

AL 315 / IDE/AL 315

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

MAIN EXAMINATION 2013 / 2014

TITLE OF PAPER: TRADITIONAL/ORAL LITERATURE 11

COURSE CODE : AL 315 / IDE-AL 315

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS :
1. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS, CHOOSING ATLEAST ONE (1) FROM EACH SECTION.
 2. EACH ANSWER SHOULD COMMENCE ON A SEPARATE PAGE.
 3. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING ANY READING MATERIAL INTO THE EXAMINATION HALL
 4. IN THE ASSESMENT OF THIS PAPER, CORRECT USAGE OF ENGLISH, THE QUALITY OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESENTATION OF ANSWERS WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

SECTION A: THE NATURE AND THEORY OF ORAL NARRATIVES

1. "I want to invite you to accompany me into a region where Lions fly around, little clever girls kill giant snakes and old fellows have their eyes on their feet...you soon will realise that under the strange surface much wisdom is hidden, many a provocation to contemplate about human weaknesses and tragedies, there is much to learn for our everyday conduct".

Discuss the above statement from Sigrid Schmidt's *Trickster Monster and Clever Girls*, in the light of Swazi oral narratives. (20 marks)

2. Oral narrative performance like all other speech acts, is a communication system in which a social discourse takes place principally between a narrator/performer and an audience. Discuss. (20 Marks)
3. Comment on the fluid and ambiguous nature of oral narratives (20 marks).
4. Using the extract below as your basis, discuss the role of nature in a number of Southern African oral narratives in so far as it appears to be designed to be a paradigm for a good social order and how life ought to be in a human society. (20 Marks)

At length the leaves said, "Go out, Umkxakaza, and look for water here at home. "She said, I am of age, I do not yet quit umgongo". They replied, "we already knew that you were of age; but we say, Go and fetch water." She went and fetched water from another house and came back with it. The leaves said, "Light a fire." She replied, "I cannot light a fire. "They said, "We already knew that you could not light a fire; but we say light a fire." She lighted a fire. The leaves said, "Take a cooking- pot and place it on the hearth." Umkxakaza said. "I cannot cook." The leaves replied. "We already knew that you cannot cook; but we say Cook." She put the pot on the fire, and poured water on it. The leaves said, "Go and bring corn, and put it on the fire. She sat; the corn was boiled. They said, "Turn up the millstone and grind the boiled corn." She replied, "I cannot grind, I am the King's child. Look here", -showing them her hands, for her nails were very long. One of the leaves took a knife and said, "Hand hither your hand to me." It cut off the nails with the knife. One of the leaves arose and turned up the milestone, and took the upper stone, and put the boiled corn on it and ground it, and said, "See, that is called grinding." It quitted the stone, and said, "Grind." She ground a large mass of corn. They said, "Take your pot of amasi, and put it here." She took it. They said. "Take a large pot and place it here." She took it. The leaves said, "Wash it." She washed it. The leaves said, Go and pick out the milk-calabash from your calabashes, and bring it here. Umkxakaza said, "Our milk-calabash is large; I cannot carry it alone. It is carried by three men." The leaves said, "Go, and we will go with you." They went and fetched the calabash and came back with it. The leaves said, "Empty it." She brought the pot near, and they poured the amasi into it; they also poured into the large pot. They took a basket, and placed in it some of the ground corn; they took another basket, and placed it on top of the ground corn. Again, they took another basket, and covered the amasi which was in the pot. One of the

leaves took a spoon, and put it on the top of the basket; and took the pot and the amasi to Usilosimapundu, the master of whose servants the leaves were. (From: Umxakaza Wakogingwayo, Zulu tale recorded in 1895).

SECTION B: PROVERBS AND RIDDLES

5. Proverbs are fundamental ingredients in the intellectual traditions of Africa. Discuss. (20 marks).

6. An **authentic** siSwati riddle is given below showing a structure that is of great **literary** value. Also given is the **recent** type of riddle commonly found in Swazi infant schools today.

Explain where the “literary” element lies in the “authentic” riddle, and also show how/where the recent riddle fail to meet the literary standard.

Authentic siSwati Riddle: I riddle you with my women who are wearing long white dresses and black (sometimes red) head scarves. **Answer:** Fire matches. **Recent Riddle:** I riddle you with my ten birds up a tree. I shoot one dead. How many birds remain up the tree. **Answer:** None.

7. Identify the similarities that exist in the language of Swazi proverbs and riddles.(20 marks).