THE USE OF FOLKTALES AS READING COMPREHENSION PASSAGES IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT: The teaching of reading comprehension strategies to English First Additional language students is a challenge to educators in South African schools. Most of the comprehension passages used are devoid of the learners' contexts, and therefore become incomprehensible to them. This paper argues for the usage of folktales as a strategy to teach learners reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language to promote their morals and culture. A qualitative explorative design was adopted for this study. Documents pertaining to folklore and how they can be implemented in English First Additional Language were analysed. Different thinking around the usage of folklore in English First Additional language were sought from practising educators through interviews. A directive conclusion was drawn from the analysis of these documents. A model for using folklore in English Language teaching was developed. The study recommends that folklore should be used in the teaching of reading comprehension passages as it is rich in language which appeals to learners' cognitive levels.

KEYWORDS: folklore, reading comprehension strategies, model.

1. INTRODUCTION
The teaching of reading comprehension strategies has always being a challenge to English First Additional language educators. Educators have been using different reading comprehension passages which bring along different texts which may be unfamiliar to learners (Perkins, 2015). Learners should be exposed to a variety of reading comprehension passages which will enhance their reading strategies. Most of the texts used in reading comprehension passages articulate their own values and assume that they are shared by the majority of learners. This is usually not the case. The reading of these comprehension passages require strategies which learners do not have (Carrel, 1998). The lack of usage of strategies by young and unskilled readers often lead them in filing to monitor their understanding of comprehension passages. These unskilled readers lack the knowledge about text features, they are disinterested in text and unwilling to use strategies, the problem with the majority of comprehension passages used in EFAL is that they are devoid of context.

Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) argue that teachers should be able to identify underlying ideology in a text and also articulate the values they share with learners. The teaching of reading focusses only on the decoding part, ignoring the meaning and comprehension part (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016).

The above challenges as described by Carrel (1998, 188); Grabe (2009); Grabe and Stoller (2001); and Toum'a (2012) indicate the dire situation under which learners become when coming to reading. This article argues for the development of reading strategies which may assist in enhancing the teaching of reading strategies. This study, therefore, investigate the use of folktales as alternative reading comprehension passages which will help learners in developing their reading abilities.

2. OBJECTIVES
The study had the following objectives with relation to the use of folktales;
- To investigate the possible use of folktales as reading comprehension passage in the teaching of EFAL.
- To find out different views regarding the use of folktales as reading comprehension passages from English educators.
- To design a model to be used in the teaching or development of reading comprehension strategies.

3. METHODOLOGY
This study applied the qualitative where documents pertaining to folklore were analysed. Clark and Creswell (2013, 56) believe that the qualitative method is the best when analysing documents. Sampled folklore texts were purposefully selected and analysed to determine the academic texture in terms of their acceptable level of cognitive status. About 5 English First Additional (EFAL) educators in the Mankweng circuit were purposefully

sampled for this study. They were interviewed on their views regarding the incorporation of folktales in their teaching of EFAL.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW
4.1 Definition of folklore
The word folklore may be interpreted differently by different researchers. Olajide (2010) views folklore as "a collection of chants, mnemonics, incantation, songs, music and stories derived from lullabies legends myths, proverbs, tattoos and totems. They are derived from daily experiences of ordinary people. Folklore is viewed as being constituted of customs, beliefs, attitudes, lifestyles, joys, sorrows, entertainments, events, states, habits and traditions which are peculiar to a group of people or community. Gupta (2008)'s views also agree with the above relationship between folklore and the community by stating that it is of a tribe and is specific to a particular community. He reiterate the importance of folkore in the community by stating that

Folklore also function as a bridge between two cultures through its transmission from one culture to another. The elements of folklore are transmitted to the next generation by a community interest of group identity (Gupta, 2008)

In this study, folklore are used interchangeably with folktale. Folktale is defined as "a tale or legend originating and traditional among the common people" (Olajide, 2010). It is within these specific communities that folklore and language exist side by side. It is through language that specific community folklore, social and cultural artefacts are transmitted from one generation to another. Language, therefore, plays an important role in the learning of folklore in our communities. Folklore can, therefore, be used as reading comprehension passages in English Language Teaching.

