COPYRIGHT AND CITATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS THESIS/ DISSERTATION

o Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

o NonCommercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

o ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

How to cite this thesis

MOTIF-INDEX AS A MEANS TO IDENTIFY CULTURAL THEMES IN NORTHERN SOTHO FABLES

by

DIMAKATSO S. MATHE

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

AFRICAN LANGUAGES

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

SUPERVISOR: Mr. M. Kgopa

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof Z. Mtumane

October 2017
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude is bestowed on the following persons in ensuring that this work is a success:

- My supervisors, Prof. Z. Mtumane and Mr. M. Kgopa, for their continued academic support, constant guidance and having faith in this research work. It would not have been possible without their immeasurable academic assistance.

- The storytellers, Mrs. Mmakgabo V. Mabote and Mantsho M. Monene, for availing themselves to participate in this research work.

- Ms Lethabo Mashapa for her excellent work in providing editing services for this research work.

- Mr. Themba Madingiza, in the Department of African Languages, for his encouragement and availing his study material upon countless requests.

- My loving mother and brother, Ms. Hellen Mathe and Mr. Mazali Mathe, for their support in my academic journey. Ndzi khensa vutinyiketeri bya nwina byo hi seketela hi tindlela to hambana-hambana ku hi humelela. Xikwembu xi mi kurisa!

- My best friend, Mr. Johannes Buthelezi, for his encouragement and enthusiasm.

- Last but not least, the adorable and caring mother of my daughter, Anikie Masenge, for her continued support and taking care of our daughter during the undertaking of this research project.
DEDICATION

This article is dedicated to my daughter, Katekani (Muyexe) Mathe. Her existence has instilled a renewed vigorous drive in me to complete this research work.
SUMMARY

The study examines the applicability and the significance of motif-index as a means to present cultural themes in Northern Sotho fables. More emphasis is placed on how these motifs reflect on beliefs, customs and practices that exist within the Northern Sotho society as revealed in fables. It starts with chapter one which introduces the aim, scope, delineation of the study, definition of key concepts and theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter two presents literature review by discussing previous researches relating to oral narratives. Studies pertaining to oral narratives such as folktales, myths, and legends are reviewed by focussing on aims and findings of those studies. This is followed by chapter three in which a detailed discussion of theoretical framework of the study is provided.

Chapter four focuses on the examination of selected oral narratives where cultural themes are identified. It also explains their social importance. The study concludes with chapter five wherein the summary and findings of the study are discussed. It further provides recommendations on possible future researches as a point of departure.
DECLARATION

I declare that MOTIF-INDEX AS A MEANS TO IDENTIFY CULTURAL THEMES IN NORTHERN SOTHO FABLES is my own unaided work. All the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference. It is being submitted in accordance with the requirements for Master of Arts in African Languages at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

........................................

(D.S. MATHE)

17 October 2017
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Preamble</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Aim of the study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Scope</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Delineation of the study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Methodology and theoretical framework of the study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Definition of concepts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Brief survey of classification</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Conclusion</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Preliminary literature review on oral narratives</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Conclusion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.15</td>
<td>The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.16</td>
<td>Synopsis of <em>Phukubje le roto</em> by Mabote V. Mmakgabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.17</td>
<td>Theme and moral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.18</td>
<td>Theme and motifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.19</td>
<td>Theme and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.20</td>
<td>The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.21</td>
<td>Synopsis of <em>Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola</em> by Monene Mantsho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.22</td>
<td>Theme and moral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.23</td>
<td>Theme and motifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.24</td>
<td>Theme and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.25</td>
<td>The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.26</td>
<td>Synopsis of <em>Khudu le kwena</em> by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.27</td>
<td>Theme and moral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.28</td>
<td>Theme and motif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.29</td>
<td>Theme and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.30</td>
<td>The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.31</td>
<td>Synopsis of <em>Mmutla le tlou le kubu</em> by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.32</td>
<td>Theme and moral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.33</td>
<td>Theme and motif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.34</td>
<td>Theme and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.35</td>
<td>The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.36</td>
<td>Synopsis of <em>Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši</em> by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.37</td>
<td>Theme and moral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.38 Theme and motif.................................................................78
4.2.39 Theme and society.............................................................80
4.2.40 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme........................................82
4.3 Conclusion..................................................................................83

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION
5.1 Introduction.............................................................................84
5.2 Summary and findings.............................................................84
5.2.1  *Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse* ........................................84
5.2.2  *Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela* .........................................85
5.2.3  *Mmutla le ditšhwene* ......................................................86
5.2.4  *Phukubje le roto* ............................................................87
5.2.5  *Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola* ..............................88
5.2.6  *Khudu le kwena* .............................................................89
5.2.7  *Mmutla le tlou le kubu* ....................................................90
5.2.8  *Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši* ............................................90
5.3 Recommendations for future researches..................................91
5.4 General conclusion.................................................................92

Bibliography..................................................................................95

Appendix.......................................................................................98
Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Preamble

Researches have demonstrated, with content, the adherence of oral narratives to folklore characteristics. Structuralism theory has become the fundamental model in almost all languages to examine and study those characteristics in oral narratives. African languages are not an exception to this trend as structuralism theory branches such as Proppian/Dundes, Levi-Strauss’s binary opposition, Epic laws and diffusionism have been successfully employed to study oral narratives. However, Thompson’s (1946) motif-index’s relevance as folklore research theory in African languages has been overshadowed by the above mentioned theories.

Although researchers such as Lesoro (1983) successfully identify motifs in Sesotho folktales, no research focusing on identifying cultural themes through motifs that relate to culture has been carried out before. It is with this view that it is found relevant to examine Northern Sotho oral narratives, fables in particular, through Thompson’s (1946) motif-index by focusing on cultural themes. Although Thompson’s motif-index is more concerned with studying oral narratives through comparison, the view of the researcher is that it can also be adopted to illuminate cultural themes that may be associated with storytellers and their audience.

Pretorius (2012:2) states that the indigenous African languages speaking people in South Africa bear similar characteristics with subtle differences. It is therefore assumed that the outcome of this research can be used to generate more knowledge pertaining to oral narratives, the culture of storytellers and their audience, and lastly both the Northern Sotho and their oral literature in general.
This chapter outlines the aim of the study, the scope of the study and sources that are considered for literature review. It also elucidates the methodology and framework to be adopted for this study. Various definitions of concepts key to this study are also examined followed by a brief survey of oral narratives classification in general and further narrowed down to Northern Sotho oral literature.

1.2 Aim of study

This study intends to analyse Northern Sotho fables through Thompson’s (1946) motif-index. It focuses on identifying cultural themes in fables through motif-index. The study also delineates the importance of those cultural themes to the Northern Sotho society and their oral literature, fables in particular. The motive for this study is that although other oral literature research theories have been tried and tested in African languages, not much has been done as far as Thompson’s (1946) motif-index is concerned. Furthermore, other oral literary genres such as folktale, legend and myth have received far more attention than the fable in African Languages of South Africa. This point is made evident in the literature review of this study. This work will then aid to minimise the gap between these genres and the fable, and even provide more insight regarding fables as an independent genre and the use of motif-index as a research theory in the African languages of South Africa.

1.3 Scope

This research seeks to identify cultural themes in Northern Sotho oral fables and explain their significance in the Northern Sotho society. These themes are analysed using motif-index as a theory. The study limits itself by focussing only on themes relating to culture and reflect their social significance to the Northern Sotho society. Furthermore, it only discusses fables as an oral narrative genre. Eight Northern Sotho fables were collected and recorded from two skilled storytellers, namely Mr Mantsho Monene and Mrs Mmakgabo Mabote.
The following narratives are examined:

By Monene Mantsho:

*Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse* (The jackal, baboon and water)
*Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela* (The dog bites off the rock-rabbit’s tail)
*Mmutla le ditšhwene* (The hare and the baboons)
*Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola* (The steenbok and the hare are fighting over a burrow)

By Mabote V. Mmakgabo:

*Phukubje le roto* (The Jackal and male baboon)
*Khudu le kwena* (The tortoise and the crocodile)
*Mmutla le tlou le kubu* (The hare and the elephant and the hippo)
*Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši* (The animals elect the king)

A detailed discussion of previous researches in oral narratives will be presented in chapter two as literature review. Among researchers and subjects consulted for this study are Khoza’s (2006) views on examining characterization in Xitsonga folktales, myths and legends; Guma’s (1990) analysis of oral narratives found in Sesotho literature; Canonici’s (1996) observation of Zulu myths, legends and folktales, Kgopa’s (1998) closer examination of similarities and differences between Northern Sotho legends and historical narratives; Makgamatha’s (1991) discussion regarding cultural values found in both Northern Sotho oral and written narratives; Lesoro’s (1983) closer look at the influence of oral narratives on Sesotho written narratives; and Msimang’s (1983) critical study on the folktale influence on the Zulu novel and others.
1.4 Delineation of the study

This study comprises of five chapters. Chapter one serves as an introduction where critical aspects of the study are indicated such as the aim of the study, the scope, methodology, definition of concepts and a brief survey on classification of oral narratives. Chapter two focuses on literature review, where objectives and findings of previous studies on oral literature are discussed. Chapter three lays out the theoretical framework of the study and indicates how the theory is utilised in order to analyse the selected fables. Chapter four serves as the focal point of the study as a thorough analysis of the selected Northern Sotho fables is made. Finally, chapter five provides the summary and findings of the study including recommendations on possible future research topics to be explored.

This study adopts Thompson’s (1946) motif-index as a research theory to identify themes in oral narratives, the fable in particular. In addition to Thompson’s theory, Msimang’s (1983) views on explaining theme in relation to society in which the oral narratives are told, by focusing on both social and cultural context, form part of the theoretical framework. This theoretical framework enables the researcher to explore themes in Northern Sotho fables and also explain the social significance of these themes to the Northern Sotho community.

1.5 Methodology and theoretical framework of the study

A qualitative research approach is utilised in this study where questionnaires have been drawn up and face to face interviews conducted to collect and record fables from the recruited storytellers. The identified storytellers are a male and female from the rural areas of Limpopo Province with the minimum age of 40. According to Ngonyani (2001:246) local vernacular is considered to have a significant role to play in rural areas compared to urban areas. It is for this reason that the two storytellers from the rural areas are considered as informants for this study. Moreover, it is generally agreed that the people in the rural areas have preserved the rawness of vernacular. The decision on the given minimum age is premised on the idea that those people are more likely to have been exposed to the practice of storytelling while growing up, of which they confirmed in the interviews.
The researcher embarked on the task of collecting and recording fables through recorded interviews, where Mr Mantsho Monene was consulted for a skilful narration. Mr Monene was born in 1970 in gaMonene village in the Waterberg region of Limpopo Province. The interview was conducted in July 2015 at Kabeane village, which is also located in the Waterberg region, 62 km outside the Mokopane town in Limpopo Province. The highest grade passed by Mr Monene is Standard 9 and he served as a general worker for a long time in Gauteng until his retrenchment in 2014 and is currently unemployed. During the narrating process, Mr Monene demonstrated a strong command of the Northern Sotho language and skill to engage the listener by constantly switching from the third person to the first person in order to allow the characters to speak directly while also improvising gestures to accompany the characters’ words.

Mrs Mmakgabo V. Mabote was also consulted for interviews and narration of Northern Sotho fables. She was born in 1961 in Madietane, gaMatlala which is located in the Capricorn region. The interviews were undertaken in July 2015 at Leyden village in the Waterberg region, 52 km outside the Mokopane town in the Limpopo Province. The interview and narration took place in the comfort of her sitting room. She holds a Bachelor of Education degree and has been practicing as a teacher for almost 30 years, specialising in Sepedi (Northern Sotho) at Mookamedi Secondary School. The vast knowledge of the Northern Sotho language and literature she possesses was evident in her calm and slow narration accompanied by a well mastered modulation of the voice to evoke anticipation from the listener.

Both narrators indicated that they were familiar with the practice of storytelling as they grew up during the era where storytelling was highly dominant as a form of entertainment and traditional education. Their experience is evident in their skilful narration and high command of the Northern Sotho language. The recorded oral narratives were transcribed, translated from Northern Sotho into English and attached as appendix in this study. The synopsis of each oral narrative is presented before the analysis is conducted. The cultural themes are identified through motifs and their social significance to the Northern Sotho society is explained through Msimang’s (1983) views in chapter four of this study.
The decision to examine Northern Sotho fables is guided by the fact that other oral literary genres such as folktale, legend and myth have been attended to and received far more attention than the fable in Northern Sotho. As reflected in chapter two, Kgopa (1998), Makgamatha’s (1988) and (1991) studies on Northern Sotho oral literature have been focusing on other genres such as folktales and legends and their respective literary aspects. Therefore this study will intensify efforts needed to minimise the gap between these genres and even provide more insight regarding fables as an independent genre in the Northern Sotho language.

1.6 Definitions of concepts

It is of utmost importance to have a good understanding of the central concepts of the study. Therefore this section focuses on providing definitions of concepts that are critical to it, namely culture, theme and fable.

1.6.1 Culture

Culture is one of the concepts that form an integral part of this study. As the research seeks to examine cultural themes, it is necessary to examine existing definitions of the concept ‘culture’ in order to be specific in the study. Buchanan (2010:105) defines culture as:

A set of beliefs, practices, rituals, and traditions shared by a group of people with at least one point of common identity such as their ethnicity, race, or nationality.

Social aspects such as beliefs, practices and rituals are vital in a group of people as they assemble members as an organised community. Furthermore, as these aspects unite a group of people, this presents a common identity for that group. Wolfreys (2004: 37) shares the same sentiments regarding the above definition as follows:
The notion of culture identifies broadly those patterns of human knowledge that refer to customary beliefs, social formations, and traits of racial, religious, or social groups.

It is important to note that those patterns of human knowledge are passed down from one generation to another through sharing and learning within the community. In other words, one needs to live within the community in order to acquire this kind of knowledge. The view of culture transmission across generations of the same group is mentioned in Jandt’s (2007: 427) definition of the concept as the:

Sum total of ways of living, including behavioural norms, linguistic expression, style of communication, patterns of thinking, and beliefs and values of a group large enough to be self-sustaining transmitted over the course of generations.

It is the community’s patterns of thinking and beliefs that determine values of a group and govern what is considered acceptable behaviour. As mentioned earlier on, it is these social aspects that establish an organised community with common identity. In conclusion to this definition, this study therefore focuses on themes that have to do with sets of customary beliefs, practices, norms and values, rituals, religion and traditions shared by the Northern Sotho community as common identity.

1.6.2 Theme

Theme is another concept that this study revolves around. This concept is sometimes identified as the subject of a literary work. However, the view of the researcher is that the subject of an imaginative work is not necessarily the theme. The theme is realised through the subject. The following definitions enable the study to clarify this view. Baldick (1990: 225) defines theme as:

…a salient abstract idea that emerges from literary work’s treatment of its subject-matter; or a topic recurring in a number of literary works. … The theme of a work may be announced explicitly, but more often it emerges indirectly through the recurrence of motifs.
The recipients of an imaginative work construct the theme by carefully paying attention to the subject matter. The events of an imaginative work should explicitly or implicitly persuade the audience to realise the theme. This view is made evident by Cuddon (1977: 695) as: “…the theme of a work is not its subject but rather its central idea which may be stated directly or indirectly.”

The events of an imaginative work should strive to present or convey the theme. In other words, everything that occurs in the imaginative work has to revolve around the theme. These views are elaborated by Pretorius and Swart (1985: 4) when observing the theme as follows:

The theme is not the topic of the story, neither is it the accidental, philosophical thoughts expressed in the story! … The theme is the strongest binding or cohesive factor in any [imaginative work]. It is the central element which determines the unity of the story. All the events described, should relate to the theme (or themes) to ensure unity in the story.

The theme is the dominant abstract idea that brings together literary aspects such as characters, setting and plot of an imaginative work. It is realised through the subject of a literary work. There may be work, for instance, that deals with the subject of love where the theme of adultery is portrayed.

When advancing the definition of theme, Mtumane (1995:139) emphasises its artistic and social significance as follows:

Theme is important as it is a vehicle employed by the author to communicate meaningful experience and to identify problem areas existing in the community.
Through the theme, the experience and issues of major interest pertaining to society are explored in a literary work. It is the view of this study that through the examination of cultural themes in fables, the experience and the nature of issues pertaining to Northern Sotho society will be revealed. This study deploys the motif-index as a theory to identify cultural themes found in Northern Sotho fables.

1.6.3 Fable

Last but not least is the fable, which is one of oral narrative genres. Shaw (1976:154) briefly defines the fable as: “A short, simple story, usually with animals as characters, designed to teach a moral.”

The type of characters and social function are very key in the fable. Animals are used as characters to discourage and encourage unacceptable and acceptable behaviour in a community. Abrams (2009:8) concurs with these views by defining the fable as:

… a short narrative, in prose or verse, that exemplifies an abstract moral thesis or principle of human behaviour; usually, at its conclusion, either the narrator or one of the characters states the moral in the form of epigram.

African oral narratives are didactic in nature and this is the case with fable. Although one agrees with Abrams’ definition, the moral is not always overtly stated. In some instances, it is left for the audience to work out the moral of the narrative. Simpson and Roud (2000:115) also emphasise the type and importance of characters in fable when defining the latter as: “Short comic tales making a moral point about human nature, usually through animal characters behaving in human ways.”

Characters in the fable are animals that are capacitated with abilities to execute their roles like human beings. These animals are made to think and talk like human beings. The social function of such narrative is to teach a moral lesson.
1.7 Brief survey of classification

1.7.1 Classification of oral narratives in general

Oral classification is, according to Okpewho (1992:181), an old problem in folklore studies. Attempts have been made to identify different types of oral narratives and classify them accordingly. None of the attempts made went on without sceptical criticism. Thompson translated and revised Aarne’s work from German into English which was then published under the title *The Types of the Folktale* (1928). Oral narratives are classified into three major groups which are animal tales, ordinary folktales and lastly jokes and anecdotes. The narratives are listed as follows:

**Table 1.1 Tale types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Animal Tales</th>
<th>II. Ordinary Folktales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-99. Wild Animals</td>
<td>300-749. A. Tales of Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-149. Wild Animals and Domestic Animals</td>
<td>300-399 Supernatural Adversaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-199. Man and Wild Animals</td>
<td>400-459 Supernatural or Enchanted Husband (Wife) or Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-219. Domestic Animals</td>
<td>460-499 Superhuman Tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>500-559 Supernatural Helpers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>750-849. B. Religious Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>850-999. C. Novelle (Romantic tales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000-1199. D. Tales of the Stupid Ogre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III. Jokes and Anecdotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1350-1439. Stories about Married Couples</td>
<td>1875-1999. Tales of Lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1440-1524. Stories about a Woman or Girl</td>
<td>2000-2399. Formula Tales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1525-1874. Stories about a Man or Boy</td>
<td>2400-2499. Unclassified Tales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the three major groups of oral narratives, namely animal tales, ordinary tales, and jokes and anecdotes, there are subtypes each prefaced by decimal numbers. According to Thompson (1947:417), the numbers were left open by Aarne bearing in mind that other tales related to those already identified may surface and should assume the numbers related to those types. For instance, under the subtype 1-99. Wild animals, 44 tale types are identified prefaced by the decimal numbers 1 (one) up to 99 (ninety-nine). Numbers such as 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and more are not utilised and are left open for other kinds of tales related to wild animals yet to be discovered and the same applies to subtypes found in the other two major categories. Therefore, these decimal numbers are used to classify and list tale types in the three major categories.

The concept of motif was key in identifying these three major groups and their subtypes. This concept comprises of three categories, namely; the nature of the characters, items in the background of the action and single incidents. All these three categories were employed as the basis to classify oral narratives. Most tale types were classified using motifs of single incidents. However, it is important to note that the index of those particular motifs was yet to be introduced.

The definition of motif became the centre of focus for critics, especially the overlapping of the three categories used to define what this concept is. Dundes (1997:197) points out the discrepancy in the distinction between motif and tale type as the motif category of the nature of characters is employed to identify tales such as animal tales and stupid ogre tales while at the same time the very same motif is functioning as a tale type.

Another point regarding the tale types and motif-index that was swiftly dealt with by Bascom (1992), is the fact that Aarne-Thompson relied on European oral narratives as his primary data in the establishment of tale types and motif-index, hence doubts on the applicability of tale types on African oral narratives were raised. Folklore scholars such as Clarke (1958), Arewa (1966), and Lambrecht (1967) conducted research on motif-index and tale types of African oral narratives. Kganyago (2000) has also demonstrated the compatibility of the Setswana folktales to
Aarne-Thompson’s classification. Aarne-Thompson’s classification has opened a door for more oral narrative approaches.

Bascom (1965) proposes three folklore concepts to classify oral narratives, namely; legend, myth and folktale. Characteristics such as place where the events of the narrative take place, attitude of the storyteller and the audience towards a particular narrative (sacred or secular), whether the storyteller and the audience regard the narrative as a fact or fictional (belief), the time in which the story took place, and principal characters, were considered when categorizing oral narratives.

Under folktale, which is the focus of this review, oral narratives such as human tales, trickster tales, dilemma tales, animal tales, formulistic tales, tall tales, and moral tales or fable are all identified as sub-types of folktale. The three major types of oral narratives are clearly explained, however the sub-types of folktales are not defined. This does not help in eliminating the confusion brought by lack of clear boundaries that exist on the sub-types of oral narratives under the concept of folktale.

Okpewho (1992) identifies four existing ways of classifying oral narratives and highlights the paradox of such classification. First is by considering the obvious protagonist of an oral narrative. According to Okpewho (1992:181) the problem with this kind of classification is that the human attributes such as the ability to think and speak given to animals make it irrelevant to distinguish between human tales and animal tales as animals behave the same way as humans in such narratives. The second problem highlighted with this method is that in some instances an oral narrative may have dual protagonists where an animal and a person function together as protagonists.

The view of this study with regards to the first problem is that although animal characters are given human attributes to have a direct impact on humans to draw a message from an oral narrative, this does not make them humans. Okpewho (1992) is on point regarding the second problem as seconded by Olrik’s (1992) view on the law of twins where two characters may appear on the scene and perform a similar role. As a result this method is inadequate in classifying an oral narrative where an animal and a human being are both protagonists.
The second way of classifying oral narratives is through the consideration of the purpose or function of that narrative. However, Okpewho (1992:182) rightly points out that most oral narratives have a moral that is summarised by the storyteller in order to discourage or encourage certain deeds. The third way is through the consideration of the context or occasion. Moonlight tales and hunter's tales are classified under this concept as the former is only told in the moonlight while the latter is told during a hunting expedition.

The last criterion of classifying oral narratives is on the basis of the characteristics of an oral narrative. The content is considered in order to make a decision. However, it is mentioned that despite the characteristics which might be clearly explained, an oral narrative may have intertwined characteristics belonging to various oral narratives. This will not do any help to guide an inexperienced oral narrative scholar to know and understand the kind of oral narrative that they are dealing with.

Okpewho (1992) proposes the use of three concepts as divisions of oral narratives, namely; legends, explanatory tales, and fables. This study only focuses on the review of fables as a division of oral narratives for an obvious reason, that it is the interest of this research. Oral narratives such as dilemma tales and trickster tales are classified as fables. According to Okpewho (1992:211) the open-ended nature of a fable is the significant characteristic that distinguishes it from other oral narratives. This also allows the audience to be actively engaged in the performance as they have to construct the meaning or message from the narrative.

