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**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**LBL 2201: LITERATURE IN ZAMBIAN LANGUAGES**

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**MODULE OVERVIEW**

**Introduction**

The teaching of literature in Zambian languages has ever been done without skill. The seconded teachers in many schools have been depending on novels given to learners who would read and be asked factual knowledge questions based on the texts. This has not given the students much skill on how they would analyse the content of the texts. This course introduces students to literary studies. Various approaches to the study of literature will be discussed. The course advances by looking at oral forms, their function and types. Students will also be able to analyse stories, plays and poems of varied length. This will be possible through the knowledge and skills gained on elements of fiction, drama and poetry.

**Rationale**

The course being the first of the literary courses will equip students with knowledge of literary theory and criticism. It will help students to apply literary theory to long and short prose and be able to make logical analyses of various genres of literature.

**Aim**

The aim of the course is to introduce you to literary studies and different approaches to the study of literature.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, you are expected to;

1. explain the various functions of literature.
2. explain some basic concepts used in the study of literature.
3. apply the literary concepts to the study of literature.
4. apply the concepts to writings in Zambian languages.
5. analyse and critique early writings in Zambian languages.

**Summary of module**

This module endeavours to introduce to you the literature of Bantu languages. It begins by engaging into what literary study is and discusses each of the genres of literature.

Unit 1 gives a number of aspects regarding the definition and functions of literature. It has also made a distinction between oral and written literature where what we call oral form does not necessarily have to be in oral form. It has also discussed a number of theories and approaches to the study of literature.

Unit 3 deals with literary criticism. It has discussed a number of approaches in the study of literature such as feminist, formalist, psychological, Marxist and historicism. Unit 3 deals with the fiction. Under this unit, types of fiction have been explained, fictional modes, fictional patterns and elements of fiction discussed. Unit 4 is on drama. It has discussed the functions of drama and how drama relates to other literary genres. Types and elements of drama have also discussed.

Unit 5 has looked at poetry. The unit has concentrated on types and elements of poetry. Much detail is given on imagery and figurative language. Metre and foot, including rhyme and rhyme scheme have also been tackled. In Unit 6, which is the final unit in the module, the concept of orature has been discussed and all the genres that are typically oral. Most of these are fixed forms such as proverbs, oral narratives, riddles, poetry, plays and songs.

**Study skills**

As an adult learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days: you will choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

Your most significant considerations will be *time* and *space* i.e. the time you dedicate to your learning and the environment in which you engage in that learning.

We recommend that you take time now-before starting your self-study-to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web. A few suggested links are:

<http://www.how-to-study.com/>

The “How to study” web site is dedicated to study skills resources. You will find links to study preparation (a list of nine essentials for a good study place), taking notes, strategies for reading text books, using reference sources, test anxiety.

<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html>

This is the web site of the Virginia Tech, Division of Student Affairs. You will find links to time scheduling (including a “where does time go?” link), a study skill checklist, basic concentration techniques, control of the study environment, note taking, how to read essays for analysis, memory skills (“remembering”).

<http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php>

Another “How to study” web site with useful links to time management, efficient reading, questioning/listening/observing skills, getting the most out of doing (“hands-on” learning), memory building, tips for staying motivated, developing a learning plan.

The above links are our suggestions to start you on your way. At the time of writing these web links were active. If you want to look for more go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and type “self-study basics”, “self-study tips”, “self-study skills” or similar.

**Time frame**

One year comprising three residential schooling; two (2) weeks of contact sessions per residential. You need three (3) hours for formal study per week and you are expected not to spend less than ten (10) hours per week for self-study.

**Required Resources**

Apart from this module, as you may be interested in learning more on this subject, I have provided you with a list of recommended readings; these are books, articles and websites.

**Need help?**

Contact: Edith Sikota-Habwanda

Email: edithhabwanda@yahoo.com

Office: Tutorial Block 1, Room 6

**Assessment**

**Continuous assessment 50%**

One assignment 20 %

One test 20 %

One seminar presentation 10 %

**Final Examination 50 %**

**Final Mark 100%**

**Key References**

Anderson, R. etal (1993) *Elements of Literature*. Orlando: HBJ.

Bukagile, G. and Yogo, M. (2010) *Literature in English: Theory of Literature, Novels, Short Stories, Plays and Poetry*. Dar-Es-Salaam: Nyamari Nyangwine Publishers

**UNIT 1**

**LITERATURE AND LITERARY CRITICISM**

**1.0 Introduction**

It is very important to begin this course with a clear understanding of what literature is. What do you think literature is? In answering this question, you may bring out a number of answers or explanations. Do you realise that you can bring out a number of aspects from what literature is. Try to do so before you proceed.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to:

1. interpret the various definitions of literature;
2. explicate the various functions of literature; and
3. explain the approaches employed in the study of literature.

**1.1 Defining Literature**

People have attempted to define the term literature with so many answers emerging that all seem correct without realizing the motivation for the answers. Can you attempt to answer the question, ‘What is Literature?’ I hope in your definition, you have included some of the features that will be discussed below.

Literature is written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit. The name has traditionally been applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their execution. Literature may be classified according to a variety of systems, including language, national origin, historical period, genre, and subject matter, (<https://www.britannica.com/art/literature>) on 19.05.18. Following this definition of above, we are able to see that literature, following what the word originally means in Latin, has to be written. Here, all the imaginative works that have not been written, therefore are excluded. We are also able to state that literature is a reflection of life. If you have ever critically analysed a literary text, you would be able to see a culture of a people; their way of living, their language, beliefs, traditions and customs.

Now let us look at the following theoretical definitions:

**1.1.1 Theoretical definitions**

Let us now look at the following theoretical definitions:

**The imitation Theory**

Under this theory, literature is an imitation or re-creation of something. The imitation theorists judge a literary work of art in terms of imitation. This theory is the earliest way of judging any work of art in relation to reality whether the representation is accurate or not. For this purpose, people define literature based on what they see and be able to reproduce. For example, painting, poetry, music, dancing, and sculpture are all imitations. That is the reason people define literature in the manner they do. The above are reflection or mirror of society hence defining literature in the manner they do things.

**The Expressive Theory**

You can explain this theory even before you read this sub-section. The meaning is determined from the term itself. Expressive theory considers literature as a literary work primarily viewed in relation to the author. This theory defines literary works especially poetry as an expression, or overflow, or utterance of feeling, or as the products of the poet's feelings. This means that literary works expresses the author’s feelings and emotion.

**The Effective Theory**

The Effective theory proposes to describe certain sets of observation, but explicitly without the claim or implication that the mechanism employed in the theory has a direct counterpart in the actual causes of the observed phenomena to which the theory is fitted. This means that effective theory triggers literature to arouse a particular emotion, or affect the perceiver’s minds to define it in their ways. In anyway, Literature should induce (in the reader) an emotional state that leads to an action. What we may ask here is, ‘What effect has the piece of writing has on the reader for instance?

**The Objective Theory**

Some scholars have used the objective theory to define literature and it proposes that we can divide any work up into four areas of study:

* The first one is the relationship between the universe as a whole and the work itself;
* The second one is between the audience and the work;
* The third one is between the author and the work, and
* The last one is the work itself.

Which of the four theories do you think best defines what literature is? The new critics look over these options and decide that what must be studied are the work and only the work, because there is no correspondence between the universe and the work, and we cannot know the true nature of either the audience or the author. The only thing left to study then is the work. It is because of this approach that literature is seen as an autonomous object, self-contained entity, self-surpassing entity and isolated study from other external elements. The addresser who is the writer has a message to communicate. In a fictitious story, the writer chooses the code for which he/ she would be in contact with the addressee who is the reader.

**1.2 Functions of Literature**

Have you ever thought of being a critical thinker? Have you wondered and admired the wisdom some intellectuals display in public? What of the great writers you have come across? Literature takes care of all those concerns through its functions. Some of the functions of literature are listed below. Literature helps us to:

* grow both personally and intellectually;
* Open doors for us;
* stretch our minds;
* develop our imagination;
* increase our understanding;
* enlarge our power of sympathy;
* see beauty in the world around us;
* link with cultural, philosophical, and religious world of which we are part;
* recognise human dreams and struggles in different places and times;
* develop mature sensibility and compassion for all living beings;
* nurture our ability to appreciate the beauty of order and arrangement-gifts that are also bestowed by well-structured song, beautifully painted canvas, or a well-chiselled piece of sculpture;
* see worthiness in the aims of all people.
* exercise our emotions through interest, concern, sympathy, tension, excitement, regret, fear, laughter and hope;
* encourage and assist creative and talented people who need recognition and support;
* shape our goals and values by clarifying our identities through acceptance of the admirable in human beings, and negatively through rejection of the sinister;
* develop perspectives on events occurring locally and globally and thereby it gives us understanding and control;
* shape our influence of life;
* make us human.

There is no doubt that functions of literature are simultaneously useful and pleasurable to human beings. You can go a step further. How would relate each of these points on functions of literature. Literature is a kind of entertainment. However, it is also something much more. By reading about the lives and challenges of other people, one may come to understand more about his/her own life. Others have compared literature to a house with a great number of windows in which we can view the world differently. As we look at the world and learn about it, we learn about ourselves.

**Activity**

Which texts in your local language would you cite for which some of the functions above have been met? Of what value are these functions?

People create literature to express their emotions and ideas about life. Since literature comes in several forms, writers must decide which form of literature to use. One writer may create a story, while another may compose a poem, a piece of nonfiction, or a drama all on the same idea. It must be noted that each literary form offers writers different opportunities to express what they have to say. The critical point is that, what is the purpose of studying literature?

**1.3 Oral literature and written literature distinction**

What is the difference between oral literature and written literature? Is it easy for you to determine what is oral and what is written? How would an oral story differ from the written story?

In this section, when we talk of written literature, we do not mean the works that are merely written. For a longer period of time, oral literature existed in oral form. But in the recent years, oral genres and narratives have been written. We can distinguish these from the way they are presented. The oral forms still take the nature of their orality. For instance, oral stories are characterised by repetition, songs with audience engagement and expression.

**1.3.1 How oral literature affects written literature**

All literature can be traced to oral tradition, a term that refers to story-telling that was passed down verbally from one generation to another. Legends, fairy tales, folktales including epics come from oral tradition. In modern society, oral tradition still impacts the written word. Storytelling is integral to community and culture building, and people often form a connection with stories before learning to read or write. As a result, a number of writers are inspired by the craft of oral storytelling.

With the invention of writing, people began to record the stories. In these stories, they passed down their culture, traditions, values and history. In most African societies, many early stories were part of religion. Think of a story which you would use to teach a culture of your ethnic group. How does the story enhance the teachings of that culture or religion? You may realise that apart from the creation myths, many stories were passed down in this way.

Storytelling is very important even today. Many of the modern stories trace some of their influences to ancient stories.

**Evaluation**

1. In your own words, define what literature is.
2. Go through the various theories to defining literature and come up with a suitable definition of literature. Share that with your colleagues.
3. How would you distinguish oral literature from written literature?

**Summary**

The unit has brought out a number of aspects regarding the definition and functions of literature. We hope you are now able to formulate a definition of literature as well as outlining some of the functions of literature. You also need to be able to make a distinction between oral and written literature.

**UNIT 2: LITERARY STUDY AND LITERARY CRITICISM**

Is there is a difference between literary study and literary criticism? In this course, we are going to use these two phases synonymously. This means, therefore, that the two terms have the same meaning. In this unit, you are going to study the various types of approaches used in literary study.

**Unit Outcomes**

By the end of the unit, you are expected to:

1. explain the various approaches to the study of literature;
2. analyse each of the approaches; and
3. apply some of the approaches in the study of different texts in a Bantu language.

What is literary criticism then? Well! This is a systematic study of literature. It is not saying bad things about a work as many have mistaken the term ‘criticism’, but it is an art of appreciating literature. In the broad sense of the word, criticism includes the appreciating of music, sculpture and so forth. Of course, this means pointing out positives and negatives. Criticism can also be defined as the making of a statement on the literature one has been studying. It is not mere fault finding as you may assume. It is a discussion that seeks to describe, analyse or evaluate a literary work. It is possible that you may not find bad things in a text and whatever you have written about that text would be its criticism.

**2.1 Why Criticism**

Criticism is done to publicise literary works. Therefore, a public that tries to do without criticism, and asserts that it knows what it wants or likes, brutalises the arts and loses its cultural memory,” (Frye 1957: 4). Without criticism, art becomes art for art’s sake. Because all arts are dumb. Only criticism talks. Art shows forth whether it be a painting, music or indeed a work of fiction. It cannot say anything. When art speaks we often feel that the artist has some mistrust in the capacity of the reader and the critics to interpret this meaning without assistance. To explain in simpler words what is meant by ‘arts are dumb’, one would say that all arts means nothing until it has been interpreted – It does not talk to anyone until one makes an analysis. When any artist tries to interpret his/her work for his/her readers, she/he is insulting their intelligence; often with good intentions and without intending to insult them. This is the case with most writings in Zambian languages. Most writers in Zambian languages tend to explain motivation for writing because they know the primary audience of their work is not very educated. So, they set out to try and help. What they forget is that art is inherent in any culture. The tools for understanding are there in society. Although writing is western, story is as old as society. Therefore, the tools for analysing, evaluating and interpreting are available in our cultures.

I have defined criticism as making a statement about/on the literature one has been studying. Let us now turn to the types of statements critics make about literature.

* 1. **Kinds of statement readers make**

If we make a statement about a book as it affects us; showing what parts amused, terrified, saddened us and so on, we are making an impressionistic statement. We are, thus, involved in impressionistic criticism.

1. If we discuss a book in a way that reveals by citing and interpreting properly the episode that exhibit human follies or wisdom and depravities as well as virtues, reveal social life of a particular period, customs, habits and attitudes, this would be criticism in the board sense.
2. Criticism in a more restricted sense would focus not on the reader, writer, or social background but rather on the book itself. That is, describing the nature of the story, noting its component parts such as chapter or group of chapters, episodes, settings, language, point of view and their relationship. Please note that this is too narrow a way to look at a literary work done only as an exercise to find out if the students have grasped basic concepts of theme.

What practical situation can you give in which such kind of criticism would be employed? Real critics never use it in real life.

When one criticise, it is not uncommon for the preferences of the critic to slip in. However, this should not be so. A critic should try to be as objective as possible. His /her concern should be the content, form/matter, manner/substance and technique. While what the author says is important, how she/he says it is equally important. As such, the best works are those whose form is not only well adopted to their content but also whose form helps the content. The kind of criticism that establishes this relationship between the what-and-how is often detailed and complex. Therefore, if a critic sees what you have not seen in a text, it is not because she/he is subjective. It might be because she/he has paid attention to the details you might have overlooked. The truthfulness of a literary comment is only established by asking these questions: Is the statement supported by the text under study? The primary concern of a critic is what is on the page before him/her however it got there. His starting point, therefore, is not a commentary on the author’s intention and proceeding to show how the parts of the work help to achieve that purpose albeit the information is important in modern criticism. Welleck and Warren (1963) call this error ‘the intentional fallacy’.

Let us now look at the approaches used in the study of literature.

* 1. **Critical Approaches to the study of literature (Literary criticism)**

There are various approaches that you can apply or use in the study of literature. Depending on the text and the subject, you may be use one or more of these approaches.

**2.3.1 Formalist Approach**

Formalist critics look closely at the work itself, analysing the various elements of the work as a way of explicating or interpreting a text. This approach regards literature as “a unique form of human knowledge that needs to be examined on its own terms.” All the elements necessary for understanding the work are contained within the work itself. Of particular interest to the formalist critic are the elements of form; style, structure, tone, imagery, and so many that are found within the text. A primary goal for formalist critics is to determine how such elements work together with the text’s content to shape its effects upon readers.

**2.3.2 Structuralist criticism**

Structuralism cuts across many disciplines because in principle, it embraces any theoretical movement interested in the existence of things as structured systems. In literature, a structuralist approach to literature would study texts as if they have the same sort of structure as language. A structuralist believes that a text is built out of units which collectively define its properties. These units are similar to those of speech and form a system from which a writer or reader can draw in a way we draw from a language system. Structuralist critics are concerned with:

1. What the units of a particular work are;
2. Combinations the units can exist in;
3. Reasons the units combine in the way they do and not other ways;

It is important to point out that structuralists have had interest in cultural practices. They have adopted the concept of definition by contrast from linguistics (phonemes are distinguished from each other by binary contrasts, i.e. to distinguish /p/ from /b/ you need to say one is voiced while the other is not) and applied it to the study of culture. A structuralist also sees some two-way oppositions such as – nature/culture, reason/madness, left/right, good/bad, etc. as forming the basic elements of culture. A homology (superimposition of oppositions) can be brought about by choosing one side of the binary opposition such as nature being ‘good’ as opposed to ‘culture’: everything natural is good; everything cultural is bad. Such a combination of oppositions can result in patterns that account for complex possibilities of meaning existing in any culture.

