

**THE SHORT STORIES OF S.M. MOFOKENG AND
M.P.PELO: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that THE SHORT STORIES OF S M MOFOKENG AND M P PELO: A COMPARATIVE STUDY, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged.

M.E. Mokhatle

Date

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SUMMARY

The purpose of the study is to review the short stories of S M Mofokeng and M P Pelo critically in an attempt to interrogate their skills and techniques with a view to establishing how they complement each other. Furthermore the approach to the study will be informed by an integrated comparison and contrasting process.

In the main, this study deals with how the authors who wrote at different time periods differ in style, albeit on the same discipline, the short story.

The study comprises the introductory section, which includes the aims, method of approach, forerunners of the short stories, biographical sketches of the authors and organisation of the study. The setting, functions of the setting and definitions of keywords are also discussed. Characterization and the method of presenting characters is explained and the elements of style are identified and dealt with. A summary of the findings as well as the conclusion of the study is provided.

Keywords:

setting, characterization, style, critical theories, development, time period, structuralism, dialogue, tone, folktale, myth.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introductory Background

This study seeks to examine the development of Sesotho short story writing from its early beginning to 1992 with the tacit view of establishing how the technique of short story writing has evolved from one period to another and from one writer to another. Sesotho literature, *visa vis*, short story writing is believed to have developed and progressed over the decades. In the time between the 1950s and the 1990s short story writing became scarce with only approximately 70 literary works published. Authors experienced numerous obstacles in publishing their works, for example, the scarcity of publishing houses and financial constraints. However, even given the aforementioned challenges the pool of Sesotho short stories contains works of a remarkably appreciable quality. This study will demonstrate how short stories written in the 1950s, amidst all the challenges of the era, compare to stories written in the 1990s.

1.2. The Rationale and problem

This study has been inspired by the shortage of evaluative or critical study of Sesotho short stories. Very few critical studies of Sesotho short stories have appeared. This study will focus on the selected authors in order to pave way for other researchers to make further contributions on critiquing or appreciating Sesotho literary works.

The main aim of this study is to critically review the short stories of S.M Mofokeng, an author in the 1950s, and M.P Pelo, an author in the 1990s, in a manner that would let us see how their skills or technique compliment each other or may be differ. The discussions of necessity will follow an intergrated comparison and contrasting process. Both authors have made a specific noteworthy contribution to the genre of short stories and Sesotho literature in general. Be that as it may, this genre is lagging behind when compared to genres such as novels, drama and poetry. The two

authors have been chosen for this study precisely because they represent two different epochs in the writing of Sesotho short story. Mofokeng belongs to the earlier generation while Pelo represents the latter generation.

The focus of this study is on the art of short story writing with specific reference to the theory of short story writing as propounded by Gerard Genette New Criticism. Nevertheless, Edgar Poe's traditional approach will also be viewed. We will also try to ascertain the similarities and dissimilarities on the styles of the two authors. It should also be noted that references to afrocentric tendencies especially those that are germane to Sesotho story telling will be referred to.

1.3 Method and Theoretical Framework

As has been mentioned in the previous paragraph, the method of approach will bring into play various theoretical views. The main aspects of the short story which will be examined against the aforementioned theoretical parameters are setting, characterization and style. A brief biographical sketch of each author will also be given. This of necessity will test the backgrounds of each author and how these impacted on their skills. The qualitative method would be most suitable for this kind of research because as implied in the title and aim, the purpose is to explore, analyse and engage in finding out solutions about problems. The core business of qualitative research by and large is to work toward achieving the objectives set. And that is the thrust of this study.

In the examination of the short story, the New Criticism theory will be adopted, with other text oriented approaches playing a supportive role. It should be noted that the other theoretical approaches, should they be utilized, it is only then that description thereof will be attempted. Since the new criticism is the main approach adopted in this study, it is essential to give an account of its nature.

1.3.1 New Criticism

This literary movement originated in England and America before the First World War. The approach developed from I.A Richards' and T.S Eliot's work fused together, "more exactly one can say that it began with the publication in 1924 of Richards' Principles of Literary Criticism, a radical, polemical programme for the study of Literature." (Jefferson *et al* 1986:75)

It obtained its name The New Criticism from the 1941 publication of a book of that title by John Crowe Ransom.

It came into being more or less when the Russian Formalists were active during the early 1920's. Jefferson (1986) points out that Russian formalists and New Criticism rejected positivistic literary scholarship and called for and renewed attention to literature as literature. For this reason there are various significant similarities that the Russian Formalist and New Criticism exhibit. Both strive for a theory which would differentiate literature from other forms of writing. Both give importance to the analysis of the structure and the relationship that exists in the literary works in general. Furthermore both critics believe that criticism should be objective and that the text should be separated from the author and its historical context.

New Criticism encompasses the work of practitioners such as Ransom (1941), Brooks (1947), Tate (1959), Wimsatt (1958), Beardsley (1958), Warren (1949), Blackburn (1955) and Leavis (1937). Most of these practitioners are poets and hence their approach is mainly concerned with poetry.

The New Critics are interested in the study of the literary works for they see literary text as "a self-defining and self-sufficient matrix of formal structure" (Rabinowitz 1982:27)

The New Critics maintain that literary texts are texts of a special kind and it is therefore the task of criticism to give an account of this special character. It should be treated as an object in itself. The theory developed for this purpose by Wimsatt and

Brooks including Ransom and Tate, takes as its starting-point Richard's principle of the reconciliation of opposites (Jefferson *et al* 1982:82).

The distinctive procedure of the new critic therefore is close reading of the text which is the detailed and subtle analysis of the complex interrelations and ambiguities of the component elements within a work (Abrams 1971:109).

They do concentrate on the external issues of the text. This type of approach is pertinent in the analysis of poetry and short story because these are short forms of literature. It requires the reader to go back or go through the text repeatedly. This exercise would certainly be difficult with other genres such as the novel. Although it is quite intensive to analyse the novel prose, some of these practitioners venture to other forms of writing. Eliot commented about drama, while Leavis remarked about the novel (Eagleton 1983:50).

According to Grobler (1992:15) Warren, Brooks and Wellek offer a structural criticism of prose with specific reference to the novel. Brooks' views on the theory of the novel are adequately outlined in his well-known Understanding Fiction published in 1947, while Wellek and Warren's Theory of Literature published in 1949 is probably one of the most used works on literary theory today. All other theories following these are a versionalization or attempted improvements of the works of these pioneers.

The application of the views of the New Criticism in literature in African language were proposed by Ntuli and Lenake by making substantial use of the views of the New Critics in their description and assessment of modern poetry in their doctoral researches, namely The poetry of BW Vilakazi (1984) and The poetry of K E Ntsane (1984)

Other scholars who have used the theory of New Criticism in their studies are Gildenhys in his unpublished doctoral thesis "n Kritiese ontleding van die aard en ontwikkeling van die novelle in Suid Sotho" (1973). Botha in the article "Some Narrative Techniques in Xhosa Fiction" (1984), Mafela in his unpublished master's dissertation titled "The Narrative Techniques in some Novels of T.N Maumela (1988)

as well as (Swanepoel 1990:14-15) have attempted to critically demonstrate how this structuralist approach operates.

Their works have shown without doubt that the New Criticism approach serves to a certain extent as an appropriate tool to analyse literature in African Languages.

When analysing and evaluating a particular work, the most important contribution of the New Critics is that they concentrated on the text as a fundamental object of study. The only problem as regards this approach according to Grobler (1992:17) in the words of Van Luxemburg is that “the reading process was over-simplified through not realising or not being prepared to concede that not only the words on the page,” but also the attitude of the reader, literary knowledge and world view, play a role in the interpretation of the text.

It could thus be concluded that the New Criticism approach discreetly employed will be appropriate for this study. This is because the historical background of both authors is different and therefore this approach will focus specifically on the text.

1.3.2 Literature Review

It has been acknowledged that the Sesotho short story developed remarkably, however not much has been done by way of critiques of Sesotho literary works specifically on the short story. However a few literary reviews have been made on Sesotho short story. Maphike (1978) in his MA Dissertation entitled “Essay in Southern Sotho”. Although the study concentrates on essay it makes a contribution on short story.

Another contribution to the study of Sesotho short story has been made by Mokhatle (1996) in her Honours article, “The short stories of SM Mofokeng”. Here Mokhatle concentrated on elements such as theme, plot and style as deployed in the volume by Mofokeng, namely Leetong.

The short story is the genre that is clearly distinguishable from other similar genres. It is not a mere story told for amusement, awe or wonder. It has its own distinctive

form. Writing a short story is a process which Poe as quoted by Shaw (1983:9) regards as beginning not with plot construction, but with the conception of 'a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out.' Various scholars define the short story differently, but their emphasis is on the same aspects as could be discerned from the following

For instance, According to (Roberts 1995:359) a short story is

“a compact, concentrated work of narrative fiction that may also contain description, dialogue and commentary.”

On the other hand (Notestein 1974:18) defines a short story as

“a narrative producing a single emotional impression by means of sustained emphasis on a single climatic incident or situation.”

From the two definitions compression is emphasised. Because of its compression, the descriptions, dialogue and commentary in a short story are related by means of sustained emphasis. The events in a short story should be closely knit. In his definition Notestein goes further by indicating the singleness of the short story. His definition is supported by that of (Current-Garcia 1974:33) who maintain that

“a short story deals with a single character, a single event, a single emotion or the series of emotions called forth by a single situation”

Singleness is important in a short story. The short story should concentrate on one significant issue to which everything revolves around. Being an incident or a situation, the short story may deal with one argument or one theme around which the story is constructed.

Day (1971: xi) defines the short story as

“a piece of prose fiction which can be read at a single sitting. It represents an artistic unified impression of life through many devices especially theme, characters, action involving conflict and crisis, setting and style”

Day in his definition indicates the fact that a short story represents life experiences is a unified whole.

Brooks *et al* (1971:172) aptly express the same idea when they say

“a story in so far as it is a good story, is an organic unity in which all the elements have vital interrelations”

In the above definitions the idea of unity is emphasised. The fact that the short story is a matter of a single effect achieved by many devices in a unified whole, is the notion supported by Abrams (1988:178) when he says a short story is a “ story that is short...and limited to a certain unique and single effect to which every detail is subordinate”. Phillips (1974:11) defines a short story as

“a fiction narrative, short not merely because it happened to be told in a few words but by reason of deliberate method employed in its construction”

On the other hand Longman English Dictionary cited by Anderson *et al* 1990 defines a short story as

a story in prose varying widely in length but shorter than either a novel or a novelette, concentrating on a single effect which the writer wants to achieve.

The definition is supported by Encyclopaedia (1986: 761) maintaining that a short story is

“a brief fictional prose narrative to be distinguished from longer, more expansive narrative form such as the novel, epic, saga and romance”.
(Encyclopaedia Britannica (10) 1986:761)

The above definitions concentrate on the length of the short story. Shaw (1972:343) expresses the same view about length.

“A relatively short narrative (under 10 000 words) which is designed to produce a single dominant effect, and which contains the element of drama. A short story concentrates on a single character in a single situation at a single moment.”

It is clear that the short story may vary in length as it is shorter than other forms which in turn vary as well. The notion of two types of short stories is evident. It seems the length of the short story may vary depending on the varieties and styles of the author. This will bring us to the idea of two types of short stories, a short story and a long short story. Although we may not be able to find an all-embracing definition of a short story, all the above definitions have one thing in common that is singleness of a short story. It is short and can be read in a single sitting, deals with a single emotion brought by a single situation which produces a single effect.

The definitions of the story will be useful in this study. They will indicate how effective Mofokeng (1954) and Pelo's (1992) writing skills are when handling their stories and their competence in language usage regarding setting, characterisation and style. Their competence in obeying the demanding laws of the short stories according to these definitions.

1.3.3 Objectives

The objective of this study is to demonstrate how short story writing has developed since the 1950s. The reader should obtain a clearer understanding of short story writing and the aim is also to encourage aspiring authors to venture more into this genre of writing as opposed to others and to add to the Sesotho research works which analyse Sesotho creative literature

1.4 Forerunners of the short story in Sesotho.

The forerunners of the short stories in Southern Sotho were Ditshomo. Ditshomo is a blanket term used for stories such as myths, legends, folktales and fables. These were handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. With the advent of writing during the middle of the nineteenth century some of these stories were written down. The French Missionary, Jacottet collected and published the Litshomo in two volumes. At the turn of the twentieth century writers such as E.Motsamai, A.M Sekese and Z.D Mangoaela had their contributions published.

1.4.1 Brief review

In 1893 A.M Sekese published Mekhoa le Maele a Basotho. (Customs and Proverbs of the Basotho) Sekese's book contains various Sesotho cultures and beliefs written in short story form. Among these there is a short story on a young man by the name of Ntili. This is written in typical short story form. The author portrays Ntili as a "young wonder boy" a man who becomes famous amongst women, more especially those who are struck by the misfortune of being barren. Sekese points Ntili and his fame among women in a vivid, humorous manner leaving the rest to the imagination of the reader.

Ntili is a deformed man. One of his legs does not have a foot and toes. The leg is clenched into a little ball, like a fist a person makes with his arm. He comes from a place called Lebabalasi. He is a bachelor. This man is loved and trusted mainly by Monaheng villagers for the intercession of childless women among the people. He prays to the ancestors to give them the matrix that produces children. By so doing he delivers women from the obloquy of their barrenness.

Because of his successes Ntili becomes famous in Monaheng's village, invited and taken everywhere. The barren women carry him on their backs like a baby, to a veld

where they stay vigilant for the whole night, singing and praying. Where again while praying in the cave there will be a miracle. The water will sprinkle them or the small stones hit them not knowing where they come from. The two miracles of water and stones are an indication that their prayers are accepted. Once their prayers are answered, they will carry him back home full of joy and jubilation.

In 1912 Motsamai published Mehla ea Malimo (The Age of the Cannibals) a collection of seventeen short stories. These stories resemble folktales. They are told in the folktale mode and are further characterised by being short and to the point. The people in their encounter with wild animals are related in a vivid humorous fashion.

Twelve of the seventeen short stories deal with the “gruesome time when the wholesale destruction of villages, harvest and cattle brought by Chaka and his warriors had reduced many tribes between the Indian Ocean and the Drakensberg to cannibalism.” (Gerard1971: 138) and five of them describe the encounters of people with ferocious beasts, namely the lion and the wolf. Because the stories deal with the times of calamities, the themes of the stories in the book are therefore based on physical fitness, mental fitness and fate. There is for example the story “*Mosele le Madimo*.” Mosele who is married to Tsephe separates from her husband after being scattered by the cannibals. The cannibal's wife saves her by hiding her instead of killing her. A woman from her husband's village recognises Mosele. She is taken to her husband after running naked from the cannibals.

Her husband Tsephe sends four of his men and a number of women to gather corn. On their way back they spend the night in a cave, unaware that the cannibals live on top of the cave. Early in the morning the cannibals attack them from all sides. The four men hurl themselves on the cannibals with all their might. The cannibals break into two groups. The men kill some of the cannibals and take away their spears. It is by physical bravery that they manage to scatter the cannibals.

It is by guile for instance that Mohome in “*Mohome le Tau*” escape. Mohome kills a Springbuck and carries the carcass on his nape. As he is walking he sees a lion in

pursuit. He is surprised and puzzled not knowing what to do. The lion is about to charge, it moves forward and backward in front of him. He stands and watches.

In his despair he whistles. When the lion hears the sound it retreats looking around. Mohome realises that the lion is baffled. He again whistles. The lion continues to look around. Suddenly it sticks its tail and runs away.

The main concern here is to illustrate how the above mentioned stories relate to the short story and to attain the effect folktales has on the short story considering plot. The stories do not begin with a sudden action. They move from calm to excitement. The prevailing peace is threatened which generates motion in the story. In the body the story is developed through complication to the climax. The resolution is the end of the story and there are no surprise ending.

In the story "*Khetsi le Tau*" the elements of chance and fate contribute to Khetsi's escape. Khetsi separates from other men as they are hunting and following a group of vultures. He follows them to a hill near it four lions are resting. Khetsi decides to return but unfortunately the lions see him. One of them surprises him. He moves backwards looking at the lion approaching him. He continues in this way until he reaches near Thaba-Phatswa River, today known as Leeu River. He turns, runs away and jumps on the ice in the river. The ice holds him tight on the waist he cannot drown.

The lion attempts to walk on ice but it breaks down and it fails to catch him. It ends up leaving. Khetsi walks out of the water and finds another lion resting near the river. He is surprised, stunned and in despair, thinking that there is no chance of escape. He renounces himself and walks away. Fortunately the lion watches him leave unmolested.

In 1910 Mangoaela published Hara Dibatana le Dinyamatsane (Among the Game and the Beast of Prey.) It is a collection of fifty four hunting stories. The methods employed by the hunters are drives and pitfalls. It was in those days that the great hunting song was sung: "New God, pray to the Old God of old..." (Mangoaela 1977:7) the next day when they went to the traps they found the pit full of game.

These stories are similar in inspiration to those of Motsamai. Both works deal with the times of great calamities and they have kindred themes. Mangoaela's anthology deals with man and his encounter with wild beasts. The stories focus on the dangers the hunters and travellers were faced with. They are told in a vivid short story fashion.

These stories will be related in the following paragraph to highlight their influence on the short story considering their setting.

Setting in folktales is not described in details. Places of events are not outlined no elaboration on geographical setting. This could be seen in the following stories.

There is for example the story of a man and a woman in the story "*Tau e kena ka lapeng.*" A man and a woman are sitting around the fire. It is cold. They hear something like a dog enter the hut. The man looks over his shoulder. He happens to see a lion coming into their hut. When he realises the danger they are in, he rushes to attack with his bare hands.

Before it can charge at him the man jumps on its back like someone riding on horseback. He grasps the lion by the mane. He holds it tight and orders his wife "*Nka lerumo leno o e hlabe*" (Take that spear, stab it.) The woman stands with easiness and works like a man. Before the lion knows what is happening, the woman stabs it. It dies. The villagers hear them calling "*Tlong le tlo bona*" (Come and see). They find the dead lion lying on the floor.

In the story "Lesoli le Tau" Lesoli goes hunting alone. While walking he sees a lion. He is scared, he turns to run away. The lion follows in pursuit, angry and ready to fight. Lesoli runs up to a lake in the forest and goes round the lake. The lion follows him. After a while Lesoli realises that the lion is about to catch up with him because he is getting tired. He jumps into the lake and swims in an attempt to escape. The lion also jumps in after him. It is not going to let him escape.