For Okpewho (1992) the purpose of narrating an oral tale is a fundamental key for classification. The legend aims to document historical experiences while explanatory tales aim to provide explanation about the origin of a habit and accepted phenomenon. The main purpose of a fable is to present the aesthetic skills of narrating while educating the audience. In conclusion, however, Okpewho (1992:221) acknowledges the issue of overlapping on this kind of classification as oral narratives in certain categories also reflect characteristics of other categories other than the one in which they are classified under.
1.7.2 Classification of Northern Sotho oral narratives

The classification of oral narratives is not universal, it differs from one society to another. An oral narrative may be identified as a myth by one community and be regarded as a folktale by another. This view is clearly explained by Bascom (1965:7) as follows:

In passing from one society to another through diffusion, a myth or legend may be accepted without being believed, thus becoming a folktale in the borrowing society; and the reverse may also happen. It is entirely possible that the same tale type may be a folktale in one society, a legend in a second society, and a myth in a third.

In consideration of the views above, it is necessary to have a look at the criteria used in Northern Sotho for classifying oral narratives. According to Serudu (1990:54-56) four types of oral narratives are distinguished in Northern Sotho, namely myth (nonwane ya kakanyatlhloso), legend (nonwane ya pheteletšannete), tale (nonwane ya kgogamašego), and lastly, but not least, fable (nonwane ya tsholo). A myth in Northern Sotho is an oral narrative that deals with the aetiology of natural phenomenon and also reflects on the beliefs of the society. Furthermore, through this kind of narrative, matters pertaining to the origin of the universe and the belief in God and gods are reflected.

A legend is considered as an oral narrative that is based on a historical event and deals with battles, migration of tribes and matters relating to traditional leaders and heroes. On the other hand, a tale refers to an oral narrative that deals with a range of subjects with the main purpose of entertaining or to pass time. On this type of oral narratives characters such as human beings, ogres, and human beings with godly attributes are found. Although the main purpose of this kind of oral narrative is to entertain, a message is drawn from it.
The Northern Sotho fable refers to an oral narrative where animals are given human attributes to function as characters. In this narrative humour and trickery prevail as animals compete to be distinguished from others as the better ones. The Jackal and the hare are identified as clever ones while the elephant is trustworthy. The lion is regarded as the dominant one as it symbolises power and ruthlessness. The primary purpose of this oral narrative is to teach a moral lesson.

In the examination of Northern Sotho oral narratives by Serudu (1990), it is evident that the explanation and characteristics attributed to a fable clearly resemble those of a trickster tale. In fact, the Northern Sotho fable and trickster are one, all referred to as nonwane ya tsholo. This is in line with Okpewho’s (1992) view of classifying the dilemma tale and the trickster tale under the fable category. However, as mentioned earlier, Bascom (1965) lists a trickster tale and a fable side by side under the folktale category and the fact that the two are not defined does not yield an answer for a Northern Sotho oral narrative student. In this study, Serudu’s (1990) and Okpewho’s (1992) classification is adopted. An oral narrative with characteristics mentioned by the two scholars will be referred to as a fable.

1.7.3 Application of Serudu’s (1990) views on Northern Sotho fable

In Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse animals are plagued by drought and a decision is made that they should work together to dig a well in order to get water. As all the animals are digging, the jackal regards himself too good for that dirty work and is thus denied access to the well. However, the jackal tricks the baboon twice in order to gain access to drinking water. In this narrative, the animals are given the power to think, talk and conduct themselves in a humanly manner. Furthermore, trickery and humour are realised in the narrative as characteristics of a fable as outlined by Serudu (1990).

Again, in Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela, the jackal appears as the trickster when tricking the rock rabbit in order to steal meat belonging to the dog. Hence the narrative conforms to the characteristics of fable as trickery and human attributes are involved. The jackal is held in high esteem by the baboons in Phukubje le roto after he cunningly convinces the female baboons that he killed a mamba on his own.
Trickery is realised again as the jackal tricks a troop of baboons into believing that his actions are sincere. Furthermore, humour is realised in the narrative when one considers the baboon’s actions in attempting to stand against a live mamba and eventually gives in to fear and claims to be on his way to look for a stick and never returns.

An element of trickery is also realised in *Mmutla le ditšhwene* as the animals trick each other and behave like human beings. However, it is the hare’s remarkable ability to trick a troop of baboons as a way of avenging himself, which distinguishes him from the baboons. In *Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola*, the hare uses trickery again to win the right for the burrow ownership between himself and the steenbok while the interaction between the two conforms with the fable characteristic relating to the animals having human attributes including the lesson drawn from it. In *Mmutla le tlou le kubu*, trickery is realised when the hare tricks the elephant and the hippo by pitting them into the same battle of tug-of-war believing that they are in a contest with him.

In *Khudu le kwena*, the crocodile appears to be a trickster by hoodwinking the tortoise into lending him the melodic horn and runs away with it. However, it is worth noting that his victory is short-lived as the tortoise manages to recover his horn. In this sense, the narrative is in agreement with the characteristics of a fable as trickery and the ability for animals to communicate are realised. The tortoise features again in *Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši*, however trickery is not realised except the humour resulting from the tortoise’s unexpected victory which warrants him a right to the throne as a king and the lesson arising from the narrative as the only two characteristics aligned to a fable.

In all the narratives mentioned above, the animals are able to talk, think, and behave like human beings, which is one of the characteristics of a fable. Furthermore, trickery and humour are clearly identifiable as characteristics of fable in the narratives. These narratives thus conform to fable characteristics as provided by Serudu (1990). The message drawn from these narratives, which is a pivotal characteristic of a fable, will be discussed when examining the themes in chapter four of this study.
1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has indicated the importance of examining Northern Sotho fables as a genre of oral narratives by focusing on cultural themes. The scope of the research was presented where it was mentioned that the study will only focus on cultural themes and relate them to the Northern Sotho community. A brief summary of oral narrative research was provided and is discussed in more detail in chapter two of this discourse. This is followed by a brief theoretical framework that is adopted in order to shape this research.

Definitions of key concepts such as culture, theme and fable were discussed in order to provide a detailed background of the research subjects and also to specify the demarcation of the scope. The classification of oral narratives was discussed and an indication on how this study intends to classify fable as a genre of oral narratives was made. The demonstration of identified oral narratives as fables in accordance with Serudu’s (1990) characteristics was also discussed.
Chapter Two
Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed literature review on oral narratives in general. It focuses on the objectives and findings of researches carried out in the past regarding oral narratives. The literature review will enable the researcher to have background knowledge on previous researches in oral narratives and to indicate the gaps in the study and the relevance of the research topic. Although this study is on Northern Sotho oral narratives, the literature review and references in the body of the discourse include studies from other languages as well. This provides a broader view of the topic.

2.2 Preliminary Literature Review on Oral Narratives

2.2.1 Characterisation in Xitsonga Prose Narratives Namely, Folktales, Myths and Legends by Khoza, N.C. (2006)

In her MA dissertation, Khoza (2006) examines characterisation in Xitsonga folktales, myths and legends. His study focuses on techniques employed by performers to portray characters, types of characters and their roles in oral narratives. The scholar indicates that the direct and indirect methods are prevalent in Xitsonga folktales, myths and legends. In the direct method the performer provides the description of a character. In some instances, the performer chooses a name that enables listeners to understand the role played by the character and his or her attributes. He/she also employs the indirect method where characters are portrayed through their actions and dialogue.

Khoza (2006) also identifies two types of characters in Xitsonga oral narratives, namely; flat characters and round characters. The former is described as predictable while the latter is complex and unpredictable. Three kinds of roles are distinguished, namely; hero, mediator and the villain. In all three kinds of oral narratives, which are folktales, myths and legends, the protagonist serves as the hero. The mediator
provides assistance to resolve conflict and is sometimes realised through supernatural forces or magical powers. Khoza’s study concludes that it is necessary for artists to have vast knowledge about characterisation in order to create meaningful characters to convey the message embedded in oral narratives.

2.2.2 The Forms, contents and techniques of traditional literature in Southern Sotho by Guma, S.M (1990)

In his study, Guma (1990) analyses oral narratives found in Sesotho literature, namely; myths, legends, fables and folktales. He also availed himself to study riddles, idioms, proverbs, songs and praises. In myths, he discovers that the narrators’ style is factual where each sentence evokes a new idea. The manner in which narrators present their narratives also indicates that they treat their audience with respect. However, presenters of legends make their feelings known to their audience by sympathising with the hero. In conclusion, Guma asserts that the folktale narrator thrills the audience by skilfully narrating different episodes woven around the main character.

2.2.3 Zulu Oral Tradition by Canonici, N.N (1996)

Canonici (1996) observes Zulu myths, legends and folktales. He indicates that myths present the community’s experience, how it views the world with regards to its origin and identity, aetiology, and religious beliefs. On legend, Canonici laments on the disappointing limited number of narratives in this genre. He mentions that although Zulu legends have generated proverbs, riddles and poems, the historical events of those legends lack the characteristics of oral narrative performance.

However, Canonici asserts that legends play a significant role in recording facts and tradition of a community. On folktales, it is outlined that they comprise of characters such as animals, humans and humans with fantastic characteristics. He concludes that the use of magic or supernatural means in a fantastic world represents the burning desire of a society to restore order through the aid of magic or supernatural means.
2.2.4 Northern Sotho Legends and Historical Narratives: Similarities and Differences by Kgopa, M. (1998)

Kgopa (1998) examines the similarities and differences between Northern Sotho legends and historical narratives. When examining the morphological components of Northern Sotho legends, he discovers that the narratives adhere to Dundes’ motifeme sequence comprising of lack, lack liquidation, interdiction, violation and consequence. On the other hand, historical narratives only adhere to lack and lack liquidation. He concludes that the apparent distinctive adherence of legends and historical narratives to structural motifemes warrants classifying them as distinct narratives.

2.2.5 Cultural values and strategies in the Northern Sotho prose narratives by Makgamatha, M. (1991)

In Sienaert (1991), Makgamatha discusses cultural values found in both Northern Sotho oral and written narratives. Among cultural values shared in Northern Sotho community are security, food, marriage and fertility. In oral narratives, characters’ exceptional prowess such as physical strength, mental ability, and magical powers are considered as a threat to community security. Thus ‘normal’ characters attempt to eliminate those exceptional characters in order to bring about equilibrium within the community. Another cultural value revealed by oral narratives is food. Usually the main characters are forced to leave their places in search of food. This relates directly with social challenges in reality where people are forced to leave their homes in search of greener pastures.

The last two cultural values discussed by Makgamatha (1991) are marriage and fertility. In Northern Sotho tradition a man is accorded a high status in the community only when he is married. For this reason, the more number of wives a man has increases the status bestowed upon him by his community. The importance of marriage in the Northern Sotho tradition is realised in folktales where the title may refer directly to the number of wives to describe a man.
In conclusion, Makgamatha (1991) discusses fertility as a cultural value shared by African communities in general. Infertility is considered a serious problem in most societies and is also made evident in folktales where magical assistance is utilised to resolve this problem. It is the researcher of this discourse’s view that oral narratives can be used to generate more knowledge about culture as evidenced in Makgamatha’s (1991) discussion. However, the aim of this study is to expand on those cultural values using Thompson’s motif-index.

2.2.6 A Study of the Folkloric Influence on Sesotho Literature and Song by Lesoro, E.A.S. (1983)

In his BA honours dissertation, Lesoro (1983) examines oral and written narratives to demonstrate how the former influences the latter. He also goes further to examine the extent to which oral narratives have influenced contemporary traditional music. Thompson’s motif-index is employed to illuminate plot similarities between oral narratives and the written ones. He discovers that modern prose narratives entail motifs such as magic, punishment and speaking animals which are dominant in oral narratives. On contemporary traditional music, he clearly indicates that composers borrowed their verse lines from oral narratives.

2.2.7 Folktale Influence on the Zulu Novel by Msimang, C.T (1983)

Still on folkloric influence, Msimang (1983) observes the folktale influence on the Zulu novel. He discusses the similarities found in both the folktale and novel by focussing on plot, setting, characterisation, theme, and style. A sophisticated multi-disciplinary approach comprising of theories such as Levi-Strauss’ paradigmatic approach, Proppian/Dundes structural approach, and Scheubian approach is masterly employed to examine these literary aspects. He concludes that the studied novels owe their structure to various folktales which clearly indicates that Zulu writers were consciously or unconsciously influenced by folktales.
2.2.8 The Social Function of Setswana Folktales by Ngapo, M.P. (1995)

Ngapo (1995) discusses the social functions of Setswana folktales based on Bascom’s social functions of folklore. Oral narratives analysed for the study are myths, fables, legends and tales with human characters. When examining Setswana myths, she discovers that they play an important role in teaching members of the communities about beliefs and customs of their culture and that they reprimand laziness in the community. According to Ngapo (1995:32) the essentiality of ancestors to the Tswana people is reflected through myths where they believe that their lives and livelihood are protected and governed by these beings. Furthermore, the study indicates that myths serve to answer questions about the origin of death.

Ngapo (1995) has discovered that the main social function of fables is to convey morals. The danger of being gullible and encouragement of being strategic to devise solutions when faced with challenges are also explored in fables. On tales with human characters, she discovered that morals are emphasised where it is mentioned that a secret cannot be concealed forever and that bad deeds are always accompanied by punishment.

When examining legends, Ngapo (1995) discovers that cultural heroes are explored in this genre to inspire community members to emulate the good deeds of those heroes. However, when discussing legends, she deviates from providing detailed social functions of this genre by dwelling more on the differences between Setswana and Sesotho versions of the legend.

Although she is not necessarily prohibited from mentioning this point, it is regrettable that more efforts and emphasis are placed on those versions than the objective of the study, namely the social functions of legends. Furthermore, only one example per genre is provided for the analysis. Although the valuable contribution of the study cannot be downplayed, it would have made an even more significant contribution if additional examples per genre were provided for analysis as that would yield more social functions of those oral narratives.
2.2.9 Tricks, Trickster Characters, and Trickster Tales in Tswana Folktales by B. B. Serekoane (1996)

The study focuses on the kinds of tricks used in trickster tales, identification and physical description of characters, the plot and social functions of trickster tales. Serekoane (1996) briefly summarises four common tricks found in Tswana trickster tales, as outlined by Hewitt (1986), which are naughty pranks, cleverness, being strategic and the use of magic.

According to Serekoane (1996:10-13), two types of characters found in Tswana tricksters are identified as dupe characters and leading characters. Dupe characters are explained simply as characters that are easily deceived or duped and serve as victims in the narrative. Animals such as the lion, leopard, elephant and zebra, including man, are usually employed as duped characters in Tswana trickster tales regardless of their physical prowess.

On the other hand, leading characters are defined as characters that are physically weak yet are able to adapt quickly under different and difficult situations to gain an advantage over those who are usually big and strong. Animals such as the hare, baboon, tortoise, monkey, hyena, jackal, and crocodile are identified as leading characters in Tswana trickster tales. However, the hare, jackal and tortoise are listed as the most popular leading characters and this may vary from one community to another where the dupe characters may be tricksters and vice versa.

On social functions Serekoane (1996) has discovered that trickster tales re-evaluate and reinforce social norms and values. However, nowhere in her study does she indicate how those social norms and values are reinforced as tricksters usually disregard social norms and values without being punished when seeking to achieve their objectives. In fact, she does concede that the trickster has no regard to social norms and values but fails to explain how the lesson is drawn from such antics.
The other two social functions of trickster tales revealed in the study are entertainment and creativeness. The audience's interest is usually stimulated by small animals' antics in their effort to trick big and strong animals. These kinds of incidents keep children entertained and keen to hear more. However, this can only be realised through the story teller's vivid creativeness. In order for this to be realised, the narrator has to imitate the characters, use gestures and command the used language with great proficiency. On the other hand, the children have to create a mental picture painted by the narrator and this is very vital in the development of a child's creativity.

2.2.10 Recurrent Themes in Myths and Mythmaking by C. Kluckhohn (1965)

In this study, Kluckhohn (1965) examines the themes that occur regularly in myths. A sample of myths as data was obtained from six major continental regions which are Circum-Mediterranean, Negro Africa, East Eurasia, Insular Pacific, North America and South America. This classification is based on an Anthropology article by G. P. Murdock titled *World Ethnographic Sample* published in 1957 where 60 cultures are identified in those six regions.

Thompson's motif-index is used to analyse themes occurring in myths. Kluckhohn (1965) discovered that the theme of flood occurs with high level of frequency in many cultures and it usually comes as a form of punishment in myths. Slaying of Monsters is another theme identified in the study. In North America and the Insular Pacific this theme appears to have been influenced by Oedipus narratives. However in African cultures a hero battles with the monster to save his community and after being successful in saving his people, he is promoted into a senior position within the community, usually becomes a chief.

The theme of incest involving mother-son, father-daughter, and brother-sister is explored. Although this theme is found in most identified cultures, according to this scholar, it does not occur in the Negro African region. The theme of sibling rivalry occurs with high frequency as it is found in all six major continental regions. However, this theme is prevalent in the Insular Pacific and in Negro Africa with the rivalry between brothers portrayed more often. The last theme identified in the study
is castration. Although this theme is realised in other regions, no direct reference is made to Africa.

The view of the present researcher is that it is through this kind of study that more knowledge regarding cultural similarities and differences can be generated. Although Kluckhohn (1965:159-160) acknowledges the differences and similarities found between cultures, it is only through an analysis of a specific culture that astute and insightful findings can be made about that particular culture, rather than generalising African communities on the basis of results obtained from one African community as a representative and true reflection of African people.

2.2.11 System of Binary Opposition in the North Sotho *Nonwane of Masilo le Masilwane* by M.P. Makgamatha (1988)

The study envisages Levi-Strauss’s methodology to analyse the Northern Sotho oral narrative mentioned in the title above. The model analyses the structure of oral narratives in relation to the socio-cultural aspects of the community in which the narrative is told. According to Makgamatha (1988:105), cultural aspects such as religious beliefs, rituals, superstitions, class rules, and power relations of the community in which the narrative is told are explored through Levi-Strauss’s model. The model revolves around the central components used to examine a narrative, namely binary oppositions, symmetry and inversion.

Makgamatha (1988) focuses only on binary opposition for his analysis. This is based on the view that an oral narrative is made up of a series of binary oppositions identified on abstract levels such as cosmological, sociological, techno-economic, and geographical. At the geographical level, it is explained that two brothers, Masilo and Masilwane leave home for hunting. However, the brothers have a disagreement which leads them to separate in opposite directions namely; east and west. When the two brothers separate, further geographical opposition of smooth (sandy) and rough (gravel) paths is also revealed as they take opposite directions.
The cosmological level is realised when Masilwane encounters a supernatural woman and a battle begins as she attacks him with her exceptionally big tooth. Cosmological oppositions such as high and low are introduced when Masilwane climbs onto a tree and leaves the supernatural woman underneath for his own protection. Out of jealousy over Masilwane’s accumulation of a cow and a calf after killing the supernatural woman, Masilo attempts to kill Masilwane by pushing him into a well. This act introduces another cosmological opposition of above/below.

At the sociological level, apparent opposition lies on older/younger brother as indicated in their names, in which Masilwane is the diminutive form of Masilo. Other opposites include natural man vs supernatural woman, male vs female, and rich brother vs poor brother. Makgamatha (1988:107) delineates that techno-economic opposition is realised when Masilwane accumulates a cow and a calf which are of greater cultural value compared to Masilo’s large tortoises. He concludes that the system of binary oppositions does not only provide a comprehensive structural analysis of an oral narrative but also represents the realities of the life of a given community.

2.2.12 The Fable as Literary Genre by Vindt, L. Gelfand, M & Parrot, R. (1987)

In the study above a Russian fable is discussed as a distinct literary genre where three main characteristics are outlined and discussed. The first characteristic is that the event explained in the narrative has a meaning and serves as a symbol to provide a moral lesson. The second characteristic is that animals and inanimate objects are employed as characters and also symbolises humans’ behaviour and their relationships.

The third characteristic mentioned by the three folklore scholars is the peculiarities of fable’s plot structure. Under this literary aspect, it is mentioned in the study that in the narrative, the unexpected is realised when the initial situation is reversed by the character in order to achieve something as the narrative unfolds. In other words, a serious problem that the character is faced with is given and later on, as the narrative unfolds, the situation is resolved. Vindt et al (1987: 90) explain this point as follows:
The fable breaks into two components; the denouement destroys the line projected in the initial situation, lending it an unexpected, opposite result.

This view is not a neoteric one as it clearly resembles Propp/Dunde’s lack function which deliberates that the character usually attempts to liquidate the lack in order to restore order. Furthermore, this view does not provide any uniqueness to the fable as this element is realised in other genres as well. An important point raised regarding the peculiarities of a fable’s plot structure is that happy endings and virtuous heroes are seldom. This is in line with Serekoane’s (1996:20) view when rightly pointing out that the trickster challenges social norms and customs without having to face any consequences.

Another aspect pointed out is that most fables are characterised by comic behaviour. This view is realised in Northern Sotho fables as Serudu (1990) states that sense of humour is usually reflected and accompanied by great moral lessons that the audience is expected to draw from this kind of narrative. In conclusion, another key literary aspect relating to the peculiarity of the plot structure of the fable identified by these scholars is the use of maxims to provide the moral of the fable. According to Kgopa (2016:11) in Northern Sotho fables the moral is usually but not always expressed in the form of a proverb.

2.2.13 The Structure and Style of Setswana Folktales by Kganyago, M. P. (2000)

In Kganyago’s (2000) study the synchronic and structuralist approaches are utilised to study the structure and style found in Setswana folktales. Not only does Kganyago (2000) focus on structure and theme but also goes on to classify Setswana folktales using Aarne-Thompson’s typology, which this study focuses on for this review. Although Kganyago does not dwell much on the issue of oral narrative classification, the compatibility of the Setswana folktales to Aarne-Thompson’s typology is key to the current study as both tale-type and motif-index were developed using the same concept of motif.
Three major constituents of oral narratives, namely animal tales, regular tales and humorous tales, are identified in Aarne-Thompson’s typology. These major constituents consist of sub-types of oral narratives. Under animal tales for instance, the sub-type of oral narratives such as wild animal tales and domestic animal tales are identified. According to Kganyago (2000:60), Setswana folktales adhere to Aarne-Thompson’s typology. However, he concludes that the sub-types such as novella and tales of stupid ogres are not found in Setswana.


As the topic is self-explanatory, the study focuses on the use of magic and its significance in Setswana folktales. In the study, the use of magic is identified as a minimal narrative unit and Propp’s motifeme of lack is employed to explain the significance of magic in Setswana folktales. According to Motshwari (1998:46-47), in Setswana folktales magic is sometimes utilised to assist the protagonists to escape from enemies and even to overcome their problems.

The use of magic on a daily basis by the Tswana people is also discussed. Motshwari (1998:50) states that these people usually attribute the cause of disease on man or beast to witchcraft regardless of their education level. The faith and belief bestowed by the Tswana people on bonesetters to use magical powers to attend to their spiritual matters is also emphasised. Other beliefs by the Tswana people include the making of sacrifices to appease ancestors and to have magical control over natural forces. In conclusion, Motshwari (1998:56) contends that the current common body of beliefs in magic practice shared among the Tswana people is a clear indication that magic does exist and that only a properly conducted study on this issue will prove that magic is practiced.
2.2.15 The trickster tale and its cultural symbolism in Northern Sotho by Makgamatha P.M. (1993)

In this study Makgamatha (1993) examines the trickster tale in relation to the Northern Sotho community’s cultural norms by focusing on the physical qualities of the characters and their actions. He distinguishes between successful and unsuccessful tricksters. In most of the trickster tales analysed, it is found that small animals such as the hare and the tortoise usually trick big and fearful animals such as the lion and elephant respectively.

