs are embedded in folktales. Folktales may be divided into myths, legends, animal tales, and fables. Each category has its own objectives, designed for the particular audience to which the folktales are told. For the purpose of this research, the researcher will not dwell much on the division of folktales but on the functional aspect of folktales as revealed in child characters of folktales.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

In the past, many researchers have investigated the structure of folktales, moral lessons found in the folktales, and the portrayal of characters, especially those of women. The problems that have been identified are that children in most Siswati folktales transgress or disobey set norms because of their curiosity. This research investigates the reasons why children in Siswati folktales have this kind of behavior in common. Children become curious about something which they are prohibited to do, touch, or see. Among the emaSwati, children are warned by parents not to walk around at night, not to move salt from one home to another when it is evening or during the night, not to drink water while standing, to kneel or sit down when talking to an elderly person, not to stand in the

middle of an open door, and that boys must not play with girls. Whenever a funeral convoy is passing on the road, children are told not to look at the convoy, but to hide in their homes or kneel down facing away from the convoy. Yet it seems surprising that despite the warnings, children still become curious to know the reason why they are forbidden to do certain things, and at the end of the day, they break the rules.

In most folktales, children are depicted as curious characters. They are depicted as characters who always eat and touch what they are not supposed to eat or touch, and walk in the paths where they are told not to walk. The researcher through his investigation wants to uncover the reasons behind such attitudes. Folktales are the reflection of the cultures, norms and values of a particular society, therefore the folktales to be investigated will be looked at in relation to real-life children in our society. Thus this research will undertake an investigation of the reason behind the curiosity of children in folktales. The researcher wants to understand whether the folklorists have a hidden story to tell or whether they just use children as characters of folktales to entertain without conveying any message specifically about children as such.

### **1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study is to critically investigate the curiosity of child characters in Siswati folktales.

#### **1.3.2 Objectives**

Besides the overall aim, this research aims to meet certain objectives necessary in order to answer the research questions. The following are the set objectives to attain these goals:

- to analyse the way children are depicted in Siswati folktales.

- to investigate hidden meaning behind the interdiction, if any.
- to investigate the cause of curiosity of children in folktales.
- to see whether there is a correlation between children in folktales and children in real life.

### **1.3.3 Research questions**

The researcher has formulated the following questions which will give answers to the research problem.

- How are child characters depicted in folktales?
- What are the hidden meanings behind the interdiction, if any?
- What is the reason for the curiosity of child characters in folktales?
- What is the relationship between the curiosity of children in folktales and in real life?

## **1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH**

Most Siswati scholars of literature, conducted their research on drama and novels. Those who investigated folktales looked at the structure of folktales, women in folktales and the teaching of folktales in the classroom therefore the study will try to cover the gap identified and investigate the reason behind the phenomenon and possible ways of dealing with it. The study will further examine whether the curiosity in folktales aligns with the curiosity of children in real-life situation. A contemporary approach to children's literature is the concern that children are real and vital, and today teachers are challenged to help children deal with issues that embroil our society.

The researcher believes that through the entire research on the curiosity of children in Siswati folktales, parents will discover answers and the communities will change their perception about the curiosity of children. The researcher hopes that this research will



benefit the society and bring a change to the way children are depicted and treated whenever children display their curiosity in real life, as folktales resemble the real life community and their cultures, including the standards they should maintain.

## **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study of folktales is very wide and this study will focus on selected Siswati folktales. Only folktales that feature children as main characters will be analyzed. These folktales will be selected from different anthologies of folklore compiled by different editors and authors. The selected folktales will assist the study in providing answers to the research questions.

## **1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

To analyze the data collected, the researcher will use the theory of structural functionalism, which has its origins in the thought of Émile Durkheim (1858–1917). The reason for using this theory is that it looks at both social structure and social functions. It considers the society as a complex system which has different parts that work together to promote unity and firmness. This theory essentially looks at the macro level of the society; it addresses the society as a whole. The norms, values, culture, customs, traditions and institutions form part of elements that function together to address the problems of the society. Abrahamson (1978:17) writes about functional theories as structural–functional in approach. They do not look at the surface part of a phenomenon but also at its hidden functions.

Functionalists are concerned with the kind of function and the type of characters which make functionalism suitable for the proposed study. The proposed study will also be looking at children as characters, interdictions imposed on them, and the violation of the interdiction.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

There are a number of research designs to choose from, it all depends on the type of research and the method of collecting data that will be used by the researcher.

### **1.7.1 Research methodology**

The research will be qualitative by nature hence a descriptive survey method will be adopted through the use of literature accessible in libraries. The researcher has chosen this research method as the most suitable for the topic under investigation, because it will address his research questions. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:12) describe research methodology as the way a researcher carries out research project. In agreement with them my research will be guided by the type of research, research tools and the method of data collection that will be used.

The researcher preferred to conduct the research project through qualitative research because this research deals with general research questions about the phenomenon and will answer questions such as what, why, how, rather than how many. In other words, qualitative research is exploratory or diagnostic while using a small number of people as a sample.

The collection of data is usually done through individually constructed programs. The advantage of this method is that data can be collected through interviews, observation, documents and published literature (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:135).

Bogdan and Bilken (1982:29) identified the five characteristics of qualitative research as follows:

- It uses the natural setting of the group studied as the direct source and the researcher is the key instrument of investigation.
- It is concerned with process rather than simply focusing on the outcomes of

the product.

- It is descriptive in nature.
- It analyses the data inductively.
- It is more concerned with meaning than with numbers.

The above qualities are attested by Leedy and Ormrod (2005:135) when they further say that qualitative research can reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people. It can help the researcher to gain new knowledge about a particular phenomenon; secondly it can also assist the researcher in developing new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon, or to discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon. It also allows an individual to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories and generalizations within the real world. It provides areas through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of certain policies.

The researcher has chosen to utilize qualitative research methodology since this method best suits the environment where he will collect the data, i.e. text based data. The research process will be based on flexible guidelines and personal point of view. The data will be taken from texts, and no interviews or practical observations will be conducted. After collecting the data, the data will be categorised and analyzed.

### **1.7.2 Research design**

Research design serves as the master plan of the research project. It sheds light on how the research study is going to be conducted in order to answer the research question. It provides guidelines on the choice of sampling methods which in the long run will influence the analysis and validity of data. Different kinds of designs can be used when conducting qualitative research. The researcher can choose from the following research designs: phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, content analysis and many more. For the purposes of this study, the approach of content analysis will allow the researcher a chance to explore and scrutinise the specific body of literature selected from

which to collect data. The applications of further research designs will be extensively dealt with in Chapter 3.

**Population** is the whole from which a sample is taken. Lang and Heiss (1975:183) describe population as the total number of people of concern to the researcher from which the sample is drawn. The population for this study will include published folktales from which a sample will be extracted.

**Sampling** is defined by Corbetta (2003:210) as observing a part in order to glean information about the whole. He elaborates that it is the process through which a researcher picks up information from a set of units that make up the object of the study which is the population. Sampling is very important to the researcher since he cannot study or interview the whole population. Sampling enables him to make a selection from the population. From that sample, the researcher makes a conclusion about the whole population from a limited number of cases. The choice of the research sample depends on the research goals of the research study. Sampling helps the researcher to provide good estimations about the nature of the whole. For the purpose of this study, the population is the folktales that deal with child characters. It is from this population that the sample will be drawn.

The main focus is on the curiosity of child characters in folktales; the sample will thus be those folktales that deal with curiosity of child characters. The researcher will not just embark on research without choosing a suitable sampling method for his study. Seal (2004:173) identified two broad types of sampling methods, being probability sampling, and non-probability sampling.

**Probability sampling** is described by Seal (2004:174) as the sample which is regarded as more likely to provide representativeness. Each person in the population has equal known chances of being selected. When such a sample is selected, a list of all members of the particular population is compiled; this is known as the sampling frame. All the elements from the lists are numbered. Under this kind of sampling technique, either simple random sampling, stratified or cluster sampling may be done; but the most

common type of probability sampling is simple random sampling. This is affirmed by Corbetta (2003:218) when he says that a sample is regarded as probable if it has a non-zero probability of selection for all units. This selection is said to be completely random. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (1997:153) identified four stages of probability sampling:

- Identifying a suitable sample size.
- Deciding on the suitable sample size.
- Selecting the most appropriate sampling technique and selecting the sample.
- Checking that the sample represents the population.

Even though in this type of sampling technique, a researcher cannot specify a sampling frame from which to select a sample, it nevertheless provides the researcher with information-rich case studies in which he explores his research question. Unlike in probability sampling, in non-probability sampling it is not always possible to carry out random sampling because chances are limited to a particular sample of the population.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:206) state that in non-probability sampling, the researcher has no way of forecasting or guaranteeing that each element of the population will be represented in the sample. Some members of the population have little or no chance of being sampled. Seal (2004:178) mentions the types of non-probability sampling as quota sampling, snowball and network sampling, while Leedy and Ormrod (2005:206) also mention purposive sampling as part of non-probability sampling.

**Quota sampling:** In this type of sampling, the researcher is compelled to look for interviewees who fit specified criteria such as age or sex. This type of sampling has short interview times since it is conducted in streets, shopping complexes and researchers cannot keep people in the street for a long time. The problem with this type is that it is usually conducted in busy shopping places while people on the outskirts are not represented. And the sample becomes somehow biased.

**Network sampling or snowball sampling:** This approach is used most often when there is no sampling frame available. Sampling is sometimes hidden and depends on recommendations by people who are known and trusted by the population. The disadvantage is that one can interview people who have the same experiences.

**Purposive sampling:** Leedy and Ormrod (2005:206) say that in purposive sampling people or units are chosen for particular purposes. It is appropriate for certain research approaches, but it is important that a researcher should provide a rationale for selecting this sample of participants.

This kind of sampling enables the researcher to use his judgment to select cases that will best enable him to answer his research questions and to meet his objectives. It is used when working with very small samples and when you wish to select cases that are practically informative. In the present research, the researcher will utilise purposive sampling since he will choose folktales which deal with children as his population and from those populations of folktales he will do his sampling with the purpose of answering his research questions and to meet all the research objectives. He will make his generalization from that sample.

**Sample size:** The desktop method, using published folktales, is the main method to be used in this study to gather information. Twelve folktales that portray the curiosity of children characters will be used as the main sources. Only a small size of folktales was chosen to keep the study manageable. This is a case study in which only twelve folktales were selected because their themes answer the research questions and will enable the researcher to achieve the goal of the research.

## 1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Functionalist theory:** Okpewho (1992) defines the functionalist approach as a method of studying the life and culture of a society by examining the functions or roles performed by anything practiced by the society as well as the ways in which these functions help to

ensure the survival of the society.

**Curiosity:** Thompson (1987:222) defines curiosity as the eagerness to know, or inquisitiveness.

**Children:** De Bruin (2002:38) describes children as people who are young, unmarried, pre-pubertal or pubertal. They may be ready to transition to a different life-stage such as entering marriage or becoming soldiers, depending on their culture.

For the purposes of this study, children are people who are still young and unmarried. Since the study is about folktales, animal characters called by the name 'children' will also be considered.

**Folktales** are traditional stories which were originally transmitted orally. The stories were told for several reasons e.g. imparting knowledge and skills, or entertainment. The following scholars have tried to define the meaning of the word 'folktales'.

According Hamilton (2000:625) folktales are stories passed on by word of mouth, often over many centuries. Each time the tale is told, it is changed a bit because no two people tell a story exactly the same way. Some of these folktales travel a long way, and as they are told and retold, they move out of their environments into other times and other places. Although traditional folktales reflect the particular culture and people that created them, common features can be found in folk stories from many parts of the world.

Mota (2009:14) also points out that folktale is a word used to refer to a variety of kinds of folktales.

Finnegan (1970:377) states that there can be no final definition of the purpose and the use of folktales within a culture's stories. However, a popular belief is that stories convey a moral or are told to children to educate or to admonish them.

In accordance with Finnegan, the researcher considers and appreciates all the definitions above but for the purpose of this study, the word 'folktales' will be used to cover all the different types of traditional prose narratives. This study will focus on folktales as an umbrella word for all the various types.

**Narration:** According to Brewster (2017) narration is the act of giving an account in spoken words or in writing. It gives an account of how things happened. He further explains that it is an account of action that is influenced by mood. For the purpose of this study narration will focus mostly on the retelling of the folktale.

**Character:** Scholes, Nancy, Carl and Silverman (1978:18) define characters in a story or novel as being not real people, but made to live a life as if they are real people. Since they are made to live a life like real people, whatever they do should have a motivation. They further pronounce that characters can be fictional or based on real, historical entities. They can be human, supernatural, mythical, divine, animal or personifications of an abstraction. This means that in order to understand characters, we should check their actions, against our own experience. 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.

## 1.9 ETHICAL ISSUES

McLeod (2017:1) defines ethics as the correct rules of conduct necessary when carrying out research. He further states that research has a moral responsibility to protect research participants from harm. A researcher is not allowed to harm the participants or deform their character. The researcher has to respect the participants in all possible ways. This is supported by Bunnik, Trimmers and Bolt (2020:84) when they say that ethical measures are principles that a researcher must observe because the research process must be administered in an ethical, trustworthy, and socially responsible manner in order for the results to be useful.



## 1.10 LAYOUT OF DISSERTATION

The structure of the research study will be as follows:

**Chapter 1.** This is the introductory chapter which presents the background of the study, aims and objectives of the research, justification and methodology.

**Chapter 2.** This chapter will present the detailed literature review relevant to the study.

**Chapter 3.** This chapter will present the detailed research methodology and design which will be employed in this research study.

**Chapter 4.** The summary of folktales and the analysis of curiosity of children in Siswati folktales will be presented in this chapter.

**Chapter 5.** This is the concluding chapter. It will present findings, recommendations and the conclusion of the research study.

## 1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the background of the research, the statement of the research problem was discussed where questions were formulated. The chapter further discussed the aims, relevance, impact and significance of the research. All terms were clarified from the topic to the research problem. The theoretical framework was also discussed. The methodology to be used was outlined with all the processes of data collection, data analysis and data interpretation. Detailed information on methodology will be discussed in Chapter 4. All chapters have been broken down for clarity.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter discussed the outline of the study, and gave the background of the study in brief; the present chapter will give an overview of the literature reviewed with the aim of getting a wide scope of what has been researched, related to the topic. This chapter will focus on reviewing literature related to the topic to identify the gaps and add to the body of knowledge. As mentioned in the statement of the research problem, not much has been researched about child characters in folktales; the resource material is very limited. The researcher has consulted various sources from other African languages in order to view their ideas. The following paragraphs summarize the work of some scholars in this field in order to get a comprehensive understanding of what has been researched and to identify possible new or less fully interrogated areas of research within this topic.

### **2.2 DISCUSSION OF REVIEWED LITERATURE**

#### **2.2.1 Earlier South African scholars**

Marivate (1973) in his dissertation on Xitsonga folktales, focuses on the form, content and delivery of the folktales. The present study will not give much attention to form, content or delivery, but will rather focus more narrowly on one element of Siswati folktales, namely, the curiosity of children as represented in the folktales. In his structural analysis, Marivate (1973) divides Xitsonga folktales into six motifemes, namely, lack, liquidation, interdiction, violation, consequences, and attempted escape. In his arguments, he reveals that in folktales there is always something that is lacking and is triggering children to go somewhere to look for it, e.g. wood or food. In the process, there is the interdiction pronounced by parents to children. This interdiction is said in the form of accepted social custom or in the form of expected moral behavior e.g. not to take a certain road, not to talk to strangers, or not to open something that is closed (sometimes it

was closed for a long time). According to Marivate, parents in folktales usually don't tell their children about the consequences of the forbidden act. Child characters are expected to abide by those rules without questioning their parents. Marivate gives an example of children being curious and violating the interdiction in his folktale titled '*Mabangakhungu*' where children were told not to wander away alone and they did not tell them the consequences thereof. The children's minds were very curious and they violated the rule and fell into danger. This motif is relevant to the present research since through its investigation, it will seek to get to the reasons behind the curiosity of child characters in folktales, as a basis for learning how children in real life can avoid dangers that they are faced with. Marivate's research will assist the study since he elaborated more on folktales dealing with different child characters in his research.

Tsonga folktales are structured and based on features of the human social setting, their themes being mainly on village life of the Tsonga people, who narrate folktales to discourage antisocial behavior such as disobedience, dishonesty and jealousy. This will inform the study since dishonesty is a result of curiosity in that many children are caught up in deceit or self-deceit in violating the given rules. According to Marivate (1973), children in Tsonga folktales are the least considered of people; they're neither given full instructions nor the consequences of violation, so their curiosity is awakened. Marivate does not only concentrate on the morphological structure of the folktales, but also attempts to look at the functions of the folktales, which include to educate and to entertain. This aligns well with the present study as the main aim is to investigate the curiosity of children in order to help reveal the cause of curiosity of children in Siswati folktales. Marivate also deliberates on the songs in the folktales, which give uniqueness to a particular story, and he further highlights that the song keeps the narrator and the audience together. Swazi folktales are based on the emaSwati social setting and they reflect the cultural norms that influence the Swazi behavioral norms and standards regarded as necessary in daily life or for handling day-to-day challenges. Marivate's approach is different from the approach selected for this study, being based on the synchronic approach and the present study will use the approach of functional theory to analyse data on the curiosity of children in folktales. Overall, the study will benefit from information obtained from Marivate's investigation.

Mofokeng (1951), in his dissertation on folktales, focuses mainly on the story, its presentation and the lessons to be drawn from it. He also explores the setting and theme as the main engine of the folktale. The role of the refrain is also outlined and regarded as very important in the understanding of man and his past. In his study, Mofokeng emphasizes that there are morals embedded in folktales. They are told to warn and educate children. They also impart knowledge about history and the philosophy of life of that society. Mofokeng's study of folktales in Sesotho focuses on all three Sesotho language groups: Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho and Setswana. His study of folktales is comparative in nature. Unlike Lubambo (2015) who divided Siswati folklore into myths, legends, fables and folktales, Mofokeng divides folktales according to subject matter and gives a broad discussion within this classification. He regards this method of classification as best when a researcher is doing comparison. Moreover, he discusses other characteristics such as structure, characters and morals found in the tale. In his classification according to subject matter, Mofokeng divides Sotho folktales into four types: animal tales, tales about human beings, tales about supernatural beings, and mythological tales.

In order to illustrate his classification of Sesotho folktales, he further summarises them and gives examples of each type in all three Sesotho languages. Furthermore, he compares the differences and similarities found in similar tales in each Sesotho language as well as variants in different versions of the same tale in one language. In carrying out his comparison, he adopted the historical/ geographical approach. He explains what folktales and motifs are found in Bantu languages in general and in the Sotho languages in particular. He illustrates his motives in some selected Sesotho folktales and from various other cultures in Africa. Mofokeng presents fascinating details about some beliefs and customs in Sotho tales. This information will benefit the present study since it may provide clues about the meanings of some beliefs and customs that are not given in detail in Siswati folktales, there being only the given rules, which at a later stage trigger curiosity in child characters. Mofokeng uncovers the relationship between one event and the next in the plot of most tales. He also reveals the reason why certain tales seem dull and uninteresting when related by one storyteller and yet more interesting when delivered by an expert narrator. He explains the similarities between different tricksters including the occurrence and the importance of the three-fold repetition in a folktale. When dealing with the songs, he clarifies the part played by

the refrain in the story as a whole.