Now poor Lesoli is desperate, he sees death coming. He swims across with the lion on his heels. He attempts to evade the lion by swimming from one direction to another. The lion keeps on coming to him saying "*Ke na le wena, o ikgathatsa feela*" Then he tries another strategy by going behind the lion. He holds it tight by its tail. Man and lion go under the water. When Lesoli chokes he emerges to take a breath, the lion's tail still in his grip. The lion tries to surface but Lesoli dives into the water again bringing it down with him. He continues to surface and dive in keeping the lion underneath. At last he surfaces from the water with a dead lion. He pulls it out of the lake.

On the other side Moseitse survives in an unusual manner from the teeth of the hyenas in the story "Moseitse le diphiri." He lives with Ranosi at Maphurung. He is an orphan. Ranosi adopts him because he is his relative. This young man sleeps in the hut with his companions 'Matlinyane and Ntsunyane. In the evening when the young masters go to their hut, Moseitse remains for a while in the tribunal. As he wears out he stands and walks to the hut also.

When he enters the door, unable to see clearly because there is no light in the hut, he hears someone knock him down with a leathern bag containing milk and jumps over him. Astonished he sees a hyena clutching the leathern bag running away. Overcome by fear he thinks of returning back from the door, runs to the elder people, Ranosi and his wife. He wakes up his friends 'Matlinyane and Ntsunyane: "Hey men the hyena has taken the leathern bag. They go out in a rush to wake Ranosi and the men.

They rush out from all sides in a hurry, some naked because of fear and haste. They chase after it with assegais and knobkerries. They pursue the hyena to a high flat ground, where it joins to a troop of other hyenas. They hear the laughing cry of the troop: Ha! Ha! Ha!" Someone said: "men the hyenas are laughing here, listen." They hear "Ho! Ho! Ho!" They see them with their own eyes, standing in a small troop like them. They return without the leathern bag.

From the stories we realised that little details are given on setting. In the two stories the events takes place in a hut and in the other one the events occur in the lake. In both instances no detailed descriptions of neither the hut nor the lake.

Folktales show a scanty direct description of character and most charaters are nameless. In some instances characters are animals and they possess human attributes. This is illustrated in the story below.

In 1924 Sekese made another contribution. He published Pitso ya dinonyana (The Meeting of the Birds.) It is a satirical animal story. The story deals with the sufferings the Sotho people endured under the judicial system of tribal chiefs in Lesotho in the late nineteen century. The author depicts animals as human beings.

The birds call a meeting to appeal against the victimization of smaller birds by bigger birds especially Phakoe. The birds are led by Motinyane. Each bird lodges it's complain to the vulture who is the chief as well as a judge. Phakoe is accused of cruelty and greed. Small birds protest against Phakoe for killing them. They claim that he is a cannibal, who eats the small birds. They are no longer living in their original habitats because they are running away from Phakoe's torture. Phakoe becomes angry, tries to defend himself claiming his innocence to no avail. He defends himself by saying that he punishes smaller birds because of their misdeeds. They are stealing from others.

Nonetheless he is exculpated by the vulture who claims that he cannot kill Phakoe because it will be repeating the awful thing Phakoe does to other birds. Mokhoabane urges Phakoe to humble himself, and to repent like a man who once plans to kill those who want to convert themselves to God. He quotes extract from the Bible indicating that God will punish the great men who misuse their powers.

On the other hand Sephooko takes this opportunity to lodge his complains about her torture by other birds and including Phakoe and her persecution during the day. She indicates that she is called a "moloji" (witch) when he goes hunting at night. The birds are warned not to harass Sephooko anymore.

These folktales had a significant influence to the writing of short stories. Their influence is evident in the growth and development of modern short stories. They are significant in this study to clarify the influence of oral tradition on short stories by considering aspects such as plot, character, theme setting and style and nature of the present story since Mofokeng who belongs to the earlier generation is compared to Pelo who represents the present day generation.

1.5 S.M. Mofokeng's biographical sketch

A biographical sketch of S.M Mofokeng is found in Cole (1957). In this study a paraphrase of Cole rendition will be attempted.

Sofonia Machabe Mofokeng was born in April 1923 near Fouriesburg. He attended school at the Dutch Reformed Church Primary School. He continued his school at the Adams Mission School in Natal where he matriculated with a distinction in Southern Sotho and Botany in 1939. In 1942 at Fort Hare University College he obtained a diploma in education and a BA degree with distinction in Southern Sotho. He took up a post at Western Native Township High School. He continued with his studies at the University of Witwatersrand as a part-time student and completed his BA Honours degree in History in 1944. He was then appointed as part-time language assistant in the Department of Bantu Studies.

In 1945 he was appointed full-time Junior Language Assistant. He obtained an Honours Degree in Bantu Languages in 1947 and was promoted to Language Assistant in Sotho. In the same year he suffered from tuberculosis and was hospitalised for eighteen months.

He was awarded the MA degree in 1951 on the dissertation, "A study of folktales in Sotho." His first book, *Senkatana* (a play) was published in 1952. *Leetong*, a collection of short stories was published in 1954. About the same time, *Pelong ya ka*, a volume of essays was accepted for the "Bantu Treasury Series".

In March 1955, he was awarded the Ph.D degree for his thesis entitled “The development of leading figures in animal tales in Africa”. He collaborated with Prof C.M Doke in the preparation of *A Textbook of Southern Sotho Grammar*. He had a thorough knowledge of European art, music and literature (he read French, German and Flemish. His fluency in both English and Afrikaans was remarkable.

After a number of weeks’ illness in hospital in 1957, he died sadly and a talent was lost.

1.6 M.P.Pelo’s biographical sketch

Molefe Phillip Pelo was born near Germiston at Katlehong in September 1960. He attended school at Mogobeng Primary School. Later he continued his school at Reahile High Primary School. When he completed the primary education he went to Kwa-Thema and attended his secondary education at Tlakula High School.

At Tlakula he met a fine teacher, Mrs. Tshehlo. She was an excellent teacher in the language and Sesotho literature and she helped him gain more insight and understanding in the language.

In 1979 while in standard nine he started to write poems. The poems were not published because he was uncertain, whether they were of quality. After obtaining his matric he furthered his studies at the University of South Africa. In September 1985 he took up a post at Gauteng Departement of Education where he is still employed.

His first book Kgalala was published in 1984. Lee Lefatshe was published in 1986. Phalafala di fapane, a collection of short stories was published in 1990.

1.7 Synopsis of the study

This paragraph defines the scope of this dissertation

1.7.1 Chapter One

It is an introductory chapter that maps out the route to be taken by discussions and arguments. A brief discussion of the method of approach will be outlined. Brief review of the forerunners of the short stories to highlight their influence and impact on the short story. This will be followed by both author's biographical sketch.

1.7.2 Chapter Two

The chapter focuses on setting. Description of the concept will be given. The functions of setting highlighted followed by setting in Leetong and Phalafala di fapane.

1.7.3 Chapter Three

The focus is on characterisation as defined by various scholars. Classification of characters will be dealt with focusing on two approaches, the Mimetic approach as well as the Structural approach. Methods of presenting characters will also be discussed followed by characterisation on Leetong and Phalafala di fapane.

1.7.4 Chapter Four

This chapter will deal with style in Leetong and Phalafal di fapane.

1.7.5 Chapter Five

This chapter will focus on the highlights of this research presenting similarities and dissimilarities in both authors, regarding their setting, characterisation and the style.

CHAPTER 2

SETTING

2.1 Introduction

The setting can be seen as a platform and medium for unfolding the action of the characters. It reveals to the reader the place and time of events, in other words it refers to the place where the action of the story occurs and the time when the action takes place. Time and space are therefore two important aspects of a setting. When dealing with "place", the physical location is involved including the social and political way of life of the characters. "Time" concentrates on the day or year of the narrative. Through the setting, the reader is able to determine whether the events in the narrative focus on the past or the present. Anderson and Shepherd (1990) are of the opinion that the "setting (milieu) creates the circumstance of place and time for the situation, usually problematic, in which characters should try to solve a problem as the plot develops". Pickering (1988:12) concurs with the discussion advanced thus far by defining a setting as:

“a term that in its broadest sense encompasses both the physical locale that frames the action and the time of days or year, the climatic conditions and the historical period during which the action takes place.”

This suggests that, as a setting is the place where the actions of the characters take place, it involves the geographical location as well as the atmosphere created. The time of day or year should also be taken into consideration as they assist in defining the action of the characters.

Hamalian and Karl (1978:125) are more inclusive in their definition as they say a setting also determines the life of the people involved:

“Setting is not only a particular time and a particular place, but [also] a

region, down to its dust – how the people think, how they react, their prejudices, their insanities, their very lifestyle.”

It is obvious from the definition above that the setting of a narrative embraces the social environment and circumstances, the physical and temporal objects, the artefacts and the feelings of the characters. This is how the writer breathes life into the story.

S M Mofokeng's *Leetong* is a collection of eight short stories published by the Afrikaanse Pers Boekhandel in 1954. In 1992, De Jager-Haum published M P Pelo's *Phalafala di fapane*, which is a compilation of six short stories.

The difference in the periods of publication influence the way the authors create their stories' settings. Mofokeng's (1954) stories, which were published earlier, focus on the past. His settings are rural and urban, sometimes outside South Africa. On the other hand, Pelo (1992), whose works were published recently, focuses on the present and limits his settings to urban areas. This change or difference in settings could be attributed to the writer's developmental capabilities, which would also impact on the various elements of the short story discussed in this study.

Pickering (1988:13–14) distinguishes the following functions performed by the setting in fiction:

- Setting provides a background for action, and requires a location or the place where characters perform their action. In some instances the background is explicitly described while in other cases, it is so slight that it can be inferred from the dialogue, action and clothing.
- The setting may function as a causal agent or antagonist, helping to establish conflict and to determine the outcome of events.
- It may contribute towards the revelation of character. The way the character reacts to it and the way it influences the character.

- The setting in a short story may be metaphoric or symbolic. In this way, the deeper meaning of the setting is suggested and the character can also be clarified.
- The setting may help the author acquire a suitable atmosphere by inducing the reader's expectations and preparing him or her for the events to come.
- The setting in a short story may contribute towards the development and understanding of the theme.

These aspects can be tested in Mofokeng's writings in the following paragraph.

2.2. Setting in Mofokeng's short stories

Two stories with similar settings are *Mona pela tsela* (Here by the road side.) and *Hae* (Home). The setting in both stories is dynamic. The events move from a rural to an urban setting and the stories take place during the time of the pass laws, which were very oppressive. People were required to carry their identity documents with them at all times.

In *Mona pela tsela*, the actual geographical location of the farm is not given. Tumelo, a hardworking, honest young man is arrested because a devious co-worker plants dagga under his pillow and alerts the police. He is taken to the police station.

He is tried in an urban court and, as is expected, the strange place has an influence on Tumelo. Although he has knowledge of the white man's language, he suffers from an inferiority complex and has to rely on an interpreter. This was, and still is part of the judicial system of this country. The interpreter, instead of putting Tumelo's defense and questions in a proper manner, deliberately misinforms the court. Tumelo would hear the white man say: *Re batla nnete* (We want the truth) and the interpreter would say to him: *Monna ho batluwa nnete e seng mashanoshano ana a hao* (Here

the truth is needed not your big lies). Unable to defend himself, he is found guilty and sentenced to six months in jail.

After serving his term, the worst happens to him. The identity document he is carrying indicates that he was jailed for six months and nobody is willing to offer him employment. This sad encounter is illustrated in the following paragraph:

tliša pasa tsa hao ke tswe ke ilo di lokisa ka kgotla. Tumelo a e ntsha. Lekgowa la e sheba, la tsitsinya hlooho ka qenehelo e kgolo. La e phutha hantle la mo neela yona, le mo shebile empa e se ka kgalefo, e se ka ho soma empa ka kutlwelo bohloko la re feela: "ke mohau monna fetela pele (Mofokeng, 1954:14)

(Bring your pass so that I can straighten it up at the pass office. Tumelo took it out. The white man looks at it and shook his head with great pity. He folded it nicely, gave it back to him and looked at him with no anger or mocking but with sympathy. He simply said: "I am sorry man, go on".)

Tumelo's situation is so desperate that he ends up becoming a vagrant. The setting has a negative effect on Tumelo. It alienates him from his friends and community but he does not give up; he clings to the hope that he will find employment. His continuous roaming from one farm to the next reveals a courageous and strong character. He eventually finds peace sleeping under the sky.

Change of environment often causes a change in the attitude and behaviour of the characters. Cohen (1973:29) concurs when he says, "analysis of setting contributes to an understanding of characterization, especially when the environment reflects or influences fictional human beings."

The second story, *Hae*, has a similar theme. Mofokeng focuses on the crisis of the pass laws. The main character travels with his friends from beyond the Zambezi River, over the big cascade *Mosi oa thunya* beyond *Borotse*. The character moves from a known to an unknown situation. He comes from outside South Africa as far afield as the Zambezi River to Johannesburg. The setting in this story reveals that

the character and his friends are foreigners who are baffled by the city when they arrive at the Germiston station.

ho makala ho ne ho bakwa ke dintho tse ngata tseo ba simollang ho di bona. Ba ne ba se ba sa qoqe banna bana hobane e mong le e mong o ne a lebisa mahlo kwana le kwana ho leka ho bona tse ntjha tsohle ka nako e le nngwe. Ho ya ba shebileng, e ne e ka mahlanya kapa mashodu. (Mofokeng, 1954:109)

(The surprise was caused by a new thing they saw. They were not talking to each other because everyone was looking everywhere to see all the new things at once. To someone who was looking at them, they looked like they were mad or thieves.)

The author does not give a detailed description of the main character's place of origin, which would confirm that he is a foreign national. Before coming to South Africa, he worked as a train driver in Beira for several months before taking a job in cities such as Salisbury and Bulawayo in Rhodesia. From Bulawayo, he walked to Beitbridge where he passed through customs unnoticed by the police. The men board a train and alight at Germiston station. They have no idea where they are going. When asked to produce identity documents, it is evident that the men are afraid because they have no identity documents. They are robbed and beaten up, leading them to see the new place that they are in as threatening.

The robbers direct them to the police station believing that their identity documents will be put in order. The setting is ironic as the police station, which should serve as a safe haven for them, is the exact opposite. The extract below indicates the ironic twist:

Ka ho tshaba hore Ramolemo a se tshohe a mamela motswalle wa hae ba hlaba tatamala banna ba batho ho hopola tlung eo batlang ho pholoha ho yona, le ho hetla ba sa hetle. (Mofokeng, 1954:110)

(Afraid that the kind man may listen to his friend, the poor men run forward without looking back, thinking about the house where they will be rescued.)

The irony is that soon they realise that they have jumped from the fire into the frying pan. The police ridicule and ill-treat them and instead of helping them, they are sent to a farm in a rural area. The setting in this story is symbolic. The character comes to Johannesburg looking for greener pastures. The greener pastures symbolise the peace he finds after contracting tuberculosis and eventually landing in hospital where he dies. The hospital represents an urban area.

The setting in this story also highlights the historical period during the days of oppression. It contributes to the understanding of the theme and the deeper meaning of "setting" is suggested, which is dying and going to heaven.

Ruthe, Setloholo and **Bonnotshing** (*Ruth, Grandchild and In Solitude*) also have a similar setting. The three stories are set in a rural area. In **Ruthe**, the author depicts a simple life in the rural area on a typical Free State *boereplaas* (farm) known as *Thabong*. It is realistic because it has what Shaw (1983:151) calls a palpable physical reality because it can be located. The author describes the place as follows:

Thabong ke polasi e sekgutlong. Tsela e hlahang Marung ha e feta pela ntlo e feta tlase mme ho na le tselanyana feela e arohang ho yona e tlang sekgutlong, e leng yona e sebediswang ke bohle ba etelang Thabong.
(Mofokeng, 1954:40)

(Thabong is a farm in a nook. The road from Marung passes below, near the house, and there is a small road branching off from it going to the valley, which is used by all who visit the valley.)

The action occurs on a warm winter's day. The setting in this story helps to establish conflict. Winter is symbolic of conflict as it is a dull, cold season. Its coldness disrupts the warmth and happiness that reigns on the farm. It symbolises Mmamosa's sadness on that warm day. Mmamosa is basking in the sun when she receives a

letter from her son requesting her to come and live with him in the city. Her son, Petrus, claims that his mother is the only white woman living among the African people. Mmamosa ponders over events that have happened in the past. She remembers how Rasebolai, Marie's husband, devoted his life to helping her manage the farm after her husband's death, and that now that he, too is dead, she cannot abandon his widow who depends on her.

The atmosphere in the house is touching. The sombre situation in the house seems to have affected everything on the farm. It feels as if the cows, calves and ducks also feel the sadness as their bellowing, crying and quacking creates a disturbance.

The story's setting compares life in a rural area to life in an urban area and contrasts loyalty, friendship and race. Rural life is pleasant and peaceful, while urban life is unfriendly and disordered for a person Mmamosa's age.

After a long period of meditation, Mmamosa takes her Bible and reads from the book of Ruth. She reads Ruth's words where she refuses to leave her mother-in-law, Naomi. Mmamosa decides to stay on the farm because she realises that Marie is a devoted, loyal and true friend who needs her; she feels that she will not cope with life in the city, as it is not as peaceful as life on the farm; and she will miss the farm. The setting reveals the personality of the character Mmamosa, and influences her reaction towards her son's proposal.

The second story in a rural setting is **Setloholo** (Grandchild). In this story, the author refers to the place of action as a village, but does not give it a specific name. However, from the following paragraph it can be deduced that the events of the story occur against a rural background:

E se e le motsheare wa mantsiboya mme ho se ho utlwahala ho lla ha manamane a kgannelwang hae ke bashanyana ba ba putswa mmomong le dihlohong hobane e le kgale ba raha bolo. (Mofokeng, 1954:53)

(It is sunset and the sounds of the calves are audible; they are driven by boys with grey shin bones and heads because they have been kicking the ball for a long time.)

The place of action chosen by the author prepares the reader for events to come and creates an atmosphere of suspense. The time of the action is sunset and we can deduce from the following sentence that it is winter: *mane le mane ho se ho bonahala sefate se manganga se sa ntsaneng se jere botalana ba sona leha se bonahala se le setshonyana*. (Here and there a stubborn tree still has its green colour even though it is evident that it is also a bit black.)