In the tale *Mabutle le Tau* (Hare and Lion) it is discovered that the hare is a successful trickster as he manages to nail the lion on the pole of the roof in order to feast on the fattest pieces of meat that they are cooking together. According to Makgamatha (1993:61-62) the hare represents cleverness and his actions towards the lion indicate and seek to correct an unacceptable condition in society where the small and weak are exploited and taken advantage of by the big and strong. It is further emphasised that such actions make the statement that the big and strong should not always take advantage of the small and weak in society.

In the tale *Mokhudu le Lehodu la Maloko* (Tortoise and Thief of Animal Dung), the tortoise is presented as a successful trickster as he succeeds in nailing the thief of their dung, an old woman, despite his small size and slow movement. This follows after all the animals fail to do so. However, despite his heroic actions, he is denied an opportunity to feast on the flesh of the old woman and the fruits of the sacred tree, hence the tortoise resorts to eating the fruit while everyone is dead asleep and stuffs the seeds between the thighs of the elephant in an attempt to frame him for having eaten from the forbidden tree. Makgamatha (1993:64) states that such action is narrated to discourage inequalities in society.

On unsuccessful tricksters, the ogre and a mysterious creature called *moselapse* represent evil that lurks in the society. In the tale of *Tselane le Radimo*, for instance, the ogre tricks Tselane into believing that he is her mother by singing a song that is usually sung by her mother in order to gain entrance to the shelter. The ogre succeeds in doing so and captures her. However, she manages to dupe the ogre’s
mother by killing her and proceeds to trick the ogre by serving him the flesh of his own mother. Makgamatha (1993:67) emphasises that the ogre’s actions symbolise evil in society and that is not allowed to triumph over humans.

*Moselapse* represents an evil in society as he tricks a girl on her way to her grandmother and takes all her belongings including a child, subsequently imposing himself as the girl. On arrival to the girl’s grandmother, as the imposter, he receives royal treatment from the grandmother. However, this does not last long as his false identity and previous actions are revealed, which leads to his death through scolding in boiling water. Makgamatha (1993:68) concludes by emphasising that trickery by such characters is not allowed in society as it represents evil, hence it is unsuccessful.

The study by Makgamatha is significant to the current one in that it examines a trickster tale hereto identified as fable, as indicated in chapter one, paragraph five, under oral classification in Northern Sotho (see 1.6.2). Furthermore, it analyses a trickster tale in relation to the Northern Sotho cultural norms while the current study also focuses on cultural norms. However, the theory of motif-index employed in the current study to examine socio-cultural themes provides the study with clearly distinguished investigative purpose, namely to look at themes against the socio-cultural aspects key in the Northern Sotho community. Secondly, to analyse the Northern Sotho cultural norms and values as reflected in themes of the selected fables. Lastly the applicability of motif-index in analysing themes in Northern Sotho fables.

### 2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has provided discussions of findings made by the following oral literature researchers: Khoza (2006); Guma (1990); Canonici (1996); Kgopa (1998); Makgamatha (1991); Lesoro (1983); Msimang (1983); Motshwari (1998); Kganyago (2000); Vindt et al (1987); Serekoane (1996); Makgamatha (1988); Ngapo (1995), Kluckhohn (1965) and Makgamatha (1993). These researchers have examined oral narratives such as myths, legends, folktales, historical narratives and fable. These contributions by the above mentioned researchers in Northern Sotho and other
languages are vital in providing light to what the focus for the study of oral narratives has been in previous researches.

Given the kind of research carried out before regarding oral narratives, it is clear that too little has been done as far as the motif-index is concerned in the African languages of South African. Although researchers such as Lesoro (1983) have employed motif-index, the use of this research theory to study themes has been limited. Furthermore, the above discussion on the previous studies indicates that a fable has, to some extent, been examined in Northern Sotho. However, there is no study that focuses on the use of motif-index to study cultural themes in the given language. It is for these reasons that this study finds it relevant to explore the applicability of motif-index in examining themes in Northern Sotho fables.
Chapter Three
Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of Thompson’s motif-index as a research theory. The history of this theory in oral narratives and its criticism are discussed. Msimang’s (1983) views also form part of the theoretical framework. Furthermore, the chapter indicates how the motif-index theory is employed, and designates the method envisaged to obtain narratives as the data of this study.

3.2 History of motif-index

The study employs Thompson’s motif-index to identify cultural themes occurring in the selected Northern Sotho fables. Thompson (1946:415) describes motif as the smallest narrative unit that has the power to persist in a literary work. In order to persist or recur in a literary work there should be something remarkable about the nature of that aspect. Motifs are classified into three categories, namely; the nature of the characters, single incident and lastly certain items behind an action such as magic object, strange customs, unusual beliefs and so forth. According to Thompson (1946:416), the principal use of a motif-index is to display identity or similarity in the tale elements in all parts of the world. It is therefore, assumed that this can also aid to expose the cultural identity of the Northern Sotho community.

Motif-index came as a result of Aarne’s index of tale types which is concerned with classification of oral narratives. After translating and revising Aarne’s work and the ultimate publication of *Types of the Folktale* (1928), Thompson eventually embarked on his long wish of classifying motifs of oral narratives in a logical order through the publication of *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1955). The enormous volumes of motifs serve as supplement to tale types.
The motifs are arranged in alphabetical order where the content of oral narratives is used as the basis to classify those motifs, by citing subjects of narratives as subject headings that are prefaced by an alphabet letter. Following are the subject headings together with a few selected motifs underneath each subject heading:

### Table 3.1 Motif list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A. Mythological motifs</strong></th>
<th><strong>B. Animals</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A3. Creative mother source of everything</td>
<td>B5. Fantastic beasts, birds, etc., in art.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>C. Taboo</strong></th>
<th><strong>D. Magic</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C10. Tabu: profanely calling up spirit (devil, etc.).</td>
<td>D5.1. Enchanted person cannot move.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>E. The dead</strong></th>
<th><strong>F. Marvels</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1. Person comes to life.</td>
<td>F1. Journey to otherworld as dream or vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2. Dead tree comes to life.</td>
<td>F2. Translation to otherworld without dying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4. Sun revived by own power after being killed by moon.</td>
<td>F4. Journey to otherworld as hunt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>G. Ogres</strong></th>
<th><strong>H. Tests</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. The wise and the foolish</td>
<td>K. Deceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J2799. Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness.</td>
<td>K629.2. Guardian enticed away.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L. Reversal of fortune</th>
<th>M. Ordaining the future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N. Chance and faith</th>
<th>P. Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. Rewards and punishments</th>
<th>R. Captives and fugitives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2. Kind and unkind.</td>
<td>R2. God holds the devil captive for three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Laziness punished; industry rewarded.</td>
<td>R5. Capture on field of battle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. Unnatural cruelty</th>
<th>T. Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S10. Cruel parents.</td>
<td>T1. Zeus gives man modesty, but it leaves when love enters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U. Nature of life</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U10. Justice and injustice.</td>
<td>V. Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V11. Power to which sacrifice is made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W. Traits of character</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2. Good inclinations enter body at puberty.</td>
<td>X. Humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15. Woman shelters son's murderer out of charity.</td>
<td>X31. The dream of marking the treasure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X32. Wager with overdressed youths that servant can carry a large bucket of water upstairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Z. Miscellaneous groups of motifs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z11. Endless tales.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z12. Unfinished tales.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z15. Tale avoiding all pronouns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reflected on the above list, subject headings under alphabetical letters I, O, and Y and their respective motifs are yet to be discovered. The list is left open in order to allow newly discovered subject headings and motifs which may be discovered in future to be inserted under these three missing alphabetical letters. Due to the constraint of space in this study, only selected motifs are provided underneath each subject heading in the above table. In fact, it is impractical to provide all the motifs in this study as thousands of them are published in six volumes by Thompson. However, motifs that feature in the analysis of the fables in this study have been included in the above table.
Thompson propounded the motif-index that was intended to be used together with tale types. Motifs are listed under each subject heading and they are also preceded by alphabetical letters relating to their respective subject headings, which are followed by a number. The motif-index does not limit itself to a specific literary genre. In other words, a single motif can occur across other genres. It is for this reason that the current study finds it relevant to employ Thompson’s motif-index to reveal particular Northern Sotho cultural aspects through fables.

3.3 Criticism on motif-index
3.3.1 Motif-index in general

The introduction of motif-index as a literary research theory received a positive reaction from folklorists. However, as expected with the introduction of a theory, there has also been sceptical views on the use of motif-index as a research theory. Among the opponents of the use of this theory as a tool for folklore research is Dan Ben-Amos. In Dundes (2005) Ben-Amos boldly points out that motifs do not form part of folklore as Thompson contends. In his own words, Ben-Amos (2005: 210) argues as follows:

Motifs are not the folklore equivalents of words in a language. They are not the items that make up folklore, but only constructed entities that Thompson and his students abstracted and named within a particular body of narrative tradition.

Ben-Amos needs to revisit the categories employed in the classification and identification of motifs, namely actors, items behind an action, and incidents. The identification and classification of motifs are based on these three categories and there is no narrative in any culture in the world that does not entail characters, items behind an action and the action. In this regard, it is inaccurate and regrettable for Ben-Amos to state that they do not make up a part of folklore.
According to Dundes (1997:195) motif-index serves as the most valuable tool for professional textual analysis in folklore studies, and he further states that the folklore scholar’s ability to employ motif-index as a research theory distinguishes him from others. However, he concedes that there is an overlapping in Thompson’s definition of motif concerning the three categories used to identify motifs. In his own words, Dundes (1997:197) rhetorically states that:

How can there possibly be an ‘incident’ motif that does not include either an ‘actor’ motif or ‘item’ motif?” The categories of motifs delineated by Thompson are thus, not all simply exclusive and in fact are unavoidably overlapping.

This study concurs with the above sentiments regarding the inevitability of having an ‘incident’ with either an ‘actor’ or ‘item’. However, it must be stated that it is critical for the folklore scholar to carefully consider which ‘category’ is emphasised when identifying a motif. In motif C762.1. Taboo: ‘using magic power too often’ for instance, although this incident includes the implied ‘actor’ and the ‘item’ magic power, the emphasis is on the actual incident or process of using magic power. This view is substantiated by the fact that the actor is only implied, while the incident of using magic power is specified.

Still on the definition of motif, after closer observation of the motif-index, however it is apparent that the customs and beliefs behind an action do not always necessarily need to be strange or unusual in order to be regarded as motifs. The nature of beliefs or customs varies from one person to another. In fact, certain customs and beliefs can be common to one cultural group, and at the same time, be strange to outsiders. In their introduction, Garry and El-Shamy (2005: xvii) summarise this issue as follows:

In studying the distribution of motifs, one finds that the same object in different cultures may hold vastly different meanings. For example, snakes transpire in the mythology and folktales of many cultures. While in Judaeo-Christian tradition the snake usually symbolizes evil, in India it is a sacred creature…
By considering the above statement, one can imagine the huge task that Thompson was faced with when developing motif-index covering cultures that are foreign to him. Perhaps this could also be one of the reasons the African data is underrepresented in the theory of motif-index. First-hand or extensive knowledge of those cultures is a prerequisite for an adequate collection, interpretation and representation of data to generate meaningful motifs.

The stance of this study is that motif refers to a narrative unit recurring in a literary work. This narrative unit may be in the form of the nature of the characters, single incident, and certain aspects behind an action such as magic objects, customs and beliefs. Furthermore, the motifs’ prevalence in literary works reflects the identity of the community in which they are narrated, regardless of their nature.

3.3.2 Motif-index in African context

El-Shamy (2005) is one of the few proponents of motif-index to have successfully applied the theory in African context, Arab literature in particular. His study examines socio-cultural themes found in *Alf Laylah wa Laylah*, which is a collection of Arab oral literature, and subsequently compares these themes with those of European oral literature through motif-index. Although the motif-index is applicable to the Arab oral literature, in some instances the concepts are too general, which does not help in exposing the distinctiveness of the culture in question. In his own words, El-Shamy (2005:250) states: “With few exceptions, the indexes [...] were developed with almost total absence of Arab and Islamic data...”

In fact, most African oral narratives have been excluded when considering the fact that Thompson relied primarily on European oral literature when developing the theory of motif-index. This issue is clearly illustrated under the subject headings V. Religion and P. Society which are the central aspects of the Arab-Islamic culture. El-Shamy (2005:251) resolves this issue by generating other motifs such as V215, “Mohammed as prophet (founder)”, V333 “Conversion to Islam”, and V333.1 “Conversion to Islam through miracle” which relate directly to Arab-Islamic religion.
Under the subject heading P. Society, motifs pertaining to socialising between sex groups, marriage and divorce are delineated. According to El-Shamy (2005: 252) these aspects are completely different between Arab-Islamic and European communities. As a result, other motifs were developed to expose the cultural identity of the Arab-Islamic community. In his conclusion, El-Shamy (2005:268) stresses the importance of having adequate and accurate data regarding social and cultural aspects of different communities in order to make a considerable development in all spheres of life.

Only a few African oral narratives were observed when developing the motif-index. Thompson (1946:286) himself concludes that most African oral narratives are versions of European tales and that in some instances an African oral narrative performer would embrace a European oral narrative without any adaptation. The view of the researcher of this study is that oral narratives that are unmistakably African in nature should have been examined in order to expand the motif-index and have African oral narratives adequately represented and reflected in the motif-index. However, this view does not suggest by any means that the motif-index is inapplicable to African oral narratives.

Bascom (1992) examines and demonstrates the applicability of motif-index on African oral narratives. The publication is a reaction to Richard Dorson’s assertion in American Negro Folktales that African folklore has very little contribution to American folklore as there was only one motif, out of two hundred motifs, attributed to West Africa. He goes on to state that other motifs identified as African have European analogues hence they cannot be regarded as originally from Africa.

Among oral narratives examined by Bascom (1992) are The talking skull refuses to talk; Trickster seeks endowments; Bird’s head under its wing and many more which were told by both Afro-Americans in America and the Africans in their own continent. After finding out that these narratives have many versions in African oral narratives, including the American areas that are known to have rich African influence such as Brazil and Haiti, Bascom (1992) concludes that the oral narratives are of African origin.
Motif-index was used as the basis to identify the similarity within different versions and to classify them under Aarne-Thompson tale type. Through this publication, Bascom (1992) was able to quell away the notion that African folklore did not have a significant influence on American folklore and that motif-index is not adequately developed as a research theory to unearth knowledge in African oral narratives.

Okpewho (1992) also weighed in his views on motif-index as a diffusionist literary research theory. He mentions a few doctoral theses that employ the motif-index to analyse African oral narratives presented at American universities and quickly questions the practical value of those theses. Okpewho (1992:169) boldly states:

Although some scholars have cited these indexes in their references to tale and motifs, their practical value has remained highly questionable; the pursuit of types and motifs has itself become a futile academic exercise.

It must be noted that except for providing the background of the motif-index by Okpewho (1992), nothing of substance could be drawn from the above quotation. Although he does state that the practical value of those theses is questionable, there is not even a single point mentioned by Okpewho in the publication that discredits or compromises the value of those research works. Furthermore, not even a single reason nor explanation is provided to substantiate the view that the pursuit of motif-index is a futile academic exercise.

3.4 Msimang (1983) on theme

In this study, instead of generating other motifs that relate directly to Northern Sotho cultural themes, Msimang’s (1983) views are utilised. Motif-index is only used as thematic elements to realise cultural themes, while Msimang’s (1983) observations are employed to explain the significance of those themes to the Northern Sotho society. The adaption of Msimang’s (1983) observations is premised on that his study revolves on the issue of theme as literary aspects such as theme and moral, theme and motif, and social and cultural contexts of theme are discussed when examining the extent of folktale influence on the theme of the Zulu novel.
This approach will enable this study to remain centred on cultural themes and to provide an in-depth analysis on how the Northern Sotho society world view is reflected in the fables and the society’s attitude towards it. Below is Msimang’s detailed observation on theme and an indication is made on how the present study intends to adapt each literary aspect concerning theme.

3.4.1 Theme and moral

According to Msimang (1983:133) the theme and moral of a literary work are inseparable as the former is also known as moral lesson. He further elaborates that a moral is the solution of the problem presented in the imaginative literary work, which is usually presented by the artist. However, it is also mentioned that the practice of being overtly didactic and moralising was a common trend during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and is currently outmoded. The main social function of the fable is to teach moral lessons and this point is made evident in chapter one by Simpson and Roud (2000), Shaw (1976), and Abrams (2009) regarding the definitions of a fable (1.5.3). In this sense, it is found relevant to explain the morals identified in this study through Msimang’s (1983) view on theme and moral.

In chapter four, the study identifies and discusses the themes and morals derived from the selected Northern Sotho fables and also indicates how the two aspects are brought about by considering whether they were presented directly or indirectly. It is the stance of this discourse that the morals or lessons derived from the fables serve to reflect the world view of the Northern Sotho society. Such will be discussed in detail in order to reflect the Northern Sotho society’s attitude towards their own world view.

3.4.2 Theme and motif

Msimang (1983:134) briefly states that closely related events are reflected in an imaginative literary work as sub-themes and regards them as motifs. However, not much is mentioned in Msimang’s (1983) observation regarding this aspect except providing the actual analysis. When analysing *Nje nempela*, which is a Zulu novel,
Msimang indicates that the novel hinges on the theme of love in a polygamous marriage. Petty squabbles and jealousy are reflected as the motifs illuminating the aforementioned theme. The relation between the theme of love in a polygamous marriage and such negative social aspects as motifs is that they reflect the kind of relationship that exists between the co-wives of Nxumalo.

With little information provided by Msimang on the concept of motif, the current study finds it relevant to consolidate the way of identifying motifs in Northern Sotho fables through the use of Thompson’s motif-index. The motifs leading to a particular theme emanating from each fable will be quoted and matched with those compiled by Thompson for analysis. Such theoretically guided and substantiated analysis will consolidate and heighten the objectivity and accuracy in formulating themes. All this is done in chapter four of this study.

Further efforts have been made to explain the concept of motif in context to this study under 3.3.1. According to Shipley (1970:204) motif refers to a word or pattern of thought that recurs in a literary work of a genre to evoke a certain mood. The recurring of closely related incidents or events is key in the development and establishment of theme in a literary work.

3.4.3 Theme and society
3.4.3.1 Social context

Regarding this aspect, Msimang (1983:135-136) states that it is through the theme of a literary work that the society’s view of life and philosophy are realised. He emphasises that the purpose of an artist is not only to entertain the audience when performing, but to communicate an important lesson. He also mentions that, unlike in the Western tradition, Africans do not always summarise the moral lesson of a literary work as they are not overtly didactic as the audience are expected to familiarise themselves with the contents of a literary work and could make their own interpretation.
The Zulu society’s view of life and philosophy are elaborated on when looking at the social context of the folktale, *Umabhejana* and two novels, *Insila kaShaka* and *UBheka*. In all these three literary works, according to Msimang (1983:159-160), using Levi-Strauss’s model of sociological schemata, the theme is love and marriage. All the three narratives follow the pattern of a benevolent man having to overcome evil rival, the antagonist, in order to eventually win the love of his bride. Despite all the attempts in the three narratives by the antagonists to separate the benevolent men from their potential brides, they prevail. Msimang (1983) concludes that this reflects the Zulu philosophy of life that evil cannot triumph over good. Through the alignment of the theme identified in Northern Sotho fables with Msimang’s (1983) views, it is believed that this study will be able to generate vital knowledge regarding the Northern Sotho community’s view and their philosophy of life.

### 3.4.3.2 Cultural context

According to Msimang (1983:138) members of a community are taught cultural values and norms of the society through literary works. Given the fact that formal education only came later to Africans, oral art has been the only form employed to teach members of the community about their tradition and fables are not an exception to this. As the audience familiarise themselves with the content of an imaginative work performed by an artist in order to interpret the theme, society’s cultural aspects such as marriage, funeral, social ranking, clothing, foods and others are also learnt.

Msimang (1983:147) analyses the folktale, *UDumudumu* which involves a chief called Dumudumu who marries a fifth wife and installs her as the principal wife. However, the woman is barren and subsequently loses her status as the principal wife. After being subjected to hostile treatment from the other four women, she receives two children, a boy and a girl from pigeons and eventually reclaims her status as the principal wife. According to Msimang (Op cit.) this reflects the power of a man and that of ancestral spirits represented by the pigeons. Children are considered a gift from ancestral spirits while the status of an individual is a cultural institution determined by man. It is the view of the researcher that by considering the
cultural context of selected Northern Sotho fables more knowledge pertaining to the Northern Sotho community can be generated.

3.5 Conclusion

The history of the inception of motif-index as a research theory in comparative folklore studies has been discussed. This is followed by criticism where proponents such as Bascom, Dundes, El-Shamy and Garry have all demonstrated the significance of motif-index as a research theory and its contribution in folklore studies. Vocal opponents such as Dorson, Okpewho and Den-Amos were also discussed and it was indicated how this study intends to mitigate some of the challenges of using motif-index as research theory. Msimang’s (1983) views on folktale theme were incorporated as the theoretical framework of this research in order to delineate the socio-cultural aspects of the Northern Sotho society as embedded in fable theme.
Chapter Four
Application

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of cultural themes found in Northern Sotho fables. It first provides the synopsis of each narrative before embarking on the actual analysis where motif-index and Msimang’s (1983) views are utilised to examine the themes. The detailed narratives are found at the back of this study as appendix.

4.2 Analysis of fable themes

4.2.1 Synopsis of Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse by Mantsho Monene

After experiencing severe drought, all animals agree to dig a well in order to quench their thirst. The jackal is barred from drinking from the well as he has refused to take part in digging the well. When all the animals are away from the well, the jackal gains access to it and pollutes the water after drinking. The animals appoint the baboon to stand guard of the well. Despite having a guard, the jackal still manages to gain access to the well by tricking the baboon twice, sending him away from the well to fetch honey which allows the jackal enough time to drink water and goes on to pollute the well. Not only does the jackal trick the baboon but assaults it as well.

4.2.2 Theme and moral

The theme of the narrative can be expressed as: impulsive desire for food can cloud one’s judgement. The baboon’s impulsive desire for honey is a weakness that the jackal identifies and exploits in order to achieve what he wants. Given that the baboon is later assaulted and left to be shamed by the jackal (4.2.1), this study is compelled to state that this fable rebukes not only the impulsive desire for food in society but also the obsession in general that may distract one from important matters. The following motifs delineate how this conclusion is reached regarding the theme of the narrative.
4.2.3 Theme and motifs

K629.2. “Guardian enticed away.” In Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse, this motif is realised when the jackal tricks the baboon in order to gain access to the well. It is realised in the following paragraph from the narrative:

A re: “Wena tšhwene ke kgopela gore o nkitimele mola ke beile mamepe. Ge o fihla mola o a tšee o tle le wona mo re tle re a je.” Tšhwene ka go rata mamepe a kitimela kua phukubje a bego a šupa gona. Tšhwene a re a sa ile mola phukubje a šala a enwa meetse a kgora. Ge a se no nwa a kga meetse ka boleke bjo a bego a bo swere a re go fetša a biloša sediba sela, sa tlala leraga gomme a napa a ipha naga. (He said: “Baboon could you please go collect honey that I left over there and bring it here so that we can have it together.” Because of his impulsive desire for honey, the baboon ran towards the direction that the jackal was pointing to. While the baboon was away, the jackal drank water to his satisfaction. After drinking, he drew some into a tin and polluted the well then disappeared into the bushes.)