Unlike scholars such as Marivate (1973) and Lubambo (2015) who divided folktales into categories, Mofokeng (1951) divides Sotho folktales according to subject matter, which makes his study different from the present study since this study analyses folktales collectively. However, the present study will benefit from Mofokeng's detailed discussion of the similarities between different tricksters since tricksters are likely to be manipulators of other folktale characters.

### **2.2.2 Recent South African scholars (1980–2000)**

Makgamatha (1987) also elaborates on the form and structure of Sesotho folktales. He further examines models of structural analysis in Northern Sotho folktales. Makgamatha divides folklore into myths, legends and folktales. His classification is different from the present study in that Siswati folklore is divided into four genres: myths, legends, fables and folktales. However, Makgamatha acknowledges that the division of genres varies from one folklorist to another. This shows that folktales have spiritual and social functions in the community. In addition, he investigates the embodiment of certain folk constructs such as totemistic, animistic, and religious beliefs. His relevancy to the present study is identified in his discussion of the functions of folktales. Makgamatha makes mention of the lessons behind the telling of the story as a very important aspect of a folktale. In one of his folktales, titled '*Sewela le Korintsane*', he gives the example of a girl who broke with the customs of the Basotho by refusing to marry her cousin, and chose a husband for herself, only to find that the husband was not a human being, but a snake. This is a folktale which incorporates morals or inculcates culture and belief. Curious children usually disobey the set rules as the girl has done in this folktale and they get punished for their actions.

Makgamatha (1987) variously applies the diachronic and synchronic approach as well as the psychoanalytic approach and diffusionist methods. In dealing with the synchronic approach, Makgamatha utilises functionalism and structuralism, as a school of thought that studies folklore in its current form as a phenomenon in the existing society without taking cognisance of its origin. He further mentions that a function of the folktale is to

reassure the audience about the conditions of the present world as they are portrayed in everyday activities. The present study will also analyze folktales using functionalism as an approach since curiosity is a social phenomenon that obtains in current folklore and current society. Makgamatha also discusses the language and style used in folktales. He mentions the manner in which the narrator delivers his tale, including mutual participation of the audience. Although he focuses on Northern Sotho folktales, his work will benefit this study through the insights offered in application of the theory of functionalism and the elucidation of the functions of folktales as well as the examination of language use in folktales.

Canonici (1995) explores Zulu folktales and his focus is on tricksters and trickery in the tales. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of folktale tradition, Canonici studied most available collections of Zulu folktales, but restricted his thesis to a limited number of stories that present trickster figures as their protagonists, and especially to the most ancient sources, since they reveal a more genuine Zulu situation. Canonici (1995:19) describes folktales as fictional creations performed for entertainment and relaxation, and further acknowledges folktales' educational function as reflected in the fact that they reflect human life and communicate messages based on homespun wisdom encoded in the story. He further recognises that the problem and conflict represented in them are generally solved by some kind of cunning plan. Canonici further describes trickster tales as derived from animal fables based on observation of nature, which are then transferred to the sphere of human behavior. The successful practitioners of trickery are small animals which appear to have no alternative but the use of cunning and intelligence in order to ensure their survival in a hostile and highly competitive environment dominated by powerful killers. Some of their psychological characteristics are manifested as alertness, carefulness and guile, all being traits needed in order to avoid being caught, or to procure food by stealthily attacking others. When a larger and stronger animal uses similar tactics against a smaller creature, or when it tries to catch them by sheer physical strength, the small trickster reacts by devising a careful plan that will eventually lead to his own victory and to the destruction of the powerful enemy. There is therefore a clear distinction between successful and unsuccessful tricksters in the tales. Trickery comes to symbolise the success of brain over brawn, of small over big and powerful (Canonici 1995:1).

In his selection of folktales, Canonici differentiates between successful and unsuccessful trickster tale characters, and discusses the characteristics of each. Canonici's examination of Zulu trickster tales led him to conclude that the tales offer help in the process of self-identification because the trickster motif embodies the notion of a cultural threat that goes well beyond the recent historical past relating to the golden era of Zulu nation building, to sink its roots in ancient times, even before anything that could be said to relate to modern Zulu culture and society. Chakijane in fact is an adaptation of Hare, the successful Pan-African trickster figure, with which it has many features in common, while it also stresses the Nguni innovation of superior intelligence and of extreme determination. Izimu is a composite figure largely based on the Pan-African Hyena, but also presenting important character innovations that allow the figure to interact with humans, thus giving clearer expression to their deep concerns.

Modern literature, like all literature worthy of the name, reflects the problems besetting human life. These are never easy to identify and even less to solve with ready-made remedies. Therefore, there is an all-pervading feeling that whatever solution one applies, one can never be quite sure of the result. Hence the bewildered sense of ambivalence that permeates even the most comical narrative representations of life as portrayed in the trickster folktales. The present study will benefit from Canonici's work, as it will inform the study on how children in folktales were often caught out by the trickster's machinations as a result of curiosity leading to their violating the given rules.

### **2.2.3 Twenty-first century scholars**

De Bruin (2002) in her master's dissertation 'The role of children in the Zulu folktale' did an intensive study on the role played by child characters in the Zulu folktale. In her research, she looks at child characters in a societal context. In looking at the family within the structure of Zulu society, De Bruin investigates parenting and the division of labour among the members of the family. She looks into the issues around getting married, begetting children, and the parenting of children in the context of traditional expectations and guidelines for parenting in the Zulu family – in terms of which there

are many societal and family rules to be followed.

Zulu folktales display both good and bad parenting. De Bruin discusses the hierarchy behind the division of labour in the family, under which parents were viewed as the most important people, especially the father, who is regarded as the most significant figure and head of the family. Thus the typical role of parents in folktales is to give instructions and rules to be followed by their children; this links very well with the present study, since it is again observed that the given rules are usually violated by children owing to curiosity. De Bruin observes a division between the respective roles of boys and girls in her selection of folktales. Some tales, such as *Dema na Demazane*, and *Inyoni yensimu nenyoni yemasi* (Msimanga 1986:227–231) present a good example of curiosity: Dema wanted to know what was happening in his parents' hut since they had instructed the children not to open the hut. Looking through the window, Dema discovered that his parents had a bird that produced *emasi* which his parents had been eating alone. Dema's curiosity inspired him to find out more about what he saw. He also involved his sister, Demazane. Unfortunately for them, the bird flew away and they were both in danger of retribution from their parents.

De Bruin further describes the consequences demonstrated in folktales of being a virtuous girl or a commendable boy, as well as the consequences of punishment that follows the violation of rules (De Bruin 2002:211).

Ramagoshi, Maree, Alexander and Molepo (2007) looked at the possible role played by folktales in perpetuating abusive behavior. This concurs with the present study's goal of finding a remedy for norms that may perpetuate the social consequences of curiosity as demonstrated by child characters in Siswati folktales. According to Ramagoshi et al., the portrayal of children in folktales provides insight into society's attitude towards children. Some of the ways that children are seen to be disciplined in folktales are regarded as child abuse in contemporary South Africa, and thus abuse is seen to be entrenched in the folktales. In their interrogation of the subject, the meanings of abuse, folklore and folktales were defined and the link between these concepts was clarified. Five Setswana folktales were selected for the investigation of the challenges posed by clinging to certain beliefs, and the discussion of the implications of the continued



existence or survival of traditional beliefs in modern society. Ramagoshi et al. (2007) observe that in South Africa, child abuse has its roots in the myths and beliefs perpetuated by inherited norms and point out that folktales are a mirror of social beliefs: they reflect the thoughts and ongoing customs of a society in a particular time and of the Batswana in particular. The writers discuss the spreading of HIV/AIDS as a result of child abuse deriving from some cultural beliefs and traditions. The present study is not concerned with HIV/AIDS, but it benefits from this research since it offers information on how children in folktales are depicted and punished, often as the result of curiosity. Unlike other researchers, such as Lubambo (2015) and Marivate (1973), who divided folktales into four types, these authors categorised folktales into cumulative tales, animal “talking heads”, humorous tales, realistic stories, religious tales, romantic tales, and tales of magic. While they identify abusive themes in the various folktales, they also mention that folktales were used for instilling knowledge and good behavior in children and had a moral message. These views are relevant to this study in the sense that folktales educate and influence the behavior of children.

In their discussion they point out that some of the methods that were used in order to discipline children or compel them to conform to certain rules are abusive to children. They identified the following abusive measures:

- Physical punishment as means of developing strong members of the society, manifested in smacking, deprivation of basic needs, beating, injury through various means, lack of protection against injury, and the deliberate taking of the life of a child by an adult.
- Sexual abuse.
- Educational abuse, which occurs when a child is permitted to play truant repeatedly, when there is no supervision of a parent or caretaker or when a child’s special educational needs are not attended to.
- Emotional abuse, which occurs when a child is persistently ill-treated emotionally; for example, through verbal abuse, humiliation, lack of affection, isolation and rejection.

- Neglect, which occurs when a child is not protected against or is deliberately exposed to danger, including physical exposure in inclement weather; deliberate undernourishment; or withholding of proper medical care.

The researchers agree that the abuse themes are common in folktales and fairytales and they argue that fairytales and folktales are natural sources for the examination of abuse themes and that traditional storytellers have used terrifying events to create the emotional experience of grief and abandonment. The enquiry of Ramagoshi et al. (2007) informs this study on how folktales terrify children into obeying given instructions in Siswati folktales. Shifting blame is another aspect of abuse demonstrated in folktales, when blame is shifted in order to protect the reputation of prominent figures such as fathers, chiefs or other respected members of the society. This part of their discussion is relevant to the present study since it reflects the folktale theme of parents shifting blame onto children, forgetting that children are naturally curious and they need more clarity in order for them to behave well in all circumstances. Overall, Ramagoshi et al. will assist this study since they investigate the condition of children in folktales, which is the main focus of this study.

Masuku (2005) analyses proverbs, folktales and praise poetry, with the aim of determining the ways in which society expects women and girls to behave in order to be accepted as members of society. She focuses on the stereotypes attached to women and analyses how women were depicted in folktales, women's reactions to their cultures, and the attitudes of women towards marriage. She looked at how women were depicted in folktales, proverbs and praise poetry. Masuku utilises a feminist approach in order to define how women are oppressed and to identify why some women seem ignorant of the abuses. She analyses selected Zulu folktales as well as women, family and customary society as seen from a Zulu perspective. In her analyses of folktales, she makes mention of the folktale *Dema na Demazane* where the boy Dema was curious about the bird that produced milk. The curiosity of both children was awakened when they were denied the *emasi* produced by the bird. The version of Masuku's analysis of the folktale is similar to that of De Bruin (2002). The difference lies in the perspective from which they approached the folktale. Masuku mentions that most folktales teach children how to behave according to the expected standards of their society. She explains that parents are seen as responsible for raising their children and giving them instructions to obey,

but that it is curiosity that led Dema into disobedience. This links very well with this study, since it will assist the researcher to formulate answers on why most children in folktales disobey given rules. Masuku's (2005) study is relevant to the present study, in that she also focuses on sociological aspects of folklore. She refers to the anthropologist and structuralist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, who focuses on the paradigmatic analysis of folktales in a way that not only reveals the structural content, or storyline, but also focuses on the sociological aspect of folktales. Even though the present study will not be using feminism or the theory of Lévi-Strauss to analyse Siswati folktales, Masuku's perspective is relevant to the present study for the reason that it focuses on sociological aspects.

Lubambo (2015) made an intensive study of the folktale in her dissertation, where she explores how boys are depicted in Siswati folktales and how this depiction may have an influence on boys in real life. This is relevant to the present study since the depiction of children in Siswati folktales, including their curiosity, will be used to determine the influence of these depictions on children in real life. Her study further investigates the correlations between traditional and modern boys in as far as behavior, problem-solving and a general approach to life are concerned. She tries to expose the value of folktales in contemporary society with special reference to boys as the main focus of the study. Lubambo (2015) acknowledges that the reason for telling and retelling of the stories is to share the culture with the new generation, so as to inculcate the morals and standards valued by the emaSwati, and moreover to perpetuate the culture of narration itself for generations to come. She believes that this can help modern boys to learn how to approach problems and complex situations in an acceptable manner, as did boys in the folktales.

Lubambo (2015) draws attention to the functionalist belief that analysis of social structures is of primary significance since these denote more-or-less enduring patterns of social arrangement within a particular society or social organization. Functionalism propounds that the meanings and motivations behind social behavior are to be understood through the social system and its structures, in that these institutionalize its culture and values (Lubambo 2015:38).

Lubambo's application of the functionalist approach is relevant here since the current

study also identifies functionalism as an appropriate tool in analyzing the data collected for the study.

Lubambo (2015) utilises qualitative research methods to gather and interpret her data, which was collected through focus groups, individual interviews and textual analysis. Data was collected using unstructured interview guidelines, recorded, and transcribed for analysis. Through her analysis, Lubambo (2015) discovered that boys in folktales were able to play the role of rescuing their villages, siblings and family members by overcoming difficult situations and circumstances, such as fighting monsters. In contrast, Lubambo discovered that modern boys attack different monsters and fight different kinds of wars, and also use their own differing strategies and weapons to fight modern monsters. According to Lubambo, modern monsters can include drug abuse, alcoholism, and sexually transmitted diseases, lack of job opportunities, and peer pressure. All the above-mentioned monsters can be conquered if modern boys can learn from the experiences of boys in traditional folktales, but using modern 'weapons' and strategies to confront these enemies. Modern boys can also learn to be brave, able to control anger, to tackle problems on their own, capable of thinking and using their minds wisely, capable of flexibility in using a variety of strategies to solve challenges in different situations, able to take care of and protect their families as well as the community at large (Lubambo 2015:90).

Lubambo (2015) concludes her study by confirming that folktales can still be used as a tool for teaching boys, and indeed young people generally, and suggested that since traditional Swati boys were taught in their regiments (*libutfo*) modern boys can also enjoy the benefits if modern structures such as boys' fora can be formed. Different structures such as the Department of Education and the Department of Art and Culture, as well as the media, can lend a hand in arousing recognition of the value of Siswati folktales and their further developmental uses. Strategies may differ in teaching folklore, but the narration and the functions remain the same. Lubambo believes her recommendations will assist listeners and narrators of folktales in interpreting folktales in a way that corresponds with modern life.

Lubambo (2015) is relevant to the current study in the sense that she analyses Siswati

folktales from all four categories but differs from the present study in that her main focus is on folktales that have boys as main characters while the current study is about all children regardless of sex, gender and age.

In his doctoral thesis, Mota (2009) analyses the relationship between a grouping of Angolan folktales and the personality development of an Angolan ethnic group, the Lunda-Cokwe. Angola was among the countries colonised by Portugal, which led to marginalisation of the indigenous Bantu languages. Whilst the language of education was Portuguese, the common language of the group of people studied in Mota's research was Lunda-Cokwe. Marginalisation of their language led to a loss of culture and identity among the Lunda-Cokwe. After Angolan independence, the Lunda-Cokwe people started rebuilding their social and cultural identity through the reinstatement of their traditions. Narration of folktales was one of the methods they used to instill traditional knowledge and culture. A main objective of Mota's research was to determine the contribution made by Lunda-Cokwe folktales in rebuilding individual and group personalities within the Angolan community as a whole. His premise is that personality is informed by culture; this is embedded in folktales, which need to be learned, internalised, and passed on from generation to generation. By narrating their folktales, Lunda-Cokwe people may regain their identity through the realisation of the traditional cultural norms and values of their society. In his study, Mota gives primary attention to folktales, in terms of elements such as the structure, functions, and opening and closing formulas of folktales.

Mota (2009) collected his data from people and through desktop research. He examines three theories that offer means of analysing his data: those of Propp, Finnegan, and Bourdieu. For instance, Propp's model is considered as a way of analysing the character types of Lunda-Cokwe folktales, although he found that not all of the folktales conform to this theory. Mota's major proposition is that the folktale serves as an integral means of transmitting the cultural heritage of a community. He recognises that folktales pass on the community's knowledge, culture and values to succeeding generations. This aligns well with the present research into Siswati folktales as a means of instilling emaSwati culture in our youth, and will assist the present research in providing answers to the research problem, especially in terms of the way child characters are portrayed in

Siswati folktales. Mota states that the Lunda-Cokwe folktales are told repeatedly by adult males with the aim of building personality. Some young people who are keen to promote the development of their language and cultural identity may also take the initiative of narrating the stories of folktales as an opportunity to perform and explicate the moral and cultural content of the folktales.

In summary, Mota demonstrates that Lunda-Cokwe people traditionally educate their young through the narration of folktales that provide moral lessons to children. However, folktales are told and interpreted by a man in the community who is a specialist in this function. He expects participation from his listeners, and the audience may agree or disagree with his interpretation; a wrong interpretation leads the interpreter to clarify his point further. In this way, the narration of the tales (which was their only means of instilling their traditional knowledge and culture) has a profound influence on the building of character and personality among the Lunda-Cokwe. He thus affirms that personality is informed by culture, as embedded in the folktales.

Mota (2009) concurs with Marivate (1973) in his conceptualisation of the structure, function, and opening and closing formulae used in the narration of folktales. The present study does not focus much on the structure and formulae of the folktales, but will investigate the curiosity of children as represented in the content and the functions of folktales.

### 2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FUNCTIONALIST THEORY

Elliot (1988:9) articulates that the Functionalist theory regards societies as systems of interrelated and interdependent parts and describes the parts as having an inbuilt tendency to adapt to each other so that the society is in a state of equilibrium or balance. Functionalism therefore provides a perspective on society. It views society as an organism in which all the parts are integrated to function for the benefit and wellbeing of the whole. Parsons (1999:1-3) puts emphasis on function, interdependence, consensus, equilibrium, and evolutionary change within a social system. He views the society as a social system that consists of different institutions where each has a role to play for the benefit of the entire society. These institutions are the social structures which serve the

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needs of the nation and bring stability in its social life. For Durkheim (in Cheal 2005:16), an individual is the product of society. Therefore, the values one holds and the normal patterns of behavior one displays are the result of the pressures exerted by society to conform and society must ensure that this conformity occurs as expected.

