

A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION
INTO THE
STANDARDIZATION
OF
WRITTEN TSWANA

(A Study of the History and present state of
Tswana Orthography)

by

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CHAPTER I

TSWANA ORTHOGRAPHY, C. 1806 - 1960

INTRODUCTION

1.1 There is no intention here to give a complete account of the development of the Tswana Orthography. It is intended to show very briefly some of the efforts down the years which led to the present position, which position will be the best appreciated against a background of what went before.

LICHTENSTEIN'S "UPON THE LANGUAGE OF THE BEETJUANS"¹⁾

1.2 We start an investigation of the story of written Tswana from 1806, when Heinrich Lichtenstein contributed a vocabulary entitled, "Upon the Language of the Beetjuans". For our purpose this title offers material to note -

- the rendering of the prefix: Bee-
- the rendering of the pre-palatal sound: tj
- the rendering of the present-day wa as: ua -
- the terminal suffix -n- (normally -na)
- the plural suffix of English style -s.

CAMPBELL'S "BOOTCHUANA WORDS" - 1815²⁾

1.3 John Campbell's vocabulary of 1815 is entitled "Bootchuana words". He conceives the language as that of the Country, and employs the prefix for Country, rendering his sounds -

- prefix: Boo - (today Bo-)
- prepalatal sound: tch
- terminal suffix: - na

Already there is a change from Lichtenstein's rendering of the prepalatal sound and terminal suffix.

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1. Vide Travels in Southern Africa, Lichtenstein, Appendix II, in Vol.II, Van Riebeeck Society's ed., 1930.
 2. Travels in South Africa, Campbell, 1815.

BURCHELL'S CONTRIBUTION - 1824³⁾

1.4 In 1824 W. Burchell departs from the path of both Lichtenstein and Campbell, writing, "Sichuana". Already the distinction of symbols becomes such a live problem to him that he insists on the use of accent marks like on búa (to speak) buá (to flay). In any case, in 18 years we see:

tj: tch: ch in succession for the same sound.

ROBERT MOFFAT - 1816

1.5 The Tswana got their first missionary in 1816, in the person of Dr. Robert Moffat, who settled among the Tlhaping around Kuruman, N.W. Cape.⁴⁾

1.6 Moffat gave the Tswana their first School in 1825, and understandably, sorely needed the use of the Tswana language, and its reduction to writing, systematic writing. An orthography was required, and understandably, he relied on the orthography of his own mother-tongue to serve as basis.

1.7 His great achievement was in the field of Bible translation, completing the Gospel according to St. Luke in 1830, the New Testament in 1840, the Old Testament in 1857.⁵⁾

1.8 As to Orthography he wrote for instance "Sechuana" compared to Burchell's "Sichuana". The representation of the vowel of the prefix seems to have developed thus - ee : i : e between 1806 and 1830. The title page of Moffat's bible reads at the beginning of the old Testament - "Buka ea eintla ea ga Moshe, e e Birioañ Genese". The new testament is called "Kholagano enca". We observe -

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3. Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa, Burchell, Vol. II "Specimen of the Sichuana Language."
4. Schapera, Prof. I: The Tswana, International African Inst. London, 1953, p. 15.
5. Doke, Prof. C.M.: Bantu Language Pioneers of the 19th Century, Chapter III in Literary Efforts before 1960, p. 245.

Moffat:	Burchell:	Campbell:	Lichtenstein
<u>c</u>	<u>ch</u>	<u>tch</u>	<u>tj</u>
in	in	in	in
<u>enca</u>	<u>Sichuana</u>	<u>Bootchuana</u>	<u>Beetjuans.</u>

1.9 The c is used in phonetic script for the ejective prepalatal affricative sound, aspirated form ch. Moffat inclines to the English orthography therefore. As in English "she", the voiceless prepalatal fricative sound is rendered sh in Moshe. Significant also is the use of r before i in birioaṅ, Morimo, and neither an l nor a d. Moffat employs y for the j -sound, as in Ka yenu (Exodus 19:10); he used u or o as labial semi-vowel (coa in Ex. 19:1, yoa in Ex. 19:2, but tlacue in Ex. 19:10), and although using r before u for the l/d sound, as in rumela (Ex. 19:9) also used r before u for the normal rolled alveolar sound as in leruṅ.

1.10 Summarising, there are already observable, the following alternants -

(a) o and u in the infinitive prefix and concord,

e.g. go, gu,

and as semi-vowels in coa, tlacue.

(b) the employment of the symbol u for both the close high back vowel as in rumela (believe)

and the semi-close back vowel as in gu.

Difficulty with vowels persists to this day. The representation of sounds as they are represented in European languages, or otherwise, persists as the problem of today.

JAMES ARCHBELL'S "GRAMMAR OF THE BECHUANA LANGUAGE"-1837

1.11 In 1837 the Tswana were first again, by getting a grammar (their St. Luke, their New Testament and their

Bible were all firsts in South African Bantu). The "Grammar of the Bechuana Language", from Rev. James Archbell, records the following prefixes -

Mo- in Mochuana (a Tswana man - singular)
Bu - in Buchuana (Land of the Tswana);
compare Campbell's "Bootchuana" (1815)
Archbell says Bu - is a dual plural prefix.
Be - in Bechuana (plural of Mochuana).
The symbols ch, ua seem to endure, since
Burchell in 1824.

EUGÈNE CASALIS' "ETUDES SUR LA LANGUE SÉCHUANA" - 1841

1.12 Archbell was to be followed by Eugène Casalis in 1841 with "Etudes sur la langue Séchuana". The second person singular subjectival concord is rendered y, and the 3rd person o, most probably because they differ in tone, or because Moffat so distinguished them. As in the title of the "Etudes", we notice tone-marking, which was emphasised by Burchell (1.4. supra). Evidently the study of tone had not advanced abreast of the orthographic problems of Casalis' day, as confirmed by Letele, thus, "In the field of Sotho, apart from odd references to tone in grammar books and dictionaries, the first real study was made by Professor Jones in conjunction with S.D.T.Plaatjie in "Sechuana Reader" (dated 1916) and "Tones of Secwana Nouns" (dated 1929)"⁶). Note the renderings Sechuana (1916) and Secwana (1929).

J.T.BROWN'S "LOKOALO LOA MAKUKU A SECOANA LE SEÑELES"
- 1876

1.13 In 1876 came Rev. J.T. Brown's "Lokoalo Loa Makuku a Secoana le Señeles". Moffat used -coa- in the 1850's, and this is now replacing Archbell and Casalis' -chua - in Secoana. Why the semi-close back vowel symbol is o in the class-prefix Lo- (Lokoalo) and
5/.....

6. Letele, G.L.: The Role of Tone in the Southern Sotho Language, Lovedale Press, 1955, p. 1.

should be u in Mahuku cannot be a matter of grammar only, i.e. 1st or second person, but must be a matter of tone too. It must be recorded now that Brown worked on the Tlhaping dialect, same as Moffat, while Archbell worked on Rolong, as is suspected also of Casalis. We must underline this parting since it must multiply and strengthen alternants on the basis of dialects.

W. CRISPS "NOTES TOWARDS A SECOANA GRAMMAR" - 1880

1.14 Four years later, Brown was to be followed by Canon William Crisp with "Notes towards a Secoana Grammar". In his work, 1880, it is significant that the symbol h is excluded from the list of consonants of Rolong, his basis of operation, being employed only to mark aspiration.

ANOTHER NEW TESTAMENT - 1881

1.15 When all this is said and done, literature must follow, and indeed in 1881 was published in London, a New Testament with the following title:-

Kholagano enca

ea

Yesu Keresete

eo e leñ

Moréna oa rona le morebuluki:

e e hetolecoeñ mo puoñ

ea

Sechuana

.....

London:

E gatisericoe phuthegelo ea go halaletsa

Bibela mo Beritaneñ, le mo mahatsiñ a

mañue, ki Harrison and Sons, Bagatisi.

"New Testament

of

Jesus Christ

who is

Our Lord and Saviour:

which is translated into the

Sechuana Language

.....

London

Printed for congregation for purposes of glorifying the Bible in Britain, and in other Countries, by Harrison & Sons, Printers."

1881:

Note:

- i Kh in Rholagano was also used by Moffat for present kg.
- ii The acute accent mark on Moréna should be noted as against its omission on Sechuana (cf Casalis' Séchuana).
- iii Reversion to -chua- in Sechuana is striking, compared with Crisp's Secoana (1880). The life of an orthography goes backwards and forwards like that of an economy.
- iv The employment of h in halaletsa is a warning of a probable departure from Crisp's orthography of Rolong in which h is employed for aspiration only
- v The renderings Keresete and Beritanen represent the upholding of an important phonological rule in Tswana, viz. that each syllable shall end on a vowel thus:

Ke - re - se- te as against Kreste

Beritane as against Britane

- vi Employment of o and u as labial semi-vowels before the semi-close high front vowel e in hetolecoeñ and mañue is to be noted. It is an inconsistency. Cf. hetolecoeñ with Moffat's tlacue (1.8 above). Of further interest in this Testament are -
- vii Avoidance of elision of o between n's in the word banona (men) in Acts 22:1 for instance, along with the elision of a between r's in borra (fathers); also rather an inconsistency.
- viii The contraction of nka bo to nko in 1 Cor. 13:1;
- ix The employment of the 2nd position singular le- class demonstrative, yeuo, in Matt. 13:1 for instance, which is typical in Northern Sotho, and
- x The employment of the construction ka bosasa (in the morning), which inclines to Southern Sotho ka hosasa, and finally, at the morphological level,
- xi The employment of the Lo-class prefix as in Lorato lo (1 Cor. 13:4).

The problems, when to elide and when not to, when to incline to Northern or Southern Sotho and when not to, persist to this day.

A.J. WOOKEY'S "SECOANA GRAMMAR WITH EXERCISES" - 1905

1.16 The work of 1881 was followed in 1905 by Rev.

A.J. Wookey's "Secoana Grammar with Exercises". Is

there now a complete switch from chua to coa in Secoana?

Wookey employs this c right through and notes its alternants in certain cases. He states in discussing orthography, "Note - Among the Northern Becwana c and ch seem absent, and their place is taken by ts and tsh.

Where among Southern Becwana the c and ch are prefixed by 'n', this 'n' changes to 'm' and the 'c' to 'ps', e.g. nca, a dog, becomes mpsá, ncha, new, becomes mpsha"⁷⁾

1.17 Writing as he heard the people speak, he notes for instance the alternation of e and i in certain words as:

mnele (body), mmediñ (in the body)

the alternation of o and u as in

peloñ, peduñ (in the heart).

1.18 Characteristic of him is the note on instability of consonants, showing how old the problem of standardization is, as in:-

<u>Bothonoga</u>	along with	<u>bothologa</u>	(<u>n/l</u>)	- to arise,
<u>nyenya</u>	"	"	<u>myemya</u>	(<u>ny/my</u>) - to smile,
<u>he ne he</u>	"	"	<u>re ne re</u>	(<u>h/r</u>) - we did,
<u>ka moshó</u>	"	"	<u>ka mosó</u>	(<u>š/s</u>) - tomorrow,
<u>alafwa</u>	"	"	<u>alashwa</u> and <u>alahiwa</u>	(<u>fw/shw/hiw</u>)
				- be cured.

This employment of h in place of r is also to be observed in the 1881 Testament (1.15 supra) in which the book of Acts is called Litihalelo (from diha in alternation with dira, to do).

THE 1910 ORTHOGRAPHY

1.19 Subsequently every five or ten years the problem of a standard orthography arises. After Wookey's grammar, followed what is known as the 1910 Orthography. The Rev.

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7. Wookey, Rev. A.J.: Secwana Grammar with Exercises, p. 13, Printed by Purnell and Sons, Bristol, Second ed., Second impression.

Sandilands⁸⁾ quotes as follows, in the '1910 system', from St. Luke 5:36:-

" me le goña a bua sechwancho'nabo', a
re, Ga go ope'eo o gagolañ seaparo'se sesha
a tsaea sebata a bitiela saparo' se se
onetseñ ka shoña, ha a diha yalo, sebata se
sesha se tla gagola se se onetseñ; le gona
sebata se sesha sea bo se sa dumalane le se se
onetseñ.

Le gona ga go ope'eo o tshelañ boyaloe yo bosha
yoa mofine mo mehaloñ e e onetseñ; ha a diha
yalo, boyaloe yo bosha bo ka phanya mehalo,
me bo chologe, le mehalo e senyege..... "

And from St. Matthew 25:23 :-

"Moréna oa gagwé a mo raea a re, U dihile sentlé
motlhanka eo o molemo le boikaño; u ntse u le
boikaño mo diloñ tse di potlana; ke tla gu
laodisa dilo di le dintsi".....

We observe: (as underlined above by me)

- i the use of the accent marks, e.g. opé,
- ii the use of the acute accent mark on the semi-open front and back vowels, ó and é, as compared to present day circumflex;
- iii The velar nasal symbol to be ñ;
- iv the conjunctive ha,
- v the employment of the voiced alveolar explosive d, as opposed to r, in dihile; the 1881 testament has rihile (Matt.25:23)
- vi the use of both o and w as labial semi-vowel as in oa, and gagwe;

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8. Sandilands, Rev. A: Introduction to Tswana, L.M.S., Tigerkloof, 1953, p. 321.

- vii the use of e as palatal semi-vowel, as in raea, eo.
- viii The use of diha in place of present day dira;
- ix the use of y in place of present day j in boyaloa, yoa;
- x the use ch in chologe, and in sechwancho; cf. secuanco in 1881 testament;
- xi The use of sh in shona, for the prepalatal fricative;
- xii the use of shona, gona and not shone or gone, the stabilizer of the Absolute Pronoun being -na and not -ne.

1.20 Prof. Cole⁹⁾ indicates that the 1910 orthography had eleven vowels, of which the raised variant of the semi-open front vowel, was written e, as also the semi-close front vowel and its raised variant. The last-named vowel had a variant i, thus - hatshēñ or lehatshiñ (on earth), would be tenable.

1.21 The raised variant of the semi-open back vowel [ʔ], was written o, as also the semi-close back vowel itself. The last-named vowel had a variant u, thus - peloñ and peduñ (in the heart) would be tenable.

1.22 The vowels are thus not arranged on phonemic basis, which would mean that a vowel and its raised alternant be written strictly alike and kept distinct from any other vowel and its raised alternant.

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9. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Notes on the Phonological Relationships of Tswana Vowels, African Studies Vol. 8, No.3, Sept. 1949. p. 111.

S.T. PLAATJIE'S ORTHOGRAPHY - 1916, 1930

1.23 In 1916 a Morolong of Kimberley, viz. Solomon Tshekisho Plaatjie, studied in London under Prof. Daniel Jones of London University. He, together with Prof. Jones, produced a reader in I.P.A. orthography¹⁰⁾. This publication gives a minute analysis of Tswana pronunciation. As can be expected it represents the language as spoken. Ten vowel-sounds are represented (par. 9 p. XIV), four front and five back vowels, and the low vowel a. Since it is characteristic of Bantu to have an equal number of front and back vowels, besides the low vowel a, Prof. Cole's analysis into eleven vowel-sounds (five front and five back) in 1949, was very welcome.¹¹⁾ Twenty-four consonants are recorded by Plaatjie & Jones, three symbols for the labial semi-vowel for instance, and two for l. They differentiate between their phonetic or pronunciation orthography, and simplified orthography.

1.24 They indicate clearly the difference between the spoken and the written language, which is an old warning to writers, not to hope to manage to produce an orthography which is a faithful reproduction of their speech. Touching on the phonemic principles, they refer to speech alternants which are "non-distictive", that is which "would probably never change the meaning of any word". Thus u, w, l would be the conventional symbols for all their respective alternants. A very important point in current spelling is when to employ the semi-vowel glide intervocallically. On p. xxii Plaatjie

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10. Jones/Plaatjie: A Sechuana Reader in International Phonetic Orthography. London Univ. Press. Ltd. 1916.
11. Cole: (ibid).

asserts, "In Sechuana the sound u does not occur before ô, o, u", showing for instance that the class 3 demonstrative cannot be wô or wona, and that therefore Tswana cannot readily accommodate a rule of option between spelling with and spelling without a semi-vowel in respect of this part of speech. He says in respect of w and y that such insertion of the intervocallic semi-vowel "is never essential". There must be a test of essentiality.

1.25 Pursuing this study of pronunciation, S.T. Plaatjie used a number of phonetic symbols in his translation of Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" in 1929. Examples are: [ε] for ê, [c] for tš, ng along with [ŋ]. A phonetic or pronunciation orthography must be seen as a turning-point in the analysis of spoken languages, everything but a practical orthography. In any case Tswana sounds stand minutely analysed by Plaatjie and Jones, leaving it to us to produce a conventional written form. As to word-division they declare themselves in favour of joining particles and concords to relevant stems.

A.N. TUCKER'S SUTO-CHUANA STUDIES : 1929

1.26 A milestone was set by A.N. Tucker in 1929 with the publication of his Ph.D (London) thesis entitled "Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana group of Bantu Languages".¹²⁾ He used the Rolong dialect as basis, and urged that it should be regarded as the basis of a standard form for purposes of writing. It is an open question whether this effort did not produce opposite

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results to those expected, whether other workers did not feel that their dialects were just as good. It is also an open question whether this was, or was not one of the efforts giving impetus to the consideration of unification of Bantu languages, or Sotho languages.

1.27 It may be contended that the question was pushed forcibly to the foreground, as to whether dialects should be standardized or languages, as to whether dialects should be forced to the foreground or the variant speeches unified. What happened next strengthens the contention.

THE KGATLA CONTRIBUTION - 1930

1.28 The Kgatla did not allow themselves to be long awaited, for in 1930, at Mochudi, Bechuanaland Protectorate, with the aid of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, they launched a newsletter, "Lesedi la Sechaba" (Light of the Nation), written in that dialect. The newsletter¹³⁾ was introduced as follows (page 1):

" Se ke go tsoa ga ntlha ga Lesedi la Sechaba.
Re solofela gore ka thuso ya Modimo, lekoalo
le le tla tsoela pele go ntshioa ka dinyaga
di le dintsi, le go na lesedi la nete bakeng
sa batho ba Bakgatla....
Pampiri e e kaeletsoe go tlhagisa lekoalo le
le tshoanang le le, garataro ka ngoaga, ke
gore e tla tsoa mo dikgoeding tse, Diphilane,
Morule, Tlhakole, Moranang, Seetebosigo, Phatoe.
Tefa e tla na 2 shillings ka ngoaga".

14/.....

13. Lesedi la Sechaba, Vol. 1, no. 2, October 1930
Printed in Mochudi, B.P.

(Translated: This is the first issue of Lesedi la Sechaba (the Light of the Nation). We hope that, by God's help, the paper will continue to be issued for many years, and will be a real light for the Bakgatla people.

This paper is intended to issue such a newsletter as this, six times a year, that is in the months of October, December, February, April, June, August. Subscription will be 2 shillings per year).

Observe:

- i The labial semi-vowel is consistently o;
- ii the lo-class prefix does not appear; only the le-prefix, as in lekoalo, does; consistently;
- iii The sound ch is used (cf. Lichtenstein, Campbell above)
- iv diacritic and accent marks are dispensed with.
- v the national motive, embodied in the conception of a national paper, in a national tongue, seems perceivable.

The orthography has the merit of consistency.

1.29 In the same paper,¹⁴⁾ in 1931, one teacher M. Segogoane, a Mokgatla, of Stofberg-Gedenkskool in the Orange Free State, makes a plea for yet another orthography. He says: "Ke dumedisa Kghosi ya Bakghatla Morena Molefi. A Modimo a gho thuse. Ke dumedisa sethsaba sa Bakghatla, a se atlege, Ke thlaba mokghosi, ka re: Bakghatla romelang bana ba lona sekolong sa moruti wa lona - Stofberg ke fhelo fa ghontle"

15/.....

14. Lesedi la Sechaba, Vol. 1. no. 4, Feb. 1931. p. 11.

(Translated: "I greet the Chief of the Bakghatla, Chief Molefi: May God help you. I greet the Bakghatla tribe, may it prosper, I announce, I say: "Bakghatla, send your children to the school of your missionary - Stofberg is a beautiful place.....")