The old man Motsamai lives with his daughter, Matshediso. A young teacher, Malefetsane, is a regular visitor to this family. He likes the old man's conversation and enjoys listening to the old man telling him about the good old days.

Because the story has an indefinite locale, we can surmise where it is by inference. Cohen (1973:29) indicates that "a setting may suggest social positions or status, which in turn may indicate a character's mode of dress and his manner of speech". In this instance, the notion is emphasised by the trousers Malefetsane is wearing. After bending his knee, the shape of the knee remains on his trousers as he walks away. This incident shows that he is a teacher in a rural area because a teacher in an urban area would not wear trousers made from such cheap cloth.

The events in this story are restricted to Motsamai's house in the village. Malefetsane's continual visits to his house develop into a relationship with Motsamai's daughter Matshediso.

The setting in this story brings characters together and establishes a joyful mood. Motsamai is jubilant about Matshediso and Malefetsane's relationship as he is looking forward to having grandchildren.

Bonnotshing (In solitude) is another story where the place of action is unspecified. The author refers to this place as *thabeng* (mountain). When mountains, rivers, and trees are mentioned as places of action, Pretorius (1982:8) describes the place as

"an idyllic background as this type of milieu is peaceful and pleasant". The two characters, Motsamai and Sello, are travelling to this idyllic place. As they are riding on horseback, we gather that the place is rural. The setting is again discernible in the following paragraph:

Tsatsi leo lohle ra tsamaya re feta meraka hobane jwale re ne re se resa fete metse, re ne re le metebong. Re ne re ka feta ntlo ya badisana mme ra palama hora tse pedi re sa bone letho la batho, re bona diphoofole feela. (Mofokeng, 1954:98)

(For the whole day, we walked past the cattle posts because we were no longer passing villages. We were right at the cattle posts. We passed the shepherd's house and rode for two hours not seeing people, seeing animals only.)

The events of the story occur in summer. On their way, the two characters meet an old man, Motsamai. He welcomes the two by giving them a piece of meat from the animal he is holding and tells them what led to his staying in the mountain. According to Cohen (1973:29), "shifts of setting at times reflect the psychological make up of a character". This idea is reflected in this story as Motsamai is troubled in his present environment. After the loss of his whole family from a contagious disease at Nqetjhane, he has no peace of mind. His neighbours keep insisting that he remarries but he is not interested in doing so because he is still mourning his horrible loss. Unable to stand their constant urging, he vacates his home to settle on the mountain where he finds peace of mind living alone in an idyllic setting.

Mofokeng at times refers to the place of action in general terms as *motseng* "village", which indicates the folktale influence Mofokeng exhibits in his stories. This implicit way of stating the setting helps the author to emphasise the development of character, plot and theme. Stories set in an urban setting include *Kgauteng* (Gauteng), ***Panana le tamati*** (Banana and tomato) and ***Hosasa*** (Tomorrow).

Although *Panana le tamati* is set in a small village, the author gives a brief description of the place of action as follows:

E ne e le motsaneng o mong wa metsana e akaretswang ka lebitso la Kgauteng. Ene e se motse o motle. Matlo a teng a ne a ahilwe ka ho tshwana ho mona ho nyekisang pelo. (Mofokeng, 1954:34)

(It was one of the villages that are generalised by the name Kgauteng. It was not a beautiful village. The houses were all built the same and were bad enough to cause nausea.)

From this extract, we deduce that the place of action is urban because the houses are built in a similar pattern, indicating a black township. The place of action is described as a base and has no influence on the character.

This story setting describes the main character who is an old Indian man fond of selling his produce to the people while singing and driving a horsedrawn cart. This is another reason for thinking that the events occur in an urban area because that is where one would typically find an Indian man.

The Indian man continues to sell his wares despite constant interference from children in the street who mock him and steal his products. This indicates that the urban children's attitudes and behaviour towards the elderly differs from those of children living in rural areas. One day the people realise that they miss hearing his singing and realise that he is dead. In this story, the emotional state of the character is revealed. His desperation and loneliness compel him to continue selling his products despite the children's unruly behaviour.

Another story placed in an urban setting is **Hosasa** (Tomorrow). Again, the place is only mentioned as the base of the story and the fact that the setting is urban is discernible in the following extract.

Seterateng se seng se seholo sa motse wa Kgauteng, dimotorokara di petetsane tse yang le tse kgutlang. Di entse mola o se nang qetelo-mola o molelele lelele di tsamaya di atamelane haholo. (Mofokeng, 1954:72)

(In the main street of Johannesburg, motorcars are packed together; some going and others returning. They make an endless line, a long, long line, moving very close to one another.)

In this congested traffic, a man known as Molefi is nearly run down by a car on his way home from work. He runs away afraid that he will be arrested because he is at fault. Mofokeng describes the life of people in a modern urban setting:

'E,ha e le nna ke dula motseng empa ha e le wena o dula bophoofolong feela tjena. Ha se motse ntho eno ya lona. Ke dihele, nna ke a o tshaba ruri ...
(Mofokeng, 1954:75)

(Yes, I stay in the village but you stay in such animosity. That thing of yours is not a village. It is hell. I really fear it.)

The author suggests the difficult situation that people in townships face on a daily basis. Molefi is travelling in a tram while talking to Tefo; reference to a tram shows that the action occurs in an urban area. This movement reveals not only the movement of space but also of time. Molefi thinks about his family, especially his wife, who is ill. He knows he will have to take her to the doctor.

He is so engrossed with his problems that he misses his stop and has to walk home. The atmosphere in the township street is in sharp contrast to the warm atmosphere at home where his children look forward to his arrival. Molefi is surrounded by danger. He walks through the darkness of the night unaware of his whereabouts, but his heart compels him to go on. The only thing on his mind is his wife Mmatsietsi. He is mugged and badly injured. When he finally arrives home, his wife tends to his wounds, apprehensive about how they will survive as he was robbed of all his money.

The setting in the story *Ke toro feela* (It is only a dream) is dynamic. The action occurs from an urban to a rural area. The place of action is unspecified but the reader can deduce the setting from the excerpt below:

Motjhini o llile mme ba se ba feletse diaparong tsa bona, ba rwetse dieta tsa bona tse bitswang dirifi le dikatiba tsa masenke. Tjhe mmeleng leha ba sa apara diaparo tse ngata ha ho re letho. Ona marantha ana a mmeleng ya bona a lekane hobane ka tlase ka kwana mpeng ya lefatshe ha se mofuthu ke tsietsi. Ha feelaba sireleditse maoto a bona le dihlooho tsa bona ho lokile. Ba tshwere dilampi tsa bona, ba emetse ketjhe hore e ba theolele tlase mpeng ya lefatshe. (Mofokeng, 1954:20)

(The machine has sounded and they are dressed in their clothes; they wear their shoes and helmets. Well, even if they do not wear many clothes it doesn't matter. Those tattered clothes on their bodies are enough because deep down underground it is unbearably hot. If only their feet and heads are protected, it's fine. They are holding their lamps and waiting for the elevator to take them underground.)

From the above description, we can tell that the setting is a mine. This is emphasised by the type of clothes the characters are wearing, the lamps they are holding in their arms, and that they are waiting for an elevator to take them underground. In the following sentence:

mme ke mang ya phelang moo kotsi e leng siyo? Lefu ke karolo ya bophelo ba rona, ke karolo ya bona ya ho qetela, mme kotsi ke leqosa la lefu. Bohle re kotsing kae le kae, neng le neng feela. (Mofokeng, 1954:21)

(Who lives where there is no danger? Death is part of our lives, it is its last part and danger is the messenger of death. We all are in danger everywhere, anytime.)

The author emphasises danger to evoke the danger of being in the mine. In this story, the setting may be seen as the element of primary importance. Kenny (1966:42) indicates that the character seems to exist primarily as a means of revealing what effect the setting has on the miner's lives. It again helps to establish conflict and to determine the outcome of events.

The miners are ready to go underground. In the elevator, they are talking, laughing, joking and singing. This cheerful atmosphere contrasts with Molahlehi's inner uneasiness. The writer uses this atmosphere to prepare the reader for events to come. It also enables the author to emphasise the immediate danger the characters find themselves in at the mine. Molahlehi is anxious on this day and has an eerie feeling. He is supposed to be leaving the mine the next day to go home, but instead of being delighted, he is aware of the constant danger of accidents occurring that may prevent him from doing so. He sees them as lions, tigers and hyenas standing between him and his children. Molahlehi's foreboding and insecurity establishes a dangerous atmosphere.

Tatolo, Molahlehi's best friend, is also supposed to be leaving the mine the next day. He reveals to Molahlehi that he has a strong feeling of *Mohlomong ha o sa tla kgutla* (Maybe you won't return.) The setting has an influence on the character, as Tatolo's strong feeling that he may not return home destroys his hope. Because of the danger the character faces every day, the place of action in the story envisages death. This is expressed in Tatolo's words as he avers:

empa e se e le hangata letswalo leo le ntse le mpheta hape ka nako e nngwe e nngwe ha ho ena le batho ba nyolohang ka mehla e ntse e le ona mantswa ane a kgale. "Mohlomong ha o sa tla kgutla. (Mofokeng, 1954:22)

(But the fear is there all the time with people going down everyday; the same old words: Maybe you won't return.)

The elevator arrives at the site and the the men start working dutifully. Suddenly they hear a loud bang. Molahlehi falls unconscious and Tatolo dies. The time of action is summer. The action moves from an urban to a rural area. Mmatheko, Tatolo's wife, is told of her husband's death. Mmateboho tries unsuccessfully to locate her husband Molahlehi. She thinks he is also dead. At the hospital, Molahlehi regains consciousness and returns to his family a maimed man.

Mofokeng's settings are influenced by folktales. The use of folktales is natural to a writer from Sesotho because the language is naturally rhythmical and poetic. In some of his stories, the setting is described as *motseng* (*village*), which is the type of description mostly used in folktales.

The various settings in his stories are valid in that the actions of the characters, their clothing and their means of transport verify the setting. For instance, in ***Boinnotshing*** (In Solitude) the characters wear blankets and they travel on horseback. The author tends to choose such settings because they complement the story at some point. The mine is used as the setting in the story ***Ke toro feela*** to highlight conflict, danger and death.

The theme of death is also emphasised in the setting of the story *Hae* where the character is in search of greener pastures. A relationship exists in the setting between the story ***Mona pela tsela*** and ***Hae*** because the journey to home starts with the story "***Mona pela tsela***" and ends with the story ***Hae***, where the character eventually dies. The New Criticism theory reflects relevantly on the nature of the above discussions.

The relationship that exists between elements of a short story is emphasised. Theme, conflict, character development is reflected through setting

In the following paragraph, it will be found that the setting in Pelo's writing is functional.

2.3 Setting in Pelo's short stories

Pelo does not specify the setting. In most of his stories he relies on the reader's knowledge to supply the setting from his descriptions. In the story ***Bosiung bono*** (That night), the events occur on a bitterly cold winter's day. Tshedi, the main character, is concerned about the weather as the cold does not only hurt animals but people as well. The author emphasises the cold to suggest the ailments associated with cold weather. The place of action is not described in detail. The author refers to it as the village:

ba ne ba ahile ka masenke, mme phahlo ya bona e le ya boleng bo tlase bakeng la theko ya yona e tlase. (Pelo, 1992:29)

(They built with corrugated iron and their furniture was of a poor quality because of its low price.)

From the description of the shack, we deduce that the setting is urban as this type of dwelling is found in undeveloped urban areas. The shack Tshedi and her boyfriend Sofonia share signify poverty, illness, starvation and hardship. Bowen (cited by Shaw, 1983:151) states that "the locale of the happening always colours the happening and often to a degree, shapes it". The setting contributes to the development and understanding of the theme in this story and has an influence on the characters. The desperate situation in which Tshedi and Sofonia find themselves changes their behaviour. Tshedi is unhappy and her attitude towards other people changes. The couple isolate themselves and live only on liquids. Although they are starving, they will not ask for money from their parents or borrow from their friends. They have no money to pay a doctor's fee for Tshedi who is suffering from the cold. On this cold night, Tshedi utters the following soliloquy:

Di ile kae? Di ile kae dilemo tseo ke neng ke tadimme bokamoso ka tsona? Di ile hokae banna? Ana ke bona bokamoso bona na? A tsheha sa motho ya fapaneng hlooho. Ha eba ke bokamoso bona ... ke kopa maobane. Ke kopa nako e fetileng. Ana ke nna enwa na? Ke tseba jwang hore nna ke nna? Ke mang? Ke ne ke le mang? Ke tla ba eng? (Pelo, 1992:31)

("Where are they? Where are the years that I was looking for in the future where have they gone? Is this the future?" She laughs like a lunatic. "If this is the future ... I ask for yester years. I ask for the time that has passed. Is it really me? How do I know that I am who I am? Who am I? Who was I? What will I be?")

The setting in this story establishes a mood of hopelessness. The coldness of the night evokes feelings of regret in Tshedi. As she wonders about her future, we learn about her uncertainty. She questions her identity and expectations. The atmosphere

in the shack is chilly. The cold and the night signify self-sacrifice and the coldness of death are expressed in the following words of Tshedi:

re phetse, re ratane, mme re telletse batswadi ba rona. Ke kotlo ya rona ena. Re ikgethetse Sofonia, re ikgethetse. Ke thato ya rona ena, mme re kgathetse ratu. (Pelo1992:34)

(We lived, we loved each other and we undermined our parents. This is our punishment. We made the choice Sofonia, we chose. This is our will and now we are tired dear.)

We deduce from the above excerpt that the setting affects the character, Tshedi, and reinforces the story's credibility and meaning because it is realistic. That night Sofonia dies and Tshedi returns to her parents' who take her to hospital where she also dies.

Pelo's short stories do not give a detailed description of the setting. This has an impact on his stories because it contributes towards the revelation of the character and his or her behaviour and actions. Some stories infer action and items used by the characters, as Roberts (1995:89) states "they are objects of human manufacture and construction"; for instance, the means of transport (taxi, ambulance) and media (television).

Another story in which the place of action is unspecified is ***Ho ruta mpshe lebelo*** (To teach an ostrich speed). The background can be inferred through the actions and clothing. The setting in this story is urban i.e. a modern town where the people live contemporary lives in the pursuit of money. If a person is rich, he is respected and honoured by everyone no matter how he behaves or how he earns his money. Losing his job brings about a change in Tefo's behaviour and lifestyle, which forces him to pursue a friendship with Thabo, Oupa and Motlatsi. He knows that they are unemployed even though they do not look like people who are in need:

Kajeno o se a fumane metswalle. Metswalle ke metswalle ho sa kgathalehe hore ba etsa mosebetsi ofe, ha feela e le metswalle. (Pelo, 1992:16)

(Today he found friends. Friends are friends irrespective of the kind of job they do. So long as they are friends.)

It is obvious that Tefo is aware that his friends may be involved in illegal activities. He starts living the easy life, wearing expensive clothes and buying new furniture. From his style of living and because Tefo joins a gang of robbers we can deduce that the setting is urban as gangs are rife in urban areas. The events occur mostly at night, which implies evil or crime as darkness is the perfect cover for robbers to carry out their evil deeds. Tefo becomes completely involved in a life of crime. He tells his wife Dirontsho about his new job because she is surprised by the beautiful clothes he buys and the money he has. The author uses money, an object of human manufacture, to bring out the worst in Dirontsho. Eventually Tefo promises his wife that he will tell her about their whereabouts every time they commit a crime.

Ironically, Tefo confides in his wife because he trusts her and believes she will not betray him. Dirontsho gives him a small packet and tells him to use the contents to spice their meat before they eat. She begs him not to forget. Dirontsho poses a threat to Tefo's life. The extract below reveals that the author uses poison to reveal the character's love of money as well as her goal to end her husband's life.

a bososela hanyane ha a hopola hore e se e tla ba morui e moholo ha a ena le tjhelete keyena eo a ipolella, monna ke eng? O tla be a hlokang e kaana? Lerato? Lerato ke la mafutsana. (Pelo, 1992:20)

(She smiled a bit when she thought that she was about to be a very rich person. If you have money, she told herself. What is a man? What will you need? Love? Love is for the poor.).

That night Tefo tells his wife where they will be after the robbery. The action moves from one unnamed place to another referred to as an open veld separating Boksburg and Benoni where the men are going to celebrate their victory after robbing a bottle store. That there is going to be a robbery in a bottle store indicates that the setting is urban because bottle stores are mainly found in such areas. The men eat the meat sprinkled with Dirontshos' spice and are poisoned. The transition of the action is

emphasised by Dirontsho's arrival in a taxi and emphasises that the setting is dynamic. Her arrival in a taxi also contributes towards the understanding of the character Dirontsho, who is influenced by the setting and social circumstances enough to poison her husband and his friends. The sudden wealth has changed her from being a trustworthy wife to being a murderer. She takes the bags full of money. The open veld serves as a symbol for the unravelled events. The veld serves as a stage where the crime took place and it will be the basis where all investigations will take place.

Another story where the place of action contributes to the development of the story and incites a change in the character's behaviour is *Phalafala di fapane* (Divining bones have fallen out.). The place of action is a classroom. The main character, Senonnori, maintains that he has seen a dog with three tails and is severely punished for causing a commotion in class. As he is mocked and called a liar by his classmates, he is determined to prove what he saw to redeem himself:

Utlwang hantle lona, ke yena eo a bua le rona, "ha ke batle le mpitse motho ya leshano. Ke tla le bontsha." (Pelo, 1992:5)

("You listen well", he said, "I don't want to be called a liar. I'll show you.")

He tells his friend Molefe that the dog ran into the forest and then leaves the classroom, which suggests a change of setting. In this instance, the setting serves as part of the action i.e. a deadly place. Senonnori runs to the forest, which is described by the author as follows:

E ne e tumme ka bobbe. Batho ba bangata ba shwetse teng, mme ba bang ba re ba fumane qhoboshiane ho yona ha ba tsonywa ke mapolesa. Ho bile ho thwe e tshwana le moru ofe kapa ofe. Ho ne ho thwe ha ho motho ya kenang teng a tswe a phela, ha e se dinokwane feela. Lefifi la teng le ne le babatswa ke bohle. (Pelo, 1992:5)

(It was notorious. Many people died there, and others found refuge in it when hunted by policemen. It was said that it is like no other forest. It was said that no one, except thieves, went in there and came out alive. The darkness of the place astonished everyone.)