4.2. The importance of folklore in English language teaching.
Gholson and Stump (2005) argue that folklore helps in foregrounding students' voices and their personal cultural knowledge. In using folklore in the English classes, students encounter other cultural perspectives on their own terms, both in text and in students' conversation. It is within culture that students may access the morals and values which affects their being. Olajide (2010) argues that folklore plays a critical part of any culture. It is through learners' culture that they bring the morals and values to their English classrooms, and they become aware of their existence. He argues that folklore afford students opportunities to explore the concepts of morals and values and how they apply them in their own lives and society." He further argues that knowing what morals are will help learners in determining the morals they want to have. This can only be achieved through the use of fairy-tales or folktales. Pederson (1993) argues that folklore fosters the understanding of foreign language and their cultural connectness. It also make them to be aware of underlying similarities that exist between all cultures and cultural texts (Gholson & Stump, 2005).

In addition to what Gholson and Stump discussed above, Olajide (2010) argues that folklore may be used in English classes because it
(a) Sensitizes children to the immediate environment.
(b) Helps Children To Develop Self-Confidence
(c) Sharpens Children's Survival Instincts
(d) Increases Children's Patriotism.
(e) Enhances Children' Moral Development.

The above argument by Olajide implies that teachers should have knowledge about the culture of their language context of practice. This means that they should be informed of what purpose are people needing education for. Knowledge of the curriculum, which incorporate knowledge of folklore will assist educators in designing relevant material for teaching comprehension passages (Olajide, 2010). Language classrooms may serve as the immediate environments for unfolding the envisaged curriculum.

4.2.1 The relationship between language and culture
Culture is seen as literacy resource for the national emancipation and this can be achieved through the use of folklore as reading comprehension passages. Culture prepares the mind for reading and folklore serves as a cultural reminder of what to read about. The discussion on the relationship between language and culture is based on the Whorfian Hypothesis as described in Wardhaugh (1998). He describes the relationship between language and culture in the following way:

'One long-standing claim concerning the relationship between language and culture is that the structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world. It is through language that one have a reflection of his or her culture. The culture of a people find reflection in the language they employ. People use their language in ways that reflect what they value and what they do.

The statement above tries to illustrate the interrelatedness between language and culture. It argues that culture does not determine the structure of a language, but influences how a language is used. Folklores as part

of culture, can therefore play an important role in developing learners' comprehension strategies. Abatan (2011) sees folklore as having the educational value of changing one's negative attitude and character in the society. It teaches learners to be sincere and the virtues of being patient. In addition to the above, Olajide (2006) argues that folklore and culture enhance philosophical and world view which learners could bring to the class and utilise for effective language learning (Wardhaugh, 1998). It provides a screen or filter to reality; it determines how speakers perceive and organise the world around them, both the natural world and the social world (Wardhaugh, 1998). Language is therefore part of culture. Language, as part of culture, also brings to the English class valuable experience about people' identity. Siziba and Wood (2015) argue that "language is an important aspect of identity. Our mother tongue, or language of primary socialisation, provides our initial contact with the world and facilitates the formation of values as well as our view of ourselves."

Pedersen (1993) views folklore as fostering understating and acceptance of the foreign language and culture. Students may be engaged in folklore activities which integrates all the cognitive tasks, language skills and learning strategies. Students may be exposed to observing, identifying opinions, recognising imagery, sequencing, discriminating and pronouncing sounds, exploring cause and effect, anticipating, synthesizing, generalising, brainstorming, classifying, comparing and contrasting, Interpreting facts, analysing, problem solving and evaluating (Pederson, 1993).

The use of folklore, like songs and speeches in English First Additional language is related to the current approach in teaching, which is the Communicative Approach (Pederson 1993).It exposes learners to the real usage of language in its cultural context.

5. READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Tennet (2016) define reading strategies as tools or plans for facilitating and extending comprehension. Henia (2003), as cited in Molotja (2016), describes strategies as conscious and flexible plans that readers apply to particular texts and tasks. On the other hand,McNamara (2007) define reading comprehension strategies as "a cognitive or behavioural action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension." In addition to the above definition, Cekiso and Madikiza (2014, 2020) view reading strategies as "specific actions, behaviours, steps or techniques that learners use to improve their progress in comprehending, internalizing and using a second language. Reading comprehension strategies enhance learners' attention, assist learners in distinguishing between necessary and unnecessary information in the text, think about the main idea as read through the text be able to predict, paraphrase and infer in filling gaps in their reading (Carrel, 1998; Carrel et al.,1998; Grabe,2009, ; Tennet, 2016). The expectation from learners in going through reading comprehension passages is that they should be able to perform all the above-mentioned strategies. This, however. becomes a problem because the majority of reading comprehension passages are devoid of the learners' context or background. As a result of the text being devoid of the context, many learners find themselves having difficulties in understanding what they read. The researchers argues here that folktales from learners' background may serve as good reading comprehension passages. This is because they are contextualised with the learners' background. In addition to the described reading strategies above, the following are also deemed important for learners to be able to comprehend texts:

- cognitive reading strategies
  These are strategies used to manipulate the language that include note taking, summarising, paragraphing, predictions, analysing and using context clues.
- Memory reading strategies which are techniques used to assists as word association and semantic mapping.
- Compensation reading strategies, such as inferencing and guessing while reading, which can assist the learner in making up for reading deficiencies.
- Affective reading strategies, which include self-encouraging behaviour to lower anxiety, such as rewarding oneself for reading efficiently.
- Social reading strategies, involving collaborating with peers, for example, to ask questions, seek help or correction and to get feedback while reading (Magogwe, 2013).

The above mentioned reading comprehension strategies may best be developed within our learners, if they read texts which are culturally contextualised, and therefore found within relevant folktales Carrel (1998). Fabusuyi (2014) views folktales as being rich and having varied content in language teaching and learning and which can lead to the acquisition of the above skills. Again, folktales may also facilitates the learning of grammatical structures through repetition and helps learners to reflect through the use of high level words.

5.1 The application of the Revised Blooms' Taxonomy the Barret's Taxonomy in developing reading comprehension skills.

Assessment of reading comprehension strategies in the teaching of English as a First Additional Language is done through the application of the Revised Blooms 'Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001) and Barret's

Taxonomy *(joebyrne.net/curriculum/barret.pdf retrieved on 2016/10/10)*.In demonstrating how the Blooms' Taxonomy and Barret's taxonomy may be used for developing reading comprehension skills. The folktale applied in this discussion is labelled as appendix A entitled: *The STORY OF HARE*
1. How many animals failed as gate keepers?
   The aim of this questions is to assess learners' recalling or remembering skills. It is aligned with the literal questions as stated in the Revised Blooms' Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Barret (2016) also classifies the simple questions on remembering under the literal comprehension. The literal comprehension is concerned with ideas and information which are explicitly stated in the comprehension level (Barret *(joebyrne.net/curriculum/barret.pdf retrieved on 2016/10/10*.

2. What was the cause of death for so many animals?
This question also belongs to the remembering level in Blooms' Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001).It also belongs to the Barret's Taxonomy's literal comprehension domain. It forms a base for comprehension amongst learners.

3. Outline or explain how Inkalimeva tricked other animals into sleep and then ended up stealing the fats.
This question is paced in the understanding level in Blooms' Taxonomy. Learners are supposed to indicate their understanding of the ideas by explaining the procedure/strategy utilised by Inkalimeva in tricking other animals. This also relates to Barret's level of inferential comprehension. Learners are supposed to infer supporting details for their argument from the text.

4. Refer to the Hare's actions in the text and outline your proposed solution to the problem in the text.
This is a higher order comprehension question which requires learners to apply their understanding and knowledge gained from the text regarding solving problems.

5. Do you think the Hare was more tactical in dealing with Inkalimeva? This question will require learners to analyse the Hare and Inkalimeva's tactics and decide who was more tactical between the two. It belongs to high order comprehension level (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, 6) and the inferential comprehension level in Barret's taxonomy.
   The above questions as based on the folktale, *The Story of Hare*, demonstrate how rich the folktale is on issues of developing learners' reading comprehension skills. They also emphasise what Pederson (1993); Abatan (2011); Olajide (2011) and Fabusuyi (2014) argued for the usage of folktales. They maintained that folktales are a good resource for developing reading comprehension skills among learners. Different levels of cognitive development are being assessed using folktales as texts. The usage of the folktale as demonstrated above also show how important it is in developing and fostering good relationship between members of a community through trust, and also indicating the importance of working together. These are all enshrined in culture.
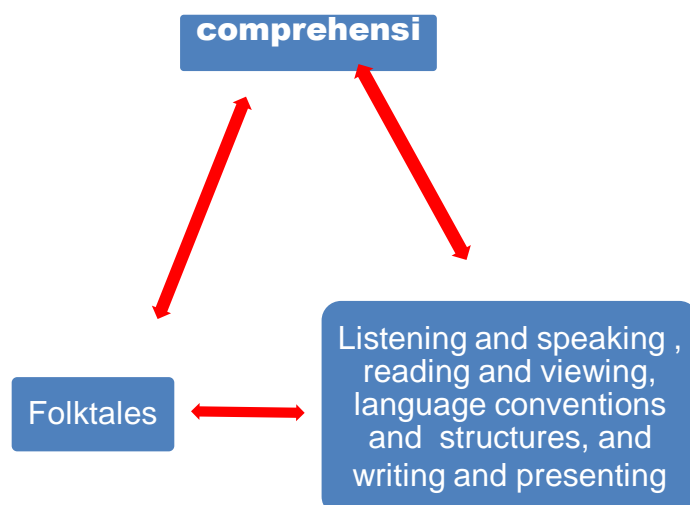