Overall speaking the functionalist perspective observes society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability within the society. This approach broadly focuses on the social structures that shape society. The present study adopted the functionalist theory since children are part of the society and Siswati folktales are told among society members with the aim to teach moral lessons, history as well as norms and values of the society. On this note, children as members of the society are taught the norms and values of the society that contributed to the patterns of behaviours that at the end of the day contribute to the building of a healthy society. The functionalist ideas assisted the researcher to conceptualise and further explicate the functions of folktales in the society as well as getting answers to the research questions on the curiosity of children in folktales.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided a brief discussion of the literature reviewed from various sources, cultures, and African languages as well as the Functionalist theory on which the study is grounded. Literature reviewed represented scholars active in the past 40 years. The relevancy of literature was also outlined to see if there are still areas deserving of further research. All literature reviewed will assist in the development of the present study.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 2 presented the literature review of this study. Different scholarly literature works such as dissertations, articles and books relevant to the study were reviewed in order to establish the current status of research on the nature and role of curiosity in children as represented in Siswati folktales. The main aim of conducting this literature review was to build an understanding of folktale research that may assist in providing answers to the research problem. This chapter elucidates the research design and methodology of the study. It further discusses the research methods, and the data collection instruments (such as the population, sampling methods, size of the data, and data collection methods). The study adopted a qualitative research design to analyse the factor of curiosity of children in Siswati folktales.

### **3.2 METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

This section outlines the methods used in this study, that is, a discussion of the background, identification of the sample, sampling procedure, sample size, the procedure used to collect data, and data analysis. According to Johnson and Christensen (2004:18) the term 'methodology' refers to the way in which one approaches problems and seeks answers. They further clarify that in the social sciences, the term 'methodology' applies to how one conducts research: methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering. The aim of methodology then is to describe approaches to research and elucidate various paradigms of research. Similarly, Kaplan in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) states that methodology aims to describe and analyzed data collection methods, throwing light on their limitations and strengths, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences, and relating their potential to reach into the 'twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge' (Cohen et al. 2007:45). In this sense methodology concerns not the outcomes of the study but the process involved in undertaking it. The following paragraphs will discuss the research methods used in this study and further highlight all the steps and tools



necessary to assist in finding answers to the research problem.

### **3.3 RESEARCH METHODS**

Research methods are the tools that researchers use to collect data. These tools help in guiding the researcher to gather data about social reality from individuals, groups, artefacts and texts; or any other media. The methods are probably influenced by the research questions, the ontological position and/or conceptual framework of the researcher, and also the aims of the study (Nieuwenhuis 2010:80).

In providing the aims of research methods, Kaplan (1973) writes:

If methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering, the aim of methodology then is to describe approaches to kinds of paradigms of research. The aim of methodology is to help us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific enquiry but the process.

Different kinds of research methods are applied by researchers, depending on the nature of the research: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (a mixture of qualitative and quantitative). Kaplan further mentions that it is more customary to use either qualitative or quantitative methods. The present researcher decisively adopted qualitative methods of research to conduct the research on the factor of curiosity of children in Siswati folktales. However, Trochim and Donnelly (2001:157) recommend that in certain cases, in order for the researcher to compile a good study, there is a need to use both the quantitative and qualitative measurements. In the following section, the research methods are discussed even though only one will have been selected as a method of investigation in this research.

#### **3.3.1 Quantitative methods**

According to Van Rensburg, Alpaslan, Du Plooy, Gelderblom, Van Eeden and Wingston

ton (2010:85) the quantitative method is a formal objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the phenomena under investigation. They further explain that this kind of method is used to describe variables, determine cause–effect relationships between variables and examine relationships amongst them.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) describe quantitative research as a study that relies upon variables that can be measured. The data can then be collected, organised and interpreted via statistical techniques (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:202). The main purpose of quantitative methods is to seek explanations and predictions that will generalise to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm or validate relationships, and to develop generalisations that contribute to theory (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:95).

The present study will not implement this method of investigation since it will not be working with numerical data but with human characters in a natural setting in Siswati folktales.

Neser et al. (1995:43) mentions three points of departure when using quantitative methods of investigation, namely:

- Natural and social realities are observed and studied in a similar way.
- Scientific knowledge should be factually based on things that can be observed and measured by means of senses.
- The research process should yield value-free knowledge.

Looking at the values above, it is evident that the present research will not consider most of these values since they are not applicable in providing answers to the research questions presented in Chapter 1. Therefore, qualitative research methods are the best option for the present study. The following paragraphs will discuss qualitative methods of investigation.

### 3.3.2 Qualitative methods

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:183) define qualitative research as applicable to a study that relies upon data collected via open-ended narratives and observations. It is based on detailed descriptions of events and people, as well as excerpts from various records that include letters, recordings, and other documentation. Thus, it is basically verbal in terms of its data base and analysis.

Strauss, Corbin and Corbin (1998:67) indicate that qualitative research means any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can represent research about persons, lives, experiences, emotions and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena and interactions between nations.

Mouton and Marais (1989:157) define qualitative research methods as that approach in which the procedures are formalised and explicated in not so strict manner, but in which the scope is less defined in nature and in which the researcher does his or her investigation in a more philosophical manner.

Borg, Gall and Gall (1993:194) maintain that the purpose of qualitative methodology is to describe a given set of phenomena though there are certain interventions. They point out that it is important that the researcher minimizes personal opinions and biases to remain as objective as possible. Correspondingly, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:160) indicate that qualitative research focuses on and narrows the qualitative purpose statement, which is formulated as questions, not as a hypothesis. These questions typically include core questions and a number of sub-questions, usually amounting to no more than five to seven sub-questions. This method aligns very well with the aim of the present study, the method of investigation being likely to provide answers to the research questions. The distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research by Van Rensburg et al. (2010:85) are listed below:

- It involves a holistic investigation executed in a natural set-up.
- A person is the primary data collection instrument in this type of research.
- The emphasis is on the use of qualitative methods.
- Subjects are selected in a purposeful rather than random manner.
- The researcher makes use of inductive data analysis so that unexpected results will also come to the fore.
- A grounded theory can be developed.
- The design develops as the research develops.

### **3.3.3 The reasons for qualitative methods in this study**

As mentioned in the above paragraphs, qualitative research methods have been selected in terms of what they offer to the research itself and to the researcher who is undertaking the investigation.

Leedy and Ormrod (2006:144) indicate that qualitative researchers draw their data from many sources, not only from a variety of people, but also perhaps from objects, textual materials, and audiovisual and electronic records. The particular entities they select comprise their sample and the process of selecting them is called sampling. They explain that a researcher identifies a sample according to what research questions he wants to answer. More often qualitative researchers are intentionally non-random in their selection of data sources: instead, their sampling is purposeful. They select those individuals, or objectives, that will yield the most information about the topic under investigation.

Davidson, Hoge, Godleski, Rakfeldt and Griffith (2002:723) state that qualitative research aims to give privilege to the perspectives of the research participants and illuminates the subjective meaning, action and context of those being researched. The present research will not have many participants; however, it will use documents as

data resources.

According to Neil (2007:1) the seven most important features of qualitative research are the following:

- Provision of a complete and detailed description of a phenomenon.
- The researcher may only know roughly in advance what he/she is looking for.
- It is recommended during earlier phases of research projects.
- The design emerges as the study unfolds.
- The researcher is the data-gathering instrument.
- Data collected is in the form of words, pictures or objects.
- The researcher tends to be subjectively immersed in the subject of study.

These and other features assist in understanding the context within which the study is conducted. The present researcher purposefully selected the qualitative research method because it allows him to draw data from different published sources of Siswati folktales, as well as from folktale narrators, including any other resources that he might come across. In qualitative research the sampling methods are non-random. Accordingly, the present researcher adopted a sampling method that is non-random in order to get the right information from sources known to the researcher that would provide the necessary information in relation to the research questions.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Lang and Heiss (1975:85), a research design is a general strategy for solving a research problem. The research design provides the overall structure for the procedures the researcher follows, the data the researcher collects, and the data analysis the researcher conducts.

Creswell (2011:171) says that the basic idea of collecting data in any research is to

gather information to address the questions being asked in the study. In mixed method research the data collection procedure consists of several key components such as sampling, gaining permissions, collecting data, recording the data and administering the data collection. Data collection involves a number of interconnected steps.

### **3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

Identifying the population and defining the sampling are very important steps in a research project since it is impossible for a researcher to use the whole group of elements, objects of study, or events, as the basis of data collection. Therefore, the researcher takes relevant samples from the population using sampling methods.

#### **3.5.1 Population**

Van Rensburg et al. (2010:150) define population as the entire group of persons or set of objects and events the researcher wants to study. A population contains all the variables of interest to the researcher. Polit and Beck (2006:258) refer to population as the total number of people or elements that fit the set specification of the study. This is also known as the target population, and thus the criteria for inclusions or exclusions should be clearly stated. In this regard, the present study selected folktales as the population from which data would be collected.

#### **3.5.2 Sampling**

Corbetta (2003:210) describes sampling as the procedure through which we pick out, from a set of units that make up the object of the study (population), a limited number of cases (samples) chosen according to certain criteria that enable the results obtained by studying the sample to be extrapolated to the whole population. According to Van Rensburg et al. (2010:150), a sample is a meaningful part of a whole, or a subset of the measurements drawn from the overall population. Sampling is a process of selecting a representative section of the total population to enable a rational generalisation of the

findings from the sample that typifies the entire group or population (Burns and Grove 2001:365). In the present study, Siswati folktales that depict the feature of curiosity in children are sampled from the whole population of Siswati folktales. The researcher believes that Siswati folktales depicting curiosity will provide information that will answer the research problem.

There are advantages to sampling that may guide the researcher in the process of data collection. Corbetta (2003:210) mentions four factors in support of using sampling in social research, pointing out that sampling offers the researcher several advantages:

- A lower cost of data collection.
- Reduced time required for the collection and processing of data.
- Simplicity of organisation, in that there is no need to recruit, train and supervise a large number of interviewees, as would be the case for a census of population.
- Depth and accuracy of findings, in that the reduced organisational complexity enables resources to be concentrated on quality control. (Corbetta 2003:212)

Two main methods of sampling are open to the researcher: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Cohen et al. (2007) explain the difference between them as follows.

In a probability sample, the chances of members of the wider population being selected for the sample are known, further, every member of the wider population has an equal chance of being included in the sample, inclusion or exclusion is a matter of chance and nothing else.

In a non-probability sample chances of members of the wider population being selected for the sample are unknown, further some members of the wider population being selected for the sample are known. However, some members of the wider population definitely will be excluded and others

definitely included. Every member of the wider population does not have equal chance of being included in the sample the researcher deliberately, purposely selects a particular section of the wider population (Cohen et al. 2007:110).

### **3.5.3 Probability sampling**

Probability sampling, or random sampling, allows each person or factor an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:155). In support of this idea, Leedy and Ormrod (2005:199) affirm that in probability sampling the researcher can specify in advance that each segment of the population will be represented in the sample. This is its distinguishing characteristic. The components of the sample are chosen from the larger population by a process known as random selection, which means that the sample is chosen in such a way that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. When such a random sample is selected, the researcher can assume that the characteristics of the sample approximate the characteristics of the total population.

#### *3.5.3.1 Simple random sampling*

All elements have an equal chance of being included in the sample in simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is easy when the population is small and all its members are known (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:161; Leedy and Ormrod 2005:201).

#### *3.5.3.2 Cluster sampling*

Cluster sampling is a variation of random sampling where the units selected form a group or cluster rather than a single subject. The units or groups are then selected randomly. This technique may save time and money but is not true random sampling (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:201). In cluster sampling, discrete units of the population are selected rather than individuals. This technique saves money. It is also appropriately



used when a list of all the individuals in the population is not available (Van Rensburg et al. 2010).

#### 3.5.3.3 *Systematic sampling*

In systematic sampling, elements are selected at equal intervals. Van Rensburg et al. (2010:155) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005:203) support the idea and specify that systematic sampling involves selecting individuals according to a predetermined sequence, although the sequence itself must originate by chance.

#### 3.5.3.4 *Stratified random sampling*

In this sampling technique, the population is divided into heterogeneous groups or clusters. Instead of homogeneous strata the sample is therefore selected from the clusters (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:155).

Lang and Heiss (1975:183) define stratified random sampling as a variation of random sampling in which subjects in the population are subdivided into strata according to specific characteristics prior to their selection. A pre-determined number of subjects per stratum are then selected randomly to ensure a proper representation of each stratum in a population. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:202) also define stratified random sampling as a method whereby the researcher samples equally from each of several layers or sectors of the overall population. Further, stratified random sampling has the advantage of guaranteeing equal representation of each of the identified strata. It is most appropriate when those strata are equal in size within the overall population.

#### **3.5.4 Non-probability sampling**

Van Rensburg et al. (2010:160) define non-probability sampling as an approach whereby the population may or may not be accurately represented. Some elements may

have no chance of being included in the sample.

In non-probability sampling the researcher has two ways of forecasting or guaranteeing that each element of the population will be represented in the sample. Furthermore, a greater number of members of the population will be represented in the sample. However, some members of the population have little or no chance of being sampled (Leedy and Ormond 2005:201). According to Terre Blanche, Durkheim and Painter (2012:139), non-probability refers to any kind of sampling where the selection of elements is not determined by the statistical principle of randomness. Researchers often use convenient samples taken from undergraduate student work or people who have volunteered to participate; but cases that are typical of the population are selected (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:160).

#### *3.5.4.1 Convenience sampling/ Accidental sampling*

The researcher selects those elements that he or she can access easily until the sample reaches the desired size (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:160).

#### *3.5.4.2 Quota sampling*

This is a non-probability sampling method similar to stratified sampling, except that the final selection is not random. The sampling procedure relies on convenience or accidental choice (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:161). Lang and Heiss (1975:85) perceive quota sampling as a non-random procedure where the population is stratified and a percentage of each stratum is selected.

#### *3.5.4.3 Snowball sampling*

This technique involves research respondents enlisting other potential respondents. Initially, the researcher identifies a few respondents as having the information and

interviews them. These respondents are then used to identify other people who qualify for inclusion in the sample (Van Rensburg et al. 2010:161); in other words, this is a referral system.

According to Corbetta (2003:222) snowball sampling is a sample design that is particularly useful in the study of those social groups whose members tend to hide their identity for moral, legal, ideological or political reasons. They may for instance include illegal immigrants, members of religious sects, and activists in outlawed political groups, homosexuals, and tax evaders, criminals, and so on. This procedure is used to study rare elements such as small groups scattered over a large area but which keep in touch with one another. As the process goes on the number of subjects should increase exponentially hence the snowball analogy (Corbetta 2003:222).

A different term for this approach, which often seeks to engage groups not easily accessible through other sampling strategies, is 'chain referral sampling', as used by Maree (2007:80).

#### *3.5.4.4 Purposive sampling*

Neuman (2006:222) defines purposive sampling as a non-random sampling method in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population. Similarly, Van Rensburg et al. (2010:161) say that purposive (or judgmental) sampling refers to cases where the researcher selects a sample that can be judged to be representative of the total population. The judgement is made on the basis of available informants or the researcher's knowledge about the population. Neuman (1997:206) further clarifies that purposive sampling is an acceptable kind of sampling in special situations. It uses the judgment of an expert in selecting cases or it selects cases with a specific purpose in mind. In purposive sampling members of a sample are chosen with a purpose to represent a phenomenon, group, incident, location or type of relationship to a key criterion (Ritchie and Lewis 2003).

Silverman (2005:130) states that sampling in qualitative research is theoretically grounded, rather than statistical. In other words, groups or settings are selected to be studied on the basis of their relevance to the study in order to gather relevant information from which conclusions can be drawn to develop or build theories.

The present research into the curiosity of children in Siswati folktales adopted the purposive sampling technique because not all folktales can help in formulating answers to the research problem. Therefore, the researcher selected only Siswati folktales that display the curiosity of child characters as a sample for this research. The researcher used his discretion and knowledge of Siswati folktales to select the informative sample.

### **3.5.5 Sample size**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:206) articulate that the basic rule of sampling is 'the larger the sample size, the better'. But such a generalised rule is not too helpful to a researcher who has a practical decision to make about a specific research situation. Obviously more precise guidance is needed in this respect. Gay and Airasian (2003:113) offer the following guidelines for determining a sample size:

- For small populations (with fewer than 100 people/ units) there is a little point in sampling. Survey the entire population.
- If the population size is around 500, 50% of the population should be sampled.
- If the population is around 1 500, 20% should be sampled.
- Beyond a certain point (at about 5 000 units or more), the population size is almost irrelevant and a sample size of 400 should be adequate.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this study will not obtain its data from living persons but will select its data from Siswati folktales that portray the curiosity of children. Thus the

folktales chosen will represent a purposive sample taken from the wider population of Siswati folktales.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

In this research the researcher will not use objects as instrument for collecting data. He is the instrument himself since he is collecting data from documentary sources.

Bowen (2009:27) articulates that document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give clarity of voice and meaning around an assessment topic. He further proclaims that document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, including both printed and electronic materials. Document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. For the purpose of this study folktales will be used as primary data and will be analysed in order to formulate answers to the research questions.

Corbetta (2003:287) explains that a document may be any material that provides information on a given social phenomenon and which exists independently of the researcher's action. He differentiates between documents produced by individuals and documents produced by institutions for cognitive purposes other than social research. Social documents include material traces especially in disciplines such as archaeology, history and anthropology. In support of Corbetta (2003), Grix (2010:132) says that documentary evidence comes in many forms, ranging from official and private documents to personal letters or memos. To some extent all these sources represent specific texts or documents. The level at which this is done can range from the full-blown and technical discourse analysis to the simple reading of texts with the aim of gaining information on a person or source; in this case written documents or texts. Grix (2010:132) further insists that a researcher must consider the origins and authors of these documents and for what purpose the texts were originally written, as well as the audience that they were intended to address. In addition, a researcher has to distinguish between primary and secondary documents considered as sources of information.

Corbetta (2003:288) highlights that memos, diaries and letters, have always been important primary sources for the historian. He further adds that historical research, has however traditionally utilised such material to shed light on famous personalities or the protagonists of history. Attention is focused on documents produced by ordinary people with a view to reconstructing social patterns and relationships on the basis of the experience of the protagonists of everyday life. Plummer (1983:13) points out that the world is crammed with personal documents in the forms of diaries, letters, photos, memos, biographies, graffiti, memoirs and letters to the papers. Though extremely diverse, all these documents represent the genuine expressions of the personalities of their authors. Such accounts of personal experiences spring from within the subject and are often not intended for public use.

Salkind (2012:214) says that various kinds of documentation, whether released internally within an organisation or group, or published for public consumption, can provide a wealth of information. All related documents serve to confirm or contradict information gathered through other means.

Kellehear (1993:69) suggests that documents in archives and libraries may be primary sources of data, or act as secondary sources that analyse the primary data sources (such as newspapers, textbooks, novels, etc.). In this way registries, archives, libraries and museums may supply both the data and the means to analyse it. In the present context, the researcher will analyse documents (published works) as primary sources since anthologies of folktales fall into this category.

Corbetta (2003:287) posits that an advantage of document analysis consists in the fact that original documents are produced independently of the actions of the researcher and thus offer 'non-reactive' information that is not subject to possible distortion through the interaction between the researcher and the document. Further, documents can also be used objectively to study the past.

### **3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Andres (2012:115) uses terms that include validity, goodness, trustworthiness and soundness to describe the worth or truth value of a research project. From a survey research perspective information collected through various kinds of survey (or research) is valid to the extent that (1) it produces information that answers the research questions posed by the researcher; (2) it accurately describes the sample or designated population; and (3) it can be extended to individuals beyond the participants of the study.