Cohen (1973:29) asserts that "although it emerges concretely, it at the same time suggests a larger meaning which fuses with the tangible manifestations the author depicts". This is a dreadful place indeed. The darkness of the place indicates that it harbours all sorts of evil and death. It is a citadel for criminals. The place is scary. The place serves to suggest that Senonnori's death is imminent. After his disappearance, his parents inform the police. With Molefe's assistance, Senonnori is found dead hanging from a tree in the forest.

In *Mehlolo ya lena* (Wonders of this world), the author focuses on two stories where the base of action is Kwa-Thema but has no influence on the character. In the first story, Tumane comes to work in Kwa-Thema in the Gauteng Province. Maseru, like Kwa-Thema is only mentioned because it is Tumane's birthplace and where his wife and children are living. The setting has a bearing on the theme of the story because it projects the emotional state of Tumane's character i.e. his values and beliefs. He has a strong belief that his home is in Maseru with his family. He knows that his stay in Kwa -Thema is temporary; hence his insistence on being buried next to his father's grave in Maseru. His persistence is taken as a symbol implying that there will be trouble if his wishes are not fulfilled. He subsequently dies and is taken to the Kwa-Thema cemetery. On the way, problems begin. The hearse breaks down, the coffin is transferred onto a lorry but the lorry will not start. It is then carried to the graveyard where the grave is too small to bury the coffin. After the grave is enlarged, the coffin is lowered into the grave:

empa hang ha le teana le o batang la itshekamela mme la qetella le eme ka bolelele. (Pelo, 1992:42)

(but once it came into contact with the soil, it tilted until it stood upright.)

These incidents indicate that Tumane should have been taken home to Maseru to be buried. The coffin symbolizes the restlessness and restraint displayed by Tumane's wife and friends who are obsessed by guilt after the funeral. They dream that Tumane is still insisting on being buried at home. Eventually his corpse is exhumed and taken to Maseru. The setting has a bearing on the theme of the story. Tumane has a strong belief that his home is in Maseru where his family is.

In the second story, the time of action is a winter's night. The place of action is dynamic. Amose sets out in his car from Tsakane to Kwa-Thema to help a friend. On his way, he gives Serwetsana a lift. Her beauty fascinates him so much that he admits to himself that even if the woman was going to Natal, he would drive her there. The atmosphere is warm, pleasant and joyous, and Amose drives slowly because he wants more time to get to know Serwetsana better: *Ka tsamaya butle hoo makoloi a neng a ntshiya kaofela.* (I moved so slowly that all the cars were overtaking me.) (Pelo, 1992:44)

This does not only reveal the movement of space but also the movement of time as Amose dreams about love. He wonders about the bright future he will have with a rich woman. He will no longer be in debt.

The sentence *Yaba o supa sabusabu ya ntlo, mme a nkopa hore ke eme pela yona* (she asked me to stop near a big house) indicates their arrival at another place. Serwetsana asks Amose to plead with her parents to forgive her. When Amose talks to her parents, they tell him that Serwetsana died four years ago.

The setting in both stories compares belief with reality. In Tumane's story, belief and reality put Tumane's wife under pressure until she gives in to her beliefs. Whereas Amose believes that a dead woman is alive.

The place of action in ***Selepe sa bohwenng*** (The axe of the in-laws) is not specified. The setting is so slight that it can only be inferred from the dialogue and action of the characters. The author describes an incident in the house owned by Dirontso's mother. Despite the limited description of the house, we can deduce that the setting is urban from words such as *tanirumu* (dining room), *sofeng* (couch) and that the whole affair is published in the newspapers. The police find two corpses lying in a pool of blood in the house. The incident takes place at sunset and the atmosphere in the house is distraught. Sampi, the man who has slain the two women appears and tells one of the policemen, Mokwena, that he is responsible for the murder:

Ke Sampi, Sampi Kotjana, mme ke yena ya entseng mahlwele ano. A nkopa hore ke mpe ke ye le yena sepoleseng. (Pelo, 1992:52)

(I am Sampi, Sampi Kotjana, and he is the one who caused those clots of blood. He asked me to go with him to the station.)

The above quotation suggests a change of scene. The action moves from the house to the police station, which constitutes an urban setting. The reader cannot help but go along with Sampi and the policemen. In court, Sampi is charged with murder and pleads guilty. He explains that he is not asking for forgiveness but for judgement. He succumbs to the situation because he feels dead inside.

The story *Polao ya Mohau* (Mercy killing) is another example where the place of action is not clearly described but only referred to as a base for the action. The events take place in a hospital where Jakobo is looking forward to the birth of the only child he may have after a long period of waiting. When the child is born, the condition of the child changes his father's behaviour because the child is born maimed:

O ne a hloka matsoho, mme bakeng sa seatla, e ne e le kutu e ntjhotjho feela athe hape oto la hae la lehlakore le letshehadi, le ne le sothehile le tadimme hosele. Puleng ha a bona meokgo ya Jakobo, le yena ya hae ya rotha. (Pelo, 1992:65)

(He had no arms, instead of a hand there was a sharp stump, and his left leg was twisted facing the wrong way. When Puleng saw Jacob's tears, hers also rolled down.)

There is a sad atmosphere in the hospital. Jakobo becomes emotional when he sees his maimed son, Tshepo. At first Jakobo reacts with anger towards his wife Puleng and accuses her of eating something inedible during her pregnancy. Jakobo's world is shattered by the misfortune. He isolates himself from other peoples afraid of being asked about his son.

After six months, Tshepo is released from hospital and taken home. The home is not described in detail but we gather from the furniture that it is in an urban setting; there

is a stove, bed and a gun. Jakobo is so tormented by his misfortune that he eventually commits suicide after failing to kill his son.

2.4 Resume

It has been shown that the setting is important because it affects the characters' actions, behaviour and state of mind.

Both authors seem to have been influenced by folktales when describing the setting, as they fail to give full details and descriptions of the setting in most of their stories. Vague words such as "village" are used to indicate the milieu. This type of reference is seen mostly in folktales. Mofokeng uses contrast and irony not only to elicit humour but also to bring emotional balance in stories that are sad. In *Hae*, after being robbed at the station, the three men are sent to a place where they should find help, but instead of it being a safe haven, it turns out to be a frustrating and degrading place. Contrast and irony are also used to enhance suspense.

The functionality of setting in terms of the New Criticism is reflected in these stories by both authors. The deadly place known as *difateng* turns out exactly as it is described – a place of death for Senonnori – and the mine which harbours danger turns out to be a dangerous place for Molahlehi who is maimed after the accident.

Pelo's settings allow us to ascertain the historical period in which the stories take place by looking at the attitudes expressed by the characters. In *Polao ya Mohau*, Tshepo's father commits suicide by shooting himself after failing to shoot his son, and the shack that Dirontsho lives in is built of corrugated iron.

The choice of setting by both authors indicates the importance of setting in relation to other aspects of the short story. The settings used by both writers define the social status of their characters e.g. their clothing, speech and property. In *Bosiung boo*, Tshedi speaks with regret about the choice she and her boyfriend Sofonia made. They disrespected their parents by living together without their parents' blessings and ended up living in poverty.

In the story **Hosasa**, Molefi's poor status is revealed by his clothing:

Mmeleng ho bonahala baki ya kgale. E se e le sekatana sa kgale. Mahlakoreng ho se ho bonahala dikgwele tse leketlang moo e neng e le lesela pele. (Mofokeng, 1992:72)

(On the body, an old jacket was visible. It was an old rag. On the sides, it was evident that strings were hanging where cloth used to be.)

Their stories settings contribute towards the revelation and understanding of their characters. Social circumstances also influence the characters. In **Ho ruta Mpshe lebelo**, the loss of a job brought out the worst in Tefo. He became a criminal.

Both writers confine their stories to a single setting thus achieving unity in their plot. The events in **Panana le tamati, Hosasa, Ruthe, Boinnotshing, Polao ya mohau and Bosiung boo** all occur in a single environment. The theory was suitable for the stories because the events are believable and their settings are realistic.

CHAPTER 3

CHARACTERIZATION

3.1 Introduction

In a narrative, characters are figures used by the author to represent human beings. The author does this to establish their personalities i.e. to identify their intellectual, emotional and moral qualities. The technique the author uses to present, develop and create the characters should succeed in making them credible and convincing. These characters do not exist in a void; they exist in a certain context of action and are fascinating because they do, say and think. According to Cohen (1973:37), characterization

is the art of creating fictional characters in words which give them human identity. Through characterization, the characters created seem to display human traits and personalities, which a reader can easily recognize, respond to and analyze.

From the definition, it would seem that individuals in a narrative are given traits that can be expressed through speech and action i.e. they can be analysed in terms such as greed, beauty, honesty, jealousy, and kindness. Noble (1978:2) is more elaborate in his definition of characterisation. To him, the characters are more than just fictional, they are real individuals with unique characteristics:

Characterisation embraces the people in the story. The characters and their traits are revealed by certain business which the author selects for this purpose, the things the characters do that make them the sort of persons they are. The characters should be vital, stimulating – never dull or uninteresting. The things they do should have an element of entertainment in them; their actions should be original, earnest, clever, and sometimes amusing.

This discussion on the concept of characterisation is informed by the structural approach with specific reference to classification and presentation.

3.2 Classification

In character portrayal in literary works, characters are classified into groups. Two approaches are distinguished, namely, the mimetic and the structuralist approach.

3.2.1 Mimetic approach

In this approach, the emphasis is on imitation. (Abrams, 1971:37) describes the approach as follows:

Mimetic criticism views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is that of the truth of its representation to the object it represents, or should represent.

According to this approach, characters are divided into two groups, namely flat and round. Flat characters are also referred to as one-dimensional or type characters. Pickering (1988:7) states that "they embody or represent a single characteristic, trait or idea and a very limited number of qualities". Round characters are the opposite. They are multidimensional, as they possess a number of qualities and traits and are complex. They are characters of high intellect and emotional depth who have the capacity to grow and change. The mimetic approach is a useful tool in the analysis of short stories.

3.2.2 Structuralist approach

This approach was started by Sotemann (1966: 79) and continued by Greimas (1966: 197-208). It moves away from the flat-round approach and, unlike the mimetic approach, its final aim is not the classification of analysis but rather as an aid to lead to further deductions (Grobler, 1992:56).

Characters with common features are grouped together and called actants. Greimas' model of classification is as follows:

Subject -----Object

The main character is usually the subject who strives towards a goal, which is the object. Thus:

Patron -----Beneficiary

While the subject struggles to achieve his or her goal, the power that urges the subject to attain this goal is the patron. When the subject obtains his or her goal, he or she becomes the beneficiary. This leads to another distinguishing level:

Helper -----Opponent

While the subject strives to reach the object, he or she experiences resistance from his or her opponents. The helper helps the subject to reach his or her aim. It is at times difficult to distinguish between the helper and the patron. The following are some of the differences distinguished by Grobler (1992:56):

The helper helps only coincidentally, while the patron has power over the whole undertaking. While the helper is mostly concrete, the patron is often abstract. The helper comes to the fore while the patron often remains in the background. There are often many helpers but there is only one patron.

In terms of this model, characters with the same attributes may be divided into groups. The relationship between the different characters therefore can be determined. The model helps to indicate the role of each character be it a subject, object, patron, beneficiary, opponent or helper – no character is left out.

3.3 Classification according to Greimas' model

The following discussion hopes to establish how these theoretical approaches apply to the story *Mona pela tsela* by Mofokeng and the story *Polao ya Mohau* by Pelo.

In the short story *Mona pela tsela*, the subject is Tumelo who is the main character. He is a hardworking person who wins his employer's trust. He is an orphan who intends to marry Lebitso's daughter, Tselane. However, his intention is shattered when Setsokotsane plants dagga under his pillow and alerts the police. Setsokotsane becomes the opponent in the story. Because of his devious and callous streaks, Tumelo is arrested. In court, Tumelo is unable to defend himself successfully because the interpreter deliberately misinterprets everything that is communicated. The prosecutor becomes his second opponent. Tumelo ends up in jail. Tumelo's opponents show their force of character and role in the following manner:

Thola bo, o etsang ha eka o rata ho bua tjee? Empa mona kgotla mashano ha a thuse. Kahoo o ahlolelwa kgwedi tse tsheletseng teronkong; ha o tswa moo o tla be o se o lebetse kakana ya hao. Tswa!"
(Mofokeng, 1954:6)

(Shut up. What are you doing trying to talk? Here in court lies don't help. Therefore, you are sentenced for six months in prison: when you get out of prison you would have forgotten about your smoking pipe. Get out!)

The interpreter's forceful words "Shut up ... you have been sentenced for six months" and "Get out" show his power over Tumelo. This defines his superior position. Tumelo serves a six months sentence. Having been disgraced and released from prison, he develops a new goal: to find employment so that he can prove that he was unjustly treated.

He goes back to the farm where he was working before his arrest. At this point, the subject, Tumelo, has a number of opponents:

- The old man Rantsho, who dashes all hope that Tumelo had of being accepted by the people on the farm
- Lebitso, Tselane father, who says that Tumelo can no longer marry his daughter, because he is irresponsible
- The farmer, who does not want to see Tumelo on his farm anymore
- Tumelo's friend, who did not visit him while he was in prison
- His fiancé, who has accepted another man's proposal of marriage.

Tumelo decides to move to another place hoping to find a job, but is unable to do so because his papers show that he was in prison. As a result, Tumelo becomes a wanderer.

Tumelo does not become the beneficiary, as he is unable to defeat his opponents and achieve his goal. The opponent becomes the beneficiary because he succeeds in achieving his goal. Setsokotsane succeeds in destroying the future of the innocent, honest and hardworking man.

Greimas' model has been successfully used in this story. Not a single character has been omitted. Looking at the incidents of the story, all the characters who help create conflict are grouped together to create a series of events that develop the story.

In Pelo's story ***Polao ya Mohau***, Jakobo is the subject of the story. He has been trying to have a baby since he married Puleng. In his desperation, he consults medical doctors and traditional healers without success. One day they find a female seer who prays for them. The woman is the helper who helped Jakobo achieved his goal. Jakobo's wife, Puleng, gives birth to a deformed boy. In this instance, Jakobo could have been the beneficiary as he receives what he was looking for, but instead of being happy about achieving his goal, he is disappointed. His disappointment is illustrated by his actions:

Pelo ya Jakobo ene e ba bohloko, mme e balabala a sa kgaotse. O ne a re o utlwela Tshepo bohloko. O ne a re ngwana wa hae o mamelletse bohloko bo hlolang, athe bonneteng, Tshepo o ne a sa utlwe bohloko ba letho. (Pelo, 1992:67)

(Jakobo was hurt and continuously worried. He felt sorry for Tshepo. He felt his son endured excruciating pain whereas Tshepo did not feel any pain at all.)

As a result, he is not considered the beneficiary because his disappointment causes him to develop a new goal: to kill his son. He thinks that by so doing his son will be relieved from living with his misfortune. His son and his wife become his opponents.

Every time he looks at his son, Tshepo smiles happily at him. His wife always talks positively about their son and how much she loves him. She reminds Jakobo of their endless effort to have a baby and that their son is a gift.

Nevertheless, Jakobo is determined to end his son's life. He fetches the baby from his mother's lap and takes the baby and a gun into the bedroom. Tshepo is smiling and chuckling happily at his father. In the bedroom, his father puts the gun in the baby's mouth, but the coldness of the gun makes the baby scream alerting his mother.

Jakobo fails to kill his son and instead commits suicide. Jakobo does not achieve his goal and therefore the opponent becomes the beneficiary. The boy does not die.

In using this model of classification, no character is repeated. The principal as well as the minor characters have been classified. In Mofokeng story, the characters with similar features are grouped together. Thus:

Subject ----- Tumelo
Opponent ----- Setsokotsane, Rantsho, Lebitso, Tselane and the farmer
Beneficiary ----- Setsokotsane

The same thing applies in Pelo's story:

Subject ----- Jakobo
Opponent ----- Son Tshepo, his wife

Beneficiary ----- Tshepo

The model is valuable as it shows that no character, however minor, is worthless in literary works. Each character assists in the development of the story and the development of the principal character.

3.4 Method of presentation

Having classified the characters, the features assigned to them are presented in two ways, namely, either direct or indirect.

3.4.1 Direct method

This type of character delineation names the trait by an *o motle* (adjective), *o lerato* (abstract noun), or possibly *ke moloji* (some other kind of noun) or *o ithata ka boyena* (part of speech). (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:32)

This method involves the revelation of characters in various ways. The author may describe his character by:

- giving the character a certain name
- self -delineation
- allowing the character to talk about himself to the other characters, in other words interrupting the storyline to make explicit comments about the nature and personality of the character.

3.4.2 Indirect method

This method is the opposite of the direct method. Instead of mentioning the various characters' traits, the reader is left to infer what they are like. The method involves portraying characters in four ways, namely, characterisation through action, speech, appearance and environment. (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:61–67) This can be seen in the following examples.

3.4.3 Characterisation in *Leetong* and *Phalafala di Fapane*

Both forms of direct and indirect characterization will be discussed here with reference to selected stories from the two books.

3.4.3.1 *Giving the character a certain name*

The giving of names in Sotho literature follows the same procedure as in Sotho culture. A name is not given as a mere label to differentiate between a man and a woman. The parents of a newborn will name the baby after a relative who, for example, has good manners or whom they respect. A child may also be named after an event that took place when he or she was born, especially if the event will evoke memories. For instance, if a child is born after something sad has happened such as the death of a family member, he or she will be named Tshediso or Matshediso

Identifying characters with names is one of the techniques of character delineation. According to Pickering (1988:9), "the characters are given names that may reinforce their physical appearance or suggest their dominant trait". Pickering's notion is characteristic of African culture. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:33) agrees with Pickering (1988:9) when he says "character names often serve as 'labels' for a trait or cluster of traits characteristic of a non-fictional human being".

Brink (1987:80) supports this technique of name giving, although he believes it is too obvious. He says,

van narratologiese belang is wel die blote feit dat die gebruik van eienaam in die teks die karakter in die teks teenwoordig maak en namate meer en meer attribute of moontlikhede rondom die 'lee teken' van die naam saamklonter, word 'n meer en meer komplekse narratiewe teenwoordigheid in die teks geaktiveer by elke nuwe noem van die naam.

(from a narratological point of view, the use of a name in the text represents the character in the text; despite more and more characteristics

around the "empty sign" of the name, there are more and more characteristics in the text activated every time the name is mentioned.)