K629.2. “Guardian enticed away.” This motif is realised again in the narrative when the jackal pretends to be eating honey from the tin in order to entice the baboon. Again the jackal uses honey to trick the gullible baboon. However, this time around the baboon is not sent away from the well but tricked into being tied against the tree by the jackal. The following quotes confirm the enticement through honey:

A botšiša phukubje a re: “Phukubje o reng o itatswa menwana gabotsana bjale, e ka ba o ja eng?” Phukubje a fetola ka go re: “Aowa ke mamepe mogwera.” Tšhwene a re: “Mphe!” E le ge a kgopela phukubje. Phukubje a re: “Go go fa nka go fa ge fela o ka dumela gore ke go kgokelle mo mohlareng mola, o be o mphe le
The baboon heed to the jackal’s suggestion to be tied up before he can have the honey. Clearly the baboon has an impulsive desire for food and is preoccupied with that quest which allows the jackal to take advantage of the situation in order to gain access to the well.

4.2.4 Theme and society

4.2.4.1 Social context

This fable is not overtly didactic as the moral is neither summarised nor stated through a proverb. However, when looking closely at the events of the narrative, the baboon’s obsession for food is clearly highlighted as a weakness. The fact that the baboon is assaulted by the jackal and left helplessly tied up to endure embarrassment in front of all the other animals serves to warn the community about obsession which may compromise one’s judgement and lead to irrational behaviour (4.2.1 and 4.2.3). Therefore, the narrative reprimands the Northern Sotho and other communities against obsession in general.

4.2.4.2 Cultural context

Food and water are essential basic needs not only to the Northern Sotho community but life in general. The importance of food and water is highlighted when the jackal tricks the baboon twice using honey as a trap in order to access water. However, although food is essential for life, one should not allow themselves to be exploited and distracted from the primary responsibility they are tasked with, through food. The
baboon’s assault reflects the Northern Sotho community’s philosophy in the consequences of neglecting responsibility assigned to members of society.

4.2.5 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

As stated already (4.2.2), through the motif K629.2. “Guardian enticed away”, the theme identified in the narrative is: impulsive desire for food can cloud one’s judgement. The motif appears twice in the narrative, as substantiated through the quotations above, where the jackal entices the baboon away from the well by sending him to fetch honey at a particular place while he drinks water from the well. Based on this analysis, it is clear that the motif-index is applicable in unearthing the theme in Northern Sotho fables.

The above mentioned theme is contextualised to the Northern Sotho society’s socio-cultural norms, customs and philosophy through Msimang’s (1983) observations on theme. The philosophy of the Northern Sotho people is that although food is essential for life, obsession for such is not acceptable as it compromises one’s ability to judge. That is evidenced in the narrative where the baboon neglects the responsibility given to him by the rest of the animals that participate in digging the well. The assault and embarrassment the baboon endures serve to discourage such kinds of conduct as his, which is also considered as a weakness in society (see 4.2.4). This is realised in the narrative by applying Msimang’s (1983) observation on theme.

4.2.6 Synopsis of Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela by Monene Mantsho

In this narrative, the dog and the rock rabbit are very close friends and live together in one shelter. One day the dog goes out for hunting and requests the rock rabbit to remain in the shelter in order to guard meat that is kept there. The jackal comes and asks the rock rabbit to dish some for him as he is starving. After eating, the jackal thanks the rock rabbit for helping out and leaves. However, the jackal hides in the bushes watching the rock rabbit and waiting for him to leave the shelter so that he
can loot the meat. The rock rabbit is forced to leave the shelter to get food as he does not eat meat.

The jackal fulfils his motive of looting the meat and leaves the shelter empty. Upon the dog’s return from hunting, he is surprised and furious to find out that the meat is left unattended, hence the jackal took that advantage. After the dog returns empty-handed from the hunting raid the following day, he takes his frustration out on the rock rabbit and attempts to kill him and eat him. The rock rabbit manages to escape but not before the dog bites off his tail and their friendship turns sour from thereon.

4.2.7 Theme and moral

The issue of trust is explored throughout the narrative and reflected through the incidents that take place between all the characters involved. The theme may be summarised in the following words: over-trusting someone may lead to disappointment. The rock rabbit trusts the jackal in good faith when allowing him into the shelter and the jackal takes advantage of the situation by stealing the meat. On the other hand, the dog trusts the rock rabbit by giving him the responsibility of ensuring that the meat is safe. However, circumstances force the rock rabbit to leave and the dog is left disappointed to learn that the jackal has ransacked the shelter.

Furthermore, the rock rabbit also trusts the dog as his friend and expects him to understand and forgive him. However, regardless of his apology, the dog goes on to bite off the rock rabbit’s tail. These incidents clearly highlight the plight of over-trusting, which is something that is common in society but discouraged. The following motifs identified from the narrative indicate how this theme is brought about.

4.2.8 Theme and motifs

**M201.** “Making of bargains and promises.” In *Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela*, the dog and rock rabbit enter into an agreement that the latter remains home in order to ensure that the meat and other belongings are secure. The dog says to the rock rabbit:
“Wena pela, šala mo gae ke sa yo tsomatsoma tše dingwe tša dijo tša ka gore ke tle ke kgone go ja. Ke tla re ge ke boa gomme go tšwe wena [...].” Pela ya dumela go šala moo gomme mpša ya tšwa ya yo tsoma.

("Rock rabbit, remain here at home, I am going to hunt for some food so that I can eat. On my return, it will be your turn to leave [...].” Pela agreed to remain there, then the dog left for hunting.)

**M201.** “Making of bargains and promises.” The motif resurfaces in the narrative when the Jackal is asking for something to eat from the rock rabbit. The rock rabbit, out of pity, agrees to assist the jackal and that may be regarded as a bargain. This is reflected as follows in the narrative:

> Morwa phukubje a lla tlala a re: “Mogwera wa ka pela, ge o mpona ke le bjale ke a hwa ka tlala. Ke kgopela gore o ngathiše.” Pela ka lebaka la gore yena ga a je nama a napa a tsena ka ntlong a kalolla dinama tšela tša mpša.

(The jackal complained about hunger and said: “My friend, I am dying of hunger. Would you please give me something to eat?” Because the rock rabbit does not eat meat, he then went into the house and took the meat that belonged to the dog.)

**M205.** “Breaking of bargains or promises.” This motif is closely related to the one mentioned above. This is however, the opposite of motif **M201.** “Making of bargains and promises.” as it revolves around the idea of breaking bargains or promises. In combination with motif **M201.** “Making of promises.”, motif **M205.** “Breaking of bargains or promises.” clearly illuminates the theme of disappointment brought by over-trusting someone. The rock rabbit is forced to leave the house in order for him to get food and in doing so, the agreement to remain home and ensure the safety of the meat is compromised. The following quote from the narrative will shed some light regarding this point.
Pela e ile ya leta, ya leta ka lehutšo la gore mpša o tla boa eupša gwa se be nko ye e tšwago lemina, tlala le yona e be e setše e iphile maatla. Pela ya ba ya fetša e tšwile ka ntlong gore le yona e tle e swariše mala.

(The rock rabbit waited and waited, hoping that the dog would return but there was no sign of him. The rock rabbit was beginning to be overwhelmed by hunger and eventually decided to leave the house so that he could get something to eat.)

M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises.” Although the two animals have not entered into any kind of agreement, the rock rabbit’s kind gesture of allowing the jackal into the house and willingness to help clearly denotes a sense of trust in the jackal. Clearly the rock rabbit trusts the jackal by allowing him into the house and even offering him food and the trust is ought to be mutual. However, after realising that the rock rabbit has left the house with the meat unattended, the jackal breaks the trust bestowed upon him and takes advantage of the situation by stealing the meat. Hence, the motif M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises” is realised again in the narrative. The following paragraph delineates how the motif is realised in the narrative:

Ge pela e etšwa bjalo, phukubje e be e iphihli e ka sethokgweng e letetše pela gore e tšwe gore yona e tle e šale e ikhola ka dinama tšela di šetšego. Phukubje ya nama ya tsena ka ntlong ya fegolla dinama tšela ya nama ya ipha lešoka.

(As the rock rabbit was leaving, the jackal was hiding in the bushes, waiting for the rock rabbit to leave so that he could help himself to the meat that was remaining. Then the jackal entered the house, took the meat that was hung in the house and disappeared into the bush.)
M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises.” After realising that there will not be anything to eat for supper, the dog attacks the rock rabbit to have him as his meal. Given that the two are friends, this can be viewed as a breach of trust by the dog in violating the code of conduct as friends. The incident is eloquently portrayed as follows in the narrative:

*Pela e ile ya lemoga gore bophelo bja yona bo ka ba bo le kotsing ya nama ya ba komana-madula-a-bapile gomme ya dumela go yo kga meetse. E rile ge e boa, gatee mpša ya e tabogela, ya e kgaola mosela eupša pela ya kgona go phonyoga ya tšhaba mpša ya šala e swere mosela.*

(The rock rabbit realised that his life might have been in danger. He agreed to get water for the dog but stayed on alert. Upon his return, the dog ambushed the rock rabbit at once, biting off his tail. But the rock rabbit still managed to escape while the dog remained with the tail in his mouth.)

The theme of disappointment brought by being too trusting is realised in the narrative through two motifs, namely M201. “Making of bargains or promises” and M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises”. It is interesting to note again that motif M201. “Making of bargains or promises” revolves around the idea of making a promise or bargain while motif M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises” is the complete opposite of the former. The combination of these motifs is key in bringing about the aforementioned theme.

4.2.9 Theme and society
4.2.9.1 Social context

Despite the dog’s stern warning to the rock rabbit not to allow anyone into the shelter, especially the jackal, the rock rabbit ignores that instruction out of pity for the starving jackal and serves him the meat belonging to the dog. The jackal decides to come back and purloins the meat while the rock rabbit is away (4.2.6). This incident
highlights the plight of ignoring warnings and over-trusting people that are known to be crooks.

The rock rabbit’s transgression is followed by some consequences as he is assaulted and loses his tail during the dog’s attempt to kill and have him for supper (4.2.6 and 4.2.8). This incident serves to consolidate the Northern Sotho society’s philosophy that disobedience is not tolerated in society. Furthermore, it serves as the aetiology for the Northern Sotho society on the physical appearance of the rock rabbit, that of not having a tail.

4.2.9.2 Cultural context

The importance of food and friendship are highlighted in the narrative. When the jackal asks for food from the rock rabbit, he addresses him as “My friend” (4.2.8). It is a norm that friends help each other and this is so not only in the Northern Sotho community, but across all cultures. In this case the jackal uses this form of address in order to incite a sense of friendship and trust which would enable him to have his wish fulfilled.

The rock rabbit and dog’s friendship is put to a test when the meat is stolen. Despite the two characters having made peace, the dog goes on to attempt to kill the rock rabbit in order to have him as his food. Although both food and friendship are of high significance in the daily life of the Northern Sotho people, it is uncalled for among these people’s tradition for friends to betray each other over food. Therefore, the dog’s actions cannot be condoned nor be justified as they are purely committed out of frustration and anger towards the rock rabbit.

4.2.10 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

As highlighted earlier (4.2.7), in this narrative the theme identified is: over-trusting someone may lead to disappointment. This is as a result of motifs M201. “Making of bargains or promises” and M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises”. Motif M201. “Making of bargains or promises” is realised twice in the narrative. Firstly, when the
dog and rock rabbit enter into an agreement that the latter remains home to ensure that the meat is secured and safe from thieves. It also emanates when the rock rabbit allows the starving jackal into the shelter and feels pity for him then serves him the meat upon the request for food. The jackal is allowed into the shelter on the basis that he is trustworthy in the eyes of the rock rabbit.

However, motif M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises” emerges three times in the narrative. Firstly, despite the agreement to remain home, the rock rabbit is forced to leave the shelter unattended in search of food. Secondly, it is realised when the jackal breaks the trust bestowed upon him by stealing the meat. Lastly, the motif is realised in the narrative when the dog breaks the code of conduct by turning against his friend, the rock rabbit, and attempts to kill and have him as his meal (4.2.9). These motifs present the theme: over-trusting someone may lead to disappointment.

In analysing this theme in line with Msimang’s (1983) views on the social and cultural contexts of the theme, it is apparent that disobedience is not tolerated in the Northern Sotho society and such leads to consequence as the rock rabbit is punished by the dog. However, through Msimang’s (1983) views it is ascertained that the dog’s action of turning against his friend over food are not acceptable as it is against the Northern Sotho tradition to betray one’s own friend or any person.

4.2.11 Synopsis of Mmutla le ditšhwene by Monene Mantsho

A troop of baboons invites the hare to a honey expedition. Upon discovering and harvesting the honey, the baboons decide to climb onto the tree and indulge in the honey knowing very well that the hare cannot climb the tree. The hare is furious as the baboons do not bother to give him a share and silently vows to avenge himself.

The hare devises a plan to avenge himself and invites the baboons for a honey expedition. As the discoverer of the honey, the hare instructs the baboons to harvest the honey and deliver it to him. After the completion of that task, he orders them to go to the river and wash their hands before they can eat the honey.
As the baboons walk on all fours, this makes their efforts of washing their hands in the river impossible and the hare sends them back while he feeds on the honey. The routine is repeated to the point where the hare finishes the honey and vanishes into the nearest bushes. It is only after this that the baboons realise that they have been duped.

4.2.12 Theme and moral

In consideration of how the events of the abovementioned fable unfold, the theme may be summed up through the saying which delineates as: he who laughs last, laughs the best, which emphasises that the ultimate victor is the one that is in control of the situation at the end. In the narrative, the baboons take comfort from tricking the hare after harvesting the honey, by climbing onto trees and eating without giving him his share. However, their triumph is temporary as the hare masters a plan to avenge himself against their actions. The fact that the hare stands there while the baboons do all the work and still manages to dupe them makes his victory even sweeter for him and more painful to the baboons. Although revenge is not favourable in society, the hare’s actions are justified when one considers that the baboons invited him to the expedition only to deprive him of an opportunity to have his share. Following is the motif that delineates how this conclusion was reached.

4.2.13 Theme and motifs

L315. “Small animal overcomes large.” This motif simply reflects on situations where a smaller animal overcomes big one. After being betrayed by the baboons, the hare retaliates through a trick in order to avenge himself. This is realised when the hare successfully executes his plan in getting the baboons to harvest the honey for him and later sending them to wash their hands in the river before they can eat. Following is the motif that appears three times in the narrative as the hare tricks the baboons:
Before they could eat, the hare enquired whether the baboons had washed their hands and demanded to see for himself. The baboons opened their hands. The hare was not impressed at all and lamented on their dirty hands. He ordered the baboons to go wash their hands and come back so that they could eat. The baboons left for the river to wash their hands.

The hare uses the same trick three times while indulging on the honey. It is only after the baboons find the hare gone with the honey that they realise they have been hoodwinked. Although the baboons have managed to trick the hare in the opening of the narrative, the hare’s victory is commendable when considering that he (small as he is) tricks a troop of baboons (larger as they are) all by himself.

4.2.14 Theme and society
4.2.14.1 Social context

Having invited the hare while knowing very well that he is not physically capacitiated to carry out the task of harvesting honey, it is expected of the baboons to at least share with him little of what they have. The baboons, however, decide to climb onto the trees in order to deny him an opportunity to eat with them and leave afterwards without even being repentant (4.2.11).

Regardless of his limited physical capacity and size, the hare is victorious as he manages to devise a plan to manipulate the situation in order to suit him and wreak revenge on his perpetrators (4.2.11 and 4.2.13). This view should be seen in light of the challenges that those with limited resources and lower ranks in society have to endure. The hare’s ability to plan and influence the situation into his favour serves to
encourage them not to give up and submit permanently to challenges or their perpetrators.

4.2.14.2 Cultural context

The significance of food to the Northern Sotho society is made evident by its prevalence in all fables discussed thus far. As food is the primary source of life, it is a common practice in Northern Sotho tradition to share not only food, but other essential resources as well. However, the baboons are in contradiction of that practice as they eat gluttonously in the presence of the hare without extending their hospitality.

Furthermore, in the Northern Sotho tradition, when a group has embarked on an expedition, members of that group are expected to share whatever is discovered. The baboons act against that common practice and norm of sharing during their honey expedition and this culminates in the switching of roles between characters as the hare becomes the perpetrator while the baboons assume that of the victim. Although revenge is not encouraged in the Northern Sotho tradition, in light of the fact that the hare is victimised by a troop of baboons, it is justifiable that he plays the role previously played by them in order to teach them a lesson and reprimand them. The baboons cannot be sympathised with, given that they are the victims of their own actions. Hence this situation emphasises the principle of life that what goes around comes around.

4.2.15 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

As mentioned earlier (4.2.12), in *Mmutla le ditšhwene* the identified theme is; he who laughs last, laughs the best which emphasises that the ultimate victor is the one that is in control of the situation at the end. This comes as a result of the motif L315 which delineates on situations where a smaller animal overcomes the larger one. The motif appears three times in the narrative, where the hare successfully avenge themselves through trickery after being duped by the baboons. The fact that he is the last to draw blood makes him the ultimate victor.
The above-mentioned theme is further analysed against the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society through Msimang’s (1983) observations. It is established that the hare’s endurance and victory serve to encourage those in lower ranks in society to never surrender to challenges or perpetrators they might be faced with in life. The practice of sharing in Northern Sotho is highlighted as well in the narrative and the baboons are punished for such transgression which also serves to encourage people to be generous towards each other (see 4.2.14). All these are ascertained through the application of motif-index and Msimang’s (1983) views on theme.

4.2.16 Synopsis of Phukubje le roto by Mabote V. Mmakgabo

After discovering a dead mamba, the jackal sees that as an opportunity to prove his bravery to female baboons. He places the dead snake on the tree to make it appear alive and call on the female baboons to witness his bravery in killing the snake. Driven by curiosity over the jackal’s bravery assertion, the female baboons accept his invitation.

On their arrival, the jackal begins to attack the dead snake in a vicious manner while, at the same time, ensuring that the female baboons do not detect that the snake is dead already. The snake eventually falls from the tree and the female baboons are shocked by the incident and decide to challenge their husband, the head of the troop, to do the same.

On hearing that the jackal managed to kill a snake, the male baboon accepts the challenge from his females and the search for a live mamba ensues. After finding the live deadly mamba, the female baboons point it out for the male and stand watching with great anticipation. The male baboon steps forward and takes two cautious steps in preparation for the attack. However, after seeing the mamba raising its head in response to his slow charging movement, the craven male baboon stops and decides to go behind the bushes and never comes back to finish off his mission albeit telling the females that he is looking for a stick.
4.2.17 Theme and moral

The quest to prove one’s bravery is the main subject in the fable given above. After discovering a huge dead snake, the jackal formulates a strategy for him to be seen as the brave one and takes the credit of having done the impossible in killing the snake. On hearing about the jackal’s huge victory, the male baboon attempts to do the same in order to prove his bravery before his females, although he is unsuccessful (see 4.2.16). Thus the theme drawn from the narrative may be summed up with the following words: acts of exceptional bravery are celebrated in society. Below are the motifs enabling this study to present this theme.

4.2.18 Theme and motifs

H1561. “Test of valour.” In the narrative, the jackal calls on the female baboons to come and observe his act of bravery in killing a snake. As the female baboons are not convinced about his assertion, he requests them to come along in order for him to prove his bravery. This is realised in the narrative through the following incident:

Gatee fela phukubje ya ba šetše e tabogetše mokopa wola ya o thula ka hlogo. Ya boa ya taboga la bobedi ya thula mokopa wola. La boraro ge e thula mokopa wola, wa wela fase. Bommadibekwane ba šala ba maketše ba kgotsa bogale bja phukubje.

(In a blink of an eye, the jackal had already sprung up and attacked the mamba head on. He sprang up for the second time and head-speared the mamba. When he head-speared the mamba for the third time, it eventually fell from the tree. The female baboons were astonished by the jackal’s bravery.)

H1561. “Test of valour.” This motif is realised again, the male baboon being the one eager to prove himself in this instance. This follows the challenge brought by the female baboons after witnessing the jackal’s witty actions in proving his bravery. The following incident will elicit this view clearly:
(The male baboon took the first step to move towards the mamba, took the second one, on his attempt to make the third one, the mamba raised its head. After seeing that, the male baboon gave in in fear and said: “No! I cannot do this.”)

It is through this incident that the female baboons conclude that their husband is not man enough. This is so because in their eyes, he has failed in the same task that was successfully executed by the jackal. Although he has managed to save himself from the snake, he has lost respect from his females as he could not do the same thing that the jackal was able to do. Through this test of valour, the baboons are able to tell that the jackal is brave while the male baboon lacks this quality.

4.2.19 Theme and society
4.2.19.1 Social context

The jackal is highly respected by the female baboons after having falsely killed the snake on his own. Given that the snake was already dead, it must be stated that the jackal is a false hero, although a legitimate one in the eyes of the female baboons (4.2.16 and 4.2.18). He elevates his social status, claiming credit from an orchestrated victory. This element is also found in the Northern Sotho society where one would claim credit for something which they did not do. Although the jackal is not exposed as a false hero in the narrative, this can have serious consequences in life when members of society falsely present themselves to potential friends, spouses, and employers.
4.2.19.2 Cultural context

Bravery is a value that is held in high esteem by the Northern Sotho society, especially in men. The jackal, through his tricks, manages to gain himself great respect from female baboons for falsely killing a snake. On the other hand, the male baboon cannot be accorded such respect as he failed the test and even came with an excuse in order to avoid the task given to him (4.2.16 and 4.2.18). Bravery is celebrated in both sexes in Northern Sotho society. However, a man with this trait is considered to be more responsible and dependable to females than the one who shies away from acts that require bravery to execute. This is so on the basis that a brave man will be able to protect his family whenever that is required. It is for this reason that the baboon’s manhood is brought into question after failing to prove that he too can kill a snake (4.2.18).

4.2.20 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

Motif H1561. “Test of valour.” is recurring in the narrative. This motif revolves around the issue of tests of valour as the jackal convinces the female baboons of his bravery by claiming to have killed a snake. After being challenged by the female baboons to showcase his bravery following the jackal’s deed, the male baboon attempts the same, although he fails and subsequently runs away (4.2.16 and 4.2.18). In consideration of the recurrence of the motif on tests of valour in the narrative, it is concluded that the theme is: acts of exceptional bravery are celebrated in society.

The theme is further contextualised and interpreted against the background of the Northern Sotho philosophy and cultural norms through Msimang’s (1983) views. It is made apparent that the jackal’s false representation can have serious consequences in society as one is viewed and believed to be capable of something that one is truly not. Furthermore, it is clear that bravery is a valuable trait and held at high esteem in Northern Sotho society on the basis that a man possessing such is more respectable and dependable as he would be able to offer protection to his family and the community at large (4.2.19). All these are realised through the compatibility of the motif-index and Msimang’s (1983) views on theme.
4.2.21 Synopsis of *Phudufudu le Mmutla di baka segola* by Monene Mantsho

After a wildfire destroys all plants, the steenbok discovers some grass and builds a burrow for himself from it. He leaves in search for food and upon his return discovers that the hare has taken over the burrow. The hare refuses to vacate the burrow and claims that it belongs to him and advices the steenbok to leave him alone. The steenbok threatens to take the matter to the elders but not before he could give a few lashes to the hare. However, the hare states that that is against his tradition and instead urges the steenbok to agree to a fight.

The steenbok heeds to the hare’s challenge, however, the hare is concerned about the fairness of that fight citing the steenbok’s sharp horns. Thus the hare suggests that the steenbok gores him and give the horns to him afterwards in order to ensure the fairness of the fight. The steenbok agrees to that suggestion and begins to launch an attack on the hare. The hare is able to keep the steenbok’s attempts at bay by avoiding his horns till the steenbok tires out from the exercise and eventually gives up.

On his turn, the hare points out that he needs a rock in order to remove the steenbok’s horns in order to charge at him of which the steenbok agrees. The hare manages to knock off both the horns, however, the steenbok experiences a throbbing headache thereafter and requests to be given time to consult a doctor. Upon his return, the steenbok states that he is still in pain and voluntarily relinquishes the burrow to the hare.