Corbetta (2003:81) declares that reliability has to do with reproducibility of the results and marks the degree to which a given procedure for transforming a concept into a variable produces the same results in tests repeated with the same empirical tools (indicating stability) or equivalent ones (demonstrating equivalence).

#### **3.7.1 Validity**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:80) pronounce that the central aim of research design is to establish, with a high degree of certainty, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The potential of a specific research design to achieve this aim is referred to as validity in the two separate but related dimensions, internal and external.

Internal validity examines the extent to which a particular research design has excluded all other possible hypothesis-dependent variables. External validity examines the extent to which the results of a study can be linked to other situations and to other people.

As it is qualitative, this research will not be using instruments to test reliability of variables, but will make sure that the results can be linked to situations or people in real life.

### **3.7.2 Reliability**

Maree (2007:147) similarly says that reliability has to do with consistency or repeatability of a measure or an instrument (e.g. a question is an instrument). High reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument will give the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample.

Dane (2011:134) explains the process of reliability as measured through correlations, statistical procedures that estimate the extent to which changes in one variable are associated with changes in another. In terms of measuring reliability and validity of the research into curiosity of child characters in folktales, these cannot be measured through statistical methods, since the present research is qualitative and will use documents as primary data. There will thus be nothing to measure. However, the results of the study will be linked to other situations in real life.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Ethics should be understood as a normal part of any concern related to employing certain methods (Kellehear 1993:11). Ethics are concerned with the most socially responsible way of implementing the chosen methods. Kellehear (1993:14) states that ethics is always about fair and honest dealings, whether towards active participants or with colleagues or state agencies or towards the owners or copyright holders of any text.

Regarding ethical considerations, the researcher is expected to respect the safety and welfare of participants in the study, and to protect their confidences and identities. He is expected to request clearance before engaging with participants. In terms of this research, where the 'participants' are characters in stories, respecting these norms does not apply. This is a desk top research where data is collected from the books and transcribed folktales. For this reason, there will be no need for concern about safety and welfare. Nevertheless, the researcher should ensure that, in making use of documentary sources, he does not use the theoretical or empirical work of others without acknowledgement (Kellehear 1993:71).



- One should not ignore copyright restrictions since they do protect the authors' privacy and ownership. Every reasonable attempt to ascertain the identity of the copyright holder should be taken and appropriate permission should then be sought.
- One should take care not to plagiarise the work of others. Ideas and extracts from written records of libraries should always be acknowledged with appropriate citations and references in the text.

In regard to ethics, the researcher will follow with due caution all Unisa's policies on research conduct. Furthermore, the researcher will acknowledge all sources cited in the bibliography.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

In this section the researcher presented and discussed the methods and procedures that he followed to address the research aims and objectives. These include the research methods, research tools, data collection procedures, and sampling techniques, as well as ethical issues pertaining to the study. Furthermore, document analysis was discussed since it is the type of data resource that will be used to address the research questions of the study. The following chapter will elaborate on the data collected on the folktales.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter the focus was on the methodology that has been used in the study. It discussed the methods of data collection, sampling and data analysis. This chapter presents the data and the data analysis, which is divided into different subsections. The chapter will present data collected from Siswati folktale books that were sampled using purposive sampling. The researcher will use themes acquired from the different folktales that display curiosity.

### **4.2 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This section will look more deeply into data analysis and presentation. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989:201) data analysis refers to sifting, organising, summarising and synthesising the data so as to arrive at the results and conclusions of the research. This is the process by which the researcher transforms unrefined data into functional information that can answer the research questions of the study.

Terre Blanche and Durkheim (2002:57) confirm that data analysis is a profound evaluation of the fundamental components of the entire range of data collected in order to comprehend the research problem. It can be regarded as a technique of organising data by bringing a particular order or structure to it.

As indicated above, the unrefined data collected from folktales will be presented in the form of folktale summaries and later be divided into themes that were deduced from the folktales.

### 4.3 SUMMARIES OF THE FOLKTALES

#### 4.3.1 *Dema na Demazane* (Dema and Demazane; Makhanya, 2006)

The story is about a husband and wife who had two children, a boy, Dema, and a girl, Demazane. They were poverty stricken and had nothing. They were living by cultivating the land. One day the mother went to remove weeds in their mealie field, and when she had finished for the day, a certain bird came and sang a teasing song that ended with: 'Grass, grass, come together and cover up the soil at once'. She went home and when she came back the following day, she found that the weeds had grown again as if she had done nothing on the previous day. She was very cross. This happened three days running, and her husband did not believe in her story about the bird, and that she had been working hard, and he became very angry. He went to the field to see for himself what was happening, and worked to remove the weeds. When he returned on the following day, he found that there were as many weeds as if he had not done anything. The husband made a plan to go into hiding in the field, and stretched his hand on top of the grass like a branch so that the bird could come and sit on his hand, and the husband caught the bird. The bird pleaded with the man not kill it and promised to produce sour milk. They took the bird home and it produced sour milk for them. The husband and wife were happy as they were commanding the bird to produce sour milk. However, they kept the bird locked in their room, and they ate alone, never giving any of the sour milk to their children, Dema and Demazane. This led to Dema and Demazane becoming curious and tampering with the bird in their absence. While commanding the bird, they could not handle it very well and it flew away. This led to their being severely punished, to the extent that they went away from their parents' home and found themselves a home at Ntunjambili.

#### 4.3.2 *Salukati nemntfwanaso* (The old woman and her child; Nkosi 1994)

This folktale is about Ntsandzane, a girl who was an orphan. The girl lived with her grandmother after her parents had passed away. Her grandmother often used to go out to look for food. Each time she went out, she would give an instruction to her

granddaughter that she should be vigilant since there were cannibals around the place. She further told her that she should not open the door for anyone. She did not tell her anything further about cannibals. After she had left, the cannibal came and pleaded with the girl to open for him. The girl refused for several days but the cannibal kept on pleading with a sweet voice that sounded like her grandmother's, and that was convincing to the girl, who eventually opened the door. The cannibal pushed her into his sack and went off with her. Fortunately, she was rescued by the village boys, who chased the cannibal with dogs. Thus the girl was saved from death and was taken out of the sack.

#### **4.3.3 *Imbulumakhasane na Wela* (The Salamander and Wela; Nkosi 1994)**

The story is about Wela, a beautiful girl whom the prince wanted to marry. Wela and her friend took a journey to the prince's home far from their homestead. Wela's mother told her that she must not rest on the anthill when on her way to her future husband. They began their journey, but on the way they felt very tired and they were also hungry. They saw some fruits on the trees around them. They decided to pick fruit and sit down to eat their food. Wela saw the anthill and remembered her mother's advice. She told herself that she was going to sit there, and see what would happen.

They sat on the anthill and all of a sudden, a Salamander appeared and asked Wela to exchange clothes with it. Wela was afraid that the Salamander would kill them, so she agreed to the exchange. However, it then happened that when they reached the place, the Salamander became the bride while Wela and her friend were regarded as strangers. The Salamander received very hospitable treatment while Wela suffered because of the Salamander's clothes. The prince recognised the Salamander as his bride. Wela cried and the Salamander comforted her. After some days, the family started to have doubts about their bride. They investigated until they found out that the Salamander had taken their bride's clothes. They finally received their true bride and killed the Salamander.

#### **4.3.4 *Lijaha nelikhiwa lendlela* (A young man and a fig of the wayside; Mavuso 1993)**

In this story, a young boy, Siguca, lived with his grandfather. Siguca was very handsome and neat. His parents wanted him to get a bride who was beautiful and neat like himself. They arranged a future bride for him who lived at Ntsababovu, far away from their home. The girl's name was Gcebile. It was necessary for the boy to go and fetch her. The old men instructed the boy not to deviate from the route when going to visit the girl. He was instructed to follow one route until he had reached the destination. Siguca agreed, and embarked on the journey, as arranged, to fetch his future bride, accompanied by his friend. On the way, they were very hungry and there were attractive figs ripening on trees by the wayside. Siguca and his friend ended up deviating from their route to gather some of the figs that had fallen to the ground. After eating the figs, Siguca felt that his stomach was full and wanted to relieve himself. He went into the forest and relieved himself. To his dismay, the faeces grew feet and followed him. When they reached the place, the faeces smelt very unpleasant. The following day, Gcebile went to see her fiancé, but the smell hanging around him was so unbearable that she refused to marry him. Siguca was chased away after travelling a long distance for nothing, and moreover the smell was overpowering. He was left wondering what to do.

#### **4.3.5 *Umfana nelidada* (The boy and a duck; Ntuli & Malindzisa 1988)**

This folktale is about a boy who lived alone with his mother because his father had died some time ago. The family was very poor, so when the boy was old enough he went to look for work even though he was still young for the kind of work. He was hired by a white man to work in his garden. After some months his employer decided to go overseas to join his family. There seemed no hope of his coming back. The boy wept, and said he did not know what he would do, because there was no other source of income at home. The white man laughed and gave him a duck. He told him that the duck would produce golden eggs to provide for him for the rest of his life. He insisted that the boy would become a businessman but never told him how this would come to pass. After the white man's departure, the duck started producing golden eggs. The boy sold the golden eggs and got a lot of money. He became very rich and built his family a very big house. The

family moved out of their poverty-stricken circumstances and enjoyed life because of the duck. The boy was so curious to know where the eggs came from. Every day he would tell himself that one day he will get to know where the eggs came from. He thought he would get more eggs if he knew the source. He killed the duck with the aim of getting more eggs, not recognising that he was ending the production of the riches for him. He did not find any eggs inside the duck, and his family went back to poverty because of his curiosity.

#### **4.3.6 *Umfelokati nemtukulu wakhe* (The widow and her grandson; Nkosi 1994)**

This story tells of a widow who lived with her grandson, whose name was Sitolotolo. They had one cow, a goat and a chicken. They used the cow to get milk to drink, and they had a field to plough. One day the grandmother was hosting *lilima* (where members of the community come to help and plough without being paid) in the field. She asked her grandson to go and fetch some milk from their home and bring it to the field.

She instructed the boy not to take the route through the bush on his return. She told him to use the open road and not the woodland road, and Sitolotolo agreed. But on his way back, he wondered why his grandmother had instructed him to take the open route instead of the woodland way. He then decided to take the forbidden route in order to see what was in that road. In the middle of the road he met a cannibal and tried to run away, but it was all in vain. He was caught by the cannibal! Fortunately, he had a hoe with him. The cannibal swallowed him with that weapon. The boy used the weapon to cut open the cannibal's stomach and the cannibal died in pain.

#### **4.3.7 *Umfana nemazimu lamabili* (A boy and two cannibals; Nkosi 1994)**

This folktale is about a boy who wanted to go and visit cannibals, because he did not believe that there really were people who lived by eating other human beings. Even though other people were afraid of cannibals, the boy wanted to visit them to satisfy his curiosity. The boy's parents and community warned him that the cannibals were very

dangerous to visit, and might even eat him. The whole community warned him about his intended visit. But as he was curious to go and visit the cannibals, he eventually gathered his dogs and started his journey to the cannibals. On arriving at one of the homes of the cannibals, he found the cannibal eating human flesh and they also gave him some to eat. The boy complained that the meat was rotten and that he did not eat human flesh. The cannibal forced him to eat. The cannibal further told him that he himself would be the meal for that day. The boy got up and ran away, but the cannibal followed him until the boy's dogs rescued him by chasing the cannibal back to his home. The boy decided that he would go home again. Although the cannibal tried to catch the boy, his big dogs chased the cannibal and killed him. His flesh was eaten by the dogs. Once home again, the boy became a hero.

#### **4.3.8 *Ncekezane nembulumakhasane* (Ncekezane and the Salamander; Nkosi 1994)**

This folktale tells of a grandmother who lived with her granddaughter, called Ncekezane. The grandmother told Ncekezane that as she was very old, she could die at any time. She told the girl to prepare her clothes and go to stay with her uncle. Before she died, she instructed the girl to go to her uncle but on no account should she eat the fruits on the way. Instead, she was told to eat the food she had prepared at home. The girl promised to do what her grandmother had said, and embarked on the journey to her uncle. On the way, she became hungry, and took out the food she had prepared at her grandmother's home and ate. While she was seated, eating her meal, she saw attractive fruits on the other side of the way, and she crossed over to eat some. She found that they were very delicious, and kept picking more and more of them, until her stomach was full and she had to go and relieve herself. At that moment, she was followed by Imbulumakhasane (the Salamander). Imbulumakhasane told Ncekezane that she had to exchange clothes with him. He took Ncekezane's clothes and gave her his skin garments. When they reached Ncekezane's uncle's home, Imbulumakhasane walked in front, while Ncekezane was behind. As a result, Imbulumakhasane was given preferential treatment, and Ncekezane was looked down upon. They stayed there for a long time. The family began to realise that their store of *emasi* was vanishing each night. Upon investigating the matter, they found out that Imbulumakhasane was not their niece:

instead, the person they had ill-treated was their niece. They also found out that the clothes worn by Imbulumakhasane belonged to Ncekezane. They were very surprised and killed the real Imbulumakhasane. Ncekezane was very happy.

#### **4.3.9 *Majazane naMalolo* (Majazane and Malolo; Liphoko 1991)**

The story is about two sisters, the elder one being called Malolo. They wanted to go and visit their uncle, but their mother refused giving the reason that they were still too young to go alone to visit their uncle. One day while their mother was out, they decided to go and visit their uncle without permission. However, they took two different directions: Malolo took the path to the right, and the younger sister chose the path to the left. Malolo went on her way, walking until it was very late. On the way, she saw a light, and wanted to go there to ask for a place to sleep and food to eat. Malolo found her way to the place and they gave her both shelter and food to eat. The lady and a girl who were there warned her about the cannibals who were killing people all over the area. They told her about the most dangerous cannibal by the name of Majazane. Malolo was advised to make a heap of wood and cover it with a blanket so that the cannibal would think that was where she was sleeping, so that she would have a chance to run away. They also gave her three eggs that she should throw should the cannibal chase after her. Majazane came and he chopped at the wood, thinking that it was Malolo, only to discover that Malolo had gone. The cannibals chased Malolo. When they approached her, Malolo threw one egg and a forest appeared. When she threw the second egg, meat appeared, and the third time that Malolo threw an egg, a big hole opened in front of the cannibal, and it fell inside and died.

#### **4.3.10 *Mphungane* ('The fly'; Mavuso 1993)**

This folktale tells of a boy known as Mphungane, who came from a very poor family. The family was known for its poverty. They lacked food, clothing and soap to wash with, hence his nickname 'Mphungane', because the boy was always surrounded by flies that were attracted to his dirtiness and the bad smell of his mouth, owing to hunger and poverty. Mphungane's curiosity was aroused when he heard that the King had lost his gold and there was a reward set in place for the person who would bring back the lost



gold. Magicians, witches and traditional healers tried and failed. Mphungane displayed his curiosity by following some women who were talking, when one of them confessed that her duck had swallowed the King's gold. Mphungane knew that if he followed these women, he would get what he wanted. Mphungane satisfied his curiosity by going to the women's house and looked for the duck. After killing two of the three ducks with no luck, it became obvious which one had swallowed the gold. He called the elders and showed them the duck. In that way, the boy's curiosity led him to riches, and he was never hungry again. Moreover, another outcome of Mphungane's curiosity was the change of his name. He was no longer known as 'Mphungane', but as 'Ngcumba', meaning a rich person.

#### **4.3.11 *Mtimba naMtinjane* (Mtimba and Mtinjane; Mavuso 1993)**

There was a man who stayed with his wife and two sons. The names of these boys were Mtimba and Mtinjana. The man was very cruel and abusive to his wife. There was always violence in their home until the wife decided to go back to her father's house. The cruel man remained with his two sons Mtimba and Mtinjana. He also abused them verbally and physically, beating them severely for no apparent reason. He instructed them to wake up early in the morning to milk the cows but after they had milked the cows, the man denied them access to the milk. He also did not provide them with food, telling them to find wild fruit to eat. The boys became so thin they were unrecognizable. One day the older boy, Mtimba, suggested to his brother Mtinjana that they should go and look for their mother who left them while they were still very young. They took their father's beloved cow on their journey. On their way, they talked to the cow telling it that they were going to look for their mother. When they reached the gate to their mother's house, the cow bellowed very loudly and their father's entire flock appeared. They were so happy that their father was left with nothing. Their mother was happy to see them.

#### **4.3.12 *Mfanukhona nemcashi wakhe* (Mfanukhona and his master; Mabaso 1990)**

In this story, there was once a boy called Mfanukhona who lived with his poor family. They had so little food that they often slept without eating. Mfanukhona's parents arranged for their son to go and work at the farmer's house. The farmer accepted the boy even though he was still so small. Mfanukhona had to sweep up leaves every day. He had a lot of questions to ask his master. One of the questions was about death. The farmer told him about Adam, who had disobeyed the law of Mvelinchanti (the one who existed first), and as a result death came as a punishment. In addition, the farmer mentioned that working hard was one of the punishments Mvelinchanti had given mankind. Mfanukhona sang that chorus every time he worked. He blamed Adam and resolved that he would be better than Adam. The master tested him by putting a dove inside a container and left him with the instruction not to open it. He was faithful for some days, but in the end he gave in to temptation and opened the container. This was proof that he was not faithful, and was just like Adam whom he had blamed every day.

#### **4.4 ANALYTIC COMPARISON**

The study will use the tool of analytic comparison to analyse the data collected from Siswati books using the purposive method of sampling. Neumann (2014:492) describes analytic comparison as a technique for analysing qualitative data that uses the method of agreement and the method of difference to discover causal conditions that affect an outcome among a set of cases.

Neuman further elaborates on and describes the method of agreement as a method of qualitative data analysis that compares similar characteristics across cases with the same significant outcomes. He describes the method of difference as a method of qualitative data analysis that compares characteristics among cases in which some share a significant outcome but others do not; it thus focuses on the differences among cases (Neuman 2014:492).

Taking into account what is stated above, the researcher will analyse data from identified characteristics that have similarities across the data collected as well as the characteristics that are different across the data. The identified characteristics will be used to elucidate the causal factors as well as the outcomes of curiosity of children in the selected Siswati folktales. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the similarities and the differences of the characteristics will be categorised according to themes.

#### **4.4.1 Themes**

According to Peck and Coyle (1984:141) the word 'theme' is a:

large idea of concept dealt with in a work. In order to grasp the theme of a work one needs to stand back from the text and see what sort of general experience or subject links its details together.

Abrams (1981:111) pronounces that "the term theme is more usefully applied to an abstract claim or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader". The word 'theme' is further described by Brooks and Warren (1938: 273) as

what a piece of fiction stacks up to. It is the idea, the significance, the interpretation of persons and events, the pervasive and unifying view of life embodied in the total narrative. It is what we are to make of the human experience rendered in the story – always involving, directly or indirectly, some comment on values in human nature and conduct.