He adds a fascinating slant to giving a character a name from the beginning to the end of a story although there is a vast difference in the character's traits by the end of the story. There is also a difference in the reader's perspective of the character because in the development of the story the character may go through various behavioural changes. Brink (1987) believes that the procedure of name giving can be improved by employing different names to a single character in a story. As the character develops, he may be given a name for all the phases that he goes through. The name may also be substituted by another pronoun to achieve certain effects in the story. In other words, he supports afrocentrism.

Mofokeng, in giving names to his characters, falls in line with Brink's idea. In ***Mona pela tsela***, the principal character is named *Tumelo*. He is a hardworking man who ends up in jail after being falsely charged for being in possession of dagga. With the development of the story, he acquires a different name. After being discharged from prison, the old man Rantsho refers to him as *Radikakana*. He is given the name to indicate that he is no longer the honest man they knew. He has changed because he now supposedly smokes dagga. The name is used to reinforce and emphasise Tumelo's disgrace. It is illustrated in the following words. *Tjhe ha se tsa ka tseo, ke tsa hao tseo Radikakana. Sala hantle. (That's not my problem Radikakana, deal with it. Goodbye)*

In Basotho culture, Tumelo needs to be cleansed. A white chicken has to be slaughtered to remove the disgrace of having been in prison and to be accepted back into the community.

In ***Ruthe***, the character Mmasebolai arrives at Thabong with her husband. She works for Mmamosa, a white employer. Mmasebolai is given another name by her white employer. She calls her Marie, which ultimately becomes her real name after she is baptised.

Mofokeng also gives his characters names that contribute to the character's traits and names that suggest the character's behaviour, even though at times the names have no bearing on their traits. The idea is stressed by Kunene (1971:13) when he says that "names are important in our African culture in particular, because a name forms an integral part of an individual". The process of name giving is of special significance. A child does not just acquire a name because his parents like it; the child is given a name because of its relevance to a given situation, or for a certain purpose that the name is supposed to fulfil. There is however, also the belief that a name can influence an individual's behaviour and personality.

In ***Mona pela tsela***, the name *Setokotsane* (whirlwind) translates into the activities of the jealous, callous and devious character in the story who turns Tumelo's life upside down. The name also has a bearing on the plot, as Setokotsane's actions trigger a series of events in the story. Tumelo, a hardworking honest man is arrested for being in possession of dagga found under his pillow after being framed by Setokotsane. He served a six month prison sentence and ultimately becomes a vagabond as he is unable to find employment.

Matshediso's (consolation) father is devastated after the grave loss of her mother and little brother. Her mother died of a headache and a month thereafter, her eight-month-old brother died. Matshediso consoles her father and helps him understand and accept his wife's death. Her father is consoled by the peace he sees on his daughter's face all the time. Matshediso is fond of making music. Every time she plays her piano, she sings the song her mother sang, *Lala ho nna shwalane e wele* (Abide with me, fast fall the eventide) This song soothes Matshediso's father.

In ***Ruthe***, the name *Mmamosa* (a compassionate person) is used to describe the compassionate white woman in the story. It is a nickname given to her by her workers for her good deeds. After the death of her husband, her son invites her to stay with him in the city. She declines her son's invitation because she will not leave her dedicated employee, an African woman who is dependant on her. Both women lived through hard times after the death of their husbands and Mmamosa vows that only death will part them.

In **Hosasa**, Mofokeng names his character *Mmatsietsi* to reinforce the difficult situation in which she finds herself. She and her husband struggle to make ends meet. She is ill, married to a poor man, has children and is unemployed. Her troubles are increased when her husband comes home one night badly injured and penniless. Although she is relieved that her husband is safe, she cannot stop worrying about how they will survive should he be admitted to hospital and be unable to work.

In Pelo's short stories, the characters are given names to differentiate the characters and to indicate whether a character is male or female. In naming his character, he follows Hamon's (1977:147–150) idea that "names can parallel character traits in four ways: visually, acoustically, articulatory and morphologically".

In the story **Mehlolo ya lena**, the main character is *Serwetsana*. The character is given the name to reinforce her youth and enhance her beauty. Her trait is paralleled visually. Amose, the narrating character who meets her in the middle of the road at night, supports this notion. Her beauty so fascinates him that he says:

leha a ne a itse habo ke Natala, ke ne ke tla mo isa. O ne a hohela ka tsela e makatsang. (Pelo, 1992:44)

(Even if she said she lived in Natal, I would have taken her. She was very attractive.)

He totally forgets about his plan to assist a friend who has trouble with his car. He changes the direction in which he is travelling and decides to take *Serwetsana* (youthfulness/charm) to her home so that he can plea with her parents to forgive her. The name *Serwetsana*, suits the character for it reflects youthfulness and irresistible charm.

The name that Pelo uses for the main character, Tefo, in **Ho ruta Mpshe lebelo**, evinces the theme. Morphologically the name is derived from the verb *-lefa* (to pay). Tefo, an honest man, is retrenched shortly after buying a house. Aware of his predicament and knowing that he and his wife will soon be evicted if he fails to pay the housing loan, he becomes involved with three criminals. They make a lot of

money stealing and robbing stores. His wife, Dirontsho, questions him about his new lifestyle and their sudden fortune. Tefo tells her everything about the robberies, unaware that his wife is treacherous and greedy. The irony is revealed when his wife poisons him and his friends to get the money. Tefo paid with his life for his wrongful deeds, therefore the name befits the character.

Both authors employ the name-giving technique to describe their characters, support the theme, enhance relationships, and reinforce the plot. Mofokeng gives his characters evocative names. He follows the traditional way where the name has a bearing on the traits and behaviour of a character as well as having significance to what is happening in daily life. At times, the names contribute towards the understanding of the theme. For example, the name Mmatsietsi supports the theme, which is that life consists of trials and tribulations, as the character finds herself in trouble wondering about the future. Mofokeng employs the name-giving effectively, as the names are relevant to the deeds of the characters.

On the other hand, Pelo mostly gives names that have no bearing on the character's role. His writing has moved away from the traditional or cultural point of view towards the modern point of view where names are given without considering their significance. For instance, he gives his characters the names of flowers, Biblical names, names of famous movie stars and music artists. The names are simply to distinguish between the different characters, although at times they have significance to the understanding of the theme.

The name-giving technique is relevant as it helps the reader to differentiate characters and enables them to gain an in depth understanding of the characters' traits and situations.

3.4.3.2 Self delineation

Brink (1987:76) defines self-analysis as "a method of characterisation where the character talks to himself or about himself in dreams or conversations". It is because of these utterances that one is able to establish the personalities of the character.

In the story ***Ho ruta mpshe lebelo***, Dirontsho talks to herself about herself.

Ke mang ya dulang ka tlung ha e se nna Dirontsho Kopi? Sefane sena ha ke se rate hohang. Kopi? Keng yona nthweno? Ketla sefetola ha ke eme hantle. Tjhelete e lokisa dintho tsohle, mme e fodisa maqeba ohle.

(Pelo, 1992:32)

(Who stays in the house if not me Dirontsho Kopi? I really do not like the surname. Kopi? What is that? I will change it when I can afford to. Money solves everything and cures all wounds.)

The extract reveals Dirontsho as a self-centred person and an apparent gold digger who has no true feelings for her husband. She claims she dislikes her husband's name and finds a solution to this problem; she thinks that money solves all problems and can buy happiness. She exposes herself as the kind of person who will stop at nothing to have what she wants.

Tshidi talks to herself in ***Bosiung bono***. She says,

ke kopa maobane-ke kopa nako e fetileng. Ana ke nna enwa na? Ke tseba jwang hore nna ke nna? Ke mang? Ke ne ke le mang? Ke tla ba eng? (Pelo, 1992:31).

(I ask for yester years. I ask for the time that has passed. Is it really me? How do I know that I am who I am? Who am I? What will I be?)

The above excerpt reveals Tshidi in a state of despair. She is desperately trying to figure out her identity and would like to turn back the clock. Her questions make us wonder what causes Tshidi to question herself. She defied her parents by leaving home to live with her boyfriend. She thought she would have a bright future when she and her boyfriend married but instead they never married and struggled to make ends meet.

That the personality is showing regret is further developed when Tshidi talks to her boyfriend Sofonia, about their love and how they undermined their parents when they were told that they were too young to live together. She considers their suffering as a punishment because of the choice they made. They are tired.

The method is successful, as it helps to not only reveal the conflict that led to a series of events but also to understand the theme. It has been helpful to the reader because it has enabled the reader to ascertain the inner thoughts of the character and consequently to understand the character and her personality.

3.4.3.3 *Character talks about himself to other characters*

According to Rimmon-Kenan (1983:66), when a character talks about himself to the other characters, the other characters either support or deny what he says about himself. There are a number of instances where the characters in the works of both authors reveal their personalities when talking to the other characters to enhance their self-image, win a battle or conflict, or to disguise their inner feelings.

In ***Setloholo***, Malefetsane's dialogue with Motsamai reveals that he is a health conscious man when he refuses a cigarette from Motsamai. Motsamai supports Malefetsane when he explains that he also was a non-smoker once.

Le nna ka nako e nngwe ke ne ke sa tsube ngwanaka. Ke ne ke tshabana le kwae, ke tshaba hore mohlomong e ka tsoha e ntshenyetsa bophelo baka boo ke neng ke bo babaletse haholo. (Mofokeng, 1954:59)

(I also did not smoke at one time. I was afraid of a cigar, afraid that it may destroy my life.)

In ***Phalafala di fapane***, Senonori, after being lashed by the teacher, reveals that he is a strong young boy who stands firm to what he believes. When the pupils in his class make fun of him after he claims to have seen a dog with three tails, he says:

Utlwang hantle lona, ke yena eo a bua le rona, ha ke batle le mpitse

motho ya leshano. Ke tla le bontsha! (Pelo, 1992:5)

(You listen well; I don't want you to call me a liar. I will show you!)

Seeing that his integrity is being questioned, he stands for what he believes to be the truth to retain his self-image. He is battling with his feelings after being humiliated in front of the class and wants to win the battle by bringing proof of what he saw. His friend is stunned when it becomes clear that Senonnori is going to look for the dog in order to clear his name. He starts to believe that Senonnori is telling the truth, and when the police start looking for Senonnori, he tells them that he too has seen the dog.

This technique gives the characters the opportunity to reveal their personalities, to disclose or disguise their inner feelings, enhance their self-image, or win battles.

3.5 Indirect characterization

"Indirect characterization is the opposite of direct characterization in the sense that it is supposedly a direct presentation of events and conversations, the narrator seeming to disappear (as in drama) and the reader being left to draw his or her own conclusions from what he or she 'sees' and 'hears'. (Rimmon-Kenan,1988:107).

A character's speech, be it a conversation or a silent activity of the mind, can indicate a certain trait of the character.

Cassill (1975:159) states that

[d]ialogue has always seemed to me one of the indispensable devices for shading and particularising a character. In real life we like to see a person's face and hear his actual voice before we judge what he is up to.

Mofokeng enables his characters to reveal their personalities through their speech so that their traits, inner feelings and intentions are revealed.

3.5.1 Speech

In *Mona pela tsela*, the reader first learns about Tumelo's predicament in the court hearing when he has to give evidence to exonerate himself and his words are deliberately misrepresented by the interpreter:

Re batla nnete ... Toloko e re: 'Mona ho batluwa nnete e seng mashanoshano ana a hao ... Ho thata hore lekgotla le amohele bopaki bo sa tlang ... A utlwe toloko e re: Monna leshano la hao ha le a tla, hoja le tletse re ka be re mamela. Ha o a le qapa hantle. (Mofokeng, 1954: 5)

(We want the truth ... The Interpreter says: The truth is needed here, not your lies ... It is difficult for the court to accept the evidence. The interpreter would say. Man your lie is not complete, if it was we would listen. It is not well invented.)

The interpreter clearly shows that he is prejudiced, unfair, untrustworthy and unsympathetic. He is trying to tell us that Tumelo is a liar and is guilty, but meanwhile he is telling us a great deal about himself and that he has already convicted Tumelo. This is supported by Rimmon-Kenan (1988:64) when he says "what one character says about another may reveal the character not only of the one spoken about but also of the one who speaks".

Considering the situation Tumelo finds himself in, it becomes apparent that his innocence will be difficult to prove. That no one believes him is reflected in the dialogue he has with the old man Rantsho.

Tumelo is relieved when he sees Rantsho, hoping that he will understand and tell him good news about the people he knows and the woman he loves. Instead, he is rudely awakened by what Rantsho has to say:

Monna o se o le motsho o tletse ditshila hakale keng? Ha le itlhatswe teronkong na? Ha se kgopane molaleng mona, ke kgolwa o nyeunya dintla feela o le tjena. (Mofokeng, 1954:7)

(Man you are so black, you are dirty, what's wrong? Don't you wash yourselves in prison? Your neck is so dirty. I believe you have a swarm of lice on you.)

From Rantsho's speech, we deduce that he is a spiteful man. Being an old man, we expect him to comfort and encourage Tumelo having known that Tumelo was an honest, hardworking and clean living young man, but his words reveal that he has no compassion. Instead of having doubts about Tumelo's conviction, he condemns him. The old man's words not only disclose his personality, they also symbolise Tumelo's humiliation and that he has been disgraced.

We cannot help but sympathise with Tumelo and cling to the hope that he will eventually be vindicated.

This technique was useful as it helped in shaping and determining the outcome of events in this story. It enabled the reader to draw conclusions about the personality of the character from his speech.

In the story **Ruthe**, Mofokeng portrays two characters who have a unique and rare relationship. The following dialogue between Mmamosa and Marie indicates that they are friends and that there is a very healthy relationship between worker and employee. Although Marie seems to be upset with Mamosa for not drinking the coffee that she asked her to make, it is evident that she is concerned about her friend's behaviour and knows that something is wrong:

Mmamosa basadi ha a eso nwe kofi e leng kgale ke e tlišitse, molato keng? Ka nnete o bapala ka nna! O ka re ke o etsetse kofi athe ha o tlo enwa? Ke hampe hobane ke hona o bapalang ka nna mantsiboya.ana ke se ke tsofetse le wena o se o le molora ona! (Mofokeng, 1954: 48)

(Mmamosa has not drunk the coffee I brought her long ago, what's the matter? You are really playing with me. Can you ask me to make you

coffee when you know you are not going to drink it? It is bad because it is now that you are playing with me this late, I am old and you are old also.)

Mmamasa's behaviour has a bearing on the plot. Her reaction evokes a series of actions in the story. She travels back in time remembering her and Marie's husbands and their children, and recalls how they became close friends many years ago. She realises her mistake, immediately apologises to Marie and assures her that she was not deliberately ungrateful. Mmamasa's words reveal that she has great respect and compassion for her African worker although she is her white employer.

The technique is relevant in this instance, as it reveals the compassionate and humble personality of the character. This is further accentuated by the words Mmamasa writes to her son (Mofokeng, 1954:51):

o lebetse hore ho na le e mong polasing eo e seng e ka ke ngwaneso, eo monna wa hae e neng e se ka ngwanabo ntatao ya phetseng bophelo ba hae le ba monna wa hae ba iteletse ho re sebeletsa. Ekaba ho hloka teboho ha nka mo furalla nakong ena ha a se a tsofala, a se a hloka bathusi. Ke fumana ho le thata ho mo tlohela a le mong, mme ke tseba hantle hore ha a sa le mona ha ho tsietsi e ka ntlhahelang. Ke bolela Marie. Re tla dula le yena mona ho fihlela re arohanngwa ke lefu."

(you have forgotten that there is someone on the farm who is like my sister, whose husband was like a brother to your father who devoted their lives working for us. It will be selfish of me to turn my back on her now that she is old, with no one. I find it difficult to leave her alone, and I know very well that as long as she is here nothing will happen to me. I mean Marie. We will stay together until death do us part.)

The reader is struck by the total devotion and trust that Mmamasa exhibits towards her employee whom she sees as her companion, confidante and sister. Under normal circumstances, we would assume that Mmamasa would jump at the opportunity to stay with her son, but instead, she pledges to stay with her employee unto death.

Pelo portrays Dirontsho as a villain in *Ho ruta Mpshe Lebelo*. In the beginning, Pelo presents Dirontsho as a loving and responsible person who is concerned about her husband's changed behaviour. He is unemployed yet can afford expensive clothes. Her concern is indicated in the following dialogue between her and Tefo:

Tefo ke utlwa ke tshoha jwale. (Tefo I am afraid now.)

O tshoswa keng jwale? (What scares you?)

Tjhelete, diaparo le ka moo o seng o fetohile ka teng

(The money, the clothes and the way you have changed.)

"Ke fetohile?" (Have I changed?)

"Tefo o etsang?" (Tefo what are you doing?) (Pelo, 1992:17)

Dirontsho's questions show that she has her suspicions about her husband's actions, but instead of answering her questions, Tefo becomes defensive. Knowing that her husband is unemployed, Dirontsho is curious about where her husband gets his money. She has no doubt that her husband is doing something illicit.

In this instance, the character's speech helps the reader to perceive her loving and concerned personality.

It is difficult for Tefo to tell his wife where he gets his money because the other gang members do not want their actions disclosed. However, because he loves his wife, he eventually tells her his secret.

After asking her husband "Tefo what are you doing?", we expect Dirontsho to reprimand her husband for his criminal behaviour but instead she insists that he must inform her of the gang's every move. She no longer has the fear she seemed to have earlier. We realise that Tefo has put so much trust in her, that he does not become suspicious of his wife's request. He is unaware of Dirontsho's greed.

Every time her husband commits a crime, Dirontsho knows his whereabouts. She counts her husband's share of the takings and reveals her desire to be wealthy:

Ha ona le tjhelete, ke yena eo a ipolella, monna ke eng? O tla be o

hloka eng e kaana? Lerato? Lerato ke la mafutsana. Dikgoraneha dina nako ya lerato, di na le nako ya ho eta. Nako ya ho bona lefatshe le ho ikina. Ho ja tjhelete, ho ja mofufutso wa phatla.
(Pelo, 1992:20)

(When you have money, she told herself. What is a man? What will you need? Love! Love is for the poor. The rich have no time for love they have time to tour, to see the world, to be well dressed. To spend their money, to spend their earnings)

It is clear from her words that Dirontsho is greedy. By taking her into his confidence, Tefo is unaware that he is exposing himself to her evil intentions.

She makes plans to murder her husband and his friends and to take all their money. She gives him poisoned spice to sprinkle on the meat that they are going to braai to celebrate their success and later goes to their place of celebration by taxi. When she arrives at the scene, her husband and his friends are already dead. She peeps into the bags of money and smiles.