Binary oppositions on their own cannot make up many systems in combinations. Structuralists came up with slot and filler grammar to complement binary oppositions. The argument of this grammar is: sentences are made of slots. Each slot can be filled by a particular category of words. Thus, verbs fill verb slots, nouns in theirs and so forth. More sentences can be built by filling these slots with different words in each category. Consider the example below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** |
| The | Cat | crouched | on | The | Carpet |
| The | Cat | sat | on | The | Mat |
|  | Students | stormed |  | The | classrooms |
| Every | man | ran | from |  | danger |

This model has been adapted for cultural and literary analysis. Barthes uses the human body to illustrate how this model works in his ‘Elements of Semiology’ and fashion systems. He equates every slot to a part of the body where items of clothing can be worn. With this, it is possible to establish that home-made sandals (made from tyres) and industrial boots are types of foot wear, that gloves are not worn on the head or foot. With this, it is possible to describe styles in clothing – what should be worn with what. If, for instance, you choose to wear a bowler hat in the head (head slot) a kind of consistency can be produced by wearing a shirt and jacket (in the torso slot) instead of a ‘T’ shirt which you would wear if you wore a cap on the head.

In poetry, we could use the filler and slot model to produce assonance and alliteration or some other form of rhyming. In the alternative example, if you select cat in slot 2, sat in slot 3 and mat in slot 6, you produce a rhyming pattern – repeated vowel and consonant sounds in at least two different words. A choice of cat in slot two, crouched in slot 3 and carpet in slot 6 would produce alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words). To describe this, Roman Jacobson formulated a ‘projection principle’. According to this principle, “The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. This means that poetic efforts are produced by extending the repetitive relation between fillers (which have to be alike in some respects in order to be eligible for the slot) to a repetitive relation between the different successful slots (which don’t have to resemble one another, but can be made to show resemblances),” (Durant and Fabb 1990: 34). This is the principle that explains the alliteration as well as the dressing example above.

**2.3.3 Post-Structuralism**

Post-structuralism simply advances structuralism; answering questions structuralism could not. Stories in post-structuralism are made of slots and fillers not of phonemes and words but of events, description, characters and so on. Furthermore, these elementary principles of ‘code’ descriptions are combined for a better description of cultural forms. For instance, to explain how the pleasure of suspense and then resolution work in stories, the interaction between the ‘grammar’ of the psyche and grids of narrative description involving events and other aspects of narrative should be clear.

* + 1. **Historical Criticism**

This approach “seeks to understand a literary work by investigating the social, cultural, and intellectual context that produced it—a context that necessarily includes the artist’s biography and background.” A key goal for historical critics is to understand the effect of a literary work upon its original readers. This approach has developed into New Historicism. New historicist critics look at the impact of the politics, ideologies, and social customs of the author’s world on the themes, images, and characterizations of a text. This type of critic considers the historical events or conditions during which the work was written.

**2.3.5 Sociological criticism**

Like historical criticism, sociological criticism examines literature in the cultural, economic, and political context in which it is written or received. This type of criticism may analyse the social content of a literary work; the cultural, economic, or political values a particular text implicitly or explicitly expresses.

It explores the relationships between the artist and society. Sometimes it examines the artist’s society to better understand the author’s literary works; other times, it may examine the representation of such societal elements within the literature itself. One influential type of sociological criticism is Marxist criticism, which focuses on the economic and political elements of art, often emphasizing the ideological content of literature; because Marxist criticism often argues that all art is political, either challenging or endorsing (by silence) the status quo, it is frequently evaluative and judgmental, a tendency that “can lead to reductive judgment, as when Soviet critics rated Jack London better than William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Edith Wharton, and Henry James, because he illustrated the principles of class struggle more clearly.” Nonetheless, Marxist criticism “can illuminate political and economic dimensions of literature other approaches overlook.” Therefore, we will look at this approach as a separate idea.

**2.3.5 Marxist Criticism**

Marxism is an economic and social system based upon the political and economic theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Angels. Marx proclaimed that history is the chronology of class struggles, wars, and uprisings. Marx argues that under capitalism the worker has no control over the labour or product which he produces, (<https://www.herald.co.zw/marxism-and-african-literature/>, on 09.08.19). One thing that links Marxist analyses of society is the belief in the inseparability of economic structures and relationships, often called the base or infrastructure, and the means through which those structures and relationships are represented or expressed the superstructure. Whatever happens depends on economy.

Explore the many texts that you have read in your language or any local language and look at how the authors have structured the stories. Is there any relationship between the society in which the story is set with the economic, political and religious structures? How are these structures relating to society as well as to each other?

**2.3.5.1 Marxism and social change**

An appreciation and understanding of Marxism will reveal that most post-colonial writers have an inclination towards socialism or Marxism as the ideological solution to the problems outplaying in the post-colonial environment.

Marxism, therefore, becomes the guiding post for writers in that it is the ordinary people, the peasants, workers or the masses who take centre stage.

The collective effort that the characters undertake in raising their consciousness and in a revolutionary spirit endeavour to change the system is synonymous with the dictates of Marxism which advocates for the ownership of the means of resources by the workers. An understanding of Marxism is therefore a prerequisite in the analysis of most post-colonial literature as most writers seem to appropriate some of its basic principles in their fiction. Marxist literary analysis is concerned with promoting social change by distinguishing between progressive and non-progressive texts on the basis of how the texts are related to society’s material basis (whether capitalist, feudal, communist, socialist, and so on,) as well as their conditions of production such as copyright laws and existing library facilities among many others. Based on these criteria, progressive texts are those which advocate social changes towards a democratic society. Ngugi’s works such ‘I will Mary when I want’, ‘Patels of Blood’ and ‘Devil on the Cross are good examples (<https://www.herald.co.zw/marxism-and-african-literature/>, on 08.08.19). As it is not easy to determine which text should be considered progressive, three kinds of texts have been proposed:

1. Socialist realist texts: These texts investigate and offer insights into the underlying social network of social forces in a society. A text can be said to be a socialist realist work if it sets out to accurately describe society with the author’s commitment to bring social change. Using this view, can you state the texts that you have read that can qualify for a socialist text?
2. Non-realistic distancing texts: These emphasise the represented ‘theatrical’ or ‘artificial’ nature of what is being seen by destroying any illusion of reality in their representations of society to the audience or reader by using alienating ‘devices’ in order to prevent an uncritical emotional involvement in the represented world to enable the audience or reader reflect on and thus understand the social forces.
3. Formal Experimental Texts: Many modernist works are sometimes claimed as socialist works although controversial among Marxists since the political spectrum of modernist writers was vast. They further argue that this destabilisation by experimental texts extends into the reader’s broader perceptions of social relations.
4. Non-progressive works comprises all the others not covered above. A Marxist reading of these exposes how they re-enforce non-socialist structures. Marxist criticism uses literature’s chosen images to show the reader its connections with the economic and political base. It traces the much-admired ‘human achievements’ of literary works to a fabric of inhumane social relations which produced them. You may realise that there is no work of culture; whether it be literature, fine art or music that can be attributed to the efforts of only the great mind and talent that created it. It is also a product of many other anonymous contemporaries, (Gugelberger (1986). In the various texts that you have read, you may also realise that there are several attributes in the development of the genres.

**2.3.5.2 Marxism and the study of ideology**

Marxist reading of texts exposes the way ideas, images and beliefs (collective ideology) function. Although there can be variations and autonomy in ideological forms, they finally derive from underlying realities of the economy. The superstructure is made up of the repressive state apparatus (school, church, literary criticism, etc.). Marxists see ideology as a socially constructed network of ideas which function to represent underlying economic and political forces, and covers up contradictions, inequalities and exploitation in the society by mystifying them or making them seem natural. Once suffering is seen as the will of God or necessary for the purification of one’s faith, dissent is silenced. Existing social relations in this case can remain as they are. Marxist criticism demystifies ideology; suffering is not the will of God. It is a result of unequal distribution of resources by an economic and political superstructure such as the government or the economic system.

**2.3.5.3 How ideology is connected with the infrastructure in the African Context**

Ideology does not only reflects a society’s economic base. It is derived from the very economic base. A change in any society’s economy directly affects the form of culture produced by it. Thus, if an economy moves from capitalism to socialism, the art form ought to change. According to Marxists, economic systems change from feudal to capitalism to socialism, to communism.

Investigations of ideology face problems in texts made of language as to whether language is part of the base or part of the infrastructure. To get round this problem, one line of modern Marxist thought has been to suggest that the material which provides the building block for language (the words and possible sentence structures) determines our thoughts and pleasures, and that people are formed from language or constructed by language as language-using beings, (Selepe, 1991). Do you see any aspects of the ideology in the African tests, particularly the Zambian ones? What philosophical ideas are there?

**2.3.6 Gender criticism**

This type of criticism examines how sexual identity influences the creation and reception of literary works. Gender studies originated during the feminist movement, when critics began investigating the unexamined assumptions around gender in a piece of literature. Originally, an offshoot of feminist movements, gender criticism nowadays includes a number of approaches, including the masculinist approach. The bulk of gender criticism, however, is feminist and takes as a central precept that the patriarchal attitudes that have dominated western thought have resulted, consciously or unconsciously, in literature full of unexamined ‘male-produced’ assumptions.

**2.3.7 Feminist criticism**

Feminist critics explored how an author’s gender might consciously or unconsciously affect his or her writing. These critics may also explore how images of men or women in literature might reflect or reject the social norms around gender in a particular society. Feminism attempts to correct the imbalance discussed above by analysing and combatting such attitudes by questioning, for example, why none of the characters in Shakespeare’s play ‘Othello’ ever challenge the right of a husband to murder a wife accused of adultery. Other goals of feminist critics include analysing how sexual identity influences the reader of a text and examining how the images of men and women in imaginative literature reflect or reject the social forces that have historically kept the sexes from achieving total equality, (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02572117.1991.10586917?journalCode=rjal20>), on 17. 08.18. How do ideas under such critics run against today’s advocates on gender?

Reflect on your own society. How is the attitude of one sex towards the success of the opposite sex? How are women treated by the male counterparts in workplaces, churches, political spheres, etc? Is there any text that you have read that you can give as an example? Is there any literature that has addressed the imbalance between men and female? Take a survey on whether there is a balance between men and women in your community, workplace, religious, or cooperative. How are these reflected in texts such as Achebe’s ‘Things Fall Apart’?

**2.3.8 Deconstructionist Criticism**

This approach “rejects the traditional assumption that language can accurately represent reality.” Deconstructionist critics regard language as a fundamentally unstable medium—the words “tree” or “dog,” for instance, undoubtedly conjure up different mental images for different people; and therefore, because literature is made up of words, literature possesses no fixed, single meaning. Deconstructionists insist on “the impossibility of making the actual expression coincide with what has to be expressed, of making the actual signs (i.e., words) coincide with what is signified.” As a result, deconstructionist critics tend to emphasize not what is being said but how language is used in a text. The methods of this approach tend to resemble those of formalist criticism, but whereas formalists’ primary goal is to locate unity within a text, “how the diverse elements of a text cohere into meaning,” deconstructionists try to show how the text “deconstructs,” “how it can be broken down...into mutually irreconcilable positions.” Other goals of deconstructionists include (1) challenging the notion of authors’ “ownership” of texts they create (and their ability to control the meaning of their texts) and (2) focusing on how language is used to achieve power, as when they try to understand how some interpretations of a literary work come to be regarded as “truth.” (<http://home.olemiss.edu/~egjbp/spring97/litcrit.html>) on 22.06.19.

**2.3.9 Psychological/ Psychoanalytic Criticism**

This approach reflects the effect that modern psychology has had upon both literature and literary criticism. The psychological study of a particular artist, usually noting how an author’s biographical circumstances affect or influence their motivations and/or behaviour. It views the themes, conflicts, and characterizations of a work primarily as a reflection of the needs, emotions, states of mind, or subconscious desires of the author. Fundamental figures in psychological criticism include Sigmund Freud, whose “psychoanalytic theories changed our notions of human behaviour by exploring new or controversial areas like wish-fulfilment, sexuality, the unconscious, and repression” as well as expanding our understanding of how “language and symbols operate by demonstrating their ability to reflect unconscious fears or desires,” <https://www.aresearchguide.com/psychoanalytic-criticism.html>, on 22.06.18.

Psychological criticism has a number of approaches, but in general, it usually employs one (or more) of three approaches:

1. An investigation of “the creative process of the artist: what is the nature of literary genius and how does it relate to normal mental functions?”
2. The psychological study of a particular artist, usually noting how an author’s biographical circumstances affect or influence their motivations and/or behaviour.
3. The analysis of fictional characters using the language and methods of psychology.

**2.3.10 Mythological criticism**

Mythological critics explore the universal patterns underlying a literary work. This type of criticism draws on the insights of anthropology, history, psychology, and comparative religion to explore how a text uses myths and symbols drawn from different cultures and epochs. A central concept in mythological criticism is the archetype, a symbol, character, situation, or image that evokes a deep universal response.

This approach emphasises “the recurrent universal patterns underlying most literary works.” Combining the insights from anthropology, psychology, history, and comparative religion, mythological criticism “explores the artist’s common humanity by tracing how the individual imagination uses myths and symbols common to different cultures and eras.” One key concept in mythological criticism is the archetype, “a symbol, character, situation, or image that evokes a deep universal response,” which entered literary criticism from Swiss psychologist Carl Jung. According to Jung, all individuals share a ‘collective unconscious,’ set of primal memories common to the human race, existing below each person’s conscious mind”- often deriving from prehistoric phenomena such as the sun, moon, fire, night, and blood, archetypes according to Jung “trigger the collective unconscious.” Another critic, Northrop Frye, defines archetypes in a more limited way as “a symbol, usually an image, which recurs often enough in literature to be recognizable as an element of one’s literary experience as a whole.” Regardless of the definition of archetype they use, mythological critics tend to view literary works in the broader context of works sharing a similar pattern. The mythological critics view literature as, “a gateway to reveal human desires, fears and expectations,” (<https://prezi.com/di-rhq7ujy8i/mythological-criticism/>), on 10.06. 18.

**2.3.11 Biographical criticism**

Biographical critics explore how understanding an author’s life can help readers more thoroughly comprehend the literary work. Note that biographical critics are not concerned with simply describing the author’s life but instead with interpreting the literary work using the insights provided by knowledge of the author’s life. The approach “begins with the simple but central insight that literature is written by actual people and that understanding an author’s life can help readers more thoroughly comprehend the work.” (<https://www.revolvy.com/page/Biographical-criticism>), on 03. 7.18. Hence, it often affords a practical method by which readers can better understand a text. However, a biographical critic must be careful not to take the biographical facts of a writer’s life too far in criticising the works of that writer: the biographical critic focuses on explicating the literary work by just using the insight provided by knowledge of the author’s life. Biographical data should amplify the meaning of the text, and not drown it out with irrelevant material.

* + 1. **Reader-Response Criticism**

This approach takes as a fundamental principle that “literature” exists not as an artefact upon a printed page but as a transaction between the physical text and the mind of a reader. It attempts “to describe what happens in the reader’s mind while interpreting a text” and reflects that reading, like writing, is a creative process. According to reader-response critics, literary texts do not “contain” a meaning; meanings derive only from the act of individual readings. Hence, two different readers may derive completely different interpretations of the same literary text; likewise, a reader who re-reads a work years later may find the work shockingly different. Reader-response criticism, then, emphasises how “religious, cultural, and social values affect readings. Although this approach rejects the notion that a single “correct” reading exists for a literary work, it does not consider all readings permissible: “Each text creates limits to its possible interpretations,” (<https://public.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/reader.crit.html>), on 15.06.18.

A reader-response critic might also explore the impact of a particular text on his or her own ideas or values. For example, one might reflect on how a particular character seems admirable or unlikable and why. One might reflect on how one’s religious, culture, or social values affect readings. It also overlaps with gender criticism in exploring how men and women may read the same text with different assumptions.

The many approaches to the study of literature discussed above can be got from the following link: <https://www2.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/intranet/englishbasics/Theory02.htm>. on 19.08.18.

**Evaluation**

1. Compare and contrast the psychoanalytical and biographical criticism.
2. Explain the following approaches to the study of literature:
3. Feminist
4. Structuralist
5. Marxist
6. Reader-Response
7. Psychological
8. Read any novel in your language and analyse it using any for the approaches discussed.

**Summary**

This unit has discussed a number of approaches to the study of literature. You have interacted with a number of these and we assume that you are well equipped with these approaches in a way that you would use any of them or determine which approach would be appropriate to the method to be used.

**UNIT 3: LITERARY GENRES**

The term ‘literary’ is very familiar to you. What do you understand by the term genre? Can you mention some of the literary genres? There are a number of them but the main ones are the novel, poetry, drama. In this course, we are going to discuss prose fiction, drama and poetry.

**Unit Outcomes**

By the end of the unit, you are expected to:

1. discuss the types of prose fiction;
2. discuss the various structural elements of prose fiction;
3. explain the fictional modes and patterns used in narratives; and
4. state and explain the elements of fiction.

**3.1** **Prose fiction**

What is fiction? How would you differentiate prose fiction from non-prose fiction? Compare your definition of prose fiction with the following:

Fiction is a work of artistic nature that is wholly or partly imagined or theoretical. Prose is written in complete sentences and organized in paragraphs. Instead of focusing on sound, which is what poetry does, prose tends to focus on plot and characters. Non-prose fiction is written or expressed in verse. The central character in fiction is called the protagonist while forces, events and characters arrayed against him or her are called antagonist. We will deal with these later.

* 1. **Types of Prose Fiction**
* **Novel** which is a fictitious prose narrative of book length, typically representing character and action with some degree of realism. These include: story, tale, narrative, romance;
* **Short story** which is a story with a fully developed theme but significantly shorter and less elaborate than a novel, and
* **Novella** which is a short novel or long short story.