According to Lutrin and Pincus (2006:96) a theme is the main idea in a literary work, which conveys the message of the writer and may represent his beliefs and opinions. Themes are sometimes conveyed figuratively and may be revealed and understood with in-depth study. In this study, the researcher identifies the themes, or principal ideas within the folktales, as the principal means of analysing the data on curiosity in the fictional child

characters which arise from the narratives.

#### **4.4.2 Themes identified in the current study**

From the views expounded above by scholars, the research has been able to identify six themes for analysis and discussion following the reading of the selected Siswati folktales. The themes are as follows:

1. Lack of self-control in satisfying curiosity.
2. Insufficient information from parents.
3. Parents keeping secrets from their children.
4. The nature of children is to be inquisitive and explore what is hidden or mysterious.
5. Extrinsic attractions can be causes of curiosity.
6. Intrinsic factors such as hunger, pain and suffering can be causal conditions for curiosity.

#### **4.5 ANALYSIS OF COLLECTED DATA**

As mentioned above the data will be analysed in terms of themes generated from the folktales, and the themes as identified will be dealt with using the tools of analytic comparison described by Neuman (2000) which apply the method of agreement and the method of difference as the main techniques of analysis.

##### **4.5.1 Theme 1: Lack of self-control in satisfying curiosity**

###### ***Method of agreement***

In folktale 4.3.8, the girl Ncekezane displayed lack of self-control when considering the instructions of her old grandmother, about how to get to her uncle. The grandmother told her to prepare and eat only homemade food, and not to eat fruit from the wild trees along the road.

On the way, the girl became hungry and tired and through this necessity she opened her food and ate. But when she saw beautiful wild fruits, she could not control herself and gave in to her curiosity about the taste of the fruits that looked so delicious to her. Curiosity impelled her to ignore her grandmother's instructions. The outcomes of this lack of control are observed as a domino effect: when Ncekezane goes to relieve herself, Imbulumakhasane (Salamander) appears, and the girl is unable to resist his imperatives, first that he joins her, and then that they exchange clothing. Finally, as a result of the foregoing, when they reach the uncle's home, Imbulumakhasane is in a position to supplant Ncekezane, who was treated as a stranger who accompanied their niece. Ncekezane then suffers the full consequences of lack of self-control arising from curiosity. In the tale, she is eventually rescued when the uncle digs a big hole to trap the culprit who was stealing *emasí* and Imbulumakhasane falls into it and is identified and killed.

In folktale 4.3.3, lack of self-control arising from curiosity is again observed when Wela has to journey to meet her fiancé who lives far away. Wela and her bridesmaids had to visit the boy before the marriage. At the outset, Wela agrees to abide by her mother's instructions, but, as in the previous story, she becomes very tired along the way and is attracted by the fruits to the extent of disregarding the instruction not to sit on the anthill. Again, the lack of self-control arising from irresistible curiosity results in Wela falling into the hands of the Imbulumakhasane (Salamander), with similar results to those of the previous story.

The similarities in these two folktales include the following: both protagonists are girls; they both have to undertake a long trip (representing a rite-of-passage challenge involving separation from the parental protection of childhood); along the way, they give in to self-indulgence and disobey their respective interdicts (representing traditional moral guidelines, which have not been explained). Their lack of self-control rapidly leads

them into the hands of the Imbulumakhasane (our spiritual enemy in the world who wants to rob us of our destiny), who takes advantage of them and manipulates them by stripping them of their identities (represented by clothing), and their destinies (loss of their proposed partners). Both tales have a redemptive element in that each girl is rescued when the true identity of the Salamander is revealed, it is decisively dealt with, and the girls are able to regain their respective statuses (take hold of their respective destinies again).

### ***Method of difference***

In folktale 4.3.2, Ntsandzane gives in to the force of curiosity when her grandmother (representing parental oversight and protection) goes out. When the cannibal comes repeatedly knocking at the door, tempting her and deceiving her with a sweet voice pretending that he is her grandmother (the protective agent in her life), Ntsandzane is deceived into losing self-control and forgetting the instructions (or interdict, which represents moral guidelines). She opens the door (her means of protection and shelter) and falls into the hands of the cannibals. There is again a redemptive element in that she is rescued by boys (representing girls' rightful and wholesome counterparts) who deal decisively with the cannibals (who represent the fearful and dangerous spiritual enemy of mankind).

Folktale 4.3.7 also involves cannibals (again representing the spiritual enemy and a force that disrupts and destabilises community life and traditional values). Here the mechanism of curiosity is impelled not by attraction but by scepticism: the boy does not accept the proposition that cannibals exist, and goes out into the bush (representing the world beyond the traditional society) to see and experience the reality for himself. Because of his scepticism, his curiosity exerts greater influence over his actions than the warnings of his traditional community, resulting not so much in a lack of self-control as in his abandoning of the controls represented by the social norms that he is supposed to respect. He is effectively testing the social hypothesis that cannibals are not normal human beings and should be feared. This is a 'prodigal son' scenario, and again, there is a redemptive element in that his dogs (representing non-human or perhaps even other-worldly beneficent agencies) come to his rescue in time to deliver him.

The differences between the two folktales are that in folktale 4.3.2, the grandmother goes out, leaving Ntsandzane to face the challenge of external forces of threat and danger alone, while in folktale 4.3.7 the boy himself goes out to challenge the existence of these threats and dangers. Although afraid, Ntsandzane is impelled by curiosity to open the door, and suffers the consequences of being deceived despite the interdict (the social mores of her community), that is, she falls victim to danger and experiences loss of safety and security because of giving in to curiosity. In folktale 4.3.8 the boy discovers for himself the real existence of the cannibals, and he confronts the threat and actual danger that they pose to him. He experiences positive outcomes since he triumphs over the difficulty by getting rid of the cannibals and is regarded as a hero who saved his community from the danger posed by them. In folktale 4.3.2 the curiosity of the girl results in victimisation but it has a redemptive element in that the boys rescue her. By contrast, in folktale 4.3.7 the boy's curiosity leads him into the heart of danger, but he is rescued by his bravery and the assistance of the dogs.

#### **4.5.2 Theme 2: Insufficient information from parents**

##### ***Method of agreement***

Insufficient information is shown to be a primary factor in causing young people to yield to their curiosity instead of obeying the interdict given to them. This was observed in folktale 4.3.8 in the tale of Ncekezane's journey. Her grandmother had cautioned her to follow her advice, so that she would one day end up happily married, as planned. However, the grandmother did not give enough information to Ncekezane, and because of her naivety she succumbs to the temptation to deviate from her path, which leads her into great suffering, although in the end she finds her rightful place in her new community.

Similarly, as already discussed above, in folktale 4.3.3 lack of information plays very much the same role in Wela's journey with her bridesmaids. In this case, being careless of the interdict (because she was distracted) led to Wela not regarding the interdict with enough seriousness, and thus falling prey to the Salamander who was lying in wait at

the anthill, and again it leads to very much the same kind of suffering as Ncekezane's.

In both folktales the primary cause of disobedience is naivety owing to insufficient information. This results in the characters being manipulated and abused by a deceitful and evil enemy, although after suffering for a time they are both redeemed.

#### ***Method of difference***

Curiosity that is indulged owing to insufficient information is also demonstrated in folktale 4.3.2, when Ntsandzane's granny gives only a broad generalisation about why she should not open the door to anyone: 'because the world is full of various kinds of evildoers'. The girl was lonely and eager to have the company of her granny again, and because she had no precise concept of the evils outside her home, she eventually gives in to the deceitful voice that sounded so appealing. Consequently, even if only for a short time, the girl suffers the horror of violent abduction.

In folktale 4.3.6, disobedience owing to lack of information again leads to indulgence of the protagonist's curiosity and disaster follows. Here again, similar to the tales considered in section 4.4.1 above, the method of difference is shown in the way the act of redemption plays out differently for girls and boys. As a girl, Ntsandzane must be rescued by the menfolk (boys) of her community; whereas, like the boy in folktale 4.3.7, Sitolotolo frees himself by resourcefully fighting back with his implement.

#### **4.5.3 Theme 3: Parents/ guardians keeping secrets from their children**

##### ***Method of agreement***

Although children are naturally curious, folktale 4.3.1 reveals that deliberately preventing children from gaining access to important knowledge of how things should work in the family makes them more eager to satisfy their curiosity. Dema and Demazane's parents



kept the secret about the *inyoni yemasi* (the sour milk producing bird) as they did not want their children to share their knowledge of the captive magical bird, and also shared only a little of the *emasi* (sour milk) with them. Without appropriate knowledge of how to handle the bird in order to keep it working for them forever, the children's curiosity becomes a threat to this resource. Whereas the parents supposed that keeping everything about the bird a secret would keep the bird safe, the lack of trust and generosity towards their children in fact not only provoked a more compelling curiosity in the children, but in the end also created a deep rift in the family, which fell apart after the bird had flown away. Following the cruelly severe punishment of the children they ran away from their parents, never to return home again.

Folktale 4.3.5 tells of a boy from a poor family who goes to work for a farmer living near the family homestead. In this case, the adult's intentions towards the boy are kind when he presents him with the magical duck, but perhaps he supposes that the boy is too young to understand, and does not explain how to take care of the 'investment' that he gives the boy. Without appropriate adult input and training, the boy becomes reckless and tries to satisfy his curiosity in a way that ruins the gift.

The agreement, or points of similarity, between these two tales lies in the way the adults, instead of capitalising on the children's natural curiosity and using it to train them, withhold knowledge and understanding from them. They do not respect the children's need for education and guidance, and instead of guiding the children to build on a foundation provided by the adults, they exclude them from such practice in administering the available resources. In the end, this leads to disappointment and poverty.

### ***Method of difference***

In folktale 4.3.9. Malolo is a defiant girl who goes astray and lands herself in a house of cannibals. This illustrates how curiosity can sometimes make children foolishly wilful and lead them into trouble because they are ignorant of the dangers and consequences of their actions. Again there is the motif of a channel of redemption in a dangerous situation, where one kind adult provides magical eggs to help the girl escape. However,

this adult also does not explain how the eggs will work. It is hard to say whether the idea behind the folktale is that nothing really prepares you to deal with situations before you get into them, or whether it demonstrates that adults do not give enough attention to preparing children for life's challenges. Even though the eggs save Malolo, she has to use her own discretion which could have led to a very different outcome.

In folktale 4.3.12, a secret was deliberately kept from Mfanukhona, a boy who had a problem about how death came to this earth. However, this adult kept the secret as a kind of controlled experiment, in order to allow the boy to discover a truth for himself, as it is clear that this kind of philosophical question has to be worked out for oneself. Thus, the boy's master goes away, telling him to take care of the container on the table and put maize in a small hole on the left of the container. He was warned not ever to open the container. After keeping his assignment for a week, the boy's curiosity overpowers his sense of responsibility, and he gives in to the desire to satisfy his curiosity, opens the box, and the dove flies away. When the master comes and finds that Mfanukhona has opened the container, he demonstrates to him that he has elucidated his own philosophical problem. In both folktales the main characters were warned not to disobey, but their lack of understanding and natural curiosity led them to disobey and caused them both unexpected, but different, outcomes.

In folktale 4.3.9, Malolo is warned not to take the road to the left but she disobeys and finds herself in the cannibals' house. The lady who rescues her gives her eggs but keeps the knowledge of their magical power a secret. In both cases, the adults seem to require the children to trust them blindly, that is, without having full knowledge and understanding of the situation. The purposes of the secrets were different for each character: Malolo tries out her weapons and finds them more powerful than expected. Mfanukhona opens the container and loses the dove. In this way he disappoints himself but learns a profound truth about life.

#### **4.5.4 Theme 4: Being inquisitive and the desire to explore what is hidden and mysterious**

##### ***Method of agreement***

The fact that it is in the nature of children to be curious is demonstrated in folktale 4.3.1, where Dema and Demazane are anxious to discover what was happening behind closed doors. Upon hearing their parents laughing and giggling with excitement when commanding the bird to produce sour milk, it was natural for the children to be inquisitive about what was happening inside. It is therefore almost inevitable that Dema as the older brother makes a plan to get into their parents' hut and try out the procedure with the help of his sister. Unfortunately, in their ignorance and inexperience they cannot handle the bird appropriately, and it escapes, leaving them to face unpleasant consequences.

Again, in folktale 4.3.5, the boy who was given the duck that produces golden eggs wanted to discover for himself how it worked. Again, ignorance and inexperience led him to kill the duck in order to see what is inside, without realising that this act is irreversible. In this case the urgency of curiosity coupled with the ignorance of youth led to permanent loss of resources.

The factor of similarity in these two folktales is the desire of the child characters to discover things for themselves. In both cases, in their zeal to discover where the magic came from, their curiosity is not tempered by experience and background knowledge, and thus curiosity leads to loss.

##### ***Method of difference***

In folktale 4.3.7 the protagonist again wants to discover something for himself: in this case, it is whether his fellow villagers' opinions of the cannibals are valid. His curiosity leads him to openly defy prohibition (interdict) and venture into the heart of the enemies' territory. In this case, the child protagonist shows forethought instead of complete inexperience, in that he takes his dogs with him. This turns out to be his 'saving grace'

as his escape from the cannibals would not have been possible without the help of the dogs.

In folktale 4.3.4, Siguca's desire is to find out for himself why he is prohibited from eating the wild plums. In this case, the ignorance and inexperience that led to unpleasant consequences could have been mitigated if his father had explained the reasons behind the prohibition. The results of his desire to find out for himself had consequences that continued to beset him and prevented him from realising his destiny.

These two folktales have certain similarities: in each, the main character is a boy, and he wants to find out for himself whether what he has been told is valid for him. The differences lie in their mission of discovery: In folktale 4.3.7 the boy wants to know whether public opinion about a threat is valid, while in folktale 4.3.4 the boy wants to discover whether he can get away with doing something prohibited. The first boy shows some forethought and as a result has the opportunity to escape and thereby learn a valid lesson from his adventure. The second boy, Seguca, is unfortunate because the unexpected supernatural consequences of his disobedience are irreversible.

#### **4.5.5 Theme 5: Extrinsic attractions as causes of curiosity**

##### ***Method of agreement***

In folktale 4.3.8, Ncekezane's curiosity was provoked when she was attracted by wild berries on her journey to the safety of her uncle's home, and she deviates from her path. Because of her deviation, she is waylaid and falls under the power of the Salamander, which almost ruins her life.

Very similarly, in folktale 4.3.3, Wela is also attracted by the wild fruit along her path during her journey to meet her fiancé, and she too falls under the power of the Salamander.

In both folktales curiosity is provoked by something extrinsic to the main purpose of the girls: the fruit is incidental to their journey, but promises to fulfil an unmet need (hunger) during the journey. In both cases their curiosity leads them to disregard the warnings not

to deviate from their path, with disastrous results. Both tales make provision for a reversal of the bad fortune that results from their mistake.

#### ***Method of difference***

As in the tales of Ncekezane and Wela, curiosity provoked by an extrinsic attraction is displayed in folktale 4.3.4 when Siguca goes to fetch his bride-to-be and was attracted by wild fruits on his way to his destination. Although in many ways the outcome of this tale is broadly very similar to the tales about the girls, it offers no provision for hope or reversal of the bad consequences that befell the boy.

Both folktales are about boys, the difference is that in folktale 4.3.4 curiosity was evoked by being attracted by fruits while in folktale 4.3.11 curiosity was caused by suffering and pain. In folktale 4.3.4, the boy took the journey to fetch a woman who was going to be his future bride, while in folktale 4.3.11 the boys went to look for a woman who is their mother. The purpose of the journey was totally different in these folktales. Furthermore, the boys in folktale 4.3.11 had no clue about their mother's whereabouts whereas the boy in folktale 4.3.4 knew everything since the marriage was pre-arranged. The outcomes of the journeys in both folktales were not the same since in folktale 4.3.4 the outcomes were negative while in folktale 4.3.11 the outcomes were positive.

#### **4.5.6 Theme 6: Hunger, pain and suffering as causal conditions of curiosity**

##### ***Method of agreement***

In folktale 4.3.1, the children's curiosity was encouraged by their condition of hunger: Dema and Demazane see that their parents are eating in their hut while they go hungry outside. This sparked Dema's curiosity to investigate further. Again, following their severe punishment, the siblings' pain and suffering sparked Dema's curiosity about Ntunjambili and the two make their escape there, with happy results.

In folktale 4.3.11, the intrinsic conditions of pain and suffering of the two brothers encourages their curiosity about alternative possibilities. Mtimba and Mtinjana's curiosity about another way of life inspires them to venture out into the unknown to look for their mother.

The similarity between the two folktales lies in the ill-treatment of the children and their escape to a happier life. The intrinsic conditions of their circumstances reveal the selfishness of irresponsible parents who end up losing their children as a result. In both folktales, the parents' abusive acts prepared the ground for their children to exercise curiosity in a positive way.

#### ***Method of difference***

In folktale 4.3.10 Mphungane also suffered from intrinsic factors of hunger and suffering under need and the contempt of the community. Mphungane's curiosity is provoked when he hears of the King's lost gold and the promised reward. His curiosity leads him to follow clues that progressively enable him to finally claim the reward. As a result of exercising his curiosity, he becomes rich and earns respect.

In folktale 4.3.4, the curiosity of the poor boy about his magical duck also arises out of conditions of hunger, pain and suffering. His curiosity, however, leads him to kill the duck, thus causing him to lose the wealth that was given to him.

Although both the protagonists in these two folktales had been poor and needy, and both kill a duck that contains gold, the difference between the two is that in folktale 4.3.4 the boy has already been blessed with riches but is perverse in trying to figure out how the duck produces wealth for him, whereas in folktale 4.3.10, Mphungane's curiosity is a response to his condition of poverty and his curiosity reflects his determination to have a better life. The boy in folktale 4.3.4 goes back to poverty while the boy in folktale 4.3.10 becomes rich.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter presented the data collected from Siswati folktales that were purposefully selected from anthologies of folktales depicting curiosity in child characters in the tales. The chapter has presented a summary of the selected folktales as well as the method of analysis that was used to analyse the data. The themes that were generated from the folktales were used to understand and interpret the data. In the following, final chapter the data will be more closely reported on in terms of the findings, recommendations, and conclusions of the research.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter dealt with methods of data presentation and data analysis where the data collected from Siswati folktales was presented. The data, presented in the form of folktales, was further analysed using six themes arising from the folktales. The researcher adopted the analytic comparison suggested by Neuman (2000) as the method of analysis whereby the method of agreement and the method of difference were used to analyse the data collected. The aim of this chapter is to conclude the research by presenting research findings as well as the recommendations arising from them. General and specific conclusions will be presented at the end of the chapter.

The purpose of the study was to give close attention to the curiosity of children in Siswati folktales, with the aim of investigating the reasons behind the curiosity and the potential outcomes of being curious. This was guided by the following research questions:

- How are child characters depicted in folktales?
- What is the hidden meaning behind the interdictions given to children, if any?
- What is the reason for the curiosity of child characters in folktales?
- What is the relationship between the curiosity of children in folktales and in real life?

Besides these primary aims, this research had to meet further objectives in order to answer the research questions. The following are the set objectives used to attain this goal:

- To analyse the way children are depicted in Siswati folktales.
- To investigate the hidden meaning behind the interdiction, if any.
- To investigate the cause of curiosity of children in folktales.