Observe the symbols:

kgh for present kg

fh " " f

gh " " g

ths " " tšh

thl " " tlh

1.30 About the same time Prof. Lestrade,¹⁵⁾ commenting on Casalis' "Etudes sur la langue Sechuana", feels that the language of this book is the Rolong dialect of "Thaba Nthšo". Segogoane's Sethsaba should therefore have been Sethšaba, judging by the Professor's rendering of Thaba Nthšo.

1.31 The editor of the "Lesedi" says, referring to the orthography bespoken by M. Segogoane:

"Ke mokoalo o mmuso o reng re o dirise".

(It is the orthography the government says we must use).

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURE GIVES GUIDANCE - 1930

1.32 We go back to 1930, when the Institute of African Languages and Cultures issued "Practical Orthography of African Languages"¹⁶⁾

A Tswana text in this memorandum is as follows:-

16/.....

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15. Cole/Doke: Contributions to the History of Bantu Linguistics, Wits. Press, 1961, p. 36.
16. Issued by Oxford Univ. Press, Memo 1, revised ed., 1930.

"Betswana ba boxoloxolo bare tlou ekile ya foloxela mo nokeñ ya Sampisi, ya fitlha ya nwa. Erile e santse e nwaKefa tlou e inola kwena, e e tšholetsa ka selopo, e e kakamara, e e isa ko naxeñ, kxakalakxakala le noka....."

Observe :

- i x for g of the present day, and g of Moffat, (1.10),
- ii n for ng of the present day, and ñ of Brown (1.13),
- iii the symbol ʃ in tšholetsa for the present day š, and the 1910 sh (1.19).

These are I.P.A. symbols. Was there a move in the direction of I.P.A. symbols (See also 1.25 supra).

1.33 We observe as to word -division:-

- i bare for present day ba re (they say)
- ii ekile " " " e kile (it once happened)
- iii kefa " " " ke fa (and then)

also:

- iv there are no diacritics or accent marks,
- v tlh for Segogoane's thl, (1.29)
- vi fa in Kefa for the ha of 1910 (1.19 above)
- vii tšh for Lestrade's thš (1.30 above).

1.34 Of great importance in the Institute's memorandum are the Principles of Orthography, given on page 17 par. 31 as follows:

- (1) "The orthography of a given Language should be based on the principle of one letter for each phoneme of that language. This means that whenever two words are distinguished in sound they must also be distinguished in orthography.

(2) The existence of diaphonemes must be recognised and allowed for. Thus Fanti speakers of Akan pronounce the syllable di as dzi and ti' as tsí; but the orthography di, ti is adequate for covering both pronunciations. Again, the Hausa f is pronounced in some dialects as labio-dental f and in others as bi-labial f and in others as p; but the letter f can be used in orthography with the necessary conventions as to dialectal pronunciations.

(3) It may sometimes be convenient to depart from a strictly phonetic system, in order to avoid writing a word in more than one way. Thus it is better to write in Luganda soka oleke (wait a bit), although the pronunciation is sok eleke

(4) "As a concession to existing usage an ordinary Roman letter may sometimes be used in place of one of the special new letters, when the sound denoted by the Roman letter does not occur in the language. Thus f may be used instead of f in writing Sechwana, because the labio-dental f does not occur in that language. Similarly s may be used instead of f in writing Oshikwanyama because an ordinary s does not occur in that language".

1.35 As far as we know the labio-dental f occurs in Tswana, but is precisely the same phoneme as the bilabial f, thus our recommendation in terms of principle no. (1) above, is an f right through.

1.36 The enunciation of these principles represents an important milepost in writing Bantu languages in general, but for our purpose Tswana in particular, and we shall endeavour to apply them in this thesis.

THE 1937 ORTHOGRAPHY

1.37 Evidently the orthography employed by the Institute (1.32 above) was the same for Tswana as for Northern Sotho (Pedi), a shadow of coming events, cast ahead, as will be seen in 1.41 infra. We want here to refer to the so-called 1937 Orthography which was detailed by Prof. Lestrade in a pamphlet¹⁷⁾ of that year giving decisions of a representative conference held in Johannesburg, S.A., in April of that year.

1.38 The great service of this conference was largely negative, as seen on page 142 of the said pamphlet. The exclusion of the undermentioned symbols from the orthography is urged. Indirectly it means basing standard writing on a dialect or at most a dialect cluster. The symbols to be excluded are:

<u>ps</u>	as	in	<u>mpsa</u>	(dog)
<u>pš</u>	"	"	<u>mpša</u>	(dog)
<u>py</u>	"	"	<u>mpya</u>	(dog)
<u>psh</u>	"	"	<u>mpsha</u>	(new)
<u>pšh</u>	"	"	<u>mpšha</u>	(new)
<u>phy</u>	"	"	<u>mphy</u>	(new)

Positively stated, this means, of the four alternants:

ps, pš, py and tš/tšw

in standard writing use tš; of the four alternants

psh, pšh, phy, tšh/tšhw,

in standard writing use tšh; thus write

ntša (dog) and ntšha (new).

19/.....

17. Lestrade, Prof. G.P.: A Practical Orthography of Tswana, April 28, 1937.

Thus while the people speak as they like, as in Akan (1.34 above) the written language provides for only one form in terms of orthography principle No. (2) 1.34 above. Yet alternants were recommended in case of ts and tš tsh and tšh, t and tl, th and tlh. (e.g. tsola/tšola - undress; tshoga/tšhoga - fear; tala/tlala - hunger; thala/tlhala - divorce;) in contravention of principle no. 2 (1.34 above).

1.39 As to vowels the phonemic principle (no. 1, 1.34 above) was not complied with fully. The semi-open front and back vowels were circumflexed but their raised variants not, thus

ô for o, as in bôna (see)
o " o, as in boné (have seen)
ê " e, " " êma (stand)
e " e, " " emé (have stood)

The semi-close front and back vowels were each written the same as its raised variant thus -

o for o as in phòló (ox)
o " " " phòlóng (to the ox)

These difficulties are not overcome to date as will be seen in the next paragraph and following ones.

UNIFICATION OF ORTHOGRAPHIES - 1947, 1962

1.40 The 1937 orthography is seen as a departure by Tswana, from a common system for Tswana and Pedi, as hinted at in 1.37 above. It was also averred at the opening of par. 1.37 that unification of orthographies cast its shadow ahead. Thus we hear, "In 1947, the Transvaal Education Department initiated further moves

towards unification of orthographies, and this resulted in the Somerset House Conference of February, 1947, at which a number of changes were agreed upon¹⁸⁾. Most of the members of this conference were appointed to a permanent departmental committee, the Sotho (N. Sotho, S. Sotho, Tswana) Language Committee, being Inspectors of Education, Teachers, ministers of religion, assisted by University professors.

1.41 The result was the issue of "Sotho Terminology and Orthography no. 1" in 1957. On page 13 the following sounds are listed for use in Tswana, among others:

- "3. (b) fricatives.....fs
fs (fy)
- (c) ejected affricates.....(ps)
(ps, py)
- (d) aspirated affricatespsh
psh
- 4. (b) miscellaneous
affricate/fricativej (by)"

1.42 Provision is made for the first time for "unusual consonants", "in order to represent certain uncommon sounds for which no provision had been made previously, and which occur mainly in ideophones and interjections" (p.11). On page 15 then the list is:

- "6. Other unusual consonantsc, ch, nc
q, qh, nq.
x, xh, nx.
v
z"

21/.....

18. Sotho Terminology and Orthography no. 1, (N. Sotho, S. Sotho, Tswana). Govt. Printer, Pretoria, 1957, p. 3

1.43 Important also was the decision not to use diacritic marks, and tone marks, except "when there is likely to be confusion, or in scientific works", as well as the ruling that it shall not be necessary to mark elision, except perhaps if necessitated by poetic considerations or dramatic renderings. Therefore the diacritics are conditionally provided for in this orthography.

1.44 We referred to Word-division in 1.33 above, and need say here that the Orthography under review adopted the disjunctive rendering of words, or approached word-identification analytically, i.e. rendering particles also as separate words. The matter will be discussed infra.

1.45 A further rule was that the Absolute Pronoun, except that of the ma-class, be rendered with a semi-vowel, thus -

monna yena, moriti wona, but maleme ona, marena
ona, magobe ona,

and that Demonstratives be written with or without semi-vowel thus -

monna o/yo.

moriri o/wc.

Terminology was included, not only that existing, but also that created by the Sotho language Committee itself. Where European words were translated, the phonological rule of open syllables (See also 1.15.v above), was employed, thus -

Afrikaans : "perske" - Sotho : perekisi

English : "glass" - Sotho : galase.

English : "silver" - Sotho : selebera etc.

LESTRADE ON UNIFICATION OF BANTU

1.46 In conjunction with the move towards orthography unification, we wish to record a wider move, that of unifying Bantu languages. Prof. Lestrade ¹⁹⁾ said in 1945, "Our policy towards the Bantu Languages should therefore be plain. We should not attempt to repress them actively, since that, as has happened many a time in the linguistic history of the world, might serve as an indirect means of encouragement".

1.47 Advocates of the mergence of Bantu languages into one written language are therefore hesitant. Advocates for the mergence of the Sotho Languages, even at the orthographic and technical-lexical level only, must yet be seen to succeed. But the struggle is on.

TSWANA LANGUAGE COMMITTEE: 1960

1.48 As far as Tswana is concerned, and the other two Sotho Languages, in 1960 the composite Sotho Language Committee (1.40 supra) was divided into Tswana, Southern Sotho and Northern Sotho Language committees, and during 1962 each Committee issued its Terminology and Orthography no. 2. The Tswana sounds were as those of 1957, the bracketed forms under Tswana being "variants which are recognised as appearing in certain dialects, but whose incorporation into the standard Tswana alphabet or into standard written Tswana was not proposed in 1937". In other words, the use of a dialect as basis of standardization falls away, the use of dialectal alternants triumphs, principle of orthography, no. 1 (See 1.34 above),

23/.....

19. Lestrade, Prof. G.P.: Some Problems of Bantu Language Development: Address to section E of the S.A. Assn. for the Advancement of Science, 2nd July, 1945, p. 71, 3rd line from bottom.

is not fully complied with, and therefore standardization is not yet an established fact. It is up to the Tswana Language Committee in any case, and we hope this investigation will serve as inspiration, since, "for a people to retain its language is to retain one of the most powerful media to their hand both for assimilating and shaping to their own needs cultural elements derived from without, and also for developing those contributions to the culture of the world at large which they and they only can make and which well up from within".²⁰⁾

REV. SANDILANDS BESPEAKS IDENTITY OF TSWANA - 1953.

1.49 In a publication dated 1953 Rev. Sandilands discusses orthography strongly and forthrightly, recommending that symbols be likened to those of the neighbouring European languages, e.g. that sh be preferred to š, since sh is used in English, but above all challenging the Tswana to retain their language as a distinct entity. He employs the Rolong dialect as basis of standardization. He says on page 319 et sec. of his "Introduction to Tswana", ²¹⁾ "It is not at all certain, in the writer's opinion, that Tswana will survive the present century as a linguistic entity, preserving its identity in a recognizable form, and developing into a successful literary medium..... It all depends upon the Bantu - in this case, the Batswana - themselves But, if Tswana is to survive, as on its merits, it certainly deserves to do, and if it is to avoid the fate of lapsing into a dead language entombed in a few volumes

24/.....

20. Lestrade (ibid) Some Problems.... p. 72.

21. Sandilands, Rev. A.: Introduction to Tswana, Morija, Basutoland, 1953.

seldom read by any but experts in philology and phonetics, there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind that it must get to itself, and that soon, an effective orthography."

1.50 This marks the degree of discontentment with the 1937 Orthography, then in vogue. The following are taken from quotations of Rev. Sandilands rendered in the 1937 orthography and in that proposed by him:²²⁾

<u>1937 system (p. 321)</u>	; Rev. Sandilands' <u>System (p. 322)</u>
<u>gôna</u>	<u>gôna</u> (it, that place)
<u>setshwantsho</u>	<u>setshwantshò</u> (picture)
<u>yo o gagolang</u>	<u>yo o gagolang</u> (who tears)
<u>se seša</u>	<u>se sesha</u> (new)
<u>fa</u> (if)	<u>ha</u> (if)
<u>bojalwa jo boša</u>	<u>bojalwa jo bosha</u> (new, fresh beer)
<u>o ntse o le boikangô</u>	<u>u ntse u le boikangò</u> (you have been faithful)
<u>ke tla go laodisa</u>	<u>ke tlaa gu laodisa</u> (I shall let you rule)

PROF. COLE'S BASIS OF STANDARDIZATION - 1953

1.51 In 1953 also came, from Prof. Cole²³⁾ this time, a publication on the Standardization of written Tswana. This work was based on a dialect-cluster, and now we have three streams - that of the Language Committee which may be described as centralised since it allows for alternants provided only they are spelt in a prescribed manner, that of Rev. Sandilands, typical of the honoured missionaries which may be described as sectional since it has a dialect as basis (Archbell, Crisp, Wookey, Casalis, Moffat all worked on this

25/.....

22. Sandilands, Rev. A: Introduction etc. ibid

23. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar, Longmans Green & Co., 1953.

sectional basis, and Tucker too), and now that of Prof. Cole, based on a dialect-cluster which may be described sectional to a lesser degree.

1.52 The dialect-cluster chosen by Prof. Cole as basis is the central, viz. Rolong (except that of Thaba Nchu), Hurutshe, Ngwaketse. Prof. Cole urges that the sounds fs, fš, fsw, fšw be replaced by š (par. 1.75, p. 36), and that bj, bjw be replaced by j, while ps, pš be replaced by tš, and psw, pšw, are replaced by tšw.

The sounds fsw, fšw, bjw, psw, pšw, had already fallen into disuse on phonological grounds. The phonological ground is that since f, b and p are bilabial consonants, it is redundant to indicate labialization again with a w. These sounds were therefore not included in the Orthography of the Somerset House Conference referred to in 1.40 above. Prof. Cole notes the sound šw (alternant of fs, fš), which was omitted under Tswana in the list of sounds of the Somerset Orthography, if one may so refer to this record.

1.53 As to the vowels Prof. Cole proceeds strictly phonemically, recommending seven symbols for the seven phonemes as follows - (p. 5)

<u>u</u>	for	the	Bantu	<u>û</u>
<u>i</u>	"	"	"	<u>î</u>
<u>o</u>	"	"	"	<u>u</u>
<u>e</u>	"	"	"	<u>i</u>
<u>ê</u>	"	"	"	<u>e</u>
<u>ô</u>	"	"	"	<u>o</u>
<u>a</u>	"	"	"	<u>a</u>

He urges strongly that the raised variants of \hat{o} viz $[\hat{o}]$, of \hat{e} viz $[\hat{e}]$ of e viz $[e]$, and of o , viz $[o]$, be written as the main member of the phoneme, thus -

\hat{o} for $[\hat{o}]$ and $[o]$
 \hat{e} " $[\hat{e}]$ " $[e]$
 e " $[e]$ " $[e]$
 o " $[o]$ " $[o]$

Prof. Cole then, accepts the \check{y} which Rev. Sandilands rejects, and the circumplex of the 1937 system on the semi-open front and back vowels, where Rev. Sandilands would rather employ a grave accent mark.

1.54 In his latest publication, Prof. Cole declares his basis of operation as "the usage of Mr D.M. Mokaila, a native speaker of the Rolong dialect as spoken in the vicinity of Mafeking, South Africa..."²⁴⁾ We shall see infra what variant material can be found in a dialect today.

1.55 We must record here Prof. Cole's linguistic classification of Tswana dialects before stating the method of dealing with these dialects in this investigation later. Prof. Cole²⁵⁾ gives the following divisions of Tswana -

Central: Hurutshe, Rolong, Ngwaketse.

Southern: Tlhaping, Tlhware (alias Tlharo)

Northern: Western Kwena, Ngwato, Tswana.

Eastern: Kgatla, Eastern Kwena, Tlhako,

Phalane Kubung, Kolobeng, Tlounng,

Tlokwa, Lete, Fokeng, etc.

27/.....

24. Cole/Mokaila: A Course in Tswana, Washington, 1962
25. Cole: Introduction to Tswana Grammar, p. xvi

He notes the characteristic contractions of the Eastern cluster such as:-

mollô < molelo (fire)

ke yô bona < ke ya go bona (I go to see)

and the alternant alveolar sounds of the Ngwato:

t for tl

th for tlh

He recommends the uncontracted forms, and that the Ngwato alveolar forms be excluded when a standard orthography is decided upon, in favour of the laterals. He objects to inclinations to Southern Sotho for instance by the Thaba Nchu Rolong, and to Northern Sotho by some Eastern dialects - very sound principles, and in agreement with Rev. Sandilands' principle of identity of Tswana (see 1.49 above).

THE TSWANA THEMSELVES WANT STANDARDIZATION

1.56 Knowing the dialects to which any attempt at standardization must perform a duty, indeed return dividends, since they all have a stake in the pie, we proceed to note briefly what we observe the Tswana themselves to be saying:-

(a) Naledi ya Batswana:

On March 16, 1963, the Tswana weekly publication "Naledi ya Batswana", then published at 11 Newclare Road, Industria, Johannesburg, S.A., placed news items in which one S.G. Sanoto argued points of orthography with one Zaccs Motswakhumo, both of Bechuanaland Protectorate. Among others, the point of vowel raising was debated, in spite of apparent unawareness of

the phonological involvements on the part of the contributors. The question was whether to write pudi or podi (goat) for instance. Fact is that both wanted an authoritative ruling as to these variants - to use both alternately, or to use a standard one only. Important here is that even in Bechuanaland, away from Northern Sotho and Southern Sotho etc. there are irritating problems of standardization.

(b) Tswana Territorial Authority:

A further and very important proof of the desire for standardization of written Tswana, on the part of the Tswana themselves, is that at the second session of the Tswana Territorial Authority, held at Mafeking, S.A., in December 1962, not only was it decided to explore the possibility of establishing a printing press of the Authority, but it was also resolved to request the Department of Bantu Education of the Republic of S.A., for the standardization of Tswana. The relevant resolutions read as follows: Item 25: Proposed standardization of Tswana Language.²⁶⁾

"That the Tswana Territorial Authority request the Department of Bantu Education to consider the question of standardising the Tswana Language".
Language".

29/.....

26. Tswana Territorial Authority: Proceedings incorporating Reports of Select Committees at the session of 1962 and Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1962 - 63, p. 31.

Item no. 1: Establishment of own Printing Press.²⁷⁾

"That the Tswana Territorial Authority should investigate and consider the establishment of its own Printing Press".

1.57 The Tswana Territorial Authority, being the national government of the Tswana, has however, to contend with many obstacles, among which that they are themselves, for no fault of their own, however, enemies of their own joint ventures, since they have no paramountcy, and the Territorial Authority or national government as such, is still to earn its spurs.

1.58 The Secretary of the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, under the auspices of which Department the Territorial Authority operates, Mr C. Bruce Young, gave a timely warning at the inaugural session of the Authority in December, 1961 at Mafeking, saying:

"The history of the Tswana is, of course, that, in the past, the various tribes and clans split up. The result is that there is no paramount chief here as you have, for example, in Zululand. Anybody who seeks to aspire to a paramountcy here may be looking for trouble.... A chairman and a vice-chairman have been elected. This does not mean that they will exercise powers or functions over the individual chiefs and tribes. It means that they have certain functions and duties to perform in the capacities to which they have been elected".²⁸⁾

30/.....

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27. Tswana Territorial Authority: Proceedings.....
Ibid p. 33.
28. Tswana Gebiedsowerheid: Notule van Sitting van 1961 en Inkomste en Uitgawe Begrotings vir die Finansiële jare 1961 - 1962 en 1962-1963, page 14.

1.59 To unite the Tswana linguistically is no less difficult, nor less important, and urgent, than to unite them administratively and politically. To ignore members of the fold may be equally disastrous.

TASK OF THIS INVESTIGATION

1.60 What then, is our task in this investigation? First of all, to catalogue the main points of difference of speech, and then the extent to which these differences are still reflected in literature (chapters II and III). Our next step will be to ascertain whether tribal boundaries correspond with these differences, conversely whether the differences are to be found even within a tribal unit. If circumstances point to a linguistic defiance of tribal boundaries, it may be wise to consider a different basis for standardization from those pointed out above and named "centralised", "sectional" and "less sectional" (1.51) and in order the better to decide on method, one would like to note what other languages have done down the centuries.