**3.3 The nature of fiction**

For a text to count as fiction, it must be produced as a result of a certain fictive intention on the part of the author. This is to say, the actual author’s intention should make the reader believe the content of the story as told. Unlike non-fiction (where the author intends the audience to take on an attitude of belief towards the propositions in the text), fictional texts engages imaginative involvement (make-believe) rather its verisimilitude.

However, what we view as fiction today began as true stories. As people told stories of heroes, they also added fancy to make the story interesting. The facts contained in the stories were amplified in some cases, exaggerated. From such developed storytellers of folk tales, fables, epics, poems and in later time more developed stories such as found in novels. Modern story developers blends historical facts and imagination and creativity. The imagination and creativity is what is called fiction. Nevertheless, fiction does not just deal with imagination and creativity. The story teller has to be innovative and may deal with certain situations that real in society. The storyteller tells or writes on what they have seen or experienced. They need to share the background with the reader; the culture, social context and history. Otherwise, the reader might find it difficult to get the meaning that the author intends to communicate.

**3.4 Language and the author’s voice**

The language style refers to the writer’s use of language or diction. The writer selects language to fit his or her purpose. If the writer wants to communicate with masses the language is flexible or accessible. If on the other hand s/he wants to communicate to the learned masses the language is amplified to the level of their status. Generally the language of the writer in prose fiction is prosaic and dialogue in nature. This means that, the author’s voice is at times hidden in a character’s narration and in some instance it is easily noticeable.

**3.5 Structural Elements of Prose Fiction**

Every story has a structure of form. When you look at any piece of writing, or when listening to an oral form of literature, you will be able to state from the layout what kind of genre it is. The following are the structural elements of prose fiction:

* It is simple but expressive.
* It expresses the feelings in a way which is easy to read and understand.
* Fiction is written in prose. There are no verses or stanzas.
* It is straightforward. It is not about rhyming or using patterned words like the poem.
* Authors sometimes dabble between the two to give a good combination.
* Short stories, novels and plays usually fall under this type of literature.

**3.6 Fictional modes**

In literature and other artistic media, a fictional mode is an unspecific critical term usually designating a broad but identifiable kind of literary method, mood, or manner that is not tied exclusively to a particular form or genre. Examples are the tragic, ironic and comic fictional modes.

**1 Tragic Fictional Mode**

Tragedy in fiction is concerned with the hero’s separation from society. There are four categories of the tragic fictional mode:

* **Mythic tragedy** deals with the death of gods. This category is also called ‘dionysiac tragedy.
* **Romantic tragedy** features elegies mourning the death of heroes.
* **High mimetic tragedy** presents the death of a noble human such as Oedipus.
* **Low mimetic tragedy** shows the death or sacrifice of an ordinary human being and evokes pathos.

**2 The Ironic Fictional Mode**

The ironic fictional mode often shows the death or suffering of a protagonist who is both weak and pitiful compared to the rest of humanity and the protagonist’s environment. At other times, the protagonist is not necessarily weaker than the average person, yet suffers severe persecution at the hands of an unsound society.

**3 Comic Fictional Mode**

Comedy is concerned with integration of society. The protagonist is accepted and integrated in society. The protagonist develops as s/he endeavours to socialise and employ acceptable behaviour and traits to his or her society. There are also four forms of comic fictional modes:

1. **Mythic comedy** deals with acceptance into the society of gods, often through a number of trials as with Hercules or through salvation or assumption as in the Bible.
2. R**omantic comic modes**, the setting is pastoral or peasant, and there is an integration of the hero with an idealised simplified form of nature.
3. **High mimetic comedy** involves a strong central protagonist who constructs his or her own society by brute force, fending off all opposition until the protagonist ends up with all honour and riches due to him or her.
4. **Low mimetic comedy** often shows the social elevation of the hero or heroine and often ends in marriage.

**4 Ironic comedy**

At one extreme, ironic comedy borders on savagery, the inflicting of pain on a helpless victim. Some examples of this include tales of murder mysteries, or human sacrifice. Yet ironic comedy may also offer biting satire of a society filled with arrogance. It may even depict a protagonist rejected by society (thus failing the typical comic reintegration) yet who appears wiser than the rejecting society. (<http://www.umontanamediaarts.com/MART101L/fryes-modes-of-hero>) and (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatomy\_of\_Criticism)

**3.7 Fictional Patterns**

Think of the many stories that you have ever read either in a local language or in English. How do they start and end? Are all the story of the same pattern? There are two major fictional patterns subdivided into four. We can look at each of them

1. The character begins out of harmony with his world and is gradually educated or initiated a harmonious situation in it. This pattern gives rise to:
2. **Comic Rise**: An inept or foolish character is educated for a role in the orderly world. The best example here can easily be found in folktales where an imbecile marries a chief’s daughter after doing something every other member of that society has failed to do.

**Activity**

You have been given an example of a story where you can find the above kind of rise. This kind of rise is not unique to orature. Find a book in which this kind of (the rags-to-riches) character is found.

1. **Ironic Rise:** If the character is initiated into the world of ugliness and disorder which amounts to corruption. You should not be confused by how this can be rise. Let us look at what we mean by harmony. A character is in harmony if s/he is in conformity with his/her world. S/he is out of harmony with his/her world if s/he is not in conformity with it.

If a character that was out of harmony ends in harmony, there is a rise. From this point of view, what has happened to the Pastor, at the end of the story is corruption – a fall. From the point of view of fictional patterns, it is a rise – he is now in harmony with his world – his family.

Pause for a while. Can you think of a story in real life or fiction where a person with good character ends up losing his/her morals usually due to peer influence or any other circumstance?

1. The character begins in harmony with the world but is finally rejected or destroyed by it. This gives rise to:
2. **A tragic fall:** That is, if the heroic figure falls from his position due to some flaw in his character. Remember that a tragic hero starts off as an admirable figure.
3. **A pathetic fall:** If the doom of the ‘‘lowly creature’’ is the result of his unfortunate virtue or delicacy.

This must remind you of some fictional modes we have done earlier. The four situations above can be presented as below:

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i Disharmony Good

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E

l D R

a e

i s

t Harmony Bad u

i F C l

n t

I

A B

Heroic Lowly

Protagonist

in which:

A means ‘‘heroic,’’

B ‘‘lowly character,’’

C ‘‘bad result,’’

D ‘‘good result,’’

E ‘‘the character is in disharmony with his world’’

F ‘‘the character is in harmony with his world.’’

1. AEC Ironic rise: the heroic character is in disharmony with his world and gets a bad result (i.e. corruption).

2. AFC Tragic fall: the heroic character is in harmony with his world but finally gets a bad result.

3. BED Comic rise: the lowly character is in disharmony with his world and finally gets good result.

4. BFC Pathetic fall: the lowly character is in harmony with his world but ends badly.

Theoretically four more situations are possible:

5. AFD heroic character in harmony with his world gets good result.

6. BFD lowly character in harmony with his world gets a good result.

7. AED heroic character in disharmony with his world gets a good result.

8. BEC lowly character in disharmony with his world gets a bad result.

(Bwalya, 2006)

**3.8 Elements of fiction**

There are a number of elements of fiction and here are some of them below.

**1 Plot**

Plot refers to the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed. Plot consists of sequence of related actions. It outlines the conflicts and the clash of ideas, desires and wills. Therefore, plot is seen as “the actions of the characters”. However, plot is also the connective tissue that links events or actions with meaning. It is not just what happens, but the causal connections of why it happens. Further, plot is a series of events deliberately arranged so as to reveal their dramatic, thematic, and emotional significance. Plot’s concern is ‘what, how, and why,’ with scenes ordered to highlight cause-and-effect. In simple terms, plot is a series of actions with a cause and effect relationship. ([www.ingridsnotes.wordpress.com](http://www.ingridsnotes.wordpress.com))

There are six elements or stages in a plot; 1) exposition, 2) conflict, 3) rising action, 4) climax, 5) falling action, and 6) resolution. Plot enables us to visualise the **protagonists**’ struggles against the **antagonist**. The conflict in the novel may be physical, mental, emotional or moral. As you study a text,take note of the types of conflicts presented.

**2 Setting**

Setting is the time and place in which the story takes place. It is the context in which a story or scene occurs and apart from time and place, the definition of setting includes social positions, weather, historical period, and details about immediate surroundings. It is important to establish a setting in a story, so that you can visualise and experience it. The setting provides the backdrop to the story and helps create mood.

*Types of Setting:* Two types of setting have been established: *Integral Setting* where the setting is fully described in both time and place, usually found in historical fiction. *Backdrop Setting* for which the setting is vague and general, which helps to convey a universal, timeless tale.

*Importance of Setting*: The place largely affects the story overall. The setting is extremely important to a story. It can have immense effects on the plot and the characters. It can also establish the atmosphere, or mood, of a story or a specific scene.

An awareness of how setting influences the plot and characters in a story is important to help you understand and respond to literary texts. When you consider the setting of a story, you gain insight into its underlying foundation or background and thus a deeper understanding of its meaning.

While it is true that the world the author creates is imaginary, it shares a close resemblance with our own world. It is important to identify the setting of the story if you have to appreciate the themes. In order to understand the setting, ask yourself: could this story be happening anywhere, or could it have happened anywhere? If you understand the setting, it will be possible for you to understand the characters and get to know why they act the way they do.

The setting helps to create the mood of the story. It influences how readers feel about the text.

**Activity**

Using a Zambian novel of your choice, identify the setting element (time, place, location) in which the story takes place. Then explain why the element is important to the story element (plot, theme, mood, etc.)

The theme is shaped by the character, setting, and plot of the story. The setting causes conflict and influences the main character's thoughts, feelings, and actions. ... The time and place the story takes place affects the lessons that can be learned from the main character in their surroundings

We have already stated that fiction is a story based in the imaginations of authors. Most stories are short enough to be read in one sitting. In that brief time of reading, a story can amaze you. This means that stories can take us into thrilling adventures because of recount of sequence of events or actions. Although fictitious, the events recounted in a story can show a reader truth about human nature.

**3 Characters or characterisation**

Who is a character? In literature, this term is used in two ways. Character can refer to traits of behaviour of a person or to one of the participants in the action of a story. In the latter case the characters can be human or animals, they can be life-like or drawn from fantasy; they can be fully individualised or stock characters who stand for many others. One does not prescribe the type of characters a writer should use in a narrative – it depends on the purpose of his writing. Generally if he is writing in a realistic mode or way, we expect his characters not to be exaggerated and inflated. The writer creates the standard or expectations with which to judge him or her.

There are usually minor and major characters in any narrative, the term we use for story in literature. Minor characters are usually unchanging in the story. In other words, they tend to be flat. They seem to be a **personification** of things such as goodness, greed, lust, envy, to name a few. Where their character has close resemblance to a personality in society, we say those characters are **caricatures**.

**Characterization** is the process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character. It is revealed through the following types:

* Direct Characterization where a writer conveys information about a character by telling the information directly to the reader. He/she tells the audience what the personality of the character is. For example: “The patient boy and the quiet girl in period C were both well-mannered and followed the teacher’s instructions.” <https://www.ptbeach.com/cms/lib02/NJ01000839/Centricity/Domain/211/Characterization.pdf>. In the description of the boy and the girl, two words have been used: patient and quiet. The writer directly tells us their characters or traits.

Indirect characterization occurs when the author shows the character in action, and lets the reader interpret what these actions reveal about the character. It shows things that reveal the personality of a character. The following are the things that can be considered:

* Speech: What does the character say? How does the character speak?
* Thoughts and feelings: This is what is revealed through the character’s private thoughts and feelings. How is done in a literary work? Discuss this with a friend on this course.
* Effect on others: What is revealed through the character’s effect on other people? How do other characters feel or behave in reaction to the character? What type of people do they associate with?
* Actions: What does the character do? How does the character behave?
* Looks or appearance: What does the character look like? How does the character dress?
* By what the author writes about them
* By what the narrator tells us about them
* By what other character say about them

([https://www.ptbeach.com/cms/lib02/NJ01000839/Centricity/Domain/211/Characterization.pdf) 02.10.18](https://www.ptbeach.com/cms/lib02/NJ01000839/Centricity/Domain/211/Characterization.pdf)%2002.10.18)

**Types of characters**

**Minor characters** are mainly used in four ways. They may be used to provide the human context in which the story takes place. A believable story cannot occur in a vacuum; it needs a human context and this may be provided by the minor characters.

A minor character may also be used for humour in the story, to provide light moments or comic relief. For example, in **The Tongue of the Dumb** by Mulaisho, there is a character Cumba, who does a lot of mischief in the story just to amuse the reader. Even the name Cumba has a funny meaning in Nsenga. It means a ‘barren person’. Can you think of minor character in the stories you have read in Zambian languages? Minor characters may also be used as foils in a story. **A foil** is a character who is used to reveal in a sharper light the character of another. This is usually achieved by closeness to the character, posing the appropriate questions and passing appropriate comments on the character. For instance, in **Things Fall Apart**, Obierika, can be said to be a foil to Okonkwo. He asks Okonkwo questions that bring out quite clearly Okonkwo’s unreasonable rigidity of character. By his behaviour Obierika gives us an example of a balanced personality - something which Okonkwo could become if he wanted to survive in the new era.

Sometimes, a narrator can be drawn from the minor characters. The minor character tells us the story in which he or she is a participant. This narrator, in telling the story performs three key functions: Firstly, by establishing a close relationship, with the reader to the extent that the reader develops trust in this narrator. Secondly by guiding the reader, through the story. Thirdly by providing commentary on the action in the story.

**Major Characters** are characters who take up most of the narrative space. They may be so important in shaping the course of the action than even the narratives are named after them such as **Maru.** In general, they tend to be fully individualised, life like, a mixture of good and evil and contradictory due to failure to fully understand themselves. In long prose works, the major characters also tend to grow in the story, either by becoming more noble or deteriorating.

In the past, the main characters were referred to as heroes and heroines but this has changed. In this pessimistic and cynical age people feel there are no heroes and heroines. Mankind is just too steeped in evil to produce heroes anymore. Can you argue for or against this statement.

Others called the main characters as protagonists but this too has lost favour due to the associations with Greek tragedy where the protagonist was the leading actor. In this democratic age, people feel all major characters ought to be accorded the same attention.

Thus, we are left with simply referring to the major characters as merely the central or main characters. While we can still use protagonist in referring to central or main characters, we may just use this term where the central character in the single story is one, the rest would be just major characters.

Let us now come to the notion of flat character. **Flat characters** are two-dimensional in that they are relatively uncomplicated and do not change throughout the course of a work, eg. Dobchinsky in Gogol’s Government Inspector’. By contrast, **round characters** are complex and undergo development, sometimes sufficiently to surprise the reader. (<https://www.google.co.zm/search?source=hp&ei=9p2zW_TPIYWtsgHz6ZiQCA&q=characterisation+in+literature+pdf&oq=Characterisation>), on 25. 07. 18. We have in a way mentioned how we can identify characters. What type of characters do you find in the texts that you have read?

**4 Point of view**

Point of view refers to the angle from which the story is told by the narrator. It is the angle of considering things, which shows us the opinion or feelings of the individuals involved in a situation. In literature, point of view is the mode of narration that an author employs to let the readers “hear” and “see” what takes place in a story, poem, or essay, (https://literarydevices.net/point-of-view/). Traditionally, narratives have been told from the viewpoint of an all knowing, all seeing, Omni present narrator or rather the **omniscient** point of view. The narrator knows everything about the characters, their entire inner lives, their thoughts, feelings, hopes, fears, their dislikes and hates, everything and doles it out to the reader as he/she wishes. Third person point of view uses pronouns like “he,” “she,” “it,” “they,” or a name.

However, this has been challenged. Modern man feels it is unrealistic for a narrator to have such powers. So there is a movement towards limited point of view, where the narrator tells the story from a narrator’s angle. Second person point of view employs the pronoun “you.”, eg. “Sometimes you cannot clearly discern between anger and frustration.” This technique may be less common, but it has its own strength of hooking the reader right from the start. (<https://literarydevices.net/point-of-view/>), on 23.08.19.

Where the story is told by a single character who is a participant in the story we say we have first person narration. We only see, hear and feel what happens to this narrator. He merely describes the outward actions of the other characters. He does not attempt to describe their inner lives. First person point of view involves the use of either of the two pronouns “I” or “we.”, eg. “I felt like I was getting drowned with shame and disgrace.” The use of first-person point of view gives us a glimpse into the real inner feelings of frustration of the character.

Many people seem to favour limited narration which takes several forms. There is a feeling that it is more authentic.

**5 Style and language**

Style refers to a writer’s use of language. A writer always selects language to fit his/her purpose. It is one of the most important choices he/she has to make. If a writer wants to communicate with the masses the language will tend to be accessible but if, on the other hand, he/she wants to commune with the learned the language will tend to be difficult. In saying this we have also alluded to the two basic styles, the direct and complex. The direct style is generally characterised by the use of short words, short sentences in active voice and short paragraphs. Its main use is to create a sense of immediacy.

The complex style on the other hand is marked by the use of long abstract and learned words from the Latin root of English, long passive sentences and long paragraphs steeped in reflective language.

The author might combine the two styles in their narratives. This is why readers have to be alert to the use of language at all times. Changes are to be expected. You cannot simply label the use of language as direct or complicated. There are also various ranges on the continuum. Examine the language in a deep and profound way at each stage. Questions that might help you are:

1. Is the language used similar to that used in everyday usage or is it strange and difficult?
2. Is subordination and co-ordination used widely or sparingly?
3. Are the verbs that are used mostly transitive or intransitive?
4. Is the dominant voice, active or passive?
5. Are the words used simple or learned and abstract?