- To find out whether there is a correlation between children in folktales and children in real life.

The researcher used functionalism theory based on qualitative research methods and collected data through a purposive sampling method to identify a relevant selection of Siswati folktales. The study used Neuman's (2000) tools of analytic comparison to analyse data through the method of agreement and the method of difference. After the presentation and analysis of the data, the findings emerged through major themes and these provided answers to the research objectives mentioned above.

The objectives were achieved using the themes to be discussed in the following section.

## **5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.2.1 Objective 1: To analyse the way children are depicted in Siswati folktales**

In relation to the first objective of the study, the research concluded that children in Siswati folktales are often depicted as deprived of the right to be fed, and may be abused by lazy or neglectful parents (who may torture them to the extent that they decide to leave home and look for alternative places to stay). On the other hand, many tales show that parents love their children and try to warn them of possible dangers on their path of life. Child characters in the folktales are depicted as brave, adventurous and, especially, inquisitive; and it is this curiosity of theirs that often leads to disobedience, which gets them into trouble, sometimes resulting in severely bad consequences. However, the natural curiosity of children in the folktales is often portrayed as an asset that leads the children into a better or wiser condition of life.

In folktale 4.3.1, Dema and Demazane are deprived of food, which leads to the expression of their curiosity in trying to get their own control of the source of food. When their parents punish them severely, they leave home and go to live in Ntunjambili where they adopt a new lifestyle. This is in line with real life where children who after being punished by parents leave home to go and live on the streets. They join other street children and

learn to live like them. Arnebona Harto Collis reported (*Bona* magazine 2019:10) on a couple who tortured their 12 children by starving, beating, and depriving them in various ways. The children were rescued and given an alternative home in January 2017 after one of the girls gathered courage to escape and report the abuse to the police.

## **5.2.2 Objective 2: To investigate hidden meaning behind the interdiction, if any**

### *5.2.2.1 Parents giving insufficient information*

One of the findings from the folktales chosen for this study was that children's curiosity is often a liability because parents give interdictions, but without giving sufficient information to encourage obedience or enable the children to make wise choices. In folktale 4.3.3, Wela is told not to sit on an anthill on her way to her destination. The parents gave her insufficient information since they did not tell her about the consequences of non-compliance. In real life, children are also given inadequate instructions and later find themselves in terrible situations where their belongings and valuables are taken by others. They are not prepared by their parents/mentors to face the consequences of certain acts. According to Guru Moya in *Bona* magazine (2020:15), parents/teachers do not give full information to the youth about sex education, they only tell them not to go out at night without explaining the consequences of disobedience. When children become pregnant or do other unacceptable things, they are punished. As reflected in the article mentioned above, children who lack sufficient information do find themselves plunged into dangerous situations. Still in the same magazine, *Bona*, Matheba (2012:30) reported that children are facing a huge challenge because most parents are at work, and are therefore not available during the day to give children appropriate advice, and are not present either to give them sufficient information about life. Children fall prey to various dangers because of not having enough information.

### 5.2.2.2 *Hunger and other physical needs*

The folktales cite hunger or natural appetite as common reasons why children deviate from their parents' instructions, as observed in several of the folktales studied in this research. As in the folktales, children in real life situations, may be attracted by and indulge in various activities or habits that seem good at first but have long-term bad consequences for them. This is supported by Keith Megaw in *Bona* magazine (2019:25) who reported that some children may break and steal goods to satisfy their needs and sometimes they steal as a cry for help, because of emotional or physical challenges they are enduring.

## 5.2.3 **Objective 3: To investigate the causes of curiosity of children in folktales**

### 5.2.3.1 *The desire for autonomy and to find out for oneself*

One of the causes of curiosity is the desire to find out how things work. The study has discovered that children in Siswati folktales like to discover things on their own. This is reflected in several of the folktales represented in this research (for instance, 4.3.1, 4.3.4, 4.3.5, 4.3.7 and 4.3.12). In contemporary real life situations, children do sometimes experience good luck or fortunate circumstances, but because of naivety, ignorance and unfounded self-confidence they end up losing them. Cebelihle Mthethwa in *Bona* magazine (2019:17) reported that a small boy, who did not know how to handle a gun, pulled the trigger and shot one of his friends. The gun was meant as a means of adult protection, but in his ignorance he wanted to discover for himself the results of pulling a trigger. As a result, he lost a friend as well as committing an irreversible evil, similar to the story of the boy and the duck that laid golden eggs (folktale 4.3.5).

### 5.2.3.2 *Physical fascinations as causes of curiosity*

The research study indicated that the curiosity of child characters in the folktales is often connected with physical attractions, distractions or fascinations. This is reflected in

folktales 4.3.2, 4.3.4 and 4.3.8. This relates well to most children in real life who do not heed instructions and end up being manipulated by those who have greater power than they do. This is supported by Robert Mathebula in the *Lowvelder* (2020:21) who reported that children and youth are attracted by the apparent glamour of many things such as fashion and sex, and describes how pursuing these things can eventually rob them of their future or cause them to lose their relationship with their families.

#### **5.2.4 Objective 4: To see whether there is a correlation between children in folktales and children in real life**

The study demonstrated that there are clear correlations between child characters in folktales and contemporary children in real life. The study revealed that in Siswati folktales, the education and nurturing of children is seen to be governed by rules and instructions that are meant to direct and protect them in their daily lives. This contributes to the way the child should behave as well as to guide their own making of choices. The analysis further revealed that most children violate the interdictions by not making good decisions, or choices. The following paragraphs will give more clarity on the correlations between children in folktales and in real life.

##### *5.2.4.1 Violation of interdiction*

The research analysis exposed that most children in folktales violate the instruction (interdiction) and thus find themselves in dangerous situations. In folktale 4.3.2 Ntsandzane was given instructions not to open the door because cannibals would come in; and that is exactly what happened. Even in real life, children are instructed not to talk to or accept offers from strangers; but some children violate the instructions and become victims of rape, human trafficking or even lose their lives. Captain Zondo of the SAPS was reported in *Ridge Times* (7 November 2018) as saying that parents should be on 'stranger danger' alert after some children were abducted by strangers. In one instance an unnamed girl on her way from school was accosted when a car stopped and one of the people inside opened the window and spoke English to greet her. Suddenly, she was grabbed in an attempt to abduct her, but fortunately a resident from the nearby

houses helped her free herself, just as Ntsandzane was rescued from the hands of cannibals by a neighbour.

#### 5.2.4.2 *Making choices*

The study identified that curiosity plays a role in the making of choices and decisions. In folktale 4.3.7, Sitolotolo had to choose between taking the safer long way or the shorter, more dangerous way that passed between the bushes. His choice of convenience over safety led him to fall into the hands of a dangerous cannibal. This correlates well with children in real life who are cautioned about taking the apparently 'easy way out', in terms of a variety of things such as friends, choice of clothes, religion and behaviour, but still make wrong choices. In *Bona* magazine (2014:9), Les Brown, a guest speaker in a prize awarding ceremony at Bonginhlanhla High School, stated that goals are the road map that guides learners in making choices for their futures. He mentioned that most children fail to make good choices while they are still young, which can affect their futures. He encouraged learners to make good choices and differentiate between right and wrong. He added that some of the roads may look very long but lead to success while some roads may look shorter but lead to failure and misery. This is what prevailed in folktale 4.3.7, where Sitolotolo made a convenient, but wrong, choice of route, and fell into danger.

#### 5.2.4.3 *Bravery of children in folktales*

In her master's dissertation on the role of children in Zulu folktales, De Bruin (2002) found that some children in folktales are very brave, fearing almost nothing. In folktale 4.3.7, we find a boy who was very brave, in that although the community told him that the cannibals were very dangerous, the boy was not afraid and went to visit them. During this episode, the boy succeeded in destroying all the cannibals and his bravery made him a hero in the community. Similarly, in contemporary real life, if we look back on the South African struggle against apartheid, young children did amazingly brave things and contributed to saving the nation by rejecting the imposition of Afrikaans upon them and generations to come.

This is supported by Lubambo (2015:86) who articulates that folktale boys are depicted as brave and most of them used their bravery to assist the community in times of attack by enemies like cannibals and other monsters. She adds that brave boys fight enemies and conquer them. In *Bona* magazine dated April 2010:19 Oelschlager related a story about a brave and intelligent boy who grew up in a poor family. The community discouraged him from studying physics owing to a lack of facilities such as a laboratory. The boy was very intelligent and continued to study physics. His courage in persisting led him to a bright future since he became a doctor. The community in real life celebrates the courage and perseverance of the boy just as was seen in the folktale.

#### 5.2.4.4 *The role of folktale parents in the awakening of curiosity*

The study reveals that parents play a role in awakening curiosity in children. In the majority of folktales represented in this selection, parents play roles showing care, love, giving guidance, warning, and giving directions to their children. This is why they gave instructions each time the child undertook a journey. Furthermore, the study revealed that children violated the instructions because of curiosity. Folktale parents are shown to cause their naïve or ignorant children to act out of curiosity by not providing sufficient information to meet the challenges along the way. In real life, parents also show that they care by giving rules, norms and values to their children, but through being ignorant and inexperienced, the children have insufficient information and ignore the instructions to do as they like. In folktale 4.3.8, Ncekazane's grandmother indirectly causes her to act out of curiosity by not providing sufficient information. Not all parents are caring, however: in stories 4.3.1 and 4.3.11, the folktale children are treated cruelly and neglectfully by their parents, leading them to use their curiosity to get out of the situation. Similarly, Mashadi Kekana (2018:20), reported in *City Press* that parents' neglect had resulted in thirteen children dying due to shack fires, owing to absence of parents and inexperience and ignorance of the children.

#### 5.2.4.5 *Curiosity of folktale children characters in folktales as compared to contemporary children in real life*

The study revealed that the curiosity reflected in children in folktales is no different from that of children in real life, regardless of the setting. Their desire to find out for themselves or satisfy a need or a distraction lead them to disregard their parents' instructions. They are both attracted by the things they see. In folktale 4.3.6, Sitolotolo was attracted by wild berries. Modern children are attracted by food, clothes and a fancy lifestyle. This is supported by Lubambo (2015:19) who concluded that children in folktales, especially boys, have to face modern-day monsters such as peer pressures, and they also design new methods of conquering those monsters. Contemporary children are attracted by drugs and other substances. Denise Williams reported in the *Citizen* newspaper (2016:23) that drug abuse among the youth was rising in South Africa. She further explained that the use of both illegal and over-the-counter drugs was seemingly growing and needed to be dealt with urgently, adding that South Africa is the regional hub for drug trafficking in and out of the country. Furthermore, she highlighted that drug dependency is a massive problem that creates serious health, social, legal, and economic problems for the country. She added that South Africans need to stand together to deal with this monster of drugs.

### **5.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **5.3.1 Disobedience of child characters in folktales**

The study reveals that in most folktales, children are depicted following a pattern of being disobedient and violating their parents' rules, as in folktale 4.3.6, where Sitolotolo deviated from instructions and was swallowed by cannibals. He had agreed to follow the instructions but he in fact spontaneously did the opposite. In folktale 4.3.3 Wela disobeyed her grandmother's instruction not to eat anything on the road until she reached her destination. Both tales indicate that children do initially intend to obey, but curiosity inclines them to deviate from rules, norms and values. This is in line with children in real life, most of whom are disobedient to their parents especially the elderly people

like grandmothers and grandfathers. It was reported in *Middle Earth* (2015:31) that teenagers disobey their parents or other authority figures because they are trying to find out who they are. The article added that, in the process, some teenagers may do things that have detrimental consequences for them, some more serious than others, and some more lasting than others.

### **5.3.2 Causes of curiosity in children in folktales**

The findings revealed that curiosity in children is caused by their eagerness to know about how things are done, and where things come from. This often leads them to punishment or other bad consequences. However, it can also lead to victory and benefit, depending on the levels of experience of the child or youth. In folktale 4.3.7, the boy was told not to visit the cannibals because they were dangerous and would kill him but the boy ignored the warnings and succeeded in overcoming the ensuing challenges. He was appreciated by the community.

Children are always zealous to learn and discover things on their own, but do not necessarily have sufficient knowledge and maturity to do it in a beneficial way. In folktale 4.3.5 the boy cut up the duck to see where the golden eggs came from. This was an irreversible act as it killed the source of the eggs and was a permanent loss to the boy. In real life situations, parents may avoid giving their children enough information about certain things, an example being sex education. The half-truths they tell evoke curiosity in children to discover things for themselves; as a result, they end up being victims of rape and other kinds of abuse that sometimes affect them for the rest of their lives. Children should be told the truth from scratch even though to some of them nothing seems correct. Suzanne Moore reported in *The Guardian* (2014:09) that children, especially teenagers, need to explore and experiment with things they hear about from their peers. She cited this as one of the reasons teenagers want to learn on their own and end up being troubled by their deeds. Some of them end up ruining their lives forever.



### **5.3.3 The effects of neglect on child characters by their parents**

The study revealed that neglected children in the folktales end up being curious to discover things for themselves. In folktale 4.3.1 Dema and Demazane were neglected by their parents. Cautious to find a way to get to the *emasi*, the children end up being severely punished. In the study it is evident that parents may in fact severely punish their children for their own negligence. In real life, children who are neglected by their parents often end up being street kids or finding a different home where they will find peace and shelter away from their parents. Tumelo Waga Dibakoane reported in *News Horn* (2020:12) about a woman from Bushbuckridge who abandoned her four kids and chose to enjoy life with a boyfriend. In order to meet their basic needs, the children ended up asking neighbours for food and shelter. The mother put the blame on the biological father of the children for rejecting his own children. At last, the children were taken to a temporary home for safety, just as Dema and Demazane ended up finding a home far from their parents.

### **5.3.4 Folktale parents in relation to real-life parents**

In the folktale story above, the parents were too selfish and irresponsible to provide their children's basic needs. In other folktales, parents did not sufficiently protect their children, who had to travel long distances and later fell victim to cannibals and other monsters. In folktale 4.3.9, Malolo defies her mother and when the mother is out, she goes on a long journey on her own and was subsequently chased by cannibals. Today's parents are also often absent from home and this leaves the children to do risky things on their own such as boarding taxis to get to school. Child neglect and abandonment is one of the root causes of child abuse and abduction in contemporary society. Jeff Wicks and Lwandle Bhengu reported in the *Sowetan* (2018:07) about a toddler who went missing for 48 hours. The toddler was left to play unsupervised and had wandered off a long distance before the mother realised she was gone. The toddler walked alone to the mountains and fortunately the police found her.

## **5.4 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS**

### **5.4.1 Chapter 1: Introduction**

Chapter 1 introduced the study and presented the background information to the study. This chapter further demarcated the statement of the research problem and the reason why the researcher embarked on the topic 'Curiosity of child characters in Siswati folktales'. The aim and objectives of the study were also discussed in this chapter, i.e. to critically investigate the curiosity of child characters in Siswati folktales. The main focus of the investigation was based on Siswati folktales which depict children as main characters. The study further introduced functionalism as the theory that was used in the interpretation and analysis of the data collected. The chapter further introduced the methodological approaches where qualitative methods were selected for collection and interpretation of data. The reason for the choice of qualitative methods as a method of data collection and interpretation was that qualitative methods deal with phenomena in real life settings. The chapter concluded by providing the definition of terms used in this study.

### **5.4.2 Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework**

Chapter 2 presented the literature reviewed for the purpose of finding a gap to be able to make a contribution to the body of knowledge. Literature related to the present study on Siswati folktales and specifically curiosity of children in Siswati folktales was reviewed. The researcher consulted published and unpublished sources in different local indigenous languages as well as those written in the indigenous languages of other countries on the African continent. The focus then fell on the functional theory which was found to be very appropriate for the study.

### **5.4.3 Chapter 3: Research methodology**

Chapter 3 discussed the research methods as well as the data collection methods. The

chapter outlined a detailed research design, including the population sampling methods, size of the data, methods of collecting data, as well as data analysis. The research was conducted using qualitative methods of research because these methods allow for an in-depth study of a phenomenon in the natural setting and describe, explain and interpret information. Borg et al. (1993:194) maintain that the purpose of the qualitative methodology is to describe a given set of phenomena though there are certain interventions. He further adds that it is important that the researchers minimise personal opinions and biases to remain as objective as possible. The selection of the qualitative research method assisted the study to collect the appropriate data that answered the research questions. Through purposive sampling, folktales were purposefully selected to provide answers to the research questions. The chapter also provided information on ethical issues whereby the researcher applied for ethical clearance from the university before collecting data.

#### **5.4.4 Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis**

Chapter 4 presented and analysed the data collected from the selected Siswati folktales. The aim of analysing the data was to investigate the curiosity of child characters in Siswati folktales. The collected data was analysed utilising Neuman's (2000) method of Analytic Comparison through the method of agreement and the method of difference. The collected data was discussed using different themes that were identified when reading the folktales.

#### **5.4.5 Chapter 5: Research findings, recommendations and conclusion**

Chapter 5 discussed the findings of the data presented and analysed in Chapter 4. This chapter provided answers to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The analysed data were also categorised into themes that were drawn from the analysis in Chapter 4. The following themes were identified and discussed:

- The depiction of children in Siswati folktales.

- Parents giving insufficient information.
- Hunger and other physical needs.
- Self-discovery of mysteries.
- Physical fascinations as causes of curiosity.
- Relationship between children in folktales and in real life.
- The role of folktale parents in curiosity in relation to real life.
- Levels of curiosity in child characters in folktales as compared to modern children.

In this chapter, the causes of curiosity in children were discussed as delineated in the analysis, as well as the implication of curiosity in child characters in folktales. The chapter further discussed the correlation between curiosity in child characters in folktales and in modern children. The findings of the study were discussed as well as the contribution of the study, the limitation, and the recommendations from the researcher as well as the conclusion of the research.

## **5.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The motivation for this study of curiosity of children in Siswati folktales relates to the fact that emaSwati recognise folklore in general as a very important tool of teaching and learning. It is one of the many traditional ways of imparting knowledge and skills as well as cultural values for life.

At the start of this research, 'Curiosity of children in folktales' was an unexplored motifeme constituting a knowledge gap in the study of Siswati folklore. This knowledge gap has in part been explored in this research, by carrying out a systematic study on the causes of curiosity of child characters in a purposive sampling of 12 Siswati folktales. The researcher believes that the findings of the study are valuable in demonstrating that the insights of these traditional tales still have relevance for contemporary society. This is because they deal with typical characteristics of humans everywhere, and more specifically in this context with children, whose differing levels of naivety, ignorance,

experience and knowledge make them vulnerable in many ways when exercising their natural faculty of curiosity.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE**

As a purely literary piece of research, this study serves to draw together a selection of related folktales for this specific language group, which may serve as a resource for further similar research. From time immemorial the folktale has been one of the folk tools of education and maintenance of order in the society. Functionalist scholars such as Malinowski (1926), have demonstrated how folktales contribute to the maintenance of institutions in society and how they function in that particular society. Malinowski holds that folktales educate children in, and validate, the norms of the society, and adds that they safeguard and enforce morality and contain practical rules for the guidance of the members of a society (Malinowski 1926:19).