EUROPEAN EXAMPLES AS TO METHOD OF STANDARDIZATION

1.61 A few examples of European languages which passed through complex situations like that of Tswana are met.

(a) German:

Germany's standard language is not based on a particular dialect. We are told, "It is pure prejudice when any particular district is picked out in which it is alleged that the 'purest German' is spoken. The language which

serves as the German model is rather that employed in the theatre in serious drama, with which the pronunciation of educated persons in no place agrees".²⁹⁾ In other words, the written is not a replica of the spoken language of any geographical or tribal unit.

(b) South African English:

As to South African English, we are informed that it "was not a transplanted version of any English dialect, but one incorporating features of several different dialects - in fact a new English dialect in Africa"³⁰⁾ The 1820 settlers, 4,000 men, women and children, came from various parts and dialectal enclaves of Britain, "including such extreme ones as Scots English and Irish English"³⁰⁾ and they pooled their linguistic heritages.

(c) Dutch:

In 1524, the New Testament was translated by Delft into what was reckoned to be good Dutch, for the very reason that it was embracive. Of the language of this translation, we are told, "... op 't kortste en reynste, na onzen vermogen een gemeyn spraek.... die men all Nederlant doer: lichtelick solde mogen lesen ende verstaan"³¹⁾ Even when the dialect Hollands eventually triumphed, owing to the economic ascendancy of that province, Holland,

32/.....

29. Strang: Paul's Principles of Language, 1890, p. 477. par. 727.

30. Lanham, Prof. L.W.: in the Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, S.A. 26/8/1963, "S.A. English is distinct form".

31. Quoted by Prof. Abel Coetzee in Standaard-Afrikaans from Von Ginneken: De Studie der Nederlandsche Streektalen, p. 9.

it took with it the marks of the Limburg, Flemish and Brabant dialects, to constitute as it were, a four-cornered, a broadly representative standard written language.

(d) London English:

Britain's English is London English. London towered economically, educationally, politically and otherwise over all Britain. All roads literally led to London. It was exceedingly favourable for, and everything was promotive of, the London dialect becoming the standard for all Britain. And it did.

(e) Afrikaans:

Of Afrikaans we learn, "In die eerste periode het die Suide die toon aangegee op die gebied van die skryftaal (I underline), in die tweede het ook die Noorde seggingskap gekry".³²⁾

METHOD OF THIS INVESTIGATION

1.62 With the guidance and inspiration of the great European languages, let us turn to our method of dealing with our task:

We aim at a common language, which must be as a common denominator of the spoken language, which "bears the same kind of relationship to actual linguistic activity as that of a particular code of laws to the entire legal authority in the district to which the laws apply, or of a confession of faith, or a dogmatic textbook, to the entirety of religious views and feelings."³³⁾ We shall endeavour to catalogue the

33/.....

32. Boshoff, Prof. S.P.E.: Volk en Taal van Suid-Afrika (de Bussy, 1921), page 87.

33. Strang: Paul's Principles of Language, ibid p. 475 par. 724.

main variants of contractions, of allophones, and allomorphs with a view to selecting what should go into standard writing. This method will go by the name of the selective method, since it is not a question of which dialect, but which form, which pattern, is best suited. We shall test data by the principles summed up in 1.34 above.

RESUME OF PRINCIPLES OF ORTHOGRAPHY

1.63 In par. 1.34 above, we noted the four principles of orthography enunciated by the Institute of African Languages and Cultures. These will be applied to test the material from which to select standard patterns. Further, the principle of maintaining the identity of Tswana, and not a dialect or cluster of Tswana, will be had in mind. At this stage one will not attempt unification of orthographies.

1.64 Since there is no political paramountcy and no economic or industrial precedence among the Tswana, there will be no dialect to treat preferentially.

* * * * *

CHAPTER II

VARIANT SOUNDS STILL ENCOUNTERED IN SPEECH

INTRODUCTION

2.1 In this chapter we simply catalogue variant material heard in the spoken language. The extent to which this material has entered into the written language will be reflected in Chapter III, and a full discussion follows in Chapter IV.

2.2 This and the next chapter must be seen as a statement of our problem of orthographical disunity without any substantial comment.

PHONETIC VARIANTS

2.3 We propose to deal with phonetic variants, first taking vowel and then consonant ones, mostly employing orthographic symbols.

The Vowels:

2.4 Vocalic variants will be represented as by Prof. Cole¹⁾ thus:

<u>Main member of phoneme</u>	<u>Phoneme variant.</u>
1. [i] e.g. [phiri] (wolf)	No variant
2. [e] " [sebe] (sin)	[e] e.g. [sebeng] or [sebɛng]
3. [ɛ] " [tsebɛ] (car)	[ɛ] e.g. [tsebɛng]
4. [a] " [aba] (distribute)	No significant variant
5. [ə] " [pompə] (pump)	[ə] e.g. [pompɔng]
6. [o] " [pholo] (ox)	[o] " [pholɔng]
7. [u] " [kubu] (hipo)	No significant variant
<u>7</u>	+ <u>4</u> = <u>11</u>

35/.....

1. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Notes on the Phonological Relationships of Tswana Vowels, African Studies, Vol.8, No. 3, September 1949, p. 124.

2.5 Subsequently, unless otherwise necessary and stated, we are going to employ the existing practical orthography with the addition of the vowel symbols with dots underneath to indicate the raised vowels:

1. i for [i̇]
2. e " [ė] and ɛ for its raised variant
3. ê " [ɛ̇] and ê for its raised variant
4. a " [ȧ]
5. ô " [ȯ] and ô for its raised variant
6. o " [ȯ] and o for its raised variant
7. u " [u̇]

2.6 The interrelationship of these vowels and variants needs no further belabouring, as Prof. Cole has done so adequately. We might reiterate that in the spoken language one hears varying pronunciations, cutting across the normal phonemic ties. For instance, take the word-group selêpê sefe? (which axe?). One hears it pronounced, as to the enumerative -sefe, as -

sefe : the e's are phoneme no. 2 above in par 2.5

or

sêfe : the ê is the raised variant of /e /, i.e.

phoneme no. 3.

This warns us as well against the dangers of leaving language unwritten too long, as against those of attempting to write it faithfully as it is spoken.

Alternants e and ɛ

2.7 This phoneme is no. 2 above in par. 2.5. In writing, the variant is represented by i, right outside phonemic borders. A further consequence is that many a word soon assumes the variant pronunciation exclusively.

We give below, examples of this alternation under three main causes thereof:

(a) Alternation due to locative formation by suffix - ng:

mmele (body) > mmeleng (in the body) written mmeling or mmeding or mmiding, alternately mmeleng.

sebe (sin) > sebeng (in sin), written sebing or sibing, alternately sebeng.

mosepele (journey) > mosepeleng (on a journey), written mosepeling, mosepeding, mosipiding, alternately mosepeleng.

setlhare (tree) > setlhareng (in the tree), written setlharing, alt. setlhareng.

sebi (dried cake of cow dung) > sebing (on the dung cake), written sibing, alternately sebing.

(b) Alternation occasioned by a succeeding perfect suffix - ile:

lema (to plough) > lemilê (have ploughed) written limile, alternately lemile.

betsa (to beat) > bêditsê (have beaten), written biditse, alternately beditse.

lefa (to pay) lefilê (have paid), written lifile, alternately lefile.

(c) Alternation due to the agentive suffix: - i

lefa (to pay) > molêfi (one who pays), written molifi, alternately molefi

senya (to spoil) > sesenyi or şesenyi (one who spoils) written sesinyi or sisinyi, alternately sesenyi.

2.8 Summing up we find that -

- (a) there may be up to five non-significant alternants from a common root, e.g.

mosepeling (in the journey)

mosepeding

mosepiding

mosipiding

mosepeleng

The root is right through - sepel -. Semantic, and functional value, is precisely the same.

- (b) some of these alternations have an adverse semantic effect, e.g.

sebing (< sebe : sin) may also mean,

on the dung cake (< sebi : cake of

dried dung); mmiding (in the body),

could also mean among the mealies

(< mmidi : mealie).

The Alternants ê and ệ

2.9 The phoneme / ê / is no. 3 above, in par. 2.5

The variant [ệ] is narrowed.

Examples:

selêpê (axe) > selêpệng (locative)

borêkêlô (market) > borêkêlộng "

phêthêkgê (bucket) > phêthêkgệng

bêrêka (to work) > bêrêkêlệ (perfect tense)

sêbêla (shisper to) > sêbêlệtse " "

rêra (preach) > morêri (agentive form)

bêrêka (to work) > mmêrêki " "

There is regularity here, the alternant derivative forms narrowing the vowel to ệ right through. Difficulty

arises when speakers who have only book knowledge of the language, pronounce the narrowed variant [ɛ̃] precisely as the main member of the phoneme, decidedly bad speech.

The Alternants ô and ɔ̃

2.10 The sound ô is heard as phonetic ɔ̃. The raised variant is ɔ̃.

Examples:

phôlôgôlô (animal) > phɔ̃lɔ̃gɔ̃lɔ̃ng (to the animal)
borôkô (sleep) > borɔ̃kɔ̃ng (in sleep)
bôna (to see) > bɔ̃ntsha (cause to see)
pɔ̃ntshɔ̃ (a show)
bôla (to rot) > sebɔ̃du (stench)
gôrôga (to arrive) > gɔ̃rɔ̃gilɔ̃ (have arrived)

This phoneme no. 5 above is the back counterpart of our no. 3 above in par 2.5.

The Alternants o and ɔ̃

2.11 Plaatjie and Jones say this phoneme "is intermediate between the cardinal vowels o and u"²⁾, while Prof. Cole adds that it "is slightly more open than the vowel in English pool....."³⁾ The raised variant is midway between this and u. (cardinal vowel 8).

Example:

bola (betray secret) > podɔ̃ or pɔ̃di (goat)
roka (to sew) > morokɔ̃ or morɔ̃ki (dressmaker)
lefoko (a word) > lefokong or lefɔ̃kɔ̃ng or
lefokɔ̃ng (in the word)
roka (to sew) > rokilɔ̃ or rɔ̃kilɔ̃ (have sewn)

39/.....

-
2. Plaatjie/jones: Sechuana Reader in International Phonetic Orthography, London, 1916, p. xxv par. 48)
 3. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar (Ibid). p. 6. par 1.11.

2.12 The alternation is non-significant. In some areas the raised variant dominates. Thus one hears lehoko, (a word), mmoḃodi (a patient), rona (we), right through such areas, while in others one hears only the normal o. In the main both vowels are heard in most places and occur in most books in alternation (See chapter III infra).

Vowel Breaking

2.13 There is also a case where a terminal front vowel exerts such influence over a preceding back vowel, as to break it, or bring it into harmony with it. It may also be argued that this is simply a case of two different sounds used in alternation, thus -

lekôtê (a clot of earth) and lekwêtê, as if the terminal ê of lekôtê made the medial ô into wê. Further examples:

ôle (oil) > wêlê
lengôlê (knee) > lengwêlê
khuti (a ditch) > khwiti
kgôlê (a thong) kgwêlê

These alternants are not dialectally distributed, and are non-significant.

Vowel Integration

2.14 It is characteristic in Tswana, for verbs ending on -wa, to change wa to o or u in formations of the perfect tense. We propose to call this vowel integration as against vowel breaking. Here it may also be argued that it is simply two different sounds used in alternation, arising independently.

Examples:

nwa (to drink) > nolê (have drunk), or nwelê

wa (to fall) > olê (have fallen), or wele.

utlwa (to hear) > utlule (have heard), or utlwile.

utswa (to steal) > utsule (have stolen), or utswitse

butswa (to ripen) > budule (have ripened), or

butswitse.

The patterns are not dialectally distributed.

The Alternation of Terminative - ê and -a

(a) Absolute Pronouns

This alternation is heard in all classes of the Absolute pronoun, but not in the first and second persons, singular and plural.

Examples:

	<u>Singular</u>
First Person	<u>nna</u> (I) no alternant
Second Person	<u>wêna</u> (you) " "
Class 1 (3rd Person)	<u>êna/ênê</u> (he/she)
3	<u>ôna/onê</u> (it, the village)
5	<u>lôna/lônê</u> (it, the baby)
7	<u>sôna/sônê</u> (it, the ax)
9	<u>yôna/yônê</u> (it, the animal)
11	<u>lôna/lônê</u> (it, the generation)
14	<u>bôna/bônê</u> (it, the porridge)
15	<u>gôna/gônê</u> (it, to plough)
16, 17, 18	- do -

	<u>Plural</u>	
First Person	<u>rona</u> (we)	no alternant
Second Person	<u>lona</u> (you)	" "
Class 2	<u>bôna/bônê</u> (they)	
4	<u>yôna/yônê</u> (they, the vil- lages)	
6	<u>ôna/ônê</u> (they, the babies)	
8	<u>tsôna/tsônê</u> (they, the axes)	
10	<u>tsôna/tsônê</u> (they, the animals)	
10	<u>tsôna/tsônê</u> (they, the generations)	
6	<u>ôna/ônê</u> (they, the por- ridges)	
15, 16, 17, 18	no plurals	

(b) The Imperative

The command, in the form of the Imperative verb, is rendered in two different ways in spoken Tswana, thus -

Give me	:	<u>mpha</u> or <u>mphê</u>
Here me	:	<u>nkutlwa</u> or <u>nkutlwê</u>
Listen to me	:	<u>nthêÿtsa</u> or <u>ntsêÿtsê</u>
Hide yourself:		<u>iphitlha</u> or <u>iphitlhê</u>

This alternation appears to occur when the reflexive prefix or object concord precedes the verb-stem.

Consonantal Variants

The alternants f,g,h.

2.16 This alternation applies extensively. Hereunder follow examples heard:

Conjunction: fa, gê, ga, ha, hê, (if);

Verb : fêla, hêla (get finished);

dirafala, diragala, dirahala (to occur);

solofêla, sologêla solohêla (to hope;

Noun : sefela, sehela (hymn);
kgomo, khomo (cow);
lofêêlô, lohêêlô (a broom);
lefufa (> diphufa), lehufa (> dikhufa)
lehuha (> dikhuha) (jealousy).

Observe that this alternation occurs initially, medially, and even in strengthened forms such as the last three.

Alternation of h and r

2.17 This alternation is of very limited extent.

Examples:

The Verb : diha (to do)
dira " "
dihala or dihahala (to occur)
dirala or diragala

The Subject

Concord: he (we)
re.

e.g. He ne he sa itse (We did not know)
alt. Re ne re sa itse " " " "

Alternants r and l, l and n.

2.18 The consonant r alternates often with l, and in one typical Southern case with tšh, while l alternates with n as well, thus:

r/l : tlhôbôro (a gun)
tlhôbôlô " "

One is reminded of children's language where all r's are spoken as l's e.g.

lata for rata (love)
kgola " kgora (to be content)
malulu " maruru (cold), etc.

l/n : letlhôgônôlô(blessing)
letlhôgônô "
konopa (to throw)
kolopa " "
ganêla (deny)
ganêna "
bothologa (rise and go)
bothonoga " " "
r/tšh : rona/tšhona (we)

Alternants s and š, ts and tš, tsh and tšh

2.19 Outstanding also are the alternations of s and š and ts and tš, and tsh and tšh, before back vowels and w, e.g.:

The verb suga (to tan a hide)

šuga " " " "

The noun lesomo (a group)

lešomo " "

The verb tsoga (get awake)

tšoga " "

The noun letsôgô (hand)

letšôgô "

The verb tshoga (to fear)

tšhoga " "

The noun letshwiti (multitude)

letšhwiti "

Alternants t and l, th and tlh

2.20 The alveolar explosive t is still heard in alternation with the lateral affricate tl, as also th/tlh, e.g.:

The verb tala (get full) or
tlala " "

The verb thathoba (examine) or
tlhatlhoba "

The Northern Tswana will say, for instance, and hardly be understood elsewhere in the field of Tswana:

Thôgô ya ka e itôtêtse

Elsewhere this would be -

Tlhôgô ya ka e itôtlêtse (My head has locked itself up, meaning; I am at my wits' end).

Alternation of r, h, th:

2.21 This is limited, so far as we could hear, to the word dira, which is heard as:

dira, diha, ira, itha.

Alternation of n and l, n and e/i:

2.22 We must note the occasional instability of n, making it interchangeable with i or e e.g.:

The noun sentlhaga (bird's nest) or
seithlaga " "

The conjunction etswa or ntswa

The noun mantsiboa (evening) or
maitsiboa "

Din-class Quantitative Concord

2.23 We conclude the phonetic alternants by noting the din-class Quantitative concord and its variants as follows:

tsê tsôtlhê (all of them) or
tsê tsêtlhê " " " or
tsô tsôtlhê " " "

PHONOLOGICAL VARIANTS

2.24 Next to phonetic variants are phonological variants, that is, alternant sound-changes.

Prepalatal variants:

Most notorious of these are those changes that come under palatalization, as follows:

(i) When the passive is formed:

aba (distribute) > abja (be distributed)

ajwa

gapa (drive, cattle) > gapša (be driven)

gatšwa

thopa (loot) > thopša (be looted)

thotšwa

thotswa

tlhopha (choose) > tlhopšha (be chosen)

tlhotšhwa

tlhopsha

(ii) When the locative is formed:

bojang/bjang (grass) > bojannye/bjannye or

bojannge/bjannge

(iii) Diminutive formations also alternate as do the passive formations above, e.g.

marapo (bones)- > maratswana

maratšwana

marapšana

marapsana

Elision:

2.25 Next to these we note alternants born of elision thus:

- (i) lela (cry) > lla
- rapalala (along side -) > rapalla
- mobu (ground) > mmu
- yo mobe (ugly one) > yo mme
- rara (father) > rra
- mame (mother) > mme
- monona (man) > monna
- sidila (massage) > silla

(ii) Well-known too is the employment or elision of the following class- prefixal morphemes:

le-, se-, lo-, bo-, di-, din-.

This presents in fact no difficulties positively since the predicative concords remain the same, e.g.

lesaka le tletse (the kraal is full)

saka le tletse " " " "

The problem however, often arises whether to say:

bôkô (brain) or boboko

boi (cowardice) or boboi.

At the other extreme end there is found, the addition of the prefix where there is already a prefix. I have heard one word only, but it may be a warning of what can happen if we do not standardize. The word is:

bobotho (humanity, character) as against botho.

√stem - tho, class-prefix bo-, double class -prefix bobo-

Strengthened forms of f and h alternate:

2.26 As a result of the alternation of f and h, noted in 2.16 supra, one today finds an alternation of the corresponding strengthened forms ph and kh, e.g.

fêpa (feed) > o mphepile (he has fed me)
hêpa > o nkhepile " " " "
fosa (err) > o mphoseditse (he has erred against me)
hosa " > o nkhoseditse " " " " "

The result is that one now hears in alternation,
o mphepile and o nkhepile, o mphoseditse and o nkhoseditse,
etc.

Transposition

2.27 We might add here also instances of transposition which cause alternants, e.g.:

moretlwa (Grewia flava berry-bush)⁴⁾
morwetla
jaaka (like)
kaaaja
phêthêkgê (bucket)
phêkgêthê
ekete (It is as though...)
eteke
vikisi (vicks)
visiki
frisko (frisco)
frikso.

Assimilation/Dissimilation

2.28 Finally we observe alternants arising through assimilation and dissimilation, thus -

(a) Assimilation:

mokêtê (so and so) > nkete
letsôgô la moja (right hand) > letsogo la nja/ntša

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4. Translation as per Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar ibid. p. 78

(b) Dissimilation:

ntlha (why?) > ntla

setlhopa (group) > setlhopa

re mo file (we have given him) > re mhuile

The Easterner says:

ntlha o robetse? (Why sleepest thou?)

The Southerner says: ntla o robetse?

MORPHOLOGICAL VARIANTS

(a) The le and lo- class-prefixes

2.29 Most troublesome perhaps, is the alternation of the class prefixal morphemes le- and lo-, thus-

<u>leleme</u> (tongue), plural		<u>maleme/diteme</u>
<u>loleme</u>	"	<u>diteme</u>
<u>lelapa</u> (courtyard)	"	<u>malapa</u>
<u>lolwapa</u>	"	<u>malwapa</u> , not <u>ditwapa</u>
<u>legong</u> (wood)	"	<u>magong/dikgong</u>
<u>logong</u>		<u>dikgong</u>
<u>leso</u> (death)		<u>maso/dintsho</u>
<u>loso</u>		<u>dintsho</u>
<u>lebone</u> (lamp)		<u>mabone/dipone</u>
<u>lobone</u>		<u>dipone</u> .