Dominance of strange and difficult language use of subordination and co-ordination, intransitive verbs, passive voice and learned and abstract words suggests the complex style. The dominance of the other elements such as simple, active voice, transitive and concrete words suggests the direct style.

In addition, the examination of style in fiction calls for other standards as well. We can see usage of African speech patterns rhythms, and African ideology or philosophy. Some African writers such as Bessie Head in Maru tend to write in Standard English. But writers like Achebe in Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God have tried to domesticate the English language. Achebe uses Ibo words, Ibo sayings of the wise to express the Ibo way of thinking. Which pattern or standards do the texts written in your language take? Can the texts be said to be African or Zambian or do they emulate outside cultures? Comment overtly, on the style of many Zambian writers.

**6 Theme**

Theme refers to the central idea in a narrative. In most cases, this is usually implied and not stated clearly. It is mostly in propaganda works where the theme is stated in a blunt way. A work may have sub themes but in most cases these will be related to the central theme. In this way, the work will still be unified despite having a number of sub themes.

While theme has been at the centre of narratives, increasingly, modern works are not being created on the basis of theme. In some modernist works it is difficult to discover a theme; the work seems to be too random and disorganised. The aim in such works is not really to show a central idea in the traditional sense but to be a metaphor of the alleged randomness and confusion of the world.

Themes are often a declaration of the human condition. Or a truth that explains human behaviour. Themes may deal with a specific group. Themes may deal with principles and abstractions rather than people, eg. love means sacrifice, hope is painful, death stalks each of us from the moment of birth.

Themes do not have to be true in the real world. They are true in terms of the story they come from. That is, you do not have to believe the theme is true in your daily life; you may actually hold the opposite viewpoint. But if the story has been written such that the theme is obvious to readers, the theme is true in terms of the people and events in the story.

Theme is often stated in absolutes: someone/something is/does something.

Themes tend to be universal. You can merely see the theme of betrayal, corruption and ambition in many texts in the world of literature.

Themes tend to be serious, even in humorous works. When you describe the way people behave or how big concepts (such as love) work, you’re getting into people’s beliefs and strongly held opinions. You might hear an argument from a reader who disagrees. You might hear from multitudes of devotees who agree. You might start a war between parties from both sides. (Which could only help sales and bring attention to your writing.)

Writers can decide upon theme before writing: this story will be about the hypocrisy of love, the blindness of love, the pain of love. Then the writer crafts words and scenes and character and events to point to his theme, love stinks.

One problem with deciding theme before writing a story is that the book can come out very, very preachy. With everything pointing to the foregone conclusion, there’s no opportunity for characters who disagree or situations that might lead to a different conclusion. Stories written with a theme clearly in mind are often heavy handed. (Not always, of course. But especially true of new writers with a cause to promote.)

Do you know that writers can write with no theme in mind, waiting until the first or second draft is complete before determining where the story went, what theme has emerged. Then, the writer can twist with a light hand, phrases and scenes to highlight the theme.

Writers can also completely ignore theme, allowing readers to draw their own conclusions. Definitely, readers will. They will usually finish a book and have strong thoughts or feelings about it. Theme is something they’ll take away without intending to. When someone asks what the story was about, they may tell the plot. Or, they may report the theme; it was about love conquering in the face of hatred. It was about fear being stronger than common sense. It was about how strangers can work together to overcome a common enemy. Do you still remember what we said when we were dealing with literary criticism? A writer who explains everything to the readers insults the intelligence of his/her readers. Literary work need to be analysed by the reader.

Stories that are written well always have a theme. Maybe several. Well-written books are tied with threads and common elements that speak to theme, that allow readers to draw conclusions about life.

Poorly written books, with unrelated plot threads, characters, and events, may not have a theme. The story elements may be so far apart that the reader can draw no conclusion about the tale. The story may lack unifying elements and cohesion. There may be no theme. A story that is not about anything is probably not one readers will remember. It is probably not one writers want to write. A good theme can be a unifier. An ill-formed theme can make a book incomplete and unsatisfying.

Books may produce several themes. One reader, going through a divorce, may read one theme from a story. Another reader, one focusing on the freedom of being away from home for the first time, may read a different theme.

What you should realise therefore is that you can defend the choice of the theme in any text you read. Look for character dialogue or thoughts that lend themselves to theme; what conclusion does the character make? Look also to characters’ actions; characters act on what they believe. What they believe is an indicator of theme. Study the change in a character, how s/he is grown throughout the story. What made him change? What conclusions has he drawn about life? Character growth and insight also point to theme.

Themes can be old, new, reworked, and restated. They can be softly spoken or boldly shouted. Themes from one book to the next; even for the same author can be contradictory. Remember, a theme is true for the book it comes from, not necessarily for life or for other works of fiction.

Themes are very important to give a story substance, to make it more than just the interaction of a few characters. A short story might just have a single theme, but a novel can be more powerful if multiple themes are interwoven. Some themes will emerge unbidden as the writing takes place. (<https://theeditorsblog.net/2010/10/24/what-is-theme/>), on 16.05.19

**7 Tone and Mood**

The tone of a piece of literature is the speaker's or narrator's attitude towards the subject, rather than what the reader feels, as in mood. Mood is the general feeling or atmosphere that a piece of writing creates within the reader. Mood is established in order to affect the reader emotionally and psychologically and to provide a feeling for the narrative.

**8 Imagery and symbols**

Imagery, in a literary text, is an author's use of vivid and descriptive language to add depth to their work. It appeals to human senses to deepen the reader's understanding of the work. Powerful forms of imagery engage all of the senses (touch, sight, smell, taste and auditory. *Imagery* means to use figurative language to represent objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses. Usually it is thought that *imagery* makes use of particular words that create visual representation of ideas in our minds. From the five senses, we can come up with seven types of imagery as follows:

**Seven types of imagery**

* Kinaesthetic (movement).
* Olfactory (smell).
* Visual (sight).
* Gustatory/ oral (taste).
* Organic (feeling inside).
* Tactile (touch).
* Auditory/aural/hearing (sound).

**Sensory imagery** is the collection of images that are created in your head from detailed descriptions in poetry and prose. Sensory imagery is created with details that help the reader see, smell, hear, taste, and feel (tangibly) things without actually experiencing them.

**Olfactory imagery** pertains to odours, scents, or the sense of smell. Gustatory imagery pertains to flavours or the sense of taste. Tactile imagery pertains to physical textures or the sense of touch.

Imagery refers to mental pictures in your mind, or to words and descriptions that create mental pictures. **Gustatory imagery,** in particular, refers to imagery related to the sense of taste. In other words, gustatory imagery refers to words, descriptions or pictures in your brain that make you think of taste, eg, Ann thought she was biting into an orange slice and was shocked as her mouth exploded with the bitter taste of a lemon, (<http://www.literarydevices.com/imagery/>), on 11.06.19.

In literature, **symbolism** can take many forms including a figure of speech where an object, person, or situation has another meaning other than its literal meaning. The actions of a character, word, action, or event that have a deeper meaning in the context of the whole story.

The purpose of imagery is to take advantage of all of a reader's senses and build them into something vivid and real in the reader's imagination. A writer uses imagery to show the reader the story instead of telling them.

Sometimes the protagonist is someone with whom it is difficult to identify or who may be seen in ‘ordinary’ circumstances in more of the antagonist role. In this case they tend to be identified as an anti-hero.

**Summary**

Unit 3 deals with prose fiction. There are so many aspects discussed under prose ranging from types to elements. Elements of fiction are cardinal even in the analysis of a novel. You will be required to grasp the concepts fictional modes, fictional patterns and elements of fiction and how these relate to various stories.

**UNIT 4: DRAMA AND PLAYS**

We now turn to the most interesting genre of literature, drama. In this unit, you will look at various aspects in relation to drama (whether in performance or one written for reading.

**Unit Outcomes**

By the end of the unit, you are expected to:

* 1. state the function of drama;
  2. explain how drama relates with other forms of literature;
  3. explain the importance of dialogue in drama;
  4. gain understanding of the role of imitation in drama; and
  5. discuss the types of drama.

Drama is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance. This can be a play, opera, mime, ballet, and others, performed in a theatre, or on radio or television. Drama is also a type of a play written for theatre, television, radio, and film. In simple words, a drama is a composition in verse or prose presenting a story in pantomime or dialogue. Like prose fiction, it contains conflict of characters, particularly the ones who perform in front of audience on the stage.

Drama begins in the make-believe, in the play acting of children, in the ritual of primitive relation. In your childhood stages, you probably played some of the dramatic performances where a boy pretends to be a husband, a girl, a wife and other younger children as children of the two. There could be even other families who go to visit on other family. Such children plays (for instance manyengo in Cinyanja, mantoombwa in Chitonga) are still common in rural areas than in the urban. Sometimes such children plays take the normal course of action; it has a plot (with six stages), characters and dialogue. Aplay can as well be read (closet dramas). As representational art, a play can be watched/ acted. You do not need to be told that an acted play is richer than a closet as many images and emotions can be interpreted by what we see and hear on the stage (spectacle). It might be a whisper, wrinkle, frown, nod a particular sound – musical or not and so on.

<https://www.google.co.zm/imgres?imgurl=https://image.slidesharecdn.com/thehistoryofdrama->

**4.1 Function of Drama**

Drama is one of the best literary forms through which dramatists can directly speak to their audience, and they can receive instant feedback of audiences. A few dramatists use their characters as a vehicle to convey their thoughts and values, such as poets do with personas, and novelists do with narrators. Since drama uses spoken words and dialogues, thus language of characters plays a vital role, as it may give clues to their feelings, personalities, backgrounds, and change in feelings. In drama the characters live out a story without any comments of the author, providing the audience a direct presentation of characters’ life experiences.

**4.2 Drama and other literary forms**

We know that drama is a form of literature. It has some features that are similar to other forms of literature and yet we can distinguish it from the rest of these genres of literature.

The essay uses words to establish ideas addressed directly to the audience.*It is essentially persuasive.*

A poem uses words to express feelings of a speaker addressed to him/herself***.*** Such a speaker may think or speak to him/herself rather than to an audience. Poetry is, thus, *essentially meditative.*

A play on the other hand which uses words to create action through dialogue, characters talk to one another other than the audience, is *essentially interactive.*

From the foregoing it is clear that drama has similarities with a story in its use of words, and has similarities with poetry in its projection or communication of words. Like prose (especially long prose), it is concerned with plot and character***.*** Like a poem, a play is overheard by the audience; the words are not directly addressed to it. There is use of poetic language and expression.

**4.2.1 Drama and Narration**

A play is dramatic when it uses dialogue to create interaction.However, this interaction has to be set in time and space. To develop this, drama turns to **narrative techniques**. Occasionally story tellers emerge. Usually, however, characters become story tellers in their dialogue with one another. In the latter case, interaction and narration go hand in hand; one purpose serving another. This usually happens at the beginning of a play – exposition. Related to the exposition is another narrative technique – flashback or retrospection (looking back to see important events which took place well before the time covered in the play) which drama uses. At times of stage, action can be reported other than represented on the stage. This can be a chorus (a group of singers and dancers on the stage all through the performance) performing the function of the narrator. In some performance, a voice in the back-ground or a character such as a messenger, servant, a joker who is not directly involved in the action may perform this function.

**4.2.2 Drama and Meditation**

Because interaction between characters through dialogue is the basis of drama, a play is committed to showing audience the public side of the character just as talking does in real life. To reveal the private side of the character, that is, what the character thinks, a playwright turns to use techniques of poetry. A character may speak to himself or think aloud through a lyric poem as in soliloquy. A soliloquy is a popular literary device often used in drama to reveal the innermost thoughts of a character. It is a great technique used to convey the progress of action of the play, by means of expressing a character’s thoughts about a certain character or past, present, or upcoming event, while talking to himself without acknowledging the presence of any other person. (<https://literarydevices.net/soliloquy/>), on 22. 06. 19. A character may soliloquise alone on the stage or think aloud while in the midst of other characters. When a play shifts from the dramatic interaction to **meditation** the process of events is temporarily suspended, and the soliloquising character necessarily becomes a spectator of his world. You may now understand why on the stage some character appear and go without verbalising. They would be meditating.

**4.3 Soliloquy and Monologue in drama**

We have already used the term soliloquy in the foregoing subsection. What do you understand by the term ‘monologue’? Sometimes soliloquy is wrongly mixed up with monologue and aside. These two techniques are distinctly different from a soliloquy. Although, like soliloquy, a monologue is a speech, but the purpose and presentation of both is different. In a **monologue**, a character usually makes a speech in the presence of other characters, while in a **soliloquy**, the character or speaker speaks to himself. By doing so, the character keeps these thoughts secret from the other characters of the play. An **aside** on the other hand, is a short comment by a character towards the audience, often for another character, but usually without his knowledge. (<https://literarydevices.net/soliloquy/>), on 22. 06. 19.

By large, drama is public action. However, it can also be private action. Plays which are almost exclusively concerned with a single consciousness and its interior mental processes, and those concerned with psychological theories and the behaviour of the mind are primarily meditative***.*** In this kind of play we encounter soliloquies, other kinds of monologue and many imaginary sequences depicting dreams and fantasies. In such plays ‘hidden conflicts of the mind’ are more important than the interaction of characters. When evaluating such a play, you should be careful not to fall in the trap of looking for a plot which has a clear exposition, middle and end because it may not be found.

(<https://literarydevices.net/point-of-view/>), on 22.06.19.

**4.4 Types of Drama**

There are various types drama. However, in this course, we are going to consider the following:

* **Comedy** – Comedies are lighter in tone than ordinary works, and provide a happy conclusion. The intention of dramatists in comedies is to make their audience laugh. Hence, they use appealing circumstances, unusual characters, and witty remarks. Its tone is light and it mostly has a happy ending.
* **Tragedy** – Tragic dramas use darker themes, such as disaster, pain, and death. Protagonists often have a tragic flaw - a characteristic that leads them to their downfall. Sophocles’ mythical and immortal drama Oedipus Rex is thought to be his best classical tragedy. Aristotle has pronounced this play as one of the greatest examples of tragic drama in his book, ‘Poetics’, by giving the following reasons:

1. The play arouses emotions of pity and fear, and achieves the tragic catharsis.
2. It shows the downfall of an extraordinary man of high rank, Oedipus.
3. The central character suffers due to his tragic error called hamartia; as he murders his real father, Laius, and then marries his real mother, Jocasta.
4. Hubris is the cause of Oedipus’ downfall.

Aristotle actually believed that the main characteristic of tragedy was the change of fortunes of the main character because of his flaws. The philosopher also believed that such drama has to implant a feeling of fear and pity in the audience. Attah, <https://www.legit.ng/1219307-4-types-drama-literature.html> (18.07.19)

* Tragicomedy - Tragicomedy is a special kind of drama that combines the features of tragedy and comedy. Such plays may be sad but will have a happy ending, or it may be serious with some elements of humour emerging throughout the whole play. The audience may have tension at the beginning of the play but pacify at the end.
* **Farce** – Generally, a farce is a nonsensical genre of drama, which often overacts or engages slapstick humour. eg;

Oscar Wilde’s play, ‘The Importance of Being Ernest’, is a very popular example of Victorian farce. In this play, a man uses two identities: one as a serious person, Jack (his actual name), which he uses for Cesily, his ward, and as a rogue named Ernest for his beloved woman, Gwendolyn.

Unluckily, Gwendolyn loves him partially because she loves the name Ernest. It is when Jack and Ernest must come on-stage together for Cesily, then Algernon comes in to play Ernest’ role, and his ward immediately falls in love with the other ‘Ernest’. Thus, two young women think that they love the same man – an occurrence that amuses the audience.

* **Melodrama** – Melodrama is an exaggerated drama, which is sensational and appeals directly to the senses of the audience. It is a kind of drama in which everything is hyperbolized. Usually, themes depicted in melodramas are simple and without any unpredictable plot twists. Just like the farce, the characters are of a single dimension and simple, or may be stereotyped. The main point of a melodrama is not to tell a story but to awaken feelings in the audience. They are mostly love stories with beautiful heroines, charming heroes and scary villains. (<https://www.legit.ng/1219307-4-types-drama-literature.html>) 18.07.19.
* **Musical Drama** – In musical dramas, dramatists not only tell their stories through acting and dialogue, but through dance as well as music. Often the story may be comedic, though it may also involve serious subjects.

These are the few popular types of drama. What type is the play that you have read or watched, written or performed in a local language?

**The Features of drama**

Drama is a literary composition to be acted by players on a stage before an audience. Its successful portrayal depends on the cooperation that must exist among writers, actors, producers and audiences in accepting the limitations and the conventions of the stage. Modern drama has become the greatest form of mass entertainment in the western world. Experimentation and innovation are basic to the present dramatists. Through movies and television, everyone has experienced the excitement and emotional involvement that gives the drama its important place in our lives today.

The drama is difficult to read because it is meant to be seen, not read. It demands much imagination and attention on the part of the reader to enable him to hear the tones and see the actions of the actors against an imaginary background. The reader has only the dialogue form which to visualise the costumes, the situation, the facial expressions, and the movements of the actors. The drama is also difficult to write because the playwright must be aware of the interests and opinions of the actors and producer as well as his audience. He must also recognize the limitation of the stage and work within the many conventions and restrictions it imposes on the actions of his characters and the locations of his settings.