This study revealed that folktales are still relevant in contemporary society as they contain insights about appropriate behaviour and how to avoid being tempted to indulge curiosity under certain circumstances. Malinowski's statement holds true in relation to folktales in the context of traditional emaSwati society, which has indeed long regarded folktales as a tool to enforce morality by validating the norms of the society. This study of the folktales makes a contribution to the body of knowledge by serving to reaffirm the relevance of traditional literature as a medium that lends itself to educational and cultural purposes, since its themes and insights are essentially timeless, related to people coming to grips with the surprises life can throw at us, or of facing danger and challenges in our lives.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher's most significant drawback in research effectiveness was the scarcity of indigenous resources for folktales especially in Siswati folklore. Old editions of this kind of literature are difficult to find or have gone out of print. To conserve the primary sources

of this body of knowledge, it is hoped that institutional repositories will acquire rare copies of literature and create and administer catalogues and other bibliographic information to assist researchers in this field.

## **5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was limited by reason of the focus on the single aspect of the functions and outcomes of curiosity in children as portrayed in folktales. Further study is needed to evaluate the usefulness of the folktale as a hinge between modern life and the traditional life depicted in the folktales, which serves to enshrine traditional mores while at the same time reflecting timeless human needs and traits that dictate human behaviour for better or worse.

In isolating curiosity as one aspect typical of children's responses to unknown phenomena in their world, the study indicated that traditional folktales are still a rich educational resource for psychological, spiritual and pedagogical training and research. The researcher recommends that academic focus can be brought to bear on the teaching of folktales, their revision and adaptation for a modern context, being careful not to lose their didactic and moral functions. In terms of cultural studies, folktales have great potential for interpretation in drama and dance, and academic awareness of this rich resource may lead to a revitalization of the recognised value of folktales as an indigenous heritage.

## **5.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter summarised the entire research study on curiosity of children in Siswati folktales. The research has shown that as child characters in folktales are curious, children in real life also display curiosity. Child characters in folktales display curiosity in different situations and they are provoked to curiosity by different causes in different settings. Parents are also displayed as people who may cause children to act out of curiosity by not providing sufficient knowledge or protection for children. The study

further revealed that some acts of curiosity in children are caused by children themselves who want to discover things for themselves and sometimes are reluctant to wait for the right time for things to happen as they are impatient for quick results. The study also exposed that impatience is one of the causes of curiosity especially if full information is not provided for an interdiction. The present study has not exhausted the research topic; there are still gaps in the research that need to be attended to by other researchers approaching the subject from a pedagogical or literary perspective. Folktales themselves are not didactic or prescriptive: they present the actions of the characters without judgment. This is what makes them timeless and useful in the study and elucidation of the motives and desires behind human behaviors.

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## 7. APPENDIX: FULL VERSIONS OF FOLKTALES

*(Numbered according to their first appearance in the text)*

### 4.3.1 *Dema na Demazane* (Dema and Demazane)

Once upon a time, there were a husband and wife with two children, a girl and a boy. These parents were so poverty-stricken that they did not even have a single chicken, much less any cows or goats. Their livelihood depended on subsistence farming. They did not have machinery for ploughing. They used a hoe and their bare hands. Therefore, their fields were overgrown with weeds. The man would do all the ploughing alone, and all the weeding would be done by the wife alone.

She would wake up every morning and go to the fields to weed and then go back home to cook. As usual, at the beginning of the week she took her hoe and went to hoe the fields. When the sun started getting warmer, she picked some wild spinach so she could cook for the children and have something to eat. The next day when she went back to hoe the fields she found that weeds had grown once again and covered up the whole area she had weeded the previous day. She could hardly believe that the very field she had weeded the previous day was now overgrown with weeds. She started weeding again and then went back home. Upon getting home she related to her husband what she had seen in the fields. Her husband did not believe her for a moment. He said his wife was lying, she was just lazy. He had seen for a long time that she was just a good-for-nothing

wife. Where has one ever seen such a thing happening in this whole world? She insistently repeated her story to her husband. So, the following day the husband woke up and took to the fields. To his shock he found the situation exactly as his wife had described on the previous day. But still, he did not believe her story.

Each time the wife had weeded, a certain bird came, and sang:

'Tweet! Tweet! Tweet! This  
is my father's land,  
Being tilled by good-for-nothing people,  
instead of industrious people.  
Soil, soil, be covered up at once.  
Grass, grass, come together and cover up the soil at once.'

Indeed, the soil was covered up and tall grass grew together with the mealie plants. One could barely see the mealie plants. The wife did not know how she was going to tell her husband about all this. This was because he had not believed her before. Instead of believing her he got very angry with her, and again told the wife that she was lazy, and that she did not want to work. He also said that he could not plough the fields only for the wife to be wasteful. 'I am going to see for myself', said the husband to the wife. He said it would be better that they go together on the following day, so he could see for himself. Indeed, when morning came they took their hoes and off they went to the fields. They weeded and weeded and the sun started getting hot. They got tired and therefore stopped weeding. They took their hoes and went back home. The bird came again and started singing:

'Tweet! Tweet! Tweet! This  
is my father's land,  
Being tilled by good-for-nothing people,  
instead of industrious people.  
Soil, soil, be covered up at once.  
Grass, grass, come together and cover up the soil at once.'

Immediately the tall grass grew again. Now it was worse than before. The following day the husband came back to see how the fields were. He was very shocked to see that the weeds were overgrown as though no weeding had taken place on the previous day. Now he realised that his wife was right all the time about something causing the weeds to grow back again. 'I will hide and show only my hand. I believe that the witch will come and sit on my hand thinking it is a tree. I will catch him and then take him to my home.' When the bird saw the wife leaving the field, it flew at once and went to the fields to do its usual job. It then sat on what it thought was the only tree that was there and started singing:

'Tweet! Tweet! Tweet! This  
is my father's land,  
Being tilled by good-for-nothing people,  
instead of industrious people.  
Soil, soil, be covered up at once.  
Grass, grass, come together and cover up the soil at once.'

As it was finishing the last word the man caught it.

'Tweet! Tweet! Tweet! Please do not kill me', pleaded the bird. 'I will produce some sour milk for you, I am a sour milk bird.'

The bird was now their captive, and it indeed produced sour milk, which the family ate. One day, while the parents were out in the fields, the children were curious and wanted to see what made the bird produce the sour milk. They forced the bird to produce sour milk until there was nothing coming out except blood. The bird eventually flew away and the children were left speechless and did not know what to do.

The end.



#### 4.3.2 *Salukati nemntfwanaso* (An old woman and her child)

Once upon a time. . .

Listeners: Go on!

There was an old woman who stayed with her child, named Ntsandzane [Orphan]. The child was young and was five years old. It is said that the child was brought up by the old woman.

The old woman always went to weed the fields. When she was done weeding she would come back and fetch some water. Sometimes the child would go with her, but sometimes she would leave her at home to do all the other house chores. Ntsandzane was a very industrious girl and very helpful to her grandmother. Every time when the old woman arrived home after working in the fields she would knock on the door and say:

'Ntsandzane! Ntsandzane!

Open the door for me my grandchild, I  
am so tired.'

Upon hearing these words Ntsandzane would be very happy for she knew that her granny had brought her something nice. The old woman always found that Ntsandzane had finished cooking. The old woman would often say that her children had departed before they could see what their child was doing. You would swear that there was an older person who was always cleaning up the house, and yet it was Ntsandzane.

The old woman gave Ntsandzane a strong warning that she must never open the door to anyone who knocked at the door while she was out in the fields. The world is full of murderers. People have become murderers, cannibals, parasites and wolves. She told Ntsandzane to open the door only for her, knowing that Ntsandzane would recognise her voice. One day as Ntsandzane had just finished cleaning the house she heard a voice calling:

'Ntsandzane! Ntsandzane!

Open the door for me my grandchild, I am so tired.'

On this occasion, Ntsandzane was very hesitating to open the door. She thought to herself that the voice was not like that of her granny and therefore it was not her. She said, 'You are not my granny. I will only open for her, not you. My granny's voice is not as hoarse as yours and it is not as deep as yours.'

'You will always be safe, Ntsandzane', said the cannibal going back into the forest because she refused to let it come in. Ntsandzane froze with fear. She realised that she had been saved from serious danger. She peeped at the cannibal through a hole in the door until it was out of sight.

When the old woman came home, Ntsandzane heard her say the words she normally said when knocking on the door. Ntsandzane kept quiet for a while because she wanted her granny to say the words again. The granny repeated her request. And then she repeated it again, now saying even more loudly: 'What is wrong today Ntsandzane, my grandchild? You have your mouth wide open, as if terrified! What took you so long to open the door for me?'

'My intention, granny, was to establish whether the voice was really yours. Someone else was here, granny, and she was very scary. Her face is big. Her eyes are boulders. Her ears are those of an elephant and her nose is covering her whole face. Her forehead has a lot of wrinkles, and she has very big hands and arms. Yoh! the person is very scary granny.'

'Oh, well done my grandchild for not opening! It's a cannibal that was here. She eats human beings', said the old lady. The child was extremely frightened when she heard that that was a cannibal. The following day the old woman told Ntsandzane that she must

not open the door before the sun sets as she normally got back from work after sunset.

The next day while she was busy in the house Ntsandzane heard a small voice exactly like that of her granny.

'Ntsandzane! Ntsandzane!

Open the door for me my grandchild, I am so tired.'

She rushed to the door to open so she could see who it was even though her granny had said she should not open the door. The cannibal caught her and put her in a sack. Off to the forest it went with her. However, at that moment, along came a hunting party. The cannibal closed the sack very tightly and fled. The hunting party's dogs chased after the cannibal. Then the hunters took the sack and opened it. They found a girl so terrified that she could not even speak. After a long time, she related her story, and the hunting party took her back to the old woman. The old woman was overjoyed, and Ntsandzane was even more overjoyed.

The end.

#### **4.3.3 *Imbulumakhasane naWela* (The Salamander and Wela)**

In a certain country, there was a very beautiful girl and her name was Wela. Her beauty was known across the country. This caused her to be chosen by the prince to be his wife. Her parents were very happy that their daughter was going to be the prince's wife. They prepared everything their daughter was going to need for her wedding.

The wedding day came. Wela was accompanied by one of her maids. They were dressed most impressively. The following day Wela was even more impressively dressed than on the previous day. They left her home on horseback, with their belongings.

Before they left Wela's mother warned and instructed her not to sit on an anthill near the footpath. She agreed and assured her mother that she would obey this rule. Then they embarked on the journey.

After travelling a long, long distance the girls got tired. They decided to have a rest because their destination was now closer. In that place where they rested there were many anthills. Wela forgot all about her mother's instruction. She sat on one of the anthills and before she knew it a salamander appeared suddenly.

'Where are you off, to girls?' asked the salamander.

'We are going to get married to the prince', Wela answered.

'Who is the bride between the two of you?' asked the salamander, looking them straight in the eyes, wriggling all the time in the hide it was wearing.

'I am the bride, this one is my maid', answered Wela smiling. 'You really do look like one', said the salamander. 'Oh! what a beautiful dress you are wearing. May I borrow your dress to try it on and see if it suits me?' said the salamander, taking off its hide and giving it to the bride.

The salamander put on Wela's dress while Wela put on the hide. The salamander then jumped onto the horse that Wela was riding. It instructed Wela to follow behind on foot. Wela looked like a salamander for real. She followed behind the horse crying. As they were about to enter the royal house the salamander instructed her to stop crying. It said if they enter the royal house crying they might be turned away. Indeed, Wela stopped crying. They were given a special welcome at the royal house. A big celebration was thrown by the prince in their honour and to welcome them. When Wela tried to explain to them that she was not a salamander but the bride they did not believe her.

They did not know that a salamander loves sour milk very much. Very soon the royal house started running short of sour milk. There was a call that a big deep pit needed to be dug. Everyone was supposed to jump over the pit to the other side. The pit was then dug. Sour milk was then put in this pit. The salamander loved sour milk very much. It could never pass some sour milk without eating it. The maid started jumping over the pit. Wela was the next one to follow, and the fake bride the salamander was the last one to jump. As the salamander was jumping it realised there was some sour milk in the pit. It then let down its tail to scoop the sour milk. Unfortunately for it, it slipped into the pit and died.

As the days went by a giant pumpkin grew in that place. One day Wela picked this pumpkin. She cut it up to cook it. Once she had put it on the fire to cook she took a water bucket and went to fetch some water. She left her first born child sleeping. The pumpkin was not a real pumpkin but the real salamander itself. As she went out the salamander came out of the pot and took the child and put her in the pot. The salamander pretended to be the child. It ate and finished all the sour milk in all the calabashes.

When Wela got back into the house it pretended to be a child and fast asleep. She looked for the sour milk to give to her child but could not find it. The fake baby was now snoring. When Wela opened the blankets she found the salamander sleeping. She realised that it must be the pumpkin she cooked which was pretending to be a baby. She called the family and the salamander was killed, still pretending to be the baby.

The end.

#### **4.3.4 *Umfana nelikhiwa lendlela* (The young man and the wayside fig)**

Once upon a time there was a certain young man named Siguca. This young man was very handsome. He loved himself and he was a very neat person. The girls liked him so much. He also loved proposing love to the girls when he saw them.

One day there was a celebration in his area. He went there because he knew he would

find some girls, as they always attended celebrations. Even girls from very far attended. In this celebration the girls dance and the young men choose beautiful girls for themselves. Siguca too found himself a girl from a faraway place, Gcebile. This girl came all the way from Ntsababovu. One cannot see the girls well from very far. It is said that this girl came from a place called Nhlolotsi.

The young man started trying to charm the other girls. He had a very sweet tongue. The girls could not resist him. They responded to him with beautiful sweet words, promising to show the young man the way to Gcebile's home.

Siguca went around dancing because Gcebile was the one who was responsive to his magic.

'Look here, my boy', said the old man, 'I must give you advice for when you go to Nhlolotsi. There is only one route that goes there. There are rules to be observed. It is important to note, when going there, that the route is very long. Another important thing is that when you go to your girl you must never divert from the route. Once you embark on this route, do not divert, go straight until you get to your destination. You need to start your journey very early in the morning and do not take any food for the journey.'

'I hear you very well, grandfather', answered the young man. 'You are scaring me now, grandfather: why does this road have so many obstacles?'

The old man told the youth that the girl's family were rich. He also said that, should he divert from the route, he would be in for trouble.

Siguca woke up very early the next morning and dressed stylishly. On the way he was attacked by a stomach ache. Now the problem was that should he divert from the route he would be breaking the rules. Even should he just divert from the route only to relieve himself, he would be breaking the rules. Though he should be hungry and see some figs along the route he may not divert to go and pick them.

'Oh! the fig tree is so fruitful', he said to himself, 'and the figs look so beautiful'. It is obvious that not too many people walk on this route. Maybe if I pick up those that have fallen down I will be then picking up bad luck, and then my paths will be closed. But I cannot properly see whether the tree is next to the route. Just picking up the figs will not really mean I have diverted so much from my route; and I do not even want to eat them to fill my stomach. I just want to eat them as a snack, so that I reach Nhlolotsi still alive.'

Siguca was very hungry by this time. He had been walking all day long. He was so hungry that his knees were shaking. Apart from the hunger, he was so weak that if he were to sit down, he would never be able to get up again. So he picked up the figs just as he was about to fall to the ground. He picked up those that had just fallen.

He then diverted just a little from his route and defecated. He left his faeces on the ground before crossing the river as he marched on towards his in-laws. When he looked back he noticed that his faeces had grown little feet. It could not be noticed that it was crushed at the back. He was very angry. Once Siguca was across the river he stood there. The young man hit his faeces and it fell far enough away that he could not see it. 'The smell is better now', said another man. The feet are better now. The son-in-law arrived at Nhlolotsi and stayed the night there. Gcebile said, 'If it was up to me, I would not dish up food for the son-in-law. There is a little ghost that is mimicking him. Let us not tell him because that will make him unhappy.'

Gcebile came in the morning to greet her future husband. She almost fell down because of the terrible smell as she entered the door.

The end.

#### 4.3.5 *Umfana nelidada* (The boy and the duck)

Long ago when the white people arrived in the country of the Swazi, there was a woman who had only one child. The child was a boy, and his father had died long ago. This widow and her child lived a very difficult life. They were poverty stricken. They did not have even blankets. In winter they were beaten down by the cold. All that helped them was to sleep next to the fire all night till morning. The boy grew up, and when he became an adolescent he went to look for a job at a white man's farm. The white man had livestock. He hired the boy and he started working. But the white man did not pay the boy well even though he worked hard. He gave him only food and second hand clothes. The boy was patient until he grew up. All the time he was thinking. One day the white man called him and spoke to him.

'I want to inform you that next month I am going with my family, back to our home country overseas. This means it is the end of your job. There is nothing I can do: my time for going back has come. Also you are now a man – you can go and look for a job from other white people in the vicinity.'

'That is so painful', said the boy.

Indeed, the white man's time came and he sold everything he had. He kept back only one duck, which he gave to the boy. He said, 'I am giving you this duck, look after it well. Take care of it and give it water to drink. Never slaughter it.'

'For all my hard work of many, many years, all I deserve is this duck!' exclaimed the youth. 'Is the money finished?'

The white man laughed and shook his head, and said, 'Money will do nothing for you. Just take this duck and go and rear it. Do what I have told you to do. I have reserved a sack of mealies. Do not eat the mealies: they are for the duck.' The boy took the duck and they bid each other farewell. He took his belongings and went home to his mother.



He got home and gave the duck to his mother. She was surprised but instructed him to do as the white man had told him. After two days the duck laid a golden egg. They sold the egg, and got a lot of money, which enabled them to buy clothes and food. The duck then laid another egg and they got more money, which they used to buy a house and to fill it with furniture. The old woman and her child got very rich. One day the boy caught the duck and killed it because he wanted to see where the eggs came from. After that they remained poor because the duck was dead.

The end.

#### **4.3.6 *Umfelokati nemtukulu wakhe* (The widow and her grandson)**

Once upon a time in a certain country there lived a widow and her grandson. His name was Sitolotolo. They stayed in a house with a thatched roof. Next to it was another one-roomed house which they used as a kitchen and also as storage for their food provisions. They had one cow, which they milked. They also had goats and chickens. The chicken livestock was flourishing. During a ploughing season they used their cow to pull the plough. The fields were far from their home. Sitolotolo always stayed at home looking after the smaller livestock.

One day Sitolotolo's granny brewed some liquor for the hoeing party she had invited to help her with the hoeing. Before leaving for the fields she gave Sitolotolo some instructions. She said, 'Sitolotolo, today I am going to the fields to cultivate because I am having a hoeing party coming to help me with the hoeing. I will take long to come back and therefore you must bring me some milk. Please remember not to take the short-cut path through the forest. You must use the clear open path.'

'It is fine granny. Do not worry, I will do as you have said', Sitolotolo replied.