(b) Long and short Perfect formations alternate

The rendering of the perfect suffix presents a problem since the normal form -ile alternates with other forms, -tse, or -re, e.g.:

<u>tila</u> (prank and frolic)	>	<u>tidile</u> or <u>titse</u>
<u>tsaya</u> (take)	>	<u>tseile</u> or <u>tsere</u>
<u>nna</u> (sit/stay/have)	>	<u>nnile</u> or <u>ntse</u>

Some words however, are heard with the long perfect suffix only, and vice versa, and this causes mixture, which though logically right is idiomatically irritating. i.e.

kwala (write) > kwadile. School children invariably say kwetse, unknown among adults, but arrived at by analogy.

raya (tel, say to) > reile, along with reetse (perfect of rêêla)

re (to say) > rile or riye or lle or iyē.

e.g. ke rile, ke riye, ke lle: ke iyē (I said).

MISCELLANEOUS CONTRACTIONS

2.30 We hear various interesting predicative contractions in the field, thus:

(a) treatment of the infinitive prefix following a predicate:

ke rata go ja (I want to eat) > ke ratô ja
> ke rtô ja

ke tlilê go ja (I have come to eat)
> ke tliîô ja
> ke tsuô ja

ke sena go ja (After I have eaten)
> ke senô ja
> ke sena ja
> ke snô ja
> ke smô ja
> ke sna ja

ke semane go ja " > ke semano ja
> ke smano ja.

(b) Treatment of the concordial morpheme o or e after a subject:

ngwaga e e tlang (next year) > ngwagêtlang

ngwaga o o tlang (next year) > ngwagêtlang

- (c) Treatment of the Deficient Verb ne before the Subject concord of the main verb:

O ne a ja (He was eating) > o na ja
> o na a ja
O ne o ja (you were eating) > o no ja
> o no o ja
O ne wa ja (you did eat) > o no wa ja
> o nwa ja
> o na wa ja

- (d) Treatment of the concordial morphemes o and a after a predicate facilitates interesting contractions thus:

mo râyê o re (tell him that) > mo rôôre
a mo raya a re (he then said to him that...)
> a mo raare
o mo râyê o re (then tell him that) > o mo rôôre
> o mo rêêre

In this category we hear the "ugly" alternant of

o mo râyê o re and o ithaya a re, thus
o mo râyê gore (literally tell him so that...)
o ithaya gore (he tells himself so that....)

- (e) We bring into this section also the treatment of the negative formative ga when followed by the subject concord ke, thus

Ga ke itse (I do not know) > Ga kitse,
> Ke itse,
> Kitse
> Kgitse

Ga ke re jalo (I do not say/
mean so) > Ga ke rialo
> Ke rialo
> Kge llao

Ga ke mo bone (I do not see >Ga ke mmone
him/her)
>Ke mmone
>Kge mmone

GENERAL

2.31 The following phenomena also pose problems of standardization

- (a) The verb tlhola meaning "stay for a whole day", "continue" has the alternant tlhwa, e.g.

Ga ke tlhole fa: I am not remaining here
for the day, or

Ga ke tlhwe fa.

Ga ke tlhole ke tla: I am no more coming, or

Ga ke tlhwe ke tla.

- (b) Ngwetsi (daughter-in-law) is heard in two forms in the plural -

betsi or dingwetsi

Syntactic difficulties arise as to the concords

e.g.: Betsi ba kae?: where are the daughters-in-law? (Concord ba means people)

dingwetsi di kae? where are the daughters-in-law? (concord di means things).

- (c) Alternants such as itaya, ntaya, ditaya and dhaya (beat); mpa (a stick) and bha are confusing. cf. also Magwera go tlhalefa madhêwa madhêwa for the more common maitêwa. (Spare the rod, spoil the child)

- (d) Southern areas employ peculiar demonstratives -

mahuku ua (those words)

motse ouo (that village)

māši aua/auo, etc. (that milk)

These speech forms will be discussed in a subsequent chapter with a view to standardization.

CHAPTER III

ALTERNANT SOUNDS IN CURRENT LITERATURE

SOURCES:

3.1 Works of contemporary authors have been scrutinised for the employment of variant or alternant sounds. The intention is to show to what extent the multiplicity of alternants noted in the spoken language (Chapter II) are contained in the written language. The nearer we are to the spoken language, of course, the further away from standard writing.

3.2 Inconsistencies, as the employment of alternants will be referred to, are by no means regarded as errors. Where however, an author is inconsistent with himself, that is, spells one word in different ways, and authors are inconsistent in relation to one another, that is, spell the same word differently, the position must be assessed in the light of principles of Orthography. (See 1.34 above).

3.3 The following publications have been selected as basis of operation:

1. Henry wa Bone by M.O.M. Seboni, A.P.B., 1952. The book is claimed to have been written in an orthography of 1951.
2. Bonnô botlwaêlô by L.D. Matshego, first impression Via Afrika, 1950.
3. Nosimane Motshabadire by N. Phutieagae, Via Afrika, 1956.
4. Notimedi by D.P. Moloto, A.P.B., MCMLVII.
5. Dihela tsa Tihèlò ea Modimo di na le Dipina tsa cōna mo puōn ea Secwana 19th impression, 1961 — L.M.S., Bechuanaland Book Centre, Lobatsi, B.P. by A.J. Wookey.
6. Letlhaku le legologolo by P. Leseyane, Van Schaik's 1963.

7. Testamente e ntšha le Dipesalema, B.F.B.S., 1957
This revision of the Testament is claimed to be in Central Tswana (Hurutshe, Rolong, Ngwaketse).
8. Livingstone Tswana Readers, Tigerkloof, 1948 (The Substandard reader is Mpepi, the rest Padiso I - VI. We do not necessarily cull data from the whole series).
9. Buka ya Merapêlô, Ditirêlô le Difela tsa kêrêkê ya Methodiste ya South Africa — Methodist Publishing House & Book Depôt, Cape Town, 1953.

PERIODICALS

10. Bona... Vol. 9, no. 6, Lwetse (September) 1960, Bona Press, Johannesburg.
11. Molebalibi... (The Observer)... Mafeking, S.A., Issue no. 1, April 1956.
12. Utlwang ... Vol. VIII, no. 8, March 1964, Utlwang Publications, Rustenburg.
13. Wamba... Vol. 14, no. 4, Julae (July) 1964, Bloemfontein.

3.4 Alternant sounds are culled from these publications, by the use of abbreviations of names of authors where these are stated, and abbreviations of titles where no particular authors are named, as also in the case of the periodicals, thus:

- | | | | |
|--------|----|---------------|---|
| No. 1. | Se | for | Seboni |
| " | 2. | Ma | " Matshego |
| " | 3. | Ph | " Phutiagae |
| " | 4. | Ml | " Moloto |
| " | 5. | Wy | " Wookey |
| " | 6. | Le | " Leseyane |
| " | 7. | Testamente | for Testamente e ntšha etc. |
| " | 8. | Mp for Mpepi, | Pl, Pv etc for Padiso I,
Padiso V etc. |
| " | 9. | Ditirêlô | for Buka ya Merapêlô etc. |

- No. 10. Bo for Bona
" 11. Mbb " Molebalibi
" 12. U " Utlwang
" 13. Wa " Wamba.

A number after the abbreviation relates to the page of the source of data. Such a number may be followed by C for column in the case of certain periodicals, thus:

Wa 16C1 = Wamba page 16, Column 1.

Where the number following an abbreviation relates to a hymn this will be so stated.

Sounds and words are represented in the current orthography, phonetic and phonemic symbols being used when absolutely essential.

VOWEL ALTERNANTS

3.5 /e/ - e + i.

English words

Tswana representations

really (truth, indeed)	Se. 7 <u>rure</u> ; Ma 63 <u>rure</u> ; Ml.66 <u>ruri</u> ; Le. 9 <u>boammaarure</u> (truth); Testa- mente 578 <u>boammaaruri</u> ; Ditirêlô <u>Ammaarure</u> (indeed); Ph. 56 <u>boammaruri</u> (truth), Bo 78 C5, Mbb. 2 <u>ruri</u> .
near	Se. 32 <u>gaufi</u> ; Ma. 104 <u>gaufi</u> ; Le. 12 <u>gaufe</u> ; Ditirêlô hymn 159 <u>gaufi</u> ; Bo. 11C1 <u>gaufi</u> ;
in the treasury	Se. 32 <u>letloding</u> < <u>letlole</u> , alter- nant locative <u>letloleng</u> . <u>Letlo-</u> <u>ding</u> may otherwise mean "in the ditch".

Water	Mp. 22 <u>metse</u> ; Pv. 35 <u>metsi</u> ; Ditirêlô hymn 395 <u>metsing</u> (locative of <u>metsi</u>); Pv. 52 <u>metse</u> . Ph. 47 <u>metsi</u> .
a bear	Pv. 43 <u>senonnore</u> , <u>senonnori</u> ;
in the pool	Mp. 22 <u>mogobing</u> ; Le 38 <u>Mogobeng</u> < <u>mogobe</u> (a pool)
on earth	Ditirêlô hymn 174 <u>lefatshing</u> ; Wy hymn 391 <u>hatshiñ</u> ; Wa. 19 lefatsheng; Mbb. 5 lefatshing;
to the side	Testamente 278 <u>letlhakoreng</u> < <u>letlhakore</u> (side), alternant locative <u>letlhakoring</u>
to the trees	Ditirêlô hymn 7 <u>ditlharing</u> < <u>ditlhare</u> (trees), alternant locative <u>ditlhareng</u> .
to the olives	Ph. 5 <u>Matlhwaring</u> < <u>matlhware</u> (olives); alternant locative <u>matlhwareng</u> .
criminals	Ml. 21 <u>disinyi</u> ; singular Ml. 34 <u>mosenyi</u> ; both from verb-stem <u>senya</u> (to commit offence) Testa- ment 272 <u>mosenyi</u> ; Mbb. 5 <u>basinyi</u> (class 1 plural). Pl, 42 <u>sesinyi</u> .
The Observer	Mbb title page <u>Molebalibi</u> < <u>lebaleba</u> (to observe); alternant <u>Molebalebi</u> .
in the village	Mbb. 8 <u>motsing</u> ; Ph. 23 <u>motsing</u> < <u>motse</u> (a village); alternant locative <u>motseng</u> .

in sin

Wy. hymn 24 dibiñ; Ph 37 sebi (sin); the dictionary¹⁾ says "Sebe, n., pl. dibe, A sin. Also, a cake of dry dung." Elsewhere i.e. in speech sebe = sin, sebi = dung cake, corresponding and distinct locatives = sebeng, and sebing. e.g. Ditirêlê hymn 27 dibeng.

3.6 /o/ — o + u

English words

Tswana Representations

House

Ml. 66 ntlo, 62 ntlu; Ma. 93 matlu (plural); Se. 17 tlung (locative); Ph 54 ntlung; U 4C1 Matlong Testamente 209 ntlo, 212 tlung.

In the heart

Ml. 55 pedung; Diterêlê hymn 172 dipelung, hymn 172 dipelo /in the same hymn dipelo < dipelung / Wy hymn 316 dipeduñ.

In the word

Mp. i lefokung < lefoko (word),

Buck

Pv, 5 phuti, Ph. 45 diphuti (plural); alternant photi e.g. in Secwana dictionary (ibid).

In humanity

Le. bothong. cf. Wy's bathuñ (to the people), both locatives built on to the root -tho-.

In sorrow

Ditirêlê hymn 7 bothokung < bothoko (sorrow)

1. Brown, Rev. J.T.: Secwana Dictionary, Bechuanaland Book Centre, Lobatsi, B.P. 1961.

In death	Ditirêlô hymn 182 <u>lošung</u> . cf. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) <u>losho</u> . <u>lošu/loshu</u> also means a thicket of mimosas, hence <u>lošung</u> - in the mimosa thicket.
On the elbow	PI 27 <u>sekgonung</u> < sekgono (elbow)
Sinner	Ditirêlô hymn 145 <u>Moleofi</u> , page 25 <u>baleufi</u> (plural) both from root <u>-leof-</u> .
Proper names	Wa. <u>Ludirile school</u> < lo dirile (you have worked)
in the newspaper	Wamba 19 <u>kuranteng</u> ; cf Mbb. <u>Ko-ranta</u> (newspaper)
One who rules	Mbb. 5 <u>Molaudi</u> ; Testamente 216 <u>Molaodi</u> .
snares	Le. 10 <u>meutlwane</u> ; alternant alternant <u>mectlwane</u> .
staircase	Mbb. 5, <u>serepudi</u> ; cf. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) <u>serepodi</u> .

3.7 Alternation of a and ê

(a) Absolute Pronouns

The Absolute pronoun consists of a pronominal root and a suffixal morpheme -na or -ne, except in the 1st and 2nd persons where the suffixal morpheme is always -na.

Alternant renderings were found as follows:

Singular:

- 3rd person. Se. 9 ene; Ml. 64 ena; Pv, 2 ene
- Class 1 : Ditirêlô hymn 11 êna; Wy hymn 396 ena;
Wa 18 ene, 19 ena. /means he/she/
- Class 3 : Le. 9 ona; Ditirêlô 159 ôna; Bo. 11C3
ona; vide Secwana Dictionary (ibid)
ôna. Mp. i ônê. /means it, the village
for instance/
- Class 5 : Testamente 221 lona; alternant lone.
/means it, the light for instance/.
Ditirêlô hymn 104 lôna.

- Class 7 : Le. 9 sona; Ph 6 sôna. cf. Secwana^a Dictionary (ibid) shôna and shône.
/means it, the instrument e.g. axe/.
Testamente 153 sona.
- Class 9 : Ma. 134 yôna; Testamente 477 yona;
Mp. 17 yônê. /means it, the animal/
- Class 11 : same as class 5 above lona/lone.
- Class 14 : Secwana Dictionary (ibid) yonà (pronounced jona); Le. 142 bona Le. 9 jona alternant jone/bone /means it, the kingdom for instance/.
- Class 15 : Ml. 1 gone; Testamente 273 gona; Wy
16 : hymn 397 gona; U. 701 gona; Wa. 18
17 : gona. /means it, to plough or the
18: place/.

Plural:

- 3rd Person. Se. 33 Bone, Ma. 134 bônê Testamente 477 bone; Ph. 6 bônê.
- Class 2 : Le. 9 bona; Ditirêlô p. 14 bônê, hymn 38 bôna. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) only bôna /means they, the people/.
- Class 4 : Ditirêlô hymn 172 yôna; Ma 134 yôna /means they, they villages for instance/. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) yona. Alternant yone.
- Class 6 : Le. 9 ona; Ditirêlô 159 ôna. Bo. 1103 ona; Mp i ônê /they, the babies for instance/.
- Class 8 : Pv, 1 tšônê; Ditirêlô in preface tšônê cf. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) côna/cône /means they, the instruments, e.g. axes/.

Class 10 : As for class 8.

Class 15

16

17 : No plural.

18

(b) Imperative Verbs with Reflexive Prefix and Object Concord, 1st person:

Se. 32 nthusa (you help me), Nnayang (you, plural, give me). The terminative vowel of the stems is a viz. nthusa, nnaya -ng. But on the same p. 32 Ikêtlê, Ipipeng with terminative -ê and not -a.

Ma. 101 Mpheng (you, plural, give me) and not Mphang.

Testamente 272 Mo tseeng (you, plural, take him), 273 Re gololele (release unto us) Mmapole (crucify him). Alternants mo tsaang, Re gololela, Mmapola. Terminative -a is not used. Is it good orthography to order "Mpha", and then "Mphe" (Give you me)?

3.8 Vowel breaking: This refers to cases where a back vowel /õ, o, u/ alternates with or changes into a labial semi-vowel plus vowel /wa, we, wi/.

Examples;

Se. 40 metswetswe < metso (minutes), 53 lengwele < lengole (knee), 54 tlhwatlhwa, otherwise tlhotlhwa (price).

Ma. 9 dikweleng < dikolong (to the schools), 5 Banotwa, the people of Ranoto 75. The stem is not -noto (hammer) or -notwa right through; 2 Mopitlwe (March month, alternant Mopitlo).

Se. mahuti (ditches); Ml. 34 sekweleng Mp. 13 Sekole.

Le. 17 tlhotlhwa (price) cf. Se. in this paragraph.
Ditirêlô hymn 241 tlhoafalang (being earnest);
Ph. 54 tlhoafala; U. 503 tlhwatlhwa (price),
Wa. 18 tlhwafalo (earnestness); Mbb. 8 kwatlhao
(punishment); Ditirêlô hymn 21, ikwatlhæ (punish
oneself) ôtlhaê (punish one); Testamente 214.
watlhaya Mbb.10 Mopitlo (March month), cf.
Ma. in this paragraph, 4 machutichuti (alternant
machwitichwiti — multitudes). Ph. 40 mekotla
(backs), alternant mekwatla.

3.9 Vowel Integration: This takes place when in certain
circumstances a verb ending on -wa changes the wa to a
back vowel $\sqrt{o, u}$.

Examples:

Testamente 34 o dule (he is out) — dule perfect
form of tswa (go out); 97 o sule (he is dead)
from swa (to die); Mbb. 8 nowa (be drunk) from
nwa; could have been nwewa.

3.10 Semi-vowel glide : W

Se. 50 powana (bullock); 14 mantsiboa (evening);
44 gowa (to scream); Ml. 66 mantsibowa; Testamente
273 goa (to scream); 126 mantsiboa U. 401 bokoa
(weakness), sekgoa (the European way); Wa. 901 mowa
(spirit); Testamente 34 moa; 278 lotlowa (a net).
Ma. 9 bokowa (weakness); 77 makgoa (Europeans);
Ml. in preface Sekgowa (the European way);
Le. 112 Lekgowa; Ph. 12 bowa (return), 161 boa
(return). Bo. 94 leruarua (a whale).

Semi-vowel glide: Y

Ml. 5 Ke yeo (cl. 1 demonstrative, elsewhere yoo/oo);
62 Kaeyeletswe (to be in a fix); 65 tobeya (to criss-
cross); 7 naye (with him/her). Ditirêlô ye (this
one-animal, alternant \hat{e}). Ph. 5 yeo, eo. cf. Ml.
in this paragraph. Wa. 19 ye.

CONSONANTAL VARIANTS

3.11 Data are also culled from the titles named in 3.3 above.

3.12 The alternants f, g, h:

<u>English words</u>	<u>Tswana representations</u>
chest	Se. 9 <u>sefubana</u> (diminutive of sefuba-chest); Wy. hymn 444 <u>huben̄</u> (locative of se-huba)
jealousy	Ph. 4 <u>lehuha</u> ; Se. 9 <u>fufegela</u> /root - <u>huh-</u> and - <u>fuf-</u> /.
hillside	Pv, 7 <u>mhapheng</u> (locative); Testamente 201 <u>mfapheng</u> ; /com- pare also Pv, 18 <u>mherehere</u> (an uproar), and Le. 193 <u>mfera</u> (precipice).
If	Ml. in the preface <u>ha</u> , <u>ga</u> , p. 5 <u>ge</u> Le. 10 <u>ha</u> ; Ph. 7 <u>ga</u> .
now then	Se. 7 <u>jalo heng</u> ; Pv, 63 <u>he</u> (singular) alternant <u>ge/geng</u> (sing/pl.)
shirt	Ml. 5 <u>digempenyana</u> (diminutive of plural), 65 <u>hempenyana</u> (dim. of singular), both from Afrikaans hemp > stems - <u>gempe/-henpe</u> :
occur(-rence)	Bo. 901 <u>ditirahalo</u> ; Mbb 6 Mbb 6 <u>diragala</u> ; Testamente 276 <u>dirafetse</u> ; < stems - <u>dirahala</u> , <u>diragala</u> , <u>dirafala</u> .
here	Le. 10 <u>fa</u> . cf. Secwana Dictionary (ibid) <u>ha</u> .

ditches	Testamente, 144 <u>mafuti</u> ; Se <u>mahuti</u> /strengthened form al- ways <u>khuti/khwiti</u> , never <u>phuti</u> 7.
animal	Le. <u>phologotswana</u> < <u>phologolo</u> ; Ditirêlô 7 <u>diphôlôfôlô</u> < <u>phôlôfôlô</u> .
Hymns	Ditirêlô - title page <u>difela</u> ; Wy - title page <u>dihela</u> .
wish evil	Ph. 7 <u>futsa</u> ; Ml. 1 <u>bohutsana</u> (state of being pitiable, being orphaned). Alternant stems - <u>futsa/hutsa</u> .

