

L A N G U A G E O F P O E T R Y  
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H . M . L . L E N T S O A N E ' S P O E T R Y  
B Y  
M I R I A M D I T A B A L E H O N G  
B A , B A H O N S ( U N I S A ) , H P T C


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DECLARATION

I declare that the LANGUAGE OF POETRY IN H.M.L. LENTSOANE'S POERTY is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another University.

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## CHAPTER 1

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 THE PURPOSE OF STUDY

This work will present an analysis of the language of poetry from the point of view of Lentsoane's anthology. The purpose of the study is to give a detailed account of the aspects of language responsible for the transformation of everyday language into the language of poetry. The analysis will further discuss the presence or the existence of the unfamiliar structures better known as stylistic deviations.

#### 1.2 MOTIVATION

The reason why this study is being pursued is that the topic, to my knowledge, has never been dealt with in Northern Sotho. The reason for the choice of the poet and the topic is that Lentsoane is regarded as one of the most efficient poets in Northern Sotho literature, hence his work is selected to serve as a source of reference in the analysis of "language of poetry". Serudu's (1985) and Mampa's (1978) comments on Lentsoane's outstanding performance are sufficient evidence why he is rated among the best. The aesthetic qualities of Lentsoane's work,

especially, from Mokgako, are found in references such as the following from Serudu:

He evaluated 'Mophamoladikanapa' (1985:32) and said:

"The success lies in the fact that Lentsoane has been able to present this thorny question of influx control without the slightest sign of subjectivity" (P:98)

Serudu commented again saying:

Moeng-mofsa wa batho (1985:25)

" This apathetic attitude towards the child is portrayed in beautiful imagery by Lentsoane" : (1986: 101)

About Mohlatswadiaparo (1985:36) Serudu says:

"Ka go kgetha mantšū ka tshwanelo le tirišo ya tshwantšhokgopolo, Lentsoane o kgona go re thalela seswantšho se phethagetšego" (1986:74)

( By choosing words correctly and making good use of imagery, Lentsoane is able to bring out a good picture.)

In summing up his experiences Mampa (1987:58) in one sentence says:

"Mokgako is a welcome contribution to Northern Sotho poetry"

### 1.3 SCOPE

For practical purposes, the study of the language of poetry is divided into chapters each with a definite service to render towards the analysis of Lentsoane's poetry.

Chapter two starts off with a discussion of what poetry is, followed by another one on the language of poetry. Included in it will be brief notes on the characteristics and elements of the language of poetry. The chapter concludes with a close look at the language of poetry which will be studied, namely, the linguistic approach.

The third chapter will concentrate on the various types of deviations characteristic of the language of poetry. Deviations to be discussed range from morphological to syntactical levels. The semantic level of deviation will also be focused upon. Figurative language will be dealt with in chapter four. An examination of how images are built with the employment of metaphor, simile,



symbolism and personification will be followed by another one on the effective use of figures of speech such as metonymy, synecdoche; hyperbole; litotes and irony.

The last chapter (5) deals with form. The physical aspect of form will be addressed under sound values subdivided into parallelism, the refrain and rhythm.

Lentsoane's volumes of poetry from which examples will be drawn, are as follows:

1. Direto tšá mang le mang  
1971
2. Ga se ya lešaka le  
1973
3. Mokgako  
1979
4. Ihlo la moreti  
1981
5. Kgogamašego  
1988
6. Direti tše nne Book 1  
1991
7. Direti tše nne Book 3  
1991

#### 1.4 BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Herbert Mokadi Lucky Lentsoane, the first son of Thomas Cheleoane and the late Mina Maasegadi Rebone Lentsoane, was born in 1946 at Ga-Marishane in the Nebo district. He started schooling at Marishane Community School in 1953.

He passed standard one in 1955 and at the beginning of 1956 migrated together with the parents, to Johannesburg. Because of age, he was refused entry into Standard two, and was made to repeat standard one.

Another problem he was faced with was the absence of Northern Sotho Medium Schools. He received his education through the medium of Tswana and Southern Sotho. From there he went back to Ga-Marishane where he completed his standard six in 1961.

Lentsoane's love for poetry developed its roots in the early stages of his life. Elsinä Makuntane Makgabo, his grandmother, was his source of inspiration. He took pleasure in listening to her pre-literate eulogies-recitals glorifying her tribe and buttressing the

prestige of her chief. His authorship started at Bopedi-Bopedi Secondary School where he completed his Junior Certificate in 1964. It is at this school where his love for the Northern Sotho language developed. He used to compete with other students, in essay writing. Lentsoane would then, thereafter, send some of the best essays to be published in **Motswalle wa Bana** (Wamba).