4.2.22 Theme and moral

The ability to devise means for survival under difficult circumstances by the hare reflects his cleverness in the narrative. The hare opts for the easy means to acquire himself a burrow that has been built by the steenbok. The latter resorts to giving the hare a lash as a way to reprimand him from taking the burrow which does not belong to him. However, the hare counters such by suggesting that the two enter into a battle and also proposes the conditions of the fight which leads to him being the victor and the new owner of the burrow (4.2.21).
In light of the above series of incidents, it is clear that the hare has the ability to manipulate the situation in order to gain the upper hand from the steenbok. It is crystal clear that through his cleverness, the hare sets himself up to be in a better position to win. It is worth noting that the victory is gained at the expense of the steenbok’s foolishness in agreeing to all the proposals presented by the hare without suspecting anything. It is for these reasons that the theme of the narrative is summed up as: wisdom triumphs over foolishness. Below follows the motifs for this theme.

4.2.23 Theme and motifs

J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness.” Both wisdom and foolishness go hand in hand in the narrative. In fact, in Northern Sotho fables a character’s wisdom is realised in relation to another’s foolishness. After the steenbok makes his intention known to give the hare a few lashes, the latter is presented responding cunningly as follows:

*Mmutla wa araba ka gore wona ga o bethiwe ka thupa. Go tla ba kaone ge ba ka Iwa, eupša o tshwenywa ke taba ya gore phudufudu e na le dinaka mola wona o se natšo. “Go kaone o nthule ka dinaka tša gago, gomme o re go fetša o nkadime tšona gore le nna ke go thule ka tšona”. Ka nnete phudufudu ya dumelelana le mmutla.*

(The hare responded by saying that it is against his tradition to be hit with a lashing stick. Adding that it would be better for them to fight. But he told the steenbok that he was concerned about the fact that the steenbok had horns while he (the hare) did not. “It is ideal that I be gored by you then you should lend me those horns when you are done in order for me to do the same to you.” Indeed the steenbok agreed to the hare’s proposal.)
J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness.” After the steenbok’s unsuccessful attempts to gore the hare, the former eventually tires out and gives up. However, when it is the hare’s turn to gore the steenbok, he resorts to another trick by proposing that he be allowed to use a rock in order to remove the steenbok’s horns of which the steenbok agrees to without considering the pain associated with it. This again shows the hare’s cleverness in gaining the upper hand which allows him to acquire the burrow. At the same time, the steenbok’s foolishness is exposed. The following succinctly presents the hare’s cleverness and the steenbok’s foolishness.

Mmutla ka mahlajana wa re: “Aowa ke a go kwa eupša bothata ke gore ga ke na thipa yeo nka e dirišago go tloša dinaka tšeo. Go kaone ke diriše leswika gore re kgone go di tloša.” Phudufudu ka botlatla ya dumela. Mmutla o ile wa nyaka leswika gomme wa le hwetša wa nama wa thomiša ka go konka dinaka tša phudufudu.

(The hare cunningly responded by saying: “I hear you but the problem is that I do not have a knife to remove the horns with. It is better to use a rock in order to remove them.” The steenbok stupidly agreed. The hare looked for a rock and found it and then started to hit the steenbok’s horns with it.)

This motif lays bare the hare’s cleverness in ensuring that he is in a pole position to be the victor. He does so by proposing the conditions of the fight with ulterior motives which the steenbok is blind to notice. On the other hand, the steenbok’s shallow mindedness is reflected when he agrees to everything that the hare proposes without any questions. This results in him experiencing a throbbing headache which practically makes him unfit to continue with the fight and concedes a defeat and ultimately relinquishes the burrow to the hare. Thus the motif J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness.” reflects the theme that wisdom triumphs over foolishness (4.2.22).
4.2.24 Theme and society

4.2.24.1 Social context

The hare’s ability to put matters under control in order for him to be the victor reflects his cleverness. Although it is out of question that the burrow belongs to the steenbok, he is unable to prove it to the hare. In light of the steenbok agreeing to every proposal that the hare presents and eventually gives away the burrow willingly, one would be tempted to state that he cannot be sympathised with as he had an opportunity to object to such proposals. The steenbok’s failure to question the hare’s proposals has dreadful consequences as he loses his burrow and becomes ill after allowing the hare to remove his horns using a rock. This highlights serious negative implications that may arise from entering into agreements without subjecting such to thorough scrutiny. In this sense, this serves to encourage members of society to scrutinise and familiarise themselves with proposals presented to them before they commit themselves.

4.2.24.2 Cultural context

As indicated in the title of the narrative, at the centre of the hare and steenbok’s fight is the shelter. It is through the shelter that the hare’s cleverness is revealed where he proposes a fight and formulates the terms for such in order to determine the rightful owner of the burrow. Shelter is one of the basic needs which are fundamental not only to the Northern Sotho people but society at large. It provides protection and cover for the owner’s privacy. Hence the loss of such leaves one exposed to danger and unable to conduct personal and family matters in an enclosed and private place. It is regrettable that the steenbok is left with no shelter and subsequently losses all the benefits that come with it. This is as a result of his recklessness in making judgement on all the proposals put forward by the hare. Thus the importance of wisdom over foolishness is reflected in the narrative.
4.2.25 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

Motif J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness,” which relates to aspects of wisdom or foolishness occurs twice in the narrative where the hare shows his cleverness by proposing the manner of determining the rightful owner of the barrow. The hare cunningly proposes this manner which he knows will enable him to beat the steenbok. In doing so the steenbok’s foolishness is exposed as he accepts all the conditions proposed by the hare without any question nor suspicion and eventually losses the burrow in the process. Hence the theme that wisdom triumphs over foolishness is realised in the narrative through the occurrence of motif J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness.”

In probing the theme of wisdom triumphs over foolishness against the socio-cultural aspects of the Northern Sotho society through Msimang’s (1983) views, it is clear that the importance of scrutinising and applying one’s mind fully before committing to something is emphasised in the Northern Sotho society. Failure to do such has serious consequences and results in one losing valuable property such as shelter which is important for the Northern Sotho people’s protection and privacy. This is deduced in the narrative when the steenbok loses the burrow to the hare (4.2.22 and 4.2.23). It is certain that the motif-index and Msimang’s views complement each other in identifying and interpreting themes to reflect on the Northern Sotho society’s cultural aspects.

4.2.26 Synopsis of Khudu le kwena by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo

Upon fetching water from the river, the tortoise indulges on playing the kudu horn on the river bank. The crocodile’s attention is drawn by the melodic sound coming from the kudu horn and leaves the water in order to inspect. Upon realising that the melodic sound comes from the kudu horn played by the tortoise, the crocodile approaches and showers him with praises on his ability to play the horn. He asks the tortoise to lend him the horn in order to try it. The unsuspecting tortoise generously gives it to him, however, after receiving the horn the crocodile suddenly runs away from the tortoise and hits the water with a mighty splash into the river along with the
kudu horn. He boasts unapologetically to the tortoise and vows never to return the horn as it now belongs to him. The tortoise is temporarily stunned by the crocodile’s mischievous actions and helplessly begs him to return the horn but to no avail.

The tortoise devises a plan to recover the horn by recruiting a bird called the hamerkop. The bird’s responsibility is to alert the tortoise when the crocodile is out and basking in the sun. The tortoise and the hamerkop forge ahead with their plan, however the crocodile manages to get away in time and recruits his own watcher to alert him when the tortoise approaches. Despite having recruited the secretary bird as his guard, the crocodile is dead asleep and the tortoise manages to sneak upon him and applies a mixture of mould that turns solid in contact with water on his eyes. Upon hearing the warnings from his guard, the crocodile attempts to run away and takes cover into the river. However, it is already too late as the mould is now solid and causes the crocodile to be blind.

On the following day the crocodile basks in the sun hoping that the tortoise will return and help him recover his sight. Indeed the tortoise shows up and demands that he be given his horn. The crocodile asks for forgiveness and further requests that the tortoise assist him recover his sight. After receiving the horn the tortoise reluctantly restores the crocodile’s sight and from thereon he treats the tortoise with respect that is due to him.

4.2.27 Theme and moral

The crocodile’s actions clearly indicate his bullying towards the tortoise. He takes advantage of his big size and the inaccessible environment that he lives in to exploit and rob the tortoise of his precious melodic horn. However, through the determination to counter such behaviour with a well devised plan, the tortoise is able to recover his horn and the crocodile is forced to humble himself before the tortoise and apologise for his actions (4.2.26). It is for this reason that the theme is summed up as: Bullying should be stood up to and dealt with in society. Following are the motifs identified from the narratives.
4.2.28 Theme and motif

L310. “Weak overcomes strong in conflict.” However, before this is realised in the narrative, the strong, which is the crocodile in this instance, reflects the bullying attributed to his physical prowess and size as it is delineated as follows in the narrative:

*Kwena e no letša gararo fela ya tsena natšo ka bodibeng khudu e e lebeletše gomme ya re e le gare ga bodiba ya retologa ya lebelela khudu ya e sega ya re: “Mogwera, tseba gobane ga se ka go amoga dinaka tše, o mphile tšona bjale ke tša ka, ga e sa le tša gago.”

Khudu ya tlabega ya re: “Hee kwena tliša dinaka tšeo. Kgane ge o re o nyaka go di kwa be o nyaka go ntšeela tšona? Tseba gore go tšago lehonona re tla bona gore ke mang yo bohlale.”

(The crocodile only blew the horn three times and ran into the river with it and turned while in the water to stare at the tortoise while laughing at him and said: “Friend, know that this is no longer yours but mine as I did not take it forcefully from you, instead you gave it to me.” The tortoise was astonished and helplessly said: “Hey you crocodile bring back that horn. Were you intending to trick me and take it away from me when you said I should lend it to you? Let it be known that from today we will find out who is smart between the two us.”)

What is pivotal in this extract is that not only does it reflect the crocodile’s ruthless bullying, but also that a line is drawn for the ensuing conflict between the two. Although the odds are against the tortoise in consideration of his small sized body in relation to the crocodile’s massive size, the former recruits the hamerkop in order to defeat the latter. The following motif L310. “Weak overcomes strong in conflict” indicates the tortoise’s decisiveness in ensuring that he stands a chance to avenge himself and recover the horn from the crocodile:
“Mogwera, ke a go bona o a hlaka, le nna ke a hlaka, mme re hlakišwa ke kwena, ka go re amoga dijo tša rena. Bona, ga o sa ja go kwena, e go amoga dintši tše o bego o swanetše go di ja. Ge o ka šetša gabotse, o tla hwetša e ahlame dintši di e tletše godimo ga leleme mme e di bolaye ka bontši ka go tswana tswana ka pela e di metše. Bjale wena o tla jang? Bjale ge, tla re loge maano a gore re e tswana tswana gore e se sa bona. Ke na le molemo wa go tswana tswana. Ge o e bona e patlame leswikeng o lle o re: “Agee! O patlame. Agee! O patlame.” Gomme ke tla re go kwa seo ka nanya ke swere sehla ka e loya mahlo gore e se sa re tshwenya.”

(“My friend, both of us endure the same suffering inflicted by the crocodile because he takes away our food. Look, you cannot even eat in the same place as the crocodile as he gallops the flies which you were supposed to be having. If you have observed carefully, you will realise that he devours the flies in large numbers because of is big jaws. Then what will be left for you to eat? Join me in devising a plan to shut his eyes so that he loses sight. I have a mould that can be used to shut his eyes. When you see him lying on the rock basking in the sun, alert me by saying: “It is time! He is asleep! It’s time! He is asleep!” Then upon hearing that, I will sneak up on him and bewitch him by applying the mould so that he does not cause any suffering to us anymore.)

It is clear that the tortoise is not the only victim of the crocodile but the hamerkop bird as well as he is left with nothing for himself to eat. However, the two victims decide to work together in ensuring that the crocodile’s bullying is dealt with swiftly by resorting to impairing his sight. Thus the motif where the weak overcomes the strong in a conflict is realised in the narrative as the tortoise forges ahead with his intention of showing the crocodile that he can be smart and deal effectively with his bullying. The following motif L310. “Weak overcomes strong in conflict” succinctly explains the ultimate victory where the crocodile concedes that he has been defeated:
“Mogwera ke tlištše dinakana tša gago ke tše, anke hle o nkalaše ke boele ke bone. Ge e le mahlale ona ke lahlile.”[… E sa le go tloga ka lona lešatši leo kwena ge e bona khudu e e dumediša ka boikokobetšo.

(“My friend I have brought back your horn, please I beg you to cure me in order to restore my sight. As for my mischievous actions I will not repeat that.”[…] From that day thereon when the crocodile sees the tortoise he greets him with great humility.)

Although the crocodile is larger and more aggressive than the tortoise, he is forced to admit that his actions were not acceptable and apologises in that regard. Most importantly, it is remarkable for the tortoise to accept his apology and even goes to the extent of restoring his sight. Not only does the tortoise receive the horn but commands huge respect from his former bully in the crocodile.

4.2.29 Theme and society
4.2.29.1 Social context

The crocodile’s bullying is evident when he takes away the tortoise’s melodic horn and runs away with it (4.2.27 and 4.2.28). The crocodile uses his massive size in an unduly manner when refusing to return the horn. This is a reflection of situations in society where people occupying higher social ranks or positions of power use their influence in exploiting those of lower status. However, in the narrative, the tortoise successfully implements his plan in impairing the crocodile’s sight and forces him to humble himself by apologising unreservedly, return the horn and treat the tortoise with the respect due to him despite his small size (4.2.28). This serves to indicate that the people of higher social status’ unacceptable actions should be challenged whenever they attempt to take advantage and look down upon those of lower social ranking. It is therefore, justified at the end of the narrative, when the tortoise manages to recover what is rightfully his by overcoming the crocodile.
4.2.29.2 Cultural context

It has already been mentioned earlier that the crocodile not only bullies the tortoise but the hamerkop bird as well (4.2.28). However, in the hamerkop’s case the crocodile does not torment him deliberately as it is expected that he needs more food to fill his massive belly. Nonetheless, it poses a serious challenge/threat to the hamerkop as he has to compete, despite his small size in comparison to that of the crocodile, for the same food. The crocodile’s size and his bullying is a cause for concern and unacceptable towards the two smaller animals, hence the hamerkop assists the tortoise in bringing about the equilibrium by bewitching the crocodile in ensuring that his mobility is compromised through loss of sight (4.2.26 and 4.2.28).

The practice of witchcraft is at the core of the Northern Sotho society's belief system. It is believed amongst these people that a person may use muthi in order to influence luck, be it good or bad. In this instance, it is done for a good cause as it serves as punishment to reprimand the crocodile’s unruly behaviour as he torments the weak in the tortoise and the hamerkop. It is therefore not surprising that the tortoise resorts to the using a special kind of mould mixture to impair the crocodile’s sight in order to make the situation unfavourable for him and eventually return the horn (4.2.26 and 4.2.28).

4.2.30 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting theme

Three incidents relating to motif L310. “Weak overcomes strong in conflict” which focuses on instances where the weak overcomes the strong in a conflict are classified in the narrative. Firstly, the motif is realised when the crocodile indicates his bullying by running away with a horn belonging to the tortoise and refuses to give it back (4.2.26 and 4.2.28). Secondly the motif appears when the tortoise, together with the hamerkop bird, work hand in hand in dealing with the physically big and strong crocodile. Despite the crocodile recruiting his own helper, he is defeated and forced to acknowledge his wrongdoings and humbles himself before the tortoise by asking for forgiveness and requesting assistance to regain his sight. Furthermore, it is worth noting that not only does the crocodile acknowledge that his actions are wrong, but
concedes that the tortoise, despite his small size body, is mentally superior and starts treating him with respect accordingly (4.2.28). Thus the theme: bullying should be stood up to and dealt with in society, is realised in the narrative through motif L310. “Weak overcomes strong in conflict” (4.2.27).

In applying Msimang’s (1983) views to probe the theme: bullying should be stood up to and dealt with in society, the issue of social status emerges as the relationship between the high and low social rankings are explored in the narrative. It is prevalent to have a person of higher social ranking taking advantage of the lower ranking ones and hell-bent in exploiting them. However, such conduct is discouraged in the Northern Sotho tradition as evidenced in the narrative where the crocodile is overcome by a physically small animal in the tortoise.

Moreover, the crocodile’s bullying is overcome through witchcraft where the tortoise uses muthi to impair the crocodile’s sight and forces him to hand back the horn (4.2.26 and 4.2.28). The belief in the practice of witchcraft is not uncommon in the Northern Sotho tradition. However, in this instance its use is justified in the narrative as the crocodile bullies other animals and such is resorted to in order to bring about the equilibrium where all are treated equally and with respect due to them regardless of how they look. It is through Msimang’s (1983) observation that such belief is laid bare in line with the Northern Sotho religious belief system.

4.2.31 Synopsis of Mmutla le tlou le kubu by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo

In the opening of the narrative, the hare is contemplating about his desire to be reckoned as a hero, powerful and clever by the entire world. In his quest to be reckoned as such, he approaches the elephant and issues a challenge of a tug-of-war where the elephant is expected to hold the opposite end of the rope while the hare clutches the other opposite end in order to determine the stronger one. The elephant agrees to enter the challenge and a date is set. However, the hare approaches the hippo as well and challenges him to the same tug-of-war match, of which the hippo agrees to and the date for the challenge is issued.
Not known to both the elephant and the hippo, it is the same date and the same challenge hence the two battle it out thinking that they are contesting with the hare. The contest is balanced as both big animals have equal strength. Then the hare decides to cut the midpoint of the rope and quickly runs to the elephant and declares the contest a draw and the elephant agrees. After such the hare turns to the hippo and says the same. From there on, both the elephant and the hippo treat the hare with the highest respect.

4.2.32 Theme and moral

The hare reflects insecurity over his personal attributes and is yearning to be respected by the whole world for his heroism, power and wisdom. As a result of such a strong wish, he is set for a mission to prove to the world that he has all the attributes to be a smart, powerful hero. The fact that he is able to put the two biggest and strong animals at collision, without them realising it, clearly indicates that he is smart as he successfully achieves his ambition of being seen as a powerful clever hero. It is for this reason that the theme in the narrative is identified as: power, heroism and wisdom are the highest personal attributes yearned for in the Northern Sotho society. The following motifs indicate how this theme is realised in the narrative.

4.2.33 Theme and motif

K12. “Wrestling match won by deception.” In his quest to prove his strength, the hare enters into a tug-of-war contest with the elephant knowing very well that he stands no chance of overpowering him. However, he manages to persuade and hoodwink the elephant into entering the contest which is reflected on as follows:

Ba ile ba kwana gore mmutla o swanetshe go leka go gogela tlou ka ntle ga sethokgwa mola tlou yona e swanetshe go gogela mmutla ka gare ga sethokgwa, gomme ba phetha letšatsi.
In consideration of the huge difference in size between the two animals, there is no way that the hare can pull the elephant. However, the hare is aware of such and persuading the elephant to agree to the challenge is part of his bigger mission to prove his strength. The elephant is made to believe that it will be contesting with the hare as stated above and his consent is a clear indication that he has been hoodwinked as the hare does not participate in the challenge. The following motif K12. “Wrestling match won by deception” also indicates the hare’s deception, however, in this instance, the hippo is the dupe, using the same trick:

\[Kubu\ le\ yona\ e\ ile\ ya\ dumela\ ka\ ge\ e\ be\ e\ bona\ gore\ mmutla\ ga\ se\ selo.\ Ba\ ile\ ba\ phetha\ le\ tšatši,\ mme\ ka\ lona\ le\ tšatši\ leo\ mmutla\ o\ be\ o\ swanetše\ go\ ntšha\ kubu\ ka\ meetseng\ mola\ kubu\ e\ be\ e\ swanetše\ go\ gogela\ mmutla\ ka\ meetseng.\ Mmutla\ o\ be\ o\ file\ kubu\ le\ tlou\ le\ tšatši\ le\ tee\ leo\ o\ be\ o\ tlile\ go\ gogana\ le\ tšona.\]

(The hippo agreed to the challenge as he did not consider the hare as a threat. They set up the date in which the hare is expected to pull the hippo out of the water while the hippo is expected to pull the hare into the water. The hare scheduled the same day to contest in a tug-of-war with both the hippo and elephant.)

The hare successfully accomplishes to set up the hippo and the elephant against each other unknowingly into a contest while he observes. The two animals give their all in order to defeat the hare in the contest whereas, in fact, they have been pitted against each other. After realising that they are evenly matched in strength, he cuts off the midpoint of the rope and claims that he was able to withstand the strength of the elephant and the hippo respectively. Again this is reflected through the following motif K12. “Wrestling match won by deception” emanating from the narrative and marks his ultimate achievement:
The elephant conceded that he was almost defeated by the hare and also acknowledged the enormous strength the hare possesses. The hare then went to the hippo and told him that had it not been for the rope to break, he would have defeated him. The hippo agreed as well and from that day the hippo and the elephant respected the hare.

In light of what transpires in the narrative, it is clear that the hare is well vested with wisdom as he accomplishes his mission of being seen as powerful and a hero. This is based on his cunning skill to stage a fight between the hippo and the elephant without them noticing that the main challenger, being himself, is not participating in the contest and further claims that he almost defeated them. Although he did not defeat the two animals, the fact that he manages to accomplish his mission of asserting his strength against the two big and strong animals, as validated by their acknowledgement of his strength, is viewed as a victory. However, he does achieve his mission through deception, hence the motif of winning a contest through deception is realised in the narrative.

4.2.34 Theme and society
4.2.34.1 Social context

A contest to determine the strong is prevalent in the narrative as the hare challenges both the hippo and the elephant (4.2.31 and 4.2.33). However, it must be noted that the contest in the narrative is only meant for two participants for a specific purpose, which is to enable the hare to elevate his social status. It is a common practice among the Northern Sotho for members of the society to enter into a contest in order to determine the best. However, such has to be conducted in a fair manner in order
to ensure that all the participants stand a chance of making a good account of themselves in the contest.

In consideration of the physical stature of the hare in relation to the hippo and the elephant and the nature of the contest, the odds are against him, hence he resorts to a mischievous set up to achieve his mission of being seen as a powerful and wise hero. This serves as an indication of the society’s outcry against the inequality where the big and strong are respected and occupy higher social ranking positions in relation to the weak. Based on this observation, it not surprising that the hare resorts to such actions in order to gain the recognition and respect from the hippo and the elephant and subsequently elevate his social standing.

4.2.34.2 Cultural context

In the opening of the narrative, the hare is meditating loudly about his strong desire of being recognised as a powerful wise hero. This results in him embarking on the mission of gaining such recognition, and cannot be accomplished better than having to challenge the very dominant and powerful animals in the hippo and the elephant. He is successful in his mission and well respected by the big animals themselves (4.2.32 and 4.2.33). Attributes such as heroism, wisdom and physical strength are essential for one to be accorded respect in the Northern Sotho society. Respect on its own is an important cultural value that the Northern Sotho society emphasises among their members. Therefore, members of society who demonstrate their heroism, physical strength and wisdom are highly respected.

4.2.35 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme

Motif K12. “Wrestling match won by deception” is realised three times in the narrative where the hare succeeds in persuading the hippo and the elephant on two separate instances to enter into a contest of tug-of-war to determine the stronger one. On the third, the ultimate victory is realised as he accomplishes his mission of a being viewed as a powerful wise hero (4.2.31 and 4.2.33). In all instances where motif K12. “Wrestling won by deception” is identified, an achievement on the hare’s side is
evident as he manages to persuade these animals to participate in the contest, albeit with mischievous ulterior motive as he is not actively involved in the actual contest. Through these motifs, the theme: power, heroism and wisdom are the highest personal attributes yearned for in Northern Sotho society, is realised in the narrative (see 4.2.32).