Variants l/n, l/r, r/h, f/b, b/p.

3.13 Examples here are not many, yet it is certainly inconsistent for authors to alternate these sounds arbitrarily. Seboni, in the title mentioned above, uses senonori, p. 12, for a bear, while "Livingstone Tswana Readers" alternate senonore (Pv, 43), and selolori (Pv, 43) freely. Leseyane employs tlhobolo (a gun), and so does Phuticagae on pages 12 and 44 respectively, whereas we also know tlhôbôrô. "Buka ya Merapêlô" has ditirêlô (services) on the title page, while "Dihela tsa Tihêlô" (A.J. Wookey) has tihêlô. "Livingstone Tswana Readers" teach us peloethata (hard-hearted, Pv, 36), and bobeloethata (hardheartedness, Pv, 36). Leseyane employs Kgofati, page 157, whilst Kgobati is in Secwana Dictionary (ibid). So do we hear Motlhatlhobi and motlhatlhofi (inspector). There are just no rules, a dangerous situation, even as we are taught, "As jy geen beginsels nastreef nie, verval jy maklik in willekeur".²⁾

63 /.....

2. Le Roux, Dr. T.H.: Afrikaanse Taalstudies, Van Schaik's 1962, p. 285.

Variants š and s, tš/ts, tšh/tsh, tš/j:

3.14 "Livingstone Tswana Readers", Pv. 30, write lošo (death), while Moloto (ibid) writes lošo, page 12, with "Buka ya Merapêlô" spelling the locative lošung, hymn 182. Seboni (ibid) writes moso, p. 15, the morning, and "Buka ya Merapêlô" mošo, hymn 347. Buka ya Merapêlô has tšotlhe, hymn 244, tšonê, preface, and Moloto (ibid) tsothle, p. 3 and tsona, p. 46. So does Seboni write lonyatso p. 97 (spite, elsewhere lonyatšo), and "Livingstone Tswana Readers" batšoming Pv, 73 (to the hunters, elsewhere batsoming). The sounds s/š, ts/tš alternate freely. Seboni write tshokologo, p. 17, tshoganyetso, p. 9; Moloto writes kgokgotsho, p. 8, and Livingstone Tswana Readers baetšho, Pv, 46, and so on.

3.15 The alternants tšhokologo (repentance), tšhoganyetšo (surprise), kgokgotšho (throat), baetsho, would be no surprise at all. Who would think these authors are contemporaries? Furthermore, witness Seboni's matšarrana, p. 4, as against Moloto's bojarara, p. 45, and Buka ya Merapêlô's botšarara, all from the stem - tšarara (sour), with alternant - jarara. The authors are all right while there is no limitation to alternants. The pairs of sounds are unquestionably allophonically related.

3.16 The Alternation of (a) š, šw, sw, fs, fš
(b) j, jw, bj,
(c) ts, tšw, pš, tš, ps.
(d) tšh, tšhw, ph, pšh, psh,
(a) š, šw, sw, fs, fš:

"Livingstone Tswana Readers" write maši (milk), Pv, 23, and mafsi, Pv, 60. Leseyane (ibid) writes sefša, p. 34 (afresh), and fsa, (burn) page 81, and on page 181.

Moloto (ibid) writes moša in the preface for a youth, employs the interjections f*si*-i-i, p. 65 and fšiii, p. 79 to convey the idea of suddenly getting dark. Phutieagae (ibid) writes šweditse (have finished), p. 37, š*el*ê p. 24 (have burnt), maši, p. 35 (milk) and not šwelê or mašwi, after the pattern of šweditse.

(b) j, jw, bj.

"Livingstone Tswana Readers" write maje (stones), Pv, 25, along with lejwe, M,ii (a stone); also phokoje, pv, 23 along with phokobje (a jackal), Pl, 84. "Buka'ya Merapêlô" again has jala (to sow,) hymn 175, along with the concord jwa and not ja, in the preface. Moloto uses the concord jwa (of) in the preface, and ja p. 30. Last-named must of course, be known to be a professed centralist. Phutieagae uses these two concords in alternation too.

(c) ts, tšw, pš, ps, tš.

Leseyane (ibid) writes ntswa, p. 11 (whereas), and etswe, p. 26, while "Livingstone Tswana Readers" contain ntšo, Pv, 76, ntšwa, Pv, 14, ntšwe, Pv, 14 and Testamente etswe, p. 205. Leseyane further writes mpsa, p. 19 (a dog), along with mpja, p. 21 and Phalapye, p. 30 and kgonopse (thumb) p. 110. Compare with "Livingstone Tswana Readers" ntša (dog), Pv. 43, and Moloto's pša-pša, p. 81 (clapping of hands), and kgoronkgojwe, p. 36 (the thumb) as well as the interjection psim, p. 39, an expression of disgust. Suppose the words above had been rendered as follows:

ntswa (whereas), ntšwa (dog), Phalatšwe
(name of Bechuanaland town), tšwa-tšwa
(hand clapping) kgoronkgojwe/Kgonotšwe,

would there not have been system?

(d) tšh, tšhw, pšh, psh, ph.

"Buka ya Merapelô" writes tšhatlang, hymn 171, from stem tšhatla (to smash). This may also be written tšhwatla, pšhatla, pshatla. But the same book has phimola (to rub off), which may also be tšhimola, tšhwimola, pšhimola, pshimola. Moloto (ibid) employs pšhedisiwa, p. 20 (be caused to undress), (alternant tšhwedisiwa) along with ntšhe (ostrich) (alternants mpšhe, ntšhwe, mpshe); he writes iphina p. 59 (enjoy ourself) (alternants itšhwina, ipshina, ipšhina). He also writes tšhwetlelela, p. 51 (press to point of smashing), (alternant pšhetlelela, pshetlelela). Witness also Leseyane's (ibid) phimola, p. 41 (to rub off), mpšha, p. 193 (new), and mpshe, (ostrich), p. 19. Phutieagae (ibid) consistently writes morotôwantšhe p. 7, (ostrich urine) tšhele, p. 24 (have dried- a well), setšhane (stamina).

Quite clearly, authors are writing the spoken language, in regard to which we might consider the advice of Dr. T.H. le Roux (ibid p. 207), that, "Dis egter heeltetal onjuis om te meen dat 'n taal altoos stil ontwikkel, sogenaamd langs sy eie lyne; dat hy nooit opsetlik in 'n bepaalde rigting kan gestuur word nie".

Variants tl/t, tlh/th:

3.17 We found this phenomenon in Moloto's book, in the word-group go se twaele (not to get acquainted) p.23, which word-group may also be rendered go se tlwaele. We also found ngwagatola (last year) in Phutieagae's book, p. 19, which alternates with ngwagatlola (last year). I sincerely hope these are misprints.

Variants d/-, n/i or e:

3.18 "Livingstone Tswana Readers", precisely as in the spoken language, write, o iri jang? (what is the matter with you?) on p. 30 of Mpepi, while "Bona" magazine employs irile (have done), on 78c5. These could have been dira (to do) and dirile (have done.) As to the n/i alternation, see Leseyane's maitisiboa (evening) as against Seboni's mantsiboa, p. 14. Note also Leseyane's maiphorwana, p. 20, (birdlings), seitlhaga, p. 20 (bird's nest). In this particular case Leseyane consistently uses i in place of n. The words mamphorwana and sentlhaga are very commonly used in alternation with maiphorwana and seitlhaga.

PHONOLOGICAL ALTERNANTS

3.19 We deal here with the sound changes of elision and palatalization only, being the ones in particular on grounds of which serious dialectal emulation often arises.

Elision:

3.20 We cull data again from authors named in 3.3. A number after a word indicates page.

<u>Author & title</u>	<u>Elided forms</u>
L.D. Matshego - "Bonnô-botlwaêlô"	<u>Thibêlla</u> 5 (to drive into corner), alternant <u>thibêlêla</u> . <u>phallêla</u> 12 (to go on expedition), alternant <u>phalalêla</u> .
Compare the Author's	<u>Bafaladi</u> 7 (trekkers); one would expect <u>bafalli</u> in view of <u>phallêla</u> . <u>dilelô</u> 12 (complaints), one would expect <u>dillô</u> in view of <u>llêla</u> , 11, to cry for.

"Testamente e ntšha lle, lela 129 (to cry) lebella
le Dipesalema" 127 (to lock, to expect), mollo
(ibid) 283 (fire) — cf. tshololela
and no longer tshollela, and
selelo, no longer sello on p.
768.

D.P. Moloto petollo 3 (vomiting, cf. petololo<
"Motimedi" (ibid) betolola 3 (to vomit, otherwise
betolla).

3.21 What we learn here is that authors employ elided and unelided forms alternantly. Should not an author employ the elided forms consistently or the unelided forms? In any case even sectionalist authors show centralist tendencies, e.g. L.D. Matshego above writes phallela (elided spelling) and bafaladi (unelided spelling), and many others can be instanced. It is a matter on which there is no ruling at present, so that the authors are perfectly right. But, is such a mixed system sound?

Palatalization

3.22 Let us focus attention on the manner in which our authors handle this sound-change as it occurs daily in passive, diminutive, and locative formations.

(a) Passive Formations

Author & title

L.D. Matshego - tlhošwa 122 (be stripped of
"Bonno - botlwaêlô" feathers) from tihofa (to strip
(ibid). of feathers). tshabya 8 (be feared)
from tshaba, to fear. (ba>bya)
cf. immediately hereunder.

"Testamente e ntšha tlhajwa 619 (be gored or le D. pesalema"(ibid) stabbed), from tlhaba, to stab. (ba > jwa); monyadwi 608 (a bride), from nyalwa (to get married), usually monyadiwi. Use of the labial semi-vowel after d is as strange as the use of a back vowel in this position. D.P. Moloto avoids this by using baabeloi -- ba-a-be-lo-i -- those given a share, from abelwa, to be given a share.

"Livingstone Tswana" Readers (ibid) Buka ya Merapêlô spells it baabedwi, page 59. matlhotšhwa Pv, 27 (those selected) from tlhopha, select. May also be spelt matlhopšha. bošwa Pv, 5 (be bound). cf. Moloto's diboswa 31. (may also appear as bofša), kolotšwa Pv, 14 (to be aimed at with missile), from kolopa (to throw). Alternant kolopša.

That tlhošwa and tshabya should come from the same author shows either that the patterns palatal + wa and bilabial + palatal + a are not dialectally distributed, or that authors are inclined centralist. Fact is that alternations abound in contemporary literature.

(b) Diminutive formations

- L.D. Matshego — mebetšana 132 (small bodies),
"Bonno-botlwaêlô"
(ibid) from mebele (bodies), Mmakgojane
65 (mother of Kgojane). Kgojane
is derived from Kgôlê (riem)
cf. êselana of "Buka ya
Merapêlô", p. 40. We see here --
le > tšana, lê > jana, lê-lana.
Alternation of tš and j was
recorded in 3.3. above. See
also Livingstone Tswana Readers
ditsejana, Pv 3, and Moloto's
bogojwana, 3. This means
ditsêbê > ditsejana, bogôbê >
bogojwana i.e. - bê > jana, or
jwana.
- "Buka ya Merapêlô"
Ibid) kgarebana, p. 18 (young virgin)
from kgarebê, introduces a fur-
ther alternant, viz, -bê > bana.
Moloto switches to another
alternant, writing, lekgaretswana,
from lekgarebê. This now means
- bê > tswana
- "Testamente e ntšha
le Dipesalema" megotšana 608 (small wooden
bowls), from megopo (wooden
bowls). Alternant megotšwana,
megopšana.

(c) Locative formations

- Leseyane, P. — botennye 14 (deep down), from
"Letlhaku le le-
gologolo" (ibid) boteng (depth), bojanngwe 21
(in the grass), from bojang.

The author also uses dikgonnye 35 and dikganng 26 (in the news). This means -ng > nnye -ng > nng . Admittedly the spoken language has it so, and there is no rule forbidding their alternation. Compare Livingstone Tswana Reader's Kgangnye, Pl, 10. This now means -- ng > ngnye

"Testamente e ntšha" legonnye, 309 (on the wood).
from legong (wood), bojangnye
(in the grass) p. 101.

MISCELLANEOUS CONTRACTIONS

- 3.23 Seboni, M.O.M. - boorra - Douglas 36 (those of
"Henry wa Bone" the Douglas locality or clan),
(ibid) from ba gabo rra-Douglas (of
the clan), or ba kwa ga gabo
rra-Douglas (of the locality)
The forms written in full are
differentiating. So does
Phutiagae (ibid) write sika
loo phage, 42. and Matshego
Kofi yo Pheto, p. 63;
these may mean "of the clan or
locality". Now which?
"Buka ya Merapêlô" yo bobolang 171 (sick one) from
etc (ibid) yo o bobolang; a ko nnee pelo
17 (please give me a heart)
from a ke o nnêê pelo; ba go
158 (yours) from ba gago. This

compares well with ba Mosetlha
(those of Mosetlha) in place
of ba ga Mosetlha.

L.D. Matshego - ba seno bontsha (after they
"Bonno - botlwaêlô" showed), from ba sena go bontsha.
(ibid) cf. also ba seno go bontsha,
p. 82. The Moffat Bible has
a third rendering in Matt. 5:1,
viz a sina lula (after taking
a seat). < a sena go dula. See
also mogang a sina tsarolola
pelu ea me in Ps. 119:32.

3.24 Thus, contractions are not at all dialectally
distributed. Either they are determined by versification
or simply getting ingrained. Compare the spoken language
as recorded in chapter II.

LOAN WORDS

3.25

Seboni, M.O.M. - Teransefala - in preface.
"Henry Wa Bone" Kreste '7 - Christ. In view
(ibid) of Te - ra-n-se - fa-la from
Transvaal, should we not expect
Ke-re-se-te from Christ?

L.D. Matshego - Teransefala 5 (Transvaal)
"Bonno - botlwaêlô" Kirisetoropo 106 (Krugersdorp)
(ibid) mapapaborukhwi 74 (papbroek)
magaseterata 81 (magistrate)

Here this author is consistently
writing Tswana syllables ending
on a vowel.

"Buka ya Merapêlô" (ibid) throne 7 (throne), and not terone, diharpa p. 328, not in a hymn, therefore not influenced by poetic considerations. Compare aletareng 5 (at the altar) with Bakreste 46. It seems fair to feel that there is no consistency.

ASPIRATED CONSONANTS

3.26 The tendency exists for authors to alternate aspirated with unaspirated phones. Phutieagae (ibid) writes kgatlha, p. 5, (to please) while Matshego (ibid) writes kgatlêgô (act of being pleased), p. 95. Seboni (ibid) writes ntla (why?) where others would write ntlha. Moloto (ibid) writes methepha, p. 52, while Matshego (ibid) writes methepa, p. 130, (young girls). "Buka ya Merapêlô" (ibid) has dipupung, hymns 276, 68, 69 which word is given as diphupu (graves) in the Tswana dictionary³⁾. On page 26 this book records borukutlhing (in insurrection), and on p. 9 rukhutlhetse (have rebelled against) from same stem rukhutlha. On page 22 we find kgatlêgê (be pleased), which is otherwise kgatlhêgê. Compare Leseyane's (ibid) bokhutshwanyane 21, with Phutieagae's (ibid) bokhutšwanyane 8. Clearly the dictionary cannot be loaded with non-significant variants.

THE MERGENCE OF THE lo- and le- CLASS-PREFIXES

3.27 The use of lo-words and le-words in alternation has resulted in grammatical difficulty, which although a

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3. Brown, Rev. J. Tom: Secwana Dictionary, Bechuanaland Book Centre, Lobatsi, B.P. 1961.

matter of morphology and not orthography is noted here to point to a direction in which investigation awaits workers. Let us take lolwapa (Livingstone Tswana Readers, Mp 28) and looka, Pv, 79. Since the plural form of the singular prefix lo- is di-, the plurals of lolwapa and looka should be ditwapa and dikoka, but we find malwapa and maoka right through the field. The plural of lobelô (a race), is mabelô (athletic races) and never dipelô. Nor is loapi (sky) ever dikapi (kappies). The matter of, exactly which words should be written with lo- or le- needs thorough investigation.

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CHAPTER IV

ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNANTS

NO UNIFORM OR STABLE LANGUAGE

4.1 Chapter III has shown unquestionably the disunity in the orthography of the present day as interpreted by contemporary authors. That there are alternant sounds and symbols is as true of Tswana as it is of many languages. We are informed that, "whether we refer to 3000 B.C. or 1950 AD. a completely uniform language is a fallacy.... So is the assumption of a perfectly stable language... the equilibrium is disturbed and restored all the time"¹). We believe, however, that while the people are left to speak as they please, they must leave themselves to be made to write as they need. Where in the next pages we find that given alternants are unnecessary, or akin to other Sotho but non-Tswana forms, we shall suggest the selection of one form. This shall not represent a change of the language, as indeed standardization does not, but merely a pruning off of unnecessary verbiage.

ENRICHING THE VOCABULARY

4.2 It may be argued that alternants enrich a vocabulary. We would submit that synonyms do, but alternants are redundant. For example, the synonyms betsa, itaya, otla (to beat, with a stick for instance), do enrich vocabulary, being different words from different roots but with the same semantic force. But the alternants ntša, ntšwa, mpsa, mpša (a dog), all hypothetically derived from Urbantu mbwa, a single root, are certainly unnecessary, the need being easily covered by one only

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1. Ullman, Prof. Stephen: The Principles of Semantics, Jackson & Co., Glasgow, 1959, p. 12.

of the lot. Such ineffectual disunity is adjudged in the following terms: "To make the sounds of one language distinguishable from those of another - nay, even those of one dialect from those of another - can never be the purpose of an alphabet which seeks to serve, not scientific phonology, but only practical need: and this need necessarily occur only so far as the differences in question have a functional value".²⁾ The four alternants have the value of one only.

ALTERNANTS SEEN AS SPEECH PATTERNS, NOT DIALECTAL MATERIAL.

4.3 While not denying the existence of dialects in Tswana, we contend that dialectal boundaries are broken by population shifts, by urbanisation, by political re-organisation. Hereunder follows a short word-list as written by the informants themselves, collected from the Hurutshe area, near Bechuanaland, in the reserves, which will show that material unknown in that area in the past, has now infiltrated.

Four Hurutshe Informants

<u>Word-list</u>	<u>No. 1</u>	<u>No. 2</u>	<u>No. 3</u>	<u>No. 4</u>
dog	mpya	mpya ntšwa	mpya	ntja
new (adj.)	mpfya	ntšhwa	mpfya	ncha
to burn	go fya	go shwa	go šwa	sha
a flower	sefyefye	sešwešwe	sešwešwe	sesweswe
ostrich	mpye	ntšhwe	ntšhwe	nche
milk	mafyi	mashi	mašhi	mashi
thumb	kgonotšhe	kgonotšhe	kgonotshe	kgonotshe

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2. Strang, Herbert: Paul's Principles of Language,
Swan Sonnenschein & Co, 1890, p. 434 par. 664.

4.4 Not a single one of our English words was written alike by all four informants. My informants are all teachers in active practice, therefore in the present situation it should not be surprising to find the three spellings of the word for "new" in the same school. The words given also show that Hurutshe, one of the main members of the Central dialect-cluster, has not remained uninfluenced by other dialects and so have all dialects. Our alternants cannot be bound to a locality or tribe. Therefore we do not speak of dialects in this investigation, but simply of alternant patterns. We propose to select certain of the alternants for use in a standard orthography, irrespective of dialect, since, "Language is a convention, and the nature of the sign that is agreed upon does not matter".³⁾

LITERARY SOURCES OF DATA

4.5 In chapter III we culled data from works of contemporary authors, taking nine titles published between 1948 and 1963, an historic period in the development of Sotho Orthographies (See chapter I).

4.6 Some authors employ plenty of alternants, notably P. Leseiyane and D.P. Moloto. We view these as Centralists, since they centralise all dialects. D.P. Moloto is in fact a professed centralist, saying in the title of his that we examined, "Bagaetsho le tla lemoga gore ga rea leka go buwa Setswana ka ntlha epe ya loleme lwa Setswana mo lokwalong lo. Re lekile go buwa ka bophara jwa loleme lwa Setswana. Ke gore ga rea leka go kwala Serolong, kgotsa Sekgatla kgotsa Sengwato, kgotsa

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3. de Saussure, F: Course in General Linguistics, Peter Owen, London, MCMXXI, p. 10.