**4.5 Elements of Drama**

Elements of drama refer to the basic principles of drama which you must learn first for you to fully understand and appreciate drama both as a subject and as performance. Elements of drama are similar to those of fiction. Can you recall the elements of fiction discussed in 3.8? Compare them with the following:

* Setting
* Plot and Plot structures
* Characters and Characterization
* Conflict
* Theme
* Suspense and Atmosphere

Well, the literary elements of drama include setting, plot, characters and theme. Essential to the effective presentation of these elements are conflict, plot structure, suspense and atmosphere. Each of these elements are inherent in any narrative composition, but drama adds extra elements of stage direction, lighting effects, and the visual presence of the actors, the set and costumes. Let us now look at each of these and what is contained in them.

A. Setting

The setting of a drama presented on stage must be adapted to the limitations of the stage area. The playwright must confine his locations to scenes that can be constructed on the stage and limited to a few changes as possible. The actions must be physically restricted on the stage, and depend on dialogue, lighting, and sound effects to carry the actions and events that cannot be presented visually. It is this physical confinement that makes writing plays more difficult than any other narrative form.

B. Plot

The plot of the drama, although limited in its physical actions and changes of location or scene, is similar to that of the novel or short story. It must have the same characteristics of development and structuring, and depend on conflict, suspense and mood to carry the action forward.

1. **Technical Divisions** – Acts and scenes are the divisions of a play. In drama, ***a scene is a unit of action, often a subdivision of an act***. Shakespeare’s plays are mainly five acts in length, with many changes of scene with each act. However, the modern theatre audience is accustomed to sitting for only two to three hours to watch a play. This means the average modern play must be limited to three acts, which also has the benefit of keeping set changes minimum. A few modern plays run longer and have five or six acts. Can you think of a play in a local language that you have ever watched and determine how many acts and scenes the play has? How long is the play? Many plays in live performance in our local languages do not last over two hours.

**2. Structure of the play -** The technical development or structuring of the action in a drama is similar to that of a novel:

* **A preliminary exposition** opens up the play, presenting back ground information and any necessary explanation of the situation. It introduces the characters.
* **The moment of inciting force** follows the preliminary exposition in which the conflict is presented and the main action begins.
* **The rising action** then develops through a series of incidents and minor crises which lead up to the climax or the turning point of the struggle when the action turns against the protagonist.
* **The falling action** follows the climax as the conflict works itself out either for or against the protagonist.
* **The dénouement** presents the final outcomes of the struggle, sometimes referred to as the catastrophe which is the end of the struggle, but it is necessarily a tragic ending, (Bukagile and Yogo, 2010).

**3. Developing the Action (Preliminary Exposition):** The beginning must be clear, brief, and interesting. Every detail must have a purpose: characters are introduced in their roles, background information is given, the mood and tone are established, the time and place are given, and any necessary hints at the outcome or suggestion of theme that will give understanding to the plot is provided.

* **Complications:** The complications which keep the plot moving forward must have some basis in real life. They develop through series of crises that move in waves of heightened emotion, all moving upwards to a peak of crisis or climax where the action reverses from the previous rising action and the events go for or against the protagonist towards a final outcome. The falling action, like the rising action, moves in waves of emotional crises. The dénouement should be natural in its outcome, inevitable in its solutions, unless it is a surprise ending, and realistic in its purpose.

**Suspense:**

Suspense in situations which rouse our concern for the welfare of the characters can be created in many ways in a play. It can be accomplished through a series of crises and a major crisis or climax, foreshadowing, surprise or use of the unexpected, withholding information, disguise, and the intervention of chance or fate.

**Dramatic Emphasis**:

Emphasis is maintained by demonstrating every point to the audience. Every scene or conversation between characters must have a purpose; dialogue must not wander away from the major concerns of the plot nor must it be directed towards unnecessary or unrelated detail. Exits and entrances must be managed with purpose and be properly timed to gain dramatic emphasis, while maintaining a naturalness that does not destroy the continuity of events. Artistic economy must be observed at all times, permitting no waste of movements, words, or events to obtain an overall unit and emphasis of purpose.

**Prologue and Epilogue:**

A prologue is generally given by an actor before the play begins. Its purpose is to present an explanatory poem or speech that introduces information that is needed to start the play. An epilogue is a speech made by an actor after the play is over. It may be used by the playwright to reveal what happened afterwards or to point out the lesson of the play. In this way he is able to convey the meaning behind his play and its outcomes which could not be done naturally within the plot.

• **Atmosphere:**

The atmosphere and mood of the drama is created by the setting, the lighting, the furnishings, the music or sound effects, the opening dialogue, the facial expressions and gestures of the actors, and the growing tension of the plot.

**3. Stage Directions and Their Value:**

As plays are intended to be seen, not read, everything in them, must be seen or heard. All information, emotions, attitudes, and reactions must be presented through speech and action. This means that stage direction must succeed in reaching the audience through effective use of speech, action, furnishing, lighting, exits, entrances, and sound effects. Stage directions must determine the actor’s movements, choice of costumes as well as the behaviour of characters and interpretations of their speeches.

**C. Characters and Characterization**

Characters in a play are portrayed by actors who speak the dialogue and carry out the action of the play. Sometimes characters may be merely instruments in the plot; at other times, they have control of the action.

* All characters must appear natural so that their motivations and reactions as well as their exits and entrances seem realistic to the audience. Some dramatists introduce a wider range of characters into their plays than other authors. How many characters has your favourite play? Are you able to identify them according to type?
* Characters are developed through their dialogue and their actions. Their dialogue carries the plot and theme of the play and must be adapted to their individual characters. If dialogue is unrealistic, it must still reveal their character.
* Characters must be strongly drawn, consistent and believable.

Sudden changes in character, inappropriate gestures, wrong dialogue, mistimed facial expressions or smiles when the mood is sad or hostile must be avoided if the play is to be consistent in its portrayal and effective emotionally and intellectually for the audience.

**Conflict**

Drama, like prose, is created by conflict. It usually involves opposing forces, sometimes external and physical, sometimes internal and psychological. There may be a clash of wills in a conflict of purposes, or there may be a mental or emotional conflict within one person.

**Theme**

Theme in a drama is similar in its aspects to those of the short story or novel. You can determine as many themes as there are in a piece of drama as intended to communicate to the audience.

(<https://www.scribd.com/doc/37463939/Elements-of-Drama-One-Act-Play>), on 9.11.18.

Although there is very little written drama in most of the Zambian languages, can you find a text and analyse it based on the elements discussed above.

**4.6 Dialogue in drama**

You have known the term ‘dialogue’ from the linguistic point of view. What is your definition of dialogue? A dialogue is a literary technique in which writers employ two or more characters to be engaged in conversation with one another. In drama, it is a spoken exchange of conversation in a group, or between two persons directed towards a particular subject. Dialogue is the character’s reaction to other characters, and the purpose of dialogue is communication between characters, (<http://www.visualwriter.com/ScriptDr/Advanced/Dialogue.htm>), 9.11.18.

In the novel, dialogue is incorporated in the story, that is, as the story progresses, the novelist gives two or more characters the opportunity to discuss or comment on certain issues and the story continues in prose form. In drama, however, the entire story is presented in dialogue.

Drama is presented only in dialogue so that the reader or audience would be able to infer the nature of each character, the public and private relationship among the several characters, and the past as well as the present circumstances of these characters.

The story of drama is presented through the characters as they talk to one another and relate to one another. Characters are revealed through dialogue. Also incidents and events are exposed and explicated through dialogue.

**Ealuation**

1. You have discussed the novel as well as a play. What are the differences between the novel and a play?
2. Why is dialogue important to drama?
3. Explain the following types of drama:
4. comedy
5. farce
6. tragedy
7. melodrama
8. Get a piece of drama in a Zambian language, for instance, Pali Infa, Pali Mabvuto or Chisangano’s ‘Çiyuni Cakalala’ and state:
9. What type it is.
10. How the writer presents his/her characters;
11. How the various elements of drama are used.

**4.7 Mode of imitation in drama**

We all know what imitation is. What are the modes of imitation in drama?

The mode of imitation is one of the fundamental elements of mimesis in literature. Mode describes the manner in which the genre is conveyed to its audience. Imitation means the act of copying somebody or something. It is an act of copying the ways somebody talks and behaves, especially to entertain. It is used to describe a realistic portrayal of life, a reproduction of natural objects and actions. In drama, imitation is more pronounced in performance (followed by explanation of how a character says or does it). What is being imitated in drama is basically life. Drama tries to present life as realistically as possible on stage. This is why we say that drama mirrors life. It is part of life. It roots from children’s play. If you cast your minds back to your childhood experiences, you will recall that sometimes when you were playing, one child will say let me be the “mother” while another person becomes the “father” and the rest would be children or neighbours. Each of the participant tries to dress and talk like their models.

Imitation in drama involves a story. For it to be drama, a story must be told through dialogue as the characters interact among themselves and that story must have a beginning, middle and an end. Can you recall what these stages are? These are the plot stages that you have already discussed under prose fiction.

(<https://www.slideshare.net/mykems/elements-of-drama-imitation-dialogue>), 9. 11. 18.

**UNIT 5: POETRY**

As a scholar of literature and as a serving teacher, you have come across the term ‘poetry’. What is poetry? Can you give examples of poetry both in English and Zambian languages? What type are each of the poems that you have exemplified?

**Unit Outcomes**

By the end of the unit, you are expected to:

1. define poetry;
2. explain the various types of poetry;
3. explain with examples the elements of poetry;
4. distinguish the structure of a poem from those of other genres;
5. show understanding of rhythm, meter, and rhyme;
6. analyse poems.

Well, by definition, ***poetry can be said to be an oral or written composition in verse. Some*** writers even define it as the expression of feeling (emotional or intellectual) also known as moods be expressed in prose as we, by now, know.

**5.1 Types of Poetry**

1. **Narrative poetry** – refers to poems whose main purpose is to tell a story in poetry form. They may be short or long but the main point to remember is that they are composed mainly for storytelling. There are several subtypes of narrative poetry such as popular ballad, metrical tale, epic and mock epic.
2. **Lyric** – refers to that type of poetry that tries to share an experience with the audience such as how it feel like to be in love, how it feels like to lose a loved one, and how it feels to be hungry and so on. Lyrical poems usually express intense personal feelings and is short and concentrated but has enough clues within it for its understanding.
3. **Dramatic poetry**- refers to poetry that is really dramatic in the sense that there is a speaker in the poem addressing an audience. In other words, poetry involves the dramatic situation of speaker and audience. It involves a performance. However, dramatic poetry is distinguished by the fact that the speaker in the poem is clearly identified maybe even with a name.
4. **Panegyrics:** These are **poems composed to appease chiefs, heroes, hunters, the soil and the nation.** Our national anthem is a good example of a panegyric poem.
5. **Elegies:** These are **sorrowful poems sung at funerals to console the bereaved as well as to remember the dead.** These poems are also known as dirges. For instances *zyiyabilo* of the Tongaand *icimbo camalilo* of the Bemba people are good examples.
6. **Epics:** These are **poems which follow the ancestry heroic dynamism** mainly sung and recited by ballads.
7. **Religious Poetry:** These are **poems used to invoke spirits, gods** (or God for Christian – hymns and choruses). The elder of the family or somebody with esoteric knowledge in the community such as a diviner or priest perform these. An exception must be made for Christian ones which any believer can perform (at least most except for the ‘special’ ones).
8. **Sagas:** These are heroic poems associated with heroic events usually serving as morale boosters when sung or performed. They are mainly for hunters and warriors.

**5.2 Elements of poetry**

You have discussed elements of fiction as well as elements of drama. What are the differences between the two? What are the elements of poetry? Are they any different from the two genres of literature?

**Poetic Language**

Although both prose and poetry use language, poetry uses language in such a way that it constitutes a separate medium. Let us now examine some of the ways in which poetry handles language.

**Denotation and Connotation**

When a word is used, it has a ‘referent’. It donates something. **Denotation** can then be thought as ***the core meaning of a word*** while connotation can be thought of as **suggested meaning. Connotation** refers to suggested referents other than the core meaning e.g. red donates colour but connotes blood, revolution, rebellion, danger, anger and so forth. A poet welcomes and capitalises on the word’s **semantic duplicity** (having more than one meaning). S/He pays attention to connotation because s/he is trying to convey associated meanings and distinctions other than the core meanings.

**Imagery** **in poetry**

Have you ever built a mental image of things that you have heard from other people? What are these images? Images are the pictures that poets create with their words. The images/pictures can be concrete or abstractions like ideas and feelings. As you read a poem, you can see these images in your mind’s eye. Poets use lively and specific words so that you can see their images more clearly. Poets thus invite you to see the world in a fresh and original way. Your job as a critic is to investigate how these pictures are invoked by the poet. Imagery, therefore, is the use of words that appeal to the five senses. Can you list these senses? Well! I hope you have thought of the sense of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Let us look at each of them:

Here are some examples of words specific to the five sensory systems:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Visual**  **(Sight)** | **Auditory**  **(Hearing)** | **Kinesthetic**  **(Touch)** | **Olfactory**  **(Smell)** | **Gustatory**  **(Taste)** |
| picture flash bright sharp clear  see light dark large blue | scream shout listen tone whisper ring utter nasal squeal quiet | feel warm grasp sharp peaceful cold rugged joyful fuzzy hard | pungent fragrant sweet dank rich aroma stinky musty rotten odour essence | sweet sour salty bitter fresh juicy bland burnt zesty tangy |

The following examples will take you through all the senses and will guide you to evoke specific imagery internally. For best results, close your eyes during visualization.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Visual

To evoke visual imagery, visualize the following:

* a shape: circle, triangle, square
* a baobab tree
* a rose
* a giant

Auditory

To evoke auditory imagery, imagine the following:

* The wind blowing through the trees
* The ring on your telephone
* The sound of your computer keyboard

Olfactory

To evoke olfactory imagery, conjure up the following smells:

* Petrol fumes
* Newly baked bread
* Chlorine
* New mown grass
* Freshly brewed coffee
* Stench of rotten grass

Gustatory

To evoke gustatory imagery, imagine the taste of:

* Sugar
* Bananas
* Salt
* Lemon
* Toothpaste

Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic imagery can be further divided into: sense of touch, temperature, movement, and feelings.

Touch - imagine the feelings of:  
Standing barefoot on a sandy beach  
Running your fingertips on satin fabric  
Holding a smooth pebble

Temperature:  
Sunlight falling over your arm  
Holding an ice cube  
Stepping into a warm bath

Movement - feel yourself engaged in an activity:  
Swimming  
Running on grass  
Throwing a ball

Feelings - what does it feel like in your body to be:  
Peaceful  
Angry  
Sad  
Calm  
Happy

**Function of Imagery**

The function of imagery in literature is to generate a vibrant and graphic presentation of a scene that appeals to as many of the reader’s senses as possible. It aids the reader’s imagination to envision the characters and scenes in the literary piece clearly. Apart from the above-mentioned function, images drawn by using figures of speech like metaphor, simile, personification, and onomatopoeia, serve the function of beautifying a piece of literature. (<https://literarydevices.net/imagery/>), on 20. 06. 19.

**5.3 Figures of Speech (Figurative language)**

To arouse images, poetry uses figurative language – a crucial feature of poetry. You can over-look rhythm, sound, connotation and so on and still get something from the poem. A figure of speech is never literary true, but is a good device that always suggests a forceful truth to our imaginations. However, if you misread figures of speech, you misread the poem too.

From the explanation above, you will be able to realise that a figure of speech is a rhetorical device that achieves a special effect by using words in a distinctive way. There are hundreds of figures of speech in language and in a course like this one, we will just deal with a few.

Figurative language is often associated with literature and with poetry in particular. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we use figures of speech every day in our own writing and conversations.

For example, common expressions such as “falling in love,” “racking our brains,” and “climbing the ladder of success” are all metaphors; the most prevalent figure of all. Likewise, we rely on similes when making explicit comparisons (“light as a feather”) and hyperbole to emphasise a point (“I'm starving!”).

**The Nature and Function of Figures**

Any figure of speech in poetry is not a mere decoration, a pretty or fancy way of saying something which might be said literally but a way of invoking a stronger picture; it is a way of communication.

**Kinds of figures of speech**

What kind of figures of speech are often used in your language? Which ones have you ever used?

Using original figures of speech in our writing is a way to convey meanings in fresh, unexpected ways. Figures can help our readers understand and stay interested in what we have to say. Just as stated earlier, in Literature, a number of these are used for the same effect. Let us now look at following figures of speech:

1. Alliteration: The repetition of an initial consonant sound. Example: She sells seashells by the seashore.

Lozi: *Aukabona nja mwanjanji ica mwanja ukanjanja nji*? ‘When you see a dog on the rail line, would you

2. Anaphora: The repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or verses. Example: Unfortunately, I was in the wrong place at the wrong time on the wrong day.

3. Antithesis: The juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases. Example: As Abraham Lincoln said, “Folks who have no vices have very few virtues.”

4. Apostrophe: Directly addressing a non-existent person or an inanimate object as though it were a living being. Example: “Oh, you stupid car, you never work when I need you to,” Ben sighed.

5. Assonance: Identity or similarity in sound between internal vowels in neighbouring words. Example: How now, brown cow?

6. Chiasmus: A verbal pattern in which the second half of an expression is balanced against the first but with the parts reversed. Example: The famous chef said people should live to eat, not eat to live.