Dirontsho is first revealed as a loving wife but when she learns about her husband's criminal activities, she sheds her subservient role and commits murder.

Greed has turned her into a heartless person who finally commits murder. She does not show the slightest remorse. Note how sarcastic and callous her words are:

O ne a se tjee, ke Tefo ya morutileng ho ba tjee. O ne a tla llelang, ha e le mona a rutila mpshe lebelo? Lefatshe lena ke le fumane le bodile. Ke yena eo a nahana mme ha se mosebetsi wa ka ho le lokisa. Baruti ba teng ha ba bone! Ke ipatlela tjelete, mme ha ke e fumane ke tla re ke hlokan? Monna? Keng nthweo? (Pelo, 1992:23 –24)

(She was not normally like that. Tefo taught her to be the way she is. Why would she cry when she has taught an ostrich speed? She found this world rotten and she thinks that it is not her duty to put it right. She says,

"the ministers should see to putting the world right! I want money and If I have money, what more will I need? A man? What is that?)

The sentences "*O ne a tla llelang ha e le mona a ratile mpshe lebelo*" and "*Baruti ba teng ha ba bone*" shows her sarcasm. She feels her husband has taught her to become an expert criminal. It is not her fault that the church ministers are not doing anything about the rotten world.

From her words we conclude that she is vile, treacherous, greedy and a murderer. To clear her conscience, she shifts the blame to Tefo and the rotten world.

Pelo uses this technique to prepare the reader for events to come. The method was both functional in developing the action of the story and providing information that enabled the reader to ascertain the inner thoughts of the character and reveal her personality.

Language, as part of a dialogue or conversation, may indicate the character's background, education, living environment, and nationality. When people are speaking, they are also gesturing, grimacing, inflecting the voice, and stressing words i.e. influencing the meaning. When they are being ironic, they even reverse the meaning. Brecht (1930: 61) calls this kind of language *gestich* (gestural). The reader is able to ascertain the character's background from the dialogue (Kernan, 1969:13).

Mofokeng uses dialogue to reveal certain of his characters' personalities, their environment and nationality.

In *Hae*, a character who comes as far afield as the other side of the Zambesi River to look for greener pastures in Johannesburg, expresses himself in the following words:

Kanjani wena khuluma blulu? Wena yazi kashe Lo-Johnsbek yena mushe steleke. Yini aikhona wena funa ka Lo-Johnsbek.

(Mofokeng, 1954:106)

(What do you mean, brother? You know well that Johannesburg

is very beautiful. Why don't you like Johannesburg?)

As the character addresses his friend in Fanakalo, the reader is able to recognise that the character is a foreign national who has no knowledge of Southern Sotho. The words also indicate the mood of the character. He tells his friend, who is disappointed in what he sees that Johannesburg is a beautiful place and asks him what he dislikes about the city.

In **Hosasa**, Molefi is engaged in conversation with a man who is also waiting for a tram to take them home. His language exposes his background. Three trams arrive, but instead of picking up the men, they go straight to the depot. The people become angry, but the man with whom Molefi had been conversing defends the drivers saying that they need a break after a long day's work. After being reprimanded for displaying mercy towards people who are not related to him He replies:

Tjhe, molena wena o boa ntho e mpe jwale. Kaofela le lata ho ya kae le batsamai bao kaofela. Feela motho ya fosang ke mapalane hoja o thola batsamaisi ba baningi, bele zo fika kae kgona jwale dule. (Mofokeng, 1954:78)

(No sir you are saying a bad thing. All of us want to go home and the drivers also. The person who errs is the foreman; if he would hire more drivers we would be at home now.)

It is evident that the character is learning to speak Sotho. We assume that he is a Zulu. His language does not only reveal his nationality, but his personality as well. He is an understanding person.

Language has been successfully used. It helped the reader to ascertain the character's emotions.

3.5.2 Action

A trait may be implied by both a one-time (non-routine) action and by habitual actions (Rimmon-Kenan in Ntombela, 1994:134). One-time actions usually tend to evoke the dynamic aspect of the character while actions that are habitual tend to reveal the character's unchanging or static aspect.

Both one-time and habitual actions could belong to one of the following categories:

3.5.2.1 Act of commission

An act of commission is when something is performed by the character. The characters in the stories by Mofokeng and Pelo perform such actions. In Mofokeng's story, ***Mona pela tsela***, Setsokotsane plants dagga under Tumelo's pillow to incriminate him while in Pelo's story, ***Ho ruta mpshe lebelo***, Dirontsho prepares poisoned spice for Molefi, which kills him and his friends.

3.5.2.2 Act of omission

An act of omission is when the character does not do something that he or she should do. When Tumane's wife arrives from Lesotho after the death of her husband, it is expected that she take his corpse home to be buried. However, she does not do this, as she does not have the means. She agrees to bury her husband in Kwa-Thema. In ***Ruthe***, Mmamosa receives a letter from her son inviting her to come and stay with him in the city as she is the only white person living on the farm. Her employee, Marie, is worried as she expects that Mmamosa will agree to go and live with her son. Instead, Mmamosa does not conform to the expectations of others. She writes her son a letter declining his invitation and informs him that she would rather stay on the farm with Marie.

3.5.2.3 Contemplated act

A contemplated act is an unrealized plan or intention of the character. This is illustrated in Pelo's story, ***Polao ya Mohau***. Jakobo, Tshepo's father has not been

himself since his son's birth because Tshepo is maimed. His intentions are to kill his baby to put him out of his misery, but his wife, who seems unaware of Jakobo's intentions, hears the baby crying when the gun is placed in his mouth and Jakobo's conscience stops him from such an act.

Mofokeng is masterful in portraying his characters through their actions.

The main character in *Hae* is arrested together with his friends. At the police station they are harassed by a policeman. Mofokeng portrays a young white policeman who has very little regard for these men. He is described as follows:

e leng le leng la mabaka a neng a etsa hore a tlohele ditetswana mme a tswerele mahlwana, a tlenetlene ka mahlong ha bua le batho, mme a phahamise lentswe jwalo ka pohwana. (Mofokeng, 1954:111)

(one of the reasons that made him leave a small beard and opened his eyes wide while making a wry face and raised his voice like a young bull when he talked to people.)

Mofokeng uses simile *jwalo ka pohwana* (like a young bull) when comparing the young policeman's voice to that of a bull. The implication is that the policeman tries his best to intimidate the men in an attempt to earn their respect. The policeman's behaviour seems to have had an effect on the men as can be seen by the state of confusion they displayed:

Ba shebana mahlong, ba panyapanya, ba tsherehana, ya ka baka nyamela. E mong wa bona a tshoha a se a phahamisitse letsoho a dumedisa. (Mofokeng, 1954:111)

(They look at each other, quaking in despair; they felt like disappearing. One of them finds himself raising a hand in greeting).

It becomes apparent that the men are frightened when they can expect no help from the policeman. They want to hide themselves.

Pelo, on the other hand, employs humour to express the fear displayed by the policemen in his story **Phalafala di fapane**. The police and Molefe, a young boy, are searching for his friend, Senonnori, in a very daunting place known as *difateng*. Molefe explains to the policemen why his friend disappeared. He tells them about the dog with three tails and the conversation he had with his friend. He expects the police to understand but they laugh and dismiss the idea about the dog, saying that his friend is insane. Then Molefe tells the police that he also saw the dog. The brave attitude displayed by the policemen before suddenly changes. Their uncertainty is revealed in the paragraph below:

Mapolesa a mang a ntsha dithunya tsa bona jwale mme dikodu tsa bona tsa nyolosa tsa theosa, ba kwenya mathe. Ditsheho tsane tsa bona di ne di fedile jwale. (Pelo, 1992:9)

(Other policemen took out their guns while their larynx moved up and down, swallowing saliva. Their laughter was gone now.)

The situation indicates that the police feigned their bravery. Their pretence is reinforced by their actions when they hear the sound of a large bird flying. One of them releases a bullet then everything breaks loose.

mmutlanyana wa re kgwapho, pela hae mona, mme lebone la wela hole kwana Ho sale jwalo, ka utlwa a hoa a re "Joo! Joo!" Ha dubeha. Sethunya sa lla se sa tswa lla. (Pelo, 1992:10)

(A hare appeared before him, the lamp fell off. At the time, I heard him shout "Joo! Joo!" Things got mixed up. Guns sounded time and time again.)

The police trembled with fear, eventually realising that they were shooting at trees that were moving because of the wind. At this juncture, the sergeant starts shouting "*Kgididi*" in amazement. He picks up the lamp but it does not give them enough light

because his hands are shaking too much. He orders the other policemen to quit the search.

Tumane's character in *Mehlolo ya lena* changes. This notion is emphasised by Rimmon-Kenan (1983:61) when he says, "a character clings to old habits in a situation which renders them inadequate". Tumane is employed in Kwa-Thema, but has a strong belief that the place is not his home. He is from Lesotho and insists that he be buried next to his father's grave when he dies. From a traditional point of view, Tumane's desire is justified and his friends support his standpoint. However, when he dies, his friends are unable to collect enough money to transport his body to Lesotho so they decide to bury him in Kwa-Thema because the ground in Kwa-Thema is the same as the ground in Lesotho.

On the day of his burial:

Lekase la theoswa ka sefela empa hang ha le teana le o batang la itshekamela, mme la qetella le eme ka bolelele. Ba neng ba le haufi ba ile ba baleha. Ba re ntho eo ba e boneng ke mohlolo. Le moruti one a thothomela jwale. (Pelo, 1992:42)

(The coffin was lowered during the singing of a hymn, but once it touched the cold earth, it tilted until it stood upright. Those nearby ran away saying that what they saw was a miracle and the minister stood shaking.)

Pelo portrays Tumane as a die-hard believer in his cultural norms. His firm stand is revealed by the miraculous incident at the cemetery. Realising that this is unrealistic, we tend to believe that his friends' bad conscience played a trick on them. This queer situation gave them sleepless nights until Tumane's body was eventually exhumed and taken to Lesotho.

This approach has been successfully used as the character's actions assisted the reader in drawing conclusions, making judgements and understanding the character's motives and personality. It has been helpful in revealing the inner conflict experienced by the characters.

3.5.3 Appearance

Pickering (1982:9) writes that what a character wears and how he or she looks often provides essential clues to the person's character.

3.5.3.1 Clothing

A character's clothes may express his or her motives and give a clue to a character's personality. This is supported by Pickering (1982:9) who says that "details of dress may offer clues to background, occupation, economic and social status and ... even [give] a clue to the character's degree of self-respect".

In **Hosasa**, Mofokeng introduces his character, Molefi, by describing his clothes:

Mmeleng ho bonahala baki ya kgale. E se e le sekatana sa kgale. mahlakoreng ho se ho bonahala dikgwele tse leketlang moo e neng e le lesela pele. (Mofokeng, 1954:72)

(On the body, an old jacket was evident. It was an old rag. On the sides, it was obvious that strings were hanging where there was cloth before.)

The character's clothes reveal his background and that he is poor. He has a number of problems; his sick wife needs medical help and his friend Teboho owes him money. Nevertheless, he shows understanding when his friend is unable to repay him and nobility when he was able to placate the passengers waiting at the bus station who were becoming annoyed by the late arrival of the trams.

In **Setloholo**, Mofokeng reveals the social status of Malefetsane by drawing the reader's attention to his trousers. One trouser leg is neatly ironed while the other keeps the shape of his bended knee suggesting that the trouser is of a poor quality and well worn. As a teacher, Malefetsane has to be neatly dressed. The author

employs clothing diversely. They evince the economic and social status of his characters. He also shows that the physical appearance of his characters does not determine their worth. Despite Molefi's ragged clothes, he is a worthwhile individual.

This method demonstrates the character's personality, status and inner feelings to the reader.

3.5.3.2 *Physical appearance*

According to Imscher (1975:27), "physical features are usually expressions of motives and a clue to the character's nature". The idea is further supported by Pickering (1982:10) who says "appearance can help to identify a character's age and general state of his physical and emotional health and well-being, whether the character is strong or weak, happy or sad, calm or agitated".

Mofokeng gives a vivid description of Molefi:

A ka be a le molelele hoja ha se ka ho kobeha ho bileng teng mahetleng a hae. Ka baka leo hlooho ya hae e hlile e siya mmele morao ha a tsamaya. Ha pula ena ha a kolobe sefuba hobane hlooho e iphetotse lehaha le se okametseng. Taba e nngwe e mokgutsufatsang, o tsamaya a kobile mangole. Ke hore ha a tlilo hlaha hukung motho o bona mangole le hlooho e be hona a tlilo bona mmele. (Mofokeng, 1954:72)

(He would be tall if he were not bent at the shoulders causing his head to leave his body behind when he walks. When it rains, his chest does not get wet because the head turns into a cave protecting it. The other thing that shortens him is that he walks with bent knees. When he comes around a corner, a person sees the knees and the head first, and then the body.)

The author describes this character in a humorous manner. While certain features are beyond his control, he is responsible for certain others. The author pays attention to his shoulders and knees, which suggests that there is no one in the street who is

as tall and bent as he is. The implication we get from the description is that Molefi is a very tall yet shy man who perhaps undervalues himself.

In ***Bonnotshing***, Mofokeng delineates his character in the same manner. Although in this case the appearance is beyond the character's control:

*Ditsebe e le mahaha feela ntho tsa ditonana tse kgakeleditseng modumo.
Nko e le mpshatlela seolo sa sebele. (Mofokeng, 1954:99)*

(Near the ears, you come across a bush of beard growing down along the cheeks towards the chin. The ears are caves, large enough to receive sound. The nose is big – a real anthill.)

The hyperbole the author uses to describe Motsamai proves to be appropriate later on when we compare his life in a cave on the mountain with his appearance. Because he lives peacefully alone in the bush, he needs large ears to distinguish sounds such as birds, animals or people, to enjoy nature and be aware of danger.

On the other hand, Pelo uses a simile to describe the appearance of Senonnori:

O ne a le mokgutshwanyane ka seemo, mme mahlo a hae a le masootho ka mmala, bosweu bo re twaa. Dinko tsa hae di ne di famohile jwalo ka tsa pere ya mojaho. (Pelo, 1992:28)

(He was short, and his eyes were brown and pure white. His nostrils enlarged like a racing horse.)

In ***Polao ya Mohau***, Pelo gives a vivid description of Tshepo, Jakobo's newborn son:

O ne a hloka matsoho, mme bakeng sa seatla e ne e le kutu e ntjhotjho feela athe hape, oto la hae la lehlakore le letshehadi, le ne le sothehile le tadimme hosele. (Pelo, 1992:65)

(He had no arms, for a hand he had a sharp stump, and his left leg

was twisted facing the wrong way.)

From the excerpt above, we can deduce that Tshepo is deformed. We can therefore infer that Jakobo is sad about his son's misfortune.

The baby's physical appearance is effective as the reader is able to empathise to a certain extent with the father and gain insight into the character.

3.5.4 Environment

"A character's physical surroundings (room, house, cave, town or farm) as well as his environment (social class) are also often used as trait connotating metonymics" (Rimmon-Kenan in Ntombela, 1994:135).

The external and internal descriptions of Tshedi and Sofonia's room gives a vivid picture of two people living in poverty. The coldness of the room and Tshedi's illness portrays their hardship:

Ba ne ba ahile ka masenke, mme phahlo ya bona e ne e le ya boleng bo ka tlase bakeng sa theko ya yona e tlase. (Pelo, 1992:28)

(They had built a room with corrugated iron and their furniture was of a poor quality because of its low price.)

Tshedi's poor shack is a metonymy of her decadence, and the poor furniture is a result of her poverty.

In *Phalafala di fapane*, Senonori describes a dog with three tails as *difateng* (evil), which projects an image of an evil place. Even the policemen who first appear to be bold and composed, are struck by fear when they enter the darkness that portrays dark acts. The place harbours death, which brings sorrow to the life of the people who go there.

This technique enables the reader to ascertain the character's social and economic status and to understand their inner feelings.

3.6 Resume

Both writers use direct and indirect characterization similarly. Their characters are depicted fairly, have life; and sometimes make mistakes as all human beings do. If the writer presents his characters indirectly, through speech and action, it may take much longer for the reader to determine the character's personality and turn out to be tiring and less interesting. Action and speech alone do not give a vivid picture of the character. Other features such as the physical appearance, clothing, environment and social status of the characters are needed to determine the characters' personality.

Mofokeng uses both direct and indirect characterization successfully because instead of relating a story, he paints a picture with his detailed descriptions that attracts our eyes.

Pelo on the other hand also employs both techniques but does not attach much meaning to the name-giving technique. As a modern writer, he uses the expository technique that does not elaborate much and sometimes names his characters from the Bible, such as Jakobo and Amose. He keeps to the essentials; there is no elaborate description of the appearance of most of his characters. He prefers to use self-analysis to portray his characters, which he does well.

The methods have therefore been effectively utilised by both authors and they have used relevant techniques in portraying their characters. For instance, the name giving method is more relevant to Mofokeng as a traditional writer because it reflects the Sotho culture. The name "Mmatsietsi" has a negative meaning for it implies "troubles"; the woman struggles and finds herself in despair. In the Sotho culture, if a person is given a negative name that contributes to her traits, the proverb *Bitsolebe ke seromo* (A bad name is an omen) is used.

Both techniques are suitable for each author; they were used to give clarity and effect to both the author's characterizations. The techniques complement each other and make the characterization procedure more interesting if both are mixed.

CHAPTER 4

STYLE

4.1 Introduction

"Style" is the unique way in which every author uses language to present, shape and control his writing to achieve certain effects. It is an imperative aspect of writing. Because of the many definitions of what style is, it was decided to distinguish between the descriptive and genetic approach.

To Cohen (1973:49), style "pertains to an author's choice of words and their arrangement in patterns of syntax, imagery and rhythm". The idea of style as a choice of words is supported by Abrams (1971:165) who says that style is

the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse, it is how a speaker or writer says whatever he says. The characteristic style of a work or a writer may be analysed in terms of diction, or characteristic choice of words, its sentence structure and syntax, the density and type of its figurative language, the pattern of its rhythm and its component sounds, and its rhetorical aims and devices.

Holman (1983:432–433) defines style as "the arrangement of words in a manner which at once best expresses the individuality of the author and the idea and intent in the author's mind." In his opinion, style consists of two elements, the idea that should be expressed and the individuality of the author. Furthermore, Holman, in the words of Lowell (1967:103) regards style as "the establishment of a perfect mutual understanding between the worker and his material".