Sekwena, re dirisitse mantswe a re a itseng a puo ya Setswana re sa tllhophe gore le le dirisiwang ke Batswana bafe bogolo. Re ikwaletse Setswana ka fa se re kgatlang ka teng".⁴⁾ (See preface)

Translated:

("My people, you will realise that we have not tried to speak Setswana from any side of the Tswana language in this book. We have tried to speak according to the breadth of the Tswana language, that is we have not tried to write Rolong, or Kgatla, or Ngwato or Kwena; we have used what Tswana words we know, not selecting according to which word is used mostly by which Tswana people. We have written Tswana as it pleases us".)

4.7 Some of our authors are inclined to what used to be the speeches of certain localities. For convenience we may state that they write the one or other supposed dialect or group of dialects. These we regard as "Sectionalists", since they have been sectional in their choice of speech patterns. For example Testamente e ntšha le Dipesalema is claimed to be in Central Tswana. The works of M.O.M. Seboni, and the Livingstone Tswana Readers may be counted in this group, sectionalists, too.

4.8 Wookey employs his own orthography, based on the Tlhaping dialect. The other authors, L.D. Matshego, Phutieagae, and the Compilers of Buka ya Merapêlô, employ the 1937 orthography to the Rolong dialect, also a sectionalist approach. Of the periodicals, Wamba, Utlwang, Bona, may be classed as centralist, and Molebalibi as sectionalist.

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4. Moloto, D.P.: Motimedi. (ibid). in preface

THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM

4.9 The crux of the orthography problem is that Centralists and Sectionalists are in competition, with unity scarcely in view.

4.10 Summarising, our data show inter alia:

- (a) Centralism in the orthography of certain writers, i.e. the employment of most or all alternant forms.
- (b) Sectionalism with centralist inclinations e.g. the Livingstone Tswana Readers contain alternants metse/metsi, phokoje/phokobje, while pouring scorn on elided forms like mollo, simolla, etc., thus being sectionalist up to a point only. The amount of inconsistency with oneself, which is perpetrated by authors, suggests the proposition that nobody writes a dialect, all centralise in a measure. This is the crucial point, that no author spells every word the same way, that therefore there is no standard writing in the field. Our undertaking is to attempt to contribute towards uniformity in the rendering of words.
- (c) That a community does not necessarily speak the dialect it is supposed to speak, but an admixture of alternant sounds, so that while there has been no unqualified success in the past by adopting a given dialect as basis of standardization, there is hardly such dialect today.

- (d) That teachers accept and employ (rightly, in the absence of a ruling), all sounds they hear, all of which should be of interest for descriptive linguistics, a selection only of which is of interest for a practical orthography.

4.11 Taking for example the four alternants for "dog" that we culled from informants and authors' works, viz. ntša, ntšwa, mpsa, mpša/mpya, if the first were a fox terrier, the second a pointer, the third a sheepdog, and the fourth a bulldog, one would certainly see reason in the shades of semantic difference, for the use of these alternants. Bible Translators have pointed the way by referring to the Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, and Tswana Bibles as Beibele⁵⁾, Bibele⁶⁾ and Bibela⁷⁾ respectively. Alternant forms as distinct from synonyms, must at least have some force justifying their inclusion in an orthography, be it semantic or functional.

4.12 We take into consideration that there is an Orthography of Tswana, which is vested in official as well as social circles. This orthography⁸⁾, however, lays down the broad principles of representation of sounds, and does so excellently. Within its framework though, there is in fact possibility for alternant forms to thrive. For instance, as to the alternants by/bj/jw (p. 15) we are told that by is "completely discarded", but that, "In such cases either bj or jw

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5. Beibele - ya Mangwalô a makxêthwa a Testamente e tala le a Testamente e mphsa - B.F.B.S., 1962. /The Holy Bible in Sepedi (N. Sotho)/.
 6. Bibele - Testamente ea khale le Testamente e ncha - B.F.B.S. 1962. /The Holy Bible in Sesuto/.
 7. Bibela e e Boitshêpô - Kgólagano e Kgologolo le e ncha - B.F.B.S., 1952.
 8. Tswana Terminology and Orthography No. 2., Govt. Printer, Pretoria, 1962.

may be used according to dialect, e.g. bjang or jwang, robja or rojwa, tsebjja or tsejwa". We take the cue from a point such as this believing sincerely that "according to dialect" was a suggestion to the Tswana people themselves to select their standard form.

4.13 Centralist authors have done a great service in bringing as many alternant forms as possible in writing into circulation, which should facilitate selection of standard forms by the Tswana, irrespective of what dialect a given form is supposed to have come from, when dialects were still fairly distinct. Sectionalist authors have done an equally great service, preserving as much as possible, in writing, of the respective dialects, but their centralist inclinations point to a desire to write for all Tswana people, of all 'dialects'.

4.14 A Selective orthography, taking single patterns from as many 'dialects' as possible, should serve -

- (a) to give all or most groups an interest in the standard language,
- (b) to make clear to teachers, authors, editors, exactly where they stand about each word,
- (c) to enable lexicographers the more easily to produce authoritative lexicons. As things are, a lexicon containing ntšhwa (new), but excluding ntšha, mpšha, mpsha, unnecessary as the alternants are, is of no use as a guide to spelling where teachers in a single school may require and rightly demand all alternant forms. With this in mind we turn to a discussion of our data.

VOWEL VARIANTS

4.15 The /e/ phoneme (alternant i):

Firstly, /e/ and /i/ are normally different phonemes, so that in terms of our principle of one phoneme one letter, they should not alternate in orthography. We have two kinds of alternations, what we may call a primary alternation, and a secondary one.

Primary alternations are those which occur between e and i, without any apparent reason, phonological or otherwise, e.g.

metse and metsi (water)

gaufe and gaufi (near)

rure and ruri (really)

Since the vowel i is the more stable of the two, normally allowing of no variants, it seems safer to employ this symbol in all cases of primary alternation.

Secondary alternations are those which occur when derivative words are formed, i.e. those for which there is a linguistic explanation, e.g.

agentives:

senya (to spoil) > mosenyi (spoiler)
or mosinyi (by vowel raising)
lefa (to pay) > molefi (one who pays)
or molifi (by vowel raising)

locatives:

mogobe (a pool) > mogobeng (in the pool)
or
mogobing (by vowel raising)
letlole (treasury) > letloleng (in the treasury)
or letloding (by vowel raising)

Seeing that the form with e is recognised right through in the non-derivative stems, it should be conceded that i must be secondary in these cases. A further consideration is that often i has a differentiating effect, e.g.

motseng (in the village) < motse
motsing (in the era) < motsi
letloleng (in the treasury) < letlole
letloding (in the ditch) < letlodi

If Molebalibi were written Molebadibi, as it should phonologically be, it would mean, not observer, but one who looks at dried cow dung. cf. leba (look at), dibi (cow dung) with lebaleba (observe) and molebalebi (observer). Cases of secondary alternation therefore, should be spelt with e.

4.16 The /o/ phoneme (alternant u)

Since this is the back counterpart of the /e/ phoneme, the rules under (a) above apply mutatis mutandis, as also the arguments.

Primary alternations are not found. Since /u/ is a separate phoneme, all secondary alternations might well be spelt with the /o/ right through, e.g. -

podu, and not pudu (goat)
serepodu, and not serepudu (a stair)
ntlo, and not ntlu (house)
ntlong, and not tlung (in the house)
dipelong, and not dipelung or dipedung
(in the hearts)
moleofu, and not moleufu (sinner)

4.17 The alternation of a and ê

(a) Absolute Pronouns:

It is striking that in the Rolong of Buka ya Merapêlô etc. quoted in chapter III, the terminative ê is found in the preface, while a is largely the rule in the text. Does this not suggest that the preface is written in the speech

of the revisers or compilers, while the text, with a, is as originally compiled, when stabilizer -na was probably the rule? Wookey teaches us that, "The final vowel of all emphatic pronouns may be either a or e, except in the first and second persons"⁹⁾. Wookey and Moloto employ a in êna (he/she), Wamba employs both êna and ênê. Cole makes a debatable statement, that, "All the 3rd person forms have dialectal variants with -na instead of -nê as stabilizer, e.g. êna, bôna, etc."¹⁰⁾

Which is the dialect, and which the language? Wookey's stand is more equitable and in line with our standpoint that the variants are simply speech patterns distributed all over. The Moffat Bible employs êna, gôna, ôna. And as to contemporary authors studied in chapter III, we find that these alternants stand shoulder to shoulder. Giving each author/magazine a point for the use of either a or ê we find as follows:

	<u>a</u>	<u>ê</u>
1. Seboni	-	1
2. Matshego	1	1
3. Moloto	1	1
4. Livingstone Tswana Readers	-	1
5. Leseiyane	1	-
6. Testamente e ntšha	1	1
7. Buka ya Merapêlô	1	1
8. Dihela tsa Tihêlô	1	-

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9. Wookey, A.J. & Brown J.T.: Secwana Grammar with Exercises, LMS, 2nd ed., 2nd impression, p. 42 par. 32.
 10. Cole, D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar, Longmans, Green & Co. 1953, p. 128, par. 5.2. note (a)

	<u>a</u>	<u>ê</u>
9. Phutieagae	1	1
10. Utlwang	1	-
11. Bona	1	1
12. Wamba	1	1
13. Moebalibi	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>

The alternation is non-significant. In the interests of uniformity within Tswana, and within the Bantu fold, we urge the use of the stabilizer -na right through, in line with the first and second person absolute pronouns.

(b) Imperative Verbs:

Terminative a may indicate imperative mood, with object concord, and ê is a terminative for the subjunctive mood. But the negative of the Imperative employs ê, e.g.

mpa (give me) Imperative, positive.

se Mphê (don't give me) Imperative, negative.

alternant:

mphê (give me) Imperative, positive

se mphê (don't give me) Imperative, negative.

Quite clearly, ê persists in both positive and negative conjugations, which a does not survive. In any event the alternation is non-significant. Hence we suggest:

nnêyê, and not nnaya (hand to me)

nkutlwê, and not nkutlwa (hear me)

ipipê, and not ipipa (cover yourself)

(c) Transliterations:

It is suggested that loan-words be rendered with due regard to their forms in the lending language e.g.

"heiden" /heiden/ to be: moheitênê, and not mohaitane. (we found both forms used).

hemp to be: gêmpê and not gampê

4.18 Vowel Breaking:

This alternation is not distributed on area or dialectal lines. In the same area one hears tlhotlhwa, and not tlhwatlhwa (price), as well as khwiti and not khuti (a ditch or hole). There is no doubt however, that the labialised vowel is secondary. What is more, the alternation is non-significant, e.g. lengôlê and lengwêlê (the knee).

Hence, in the interests of standardization we urge that our word-list, taking the examples in chapter III par. 3.8 must read:

<u>standard</u>	<u>alternant</u>
<u>sekolong</u> (to school)	<u>sekweleng</u>
<u>Ranôtô</u> (name of man)	<u>Ranotwa</u>
<u>Mopitlo</u> (March month)	<u>Mopitlwe</u>
<u>lengole</u> (knee)	<u>lengwele</u>
<u>mahuti</u> (potholes)	<u>mahwiti</u>
<u>metso</u> (minutes)	<u>metswetswe.</u>

The alternant forms to be left to the spoken language.

4.19 Vowel Integration:

The following examples are peculiar to Tswana and the alternants are not quite popular idiom:

<u>Idiomatically correct</u>	<u>Alternant</u>
<u>o dule</u> (he is out)	<u>o tswile</u> perf. of tswa
<u>o nole</u> (he has drunk)	<u>o nwele</u> " " nwa
<u>o sule</u> (he is dead)	<u>o swile</u> " " swa
<u>o utlule</u> (he has heard)	<u>o utlwile</u> " " utlwa

This integration occurs with verbs ending on -wa. In the case of the last verb above, quite strangely, the alternant form is more commonly heard and written. The integrated forms are supported, in any event, one form in each case, unless the alternant is significant.

4.20 Semi-vowel glides:

(i) The labial semi-vowel, w:

Alternant spelling such as the following cannot be justified:

<u>mantsiboa</u>	along with	<u>mantsibowa</u>	(evening)
<u>makgoa</u>	"	"	<u>sekgowa</u> (the European way)
<u>goa</u>	"	"	<u>gowa</u> (scream)
<u>boa</u>	"	"	<u>bowa</u> (return)
<u>bua</u>	"	"	<u>buwa</u> (speak)
<u>mowa</u>	"	"	<u>moa</u> (spirit)

Two tests are suggested in all such cases. Firstly, as to whether the semi-vowel has any significance, whether its insertion or omission is differentiating in any way. If it has no significance, there is no justification for its use. Secondly a morphological test may apply. Take the words boa (return) and mowa (spirit).

The morphemes are:

boa = root: -bo-

terminative vowel: -a

hence: boa : return

boile: have returned

boetse: have returned to.

Omission of the w is justified, since it does not occur in the derivative forms.

mowa = class prefix : mo-

root/stem : -wa

hence mowa: spirit (singular).

The stem here is seen as -wa, since the plural form and locative form retain the w. The w is immutable, irreducible, e.g.

mewa, spirits (plural), meweng (locative).

Insertion of the w is justified, indeed essential.

(ii) The palatal semi-vowel, y:

With the move towards unification of Sotho orthographies came the ruling, "In the case of absolute (emphatic) pronouns however, it has been agreed that the spelling with the semi-vowel should be the standard except for that referring to the ma-class of nouns"¹¹). Not only is this glide non-significant, but it is more often than not absent in actual speech. The pronoun yena (he/she) is heard as ena, or ene in Tswana. The influence of the ruling, on demonstratives however, has had far-reaching results. The ruling is that these be written alternantly with or without semi-vowel, e.g. e or ye, eo or y eo. This glide is non-significant and not articulated. It is used extensively by a centralist author, in medial position e.g.

tobeya, kaeyeletswe, (to criss-cross, to be in a fix).

It is non-significant and inarticulate in that position too.

4.21 The /ê/ phonème and its back counterpart /ô/. This phoneme has two members, ê and its raised variant ê̂, while ô has a corresponding back variant ô̂. Prof. Cole rightly proposes to write both members of the phoneme with the diacritic sign according to the principle of one symbol per phoneme. The orthography in vogue uses the symbols e and o without diacritics. In this orthography great stock is set at meaning. The

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11. Tswana Terminology and Orthography no. 2 (ibid) p. 29

symbol e is used for the semi-close front vowel phoneme and its variant (e/ɛ) and for the semi-open front vowel and its variant (ê/ɛ̃), while for the back opposite numbers o is used.

4.22 By meaning, context only, do we differentiate -- lêma (to make horns), lema (to plough), as well as the perfect forms lemilê and lêmilê. This applies to the back vowels in sôka and soka with variants sôkilê and sokilê for instance. Prof. Cole¹²⁾ gets over the difficulty by proposing ----

- (a) an i for the semi-close front and u for the semi-close back vowel,
- (b) a diacritic i (î) and diacritic u (û) for the close high front and back vowels,
- (c) an e and an o for the semi-open front and back vowels.

Fact is that this proposal, basically, will introduce an i for two different phonemes, as well as an u for two phonemes, precisely as in the orthography in vogue e is used for two phonemes, and o for two. Granted that Prof. Cole's proposal would entail less use of diacritics since the frequency of î and û is lower than that of ê and ô. But these diacritics on i and u would be compulsory, while none are, in the current orthography.

4.23 The use of the phonetic symbols for ê, as done by Plaatjie and Jones (see chapter I) is not satisfactory since it cannot cover both members of the phoneme in each case, i.e. ê and ɛ̃. The sounds of the members of the phoneme differ, and while Plaatjie and Jones accept the I.P.A. principle of "one sound one letter", they

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12. African Studies Vol 8 no. 3 September 1949 p. 129
(ibid)

would be forced to employ different "letters" for members of a phoneme. The two principles, "one sound one letter", and "one phoneme one letter" stand in diametric opposition to each other, and orthographies, practical orthographies as distinct from phonetic orthographies, are based on the latter. The use of e and o in ordinary writing, is supported for ê/ê and ô/ô, with diacritics when necessary.

CONSONANTAL INCONSISTENCIES

4.24 The Alternants f, g, h:

In Chapter II we recorded this alternation in speech. In chapter III, we noted the alternation in the works of contemporary authors. There is an inclination to write as they speak locally, along with centralised inclination to write as all the Tswana speak. Hence we find:

ha, ga, ge (if)

fa, (if)

hempenyana (little shirt)

digempenyana (little) shirts)

mafuti (holes) as compared to mahuti,

mhapheng and mfapheng (on the hillside)

lefufa (jealousy)

lehuha (jealousy) and lehufa.

It is possible that the four forms of "if" above have the same origin, same function and meaning are the same.

4.25 Our examples above divide into three kinds:

Firstly, Tswana words that offend against identity since they occur also in other Sotho languages, viz. Northern and Southern Sotho. Of the words for "if", ge occurs also in Northern Sotho. Those using it in Tswana are accused of being inclined that way. The accusation often comes from those who prefer ha¹³⁾ or fa, but it is never

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13. For example, Sandilands, Introduction to Tswana (ibid) p. 322, (3) prefers ha; p. 351, (2) ge is regarded simply as non-Tswana.

admitted that ha as well, occurs in Southern Sotho. Prof. Lestrade refers to fa simply as the form generally employed in "written Tswana Literature".¹⁴⁾ It seems advisable to take the stand that if identity is at stake, preference need not be given to either Southern or Northern Sotho-inclined forms without good reason. Secondly, we have transliterations, mainly from Afrikaans and/or English. Hempenyana (little shirt) comes from Hemp, and so does digempenyana. The most faithful form to the original language is of course hempe, but does not quite satisfy since it is truer to South Sotho phonology; hence gempe with g is preferred. Fact is that there is no need, it is not "essential", to have three forms for "hemp". It does not enrich vocabulary. It complicates orthography and overloads lexicology. The need is covered by gempe, and the complication eliminated on the score that transliterations be made true to the phonology of Tswana. We would urge that a transliteration not be unnecessarily disguised from its language of origin first of all, and then studiously brought into line with the phonology of the borrowing language. Thirdly we have stems beginning with f/h, which may be tested by initial strengthening, with due regard to the rules f > ph, h > kh. Thus:

mahuti, lehuti, with alternant khuti (a ditch)
mafuti, lefuti, with the same khuti, and never
phuti. (a hole)
furalala > khularo, sometimes phularo (turning
one's back to)
mherehere/mferere > pheretlhego and never khertl-
tlhego (a stir)

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14. Lestrade, Prof. G.P. Some Kgatla animal stories, Lovedale, 1948, p. 49, par. 17.

fela/hela > phetso, and never khetso (a finish)
lefifi/lehihi > diphifi/dikhihi (darkness)
lefufa/lehuha lehufa > diphufa/dikhuha/dikhufa
(jealousies)

4.26 It must of course be recalled that Canon Crisp's orthography had no h, except, for aspiration, and that Rev. Brown's Dictionary excluded the letter f, using h right through.¹⁵⁾ Parallel forms like diphifi/dikhihi, khularo/phularo, must be ascribed to a great extent to contemporary literature. Hence we might tackle the problem in two stages, firstly the cases which still have no alternants in their strengthened renderings, and then those with alternants. In regard to the first cases it is comparatively simple to accept that, "In the case of dialects in which the sound represented by h occurs in both cases, the determination of the particular diaphoneme to which the sound belongs can be made in many cases by reference to the form assumed by the relative words if and when subject to initial strengthening".¹⁶⁾ The statement is carefully worded to cover "many" and not all cases. We submit that it covers "many" cases of the f, g, h diaphonemes occurring initially. Provision must be made for the rest, as also for medial occurrence where strengthening is not a practicable test. It is easy then to rule that spelling should be with f in cases like:

lefoko, since phoko and never khoko occurs, (a word)
lefuka, since diphuka and never dikhuka occurs,
(a wing)

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15. Brown, Rev. J.T. Secwana-English Dictionary, Lobatse, B.P. "with the exception of foreign words this letter f does not appear in the orthography of the Secwana language."
16. Lestrade, Prof. G.P.: Practical Orthography for Tswana, in Bantu Studies, Vol. XI, no. 2, June 1937, p. 144.

lofofa, since diphofa and never dikhofa occurs
(a feather),

and with an h in cases like:

lehuti, since khuti and never phuti occurs,
(a ditch)

hêma (breathe), since khêmô and never phêmô
(breathe) occurs.

mohubu (navel), since khujwana and never phubjana
occurs.

huma since khumô and never phumô occurs (get
rich).