7. Euphemism: The substitution of an inoffensive term for one considered offensively explicit. Example: “She has passed away” instead of “She has died.”.

8. Hyperbole: An extravagant statement; the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect. Example: I have a ton of things to do when I get home.

9. Irony: The use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning. Also, a statement or situation where the meaning is contradicted by the appearance or presentation of the idea. Example: “You are clever,” said to a person who is being stupid.

10. Litotes: A figure of speech consisting of an understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by negating its opposite. Example: A million dollars is no small chunk of change.

11. Metaphor: An implied comparison between two dissimilar things that have something in common. In simple terms, it is calling a thing by the name of another. This figure of speech

is more surprising and, hence imaginatively more effective than simile. Example: Jengani is a pig.

12. Metonymy: A figure of speech in a word or phrase is substituted for another with which it's closely associated; also, the rhetorical strategy of describing something indirectly by referring to things around it. Example: “That stuffed suit with the briefcase is a poor excuse for a salesman,” the manager said angrily.

13. Onomatopoeia: The use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to. Example: The clap of thunder went bang and scared my poor dog.

14. Oxymoron: A figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms appear side by side. Example: “He popped the jumbo shrimp in his mouth.”

15. Paradox: A statement that appears to contradict itself. Example: “This is the beginning of the end,” said Eeyore, always the pessimist.

16. Personification: A figure of speech in which an inanimate object or abstraction is endowed with human qualities or abilities (life and personality). Example: That kitchen knife will take a bite out of your hand if you don't handle it safely. The inanimate things include abstractions like death, poverty, misfortune, despair, sorrow and so forth.

17. Pun: ​A play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words. Example: Jessie looked up from her breakfast and said, “A boiled egg every morning is hard to beat.”

18. Simile: A stated comparison (usually formed with “like” or “as”) between two fundamentally dissimilar things that have certain qualities in common. Example: Roberto was white as a sheet after he walked out of the horror movie.

19. Synecdoche: A figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole.

Example: Tina is learning her ABC's in preschool. What does ABC represent in this example?

Other examples are as follows

crowned head Monarch

hands labourers

Bemba: Icipuna – chair/stool chairperson

As in: Umucinshi ku cipuna – Give respect to the chair (person)

20. Understatement: A figure of speech in which a writer or speaker deliberately makes a situation seem less important or serious than it is. Example: “You could say Babe Ruth was a decent ballplayer,” the reporter said with a wink. (<https://www.thoughtco.com/top-figures-of-speech-1691818>) September, 2018 update; on 25.12.18

**Reflect**

How often have you used these figures of speech? Which ones do you think is are the most used? State the equivalent of the term ‘figures of speech’ in your language and then the language taught at your school. How often have you taught these to your learners?

While the above discussed figures are the most known, there are some of the less familiar figures and tropes? While we may not recognize their names, we use and hear a good number of these devices every day.

So let’s take a look at 20 uncommon words (most of them Latin or Greek) for some fairly common rhetorical strategies.

Accismus - Coyness; a form of irony in which a person feigns a lack of interest in something that he or she actually desires.

Anadiplosis - Repetition of the last word of one line or clause to begin the next.

Apophasis - Emphasizing a point by seeming to pass over it—that is, mentioning something while disclaiming any intention of mentioning it.

Aposiopesis - An unfinished thought or broken sentence.

Bdelygmia - A litany of abuse—a series of critical epithets, descriptions, or attributes.

Boosting - An adverbial construction used to support a claim or express a viewpoint more assertively and convincingly.

Chleuasmos - A sarcastic reply that mocks an opponent, leaving him or her without an answer.

Dehortatio - Dissuasive advice given with authority.

Diatyposis - Recommending useful precepts or advice to someone else.

Epexegesis - Adding words or phrases to further clarify or specify a statement already made.

Epimone - Frequent repetition of a phrase or question; dwelling on a point.

Epizeuxis - Repetition of a word or phrase for emphasis (usually with no words in between).

Hypocrisis - Exaggerating the gestures or speech habits of another in order to mock him.

Paronomasia - Punning, playing with words.

Prolepsis - ​A figurative device by which a future event is presumed to have already occurred.

Skotison - Intentionally obscure speech or writing, designed to confuse an audience rather than clarify an issue.

Synathroesmus - The piling up of adjectives, often in the spirit of invective.

Tapinosis - Name calling; undignified language that debases a person or thing.

Tetracolon Climax - A series of four members, usually in parallel form.

Zeugma - Use of a word to modify or govern two or more words although its use may be grammatically or logically correct with only one.

Can you provide examples or situations for each of these in your local language? Have you realised that you usually use the rhetorical devices in your everyday speech?

A good figure of speech should have some or all of the following qualities:

1. ***It should be appropriate.*** It should give us a feeling that the comparison is not only just but that of satisfaction with the way the vehicle is used. We should feel that the vehicle really explains or sheds light on the tenor.
2. ***It should be fresh***. It should surprise us because although we may know the words, the resemblance (usage) should sound new.
3. ***It should seem natural***. When a reader comes across a figure of speech in a work, s/he should not be under the impression the poet struggled to work it in. A good figure of speech in a poem should seem inevitable.
4. ***It should be appropriate to the whole poem***. A good figure of speech should be good in relation to the whole poem. It should be good to a poem’s total content.

**Evaluation**

1. Write what you understand by:
2. connotation
3. denotation
4. Imagery
5. Define and give example in your language the figures of speech below. Remember to translate all your examples into English.
6. simile
7. metaphor
8. personification
9. synecdoche
10. metonymy
11. What are the characteristics of a good figure of speech?
12. Think of words that you would use to name three animals in your language.

**5.4 Rhythm and Meter in poetry**

The term **rhythm refers to the variation or the pulsation of sound/utterances.** In other words, it refers to the stress or volume of pitch and the length of time of utterance. The novel has rhythm too, it is more important in poems because poetic rhythm is regular and contributes to the meaning, subject and so forth. The regular pattern is called the meter of the verse. “Meter” is not the measurement of distance, but the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of verse. “Unstressed/stressed” syllables in the English language correspond to “short/long” syllables in classical languages. Stressed=long; unstressed=short. Call it the road markings of a poem, (https://sevencircumstances.com/poetry-and-lyrics/elements-of-poetry/elements-of-poetry-meter-and-feet/).In order to understand meter in poetry, we should learn how to determine:

* 1. the prevailing meter of the poem
  2. the significant variation in the meter and the advantages of such variations.

**Determining the Prevailing Meter**

This is done in two steps. ***First, we should discover the kind of feet in a line/verse*** and, ***then we count the number of feet in the line.*** These two facts constitute the prevailing meter.

***A foot is the metrical unit in a verse.*** It ***comprises two or more stressed or unstressed syllables arranged in one of several orders.*** Let me point out here that if students of literature in Zambian languages wish to borrow this concept, they should substitute stress for tone because Zambian languages are tonal. They do not have stress. Below is an example of feet in English:

x / x / x / x / x /

When **I**/ co.**nsi**/ er **how**/ my **light**/ is **spent**

The line above has five feet.

**Types of feet**

**Iamb *– (***adj; lambic foot): of unstressed and stressed syllables or in a quantitative meter, a sequence of a short syllable and a long syllable. When a line has five feet each with iambic foot, then we have an iambic pentameter as illustrated below:

da DUM da DUM da DUM da DUM da DUM.

**Anapaest** (Anapaestic foot): repeated unit of two unstressed syllables and one stressed. In quantitative meters, it consists of two short syllables which are followed by on long syllable.

x x /

e.g. ov.er.**turn**

***Trochee*** (trochaic foot) also called ‘choree’ contains a long syllable followed by a short syllable as in the pattern: DA dum. In English, it is usually a repeated unit of stressed and unstressed syllables as in: / x

It has an emphasis in the beginning and is seen to be the opposite of the iambic foot. We can exemplify from Shakespeare’s lines of poetry below:

**Dou**ble, **dou**ble **toil** and **trou**ble

**Fi**re **burn** and **cauld**ron **bubb**le

**Dactyl**(Dactylic foot): This is the reverse of anapaest. It comprises a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed ones or in a quantitative meter, a short syllable followed by two long syllables as in: / x x or DA dum dum

**ter**.ri.ble; **po.**e.try

**Spondee**(Spondaic foot): comprises two stressed syllables: / / (DA DA) as in the noun side.walk

**Pyrrhic**(pyrrhic foot): is the reverse of spondee. It comprises two unstressed syllables.

Unfortunately this foot cannot be illustrated by one word.

(https://www.aresearchguide.com/poetic-feet-and-meter.html)

Each line of a poem contains a certain number of feet of iambs, trochees, spondees, dactyls or anapaests. A line of one foot is a monometer, 2 feet is a dimeter, and so on; trimeter (3), tetrameter (4), pentameter (5), hexameter (6), heptameter (7), and octameter (8). The number of syllables in a line varies therefore according to the meter.

The line with two iambs is a diamb, the one with five iambs, is an iambic pentameter. (https://www.aresearchguide.com/poetic-feet-and-meter.html)

The meters with two-syllable feet are:

* iambic (x /)
* trochaic (/ x)
* spondaic (/ /)

Meters with three-syllable feet are:

* anapestic (x x /)
* dactylic (/ x x)

Here are some more examples of the various meters.

Iambic pentameter (5 iambs, 10 syllables)

* That **time** | of **year** | thou **mayst** | in **me** | be**hold**

Trochaic tetrameter (4 trochees, 8 syllables)

* **Tell** me | **not** in | **mourn**ful **| num**bers

Anapestic trimeter (3 anapests, 9 syllables)

* And the **sound** | of a **voice** | that is **still**

Dactylic hexameter (6 dactyls, 17 syllables; a trochee replaces the last dactyl)

* **This** is the | **for**est pri | **me**val, the | **mur**muring | **pine** and the | **hem**locks

([https://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/meter.html),](https://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/meter.html),downloaded) on 22. 05.19

Meter is an important part of poetry because it helps readers understand rhythm as it relates to words and lines in a poem. It also helps writers create poetry with clearly defined structural elements and strong melodic undertones. When you write or read poetry, think of meter as the beat or the cadence of the piece.

**Forced meter**

Other than in free verse, where no rhyming scheme or meter apply, when a poet tries to force a rhyming scheme on a poem, or a lyricist tries too hard to make meter work, the problem is that they alter the normal pattern of emphases in a word or phrase, and a mother tongue speaker of the language immediately notices it, and it makes the language uncomfortable. If the poem does not use a regular meter, it is said to be broken or irregular meter.

**Sound**

**Poetry communicates with the mind through a musical medium**. The music is pleasant accompaniment to the meaning of words. In very good poetry, the sound does not only accompany sense but helps convey it too. You can guess how this is done?

***Through the Use of Repeated Sound***

Although repeated sounds in poetry basically suggests rhyme (matching of sounds at the ends of words particularly at the ends of lines), poetry uses matching sounds of several kinds such as:

a. ***Alliteration*** which is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words or stressed syllables as in:

* She sells sea shells at the sea shore.
* If Peter Piper picked a peck of pepper, where is the peck of pepper that Peter Piper picked?

Notice the /s/ sound in the first bullet and /p/ in the second bullet. It is important to emphasise that when we talk about sounds, we are discussing a matter of the ear and not the eye as you already know. We are discussing what is appealing to the ear or what is heard and not what is seen.

b. **Assonance**: This is a figure of speech that focuses on the vowel sounds in a phrase, repeating them over and over to great effect. The poet repeats the internal vowels as in:

Then the mortal coldness of the soul

Like death itself comes down:

It cannot feel for others woes, it

dare not dream its own.

Notice the /o:/ in ‘soul’, ‘coldness’ and ‘own’, the /e/ in ‘death’ and ‘self’, the /i:/ in ‘feel’ and ‘dream’.

c. **Rhyme**: refers to the repetition of final sounds of words particularly those appearing at the end of lines. Such kind of rhyme is referred to as exact or perfect rhyme. Some poets, however, use approximate rhymes. There are three types of these:

1. ***Imperfect rhyme*** e.g. us-dust; gained spade
2. ***Vowel rhyme*** e.g. be-die; me-say
3. ***Suspended rhyme e.g. near-hair, star-door***

This type of sound repetition is prevalent in poems in Zambian languages. Are you able to determine such kind of rhyme in a poem that you have read in a local language?

Besides the pleasurable efforts of using sounds in this manner, alliteration and assonance have a structural function of linking key words that should be associated in the reader’s mind/consciousness through sound. For instance, in the lines above the relation between ‘coldness’ and ‘soul’ is reinforced by the matching ‘o’ sound just as the syntactic parallelism of the two clauses in the above lines is emphasised by the pairing of vowels (assonance) in both ‘feel’ and ‘dream’ and ‘woes’ and ‘own’.

**Suggestive Sound**

Like in life, sounds of words in poetry do not only please the ear but convey meaning too. ***Onomatopoeic words*** are the clearest instance of this. Do you still remember the concept of onomatopoeia? These are the words whose sounds resemble the action or the thing denoted by the words e.g. buzz (of bee), jingle (of small metal objects like keys), splash (of water), bang (of a door) and so on.

More subtle effects can be achieved by manipulating vowels and consonants. For example, if long vowels are pronounced deep in the throat (uh, oh, ah), they seem more serious and grave than short front vowels pronounced near the front of the mouth (i, e). As students of Zambian languages, you should note that the approximate of the above are: ‘o’, ‘u’, and ‘a’ for back vowels and ‘i’ and ‘e’ for front ones. For languages like Chinyanja where aspiration is possible, the English versions of back vowels or approximates are possible. For instance; **mph**amvu, **ndho**ndomeko, **ntha**no. In all the initial syllables, there is aspiration that shows the seriousness of the notions in Chinyanja.

Notice also the sounds that the words produced even when the shapes are the same in the following stanza.

Truth in writing comes from art, not chan**ce**

As tho**se** easiest learned to dan**ce.**

T’**s** not easy to harne**ss** offen**ce**,

The **s**ound is an echo to the **s**en**se**:

Soft i**s** the **s**train when wind gently blow**s**,

And the smooth **s**team in **s**moother number**s** flow**s**;

But when loud **s**urge**s** lash the **s**ounding shores,

All the sounds of the winds come to rest.

Notice how the echoing of the sound /s/ and /z/ throughout the stanza. This gives clue to the subject of the poem. It also gives the poem rhythm, the beat that brings humour.

Can you analyse the sounds by underlining the graphemes that have the /s/ sound and those that have /z/ sound in the stanza above? In a similar manner, examine the following stanza:

When the packed truck emerged,

Loaded with unfinished furniture,

When the driver realised the thing distinguished

All that perched on the truck lowered

Like fried mackerel baked and pushed

For the consumer to analyse.

Now, which shape are you dealing with here? What sounds are involved? You will realise that the sound of -ed is realised differently even when the shape of the morph is the same. Perhaps you still remember the concept of allomorphy in your LBL 1200 course. There are number of songs among the Zambian lyrics that capitalise on sound. Can you think of a few of these?

**5.5 Structure in a poem**

You could describe the structure of a poem in a variety of ways, but generally you should focus on stanzas, rhyme scheme, rhythm, and meter. In poetry, structure (form) refers to changing the length and arrangement of lines and stanzas. Poets use rhythm to manipulate the beat, or meters, in each line, and rhyme scheme is used to create a pattern of sounds through repetition.

Your duty as a critic is to discover the nature of the parts and see how much contributes to the development of the central meaning. This structural pattern is not always immediately visible as one reads the poem. The several formal structural features of a poem are more readily seen. These are book segment, the verse and the stanza whose lines are grouped according to conventional patterning of end rhymes known as rhyme schemes; each new sound at the end of the line in a stanza is designated by a new letter A, B, C and so on. Let us now look at rhyme and rhyme scheme

**5.6 Rhyme and rhyme scheme**

Am very sure that by now you are very familiar with the term ‘rhyme’. Rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhyme that comes at the end of each verse or line in poetry. In other words, it is the structure of end words of a verse or line that a poet needs to create when writing a poem. Many poems are written in free verse style. Some other poems follow non-rhyming structures, paying attention only to the number of syllables. Thus, it shows that the poets write poems in a specific type of rhyme scheme or rhyming pattern. There are several types of rhyme schemes as given below.

**Types of rhyme scheme**

There are a number of rhyme schemes used in poetry; some of the most popular of which include:

***Alternate rhyme***: It is also known as ABAB rhyme scheme, it rhymes as “ABAB CDCD EFEF GHGH.”

***Ballad***: It contains three stanzas with the rhyme scheme of “ABABBCBC” followed by “BCBC.”

***Mono-rhyme***: It is a poem in which every line uses the same rhyme scheme.

***Couplet***: It contains two-line stanzas with the “AA” rhyme scheme, which often appears as “AA BB CC and DD…”

***Triplet***: It often repeats like a couplet, uses rhyme scheme of “AAA.”

***Enclosed rhyme***: It uses rhyme scheme of “ABBA”

***Terza rima rhyme scheme***: It uses tersest, three lines stanzas. Its interlocking pattern on end words follows: ABA BCB CDC DED and so on.

***Keats Odes rhyme scheme***: In his famous odes, Keats has used a specific rhyme scheme, which is “ABABCDECDE.”

***Limerick***: A poem uses five lines with a rhyme scheme of “AABBA.”

(<https://literarydevices.net/rhyme-scheme/>), on 15.06.19.

Read the following poem and determine the rhyme scheme:

The sun is shining bright

This is a lovely sight.