Through Msimang’s (1983) observation on theme, the study ascertains the philosophy of the Northern Sotho society on the paradox of social inequality. In the narrative the hare is obsessed with the idea of being respected by mischievously initiating a contest that enables him to gain recognition from the hippo and the elephant on his false physical strength and heroic act. Nonetheless, the mission is accomplished as both the two animals concede that he is strong and his social stature is elevated as a result (4.2.31 and 4.2.33). Furthermore, the prestige of respect as an essential cultural value in the Northern Sotho society is accentuated as evidenced by its prevalence in the narrative. Therefore the motif-index and Msimang’s (1983) complement each other in providing a detailed theme analysis against the socio-cultural norms of the Northern Sotho society.

4.2.36 Synopsis of Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši by Mabote, V. Mmakgabo

As the title is self-explanatory, in the narrative the animals are concerned about lack of a king in their community and convene to elect one. However, they are undecided on how to conduct the process and resolve to send one of the animals to consult with an old woman weeding in a nearby farm. The duiker is the first to be sent and the old woman advises that the wise one should be elected as the king. However, on his way back he trips over a protruding stone on the ground and forgets the old woman’s advice. One animal after another are all sent to the old woman but fail to deliver the message.

After realising the difficulty of retrieving the message, the animals resolve that whoever manages to succeed to deliver the old woman’s message should be the king. The tortoise is sent and surprisingly manages to deliver the message from the old woman and the animals praise him as the king. However, the big animals such as the elephant, lion, hyena, leopard and rhino are annoyed by the turn of events and
refuse to recognise the tortoise as the ultimate ruler and dissolve the meeting without a ruler.

4.2.37 Theme and moral

The lack of a recognised king for the animals is a major problem in the narrative and they are determined to resolve it. However, none of them is familiar with the process of electing one, hence they turn to an old woman to advise them on how to conduct it. None of the animals is able to deliver the advice tendered by the old woman and they resolve that whoever manages to deliver the advice by the old woman should be the king. They all fail except for the tortoise, however, the big animals refuse to stick to their word that whoever manages to deliver the message should be the king as they refuse to be led by the tortoise (4.2.36). In consideration of the turn of events in the narrative, the theme is summarised as: it is usually the demeaned members of society that bring about unexpected desired results. The following motifs elucidate how this theme is brought about.

4.2.38 Theme and motif

Motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” is realised in the narrative. The tortoise is regarded as the hero as he manages to do a task that no other animal is able to do, delivering the old woman’s advice. Given his slow movement and small sized body, the tortoise does not instil any hope that he will succeed. The motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” is realised in the narrative in the form of contrast where the rhino is elected to serve as the facilitator of the election of the king of the animals which is briefly stated as follows:

*Diphoofolo di ile tša kgetha tšhukudu go ba yona e tlago sepediša lenaneo la go kgetha kgoši.*

(The animals elected the rhino as the facilitator of the election of the king.)
The animals’ choice in electing the rhino as the facilitator of the election process is not complicated to be understood. The rhino is elected as the facilitator because of his big physical body and aggressiveness which make him suitable for the role of conducting the process as he would be able to deal with other big and unruly animals that might attempt to disrupt the process. The rhino’s physical stature and aggressiveness are a clear contrast of the tortoise’s small sized body, hence one would expect the rhino to triumph over the tortoise. Motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” in the form of contrast is realised again in the narrative and identified as follows:

Diphoofolo di ile tša roma phuti gore e yo botšiša mokgekolo gore kgoši e ka ba phoofolo efe. Phuti e ile ya tloa ka lebelo le legolo e lebile mokgekolo ge e fihla ya re: “Makgolo, makgolo, diphoofolo di re naa di ka kgetha phoofolo efe go ba kgoši ya tšona?”

(The animals sent the duiker to go and ask the old woman her opinion on which animal should be crowned the king. The duiker left with great pace towards the old woman. Upon arriving, he said: “Old woman, old woman! The animals are asking which animal should be elected as their king?”)

At this instance the duiker’s agility is a direct contrast to the slow movement of the tortoise and again the former would be expected to succeed over the latter. However, despite his agility, the duiker fails to fulfil what he is commissioned to do which is delivering the old woman’s advice as he trips over the protruding stone and forgets the key message. Motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” in the narrative is realised as the tortoise manages to deliver the old woman’s message to the rest of the animals:

Khudu e ile ya fihla ya botšiša ya re: “Makgolo, yo a swanetšego go ba kgoši ke yo mobjang?” Mokgekolo a re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoši.” Khudu ya tloa e letša setontolo e re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoši.” Gomme e ile go kgopša ke leswika, setontolo sa šala se lla se re: “Yo bohlale ke kgoši.” Ya re go kwa modumo wa sentotolo ya
napa ya gopola, ya thoma go opela ya re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoši.” Gomme diphoofolo ka moka tša thoma go kwa mantšu a mokgekolo tša thoma go opela le khudu tša re ke yena kgoši ya rena.

(The tortoise arrived and asked: “Old woman, which animal should we crown as our king?” The old woman answered: “The wise one is the king.” The tortoise left singing the lyrics “The wise one is the king,” while also playing a bowstring. He then tripped over the stone, meanwhile the bowstring continued to play, echoing his words: “The wise one is the king.” He then heard the sound coming from the bowstring and remembered the words and resumed singing: “The wise one is the king.” Upon hearing the old woman’s words from the tortoise, they all joined in the tune saying he is the king.)

In consideration of his physical appearance, the tortoise is the unlikely hero as he moves slowly and such increases the probability of him forgetting the old woman’s advice as he spends more time on the way. Despite all the animals failing to recall the old woman’s advice, the tortoise succeeds against all odds, albeit with the help of the bowstring and he is recognised as the king. However, the big five refuse to acknowledge him as the king and resolve that they would rather not have a king at all, than being led by a tortoise.

4.2.39 Theme and society
4.2.39.1 Social context

The narrative revolves around the issue of the absence of a leader among the animals and the attempt to resolve it. As it proves to be a daunting task for the animals to deliver the advice from the old woman on who should be the king, they resolve that whoever manages to deliver the old woman’s advice should be installed as the king. The tortoise successfully executes the task, however the big animals refuse to be led by him and resolve that they would rather not have a leader at all. Nonetheless, his triumph in delivering the old woman’s advice distinguishes him from other animals as he succeeds where the rest of the animals failed despite their agility.
and big stature and he is a hero for that matter. However, in accordance with the Northern Sotho tradition, his ranking cannot be elevated to that of a king and detailed explanation on this matter is provided on the cultural context of the theme (See 4.2.39.2).

The tortoise’s triumph in delivering the old woman’s advice serves as an indication that the demeaned members of society are capable of executing tasks that one may never expect them to. However, the big animals refuse to recognise the tortoise as their king because of his physical appearance and he is disqualified for the throne. In consideration of the fact that it is the big and strong animals that revolt against the decision to have the tortoise as the king, this is an attestation to the prevalence of inequality in society where the lowly ranked members of society are discriminated against on the basis of their social status and physical appearance despite their competency. However, it must be emphasised that this kind of discrimination and inequality in the context of crowning a king in Northern Sotho tradition is neither unfair nor unjust. This is made clear on the following discussion.

4.2.39.2 Cultural context

It has been indicated above that the narrative hinges on the issue of the absence of leadership and attempts to rectify such (4.2.39). In the opening of the narrative, the animals eloquently state that other living species have recognised leaders except themselves, and that is considered as a major problem hence they intend to solve it and bring about the equilibrium. In the Northern Sotho tradition, a king is considered as the father of the nation and the lack of such leads to major social problems. A king is considered as the father of the nation on the basis that whenever members of society have disputes, they turn to the king for assistance.

It is thus not surprising that the animals recognise the need to have a leader. However, it is important to state that in the Northern Sotho tradition, a king is not appointed but born in a royal family with a clearly defined system of male primogeniture. Although the need to have a king for leadership purposes is legitimate in the narrative, it is not in line with the Northern Sotho custom to elect one on the basis of his competency in executing demanding tasks. The belief in the Northern
Sotho society is that no matter how exceptional one may be in the eyes of the society members, kingship is exclusively for royal family members, hence the tortoise is not recognised as one despite his exceptional achievement. His ability to overcome adversity and accomplish the desired result when no one gave him a chance to succeed makes him a hero and that cannot be taken away.

4.2.40 The compatibility of motif-index theory and Msimang's (1983) views in presenting theme

In the application of the theory of Motif-index, motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” is realised three times in the narrative. However, in the first two instances it comes in the form of contrast where characters whose physical attributes portray them as more favourable to be heroes are conveyed. In those two instances the favourable animals fail to recall and deliver the old woman’s advice and the same goes for the rest of the animals (4.2.36 and 4.2.38). These kinds of instances serve to set the tone for the achievement of the unlikely hero and unequivocally bring forth motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance” in its original form where a hero of unpromising appearance is realised in the tortoise as he succeeds in delivering the message despite his unpromising physical appearance. Hence the theme: it is usually the demeaned members of society that bring about unexpected desired results, is realised in the narrative.

In probing the above theme further against the Northern Sotho socio-cultural context through Msimang’s (1983) observation on the theme, despite the tortoise’s remarkable achievement, the big animals dissolve the meeting and disapprove to be led by the tortoise. Although his achievement is laudable in consideration of his unpromising physical appearance and the fact that other animals with superior physical attributes failed, his social status cannot be ennobled to a rank of a king. It is against the Northern Sotho tradition to elect a king based on the competency of an individual as there is a clearly defined system on the determination of kingship based on the concept of a male primogeniture. Hence the tortoise is not recognised as he is not of royal blood regardless of his ability to bring about desired results when no one expected him to.
4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter an analysis on themes found in eight Northern Sotho fables has been provided. The themes have been identified through Thompson’s motif-index and further probed, interpreted and contextualised against the Northern Sotho’s socio-cultural aspects through Msimang’s (1983) observations on theme. Furthermore, the study has discussed the compatibility of the motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views in presenting themes.

Through the motif-index theory, different kinds of themes have been identified which are brought about by the recurrence of closely related incidents emanating from each narrative. On the other hand, Msimang’s (1983) observations have enabled the study to interpret and contextualise the themes by focusing on the social-cultural aspects of the Northern Sotho such as inequality, encouraging and discouraging certain deeds and unacceptable behaviour respectively, and enforcing cultural beliefs on witchcraft and the practice associated with kingship. The findings on each narrative are summarised in the subsequent chapter of the study.
Chapter Five
Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This section of this chapter provides the summary and findings arising from each fable based on the analysis provided in chapter four of this study. The general conclusion of the study as a whole and the recommendations for possible future researches are also presented in this chapter as a point of departure.

5.2 Summary and findings
5.2.1 Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse

The theme identified from this fable is: impulsive desire for food can cloud one’s judgement. The baboon’s willingness to be tied up shows the extent to which he is prepared to go in order to satisfy his desire. However, in doing so, he neglects his duty to stand guard of the well. It is for this reason that the study finds that obsession in general in the Northern Sotho society is rebuked as it may result in one neglecting other matters of great importance.

In realising the theme mentioned above, motif K629.2. “Guardian enticed away”, which is concerned with the enticement of a guardian away from something, has been recurring and key in eliciting the theme. The motif appears twice in the narrative as the jackal tricks the baboon twice using honey in order to achieve his objective.

The embarrassment that the baboon endures after being hoodwinked by the jackal to tie him on the tree and also being assaulted serve as a form of admonishment to the Northern Sotho society against obsession in general. Essential basic needs such as food and water are mentioned in the narrative where the jackal tricks the baboon using honey in order for him (the jackal) to drink water from the well.
In consideration of the fact that the baboon has been assaulted and left to be embarrassed in front of other animals, the study concludes that the theme of the narrative serves to remind the Northern Sotho people not to neglect their roles and responsibilities in society all in the name of those basic needs regardless of their great importance. This is realised in the narrative through the identification of incidents relating to motif K629.2. “Guardian enticed away” and the theme is further contextualised to the Northern Sotho society through Msimang’s (1983) views on theme.

5.2.2 Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela

The theme of ‘over-trusting leads to disappointment’ is extracted from the narrative. This is deduced following the disappointment brought by the jackal on the rock rabbit after the latter assists the former. The issue of disappointment brought by over-trusting is identified again when the dog is overwhelmed by the disappointment following the rock rabbit’s failure to guard the meat as agreed. The final consolidation of the theme of over-trusting is also highlighted when the dog takes out his frustrations on the rock rabbit as he bites off his tale (4.2.8). The study establishes that the plight of over-trusting is common and is very discouraged in the Northern Sotho society.

The validation of the theme in this fable is realised through the recurrence of motif M201. “Making of bargains or promises”. Another motif that guides the study to deduce the above-mentioned theme is motif M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises” which is the absolute opposite of the motif M201. “Making of bargains or promises”. These two motifs are fundamental in the narrative in presenting the theme of ‘over-trusting leads to disappointments’.

Through Msimang’s (1983) views, the study finds that the rock rabbit’s transgression of the stern warning given to him by the dog not to trust the jackal is followed by dreadful consequences as he loses his tail after it is bitten off. This is viewed as a clear disapproval of the tendency of ignoring warnings and over-trusting people by society. It is also found that the narrative presents the aetiology of the Northern Sotho society on the physical appearance of the rock rabbit.
Moreover, the issue of friendship and food are highlighted in the fable. The prevalence of food in Northern Sotho oral narratives is identified yet again as most incidents come as a result of the presence or lack of food. The dog and rock rabbit’s friendship comes to an end after the two have lost the meat. However, it is noted that although food and friendship are significant in the daily life of the Northern Sotho people, fighting over food is discouraged. The study concludes that motifs M201. “Making of bargains or promises” and M205. “Breaking of bargains or promises” as reflected in the analysis, are compatible with Msimang’s (1983) views as analytic tools to provide a comprehensive theme analysis regarding the Northern Sotho socio-cultural aspects.

5.2.3 Mmutla le ditšhwene

The theme of this fable is summed up with a saying that delineates that ‘he who laughs last, laughs the best’, which emphasises that the ultimate victor is the one that is in control of the situation at the end. This follows the baboons’ short-lived victory in playing the hare by not giving him a share of the honey despite being invited. The hare contrives a plan to avenge himself and manages to trick the baboons three times. The study finds that although revenge is not encouraged in the Northern Sotho tradition, the circumstances under which the hare avenges himself make it justifiable.

Motif L315. “Small animal overcomes large” is key in presenting the theme mentioned above. This motif simply reflects on situations where a small animal overcomes the large one. In the fable the hare tricks the baboons three times by sending them to the river to wash their hands while he finishes the honey and disappears into the nearest bushes. In this sense, he is able to avenge himself after being betrayed by the baboons. The study concludes that the theme mentioned above was realised through this motif which appears three times in the fable.

The hare’s ability to think and overcome his physical capacity and his perpetrators, the baboons, serve as an encouragement to those with limited resources and lower social ranks in the Northern Sotho society not to capitulate to their challenges and perpetrators. It is also found that the hare’s victory is laudable in consideration of his
small size compared to that of his perpetrators and yet he manages to overcome them. This is a clear indication of the Northern Sotho society’s philosophy in that the size and social position of a member in the society should not serve as a barrier to overcome his or her situation and that what is key under such circumstances is his ability to think and deal positively with the situation.

On the issue of food, it is noted that it is a common practice in the Northern Sotho tradition to share food and other essential resources. However, in the fable the baboons are in contradiction of that practice as they eat gluttonously without extending their hospitality to the hare. This is subsequently followed by consequences in the form of revenge orchestrated by the hare as they are made to harvest the honey and hoodwinked by being sent away to the river while the hare helps himself to the honey and runs away afterwards. It is found that although revenge is not encouraged in the Northern Sotho tradition, in consideration of how the hare was victimised by the baboons, his actions are justified.

5.2.4 Phukubje le roto

The theme identified in this fable is that ‘bravery is celebrated in society’. The narrative revolves around this idea as the jackal is hell-bent on proving his bravery before the female baboons by hoodwinking them into believing that he killed a snake and takes the credit for the false victory. After being challenged by the female baboons to prove his bravery, the male baboon attempts to emulate the jackal’s achievement, albeit with no success.

The study presents the theme through motif H1561. “Test of valour”. This motif appears twice in the fable as the jackal and the male baboon attempt to prove their valour to the female baboons. This is realised when the jackal convinces the female baboons of his prowess and gains himself respect from the baboons after doing the impossible. On the other hand, the male baboon’s stature as a husband and leader of the troop is brought into question as he fails to prove himself thus denting his image as the female baboons conclude that he is not brave.
The study indicates that in consideration of the fact that the snake is dead already when the jackal claims to be killing it, he should be recognised as a false hero. In addition, although his actions are never detected by the female baboons, such an act is highly discouraged in society as it could jeopardise one’s social stature when exposed.

Through the application of motif-index and Msimang’s (1983) views on the analysis of this fable, it is established that bravery in men is held in high esteem by the Northern Sotho society. This is based on the view that a man with bravery will be able to protect his family and the community in general whenever necessary. This is made clear in the narrative when the female baboons insist that the male baboon takes the test in order for them to be reassured that he is brave and capable of protecting them.

5.2.5 *Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola*

In this fable the theme that ‘wisdom triumphs over foolishness’ is established through the recurrence of motif J2799. “Other aspects of wisdom or foolishness”. The motif features twice in the narrative where the hare cunningly counters every attempt by the steenbok to secure the burrow. The hare’s wisdom is reflected when he proposes the terms of a fight between himself and the steenbok to determine the rightful owner of the burrow. In doing so, he sets himself up in a better position to secure the burrow permanently. The steenbok agrees without suspecting or questioning anything, of which is regarded as foolishness. As a result of his foolishness, he relinquishes his burrow to the hare hence the theme that ‘wisdom triumphs over foolishness’ is realised.

In contextualising the theme against the Northern Sotho socio-cultural background, through Msimang’s (1983) views, in light of the steenbok’s consequences, the study asserts that the theme highlights the plight of entering into agreements without subjecting such to thorough scrutiny. The significance of shelter to the Northern Sotho society is evidenced in the title as the two animals are battling it out for shelter. Shelter is fundamental for one’s protection and privacy when conducting personal and family matters. Thus the steenbok’s loss of the shelter because of his
failure to apply his mind fully (attributed to his foolishness) before agreeing to the hare’s proposal means he relinquishes all the significant cultural benefits associated with shelter.

5.2.6 *Khudu le kwena*

In this fable the theme: bullying should be stood up to and dealt with in society, is identified. The theme is deduced from motif **L310.** “Weak overcomes strong in conflict”. This motif appears three times in the narrative as the crocodile bullies the physically weak animals in the tortoise and the hamerkop bird. This results in the two small animals working together in order to fight off the crocodile’s unacceptable behaviour. Despite his massive size, the crocodile is defeated through mutualism between the two small animals through a well thought-through plan and he is forced to acknowledge his wrongs to the tortoise.

The theme regarding bullying is further perused in line with the socio-cultural aspects of the Northern Sotho society through the application of Msimang’s (1983) views on theme. The crocodile’s mischievous actions when refusing to return the melodic horn belonging to the tortoise serve to reflect a concern in society where people occupying higher social ranks or positions of power use their influence unduly in exploiting those of lower status. However, in the narrative the tortoise effectively implements his plan by impairing the crocodile’s sight and forces him to humble himself by apologising and returning the horn. The study emphasises that this serves to indicate that even people of higher social status should be challenged and held accountable whenever their actions are found to be lacking or unacceptable towards those in lower social ranking.

Furthermore, the study ascertsains that the tortoise’s resort to bewitch the crocodile by impairing his sight is in accordance with the Northern Sotho belief regarding witchcraft practice. However, in this instance it is used for a good cause as it is used to reprimand the crocodile from bullying the physically weak animals in the tortoise and the hamerkop bird.
5.2.7 *Mmutla le tlou le kubu*

In this fable the theme: power, heroism and wisdom are the highest personal attributes yearned for in the Northern Sotho society, is identified. This is premised on the hare’s desire and attempts to be reckoned as a powerful wise hero. The theme is realised through the recurrence of motif *K12. “Wrestling match won by deception”*. The motif is identified three times where the hare cunningly sets up a match on the same date between himself and the elephant and the hippo without the two big animals noticing that they have been pitted together. As the two animals are evenly matched in strength, they both concede that the hare is strong and respect him for that matter.

In light of the hare’s strong wish to be seen as a powerful wise hero and the attempts to accomplish such over the big strong animals, the study finds that this serves as an indication of society’s disapproval of inequality where some members of society are highly respected and occupy higher social ranking in comparison to those of lower ranks. It is for this reason that the hare is yearning to prove his strength in order to be recognised as a hero and thus elevate his social position. Moreover, the study concludes that respect is an important cultural value that is emphasised in the Northern Sotho society.

In order for one to be accorded respect, attributes such as heroism, wisdom and physical strength are taken into consideration as evidenced in the narrative. Furthermore, as observed in all other fables, the use of the motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) observations on theme to examine this fable continue to consistently establish the theme and provide in-depth analysis by relating it to the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society.

5.2.8 *Diphofolo di kgetha kgoši*

In this fable the theme: it is usually the demeaned members of society that bring about unexpected desired results, is identified. This follows futile attempts by all the animals in the narrative to deliver an advice from an old woman on who should be the king of the animals. The tortoise brings about the desired results against all odds
as other animals fail to recall the old woman’s advice after tripping over an invisible stone on the ground. The incidents leading to the tortoise bringing about the desired results are linked to motif L112. “Hero (heroine) of unpromising appearance.”

In two instances, the motif appears in the form of contrast as an agile duiker is the first to be sent to the old woman to receive counsel on who should be the king. Given the agility of the duiker, one would expect him to triumph, however he fails to recall the old woman’s words. The same applies to the big and strong rhino, who is tasked with the responsibility of facilitating the process of determining the king, however he fails as well. On the other hand, the tortoise is not given a chance to succeed in consideration of his physical appearance and slow movement. However, he manages to overcome adversity and deliver the old woman’s advice to the rest of the animals.

The big five animals then refuse to be led by the tortoise and resolve that there be no king at all. In application of Msimang’s (1983) views on theme, the study contends that although his accomplishment is commendable, the tortoise cannot be elevated to the rank of king on cultural grounds. Instead, the study finds that despite the tortoise’s remarkable achievement, the only rank that fits such is being recognised as a hero as kingship is determined through a thoroughly defined system of a male primogeniture.

As the motif-index has been utilised successfully alongside Msimang’s views for the identification of the theme of each fable, this study concludes that the motif-index theory and Msimang’s views are compatible in examining themes.

5.3 Recommendations for future researches

In chapter two of this present study, it has been demonstrated through literature review that studies in African languages of South Africa have focused more on other oral narratives such as legend, myth and folktales. The same applies to the Northern Sotho oral narratives study. Through this study, avenues for future studies on fable as an independent oral literary genre are open for exploration in order to learn more about this genre. It is the view of this study that although similarities on the
characteristics of the fable across different African languages are bound to exist, it is critical that they be examined as subtle differences distinguishing each language and culture are more likely to arise.

Furthermore, the application of the theory of motif-index in the African languages of South Africa is not novel as observed in Lesoro (1983) and Kganyago (2000). However, in both studies the motif-index is not employed extensively as the studies utilise other theories as the primary ones, hence not providing an adequate perspective on the concept of motif-index as a literary theory. In this study the capability of the motif-index theory in identifying themes has been ascertained. The study, however, also incorporates Msimang’s (1983) views on theme into the theoretical framework of the study in order to heighten the accuracy and credibility of the findings by contextualising the identified themes against the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society.