4.27 The question arises how safe it is, in cases where strengthened alternants occur "in the interests of literary standardization... to use the symbol f throughout"¹⁷). A further problem is whether it would be possible to apply this ruling to the medial occurrence of the f, g, h diaphonemes.

Cases which cannot be finalised by a test of strengthening may well be tested by comparison with other Bantu languages e.g.

compare	<u>fetola/hetola</u>	with Zulu	<u>phëndula</u>
	<u>fatshe/hatshe</u>	" "	<u>phansi</u>
	<u>falatsa/halatsa</u>	" "	<u>phalaza</u>
	<u>fapaana/hapaana</u>	" "	<u>phambana</u>

This is not a foolproof test however, but it does give point to a consideration of f in preference to h. If Tswana h is found to alternate just as well with Zulu ph, a decision in favour of f or h must be made in our case. Some few cases should be left to alternate any diaphonemes since some of the alternant forms are deeply ingrained in the idiom of Tswana. For instance

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17. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar
(ibid) p. 25 par. 1. 45.

phudugô alternates with khudugô (the act of leaving a dwelling place for another), but the metaphor khuduga (the business of erecting a new home, or additional buildings, or renovating old ones extensively) stands alone, and does not alternate with phuduga. Hence it would be difficult to rule that the f diaphoneme and its strengthened form only be retained. Similarly phularo may alternate with khularo (the act of facing away), but dikhularo (back side of a person) stands alone in the idiomatic speech. Thus: Re tshwere khuduga (never phuduga): We are busy, building/rebuilding/renovating. Ke mo itsitse ka dikhularo: I recognised him by his back side (never diphularo).

4.28 Finally, in this category, we take note of the medial occurrence of the f, g, h diaphonemes as in ---

pholofolo

phologolo

pholoholo

solofela

sologela¹⁸⁾

solohela

dirafala

diragala

dirahala

Where the segment - fala can be equated to a Zulu parallel, the suggestion of comparison above in this paragraph may be helpful. Since the Zulu counterpart is - kala, it would appear preferable to employ - gala, in the verbs

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18. Motsisi & Van Zyl: Thutapuo (Setswana), Voorwaarts, 1950, p. 3, Diketapele, line 2.

in the last set of words. But in the rest we would be left to choose on other grounds. I wish to emphasize "choose" since the procedure recommended is selection. Whereas it seems best to take the form with f in the case of solofela, because Motsisi and Van Zyl's g-form is very, very rare, and because where f and h have equal claim, it seems advisable to recall that h may either be extremely sectional or inclined to Southern Sotho, it seems safer to take the g-form for phologolo. The reasons here are, pholofolo savours of Southern Sotho phoofolo, and pholoholo, is indeed very rare or sectional. In most cases the denominative (-fala) and neuter (-gala) formative might still alternate.

Alternation of l and n, l and r, r and h, p and b, b and f.

4.29 (i) l and n: Take the list that follows:

bothologa/bothonoga (arise)

loka/noka (put in salt)

morotologa/morotonoga (a sour wild fruit)

tlhogonolo/tlhogonono (luck)

senonnori/selollori (a bear)

kolopa/konopa (to throw)

sokologa/-(repent), retologa/- (turn round),

bofologa/- (get loose), fologa/- (descend),

phologa/- (escape).

I know no reason for preference of the one or the other form. If we accept the stand that alternants without semantic or functional justification are not essential, the Tswana people would do well to decide on one form.

(ii) l and r; The reasoning under (i) above applies.

- (iii) r and h: This alternation must at present be seen as absolescing, not only in writing but in speech too. It is in fact heard only in the Southern dialects, and found in Wooksey's orthography, which is based on these dialects. It seems quite acceptable to contemporary writers that r be preferred to h right through, thus:

dira and not diha (do)

re and not he (we -subject concord)

- (iv) p and b: The dissimilation of p to b in the stem pelo (the heart) occurs when the bo-class prefix is added, thus:

pelo > peloethata

(hard-hearted) > bopeloethata (hard-heartedness) or bobeloethata.

Only one author employs the form, and it is perhaps fair to feel that, the b-form may be replaced in the written language by the p-form, safe in the collective plural form of the stem, thus:

pelo (singular), peloethata (hard-hearted)

dipelo (plural), bopeloethata (hard-heartedness)

mabelo (multiplicity of hearts)

- (v) b and f and m: This alternation is of such limited sway that there is hardly any need to make rules. One author writes kgofati, while the spoken language also has kgobati, (fibre) one author writes letsobane and letsomane, (flock) another writes thabalakane,

while we also hear thamalakane (riddle). Suffice it to suggest tlhoba, tlhatlhoba, kgobati, letsomane, and thabalakane as standard.

4.30 The alternation of s and š, ts and tš, tš and j, tsh and tsh.

(i) S and S:

There is no doubt that the pairs of sounds above are, to use Plaatjie and Jones' term or expression, "non-distinctive", that is "never change the meaning of any word".¹⁹⁾ Our difficulty is which to regard as standard or normal, and which as variant. We are taught that: "The term diaphoneme is used to denote a normal (I underline) sound together with the variants of it, heard from different speakers of the same language".²⁰⁾ We need not lose over 4,000 lives on the issue as did the people of Ephraim (Judges 12:6) in days of yore, but we also have no cause to brook further uncertainty as to whether to write Siboletha or Siboletha or Shiboletha. The symbol sh must be discarded since h is employed when aspiration is intended, and on the principle one sound one letter. The sound š operates allophonically with s, but in another sphere as a separate phoneme. To prefer it where it alternates with s, leads to employing it

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19. Plaatjie/Jones: A Sechuana Reader (ibid) p. xvi par.10.
20. Memorandum 1, - Revised ed.: Practical Orthography of African Languages, p. 17 par. 30 (ibid).

in two different phonemic environments. It is therefore best to employ s exclusively where it shares environment with š, and š exclusively where it is distinctive to s. There is no dialectal consideration at all. Orthographic principles lead us, and here, the principle one phoneme one symbol.

Examples:

Where s and š alternate: Of the words
sotla/šotla (mock at) sutlha/šutlha (break through), swatola/šwatola (pull out roughly) swa/šwa (die), supa/šupa (seven) sosobana/šošobana, solofêla/šolofêla (hope), susu/šusu (deaf one), we would select the forms with s.

In the following examples š is the sole phoneme and s is not alternant:

šaba (eat with a relish)

šapa (beat)

šala (for porridge to fail to cook well
due to underheating)

šêma (cut)

šatola (do poorly e.g. teach other than
thoroughly)

šakgala (be furious)

dišašê (coward)

lešalaba (loud shouting)

lešaba (grey course sand used for
cleaning wooden bowls)

lešatlha (quantity of coins)

(ii) ts and tš; tsh and tšh; tš and j:

The arguments are largely the same as under (i) supra. These sounds are pairs of allophones in certain environments. In others tš and tšh are distinctive to ts and tsh respectively. By the reasoning under (i) above we come once more to the conclusion that where ts and tš, and where tsh and tšh alternate, the non-palatal sound be employed leaving the palatal sound employed where it functions as the sole phoneme.

Thus, of the words:

tšosi (they only) and tsosi, select tsosi,

batšoming (to hunters) and batsoming

select batsoming,

lotšô (genus) and lotsô select lotsô

tšona (they, the ones) and tsona, select

tsona

lonyatsô (spite) and lonyatšô, select

lonyatsô,

and of:

tshokologô (repentence) and tšhokologô,

select tshokologô,

baetšho (my people) and baetsho, select

baetsho,

kgôkgôtshô (gullet) and kgôkgôtšho,

select kgôkgôtshô

tšhogê (to be afraid) and tshogê, select

tshogê.

But in the undermentioned instances only tš and tšh, should be employed, being distinctive to ts, tsh:

ntša, and never ntsa (dog)

ntšogôtlhō²¹), and never ntsogotlho
(left hand)

tšarametsa, and never tsarametsa (shoot
liquid)

botšarara, and never botsarara (sourness)

tšhatšhamisa, and never tshatshamisa (fry)

tšhōtlha, and never tshōtlha (chew)

tšhōtlhō, and never tshōtlhō (minced meat)

tšhōma, and never tshōma (speak foreign
tongue)

ntšhwa, and never ntshwa (new)

(iii) The alternation of tš and j:

This alternation hinges on the fact that there are different articulations of the sound j. The result is that one gets alternant spellings such as:

ntša and nja (dog)

lejwe and lentšwe (stone)

kgonojwe and kzonotšwe (thumb)

In chapter III we found matšarrana (sour things) and also bojarara (sourness) from the same stem. With the first person object concord the pronunciation is certainly ejective and not voiced, thus:

ke jaka > o ntšakise (help me gain)

See also: ke ja (I eat) > o ntšese (feed me)

ke jala (I sow) > o ntšalêlê (sow
for me)

o jabetša (you cheat) > o ntšabetsa
(you cheat me)

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21. Moffat Bible, Basiamisi (Judges)3:15 (means left-handed).

Normally a voiced sound does not follow a nasal. Bearing also in mind that, "It may sometimes be convenient to depart from a strictly phonetic system, in order to avoid writing a word in more than one way"²²⁾, there seems no harm in suggesting that verbs with initial j be written ntš when the first person singular object concord is prefixed. It is also necessary to make writers aware that it is not good orthography to write botšarara along with bojarara for instance. Only the strengthened form of j should be rendered tš, and the strengthened /non-strengthened forms can be catalogued and standardised in a measure at least.

4.31 The alternation of groups:

The following groups alternate:

- š, šw/sw, fs/fš,
j, jw, bj
ts/tš tšw ps/pš
tšh pšh/psh tšhw ph

Certain of these phones occur in certain parts of speech by a hypothetical derivation, of which we learn, "It is possible that all s, š, ts, tš words may be traced back to non-palatal beginnings, and urBantu students have essayed to do so"²³⁾ Ours is not a philological investigation, so that what concerns this work is simply the representation of these sounds in writing. The sounds occur also in synchronic shifts such as diminutive, and passive formations.

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 22. International Institute of African Languages and Cultures memo. 1. Revised ed.: Practical Orthography for African Languages, 1930 p. 17.
 23. Tucker, A.W.: A Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages, Longmans Green & Co., 1929, p. 86 par. 230.

We see these sounds in three patterns, according to fairly definite rules. Taking for example, passive formations, we find:

- (a) A verb ending on bilabial consonant +
a > bilabial consonant + palatal consonant
+ a

or

- (b) A verb ending on bilabial consonant + a >
palatal consonant + wa.

4.32 Cases occur where at sight it may be thought that certain phones are not covered by the rules because they contain alveolar or fricative sounds, e.g.:

- ps (bilabial + alveolar)
- fs " + "
- sw (alveolar + bilabial).

For our purpose s is treated as palatal, since we are enlightened that, palatalization is the substitution of a "prepalatal or alveolar consonant (affricate, fricative or nasal) for one of some other.... organic position."²⁴⁾ We therefore arrange our material under three formulae as follows:

Pattern no. 1: bilabial + palatal + terminative vowel (bpv)

- mafsi phokobjê, pšhedisiwa, mpšhe
- sefša lebjê mpšha
- mpša

Pattern no. 2: palatal + bilabial + terminative vowel (pbv)

- mašwi phokojwê ntšhwa
- sešwa jwa tshwêtlêlêla ntšhwe
- lejwê ntšwa

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24. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar,
ibid, par. 1.80.

Pattern no. 2. pbv

tlhaba > tlhajwa

tlhapa > tlhatṣwa

lefa > lešwa

Pattern no. 3. pv. - nil, in Tswana, in passive formations. The alternation of these palatal patterns, often in the same book, is certainly one of the chief marks of distinction between dialects. We contend that an author should employ only one of the patterns in a given book. This would make the reading of a book so much easier as a word once seen, would always be the same. Authors are themselves worried about the situation, hence they attempt to avoid palatal sounds altogether e.g. :

pšhimola/tšhwimola/tšhinola is spelt by many as

phimola (rub off)

sefšefše/sešwešwe/sešeše is spelt as sesweswe

(a flower)

kgonopse/kgonopše/kgonotšwe/kgonotšē is spelt as

kgonope (thumb).

We also find diminutives and passives formed alternatively by means of additive formatives, presumably to avoid palatal alternants.

Diminutives:

motlhafunyana, kobônyana, legapunyana.

Passives:

tlhabiwa, tlhapiwa, lefiwa.

We do wish to recommend as follows:

- (a) That all hypothetical derivatives be written on the pattern pbv., since the patterns bpv and pv are extensively used in Northern and Southern Sotho, in order thus to enhance the identity of Tswana, e.g.:

<u>Southern Sotho</u> (pv)	<u>Northern Sotho</u> (bpv)	<u>Proposed Tswana</u> <u>spelling</u> (pbv)
To burn: <u>tjha</u>	<u>fsa/swa</u>	<u>šwa</u>
dog: <u>ntja</u>	<u>mpša/mpsa</u>	<u>ntšwa</u>
new: <u>ntjha</u>	<u>mpsha</u>	<u>ntšhwa</u>
to smash <u>pšhatla</u>	<u>pšhatla</u>	<u>tšhwatla</u>
jackal: <u>phokojwe</u>	<u>phokobje</u>	<u>phokojwê</u>
to sow: <u>jala</u>	<u>bjala</u>	<u>jwala</u>
beer: <u>jwala</u>	<u>bialwa</u>	<u>bojwala</u>
ostrich: <u>mpšhe</u>	<u>mošhe</u>	<u>ntšhwe</u>
to rub off: <u>phumola</u>	<u>phumola</u>	<u>tšhwimola</u>

(b) That in passive formations, the standard form be the use of additive morphemes, in case of verbs ending on -ba, -pa, fa, pha:

tlhaba (to stab) > tlhabiwa
tlhapa (to wash) > tlhapiwa
lefa (to pay) > lefiwa
tlhōpha (to choose) > tlhophiwa.

The tendency of authors and speakers points the way.

(c) That in diminutive formations, standard orthography employ the additive formatives -ana/-nyana in the case of nouns in whose final syllable there is a b, or p or f or ph, e.g.:

thaba (mountain) > thabana
kobô (blanket) > kobōnyana
tlhapi (fish) > tlhapinyana

The spoken language need not change.

4.33 The alternation of lateral affricates tl, tlh, with alveolar explosives t, th:

Only two titles out of thirteen showed this tendency, and in a slight measure too. In daily speech one hears it intensively. This is one instance where we are well on

the way to abiding by the principle of speaking as we please, and writing as we need, namely employing the lateral sounds, and leaving t and th to function in speech. All previous workers on orthography have recommended this.

4.34 The Instability of d, and the alternation of n with i/e.

In this matter it is best to write only dira. As to the alternation of n and i in seitlhaga and sentlhaga, we recommend the use of the form with i. Lestrade's third alternant setlhaga was not met in our field,²⁵⁾ but rather in Northern Sotho as sehlaga, and in Southern Sotho as sehlaha.

PHONOLOGICAL VARIANTS

4.35 Palatal variants occurring in synchronic sound-change have been dealt with for convenience under 4.30 - 4.32. above and need no further consideration. What remains to be treated are alternants occasioned through elision.

4.36 Elision, definition of, etc.

"Elision is defined as the disappearance of a sound"²⁶⁾. Prof. Cole regards elision as the dropping of a sound²⁷⁾, dealing with Tswana, but treats the dropping of a morpheme also under elision.²⁸⁾ Elision must be distinguished from an ellipse, the dropping of a word or word-group.²⁹⁾ Elision is aimed at economy of time and energy, the rendering of as much speech as possible in as little time as

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25. Some kgatla Animal stories, Lovedale, 1958, p. 67. par. XIX. 1.

26. Jones, Prof. D.: An Outline of English Phonetics p. 230.

27. Cole, Prof. D.J.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar ibid p. 49.

28. Idem p. 100

29. cf. Jespersen, O: The philosophy of Grammar p. 142.

possible and with the least possible expenditure of energy. From the examples in chapter III we find elision occurring when:

- (a) a vowel is dropped between two l's,
- (b) a vowel is dropped between two r's,
- (c) a vowel is dropped between two m's/n's
- (d) a vowel is dropped after consonant m, of class-prefix mo, when prefixed to a stem beginning with b or f, and (e) when a class-prefix is dropped altogether.

4.37 Taking these in turn we collected the following examples:

- (a) llêla instead of lelêla
lebêlla " " lebêlêla
mollô " " molelô
kabollê " " kabololê
- (b) borraetsho instead of boraraetsho
- (c) monna and mme for monona and mame.
- (d) mhurutshe/mofurutshe
mmaba/mobaba.
- (e) tsatsi le, instead of letsatsi le (this day)
gôbê jwa me, instead of bogôbê jwa me (my porridge)
lêpê sa me, instead of sclêpê sa me (my axe)

4.38 It is significant that most authors use both the elided and un-elided forms, thus for example:

L.D. Matshego: dilelô, llêla

"Testamente e ntšha

le Dipesalema" (Central Tswana): lle, lela,
lebêlla, tshololêla,
selelô, mollô

D.P. Moloto: petollô, betolola gakolla, etc.

4.39 Elided forms under (b), (c), (d) and (e) are not a bone of contention. Everybody uses them in speech and writing. It is elision of the vowel between l's, (a) above, which is always contended over. See for instance the declared standpoint of the "Livingstone Tswana Readers".³⁰⁾ "Go tlo go utlwale "mollô", "sellô", simolla".....ga se Setswana gopê sa borraetšho," (One hears mollô, sellô, simolla.... it is not at all the Setswana of our fathers).

4.40 Economy is in fact in favour of elision, although an expert contended, "In the whole of the Sotho field, Kgatla finds its equal only in South Sotho, in its tendency to contract l + vowel + l into ll".³¹⁾ By implication, non-elision is to maintain the identity of Tswana as distinct from South Sotho. It must be noted that the latest Southern Sotho dictionary contains lela or lla, llala and llalela.³²⁾ Examples of Elision given by Rev. Sandilands³³⁾ are not quite so effective in proving a case against elision. On the contrary they prove that elision is used with circumspection. Kgololô (emancipation) is never kgollô, nor golola (to free) never golla, as the writer appears to expect, because golla is to make biltong, and is kept, even in the spoken language, distinct from golola (to free). Hence kgololô remains distinct from kgôllô. As the author says "lala remains lala", simply because, and he should have given the Kgatla dialect credit for this, it would be confused with lla (to cry), if it were elided. Elision is therefore not used indiscriminately. All the same, in the interests of standardization, it appears expedient to agree to

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30. Mpepi, (ibid) p. iii.

31. Lestrade, Prof. G.P.: Some kgatla Animal Stories (ibid) p. 50, 27.

32. Mabile, Dieterien, Paroz: Southern Sotho-English Dictionary, van Schaik's, 1961.

33. Sandilands (ibid) Introduction to Tswana p. 351.

the unelided forms as standard, and the elided forms as alternant, used mainly in drama and poetry. The fact that elision cannot be removed from these genres makes any hard and fast legislation purposeless of course. All languages insist on unelided forms, e.g. cannot, do not, instead of can't and don't. So should the Tswana

Inconsistent treatment of Aspirated Consonants.

4.41 The tendency to write certain sounds indiscriminately with or without mark of aspiration is assuming considerable proportions. Often this has an adverse semantic force, sometimes not, but we must make for uniformity. Witness for instance:

kgatlha (to please)

kgatla (monkey)

ntlha (point, in argument for instance),

hence why? This is rendered ntlha, yet one hears and reads ntla. I do not at all want to suggest that the authors do not know that aspirated and ejected consonants (e.g. t/th, p/ph etc.) are different phonemes. For purposes of correct writing we should urge that the phonemes be kept apart, no matter how carelessly or carefreely people or we ourselves speak. Therefore:

ntlha (why?)

mme ntlha (but why)

phutha (gather)

tlhopha (choose)

kgwatha (lie down to be beaten)

kgatlha (please)

kgatla (monkey) bakgatla

rukhutlha (rebel)

diphupu (graves)

nothepha (young maidens)

MISCELLANEOUS CONTRACTIONS .