This definition indicates that each writer's style is unique and, as Pickering (1988:29) states, it constitutes his "signature" in a way that sets his work apart. There is no way that two different writers will have the same style. The style of writers will differ in

accordance with language usage, choice of words, sentence structure and the intent in the writer's mind.

Pickering (1988:29) defines style as an author's words and the characteristic way he or she uses the resources of language to achieve certain effects. Effect is necessary for a good style because the way the author expresses himself or herself and how he or she uses language should have effects on the work's other elements, such as character, setting and theme. This idea of effect on other elements is further emphasised by Barnett's (1992:283) definition; he describes style as "the manner of expression ... but in the choice of certain kinds of sentence structure, characters, settings and themes". We can thus say that style is the individualistic way in which the author expresses his or her ideas using various aspects of language.

4.2 Elements of style

Style will be discussed in the following paragraphs using various stylistic techniques.

4.2.1 Metaphor

Style is enhanced by the use of figurative language. According to Roberts (1995:116), "figurative language refers to expressions that conform to regularised arrangements of words and thought". Figurative language includes the choice and use of figures of speech, the two most common ones being metaphor and simile. Besides these, there are a number of other figurative usages of language in the works under study including the use of imagery and symbolism. We shall highlight these by selecting extracts from the following stories by Mofokeng: ***Mona pela tsela, Hae, Ke toro feela, Hosasa, Ruthe, Setloholoand Bonnotshing***, and the following stories by Pelo: ***Phalafaladi fapane, Mehlolo ya lena, Bosiung bono*** and ***Selepe sa bohweg***.

A metaphor is a word or expression, which in literal usage indicates one kind of thing or action is applied to a distinctly different kind of thing or action without asserting a comparison that is carrying out a change.

Cohen (1973:52) describes metaphor as "a direct or indirect substitution of one element for another". Mofokeng is very skilful in his use of metaphor. For example:

- (1) *Ba ne ba sa tswa nwa kofi ya hosing ha ba bona motho ya palameng pere ... Ka ho phatsima ha mabanta le meraho bah la ba tseba hore ke ntja ya mmuso.* (Mofokeng, 1954:4).

(They had just had morning coffee when they saw a man riding on a horse ... Because of the shining belts and stirrups they knew it was the government's dog.)

- (2) *Nko e le pshatlela, seolo sa sebele.* (Mofokeng, 1954:99)

(The nose was big, a real anthill.)

- (3) *Ya boela ya kgonya pohwana moo e dutseng teng, ya kgonya e bile e se e tla ikakgela hara bona kakgalefo.* (Mofokeng, 1954:111)

(The bull bellowed again, where it was sitting; it bellowed ready to throw itself among them in anger.)

The metaphor has a positive effect on the story. In the first and third example, it emphasises the dogmatic nature of the character. In the first example, the man riding on a horse is a policeman who is directly compared to a dog because of its known hunting skills. The policeman hunts for people who break the law. In the second illustration, a humorous atmosphere is created. The old man Motsamai's nose is compared to an anthill. In this instance, the writer communicates the character's appearance. Because the reader understands how big an anthill is, he also understands the character's appearance. Mofokeng employs this metaphor to avoid long explanations. In the third example, the young bull is the policeman. When the policeman interrogates the men (immigrants), his attitude and anger is compared to that of a young bull. He is still young, hence the metaphor *pohwana* (a young bull) to indicate the ambition and contemptuous, arrogant behaviour towards members of the public by policemen in the past. The metaphor helps the reader to comprehend the

surprise and confusion experienced by the other characters because of the policeman's action. Metaphors have been successfully used in the stories and have enhanced the authors' styles.

4.2.2 Simile

A comparison between two distinctly different things using "like" and "as" as comparative markers to show similarity or oneness is termed a simile. In Sesotho a simile is expressed by *jwalo ka, seka, tjena ka*.

Pelo, in *Phalafala di fapane*, describes Senonnori's nose with a simile:

dinko tsa hae di ne di famohile jwalo ka tsa pere ya mojaho.

(Pelo, 1992:3)

(His nostrils were enlarged like a racing horse.)

Senonnori is compared to a racing horse to indicate that he is not handsome and has large nostrils.

On the other hand, Mofokeng, in *Ke Toro Feela*, uses a simile to describe the possibility of Molahlehi not being able to return home because of the trouble in the mine:

*kajeno o di bona ka pele ho mahlo a hae, di eme jwale ka ditau, dinkwe,
diphiri mahareng a hae le bana ba hae, le baholo ba hae.*

(Mofokeng, 1954:21)

(Today he sees them in front of his eyes standing like lions, leopards and hyenas between him and his children and his elders.)

In the above excerpt, the author uses a combination of similes to describe the troubles that people encounter in the mine. The troubles are compared to beasts of prey i.e. lions, leopards and hyenas. Readers can understand the tension, fear, worry, anticipation and doubt that Mohlahlehi experiences.

In another example, the men's movements are compared to that of a chameleon:

*ha a ka a bona motho a ntse a nwaboloha jwaloka lempetje kapa
leobu o tla matha a mo tshware a sa le tseleng.* (Mofokeng,1954:111).

(if he saw someone walking slowly like a chameleon, he would run
and catch him.)

The author depicts the young man's character. The young man behaves in this manner to instil fear in the foreigners.

Simile is used in these stories to evoke and introduce comparisons that may be unpredictable. It enhances insight into the author's explanations and descriptions of characters and events.

In ***Mona pela tsela***, Tumelo is being reprimanded by the old man Rantsho for sitting on bags of maize. Rantsho was shouting so much that people gathered around. Tumelo's surprise and shock is compared to a young boy who is caught after running away.

By using this technique, the author describes his character's attitude and actions; it gives the reader clues about the state of mind of the character.

4.2.3 Overstatement

Pelo tends to overstate a number of aspects in his stories. The overstatements enrich his descriptions of ordinary life situations making them extravagant. Overstatements that intensify things or situations beyond reality are referred to as hyperbole. The author uses hyperbole to evoke the reader's interest.

In ***Selepe sa bohwenng*** (The in-law's axe), the author uses hyperbole to give a vivid description of the women's bodies found in the house:

Ka fumana letamo la madi, mme ho ne ho le batho ba basadi ba

babedi ba rapalletseng fatshe. (Pelo, 1992:52)

(I found a pool of blood, and there were two women sprawled in it on the floor.)

Consider the following extract from ***Bosiung bono*** (That night):

kgetlong lena a hohlola hoo a ileng a itahlela fatshe, a leka ho kokobetsa sefuba sa hae se tukang. (Pelo, 1992:28)

(This time, she coughed in such a way that she threw herself on the ground trying to abate her burning chest.)

The expression is an overstatement. One can cough strongly but hardly strong enough to throw oneself on the ground to soothe a burning chest; one's chest cannot be burnt by a cough. The author uses hyperbole to emphasise the severe pain the person had in her chest when she coughed.

Pelo, in ***Mehlolo ya lena***, exaggerates the sight of the dead body of Serwetsana by describing the knife wounds:

ngwanana eo a etsa paola ka mmele wa Serwetsana. (Pelo, 1992:46)

(that girl made an iron box with Serwetsana's body)

The statement is an exaggeration as an iron box cannot be made with a human body. This actually means that Serwetsana's was stabbed many times with a knife.

Mofokeng's employment of these overstatements is kindred to that of Pelo.

In ***Hosasa*** (Tomorrow), Mofokeng uses hyperbole to overstate the height of the main character, Molefi. His exaggeration evokes laughter in the reader.

A ka be a le molelele hoja ha se ka ho kobeha ho bileng teng mahetleng a hae. Ka lebaka leo hlooho ya hae e hlile e siya mmele morao ha a tsamaya. Ha pulaena ha a kolobe sefuba hobane hlooho e ikentse lehaha le se okametseng. Taba e nngwe hape e mo kgutsufatsang ke hobane o tsamaya a kobile mangole. Ke hore ha a tllilo hlaha hukung motho o bona mangole le hlooho ebe hona a tllilo bona mmele. (Mofokeng, 1954:72)

(He would be tall if he were not bent at his shoulders. Because of that, his head leaves the body behind when he walks. When it rains, his chest does not get wet because his head turns into a cave hanging over it. Another thing that shortens him is that he walks with bent knees. When he comes around a corner, a person sees his knees and head first, then his body.)

The bent shoulders and knees give the character a humorous appearance. Another hyperbole that triggers amusement in the reader is found in the story ***Bonnotshing*** (In solitude):

Ditsebe e le mahaha feela, ntho tsa ditonana tse kgakeleditseng modumo. (Mofokeng, 1954:99)

(Ears were caves, large things to receive sound.)

The statement does not actually indicate that the ears were caves. Mofokeng overstates the appearance of his character to emphasise that his ears are large. The large ears befit the character's way of life in the wilderness. He needs good hearing to enable him identify every sound; the singing of birds and the approach of wild animals and people.

In using this technique, both writers enable the reader to draw vivid pictures of their characters' appearance as well as their situation.

4.2.4 Image enhancing words

When describing certain aspects in his stories, Mofokeng uses a great number of words, which result in imagery. "An image is generally a sense impression created by a direct or recognizable sense appeal in words" (Cohen,1973:50). Such an appeal should present a description so graphic that the reader can relate to it with his or her senses. Roberts (1995:109) illustrates how one uses ones senses to distinguish between various forms of imagery as follows:

Sight: Visual imagery. Sight is the key to our remembrance of other impressions. Therefore, the most frequently occurring literary imagery is to things we can visualise either exactly or approximately.

Sound: Auditory imagery triggers our experiences with sound

Smell: Olfactory imagery refers to smell.

Taste: Gustatory imagery to taste

Touch: Tactile imagery refers to touch.

Motion and Activity: Kinesthetic imagery refers to images of general motion.

When describing the clothes Tumelo wears from prison, Mofokeng triggers the reader's sense of smell by saying, *Di ne di ena le lephoka le letjha leo a sa le tsebeng*. (They had a new smell that he did not recognise). (Mofokeng, 1954:1)

Mofokeng uses tactile imagery when describing an affectionate embrace of Malefetsane and Matshediso, after Malefetsane declares his love for her:

Abe a mo aka, ke Matshediso a potetsa matsoho a hae molaleng wa hae. (Mofokeng, 1954:68)

(He kissed her and Matshediso placed her hands around his neck.)

Auditory imagery is provoked by the following words describing the melancholy situation on the farm in **Ruthe** where Marie and Mmamosa are saddened by Petrose's letter:

Di ne di bokolla, di lla, di hloka kgotso. Esita le poho ya tsona e ne e kgonya e bohlela tlase. (Mofokeng,1954:42)

(They were bellowing, crying, they had no peace. Even their bull bellowed lower and lower.).

These sounds trigger similar sounds in our imagination.

In **Hae** (Home), the way Mofokeng describes the actions of the birds prompts the reader to visualise the harmonious beauty of nature:

dinonyana di fofa, di bina. Di raoha, di tutumolotseha, di leba kwana le kwana, di ikentse dihlopha, lefito feela di boela di kgutla. Mane ho bonahala tjobolo ... mohatla wa yona. Mane ... ele thaha-kgube ... sehlaheng sa yona. (Mofokeng, 1954:114)

(birds flying, singing, starting, rushing away, going here and there forming groups, a knot and returning. Over there *Vidua ardens* evident ... with its tail. There the red wren ... in its nest)

Pelo also uses different types of images when describing certain events in his stories. He uses tactile imagery where the effects of the cold are expressed in hyperbole:

Serame se ne se ka hwamisa maleme a bona. Motho a makale leleme le kgomarela mahalapa a hae. (Pelo, 1992:27)

(The coldness could freeze their tongues. A person would be surprised by the tongue clinging to his palate.)

Another use of imagery for effect is evident when Pelo describes the events on the day of Tumane's burial at the cemetery. In **Mehlolo ya lena**, when Tumane's coffin touches the soil it tilted and stood upright. This action result in a kinesthetic imagery.

Roberts (1995:110) states that imagery of motion is closely related to visual images, for motion is most often seen. The scene makes one shudder with fear.

A further example of a kinesthetic imagery is illustrated in the following extract.

Ha ke kena ka tlung, ka fumana letamo la madi, mme ho ne ho le batho ba babedi ba basadi ba rapalletseng fatshe. E mong wa bona a tadimeha a le mmeleng... mme ka elellwa hore ba rathilwe ke selepe kapa ho hong ho bohale ba selepe. (Pelo, 1992:52)

(When I entered the house, I found a pool of blood, and two women were sprawled on the floor. One of them looked as if she was pregnant ... and I realised that they were cut with an axe or something as sharp as an axe.)

The imagery suggests hostility and brutal death that shocks and brings a shiver down the spine.

Both authors successfully used this technique to enhance their descriptions and allow the reader to participate in the action.

4.2.5 Symbolism

Pelo uses symbolism abundantly for effect in his stories. "Symbolism is a person, object, action or situation that is charged with meaning and suggests another thing" (Barnet,1992:283). In the story *Phalafala di fapane*, symbolism is drawn from the setting of the story. Senonori, after being shamed by the class, is determined to prove that he is telling the truth. He goes in search of the dog to the forest that is described as a fortress for criminals; the darkness of this forest may suggest evil or symbolise Senonori's death.

In *Bosiung boo*, the author emphasises the effects of cold on people and animals. The cold Tshedi and Sofonia experience in their shack symbolises the coldness of death. The place where Tshedi and Sofonia live symbolises poverty, hardship and isolation.

In the story *Ho ruta mpshe lebelo*, Dirontsho gives her husband Tefo a packet of spice to sprinkle on the meat that he and his friends will eat at their barbecue when they celebrate their successful robbery. Spice gives food a pleasant taste. The spice symbolises poison and death for Tefo. Normally spice brings food to life however in this case it was meant to kill. It also symbolises Dirontsho's treacherous character, selfishness, greed and murderous streak.

Mofokeng also uses symbolism in *Ruthe*. The coldness of winter symbolises the sadness in Marie and Mmamosa when she receive a letter from her son, Petrose. Their sadness is further symbolised by the bellowing of the bull and the lowing of the calves and cows. The letter is an object that further symbolises the sadness of the imminent separation of Marie and Mmamosa.

4.2.6 Repetition

Various forms of repetition used are:

- Incremental repetition
- Repetition for emphasis

In the stories, repetition is used to advance the narrative, create suspense or an element of surprise, link ideas and enhance the author's style.

4.2.6.1 Incremental repetition

Mofokeng's various use of repetition could be seen as the hallmark of his style. For instance, when using incremental repetition, he adds detail with each repetition. Consider the following excerpt.

Matsietsi o ne a lohotha ntho e le nngwe feela ... Hosasa ... hosasa, hosasa kantle ho dipasa, hosasa kantle ho lengolo la kgafa, hosasa kantle ho tjhelete le ya ho ya mosebetsing, hosasa, e mohlomong, hosasa ha a lokela ho ya sepetlele. (Mofokeng, 1954:88)

(Matsietsi was thinking about one thing only ... tomorrow ... tomorrow, tomorrow without passes, tomorrow without a tax letter, tomorrow without money, tomorrow even without the one to go to work, tomorrow, yes maybe, tomorrow when he is supposed to go to hospital.)

The word *hosasa* (tomorrow) has been repeated eight times. The author repeats the word to emphasise the desperate situation in which Matsietsi finds herself.

4.2.6.2 Repetition for emphasis

Mofokeng uses repetition to stress the meaning of certain actions:

*ba ne ba bua,ba tsheha, ba swaswa, ba qoqa, ba bina,ba ithoka,
ba roka ketjhe e bile eka ha ba theohela kotsing.* (Mofokeng, 1954:21)

(They were talking, laughing, joking, conversing, singing, reciting and praising the elevator as if they were not descending to danger.)

All these forms give the stories a poetic effect. They are used by the writer to illustrate, describe and emphasise the actions and situations of the characters.

Repetition has been skilfully used by the author to keep the reader in suspense and to give clarity to the character's emotions, enabling the reader to visualise the descriptions.

4.2.7 Essayistic

Pelo adopts the narrative essay in his stories, which Scholes and Klaus (1982:79) describe as "consisting of narration, description, dialogue and commentary". In the introductory paragraph, he comments on a certain issue or topic before introducing his main character. This is illustrated, for instance, in the story *Polau ya Mohau* when he comments on the topic *Mohau* (mercy).

In *Ho ruta Mpshe lebelo*, he describes the hardship brought by unemployment and comments on the decision taken by people who find themselves in this situation. He further comments about the harsh effects of cold on people and animals in *Bosiung boo*. This commentary in his introduction forms the background of the events in his stories.

4.2.8 Use of Bible allusions

Mofokeng's style is influenced by the Bible, which may add to the sombre tone in which he writes his stories. His characters call upon the All Mighty in times of desperation and for comfort. In *Ke toro feela*, Molahlehi takes a moment to call upon the All Mighty when the elevator goes down into the mine:

Ntate o be le nna. (Mofokeng, 1992: 21)

He also quotes from the book of Psalms, Ruth and other books of the Bible. After refusing to abandon Marie, her helper, Mmamosa's heart is filled with love and hope. She could hear the words from the book of Ruth singing in her heart:

*ke tla dula moo o dulang; tjhaba sa hao e tla ba tjhaba sa ka mme
Modimo wa hao e tlabo Modimo wa ka. Ke tla shwa moo o shwang;ke
epelwe teng. Jehova a nketse ka hore le ka hore ha nka kgaohana le
wena ha e se ka lefu.* (Mofokeng, 1954:51)

(wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, i will die, and that is where I will be buried. May the Lord's worst punishment come upon me if I let anything but death separate me from you)

He uses hymns to soothe and comfort the character yearning for loved ones who have passed away.

*Lala ho nna, shwalane e wele,
Meriti ya bosiu ke ena,*

Ba neng ba nthusa ba tsamaile;

Wena, Morena, tlo, lala ho nna! (Mofokeng, 1954:63)

(Abide with me, fast falls the eventide;

The darkness deepens Lord with me abide;

When other helpers fail and comforts flee,

Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me)

He introduces lullabies to show his character's contentment and happiness at the prospect of having grandchildren.

Robala ngwanake,

Siu bo se bo fihlile'

Kgale o bapala'

Ako phomole 'nake.

Kopetsa mahlo hle,

O phomole jwale,

Kopetsa mahlo hle,

O phomole jwale. (Mofokeng, 1954:70)

(Sleep my child,

The night has come'

You have been playing'

Rest my child,

Please close your eyes,

Rest now,

Please close your eyes,

Rest now.)