Lentsoane's next step was to compose poems about things in his environment. His composition "Sekolo se se Phagamego sa Bopedi-Bopedi" was a real "hit". The poem was later published in **Tšwelopele**, and most of the people who read it, saw in him - a "Northern Sotho future poet"

From Bopedi-Bapedi Lentsoane went back to Johannesburg and completed his standard ten at Orlando High School in 1965. His love and understanding of poetry was nurtured at this stage by B.M. Molaba, his Northern Sotho teacher. In 1967 Lentsoane was offered a bursary by the Anglo-American Group to study at the University of the North where he obtained his B.A. and his University Education Diploma. It was during this time that he completed his first volume of poems, **Direto tša mang le mang** in 1971.

In 1972 Lentsoane started teaching at Orlando High School. He says he saw in June 1971 a certain incident (highly confidential I suppose) which did not give him

peace of mind. It inspired him to writing a narrative poem *Ga se ya lešaka le*.

After the 1976 riots Lentsoane decided to go back home and settled in Lebowakgomo - his present residential place. In Lebowakgomo, he taught at the following schools: Lebowakgomo Secondary (1977), Tshehlo Secondary as principal (1978) and Mokopane College of Education (1984). Lentsoane has been employed as a full time lecturer at the University of the North since 1987.

Lentsoane published *Mokgako* in 1985 and *Kgogamašego* in 1988. He has not only published poetry, but has also tried his hand at prose. *Megokgo ya lethabo*, his first novel saw him snatching first prize in the Literary Award. Together with three other famous Northern Sotho poets, Puleng, Maabelo, and Mojalefa, Lentsoane has published two anthologies, *Direti tše nne* Book 1 and Book 3 (1991). Book 2 will soon be released.

Apart from serving his community in the education sphere, Lentsoane is a preacher in the Methodist Church at Lebowakgomo. He is also a circuit steward in the Mphahlele district. Also on a part time basis Lentsoane is a presenter of 'Baithuti Kgothekgothe' programme with Radio Lebowa analyzing set-works for standard six up to University students, and he is also a member of 'Kopano

Readers Club' involved with the critical analysis of English literature under the auspice of Prof. Ezekiel Mphahlele. He is also a founder member of 'Lebadi' composed of Northern Sotho Authors. Lentsoane's main recreation activities are gardening, listening to music (Choral, Classic, Gospel and Traditional ) and watching soccer. He is a great fan of Moroka Swallows Football Club.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. APPROACH

#### 2.1 LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF POETIC LANGUAGE.

The purpose of this chapter is to name and discuss briefly the various linguistic disciplines to be used as frames of reference in this study. It will then be followed by a discussion of what the language of poetry is.

The study of a literary work of art requires a knowledge of the principles according to which such a work is to be constructed and also a theory according to which such principles can be utilized. For the purpose of this analysis which is limited to language and poetry from the point of view of linguistics, a proper knowledge of the relationship of principles according to which they are constructed, is a necessity. The relationship between linguistics and poetry lies in the fact that both deal with language.

Linguistic is primarily concerned with language, that is, the construction of language from linguistic signs.

Literature on the other hand is concerned with, or is about why linguistic signs (what we call language) are in

some cases referred to as literature. Poetry is one of the constituent genres of literature.

According to Traugott and Pratt (1980:20) in Pretorious (1989:48) "When we read a literary work, linguistics can help us talk about it, by providing us with a vocabulary and a methodology through which we can show how our experience of a work is in part derived from its verbal structure. Linguistics may also help us to solve problems of interpretations by showing us in rigorous ways why one structure is possible but not another. Above all, however, linguistics can give us a point of view, a way of looking at a text that will help us develop a consistent analysis, and prompt us to ask questions about the language of a text that we might otherwise ignore. Linguistics helps us by enabling the critic to recognise the systematic regularities in the language of the text. In fact, we can use linguistics to construct a theory about the language of a text in the form of a grammar of a text".

What Traugott and Pratt mean is that a literary text is analyzed and explained with the aid of terminology used by linguists in their study of language as a whole - that is, from the smallest linguistic unit (phone) to the largest ( sentence structure) including how they are structured and also how they relate to one another

In the analysis of poetic language the following levels of linguistic approaches to the study of literature will be considered. More attention will be paid to how deviations from the normal linguistic structures benefit the poet and the audience.

1. The morphological level where the formation of words from smaller units may be studied.
2. The syntactical level in which sentences may be studied in terms of the construction from smaller units such as phrases, words or word groups.
3. The semantic level in which different kinds of meaning of sentences are brought by those of their smaller units.