4.42 Such Contractions affect mostly the Infinitive prefix go, possessive and predecatative ConCORDS.

(i) Infinitive prefix -

ke tlile go ja > ke tlilo ja (I have come
to eat)

ke rata go j > ke rato ja (I want to eat)

ba na le go tloga > ba na lo tloga (they have
to go)

ba sena go ja > ba sena ja (after they ate)

a ya go betolola > a yo betolola (he then
vomitted)

The people must be credited as quite discriminating. While saying ba seno ja (after they ate < ba sena go ja), they will never contract ba se na go ja (being unable to eat) as this means something else.

(ii) Possessive ConCORDS.-

boorra-Douglas < ba gabo ra-Douglas (those of
the Douglas clan) or
ba ga gabo rra-Douglas (those
of the ward/district
of the Douglas's)

kofi yo Pheto < kofi ya gabo Pheto (the
coffee of the clan
Pheto) or
the coffee of the
locality of the Pheto's
i.e. kofi ya ga gabo
Pheto.

sika loo Phage < sika la gabo Phage (the family
of the Phage's) or
sika lwa ga gabo Phage (the
family of Phage's locality).
baa mosetlha < ba ga Mosetlha (those of Mosetlha)
boo Ratshidi < ba gabo Ratshidi (those of
Ratshidi clan)
ba ga gabo Ratshidi (those of
Ratshidi's locality).

Confusion through contraction is caused between
"those of a clan" and "those of a locality".
It is in fact no better and no worse to allow
boo Ratshidi, than baa Mosetlha. Both have a
double meaning which suffers through contraction.

(iii) Predicative and Qualificative Concords:

a ko kolopê < a ke o kolope (do throw)
yo bobolang < yo o bobolong (the sick one)
yo šuleng < yo o šuleng (the dead one)
o na ja < o ne a ja (he was eating)
o no wa ja < o ne wa ja (you did eat)
o nwa ja < o ne wa ja (you did eat)
o mo rôôre < o mo rêyê o re (tell him that..)
a mo raare < a mo raya a re (and then he
said to him....)
kgitse < ga ke itse (I do not know)
kgellao < ga ke rialo (I do not say so)

In all the cases above, it is advisable to
write the full form. The last two forms are
not common, in fact unknown in South Sotho
and Northern Sotho. They therefore enhance
the identity of Tswana and are recommended.

A good rule is that the long form be standard, especially in prose, the contractions alternating, provided used without apostrophes, and meaning is not affected. In Drama and poetry they are most likely to entrench themselves.

Transposition

4.43 Transposition of the type of "frikso" and "visck" instead of "frisco" and "vicks" is common. There is in fact no harm in it to say:

morêtlwa or morwêtla (kruisbes)

phêthêkgê or phêkgêthê (a bucket)

ekete or eteke (it seems)

The first forms above are however regarded here as standard, and should be employed exclusively in writing. We must guard against slovenly language such as alternating swa te and ga twe (it is said) and kaaja and jaaka (as).

WORD-DIVISION

4.44 This is not a problem of orthography, but one of word-identification. The word must be identified. Parts of speech must be decided. The present position in Tswana is that there are disjunctive, conjunctive and semi-disjunctive writers. This has roused a problem of Parts of Speech for each school of thought. It is therefore best not to enter into a discussion of word-division at this stage. As far as Tswana writers are concerned, the question is always asked, how to spell such segments as the following:

ebile (also)

erile (it happened) etc., etc.,

We must ask ourselves what to do if the concord is go,
or ke, or ba, or le, e.g.

le bile (you also did)

go rile (it happened, go-class)

ba rile (they did) etc. etc.

The latter are often not joined together, while the
former are more often than not joined. The orthography
in vogue is disjunctive, and we ought to be consistent
with it.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 With Ward, we come to the conclusion that man (the Tswana in this case) has "to disabuse his mind of the idea, which is very common, that one dialect — class or local — is intrinsically better, or more beautiful, or more "historically correct" than another".¹⁾

5.2 In the spirit of 5.1 above, we prefer a Selectivist orthography to either a Sectionalist or Centralist one. A Selectivist orthography is one in which a choice of speech patterns is made on other than dialectal grounds. Tucker said, "The Bechuana are divided into a number of distinct tribal groups, the most important of which is the Barolong branch, and it is their dialect, Rolong, that I have adopted here as my standard for Sechuana"²⁾. We cannot see how historical eminence becomes synonymous with linguistic precedence, unless we are carrying out a linguistic imperialism. See also Lestrade in par. 1.46 above. We must not set off to repress any dialect.

5.3 We submit that a writer should, in a given book, be consistent with himself. It makes reading so much easier, and pleasanter, if the word for an ostrich is the same right through a book, when derived from the same root. In other words a sharp distinction is to be

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1. Ward, Dr. Ida: The Phonetics of English, Heffer and sons, Fourth ed., 1962.
 2. Tucker, A.N.: Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana group of Bantu Languages (ibid).

maintained between alternants and synonyms. Ntšhê, ntšhwê, and mpšhê (ostrich) are alternants of which one only should be used in a given book or in standard writing while ntšhwê and ntlôkwê are synonyms for ostrich.

5.4 We underline principles of orthography viz:

- a. One phoneme, one symbol or group of symbols as far as possible.
- b. One sound, one symbol, where practicable.
- c. People must be left to speak as they please, while they leave themselves to be made to write as they need. This means that the written language cannot be a faithful reproduction of the spoken.
- d. Variants must be reduced to the barest minimum, if they cannot be eliminated.

5.5 An orthography must be realistic, that is, have regard for current population, political and administrative trends. While a Centralist orthography might be premature, a sectionalist one is unrealistic.

5.6 From Chapters II and III it is abundantly clear that Tswana authors as a whole, write most spoken alternants, hence there is no standard written style so far.

B. R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

We recommend a selectivist orthography with the following sounds:

5.7 Vowels

<u>Phonemes</u>	<u>Their Variants</u>	<u>Orthography Symbols</u>
/a/	-	~ <u>a</u>
/i/	-	~ <u>i</u>
/u/	-	~ <u>u</u>
/ε/	∟ē, ē̇	~ <u>e</u>
/e/	∟e, ė	~ <u>e</u>
/o/	∟ō, ō̇	~ <u>o</u>
/o/	∟o, ȯ	~ <u>o</u>
7	8+ a+ i+ u +11	5

There are 11 vowel sounds, making 7 vowel phonemes, represented in writing by 5 vowel symbols.

5.8 The /e/ phoneme:

This phoneme should be written e. The practice of representing its raised variant with i should be discontinued. Where the alternant i cannot be traced to e as in metsi/metse (water), ruri/rure, senonori/senonnore, gaufi/gaufe, we recommend the exclusive use of i. See 4.15 above for primary and secondary alternation of e and i, etc.

5.9 The /o/ Phoneme

This phoneme should be written o only, to represent the main as well as the raised member. The use of variant u should be discontinued, as stated in 4.16 supra.

5.10 The /ê/ phoneme:

This phoneme should be written e, and its raised variant also e. The symbol ê may be used where absolutely necessary, for the main member only. It is not recommended for the raised variant. If rêkêtle (to totter) is spelt rêkêtle, the pronunciation resulting is low and deep, characteristically Nguni, and the acoustic effect is disastrous to intelligibility. It is better, with rêkêtle, to err in the direction of the semi-close vowel e than the semi-open one ê. It is in such a case that we must depart from strictly phonetic rules for practical reasons. Reference to the vowel chart shows also that ê is much nearer e/e than ê.³⁾

5.11 The /ô/ phoneme:

This phoneme should be written o, and its raised variant

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3. Cole, Prof. D.T.: Introduction to Tswana Grammar (ibid), p. 5, par. 1.6.

also o. The main member may be written ô when this is absolutely necessary. The practice of writing the variant with a circumflex too, is not recommended. It certainly makes better pronunciation, and more readily intelligible speech, to pronounce the ô's in rôkôtsa more as the semi-close back vowel o than as the semi-open one ô. Refer again to Cole's (ibid) vowel chart.

5.12 The phonemes /a/, /i/, /u/.

These have no variants of practical significance.

5.13 The alternation of a and e (written e or ê):

It is recommended that Absolute Pronouns be spelt with Stabilizer - na in all classes and persons, thus -

<u>nna</u> (I)	<u>rona</u> (we)	1st person
<u>wena</u> (you)	<u>lona</u> (you - plural)	2nd person
<u>ena</u> (he/she)	<u>bona</u> (they)	3rd person
		Class 1.
<u>ona</u> (it)	<u>yona</u> (they)	Class 3
<u>lôna</u> (it)	<u>ôna</u> (they)	Class 5.
etc.	etc.	

Vide par. 4.17(a) above. The Conjunction fa should allow of no alternant fe, nor ge or ga.

Since the negative of the Imperative with terminal -a takes a terminal -ê, it appears best to toe the line with the -ê variant, and establish as standard the following, for instance -mphê (give me) se mphê (don't give me) nnyêyê (hand to me) se nnêyê (don't hand to me) rather than:

mpa (give me) se mphê (don't give me) nnaya (hand to me) se nnêyê (don't hand to me).

5.14 Vowel breaking: Forms with the broken vowel should be regarded as alternant. Thus the forms recommended for standard writing are:

khuti

letshuti

sekolo etc, etc.

5.15 Vowel Integration -

The integrated alternants should be regarded as standard, being peculiar to Tswana, as distinct from other Sotho languages, thus -

o dule (he is out)

o nole (he has drunk)

5.16 Semi-vowel. W.

This semi-vowel is used for labialising vowels, except o and u, or for labialising consonants, except bilabial consonants, thus -

wa, wê, we

kw, nw, lw, jw, etc.

It should not be used where it is non-significant, as in -

aowa (no!) instead of aoa

lekgowa (white person) instead of lekgoa

bowa (return) instead of boa.

It is significant in mo-wa where it is the immutable nucleus. Non-significant symbols always get discarded e.g. h in kgh, fh, in par.1.29 supra.

Semi-vowel Y.

This symbol need in fact never be used in rendering the Absolute Pronoun, and the Demonstrative. See parr. 1.23 and 4.20 above. Hence the following should be viewed as standard.

ena, and not yena (he/she)

e, and not ye (this one)

eo, and not yeo (that one)

Intervocally it should not be used, even when clearly articulated as in

tsamaya (go); to be tsamaa.

baya (place, put) to be baa,

tsaya (take); to be tsaa.

These words are as good with or without it. So its use is redundant. Their derived forms are in any case always without a semi-vowel, e.g. -tsamaile, etc.

A writer should never use the forms with and without the glide alternantly. The following will be written without glide.

gobea (roam)

lesea (baby)

tlalea (report)

tlaleana (get mined up)

lelea (emptiness)

tobea (stir)

CONSONANTAL ALTERNANTS

5.17 The variants f/g/h:

(a) The conjunction fa is proposed. See par. 4.24 above.

(b) Dissimilated forms such as mhapha (< mfapha) should be retained in alternation. However the standard form should be that with full prefix mo- and with f, thus -

mofama (side of carcass)

mofapha (hillside)

mofosi (one who errors)

(c) Where the test of initial strengthening reveals the diaphoneme unequivocally as f or h, f or h alone should be written e.g. fosa > phosô (fault) fosa is standard; lehuti > khuti (a hole): lehuti is standard.

(d) Where strengthened forms also alternate, alternant forms should be retained, e.g.

lefufa > diphufa (jealousies)

lehufa > dikhufa (")

(e) Where the diaphoneme can be determined by comparison with Nguni, the benefit of the comparison should be taken advantage of, e.g.

fetola (alter), not hetola, (Nguni, Phendula),

fapaana (cross each other), not hapaana,

(Nguni phambana).

Nguni ph suggests Tswana f.. See par. 4.27 above.

(f) In transliterations we should be faithful to the language of origin e.g.

fensetere < venster. (not henstere)

(g) Where medial alternation is occasioned by the derivative suffix fala/gala/hala, with Nguni equivalent - kala, g should be preferred. (Nguni k suggests Tswana g). Hence - diragala and neither dirafala nor dirahala

We admit this is a difficult aspect, and alternants may have to be retained some time.

5.18 The alternation of:

(i) l and n:

l seems in greater use, and may be the one society will prefer, thus -

kolopa, not konopa (throw a missile)

letlhôgônôlô, " letlhôgônôô (fortune)

bothologa, " bothonoga (arise)

loka, " noka (put in salt)

selollori, " senonori (a bear)

retologa, " no alternant (turn round)

simologa, " " " (get started)

tlamologa, " " " (get untied)

(ii) l and r: This alternation is of limited sway. A decision either way should impose no hardship on readers or writers. We recommend r. See 3.13 above.

(iii) r and h: this obsolescing alternation is not encouraged. Hence the forms more commonly written should be regarded as standard, thus:

dira and not diha (to do)

re " " he (we)

(iv) p and b: This alternation we cannot support. Strengthened thata should be preceded by strengthened pelo in bopeloethata, not bobe loethata. There is a reason for mabelo, being a collective plural of pelo (heart).

(v) b and f, b and m: By analogy with alternants such as tlhatlhoba/tlhatlhofa (inspect), tlhoba/tlhofa (strip of feathers), of which the forms with b are generally accepted,

b is recommended, e.g. kgobati is preferred to kgofati (fibre). In the case of b/m, m is recommended, e.g. letsomane, thamalakane, etc.

5.19 The alternation of s and š, ts and tš, tsh and tšh, tš and j:

- (i) s and š: Where these allophones are non-distinctive, it is proposed that s be preferred, leaving š to function solely as the distinctive prepalatal fricative phoneme. Thus:

suga and not šuga (tan a skin)

swa and not šwa (to die)

sola and not šola (to stroke, e.g. a beard)

but

šaba and not saba (eat with a relish)

lešetla and not lesetla (soft edible bone)

lešaba and not lesaba (gray soft stone)

šiboletha and not siboletha (shiboleth)

- (ii) ts and tš: As in the case of s and tš the ts is recommended wherever it alternates, with tš, and tš solely for that sound, where it is distinctive to ts, thus:-

tsoma and not tšoma (to hunt)

tsosi and not tšosi (they, alone)

lotsô and not lotšô, (a tribe)

but

ntšôgôtlhô and not ntsôgôtlhô (left hand)

tšarametsa and not tsarametsa (spit)

- (iii) tsh and tšh: Similarly it is recommended that these sounds be kept apart, tsh to be preferred where they alternate and tšh where it is distinctive, thus:

tshokololô and not tšhokololô (act of converting)

ditshôka and not ditšhôka (ear wax)

baetsho and not baetšho (my people)

tshwara and not tšhwara, (catch)

but

tšhoma and not tshôma (speak foreign language)

tšhatšhamisa and not tshatshamisa (fry)

- (iv) tš and j: It is certainly ugly for any author to write ntša and nja, jabetsa and tšabetsa, kgonotšwe and kgonojwe. It is proposed that j be used where there is no nasalisation and tš wherever there is nasalisation, in any case the two not to alternate, e.g.

to seek gain: jaka > ntšakisa (with nasal prefix)

to sow : jwala > ntšwalêla (with nasal prefix)

to eat: ja > ntšêla. (with nasal prefix)

5.20 The alternation of -

- (i) š, šw/sw, fš/fs:
(ii) j, jw, bj
(iii) ts/tš tšw/tsw, pš/ps
(iv) tšh, pšh/psh, tšhw, ph.

From the above observe that bilabial consonant + wa produces up to six different patterns, which are all still used in current literature. It is felt that centralists on the one hand stretch the point too far by using all these patterns, and that sectionalists are being unrealistic if they employ only one pattern.

5.21 It is suggested that three patterns only be employed in standard writing, as seen in b+wa > i, jw, bj in which cases the following rules are suggested:

- (a) that hypothetical derivatives be spelt on the pattern p+wa (palatal+wa) thus:

phoko.jwe (jackal)
ntšwa (dog)
mašwi (milk)
tšhwela (unclothe.)
sešwešwe (flower)

- (b) that in the case of passive formations, the additive pattern b+iwa (bilabial plus passive suffix -iwa) be preferred, thus:

abiwa (be shared)
alafiwa (be cured)
tlhophiwa (be selected)
gapiwa (be taken captive)

If a contracted form must be used, let it be on either one, but one at a time, of the two patterns p+wa or b+p+v, thus -

abja or ajwa
alafša or alašwa
tlhopšha or tlhotšhwa
gapša or gatšwa

These last two passive formations are alike found in South Sotho and North Sotho. Hence writers incline to b+iwa.

- (c) that in the case of diminutive formations the additive pattern be preferred, thus -

kobô > kobônyana (little blanket)
tlhapi > tlhapinyana (little fish)
setlhôpha > setlhôphanyana (little group
or setlhôphana)
phefô > phefônyana.

If we are inclined to prefer long forms lela, lebêlêla to lla, lebêlla, it seems consistent to give preference to long forms in these cases too. If however contracted forms must be used, in poetry for instance, it would be realistic to use the patterns p+wa or bpv, thus -

kojwana or kobjana
tlhatswana or tlhapšana
phešwana or phefšana

Again both patterns occur in Southern and Northern Sotho, which cannot be avoided, and the pattern bpv is the older of the two, I suspect.

PHONOLOGICAL ALTERNANTS

5.22 Palatal sounds are treated under 5.19 - 5.21 above, owing to their overlapping by hypothetical derivatives.

5.23 Elision: The unelided forms of words with l plus vowel plus l should be preferred in standard prose works, leaving the elided forms for poetry and drama. Elision of vowel between r's, n's and m's appears to entrench, and we must be realistic and recognise this tendency. So with elision of a vowel of a prefix preceding a stem commencing with a bilabial consonant (mofu > mfu: a wasp) and with the elision of certain class - prefixes eg. le-, bo-, lo-, se-, di-.

5.24 Aspirated Consonants:

Unaspirated and aspirated sounds must be seen at all times as separate phonemes and cannot be employed in alternation e.g. tlhôpha and never tlhôpa, tlhapa and never tlhapha for choose and wash.

5.25 Miscellaneous Contractions:

The long forms must be preferred to the contracted forms, in standard prose e.g.

ke tlile go ja

ke rata go ja

mo rêê o re

ba gabo ra-Douglas

ba ga gabo ra-Douglas

ba kwa ga gabo ra-Douglas

ba ga Mosetlha

tseo tse pedi

ga ke rialo,

and not:

ke tlilô ja

ke ratô ja / ke rtô ja

mo rôôre/rêêre

bôô ra-Douglas

baa Mosetlha

tsôôpedi

kgellaô

The contracted forms are one and all beautiful creations, and must be allowed in drama and poetry.

5.26 Transposition:

This process must not assume careless proportions. See 4.43 above.

Intro

C. WORD - DIVISION

5.27 We happen to know that the division into parts of speech at present in vogue is that of the Conjunctivists, and so the present morphological analysis. Conjunctivists have defined the word⁴⁾ and as far as we know Disjunctivists have not presented a materially different definition, and so also semi-disjunctivists. It is therefore best to spell disjunctively as heretofore, until the battle of the above schools of thought shall have delivered results. We therefore recommend disjunctive spelling, the separate rendering of words, particles and concords, thus -

mo rêê o re (say to him that)

ke tlile go ja (I have come to eat)

and not

morêê ore,

ketlile goja.

We have hinted above at a battle over the parts of speech, of which an authority submits: "Dit wil voorkom asof daar nog geen eenstemmigheid onder Bantoe-taalkundiges is omtrent die probleem van woordklasse of woordsoorte nie. Hoewel betreklik min skrywers hulle nog gewaag het aan motiverings of selfs toeligtings van hulle benaderinge in dié verband, kom daar 'n groot verskeidenheid indelings voor".⁵⁾

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4. See Doke, Prof. C.M. Textbook of Zulu Grammar, Longmans, fifth ed., 1924 par. 54. Ziervogel Prof. D.: A Grammar of Swazi, Wits Press, 1952, p. 18 and A Grammar of Northern Transvaal Ndebele, Van Schaiks, 1959, p. 24.
5. Van Wyk, Prof. E.B.: Die Woordklasse van Noord-Sotho in Feesbundel vir Prof. Jan A. Engelbrecht, APB, 1961, p. 69.

In the circumstances our proposal is tentative. The disjunctive Tswana word, or Sotho word, must first be identified. This is in fact more of a lexicological than an orthographic problem. In practical life, however, the Tswana want to know what to write separately and what not. In the interests of proper system we suggest disjunctive spelling tentatively.

D. T O N E

5.28 The tones of Tswana words and word-groups can be studied from Prof. Cole's Course in Tswana.⁶⁾

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6. Cole/Mokaila: Course in Tswana, Washington, 1962.

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