Before his granny left for the fields he went with her to look for the cow. It took him a long time to find it. Upon finding it he rushed home to milk it. After milking the cow, he poured the milk into a bucket and took it to his granny. The sun was now hot. He forgot that his granny gave him a stern warning that he dare not take the short-cut path but should use the clear open one. So, he took the short cut.

On his way he came across a cannibal. It looked at the milk bucket and then drank all the milk. It then threw the bucket far away. Sitolotolo ran away very fast, but unfortunately it was all in vain. The cannibal just took two steps and caught him. It went away with him and swallowed him.

As it was on its way home it met up with Sitolotolo's granny. It also swallowed her. It did not realise it swallowed her with her hoe. It started having sharp pains and eventually collapsed and died.

The end.

#### **4.3.7 *Umfana nemazimu lamabili* (A boy and two cannibals)**

There was a boy who spent a lot of time out in the veld. This boy loved to walk around and to hunt. He used to leave home in the morning and come back in the evening, but he never bothered to take food along because he used to eat wild berries and wild medlars. He lived on fruits all the time. His parents warned him that he should not walk around the veld alone, because there were cannibals who ate people up.

He always responded with another question, asking, 'What is a cannibal? Isn't it a human being who needs to be stopped from being gluttonous?'

At the time there was news that people had been eaten by two cannibals in the area. The Nhlalakahle area was well known to be peaceful and forgiving. Everybody was

perplexed as to where the cannibals were coming from. At dusk people would rush to their homes because they were scared of the cannibals. One day the boy, as usual, went to the dark forest where the cannibals stayed. He took along his big dog. It had blood-red eyes. Its tongue was always hanging out. The mouth too was hanging and always drooling. It looked like a lion. The boy was tall and you could see that he was still very young. He was talkative, and spoke to everyone he came across as though they were acquainted. He never ran short of something to say. In fact, he always had a lot to say. As he approached the cannibals' house he tied his dog to a tree stump out of sight of the house. He then walked up to the house.

He found only one cannibal at home. The other one had gone out. 'Good morning uncle', the boy greeted the cannibal.

'Morning nephew', responded the cannibal. 'Where have you come from so early in the morning?'

'I am from home uncle. Ever since you came to this place I've never had an opportunity to visit you. Today I have succeeded in coming', responded the boy.

The cannibal replied, 'O nephew! Who told you I stay here across the river?'

'My mother told me, uncle', responded the boy as he seated himself in the cannibals' house. His eyes were fixed on a human skull that was smelling and hanging on a pillar of the house. A swarm of flies had covered the pillar. He continued, 'Uncle, what does this swarm of flies want here?'

'O nephew, they are attracted by uncle's meat because it's not fresh. It has been here for some time now. Your coming here has made me very happy because I do not like meat that is not fresh. I want fresh meat. Your young uncle is coming with something delicious', said the cannibal, salivating.

'I will wait until he comes back. I am not in a hurry', replied the boy. While he was waiting he was served some meat, and was told to eat. 'What animal does this meat come from, uncle?' asked the boy.

'Just eat, so you may find out', responded the cannibal.

The boy ate, and he could tell that it was not from any of the animals he was used to. He then remembered the children's rhyme which went:

Human eater!

Human eater!

Head as big as a mountain  
Stomach!

When the boy had finished eating he bid the cannibal good bye.

'You will see your other uncle next time', said the cannibal. The cannibal had realised that the boy might be suspicious, and therefore that letting him go might pose a challenge. Why had he let him go after he had come by himself?

The boy walked off with the premonition of a bad outcome. He broke into a run and the cannibal chased after him. He went straight to where he had left his vicious dog. The dog heard him coming. He got to the dog and untied it. He also picked up his fighting sticks and awaited the cannibal.

The cannibal's eyes met those of the dog. The dog went for him and soon they were at each other's throats. The cannibal was head over heels back to its house. The boy chased after it. The dog ran away because it had lost some of its flesh. The cannibal got into its house and locked itself in. The boy set the cannibal's house on fire and the

cannibal burnt to ashes. The boy was waiting at the door with his sticks. It is not known what happened to the other uncle.

The end.

#### **4.3.8 *Ncekezane nembulumakhasane* (Ncekezane and the Salamander)**

Once upon a time there was a girl named Ncekezane. She was staying with her granny because her parents had passed away long ago. At that time, people lived well in Mswati's country because there was plenty of food. There were also plenty of wild fruits in the veld. A person could travel without food for the journey in Mswati's country. Ncekezane was leading a good life at her granny's place.

As time passed on the granny's days on earth became shorter. 'Ncekezane, my granddaughter', said the granny to her granddaughter while they were basking in the sun behind the kitchen. Ncekezane listened. 'My granddaughter I will not live much longer on this earth, I am dying. I want you to listen very carefully to what I am about to tell you. I could die at any time now. I don't want you to be left struggling on this earth. Prepare your clothes so you may go and stay with your uncle across the river. It is over the Mashonamini mountains', said the old woman, not speaking well for she no longer had teeth. 'Never eat any fruit along the way, no matter how hungry you are. Only eat your boiled mealies that you will be carrying and water from your container. If you will do as I am telling you, you will surely reach your uncle's place. They will all be happy for you and you might end up getting married to a young man from there.' The old woman said all this wiping her eyes because she was sad at the thought of being separated from Ncekezane.

Ncekezane was her main friend on earth.

So Ncekezane prepared everything: her traditional regalia, beads, sleeping mat, animal-skin cloak, food for the journey, her water container. Then she bade her granny farewell.

The old woman died and God's people buried her. Ncekezane travelled a long distance without coming across anyone. She was afraid that she might have taken a wrong route as all roads are travelled by people but hers was completely empty. 'What kind of road is this one, which is travelled by no one except for me?' she asked herself. She went over a hill and saw the mountains that her granny had told her about. But she was still far from reaching her destination.

There were some fruit trees next to the road. They had so much fruit that their branches were touching the ground. She wanted them, but quickly remembered what her grandmother had told her. So she restrained herself. Her feet wanted to rest a little bit now. She left her path and rested in the shade. She took out her food for the journey and ate it. She washed it down with the water from her water container. Her body felt very good after that and her strength was revived. She looked around and saw water berries and some milk plums everywhere. Her heart wanted to jump out. She longed so badly for these fruits (and more especially for the figs that she loved so much). But although they were so ripe and red, she still restrained herself.

When she felt she had rested enough she took her bundle of belongings and carried on with her journey. There were ripe fruits everywhere she went. She got to a point where she could not restrain herself anymore. In the end, she went to a fig tree and put down her bundle of belongings. She picked and ate one to find out how they tasted. She found them so sweet that she started picking more. Before she had walked much further, she felt like going to use a toilet. She went behind some trees near the road and relieved herself. As she was walking away she heard a voice calling her, 'Ncekezane, Ncekezane my sister's child, do not leave me behind.' She got such a fright and looked behind her only to see what she thought was her hard stool standing up like a sausage, hopping behind her. Really, it was Imbulumakhasane, the Salamander. She was shocked as to what she was seeing in this wilderness. 'Oh, it's me, my sister's child. I am also going to your uncle's place', it said coming very close to her. 'You look so beautiful my niece. May I try on your regalia and see if it can suit me too? I will just try it on and give it back to you' said the stool. Ncekezane was surprised and did not know what to say. She remembered that her granny told her not to eat any fruit along the road. Just look now! – she had come across a serious problem. It called her its sister's child and then again

called her its cousin. She then gave it her regalia to put on. So, the stool put on the regalia and smiled to itself at seeing how well the clothing suited it. 'Let us go, my cousin: I will give it back to you once we are across the river', promised the stool and Ncekezane agreed. So, off they went, passing through a lot of trees, over hills until eventually they came close to the homes of neighbours of Ncekezane's uncle.

The people were shocked to see such creatures. For now, Ncekezane had covered herself with gum nut shells so that she would not be naked. They were now almost entering her uncle's homestead, but her friend was still refusing to give her back her garments. 'Give me back my clothing, look now we are almost at my uncle's place', said t Ncekezane to the stool.

Instead of answering her it gave her its skin to wear. 'Oh no, I am travelling with a trickster!' exclaimed Ncekezane. She was thinking hard to find a plan to deal with this situation but couldn't come up with anything. The Salamander took Ncekezane's bundle of belongings, put it on its head, and walked very fast ahead of her. Ncekezane's cousins came out running to meet them. They were very happy. They took Ncekezane's bundle of belongings and carried it. They could not recognise that the Salamander was not their cousin because it had curled up its tail and hidden it. The family housed Ncekezane and the Salamander in the maidens' hut. The Salamander was very good at pretending to be Ncekezane, a fake Ncekezane. The Salamander related to the family that her granny had passed away, and that is why she had come to stay at her uncle's place. The Salamander imitated Ncekezane's voice as it talked. Ncekezane herself tried to explain to them what had happened on the way. The family quickly gave them sour milk and *emahewu* [mealie meal drink] to eat and drink, but when Ncekezane tried to eat the sour milk, the Salamander stopped her and took the sour milk clay pot and ate to eat it all by itself.

The next morning Ncekezane's uncle slaughtered a goat for them. His niece was happy. So much meat was brought forth for them to eat. However, Ncekezane got none – she could only lick the dishes when taking them to the kitchen. As time went by Ncekezane lost so much weight that she became as thin as a broomstick. The family did not notice that what they thought was a Salamander was actually Ncekezane and vice versa,

because the Salamander had a voice that sounded just like the real Ncekezane's. Now, the sour milk began to go missing from the sour milk calabashes. The family started to suspect that they might have a witch in the home. Ncekezane was afraid to tell them that it was the Salamander, dressed in her traditional regalia, who was waking up at night and stealing all the sour milk.

Ncekezane's uncle came up with a plan to catch the witch who was finishing all the sour milk in the home. He sent out an instruction that a big pit be dug in the yard behind the house. Once it had been dug, the sour milk calabashes, filled to the brim with sour milk, were to be placed in the pit. Everyone would have to help in doing this. He summoned everyone in the home, from the children to the seniors. Once they had finished the work, they had to line up and jump over the pit, one-by-one. The children started, they all did well. Next came the grannies, and none of them fell into the pit. The maidens were next and they all jumped over successfully. The real Ncekezane also jumped over. Now it was time for the fake Ncekezane to jump over. She started sweating, huffing and puffing. 'Jump over cousin', they said to her. She rolled her eyes and jumped at once. As she was flying over her tail smelt the sour milk. All of a sudden she fell into the pit. 'Wow! this is a salamander. Cover up the pit at once so that it dies in there', said the uncle. Straight away, the real Ncekezane took off the Salamander's skin she had been wearing. Her uncle ordered that a beautiful set of traditional clothing be brought for her. They put it on her and she was then given food. Before many days had passed, a prince came by and proposed to Ncekezane, and she was married to the prince.

A pumpkin plant grew where the salamander was buried. It grew and it bore a very big pumpkin. One of the wives of Ncekezane's uncle picked the pumpkin and cooked it. It turned into a salamander. It came out of the pot and took the baby and put it in the pot. Upon her coming back, the woman opened the pot to see if the pumpkin was ready. To her shock she found the baby struggling in the pot. She wailed and covered her head with her arms.

The end.



#### **4.3.9 *Majazane na Malolo* (Majazane and Malolo)**

In the olden days there were two girls. Malolo was the elder sister. They asked their mother to let them go and visit their uncle, but their mother refused, saying that they were too small to visit their uncle. The following day, when their mother was supposed to go and see to her father's house, Malolo and her sister were supposed to look after their home, and could thus not go to visit their uncle. When their mother had left, Malolo called her sister and told her they must go and visit her uncle. The younger sister at first refused, but after some deliberation she agreed. There were two paths that they could take. They left their home, arguing about which path to take. In the end, they each chose a different path. Malolo chose the path on the right, and her sister chose the one on the left. Malolo kept walking on the path until late at night. Very far away, she could see a light, and she decided she would go to that place and ask for a place to sleep. She arrived, and was given food to eat and a place to sleep. There she found two ladies, a small girl and her mother, and they told her that the area was inhabited by many cannibals, and that the name of the main cannibal was Majazane (because he always wore a jacket). The girl told her to make a big stack of firewood and spread a blanket over it before going to sleep, so that the cannibal would think it's Malolo sleeping. The girl said she must also keep three eggs in her hands.

In the morning, the cannibal came with an axe and chopped at the blanket, only to find out that no one was there. They told him that the girl had gone. He followed the girl until she saw him, and then she took one of the eggs and threw it on the ground. The egg became a big forest and the cannibal couldn't cross the forest, so he chopped at the forest until he could pass. Then he remembered that he was chasing Malolo, and just before he found her, she threw down another egg and a big chunk of meat appeared. He rushed up to the meat, when he remembered that he was chasing Malolo. He continued the chase until Malolo threw another egg. This time it made a big hole, and the cannibal fell into the hole and died.

The end.

#### 4.3.10 *Mphungane* (The fly)

Once upon a time, long ago, there was a king who had gold, which had been given to him by the ancestors. One day, all of a sudden, the King's gold just disappeared. Days passed and the gold was just nowhere to be found. The king then promised a reward of ten cows to the person who could find and return the gold, or who had information on how to get it.

All the traditional healers and sangomas, witches and wizards gathered to discuss how to go about finding the golden treasure of the King. Then one day a boy by the name of Mphungane was walking the road on the way to his uncle, when he saw women who were out to get some wood for food and boiling of water. Just as he was walking, he overheard one of the women saying: 'Neighbour, the King's gold was swallowed by my black duck that has a white line at the back.'

He carried on walking as if he had not heard anything, and just as he was about to turn the corner, he turned back and started following them until they reached the houses where they lived. Having seen where they lived, Mphungane then ran back home. When he got home he took his father's bones and went to the royal kraal. He showed homage to the King, and said: 'I hear you have lost your precious gold, and I have brought good news. He then played the bones and predicted that the gold was in the stomach of a duck.'

The King was so amazed that he called all the rulers and those who were in high authority to listen to what the boy was saying. He then commanded them to gather in groups and go to the place where the gold was (he did all this to get luck, just like every witch and wizard, who was trying but failing). When they arrived at the house where the gold was, Mphungane told them to take the three white ducks that were black on their backs, necks and heads. They took the ducks and went back to the King's place.

Mphungane took a stick and pointed at one duck and said: 'It has passed.' At that time,

his eyes were red as if he was smoking. He then took the stick again and pointed at the other duck that had black on its neck and he said: 'This one too has passed.' At last he indicated the other duck, and said: 'It is there.'

The duck was killed and the gold was found in its intestines. The King was happy and rewarded the boy with cows. After his father heard that Mphungane had taken his bones and used them for divination, he was furious and chased him out of the house.

#### **4.3.11 Mtimba naMtinjane (Mtimba and Mtinjane)**

Once upon a time, there was a man with a wife and two children, who were boys. The first one's name was Mtimba and the other Mtinjane.

The father of these boys was known to be rich: he had plenty and more than enough. He had a large herd of cows *letinkhone*, *letimasavutjiwe naletimphunga*. In addition, sheep and goats of this man were all over the bush in abundance. He was very unkind and always used to start fights and quarrels. There were always fights in his household. His anger went to the extent that he had forced his loving wife, the mother of the boys, to leave the house. The boys then had only their father to take care of them, and so things went from bad to worse. The boys were not living a pleasant life anymore. Their father just used to beat them and molest them, so their lives never really seemed good, or worth living.

Every morning, the boys would wake up to milk the cows – but never enjoyed even a drop of the milk. They never got food, because their father always insisted that they should feed on their fruits of the veld which is *emakhiwa*, *emantulu*, and *emahlala*. Due to the lack of protein in their diet, and because they could only fill their stomachs with wild fruit, they became bony and thin. Mtimba then said to his brother: 'Can you see, this life we are living, it is just so tough and hard to put up with? I think it's best to go out and look for Mom, wherever she is. Patience and persevering in this life won't help us with anything. I am tired of living this life that is difficult to bear, so let's go and look for Mom.'

Mtinjana agreed.

They drove the cow before them in the busy road, saying:

'Go! Go! Daddy's cow, go – let's go look for Mommy! Mommy left us while we were young. Go cow, let's go look for Mom.'

They carried on walking as they kept the cow moving. They continued their search until it became dark. When they were becoming too tired to walk anymore, they saw flames from a fire. They dragged themselves towards the house. By this time the sun had already set and it was evening. They arrived at the house still being led by their cow saying:

'We are looking for our Mom! She left us while we were young! We want our Mom, *Sitfungatsa luhala bekunene!*'

How amazed they were when they heard the conversations in that house! The news about their lost mother had already spread across the village. The people in the house then showed Mtimba and Mtinjana where their mother's home was situated, and they headed straight there.

'Mo! Mo, Mo!' bellowed the cow when they arrived at the gate. They then saw the whole herd of their father's cows in front of them. They were so happy, knowing that their father was left with nothing, and they entered the house. The mother was so happy to see her sons! Mtimba and Mirjana were so happy to see their mother! The mother

From that day, they lived happily together with no worries.

The end.

#### **4.3.12 *Mfanukhona nencashi wakhe* (Mfanukhona and his master)**

Once upon a time, in a certain village, there was a boy called Mfanukhona who stayed with his poor family. They lived in a poverty stricken village and the worst part was that there had been no rain for some years. They lacked food and even slept without eating. Mfanukhona's father was crippled, and could not provide for the family. Mfanukhona was the only one who could go out to get food, since his mother had to look after her crippled husband.

Mfanukhona's parents arranged that their son should go and work at the farmer's house even though he was still very young. The farmer accepted the boy even though he was still too small. As a child, Mfanukhona had to pick up leaves every day. He was paid a little wage but to him it was enough to make a living. While working for the master, Mfanukhona had a lot of questions to ask his master. One of them was about death, since he had been told that his siblings had died some time ago. You would hear him say, 'What is death, and why is there death?'

The farmer told him about Adam who had disobeyed the law of Mvelincanti (the Ever Existing), and as a result death had come as a punishment. In addition, the farmer mentioned that working hard was one of the punishments Mvelinchanti gave mankind. Mfanukhona asked, 'Am I working hard because of Adam?'

'Yes!' said the master. Mfanukhona was very upset that he was bearing the sins of a disobedient person.

Mfanukhona sang that chorus or refrain every time he was working. He blamed Adam and proclaimed that he would be better than Adam. The master tested him by putting a dove inside a container and left him with the instruction not to open it. The master said, 'Mfanukhona!'

'Yes, master?' said Mfanukhona.

'I am going for a time, it won't be long, I am going to visit my great-grandmother in a faraway place. There is a container on top of the table and a hole at the left hand side of it. Please don't open the container, but please do put some maize there every morning.'

Mfanukhona was faithful for some days, and then he was tempted to open the container. So, when the master came back, he found that the dove had flown away, since it was energetic from being given maize every morning. The master asked Mfanukhona if he had opened the container. He denied it; but the fact that the dove had flown away was an obvious answer.

The master told him that the mistake he had made was exactly like that of Adam. Everyone commits mistakes at some point. This proved that he was not faithful and that he was just like Adam, whom he had been blaming every day. From that day, Mfanukhona stopped blaming Adam.

The end.