You are like a day of May

And I as worthless as hay.

This is poor Mr. Potter

Walking a road with his daughter.

Sometimes, your unspoken word

Is more important than that heard.

Little boy wants to eat cakes

Whenever he from sleep awakes.

I saw a tree that to God doth say

I want the Lord to accept my pray.

I think I can never see

Something as free as a sea.

After so many days of drought down poured the rain

It took so long is if came from Spain.

The green garden lets its shade fall

Over the red old school hall.

There flows the river

That’s amongst the greatest giver.

**Examples of Rhyme Scheme**

Let us take a few examples of most widely used rhyme schemes in literature:

Example 1: Neither Out Far nor in Deep (By Robert Frost)

The people along the sand (A)

All turn and look one way. (B)

They turn their back on the land. (A)

They look at the sea all day. (B)

As long as it takes to pass (C)

A ship keeps raising its hull; (C)

The wetter ground like glass (D)

Reflects a standing gull. (D)

This is an ABAB pattern of rhyme scheme, in which each stanza applies this format. For instance, in the first stanza, “sand” rhymes with the word “land,” and “way” rhymes with the word “day.”

Example 2: Twinkle Twinkle Little Star (By Donald Barthelme)

Twinkle, twinkle, little star, (A)

How I wonder what you are. (A)

Up above the world so high, (B)

Like a diamond in the sky. (B)

The following example uses an AABB rhyme scheme. Here, the first line ends in the word “star,” which rhymes with the final word of the second line, “are.” Since both words rhyme with each other, they are signified with letter “A.”

Example 3: Divine Comedy (By Dante Alighieri)

As I drew nearer to the end of all desire, (A)

I brought my longing’s ardor to a final height, (B)

Just as I ought. My vision, becoming pure, (A)

Entered more and more the beam of that high light (B)

That shines on its own truth. From then, my seeing (C)

Became too large for speech, which fails at a sight… (B)

Dante has used terza rima tercet rhyming patterns (ABA, BCB, CDC …) in this poem, giving an impression of irresistible movement, as well as dynamism.

Example 4: A Monorhyme for the Shower (By Dick Davis)

Lifting her arms to soap her hair (A)

Her pretty breasts respond – and there (A)

The movement of that buoyant pair (A)

Is like a spell to make me swear… (A)

This poem presents a perfect example of mono-rhyme, in which you’ll notice that every line ends in a similar rhyme, “AAAA” like these words, “hair, there, pair, and swear.”

Example 5: Nature’s Way (By Heidi Campbell)

Upon a nice mid-spring day, A

Let’s take a look at Nature’s way. A

Breathe the scent of nice fresh air, B

Feel the breeze within your hair. B

The grass will poke between your toes, C

Smell the flowers with your nose. C

Clouds form shapes within the skies, D

And light will glisten from your eyes D

This extract from a poem by Heidi Campbell has a beautiful rhyme scheme AA, BB, CC and DD. Can you state the type? Yes, a couplet.

Example 6: A Poison Tree (By William Blake)

I was angry with my friend: A

I told my wrath, my wrath did end. A

I was angry with my foe: B

I told it not, my wrath did grow. B

And I watered it in fears C

Night and morning with my tears; C

And I sunned it with smiles, D

And with soft deceitful wiles. D

This extract from William Blake’s poem has an excellent rhyme scheme as AA, BB, CC, and DD.

Example 7: The One (By Crystal R. Adame)

The one who brought me down to earth, A

And held me every day. B

The one who gracefully gave me birth, A

And said, I love you in every way. B

The one who taught me everything, C

Like how to crawl and walk. D

The one who taught me how to sing C

After learning how to talk. D

Here, poet Crystal R. Adame makes handy use of rhyme scheme. The scheme runs like this: ABAB and CDCD.

Example 8: To A Terrific Dad (By David L. Helm)

To a dad who is terrific, A

To a dad who’s real neat. B

To a dad who makes the best of things, C

Even when they’re not so sweet! B

To a dad who’s growing older, D

To a dad who’s going gray. E

To a dad who just gets smarter, D

It would seem from day to day! E

These lines from the poem To a Terrific Dad have yet another kind of rhyme scheme, which is different from all of the preceding examples. The rhyme scheme of this poem is ABCBDEDE.

**Function of rhyme scheme**

Rhyme scheme is an integral part of the constitution of a poem, which includes meter, length of phrase, and rhythm. In fact, rhyme scheme, like other writing tools, is used to create balance and relieve tension, manage flow, create rhythm, and highlight important ideas. Its basic function is to form units of sound and suggest units of sense. It also communicates the idea in a more effective way. (<https://literarydevices.net/rhyme-scheme/>), on 16.05. 19

**How to label a rhyme pattern**

The first line is ‘A’, and subsequent lines continue through the alphabet in order. If you find a line that rhymes with a previous line, you label it with the same letter as the earlier line. Remember that a line in the third stanza of a poem could rhyme with a line in the first stanza.

Now look at the poems in our local languages. You can determine on the type of poem which you can analyse either as an individual or group, considering the devices elements discussed above.

**Evaluation**

1. a. How do you determine meter?

b. Is this possible in poems in our languages? Explain.

1. Name and exemplify the types of feet you have met in this course.
2. How do you arrive at a name of a foot?
3. Why is it important to vary meter in poetry at times?
4. Define and exemplify:
5. Alliteration
6. Assonance
7. rhyme
8. onomatopoeia
9. How would you label a rhyme scheme?
10. Using a poem in your language, show how assonance and alliteration have been used.

**Summary**

Unit 5 has dealt with poetry as one of the genres of literature. Here, we have discussed poetry in its written form. Types of poetry have been discussed as well as the elements of poetry. Much focus has been given to these elements including figurative language, rhythm, meter and rhyme to give you the necessary devices that would help you analyse given poems.

**UNIT 6: AFRICAN ORAL LITERATURE (ORATURE)**

In the preceding topics, we discussed literary criticism as it pertains to written literature. In this unit, we are going to discuss orature which encompasses forms of oral traditions and all aspects transmitted by word of mouth.

**Unit Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to:

1. Explain with justification the concept ‘orature’.
2. Discuss oral narratives, oral poetry, Zambian proverbs and the riddle.

Orature is a more recent and less widely used term which emphasises the oral character and nature of literary works. Orature, as coined by the Ugandan scholar Pio Zirimu, is influenced by culture, which is the pivot upon which societies are perched. It is the combination of these which is regarded as oral literature or orature.

([https://www.google.co.zm/search?](https://www.google.co.zm/search?%20) ) on 26. 07. 19.

In Zambia, orature comprises oral prose in its various forms; oral poetry in all its forms and what are called fixed forms like the riddle and the proverb. Up to now, drama has not been developed into a serious genre. Whatever little there is ends in very confined theatre open to a small audience. During traditional ceremonies, there is the restoration of historic achievements in form of musicals or war games as among the Ngoni’s ngoma dance, and the makishi of the Luvale people. The other common feature is the emotion expression of the bereaved which does not take a recognisable plan. This might be the reason why the written form is not also developed.

**Importance of Oral Tradition.**

In African Traditional Religion, morals, values, beliefs and culture among other things play a critical role in society. The upholding of societal norms and values is a sacred affair especially that in African society, religion is a way of life. Can you look into the ways in which these values are inculcated in the members of your society? Discuss with your colleagues how societal norms and values are upheld. Have they positively impacted society.

**6.1 Oral Narratives**

Have you ever listened to oral narratives as a young person? Who told these stories in your society? Have you ever taken part in telling such stories? These exists in these forms:

1. ***Myth***: This story illustrates what people believe in whether or not it makes sense to an outsider. Through myths, a culture tries to answer man’s big questions like: Where is man from? Where is death from? ... For the type character found in myths, check the written prose section under myth.
2. ***Legend***: These are usually heroic stories told over for generations. They originally start as history which over time is filled with the fancy. The central character is actually a historic figure who lived. For instance, the story of the migration of the Babemba royal family from Kola to present day Lubemba –Bemba land). It is true that Chiti Mukulu (as the name was originally) or that last somebody who came to be known as such migrated with his brothers and sisters from some place. Another legend is found among the Tonga people of Southern Zambia where the first Chief Moonze was not buried but leaned against a tree in the nearby forest as instructed by him before he died but when the people went to check on the following day, they found he had woken up and got his luggage and went away.
3. ***Folk tales***: The word ‘folk’ originally comes from the German word for people ‘volk’ at one time with a connotation of ‘rural people’. Once known as folklore (people’s wisdom), the term folk tales means stories of ordinary people. Long time ago in many African countries as was in Zambia, grandmothers, grandfathers, mothers, aunts and other storytellers could entertain and informally educate children by means of folktales. Folktales form a substantial part of African folklore and they are an essential genre of African tradition and children’s literature. Folktale performance was combined with mimicry, gestures, song and poetry. Many African tales have songs as one of their distinctive features, which is vital in the interaction that takes place between the performer and the audience. As has been discussed already, folktales are regarded as narrative fiction because they tell a story which is not real but taken as something that took place in the remote past. These ‘stories of ordinary people’ exist in many forms:
4. ***Trickster narratives*** are so called because the central character is a trickster. In most Bantu folktales Kalulu is the central character. The central character of trickster narrative is usually a representative of the oppressed or the ruled. Think of Kalulu, one of the tiny animals who can face a lot of injustice and oppression if he does not use his intelligence or subjects under the rule of a dictator.
5. ***The monster narrative*** are also after the central character. This is usually a story about a monster or tyrant popularly called ogre which is terrorising people but has to be overcome day by day by some non-entity in society, usually a child or woman. These stories teach the worth of man regardless of appearance or social status. A number of Nigerian ogre stories can be seen televised on a number of channels. What is the subject that is perpetual in most monster narratives that you have listened to, or read?
6. ***The dilemma narrative*** involves a character who has to make a choice between two evils. For instance, killing one’s mother or one’s wife, sacrificing your father or your son or between wealth for 24 years and your own life thereafter.
7. ***Fables***: These are stories with a lesson usually conveyed through strong imagery. They can also be called parables. You have read a lot of biblical parables and you are able to tell their teachings.
8. ***Puzzles***: You can give your own explanation of what puzzles are. This can be said to be a narrative which pauses a problem for the audience to solve. They can also be called adult riddles.

So far we have looked at narratives. Why are they told? Well! You can provide education, entertainment, value and information through a wide range of narratives.

Two major things are essential in oral narrative performance:

1. a narrator: This can be a child or an adult,
2. an audience: This is usually a group of children. It can also be a mixed audience or indeed a group of adults depending on the type of narrative.

As seen above, a narrative can be heroic, tragic, legendary or comic. A narrative has the same structural features as a written story. It comprises plot, setting (in time and space). This is why every oral narrative has an opening core that gives clue to time and space. What is this core in your language? How does the narrator begin the tale?

You will realise that like a written story, an oral narrative has an exposition, complication, climax and the conclusion. The characters can be heroic (protagonists), tragic or sympathetic. They can be flat or round/ dynamic or static.

**6.1.1 Structural types of narrative plots**

There are seven types of narrative plots based on events or actions that take place in the narrative.

At the beginning of this type of story, or specifically plot, there is lack. This is followed by amelioration (improvement) and ends with the liquidation of lack – lack is eliminated. There is a narrative progression of improvement. Set backs are possible and likely but they do not change the essential movement of the plot.

**Type 1. Ascendancy**

At the beginning of this type of story, or specifically plot, there is lack. This is followed by amelioration (improvement) and ends with the elimination of lack. There is a narrative progression of improvement. Set backs are possible and likely but they do not change the essential movement of the plot.

**Type 2.Descendance**

This begins with a normal situation and deteriorates into lack. The deterioration is triggered by a violation of a rule by the hero. The sequence that follows results in a permanent negative condition.

**Type 3. Cyclical**

In this type plot, there is lack, amelioration and finally lack again. This type starts with lack rather than a normal situation and progresses towards improvement and achievement of a normal situation, but the hero violates the rule and this results into the restoration of lack. This type of plot combines the sequence of the ascendancy and descendance.

**Type 4*.* Spiral**

The progression towards improvement in this type of story/plot suffers in the first round of amelioration but improves in the second round. The sequence starts with lack which is then liquidated through amelioration. However, later, usually due to the action of an enemy not hero, lack is restored or impending. In the second round of amelioration, the hero overcomes his adversary, improves his condition and eliminates his opponent. Can you think of a narrative that takes this kind of plot structure?

**Type 5. The Mirror Image**

This structural type involves two main characters taking symmetrical series of test, yet, their actions are in inverse relations to each other and could be described in moral terms as good and bad. The positive character is rewarded while the negative one is punished.

**Type 6. Hour Glass**

This structural type is similar to the mirror image in that both involve two characters. However, in this type, the actions of the two characters are not parallel but opposing each other. The protagonist starts in lack and goes to normal situation while the antagonist begins from normal situation to lack.

The course of actions for the two characters converge, after which follows the liquidation of lack for the protagonist and lack for the antagonist.

**Type 7. Complex**

The complex structural type is in a sense similar to the hour glass because there are two main characters opposing each other. However, the two actions do not occur simultaneously but in a sequence. In other words, the narrator changes the central character of his/her story, focusing on the positive character in the first part of the narration and on the negative in the second part, Bwalya, 2006).

An example of this type is the summarised Tonga version of the tale below:

Once a line of girls were going to the river to fetch water. One of them hit her toe against a stone. The toe bled. She limped to the river. As she was attempting to draw water, some water came in contact with her would. Jerking with pain, she let go the clay pot. She tried looking for it to no avail. She went back and reported the loss to her father whose pot it was she lost. The father was furious and sent her to look for it. He commanded her not to return without it. The girl made a long journey through the river enquiring about the pot. She asked a big fish which directed her to a crocodile which in turn directed her to an old woman by the bank of the river. While with this old woman, the girl had to eat *nsima* with maggots for relish, squeeze boils with her mouth and did many filthy and disgusting things that she was asked. After a week, she was directed to another woman who subjected her to further offensive treatment. When she managed to do what the second old woman asked her, the girl was told where and how she could get a better pot than the one she lost. She went to meet a monster that asked her to choose between the two pots that were presented to her. Since the second old woman had described the pot to choose, the girl got her father a pot that could give him any good thing at request.

When the friend to this girl saw what happened, she lost her pot but could not do the things the first one did for the two old women. She did not even heed the advice of the second old woman which was very important for getting the right pot. She went back to the village with a pot that gave, not only her father but the whole homestead, only bad things like snakes, bees, scorpions and so forth.

**Evaluation**

1. Give examples of oral narratives in your language or a language that you know very well under the following categories:
2. myth
3. legend
4. trickster narrative
5. dilemma narrative
6. monster narrative
7. fable
8. adult riddle/puzzle

Remember to gloss the stories.

**6.2 Oral Poetry**

You have already discussed what poetry is and it is easy for you to define what oral poetry is. It is a piece of oral composition in verse performed orally. Actually, Finnegan(1970:16-24) has indicated that a poem can readily be called oral if it is orally composed (composition), it is orally transmitted (mode of transmission) and, related to the second point, it is orally performed.

Anoral poem can be composed at the actual time of performance***.*** In this case, the poet relies on a known reservoir of conventional oral formulae which he has built up from his practice as well as from hearing other poets perform. Some of the sources of the basic plots may even include written material. The poem can also be composed prior to and largely separate from particular performance.In this case, the poet adapts the poem in minor ways during the performance with subsequent modification as per audience reaction.

Oral poetry is meant to be orally performed. The problem is, even written poetry is orally performed.

* + 1. **Types of poems**

What types of poetry do you know? Which of these are common in the community you live in? `

**(a) Panegyrics**

These are poems composed to appease chiefs, heroes, hunters, the soil and the nation.They are composed by ballads/griots. Our national anthem is a good example of a panegyric.

**(b) Elegies**

These are sorrowful poems sung at funerals to console the bereaved as well as to remember the dead. These poems are also known as dirges. *Iciimbo ca malilo* of Aushi and Ng’umbo of Luapula, and most *Ziyabilo* of the Tonga people are good examples. One might add here the songs sang in the memorial beer party.

**(c) Lyrics**

These are poems sung or performed to appeal to feelings and attitude of people. They can be on love, sympathy, social attitudes, politics and so forth. *Imipukomo* of the Bemba people are good examples of lyrics. These types of poems are meant for entertainment at beer parties, marriage ceremonies and other feasts. Lyrics are for everyday use and can even include elegies. Can you give examples of such songs in your locality?

**(d) Epics**

These are ***poems which follow the ancestry heroic dynamism*** mainly sung and recited by ballads.

**(e) Sagas**

These are heroic poems associated with heroic events usually serving as morale boosters when sung or performed. They are mainly for hunters and warriors. Can you think of a song in your local community which can be categorised as a saga? For what event is it used?

**(f) Religious Poetry**

These are ***poems used to invoke spirits, gods*** (or God for Christian – hymns and choruses). The elder of the family or somebody with esoteric knowledge in the community such as a diviner or priest perform these. An exception must be made for Christian ones which any believer can perform (at least most except for the ‘special’ ones).

**Evaluation**

1. Give examples of :
2. A panegyric
3. An elegy
4. Lyric

in your language. Please write the full version.

1. What is the difference between an epic and saga?

**6.3 Proverbs**

You should be very well vest with proverbs. Can you explain in simpler terms what a proverb is? Are proverbs of any use is your society? What is the situation in the use of proverbs in the society of your school?