Fig 1 Molotja (2022) Reading Comprehension Model for incorporating folktales in the teaching of EFAL

The above model designed represent the usage of folktales as reading comprehension passage, which may be used by teachers and learners at schools to help developing comprehension reading strategies amongst learners. This will in turn help in the acquisition of skills of listening and speaking, reading and viewing; writing and presentation and language convention and structures, as a requirement for the achievement according to CAPS in EFAL (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

6. RESULTS

6.1 Documents analysed

The results from documents analysed indicated that folktales serve as good reading comprehension passages (Pederson 1993; Maglioco; Abatan 2011; Olajide 2011; Fabusuyi, 2014). This implies that educators may utilise folktales, which are rich in content and developing learners' morals, as reading comprehension passages. Documents analysed also indicate that it is through the learners' culture that they will be able to foster a good understanding of the text, since most of the folktales will be from learners' culture. Foltales, therefore, serve as a resource for the development of the EFAL skills. It is of interest to learners and therefore enhances the development of comprehension skills. Learners are entertained, while at the same time learning.

6.2 Interviews

English First Additional Language educators interviewed also confirmed the value of folktales in their teaching of EFAL. They indicated that learners are able to associate with folktales as they have heard them from their homes. The problem they experienced with the usage of folktales is that folktales are mainly used in the Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and the General Education and Training Band. This is not withstanding the introduction of folklore in the FET band, which was however, offered as a choice amongst other literature genres. It is because of the educators' in ability to teach folklore in the FET band that it relegated to an unchosen genre. One advantage indicated is that folktales help learners in developing strategies which are more applicable in the reading of abstract comprehension passages.

The other discovery is that contextualisation of reading comprehension passages enhance learners' strategies in reading comprehension passages. It is therefore important for educators to make sure that their choice of passages is contextualised for the learners' benefit.

7. CONCLUSION

The researcher would like to conclude that the teaching of reading comprehension passage would be best done if folklore is considered as the alternative to reading comprehension passages. Argument from literature has also shown that folklore is rich in content and teaches learners morals and values which are part of their culture. It is also argued that folktales, as part of culture, widen learners' thinking capabilities. This is because it offers content from learners' background language, and therefore it becomes easier for learners to associate with this content. Folktales are written within context, which makes it to be a relevant resource for learners to use as reading comprehension passages.

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APPENDIX A
THE STORY OF HARE
South-African Folk-Tales, by James A. Honeÿ, [1910], at sacred-texts.com

ONCE upon a time the animals made a kraal and put some fat in it. They agreed that one of their number should remain to be the keeper of the gate. The first one that was appointed was the Coney (imbila). He agreed to take charge, and all the others went away. In a short time the coney fell asleep, when the Inkalimeva (a fabulous animal) went in and ate all the fat. After doing this, he threw a little stone at the coney.

The coney started up and cried out: "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the Inkalimeva."

It repeated this cry several times, calling out very loudly. The animals at a distance heard it, they ran to the kraal, and when they saw that the fat was gone they killed the coney.

They put fat in the kraal a second time, and appointed the muishond (Ingaga) to keep the gate. The Muishond consented, and the animals went away as before. After a little time the inkalimeva came to the kraal, bringing some honey with it. It invited the keeper of the gate to eat honey, and while the muishond was enjoying himself the inkalimeva went in and stole all the fat. It threw a stone at the muishond, which caused him to look up.

The Muishond cried out: "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the inkalimeva."

As soon as the animals beard the cry, they ran to the kraal and killed the muishond.