By using this technique, Mofokeng emphasises that his characters are human and have feelings.

4.2.9 Modern words (borrowed words)

The language used by both authors is simple and easy to understand. Pelo tends to use modern words such as

sakerete, biri, lekeisheneng, tanirumu, thelevishine, ditaere

(cigarette, beer, location, dining room, television, tyres).

On the other hand, Mofokeng uses words such as *terempe, maene routu* (*tramp, main road*), and even combines his language with other languages such as Fanakalo:

Nina fikire rapha Johnsbek. Los' khathi nina fika rapha, nina vuka.

(Mofokeng, 1954:113).

(You arrived in Johannesburg. When you arrive here, you wake up.)

Borrowed words have been effectively used to entertain the reader and develop the action.

4.2.10 Proverbs

Both authors use proverbs in their writing. Guma (1977:65) describes a proverb as

a pithy sentence with a general bearing on life. It serves to express some homely truth or moral lesson in such an appropriate manner as to make one feel that no better words could have been used to describe the particular situation

Functions of the proverb

- Proverbs are didactic and teach moral lessons.
- They may suggest a course of action.
- They pass judgement in a given situation.
- They represent wit and wisdom.

Mofokeng emphasizes morality, good manners and understanding, which are features that Molefi possesses. Although Teboho owes Molefi money, which he desperately needs, and Teboho is forever disappointing him by promising to repay him after every month end, Molefi describes Teboho as:

Ke ngwana setsoha-le-pelo-ya-maobane. (Mofokeng, 1954:79)
(a child who wakes up with yesterday's heart.)

Molefi shows understanding and does not change his attitude towards Teboho. Mofokeng uses this proverb to reveal Teboho's character.

In the story *Ke toro feela*, Mofokeng stresses Mmateboho's despair because her injured husband will be unable to work and provide food for the family. She expresses her concern with the proverb

Raka le shwetswe ke molebo. (Mofokeng, 1954:33)
(The pumpkin shoot precedes the dead.)

Pelo's use of proverbs deviates from that of Mofokeng. He uses them as titles for his stories to reveal the theme and sometimes does not use them in full. For instance, the title of the book is derived from the proverb *Phalafala di fapane* (There is trouble). When the principal informs his pupils that one of them has disappeared, he uses the proverb *Phalafala di fapane*, which is also the title of the story.

Another proverb that Pelo uses as a title is *Selepe sa bohweg*. According to Guma (1977:65),

"proverbs have a fixed and rigid form to which they adhere at all times and which is not changeable".

However, Pelo deviates from Guma's view by employing a proverb in an unusual way in the following paragraph.

Selepe sa bohwenng ha se tjhophola se poma matsale dikotokoto"
(Pelo 1992:54)

(The in-law's axe chops the mother-in-law into pieces when it slips)

Selepe sa bohwenng is part of the proverb: *Selepe sa bohwenng se ratha se iname*, which means that the son-in-law has to do his best to assist his parents in law. The son-in-law, in this case, does not help his in-laws; instead he uses the axe to kill his mother-in-law. Pelo deliberately changes the form of the proverb to correspond with the theme of the story.

In the story **Ho ruta mpshe lebelo**, Pelo explains how Dirontsho convinced herself that killing her husband for money was the right thing to do by using the proverb

Nonyana e ahela ka ditshiba tsa e enngwe. (Pelo, 1992:23)
(A bird builds with others'feathers.)

Dirontsho took advantage of this proverb that seems to encourage her to kill in order to satisfy her greed. The writer uses the proverb to reveal Dirontsho's character.

After losing his job, Tefo befriends a gang of robbers to whom he once gave a cigarette and money for two beers. They welcome him into the group, claiming *Matsoho a hlatswana*. (Arms wash each other). Because Tefo is now unemployed, the gang feels that they have to help him because when he was working he used to help them. The author uses this proverb to emphasise the negative attitude displayed by Tefo after losing his job.

Proverbs have been successfully used to enrich the language and to emphasise the characters' actions.

4.2.11 Idioms

Guma (1967:66) indicates that idioms are "characteristic indigenous expressions, whose meaning cannot be ordinarily deduced or inferred from a knowledge of individual words that make them up".

Idioms are expressions used by the author to enhance his style and to enrich the quality of the language he uses.

For instance, the title *Ho ruta mpshe lebelo* (To teach a monkey new tricks) is derived from the idiom. Pelo uses the idiom to indicate that Tefo learns new tricks after joining the gang i.e. how to break into buildings, steal and rob.

Pelo also uses this idiom to describe Dirontsho's vile, greedy contentment after killing her husband and his friends so that she could take all the money they made from their crimes. She says that Tefo has taught her all his new tricks.

When Tefo brought home R3, 500 one night, Dirontsho told him that the total amount of money they made was R14, 000. Tefo was shocked and asked her how she knew about the money. She said

Ke ja masapo a hlooho Tefo ke ja masapo a hlooho (Pelo,1992:19).
(I think Tefo, I think).

Pelo uses this idiom to show how calculating Dirontsho was.

Pelo uses the expression *Ho se tsebe ke lebote* (A lack of knowledge is dangerous) to indicate the people's reaction when Tumane's wife and his friends exhumed his coffin in Kgauteng to rebury it in Maseru. People believe that it was not Tumane's spirits that haunted his wife, but her guilt.

Another aspect of Pelo's style is his use of colour. In all his stories, he tends to highlight and emphasise certain aspects by indicating their colour. At times, these colours are contrasted.

Mahlo a hae a le masootho ka mmala, bosweu bo re twaa!

(His eyes were brown in colour and pure white.)

Mahlo a hae a ne a se a ena le mmala o mosehla.(Pelo, 1992:3)

4.2.12 Tone

"Tone" according to Pickering (1982:32), means creating a relationship or conveying an attitude. As a literary concept, Roberts (1995:138) says that tone is adapted from the phrase "tone of voice" in speech which reflects attitudes towards a particular object, situation or listeners.

Mofokeng's sombre tone is revealed by his pessimistic attitude. He seems to be certain that there is no hope in this world. His characters either die or have lives in turmoil. They live in despair with no hope for a better future. This is illustrated in the story ***Mona pela tsela***. Mofokeng depicts Tumelo as being desperate and his situation hopeless. After his release from prison, Tumelo asks a farmer for employment but the farmer's tone towards him is judgemental. When Tumelo shows him his identity document the farmer says:

Ha ba ka ba hla ba o phaphamisa teronkong ke a bona. Etsa o yo tswa le moo o keneng le teng pele ke o bitsetsa mapolesa. Ha ke thole ba kang wena tjena nna. (Mofokeng,1954:15)

(They didn't wake you up in prison. Leave before I call the police. I don't hire people like you.)

The man's speech indicates indifference, contempt and indignation.

On the other hand, Pelo's tone is emotional and sympathetic. He tends to show concern for his characters who find themselves in difficult situations. They die or are

already dead and cannot find peace in their grave. This can be seen in the story ***Bosiung bono***. The gloomy situation and Tshedi's illness evokes emotions of fear, regret and pain. Tshedi and Sofonia defied their parents and lived together without their blessings.

Tone is used in such a way that it gives the reader the opportunity to participate in the story by evoking the reader's curiosity. It gives readers insight into the characters' thoughts and attitudes.

4.2.13 Short and long sentences

Both authors use a combination of short and long sentences. The sentence construction is loose and periodic at times. The loose sentences follow the normal subject-verb-complement pattern, "expressing in short dependent propositions, each complete in itself" (Blackman, 1923:64)

Consider the following paragraphs to determine the sentence patterns of both writers:

Paragraph A ***Leetong***, p.25

La nna la tjhaba, la nna la dikela, shwalane ya nna ya tshwara, mafube a hlahe hape. Matsatsi a feta. Beke ya fela. Ha qaleha ya bobedi ya fela le yona.

(The sun rises, it sets, it was evening, and it dawned again. Days went by. A week passed. The seconds came and weeks past.)

Paragraph B ***Phalafala di fapane***, p.34

Kena dikobong re robale. Ke kgathetse, Sofonia, ke kgathetse. Tjhe ke lokile mona. Ke wena ya kulang o lokile dikobong moo.

(Get into bed, let's sleep. I'm tired Sofonia, I'm tired. No, I'm fine here. You are the one who is ill you are fine there under the blankets.)

In paragraph A, *Matsatsi a feta* and *Beke ya fela* are short sentences that Mofokeng uses to evoke the reader's curiosity to want to read further. In this instance, he emphasises Mmateboho's concern when Molahlehi did not write about his whereabouts.

In paragraph B, Pelo uses these short sentences to create mood. Tshedi and Sofonia's tiring situation is revealed.

Both authors use short sentences for dramatic effect, to increase the tempo of the narration, and to make their stories interesting and stimulating.

Paragraph C ***Leetong***. P.49

Ha e le Marie yena o ne a tlaletswe ke naha. O ne a utlwa hore kajeno o lahlehile. Ka pele ho yena ho ne ho le lefifi, leififi la mo-nka-ntjana, lefifi le lebe le fihlang ho motho ha a se a kgathetse, matla a fedile a le siyo, leififi la hore na o tla etsa jwang.

(Marie was in a fix. She felt that today she was lost. In front of her was darkness, a very great darkness, a bad darkness that arrives when a person is tired, when strength is gone; the darkness that keeps you wondering what to do.)

Paragraph D ***Phalafala di fapane***. P.31

"Empa ha ke ne ke le ngwana ke ne ke nahana hantle, kajeno ha ke se ke fetoha mosadi, ke utlwa ke tshaba, ke etswa keng? Ke ho kula. Ho kula ho tlisa lefu mme ke tshaba ho shwa ke eso phele. Teng ke phelelang athe ke tla shwa? Morero wa Modimo keng ka rona? Bophelo?"

(But when I was a child I thought properly, today when I become a woman, I fear what makes me? It's the illness. The illness brings death and I'm

afraid to die before I live. Why am I living if I will die? What is God's plan about us? Life!)

The long sentence that Mofokeng uses in paragraph C is balanced by his parallel sentence structures. According to Eastman (1984:78), these parallel structures "reduce the syntactical complexity and bind the passage together with their own natural rhythm".

The repetition of the key word *lefifi* develops into a rhythm. Furthermore, the recurrence of the word forms parallelistic structures. Mofokeng uses long compound sentences in paragraph C i.e. *Ka pele ho yena ho ne ho le lefifi ... jwang*. The sentence consists of thirty-eight words. At times, his sentences are so long that a single sentence may be a paragraph. The approach in such sentences is periodic. "A periodic sentence delays closure until the period which ends the sentence itself". (Eastman, 1984:202)

The sentence is kept in suspense because of the repetition.

A fumana a le lehlohonolo haholo ha e le mona a sa tla ba le hona ho boha bottle ba naha ya Morena, a sa tla ba le hona ho boha lehodimo la hae, le bottle ba dinaledi bosiu, a sa tla ba le hona ho boha dinoka, ho di utlwa di hwasana, ho boha dithaba di benya ke metsi a pula, ho di bona di kwahetswe ke lehlwa le lesweu mariha, a utlwa a tlala teboho ha a hopola hore o sa tla boha jwang bo botala, o sa tla tsamaya meferong, a utlwe tshitwe ha e lla, o sa tla boha dikgomo le dipere, dinku le dipodi di fula, o sa tla palama dipere, o sa tla tshosa masimong, a phefumolohe moya o motjha o phodileng wa Morena, o sa tla tsoma. (Mofokeng, 1954:30)

One hundred and thirty-four words are used in a sentence to bring forth the eternal gratefulness of a person drawn to nature's beauty. The long sentence creates an image of everlasting beauty. Mofokeng uses the long and winding sentence to slow the tempo of the action and in so doing, he keeps the reader in suspense to reflect his character's concerns and gratitude.

In paragraph D, Pelo's (1992:31) sentence *Teng ke phelelang athe ke tla shwa?* (Why do I live if I want to die?), shows a balance in Pelo's sentence structure as he employs antithesis "which is a kind of parallelism which repeats structures not to stress similarity but to stress contrast" (Eastman, 1984:213). In the second paragraph, *empa* (but) he delays the conclusion of the person's thoughts, which are suspended until the closing verb *ke etswa keng*.

Long and short sentences are used by both writers for emphasis, to create mood and to keep the reader stimulated.

4.3 Resume

When comparing the style of Mofokeng to the style of Pelo, we realise that both authors employ kindred stylistic features i.e. figurative language, imagery, repetition and sentence patterns. However, despite the similarity, each author has his own individual style.

Both authors employ proverbs and hyperbole. However, when we look at Mofokeng's use of proverbs, we realise that they remain in their natural form, giving the appropriate meaning. Pelo on the other hand utilizes tropes as titles (not in their full form) so that he is able to change the proverb to suit or be in line with the theme of the story.

Both writers employ hyperbole. Mofokeng employs this figure of speech to reveal the appearance of his characters while Pelo uses hyperbole prominently in his stories to highlight actions, certain situations and the character's appearance.

The styles of both authors exemplify most of these elements. Mofokeng's stories are rhythmically poetic. This is achieved by the language used and poetic devices such as the repetition of similar words, stems, phrases and sentences. His choice of words captures the readers' interest and his explanations give the reader a vivid image of what is being said:

Dillo tsa dikgomo ha bashanyana ba kgethela
Kgwedi tsa thwasa tsa ba tsa ya mofela

Pelo uses everyday language, which he blends with idioms to enhance his style and quality of his language.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a general conclusion of the previous chapters discussed in this dissertation.

The aim of this study was to review the short stories of S M Mofokeng and M P Pelo critically, as these authors represent two different epochs in the writing of short stories. It was noted how Mofokeng and Pelo's writings complement each other although they are both similar and different at times because of the time period separating them. The aim was also to focus on the art of short story writing, with specific reference to the theory of short story writing, and to look into the forerunners of short stories to establish their influence on these short stories and their significance to this study.

5.2 Findings.

From the study, it has emerged that folktales show a scanty description of characters and that characters represent two worlds i.e. a fantasy and a real world. The characters can be animals or people. For instance in *Mohome le Tau*, Tau is an animal, whereas in ***Leetong*** and ***Phalafala di fapane***, the characters are human. Names are given to identify the characters, signifying certain traits. Detailed descriptions of the characters, such as their physical appearance, clothing, and personality, are provided and are relevant to their portrayal.

The setting is not described in detail in folktales and both writers exhibit this influence in their stories. They often refer to the setting in general terms e.g. a place is simply

referred to as a village. The place cannot be located as no details are provided about the scenery or atmosphere.

The stylistic techniques used in folktales are repetition, songs and figures of speech. It is evident from the study that Mofokeng, who represents the earlier epoch in the writing of short stories, was influenced by folktales. He employs oral poetry devices such as repetition in all his stories, uses songs to bring relief to his characters, and uses alliteration. This influence is emphasised by Jones in the words of Balogun (1991:55) when he states that "the modern African story is a continuation of the traditional tale". This explains why the afrocentric approach is so powerful and relevant in the analysis of literature in African languages.

Pelo's stories *Phalafala di fapane* and *Mehlolo ya lena* are part fantasy, which require the reader to either believe or disbelieve them. Fantasy is one way to identify folktales. These stories deal with mystery and superstition. In *Phalafala di fapane*, Senonnori is found dead after chasing a dog with three tails. In *Mehlolo ya lena*, Amose gives Serwetsana a lift in his car, but when he arrives at her home, he learns that Serwetsana has been dead for the past four years. This indicates that folktales influence the stories dealing with mystery, witchcraft and superstition.

It has also been observed that although both authors have shifted from folktales, the modern African short story still shows a growing link between the folktale and short story.

Both authors have distinctive ways of presenting the events in their short stories, defining their unique styles. Mofokeng uses analepsis and foreshadowing. He begins with the outcome of the story and works backward. In *Mona pela tsela*, he introduces the principal character roaming about in town then goes to the beginning of the story, giving the events that led to Tumelo's situation. Tumelo is a hardworking man whose life is in turmoil because of being falsely accused of smoking dagga. After being imprisoned, he loses his job, his fiancé and his home.

Pelo on the other hand, reveals the events of his stories in chronological order. The events start at the beginning and develop to the end, although he tends to start his

stories with an introduction that highlights the theme of the story. He introduces the story *Ho ruta mpshe lebelo* by commenting on the difficult situations people face in their daily existence i.e. hard times caused by small incomes and loss of jobs. Then he introduces the main character Tefo, who has a comfortable life with his family before losing his job, which changes his life drastically. He becomes criminal.

The events in both the authors' stories occur in the natural world, the trials and tribulations experienced by human beings are emphasised in both works, and the night implies evil or crime with both writers. In Mofokeng's story, Molefi is mugged and badly injured when walking through the darkness of night. In Pelo's story, Tefo and his gang rob people at night.

In *Hae*, Mofokeng highlights the hardships experienced by Africans during the historical period of the pass laws. Similarly, Pelo highlights the hardship of unemployment and underdevelopment in *Ho ruta mpshe lebelo* and *Bosiung bono*.

Repetition is a distinctive feature of Mofokeng's style. He uses repetition to create vivid pictures and to keep the reader interested and in suspense, whereas Pelo's style has a dramatic effect because of his use of dialogue. The difference in their approach gives impetus to the growth and development of story writing in Sesotho and consequently improves the quality.

Both authors use short and long sentences, although Mofokeng uses long sentences and repetition, as in poetry, for effect and to attract the reader.

The writers are masters of their language and handle all aspects with skill and great appreciation. Mofokeng uses common words uncommonly well. Instead of using the phrase *a robala* (he slept), when referring to someone sleeping, he uses the phrase *a busa dintshi* (he shut his eyes). Pelo uses day-to-day language to reach his readers:

yaba o nanabetsa letsoho, o tshwara mosadi seatla, mme a ya le yena ka "tanirumu". Teng ba itahlela "disofeng" tse njha tse sa tswa rekwa ke Tefo. O ne a di lefelletse 'kontane'. (Pelo, 1992:17)

(he stretched out his hand, held his wife's arm and went with her into the diningroom. They threw themselves onto the new sofa bought by Tefo. He paid cash for it.)

5.3 Conclusion

Based on this study, it can be concluded that Mofokeng is the first South Sotho author who published a brilliant volume of short stories. His stories are the most unique and noteworthy works in Sotho literature and were instrumental in the transition of short stories from folktales to modern short stories. Pelo's short stories also indicate significant growth in short story writing using a modern technique.

Given the paucity of studies of this nature in African languages, this work constitutes an important contribution to this field of study.

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