A proverb (from Latin: proverbium) is a simple, concrete, traditional saying that expresses a truth based on common sense or experience. Proverbs are often metaphorical and use formulaic language. <https://www.google.co.zm/search?q=role+of+proverbs+in+zambian+culture>) on 23. 06. 19.

**6.3.1 Functions of Proverbs.**

Proverbs are concise well formulated instructions used for admonishing, rebuking or teaching derived from day to day experience. Proverbs are statements which contain knowledge and wit which is transmitted from one generation to another under appropriate situations. Proverbs play an important part in African cultures all across the continent. Proverbs are universal in use and meaning; everyone can relate to them in some way and on some level. African proverbs can convey wisdom, truth, a discovery of ideas, as well as life lessons. These lessons can rebuke, counsel, guide, offer encouragement, and so on.

Proverbs also play very important roles in different types of literary works. The most important function of proverbs is to teach and educate the audience. They often contain expert advice, with a role for educating the readers (as they have now been written) on what they may face if they do something.

They are precise and concise to make it easy to pass the expectations of society more easily. Because they are short and relevant to every situation, they acquire widespread use. Proverbs can be mere statements or metaphors which can be used as conclusions. In tales, for instance, the moralising aspects may be given as proverbs. However, proverbs have no planned situations. Additionally, proverbs vary from people to people although there are some universal aspects. Can you make a group of five for which all the five members represent a different type of language. Each of you should collect five proverbs and compare if your member acknowledges presence of such a proverb in their language.

Note that although proverbs and narratives have been coded, they still qualify to be termed oral literature because of their nature. It is not the written form that determines the written genres. Oral narratives for instance, with their nature of folklore, repetition, and singing are oral forms.

**6.3.2 Elements of a Zambian Proverb**

Proverbs are associated with wisdom, and to some extent, a certain age - the old. In Zambia and among the Bantu people, the older one is, the wiser s/he is expected to be. This perception comes from the Bantu definition of wisdom. Wisdom is understood to be an application of intelligence on an accumulation of experience. From this point of view, a young person’s wisdom no matter how much it may be cannot equal that of even the least wise old wo/men. For this reason, proverbs are not used by the old to show how wise they are, they are usually used as a matter of style. They are also used among some tribes to show someone’s fluency in the language spoken. In this case, it is not uncommon to find young a wo/man using a string of proverbs in his/her speech. To those used to this manner of speaking, proverbs are preferable because they are precise and concise, as earlier mentioned. They are also preferable because they allow more interaction between the speaker and the listener.

Proverbs sometimes tend to give the opposite surface meaning to that of the deep meaning. For instance, ‘*Umwana ashenda, atasha nyina ukunaya’* (Icibemba) literary, ‘A child who does not move praises his/her mother’s cooking’. This proverb seems to suggest that children should stay home to appreciate their mother’s cookery, yet the proverb advises the very opposite.

Because life is not subject to hard and fast rules, Proverbs exist in contradictory pairs so as to advise according to the context. Let us consider the following:

**Tonga:**  *Nkanga itola ulaalubilo* ‘A guinea fowl is got by the faster runner’.

*Waaciimba alubilo waacisiya* ‘One who dug it hurriedly, left it’.

The first proverb encourages doing thing fast but the second is against. We can, therefore, say that the two do not actually contradict each other because they are used under different circumstances.

Because the geography and the economy of any society influences the imagery and symbolism of its proverbs, ***proverbs tend to have localised images and symbols.*** Thus, people who live on the plateau are likely to have few proverbs on fish but a lot on trees, mushroom and land. If these people are farmers, additional images are derived from farming-related activities that are economically important. This explains why the Tonga people say, *Matako ali amwi tayabuli kucumbana* ‘Buttocks that are together can but rub against each other’ while the Bemba’s say *Imiti ipalamene, taibula ukukwesana ‘*Trees that are close by cannot rub against each other’ to mean that friction between people who live together is inevitable. The choice of trees by the Bemba is both geographical as well as economic. Bemba being plateau dweller and ‘citemene’ farmers have more experience with trees. The philosophy of the Tonga one, however, is that even though you may differ, you need to solve the problem without bruising each other. For the tree analogy, the friction is likely to cause injury to the parties.

**6.3.3 The structures of a proverb**

Proverbs are dual-structured; they comprise two parts. The two parts may be propositions or just phrases separated by a pause called ‘caesura’. For instance, *Munshebwa, aile namafi kubuko ‘*The one who cannot be told, went to his/her in-laws with faeces’.

The two parts of a proverb can stand; each on its own. One of the parts may be single word as in *Cintoomfwa, ameneene umwefu kwikoshi* ‘He who hears not, grew a beard at the back of his head’. The verb in such a case is compressed into a nominal phrase as seen in the gloss. You may sometimes find it difficult to notice the position of the pause. The dual structure of the verb is improvised by the coiner of the proverb because it provides rhythm and balance and helps memory. Rhythm, on its part adds substance to the proverb. Let us now look at the structural types of proverbs; mainly the parallelism and simple form. Try to think what these structures are? Can you provide examples for these? Well! For parallelism as the first structural type, we can identify three sub-structures:

1. **Simple Parallelism:** A proverb with this structure has similar forms (usually grammatical) in its two parts. For instance, a proverb may have Subject + Predicate or Predicate + Subject in both parts as in the following proverb:

Nyanja: ***Walira mvula, walira matiika.***

‘You cry for rain, you cry for mud’

Let us split this sentence into morphs so we can clearly see the parts of speech in this proverb:

Wa lira mvula, wa lira matika.

Subject verb noun, subject verb noun

predicate predicate

This proverb has subject + predicate in both of its parts. In case you have forgotten basic grammar, the underlined parts in the proverb above constitutes predicates.

1. **Cross parallelism:** A proverb with this structural pattern has different forms in its two parts. It might have Subject + predicate in the first part but Predicate + Subject in the second part as in the Nyanja and Tonga proverbs below:

*Andiitaana pakaloba njoka, pakaloba mbeba akumba okha.*

‘S/He calls m when a snake enters (a hole), when a mouse enters (a hole) s/he digs alone’.

**A ndi itaana pa kalobanjoka**

Subject infix (object) verb adverbial verb noun,

**paka loba mbeba a kumba okha.**

adverbial verb noun subject verb adverb.

*Kaluba mwaambi, mwaambilwa talubi.* (Tonga)

‘It is forgotten by the speaker, the one who has been told does not forget’.

**Ku salwa lubambo, wa kukwata tasalwi**

prepositional verb noun, Subject verb verbal

1. **Juxtaposed parallelism:**In this structure,you have th**e Verb phrase + Subject followed by Subject + Verb phrase.**  So the subjects for the two parts, as you can see, are to adjacent to each other.

Bemba: *Sunga* ***umukoshi****,* ***ubulungu*** *tabwashupa* ‘Keep the neck, necklaces are not difficult to find’. (Juxtaposed structure)

The second main structure, **the Simple form/ Simple proverb** has no caesura because it is not dual; it has only one part as exemplified below.

Tonga:  *Kabuca uleta tunji.*

‘Day break brings a lot’

Nyanja: *Tsiku limodzi silioza mbewa.*

‘One day cannot make a mouse rot’.

Now try to do the same analysis for the proverb below:

Icibemba: *Takalabwa mwebwa, kalaba uwakasosele.*

It is never forgotten by the told, it is he who said it that forgets.

Chitonga: *Kaluba mwaambi, mwaambilwa talubi.*

‘It is forgotten by the speaker, the one who has been told does not forget’.

Shona: *Chikanganwa idemo, muti wakatemwa haukangamwi*

‘It is forgotten by the axe, the tree which was cut does not forget’.

**6.4 Riddles**

Have you ever engaged in riddling? How is it done? What is a riddle? A riddle is a question or statement intentionally phrased so as to require ingenuity in ascertaining its answer or meaning. ([https://www.google.co.zm/search).](https://www.google.co.zm/search).%20) It is essentially a metaphor which is a result of the primary mental processes of association, comparison, analogy and the perception of likeness. Riddles are sometimes called brain teasers.

**6.4.1 Characteristics of riddles**

1. A riddles is presented through an opening formula.

E.g. Bemba: *Co!* ‘There it comes!’

Tonga: *Nkaako*!

The opponent has to respond before the riddler gives his / her riddle. Can you provide this response in your language or in the language you know very well?

1. It has a descriptive core.

e.g Tonga: *Ndeenda anamuleyaleya*. ‘I have moved with one who consistently deviates (off the road)’

1. It has a contradictory core which will suggest the aspect to be resolved.

e.g. Bemba: *Nanyanta pa muntu umutuntulu, alifye tondolo.*

*Nanyanta pa waafwa apuunda****.*** (Contradictory core).

‘I step on a living person, s/he is just quiet. I step on a dead one, she screams’.

1. It also has a conclusion.

Bemba: *Cinshi?* ‘What is it?’ (In Bemba, just as in many Bantu languages, this comes as a question). In a few languages, a pause would suffice.

1. The contradictory element is often developed at the expense of the descriptive core.

Bemba: *Akaile ubwamba, kabweela naakafwaala.*

‘It that went naked, has come back dressed’.

1. Answer to riddles are cultural /spatial specific: one riddle will have different answers in different places among the same or different people. The riddles themselves are localised; they vary from place to place. All this is as a result of the interaction between cultural artefacts and geography, economics and history on the other hand. Remember, riddles have to use symbols and analogies. The choice of these symbols is dependent on the three factors above.
2. Sometimes the riddle does not follow logic. Consider the Cibemba riddle below:

Riddle: *Ndu ndu ndu pa luputa,*

‘Ndu ndu ndu on the ridge’

Answer: *Nsofu yacinda mwitete ba mutinta ku mucila.*

‘The elephant has danced in the reed they have pushed his/her tail.’

1. Unlike proverbs which are meant for adults and are called upon by situations, riddles are meant for children and have no occasion.

Not all riddles, however, are meant for children. Among Bantu people, there are adult riddles meant to advance human nature such as the riddle of a man, who had to cross the river with groundnuts, a rat and a cat in a canoe that could only carry the paddler and one more thing at a time. Note that there are different versions of the same puzzle, depending culture, geography or history. The adult riddle does not begin with the same formula as the children’s. For instance, Tonga:

Riddler: *Ngaaya makani* ‘Here is an issue’

Audience: *Kaazya* ‘Let it come.’

**6.4.2 Type of riddles**

1. **Simple riddle:** In this type of riddle, one is just required to guess. For instance:

Bemba: *Ka naasi pawindo* ‘A nurse at the window’

Answer: *Ciimina*. ‘It is a nasal mucus’.

1. ***Enigma:*** This is a riddle in obscure wording. It is solved by grasping the concepts of the words. eg.
2. What is two days after the day after the day before yesterday?
3. What has a foot but no legs?
4. Two girls ate dinner together. They both ordered tea. One girl drank very fast and had finished five cups in the time it took the other to drink just one. The girl who drank one died while the other survived. All of the drinks were poisoned. How did the girl who dank the most survive?
5. ***Conundrum***: This is a riddle whose answer involves a play with words as in: Riddler**: “**What is the difference between a blind man and a sailor in prison?”

Audience: “The other cannot see to go while the other cannot go to sea.”

1. **Pun:** a play of words, For example:

When is a door not a door?

Answer: When it is a jar.

**Evaluation**

1. In your own words, what it a proverb?
2. Discuss proverbs with respect to the following functions:
3. hospitality
4. reconciliation
5. guidance
6. charity
7. admonition
8. Using your language, give examples of the following structures of proverbs:
9. Parallelism
10. simple parallelism
11. cross parallelism
12. juxtaposed parallelism
13. Simple statement
14. (a) Define a riddle.

(b) Give major characteristics of a riddle.

(c) Name the occasion for its performance.

5. What is the difference between a riddle and a proverb?

**6.5 The Songs**

Do you have a favourite song? People have probably sung 'Happy Birthday' to you, or lullabies sung to lure the babies, but could you explain what a song is if someone asked? In this section, let's explore the meaning of the word 'song' and see some examples of famous songs.

A song is a single work of music that is typically intended to be sung by the human voice with distinct and fixed pitches and patterns using sound and silence and a variety of forms that often include the repetition of sections. At its most basic, a song is a short piece of music, usually with words. It combines melody and vocals, although some composers have written instrumental pieces, or musical works without words, that mimic the quality of a singing voice. The words of a song are called lyrics. Lyrics can include a series of verses, the longer sections of the song that tell the story, and a refrain, a short phrase repeated at the end of every verse. Songs can have a simple structure of one or two verses, or a more complex one with multiple verses and refrains. Songs usually have a meter or beat. Whether you sing or speak the lyrics, you can feel a pattern or pulse in the way the words move the song forward. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-a-song-definition-examples.html>. 22.06.19.

I hope you still remember from the discussion of verse in poetry and what lyrics are

**6.5.1 Functions of songs**

What role do songs perform in your society? A song is a very important element in music, but is also one of the most prominent elements in our lives. You will come across several different categories of songs that have a unique mood and touch. Songs are used for many purposes:

* to tell stories,
* express emotions,
* convey a belief in faith,
* give instructions,
* rebuke certain behaviour,
* to educate people in the norms of the society.
* praise good individuals, and
* help make difficult, repetitive work a little less tiresome.

**6.5.2 Types of songs**

Sorting out the types of songs according to definite factors is really difficult, as they can be classified into many different and random categories.

Ballads are songs which include a narration of a story in a musical way. These are basically slow songs, but may contain heavy components as well. Generally, ballads have an emotional touch to them, owing to the lyrical content. This is why they are a great hit during live shows. Ballads can be composed by artists from any genre of music. Power ballads are those which combine heavy music with emotional lyrics.

Classical songs: As the name suggests, classical songs are those in which traditional music plays a main role. They are traditional or folk songs. These songs have had a substantial impact on the music we hear today. Every country has a culture, which is clearly apparent in its classical form and folk. Throughout the world, many cultures had songs connected to their history, often passed down from one generation to another. Everyone knew them. These reflect life and activities of common people. Some folk songs existed for decades before later composers or music scholars finally wrote them down.

Pop songs are those which have contemporary lyrics and an upbeat rhythm, basically meant for the youth culture, eg. Michael Jackson’s.

Rock songs are the most popular among teenagers and youngsters. They consist of clear pieces of lead guitar, bass guitar, drums, and keyboards as some of the main instruments. When the instruments are played in sync, they sound energetic along with the vocals.

Country songs are suitable for easy listening. They mainly consist of clean lyrics with music pieces using classical guitars and other traditional instruments. Occasionally, solos of instruments like the banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and harmonica can also be heard in country songs.

Dance songs are fast and have a thumping rhythmic pattern. Lyrics are not given much importance here. Nowadays, dance songs accompany synth, drum machines, and electronic music, and are played in dance parties. Nowadays, you will find most traditional songs rerecorded to dance numbers by adding beats and effects.

Gospel songs contain lyrics taken from Bible verses or are just written out of Christian belief. Usually, the lyrics are made out of a personal experience with God. They are sung in churches all around the globe. In our communities, we sometimes hear gospel songs in beer halls.

Love songs are slow songs whose lyrics concentrate on the feelings of love and relationships. These songs are largely played in marriages. There are sad love songs whose lyrics relate to breakups, too. They are mostly composed by pop and rock artists.

This is just a random list of the most common types of songs sung and played in the music industry along with some examples. Remember, one song can even belong to two or more categories, which is why the classification becomes difficult. However, it is commonly considered that song types can be classified as per the genre of music, (<https://melodyful.com/types-of-songs>), on 04.03.19 Which of these are prominent in your locality? What about in Zambia? What are the categories of the Zambian songs?

**6.5.3 Songs in narratives**

Songs can be applied in various situations. They can be found as a form of poetry, in drama as well as in narratives. A song embedded in a narrative saves a lot of purposes. They are a spice for the story. Ballads are typical of such songs.

When music is added, it is an exciting stimulus to keep the audience entertained by the performance. It is much easier to watch a movie if it has music and memorable lyrics at that.

Songs often help us learn and remember information better than we would just memorise it. Putting things to a tune solidifies the knowledge in our brains. So basically, it makes it much more memorable. Songs have a good way of being poetic and meaningful, allowing us to connect through the melodies or lyrics in a much deeper way than we may have just heard some lines in a movie.

**Evaluation**

* 1. Define the song.
  2. Explain the similarity of the song with poetry’
  3. What are the functions of the song?
  4. Discuss various types of Zambian songs.

**Summary**

This unit has discussed the concept of African oral literature for which the term ‘orature’ has been established. It has distinguished what is written and that which is in print. We have realised that most of the oral forms are fixed forms (the oral narratives, proverbs and riddles).

Structural narrative plots have been discussed and you can analyse any oral narrative using such plots.

Oral poetry has been discussed with focus on types of poems. Six types of poems have been discussed; panegyric, elegy (dirges), lyric, religious, saga and ballad. Proverbs have been discussed in relation to functions, elements and structure.

Riddles, which are typically for children have been have been discussed with focus on the characteristics and types while the song has been discussed focusing on function and types.

**I hope you have enjoyed your journey on this course.**

**Assessment**

**Course work: assignments and examinations**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assessment | Comments | Percentage |
| Assignment 1 | Written | 20% |
| Assignment 2 (seminar) | Team work | 10% |
| Test |  | 20% |
| Final exam |  | 50% |
| **Total** |  | **100%** |

**Prescribed Readings**

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