It is important to emphasise that the theory of motif-index is not confined to a specific literary genre, hence it will be interesting to explore, with a clear investigative purpose, its applicability and accuracy of the findings when examining other literary genres such as poetry and contemporary prose. The study concludes that it is only through the extensive use of the motif-index theory in the African languages of South Africa that the merits and demerits of the theory can be identified and that responsibility lies on the natives of African languages.

5.4 General conclusion

In chapter one, the study provided a preamble indicating the significance of examining Northern Sotho fables. The aim of the study is provided wherein it is stated that the study intends to examine Northern Sotho fables by focusing on cultural themes against the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society. This includes the use of motif-index as a research theory in the African languages of South Africa, particularly, Northern Sotho. The scope of the study is also provided wherein it is outlined that the study only focuses on identifying cultural themes and relating them to the Northern Sotho society and only eight fables from two storytellers are provided for analysis. A theoretical framework to be adopted for the
study is presented where it is indicated that motif-index is employed for identifying themes while Msimang’s (1983) views are employed to interpret the themes in line with the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society. The definitions of key concepts such as fable, theme and culture are provided. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion on the issue of oral narrative classification in general and further narrowed down to Northern Sotho.

In chapter two, the study provides a discussion on the objectives and findings of previous research studies on oral narratives. Research studies from other African languages of South African are also considered with the purpose of providing a detailed broader view on the present topic. In the literature review, it is made evident that other oral narratives such as myth, legend and folktale have been explored while at the same time indicating a gap in terms of research on the fable. Furthermore, the study also highlights the theories employed in those research studies and it is apparent that motif-index as a research theory in the African languages of South Africa has not been attended to.

Chapter three presents the theoretical framework that is adopted in the study. It begins with a historical overview of the theory of motif-index on its inception and criticism from both proponents and opponents thereof. Msimang’s (1983) views on theme as part of theoretical framework for this study are discussed and an indication is made on how the study intends to employ the two theories to examine themes. The chapter closes with a discussion on the collection and presentation of data wherein it is mentioned that the qualitative approach is adopted whereby fables are collected from two storytellers through a word recorder and transcribed for analysis.

In chapter four the analysis of eight fables is provided where the motif-index theory is used as a tool to establish themes while Msimang’s (1983) views are adopted to heighten the accuracy in interpreting those themes against the socio-cultural background of the Northern Sotho society. The synopsis of each narrative and the compatibility of the motif-index theory and Msimang’s (1983) views to identify and interpret themes are provided.
The study concludes with chapter five where the summary and findings are provided. It is found that motif-index and Msimang's (1983) views complement each other in examining themes. Possible future research topics regarding the fable as an independent oral narrative genre and the use of motif-index theory in African languages of South Africa are also discussed. Premised on the findings of this study, it is clear that good conduct is emphasised in fables while unacceptable behaviour is rebuked. This is in line with the most central characteristic of the fable in Northern Sotho in that it enforces morals to members of society. The prevalence of food and social inequality are identified with a high degree in the fables discussed in the study. The stance of this study is that this prevalence highlights the importance of food as the primary source of life and the paradox of accepting social inequality as an undeniable part of life.
Bibliography


## APPENDIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phukubje, tšhwene le meetse by Monene Mantsho</th>
<th>The jackal, baboon and water by Monene Mantsho</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go thwe kgalekgale diphoofolo tša lefase di kile tša ba mo tlalelong ka baka la lenyora. Ge di le tlalelong bjalo, tša kwana gore di kgobokane di be le kopano gore di kgone go boledišana gore di ka dira bjang gore di kgone go hwetša meetse a go nwa. Ka nnete ka le le latelago letšatši di ile tša swara kopano yeo gomme ya ba gore tšona diphoofolo tšeo ka botšona tša kwana gore letšatši le le latelago re tla napa ra thoma go epa sediba seo gore re kgone go hwetša meetse a go nwa. E rile ka letšatši leo le latelago ka nnete diphoofolo tša bo a moka ga tšona tša epa sediba seo go fhilela di hwetša meetse.</td>
<td>It is said that a long time ago, animals were once in a quandary due to severe drought. Under those circumstances, they all agreed that there should be a gathering in order for them to discuss the problem and resolve on what should be done to get drinking water. On the following day they did hold a meeting wherein they all agreed to dig up a well on the following day in order to get drinking water. On the agreed day, all the animals did return and began digging up a well till they discovered water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakong ya kopano phukubje e bile yena a gananego le taba ya diphoofolo tšo dingwe ya go epa sediba. Yena o ganne ka lebaka la gore yena a ka se kgone go ngapelo lefase ka lebaka la gore ga a nyake gore dinala tša gagwe di fetše ke lefase. Le ge go le bjalo, phukubje e bile phoofolo ya mathomo ya go nwa meetse ao e sa bonwe ke tše dingwe ya boa ya dubiša sediba.</td>
<td>However, during the initial meeting the jackal refused to be part of the decision to dig the well. He refused on the basis that he will not allow his nails to be damaged from scratching the earth. Despite his refusal to participate, he was the first to drink from the well and even went on to contaminate water without being noticed by other animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphoofolo di rile go bona gore go na le phoofolo yeo e di senyetšago tša kdropela tšhwene gore e be yona e letang sediba seo gore e tle e bone gore ke mang a dubišago sediba sa bona. Ka nnete tšhwene e ile ya ba mouwe. Diphoofolo tše pedi, e lego tau le nkwe, di ile tša tla di swere melamo gore tšhwene a lale a hlokometše sediba a ithamilile ka melamo gore a kgone go ka iphemela kgahlanong le yo a ka tlago a tlo ba nwela le go ba senyetša meetse ao.</td>
<td>After the animals discovered that there was one polluting water, they assigned the baboon to be the one to stand guard of the well so that he could find out who exactly was responsible for polluting water from the well. Indeed the baboon did guard the well. The lion and the tiger brought weapons for the baboon to arm himself in defence against the culprit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ke nnete phukubje o ile a fihla, ge a fihla a humana tšhwene a letile mola gomme a dumedišana le tšhwene gabotsese. A re: “Wena tšhwene ke kgopela gore o nkitemela mola ke bego a šupa gona. Tšhwene ka go rata mamepe a kitimela kua phukubje a bego a šupa gona. Tšhwene a re a sa ile mola phukubje a šala a enwa meetse a kgora. Ge a se no nwa a kga meetse ka boleke bjo a bego a bo swere a re go fetša a biloša sediba sela, sa tlala leraga gomme a napa a ipha naga.

The jackal then came and found the baboon standing guard. He then exchanged greetings with the baboon and said: “Baboon could you please go collect honey that I left over there and bring it over here so that we can have it together.” Because of his impulsive desire for honey, the baboon ran towards the direction that the jackal was pointing to. While the baboon was away, the jackal drank the water to his satisfaction. After drinking, he drew some into a tin and polluted the well then disappeared into the bushes.

Two days passed, then the jackal returned. Upon his arrival, he found the baboon again standing guard of the well’s entrance. The two exchanged greetings. The jackal was holding a tin and seemed to be eating something as he was licking his fingers. The baboon foolishly suspected that he might be eating honey. He asked the jackal: “Why are you licking your fingers in that manner, what exactly are you eating?” The jackal responded: “It’s honey my friend.” The baboon then said: “Give me some!” Asking the jackal. The jackal then responded: “I can give you some, only if you allow me to tie you on the tree and give me your weapons. If you do that, then we can eat together.”

Indeed the baboon agreed to be tied up by the jackal. The jackal then took a string and started to tie up the baboon before proceeding to the well and drank water repeatedly. After drinking, he went on to pollute the water in the well again. He then took those weapons and assaulted the baboon. He left the baboon tied up and took his tin with water in it and disappeared into the bushes. Upon the arrival of the rest of the animals, they found the baboon tied up and asked him: “What happened?” The baboon
“Naa morwa tšhwene e ka ba e le gore bothata ke eng?” Tšhwene a fetola ka gore: “Ke bofihwe ke phukubje.” Tša re: “Batho! O lešilo, o ka dumela phukubje a go bofelela mo mohlareneng wa dumela le gore a go setle? Bona gore o tšwa madi a makaakang!”

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

Mpša e kgaola mosela wa pela by Monene Mantsho

Go thwe kgalekgale mpša le pela e be e le bagwera ba bagologolo kudu. Ya re e le bagwera ka mokgwa woo, ka letšatši le lengwe mpša a laela pela a re: “Wena pela, šala mo gae ke sa yo tsomatsoma tše dingwe tša dijo tša ka gore ke tle ke kgone go ja. Ke tla re ge ke boa gomme go tšwe wena ka lebaka la gore wena ga o je nama.” Mpša e be e šadiša pela bjalo ka lebaka la gore go be go na le dinama ka ntlong e direla gore go se be le phofofo ye e tla šalang e eja dinama tšeo. Pela ya dumela go šala moo gomme mpša ya tšwa ya yo tsoma.

Pela e sa letile bjalo gwa fihla morwa phukubje. Morwa phukubje ge a fihla, a tamiša pela a dumela gaborose, madume ya ba a mašweu a mbotsana. Morwa phukubje a lla tlala a re: “Mogwera wa ka pela, ge o mpona ke le bjale ke a hwa ka tlala. Ke kgopela gore o nngwathiše.” Pela ka lebaka la gore yena ga a je nama a napa tsena ka ntlong a kalolla dinama tšela tša mpša, a fa phukubje gomme a ja, ge a fetša a sepela. Pela o ile a tšwela pele ka go leta mola mpša a sa ile go tsoma. Pela o ile a swarwa ke tlala eupša a tišetša go letela gore mpša a boe pele gore yena a tle a ye a yo inyakela dijo. Pela o ile a leta, a leta ka lehušo la gore mpša o tla boa eupša gwa se be nko ye e tšwago lemina, tlala le yona e be e šetše e iphile maatla. Pela a ba a fetša a tšwile ka ntlong gore le yena a tle a swariše mala.

responded: “I was tied up by the jackal.” They looked at him with astonishment and said: “You are stupid, how can you allow the jackal to tie you up on the tree and assault you like this? Look how bad you are bleeding!”

End of narrative!!!

The dog bites off the rock rabbit’s tail by Monene Mantsho

It is said that a long time ago the dog and the rock rabbit were best friends and lived together. One day the dog said to the rock rabbit: “Rock rabbit, remain here at home, I am going to hunt for some food so that I can eat. On my return it will be your turn to leave as you do not eat meat.” The dog was asking the rock rabbit to stay behind as there was plenty of meat in the shelter and did so to ensure that no one would steal it. The rock rabbit agreed to remain there then the dog left for hunting.

While the rock rabbit was waiting, the jackal arrived. Upon his arrival he exchanged greetings with the rock rabbit and all was well. The jackal complained about hunger and said: “My friend, I am dying of hunger. Would you please give me something to eat?” Because the rock rabbit does not eat meat, he then went into the house and took the meat belonging to the dog and gave it to the jackal who ate and left. The rock rabbit continued to wait while the dog was away hunting. The rock rabbit was hungry but continued waiting for the dog to return so that he could leave to look for his own food. The rock rabbit waited and waited, hoping that the dog would return but there was no sign of him. The rock rabbit was beginning to be overwhelmed by hunger and eventually decided to leave the house so that he could get something
Ge pela a etšwa bjalo, phukubje o be a iphihile ka sethokgweng a letetsé pela gore a tšwe gore yena a tle a šale a ikhola ka dinama tšela di šetšego. Phukubje a nama a tsena ka ntlong a fegolla dinama tšela a nama a ipha lešoka. Mpša o ile a boa a rothšiša diatla gomme a makatšwa ke ge dinama di se gona. O rile ge a botšiša pela gore dinama di kae pela a swara mo a lesa, a swara kua a lesa, eupša a fetša a boletše gore phukubje o be a le mo. Mpša a re: "O dumelela bjang phukubje gore a tsene mo mola o tseba gore phukubje ke phoofolo ya mathaithai go feta diphoofolo ka moka?" Pela a re: "Ke kgopela tshwarelo."

Letšatši le le latelago ba tšwa bohle ba yo tsoma. Ge ba le mo tseleng pela a laela mpša a re: "Mpša e re ke tsene mo ke nyaka go fahla magotlo, ke tla go swara mo tsele ng. Mpša a rile a sobetše, pela a nama a boela morago. Ge a fihla kua ntlong, phukubje yena o be a sa iphihile ka lešokeng gore a bone gore mpša o boa a swere eng. Ka morago mpša o ile a boa a athile diatla a bontšha go lapa bile a swere ke tlala. Ge a nagana gore maloba dinama di be di tletše gohlegohle eupša pela a di fa phukubje, a nama a ipoša gore mamohla o swanetše go no lalla ka pela. Gomme a kgopela pela gore a mo tiele le meetse a go nwa. Pela o ile a lemoga gore bophole bja gagwe bo ka ba bo le kotsing a nama a ba komana-madula-a-bapile gomme a dumela go yo kga meetse. È rile ge a boa, gatee mpša a mo tabogela, a mo kgola mosela eupša pela a kgona go phonyoga a tšhava mpša a šala a swere mosela.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

As the rock rabbit was leaving, the jackal was hiding in the bushes, waiting for the rock rabbit to leave so that he could help himself to the meat that was remaining. The jackal then entered the house, took the meat that was hung in the house and disappeared into the bush. The dog returned empty handed and was shocked to find that the meat was missing. Upon asking the rock rabbit what had happened to the meat, the rock rabbit was reluctant to provide a specific explanation but eventually mentioned that the jackal did pitch. The dog asked in anger: “How could you allow the jackal to come in here while knowing very well of his deceptiveness over the rest of the animals?” The rock rabbit said: “Forgive me.”

On the following day, they left together for hunting. On the way the rock rabbit said to the dog: “Let me go this way I want to relieve myself, I will be behind you.” The dog responded by saying: “It’s all right I am proceeding.” Upon the dog’s departure, the rock rabbit decided to turn back. On his arrival at the house, the jackal was still behind the bushes, secretly waiting to spy on what the dog might be bringing home. Later on, the dog returned empty handed, seemingly tired and hungry. When he thought of the fact that a day before the previous day the meat was all over the place but the rock rabbit gave it away to the jackal, he then silently made a decision that he has to have the rock rabbit for supper on that day. He then asked the rock rabbit to bring him water to drink. The rock rabbit realised that his life might have been in danger. He agreed to get water for the dog, but stayed on alert. Upon his return, the dog ambushed the rock rabbit at once biting off his tail. But the rock rabbit still managed to escape while the dog remained with the tail in his mouth.
**Mmutla le ditšhwene** by Monene Mantsho


**The hare and the baboon** by Monene Mantsho

One day baboons invited a hare to come with them to harvest honey. They invited the hare knowing that he is unable to climb onto a tree. They then left to the mountain to harvest the honey. After harvesting the honey, they left together with the hare to look for a good spot to sit. The baboons then mischievously ran and climbed onto a tree knowing that the hare is unable to do so. The baboons sat there indulging in the honey. When they were finished, they descended from the tree and left to their place of residence, the caves. The hare was left furious and silently vowed to avenge himself.

On another day the hare also invited the baboons to a honey expedition saying he discovered one too. The hare invited the baboons because he knew that he was unable to take out the honey from a beehive. On their arrival, the baboons extracted the honey. They then took the honey to the hare and said: “Let us eat.” Before they could eat, the hare enquired whether the baboons had washed their hands and demanded to see for himself. The baboons left for the river to wash their hands.
Le go hlapa tšona di be di se di hlape tšona ditšhwene ka lebaka la gore di be di kitimetše mamepe. Go boeng ga ditšhwene mmutla wa re e reng ke bone diatla tša lena. Ditšhwene tša phurulla diatla, mmutla wa re: “Aowa, ga le a hlapa gabotse. Sepelang le ye nokeng le yo hlapa gapegape la mafelelo, le boe le tlo ja mamepe!” Mmutla ge o laela ditšhwene go yo hlapa bjalo, o be o tseba gore moo di sepelago gona naga e be e swele, bjang bo swele go setše molora le mošidi. Ditšhwene tša kitimela nokeng tša fihla tša hlapa gapegape. Ge di fetša go hlapa tša boela gape go mmutla. Mmutla wa re e reng ke boneng diatla tša lena. Ditšhwene tša phurulla diatla. Wa re: “Aowa, nna diatla tša lena di reng e le tše diso bjale. Boelang gapegape!” Ditšhwene tša tšepa le lebile nokeng. Di fetha go di boa tša hwetša sele me le ngwagola ka ge mmutla o feditše mamepe we boa wa tsena ka monga we seloko.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

The baboons could barely wash their hands as they did so in haste, their minds preoccupied with the idea of the honey. Upon their return, the hare demanded to see their hands again. The baboons opened their hands and the hare was not impressed and ordered them to return to the river to wash their hands one more time before they could have the honey. The hare knew very well that their path was covered with ashes and black powder from burned materials as a result of a wildfire that took place. The baboons ran to the river and washed their hands again and returned to the hare. The hare demanded to see their hands yet again. The baboons opened their hands and the hare was still not impressed and even asked that why their hands were so dirty. He ordered them to go wash their hands again and they ran yet again to the river. When they returned, it was already too late as the hare had finished the honey and disappeared without a trace.

End of the narrative!!!

Phudufudu le mmutla di baka segola by Mabote Mmakgabo

E rile ka letšatši le lengwe naga ya swa kudukudu gwa hlokea bjang. Diphoofolo di ile tša hloka mo di ka dirago digola ka ge di šomiša bjang. Phudufudu e rile ge e itshepelela ya humana mohlašana gomme ya re e lebelela ka fase ya bona bjang. Ya nama ya re: “Aowa, ke tša ikagela segola gore ke kgone go dula gona mo.” Matšatši a ile a šielana phudufudu e dula moo. Ka le lengwe phudufudu ya re e sa tšwile e ile go sela, mmutla wa šala o tsena ka segoleng seo wa robala.

The steenbok and the hare fight over a burrow by Mabote Mmakgabo

One day, plants were gazed by wildfire to a point where there was no grass left. Animals could not even build burrows as they needed grass. While wandering around, the steenbok came across a small bush and upon closer examination, he discovered some grass underneath it. He then decided to build a burrow for himself to take cover. He lived in the burrow for a few days before the hare discovered the burrow. The hare entered into the burrow and slept in there.
Phudufudu ya re ge e boa go sela ya humana mmutla o tsene segoleng sa yona. Phudufudu ya befelwa kudu ya botsiša mmutla ya re o nyaka eng ka segoleng sa ka. Mmutla le wona wa araba ka pefelo le bogale wa re: “O mang wena o ntlorago boroko ka mo motseng wa ka naa. Ga o na mekgwa, ba go rutile mekgwa ya mohuta mang ga geno?” Phudufudu ya fetola ka gore: “Se ke segola sa ka. Ke fetša go tšwa go na bjale ke re ke sa yo selasela gore ke kgone go gatiša ka maleng.” Mmutla wa re: “Sepela o ye o nyake se sengwe kua pele ka ge se se re re nna wee! O nkhweditše gona mo, ga se sa gago. Le nna ge nka go hweša o le ka gare ga sa gago nka se go ntšhe.” Phudufudu ya tlala pelo ya re: “Gona a re ye go ba bagolo, re kwe gore bona ba tla e ahola bjang.” Ya tšwela pele ya re: “eupša pele re eya go ba bagolo, ke nyaka go go kgela thupa ke go inamiše.”

Mmutla wa araba ka gore wona ga o bethiwe ka thupa. Go tla ba kaone ge ba ka iwa, eupša o tshwenywa ke taba ya gore phudufudu e na le dinaka mola wona o se natšo. “Go kaone o nthule ka dinaka tša gago, gomme o re go fetša o nkadime tšona gore le nna ke go thule ka tšona.” Ka nnete phudufudu ya dumelelana le mmutla. Phudufudu ya nama ya thomiša go thula mmutla ka dinaka. Gatee fela phudufudu ya re mmutla mpone ka dinaka, mmutla wa pephpa. Ya leka gape go thula mmutla ka dinaka, mmutla wa pephpa gape. Ya boa gape ya leka go thula mmutla ka dinaka, eupša mmutla wa tšwela pele go pephpa. Phudufudu ile ya fetša e lapile gomme ya re aowa o ka no tšea dinaka gore le wena o kgone go itwela.

Upon his return from searching for food, the steenbok then found the hare inside his burrow. The steenbok was furious and asked the hare what he was doing in his burrow. The hare reacted angrily and shouted at the steenbok saying: “Who the hell are you to interrupt my sleep in my own house? You have no manners, what kind of discipline was instilled in you by your family?” The steenbok responded as follows: “This is my burrow. I have just left now in search of some food to eat.” The hare interjected saying: “Go ahead in search of yours as this one belongs to me and mine alone! It is definitely not yours as you found me here. Had I found you in yours, I would not evict you.” The steenbok could not contain his anger anymore and shouted: “Let’s go to the elders and hear what they would say about this matter,” He continued, “however, before we go there, I want to get a lashing stick to punish you.”

The hare responded by saying that it is against his tradition to be hit with a lashing stick. Adding that it would be better for them to fight. But he told the steenbok that he was concerned about the fact that the steenbok had horns while he (the hare) did not. “It is ideal that I be gored by you then you should lend me those horns when you are done in order for me to do the same to you.” Indeed the steenbok agreed to the hare’s proposal. The steenbok then attempted to gore the hare. Within a blink of an eye, the steenbok sprung up to the hare, but the hare dodged, avoiding being hit. The steenbok attempted again, and the hare dodged yet again. The steenbok eventually got tired and conceded that the hare may take the horns as it was his turn to do the same.
Mmutla ka mahlajana wa re: “Aowa ke a go kwa eupša bothata ke gore ga ke na thipa yeo nka e dirišago go tšoša dinaka tšeo. Go kaone ke diriše leswiika gore go kgone go di tšoša.” Phudufudu ka botlatla ya dumela. Mmutla o ile wa nyaka leswiika gomme wa le hweṭša wa nama wa thomiša ka go konka dinaka tša phudufudu. Wa konka lenaka la mathomo la ba la robega wa ya go la bobedi wa e ritha ka leswiika lela gomme le lona la ba la robega. Bophelo bja phudufudu bo gona le mo dinakeng gomme se o sa dira gore phudufudu e reme ke hlogo e kgolo ya go šiša ya ba ya gapelešega go ya ngakeng. Go boeng ga yona ngakeng e ile ya botša mmutla gore: “Monna mmutla o ka no tšea segola, ke sa gago. Ge e le nna ke a palelwă, nakong ye ngwe le ye ngwe nka no ikela ga maotwanahunyela.”

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

**Phukubje le roto** by Monene Mantsho

E rile ka letšatši le lengwe phukubje e itshepelela lešokeng, ya bona noga ye kgolo ya mokopa e hwile. E ile ya batamela ya lebelela noga yeo gomme ya kgonthišiša gore ka nnete e hwile. Phukubje e ile ya tšea noga yela ya e tateša mohlareng ya e bofa gomme ya re go fetša ya sepela ya yo nyaka diphoofolo tše dingwe. E rile ge e le gare e sepela ya bona bommadibekwane gomme ya nama ya ba leba. Ge e fihla go bona ya re: “Naa le tseba mokopa?” Bommadibekwane ba re: “Ee! re a o tseba.” Phukubje ya tšwela pele ya re: Go na le mokopa wo mongwe o fetile mo tseleng wa nyaka go ntoma. A re yeng ke yoa le bonšha wona. Ke nyaka go le bonšha gore nna ke bogale gakaakang, ke nyaka go o bolaya.” Bommadibekwane ka go tseba mathaithal a phukubje le go fišagalela go tseba, tša dumela go sepela le

The hare cunningly responded by saying: “I hear you but the problem is I do not have a knife to remove the horns with. It is better to use a rock in order to remove them.” The steenbok stupidly agreed. The hare looked for a rock and found it and then started to hit the steenbok’s horns with it. He hit the first one and it broke off. He then went for the second one and hit it with that stone and it broke off too. The horns are part of the steenbok’s body as a whole and for that matter he began experiencing a throbbing headache that forced him to consult a doctor. Upon his return from the doctor, he said to the hare: “You can take that burrow, it’s yours. As for me I am struggling, I might even die at any moment.”