They put fat in the kraal a third time, and appointed the Duiker (Impunzi) to be the keeper of the gate. The Duiker agreed, and the others went away. In a short time the inkalimeva made its appearance. It proposed to

the duiker that they should play hide and look for. The Duiker agreed to this. Then the inkalimeva hid itself, and the duiker looked for it till he was so tired that he lay down and went to sleep. When the Duiker was asleep, the inkalimeva ate up all the fat.

Then it threw a stone at the dulker, which caused him to jump up and cry out: "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the Inkalimeva."

The animals, when they heard the cry, ran to the kraal and killed the Duiker.

They put fat in the kraal the fourth line, and appointed the Bluebuck (Inputi) to be the keeper of the gate. When the animals went away, the Inkalineva came as before.

It said: "What are you doing by yourself?"

The Bluebuck answered: "I am watching the fat belonging to all the animals."

The Inkalimeva said: "I will be your companion. Come, let us scratch each other's heads."

The Bluebuck agreed to this. The inkalimeva sat down and scratched the head of the other till he went to sleep. Then it arose and ate all the fat. When it had finished, it threw a stone at the bluebuck and awakened him.

The Bluebuck saw what had happened and cried out: "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the Inkalinieva."

Then the animals ran up and killed the Bluebuck also.

They put fat in the kraal the fifth time, and appointed the porcupine (Incanda) to be the keeper of the gate. The animals went away, and the inkalimeva came as before.

It said to the porcupine, "Let us run a race against each other."

It let the porcupine beat in this race.

Then it said, "I did not think you could run so fast, but let us try again." They ran again, and it allowed the porcupine to beat the second time. They ran till the porcupine was so tired that he said, "Let us rest now."

They sat down to rest, and the porcupine went to sleep. Then the inkalimeva rose up and ate all the fat. When it had finished eating, it threw a stone at the porcupine, which caused him to jump up.

He called out with a loud voice, "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the inkalimeva."

Then the animals came running up and put the porcupine to death.

They put fat in the kraal the sixth time, and selected the hare (Umvundla) to be the keeper of the gate. At first the hare would not consent.

He said, "The coney is dead, and the muisbond is dead, and the duiker is dead, and the Bluebuck is dead, and the porcupine is dead, and you will kill me also."

They promised him that they would not kill him, and after a good deal of persuasion he at last agreed to keep the gate. When the animals were gone he laid himself down, but he only pretended to be asleep.

In a short time the inkalimeva went in, and was just going to take the fat when the hare cried out: "Let the fat alone."

The inkalimeva said, "Please let me have this little bit only."

The hare answered, mocking, "Please let me have this little bit only."

After that they became companions. The hare proposed that they should fasten each other's tail, and the inkalimeva agreed. The inkalimeva fastened the tail of the hare first.

The hare said, "Don't tie my tail so tight." Then the hare fastened the tail of the inkalimeva.

The inkalimeva said, "Don't tie my tail so tight," but the hare made no answer. After tying the tail of the Inkalimeva very fast, the hare took his club and killed it. The hare took the tail of the inkalimeva and ate it, all except a little piece which he hid in the fence.

Then he called out, "The fat belonging to all the animals has been eaten by the inkalimeva."

The animals came running back, and when they saw that the inkalimeva was dead they rejoiced greatly. They asked the hare for the tail, which should be kept for the chief.

The hare replied, "The one I killed had no tail."

They said, "How can an inkalimeva be without a tail?"

They began to search, and at length they found a piece of the tail in the fence. They told the chief that the hare had eaten the tail.

He said, "Bring him to me!"

All the animals ran after the hare, but he fled, and they could not catch him. The hare ran into a hole, at the mouth of which the animals set a snare, and then went away. The hare remained in the hole for many days, but at length he managed to get out without being caught.

He went to a place where he found a bushbuck (Imbabala) building a hut. There was a pot with meat in it on the fire.

He said to the bushbuck, Can I take this little piece of meat? "

The bushbuck answered, "You must not do it."

But he took the meat and ate it all. Afterwards he whistled in a particular manner, and there fell a storm of hail which killed the bushbuck. Then he took the skin of the bushbuck, and made for himself a mantle.

After this the hare went into the forest to procure some weapons to fight with. While he was cutting a stick the monkeys threw leaves upon him. He called to them to come down and beat him. They came down, but he killed them all with his weapons.