End of the narrative!!!

**The jackal and the baboon** by Monene Mantsho

It is said that one day while the jackal was wandering about in the bush, he found a dead big mamba. He stepped closer to inspect the snake and verified that it was dead. The jackal then took the snake and tied it around a branch of a tree then left to look for other animals. On his way, he saw female baboons and approached them. He then said to them: “Do you know a mamba?” The female baboons answered saying that they do know it. He then continued: “I encountered one and it almost bit me. Come with me so that I can show it to you. I want to show you how brave I am. I want to kill it.” Knowing how mischievous the jackal is, the female baboons were keen to see for themselves and agreed to go with him. The jackal led the way, followed by the female baboons.
phukubje. Sedile, tša šala phukubje morago tša sepela.

Di ile tša fihla kgauswi le mohlare wola go nago le mokopa. Ya re: “Le a o bona mokopa wola o itatilego mola, nna nka o bolaya.” Bommadibekwane ba lebelelana ka mahlong ba re: “Wena phukubje wa bolaya mokopa?” Aowa phukubje ya re: “Nka o bolaya le lena la se tshepe seo le se bonago.” Gatee fela phukubje ya ba šetše e tabogetše mokopa wola ya o thula ka hlogo, ya boa ya taboga la bobedi ya thula mokopa wola. La boraro ge e thula mokopa wola, wa wela fase. Bommadibekwane ba šala ba maketše ba kgotsa bogale bja phukubje.

Bommadibekwane ba re go tloga fao ba ya go monna wa bona roto. Ba mo laodišetša ka bogale bja phukubje ba buša ba mo nyefola gore o phala ke phukubje. Aowa, roto le yona ya gana go nyatšwa ke bommadibekwane a re mokopa ga se selo le yena a ka o bolaya. Gomme tša tloga tša sepela go yo nyakana le mokopa go kgonthišiša gore roto a ka bolaya mokopa go swana le phukubje. Di rile ge di le gare di sepela thabeng, tša o hwetša mokopa wa go phela gomme tša phutha diatla tša re: “Re bontšhe gore wena o monna go swana le phukubje.”

Roto ya tšea kgato ya pele ya batamela mokopa, ya re ya bobedi, ge e sa re e tšea ya boraro mokopa wa emiša hlogo. Roto ya re go bona seo ya topelwa ke bofsėga, ya re: “Aowaowa! Nna nka se kgone.” Bommadibekwane ba re: “O ka phala ke phukubje, kgane wena o monna wa mohuta mang? Re nyaka go bona gore ka nnete o ka kgona go bolaya mokopa wo gore re tsebe le ka moso gore o ka kgona go re phemela bjalo ka monna wa rena.” Roto ya re e reng ke nyakeng seroba gore ke thube mokopa.

They arrived closer to the tree where the snake was. He then said: “Do you see that mamba twisted around the branch, I can kill it.” The female baboons looked at each other with disbelief and said: “You, jackal, do you really think you can kill a mamba?” The jackal said: “Yes I can kill it and you will not even believe what you would be witnessing.” In a blink of an eye the jackal had already sprung up and attacked the mamba head on. He sprang up for the second time and head-speared the mamba. When he head-speared the mamba for the third time, it eventually fell from the tree. The female baboons were astonished by jackal’s bravery.

After their departure, they went to meet their husband, the male baboon. They explained to him the jackal’s bravery and even criticised him saying he could not emulate the jackal’s actions. The male baboon did not like the fact that he was being criticised by the female baboons and felt the urgency to do the same and said that a mamba was a no match to him. They then left in search of a mamba to confirm that he was indeed capable of killing one just like the jackal. As they walked along a mountain, they discovered a live mamba and folded their hands and said: “Show us that you are as much of a man, as the jackal.”

The male baboon took the first step to move towards the mamba, took the second one, and on his attempt to make the third one, the mamba raised its head. After seeing that, the male baboon gave in in fear and said: “No! I cannot do this.” The female baboons said: “The jackal is better than you. What kind of a man are you? We want you to kill this mamba as assurance that you can defend us in future as our husband.” The male baboon went behind bushes claiming to be looking for a stick, however he never
wo hlogo ka sona. Roto ya potela ka mehlare ya re e yo nyakana le seroba, ya nama e le moka e ile.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

Khudu le kwena by Mabote Mmakgabo

Ka letšatši le lengwe khudu e rile e itshepelela lešokeng gomme ya kwa e swere ke lenyora ya nama ya leba nokeng. E rile go fihla ya nwa meetsa gomme ya patlama fao gore e ithutše ganyane. E rile e dutše bjalo ya kwa e tšelwa ke bokutu gomme ya nama ya ntšha dinakana tša yona ya thoma go letša ebile e fela e opela. Kwena e ile ya kwa molodi wo wa go thakgatša tsebe gomme ya nama ya tšwa ka meetseng gore e bone gore molodi wowe o tšwa kae. Gomme e rile go batamela ya hwetša e le khudu e letša dinakana. E ile ya batamela ya nama ya dumediša khudu ya fetša ya re: “Gape mogwera o tloga o le sekgwari. Hle, anke o nkadime le nna ke letše!”

Khudu e ile ya thabišwa ke go kwa e retwa gomme ya fa kwena dinakana gore e letše. Kwena e no letša gararo fela ya tšena natšo ka bodibeng khudu e e lebeletše gomme ya re e le gare ga bodiba ya retologa ya lebelela khudu ya e sega ya re: “Mogwera, tseba gobane ga se ka go amoga dinaka tše, o mphile tšona bjale ke tša ka, ga e sa le tša gago.” Khudu ya tlabega ya re: “Hee kwena tliša dinaka tšeo. Kgane ge o re o nyaka go di kwa be o nyaka go ntšela tšona? Tseba gore go tloga lehono re tla bona gore ke mang yo bohlale.”

Ka go tseba gore kwena e rata boroko bile e fela e etšwa ka meetseng e duela letšatši, ya boledišana le nonyana ye e returned.

End of the narrative!!!

The tortoise and the crocodile by Mabote Mmakgabo

One day, while wandering around the bush, the tortoise felt thirsty and decided to go to the river. Upon his arrival, he drank water and rested for a short while. He then felt bored and decided to take out a melodic horn from his pocket and played it while singing. The crocodile’s attention was drawn by the beautiful music and went outside the water to investigate where the music was coming from. He then realised that it was the tortoise playing the melodic horn. He then went closer to exchange greetings and proceeded to praise the tortoise as follows: “My friend you are truly exceptionally talented. May you please lend me to play too?”

The tortoise was flattered to hear such praise and handed the melodic horn to the crocodile to play. The crocodile only blew the horn three times and ran into the river with it and turned while in the water to stare at the tortoise while laughing at him and said: “Friend, know that this is no longer yours but mine as I did not take it forcefully from you, instead you gave it to me.” The tortoise was astonished and helplessly said: “Hey you crocodile bring back that horn. Were you intending to trick me and take it away from me when you said I should lend it to you? Let it be known that from today we will find out who is smart between the two of us.”

Knowing that the crocodile likes his sleep and that he usually leaves the water to bask in the sun, the tortoise recruited the
bitšwago mašianoke ya re: “Mogwera, ke a go bona o a hlaka, le nna ke a hlaka, mme re hlakišwa ke kwena, ka go re amoga dijo tša rena. Bona ga o sa kgona go ja, e go amoga dintši tše o bego o swaneše go di ja. Ge o ka šetša gabetse, o tla hwetša e ahlane dintši di e tlešë godimo ga leleme mme e di bolaye ka bontši ka go tswalela molomo ka pela e di metše. Bjale wena o tla jang? Bjale ge, tla le loge maano a gore re e tswalele mahlo gore e se sa bona. Ke na le molemo wa go tswalela mahlo. Ge o e bona e patlame leswikeng o ile o re: “Agee! O patlame. Agee! O patlame.” Gomme ke tla re go kwa se o ka nanya ke swere sehla re e loya mahlo gore e se sa re tshwenyana.”


Kwena e ile ya thoma go tšwela mokgoši woo wa mokwenete gomme gwa ba boima gore a phafoge ka ge bjale ge a ekwa mokgoši owe a be a thoma le go gona go bonšha go tsefelwa ke boroko. Ka le lengwe la matšatši kwena e patlame leswikeng, tshebi ya khudu ya nama ya hlaba mokgoši wa: “Agee! O patlame. Agee! O patlame.” Gomme hamerkop bird as follows: “My friend, both of us endure the same suffering inflicted by the crocodile because he takes away our food. Look, you cannot even eat in the same place as the crocodile as he gallops the flies which you are supposed to be having. If you have observed carefully, you will realise that he devours the flies in large numbers because of is big jaws. Then what will be left for you to eat? Join me in devising a plan to shut his eyes so that he loses sight. I have a mould that can be used to shut his eyes. When you see him lying on the rock basking in the sun alert me by saying: It is time! He is asleep. It’s time! He is asleep. Then upon hearing that, I will sneak up on him and bewitch him by applying the mould on his eyes so that he does not cause any suffering on us anymore.”

They agreed to bewitch the crocodile in order to make him blind. The hamerkop kept an eye on the crocodile as he left the water and layed on a rock to bask in the sun, he then alerted the tortoise saying: “It is time! He is asleep, it’s time! He is asleep.” Upon hearing that, the tortoise appeared, sneaking up on the crocodile. The crocodile managed to wake up and ran into the water while laughing at the tortoise. After hearing the hamerkop’s warning, the crocodile noticed that he was the tortoise’s spy. He then recruited the secretarybird as his own watcher to alert him when the tortoise comes as follows: “Watchout, he is coming! Watchout, he is coming!”

As time went on, the crocodile began to get used to the secretarybird’s warning, and as a result it was difficult to wake up as it was apparent that whenever the warning was made, he enjoyed his sleep even more. As the crocodile layed on a rock, basking in the sun, the tortoise’s informant raised the alarm saying: “It is time! He is asleep. It’s time! He is asleep.”
Khudu e be e swere moti woo o rego ge o tsene ka meetseng wa fetoga sekgapetla sa go swana le sa kwena. E rile go fihla gomme ya tlotša kwena mahlo ka moka ka sehlane sela mme ya re go fetša ya tsoša kwena ya re: “Agee! O a tla. Agee! O a tla.”

The tortoise was in possession of a special kind of mould that turns into a hard shell that looks like the crocodile’s skin on contact with water. Upon his arrival, he applied the mould on the crocodile’s eyes and after finishing, he said: “My friend, wake up and give me my melodic horn, I am bored without it.” After hearing the tortoise’s voice, the crocodile woke up and ran into the water. However, he was surprised to realise that he was unable to see as he tried to open his eyes, he then took his head out of the water hoping to see the sunlight but to no avail. He spent three days without eating and decided to leave the water in order to apologise to the tortoise.

Upon seeing the crocodile lying on the rock, the hamerkop alerted the tortoise as usual saying: “It is time! He is asleep. It’s time! He is asleep.” Then the tortoise advanced but this time walking without sneaking up. After that the secretarybird began to warn the crocodile through the usual signal saying: “Watchout, he is coming! Watchout, he is coming!” The crocodile heard the warning but did not try to run away as he usully did. The tortoise then arrived and found him in possession of the melodic horn.

The crocodile lifted its head and said: “My friend I have brought back your horn, please I beg you to cure me in order to restore my sight. As for my mischievous actions, I will not do it again.” The tortoise was relactant to heed the crocodile’s request. However, he eventually took his melodic horn and restored the crocodile’s sight. From that day onwards, the crocodile started…
boikokobetšo.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

**Diphoofolo di kgetha kgoši** by Mabote Mmakgabo

Ka morago ga tshwenyego ya gore tšona di reng di se na kgoši, diphoofolo di ile tša kwana gore di kgotse kgoši yeo e tla di bušago le go di ahlolela melato, tša re: “Dinose di na le kgoši, makeke a na le kgoši, le bona batho ba na le kgoši ge e se rena fela.”

Polelo yeo e ile ya amogelwa ka atla tše pedi. Diphoofolo di ile tša kgetha tšhukudu go ba yona e tlago sepediša lenaneo la go kgetha kgoši. Gomme di ile di sa gakanegile gore di ka thoma bjang, kgano ya re: “Ke bona mokgekolo kua tšhemong o a hlagola. A re romeng yo mongwe gore a yo re botšišetša gore re ka kgetha phoofolo efe gore e be kgoši ya rena.”

Diphoofolo di ile tša roma phuti gore e yo botšiša mokgekolo gore kgoši e ka ba phoofolo efe. Phuti e ile ya tloga ka lebelo le legolo e lebile mokgekolo, ge e fihla ya re: “Makgolo, Makgolo, diphoofolo di re naa di ka kgetha phoofolo efe go ba kgoši ya tšona?” Mokgekolo a re: “Ye bohlale ke yona kgoši.”

Go be go na le tsela yeo go bego go sepela diphoofolo, yona e be e na le leswika la nthla yeo e bego e sa bonale kudu. Phuti e be e šomiša yona tsela yeo ge e boa tšhemong ya mokgekolo. Gomme e ile ya fihla ya kgorša ke leswika lela ya ba ya iša le maoto godimo. E rile ge e tsoga ya ikhwetša e lebetše molaetša wola wa mokgekolo. Tšhukudu ya botšiša phuti ya re: “Phuti, naa mokgekolo o rileng?” Phuti ya re: treating the tortoise with great humility and respect.

End of the narrative!!!

**The animals elect a king** by Mabote Mmakgabo

After being concerned about lack of a king in their community, animals agreed to meet in order to elect a king that will lead them and also assist in resolving disputes. They said: “The bees have a king, the termites have a king even people do, but we do not have a leader.”

That suggestion was well received. The animals elected the rhino as the facilitator of the election of the king. However, they were confused as they did not know how to execute the process. The mongoose then said: “I see an old woman over there weeding in a farm. Let us send one of us to enquire on who should be elected as our king.”

The animals sent the duiker to go and ask the old woman her opinion on which animal should be crowned the king. The duiker left with great pace towards the old woman. Upon arriving, he said: “Old woman, old woman! The animals are asking that which animal should be elected as their king?” The old woman said: “The wise one should be the king.”

Along the path that the animals were using, there was a stone with a sharp point protruding on the ground and it was not clearly visible. The duiker was walking on that path from the old woman’s farm. Then he tripped over that stone to the point where all his four legs were towards the sky as he fell on his back. After getting up, he realised that he has forgotten the old woman’s advice. The rhino asked him: “What did the old
“Nna ke lebetše.”

Tšhukudu a re tšhwene e ye e yo botšiša. Le yona ya kgopša ya boa e lebetše molaëtša wa mokgekolo. Ka moka diphoofolo tša ya ka go latelana eupša tša kgopiswa tša lebala. Tšhukudu ya re: “Ka moka re paletšwe e bile go šetše khudu fela.” Tau e ile ya botša diphoofolo ka moka gore di kwane gore phoofolo yeo e ka kgonago go fihliša molaëtša wa mokgekolo, e tla ba yona kgoshi. Ka nnete diphoofolo tša dumelelana le tšišinyo yeo eupša mmutla a botšiša a re: “Bagēšo, naa ge khudu e ka kgona go re botša mantšu a mokgekolo re tla mmea bjalo ka kgoshi ya rena?” Diphoofolo ka moka di ile tša dumela gomme tšhukudu a re: “Khudu, ke sebaka sa gago, sepele o yo re botšišetša.”

Aowa, khudu a nama a ikgoga a ya go mokgekolo. Khudu e ile ya fihla ya botšiša ya re: “Makgolo, yo a swanetšego go ba kgoshi ke yo mobjang?” Mokgekolo a re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoshi.” Khudu ya tloga e letša setontolo e re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoshi.” Gomme e ile go kgopša ke leswika, setontolo sa šala se lla se re: “Yo bohlale ke kgoshi.” Ya re go kwa modumo wa sentotolo ya napa ya gopola, ya thoma go opela ya re: “Yo bohlale ke yena kgoshi.” Gomme diphoofolo ka moka tša thoma go kwa mantšu a mokgekolo tša thoma go opela le khudu tša re ke yena kgoshi ya rena. Le ge go le bjalo, tlou, tau, phiri, tšhukudu le lepogo tša befelwa kudu tša re: “A re ka bušwa ke khudu ya meno a e rego ke dithor o tša leotša? Re ka mpa ra dula re se na kgoshi.” Gomme diphoofolo tša kwana ka la gore di dule di se na kgoshi gomme tša phatlalala.

Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!

woman say?” The duiker answered: “I forgot.”

The rhino then sent the baboon to go and inquire. He too tripped over the stone and forgot the old woman’s advice. All the animals took turns to go to the old woman but they all tripped over and forgot the message. Then the rhino said: “We all failed and only the tortoise is left.” The lion then told all the animals that whoever manages to relate the old woman’s advice should be the king. Indeed the animals agreed to that proposal. However, the hare posed a question: “My fellow animals, if the tortoise is successful in relating to us the old woman’s advice, are we going to install him as our king?” All the animals agreed then the rhino said to the tortoise: “It is your turn go and ask the old woman.”

Then the tortoise dragged himself, going to the old woman. The tortoise arrived and asked: “Old woman, which animal should we crown as our king?” The old woman answered: “The wise one is the king.” The tortoise left singing the lyrics: “The wise one is the king” while also playing a bowstring. He then tripped over the stone, meanwhile the bowstring continued to play, echoing his words saying: “The wise one is the king.” He then heard the sound coming from the bowstring and remembered the words and resumed singing: “The wise one is the king.” Upon hearing the old woman’s words from the tortoise, they all joined in the tune saying you are the king. However, the elephant, lion, hyena, rhino and the leopard were furious and said: “How can we be led by a tortoise with ugly teeth that look like millet grains? We would rather not have a king at all.” Then the animals resolved that they would continue to be without a king and dissolved the meeting.
Mmutla le tlou le kubu by Mabote Mmakgabo

Go kile gwa ba le mmutla wo mongwe wo bohlale kudu go feta diphoofolo tše dingwe. Mmutla wo, o be o rata go bontšha diphoofolo tše kgolo le tše maatla gore wona o bohlale go di feta. O be o fela o re: “Le ge ke se yo mogolo, ke rata gore lefase le tsebe gore ke nna mogale, ke na le maatla, ebile ke hlalefile.”

Mmutla o ile wa tloga wa ya go botša tlou gore o rata go gogana le yona ka thapo, mme o rata go e bontšha gore o ka e fenya ka maatla. O be o bolela bjalo o laetša boitshepo le boikgantšho. Tlou e ile ya sega e re: “Ke a go kwa, ebile ke dumela go gogana le wena. O bona nke o ka nkoga wa kgona?” Mmutla wa fetola ka go re: “Ke tla go gogela ka ntle ga sethokgwa se.”

Ba ile ba kwana gore mmutla o swanetše go leka go gogela tlou ka ntle ga sethokgwa mola tlou yona e swanetše go gogela mmutla ka gare ga sethokgwa, gomme ba phetha letšatši. Mmutla o rile go tloga fao gomme wa lata kubu.

Ge o fihla wa re: “Monna kubu, ke nyaka gore nna le wena re gogane re ile re bone gore ke mang yo a nago le maatla go feta yo mongwe. Ke nyaka go go bontšha gore nka go ntšha ka nokeng.” Kubu le yona e ile ya dumela ka ge e be e bona gore mmutla ga se selo. Ba ile ba phetha letšatši, mme ka lona letšatši leo mmutla o be o swanetše go ntšha kubu ka metseeng mola kubu e be e swanetše go gogela mmutla ka metseeng. Mmutla o be o file kubu le tlou letšatši le tee leo o bego o tlile go gogana le tšona.

End of the narrative!!!

The hare and the elephant and the hippo by Mabote Mmakgabo

There was once a hare cleverer than the rest of the animals in the animal kingdom. The hare wanted to show the powerful animals and the strong ones that he was cleverer than them. He used to say: “Although I am not big, I want the whole world to know that I am a hero, powerful and wise too.”

Then the hare approached the elephant and told him that he would like to engage him in a tug-of-war contest to determine the strongest. He showed courage and pride when talking to the elephant. The elephant simply laughed and said: “I hear you and I accept the challenge. Do you really think you can manage to pull me?” The hare responded: “I will pull you out of this bush.”

They agreed that the hare would attempt to pull the elephant outside of the bushes while the elephant had to pull the hare into the bushes, then they decided on the date of the contest. The hare then approached the hippo and made a similar proposal to the hippo.

He said to the hippo: “I want you and I to enter into a tug-of-war contest to determine the strongest. I want to show you that I can pull you out of the river.” The hippo agreed to the challenge as he did not consider the hare as threat. They set up a date on which the hare was expected to pull the hippo out of the water while the hippo was expected to pull the hare in to the water. The hare scheduled the same day to contest in a tug-of-war with both the hippo and elephant.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letšatši le rile go fihla gomme mmutla wa tšea thapo wa lata tlou. Wa e fa thapo yeo wa e botša gore e letele nakana ya go thomiša phenkgišano. Gomme wa re go tloga wa leba go kubu. Wa re go fihla wa mo fa thapo ka mafelelong a yona, gomme wa e botša gore e letele nakana pele e ka thomiša ka go goga. Gomme wa re go tloga wa ema bogareng bja thapo, wa letša nakana yela. Ka morago gwa tupa lerole ka lešokeng ge tlou e le gare e tsetsepela. Ka go le lengwe, maphotho a meetse a be a eya godimo le fase kubu e tišetša gore ga e gogelwe ka ntle ga noka.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The day eventually arrived and the hare took a rope and went to the elephant. He gave him one end of the rope and told him to wait for the whistle to begin the match. He then left and went to the hippo. On his arrival, he gave the hippo the other end of the rope and ordered him to wait for the whistle to begin the match. After leaving, he went to the center point of the rope and blew the whistle. Then all of a sudden there was a cloud of dust in the bush as the elephant tried very hard to grip on all his fours. On the other hand, there was a rapid rise and fall of the waterwaves as the hippo stood his ground to ensure that he is not dragged to the outside of the river. They pulled till the hare cut off the rope and immediately ran to the elephant and said: “I almost dragged you out of the bush, did you see? You should be thankful that the rope broke, as it saved you by breaking.” The elephant conceded that he was almost defeated by the hare and also acknowledged the strength possessed by the hare. The hare then went to the hippo and told him that had it not been for the rope breaking, he would have defeated him. The hippo agreed as well and from that day the hippo and the elephant respected the hare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di ile tša bogana bjalo go fihlela ge mmutla a kgaola thapo yela gomme a kitimela go tlou a re: “O bone, ke nyakile ke go gogela ka ntle. Ka fao o swanetše go leboga gore thapo e kgaogile.” Tlou e ile ya bona gore ke mnete mmutla o nyakile go e goga, mme ya dumela gore mmutla o na le maatla. O rile go tloga go tlou wa leba go kubu, mme le yona wa fihla wa e botša ge e thušitšwe ke go kgaoga ga thapo. Le kubu ya dumela, mme go tloga letšatši leo kubu le tlou di ile tša thoma go hломpha mmutla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mphoa, sa mosela wa seripa!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of the narrative!!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>