## 2.2 LANGUAGE OF POETRY.

It was the Formalists who from long, took the initiative of differentiating language according to the direction of discourse. Poetry as literature is differentiated from other literary genres on the basis of how it is constructed, that is, through form and language usage. Literary language is a special kind of language which gains its identity by deviating from and breaking the



rules of grammar of ordinary everyday language. According to Selden (1985:8) literary language does not perform any practical function but makes us see things differently. To determine the literariness of a text, was the main objective of the formalist in their study of literature.

Extensive study of literariness of text led to the distinction between the language of prose and that of poetry. The language of poetry which is the concern of this study will be referred to in this and the ensuing chapters, as 'poetic language'. " The study of poetic language involves the study of a certain type of arrangement and modification of the elements of everyday spoken language" (Sebeok 1960:70). Some linguists according to him, are of the opinion that the study of poetic language falls under the domain of linguistics. They do not, on the contrary, ignore the fact that spoken language is subject to systematic and rigorous descriptions, whereas poetic language manifests various degree of deviations from the linguistic norm. Poetic language is licensed to that. Tolerance of deviations and expectations of striking metaphor, unusual collocations and irregular word-order are characteristics of poetic language. Unusual sentence structures and phrases rich in connotations are more concentrated in poetry than in prose.

Poetic language is regarded as the most creative of all discourses. The language used by poets is compressed, intense and much more effective. With it he can paint, mould or carve clearer and more convincing picture in the eyes and minds of his audience. This quality of presentation is achieved because poetic language takes full account of the rules of the linguistic system.

Twisting of the practical language, ( if evident), is controlled by the given poetic tradition. Leech (1969:15) says: " Is a treasure in which has been controlled all that is best in the language of the past, it is a precinct set off from the ordinary language of the day".

Poetic language is nothing more than defamiliarised practical language. It is an organised violence committed on ordinary speech, Erlich (1980:219)

#### 2.2.1 SHKLOVSKY'S DEFAMILIARISING DEVICES.

The highly competent tools towards the realisation of literariness are Shklovsky's devices of defamiliarisation. For language to be used in a poetic manner, he recommended that it should be in a position to 'Making strange' familiar acts and objects by taking them out of

their ordinary context or by describing them as if they were seen for the first time (Ryan. et al 1982:17). For the purpose of substantiating this view Lentsoane's poem, LETŠATŠI (the sun) will be used. The sun, a natural phenomenon is commonly known and valued for providing light and warmth . But the way the poet talks about it makes the audience aware of some hidden functions that are being overlooked or just ignored. Individuals in the public attach to the 'rising' of the sun a value very much personal to themselves.

Wa tšwelela le a tsoga lethabo,  
Wa uša molwetši pelo e tšhitšhila,  
Wa tsikinya banyalani letšatšing la bona  
Wa akelwa ke dialoga tšatši la ntshe,  
( Kgogamašego : 32 )

( When you appear, happiness wakes up,  
You satisfy the patient's ailing heart,  
You kindle the wedded couple on their day,  
You are well-wished by graduands  
On their initiation ceremony day).

Memories of an eventful day keep ringing in the heads of those concerned. The rising of the sun on that day will never be forgotten - be in the past or in the future.

But to show that every person is unique, in the third verse the poet now brings out 'receptions' of the same object ( the sun) far more different from those in the first verse. An ordinary act of the 'rising' of the sun seems new. It is taken out of the ordinary context of giving light and warmth. Here the rising of the sun leaves some people depressed, wishing it should not have risen, exalting abuses and indecent words, whereas others feel like pushing or stopping it from rising.

Bangwe ge o tšwelela pelo di a korobela,  
Ba duma ge nkabe o ganeletše bodibengboso  
Mogolegwa o go roga maswiswing,  
Modiša o go hlapaola le ge o sa mo kwešiši,  
A imelwa ke mathata a bophelo,  
Mošomi yena nke a ka go bušetša morago  
( Kgogamašego : 32 )

(Some when you appear their hearts become depressed,  
Wishing you should have remained in the deep waters.  
The shepherd swears at you even when you do not  
understand  
When overloaded with the adversities of life ).

Metaphorical use of language, a characteristic of poetic language is exemplified in words such as Maswiswing and 'bodibengboso'. The sun has no control over its 'rising' and 'setting'. God, Almighty is the one in charge. The night, on the other hand is talked about as if it is a container (deep water) wherein the sun is kept. The 'rising', of the sun is a thorn in the flesh - this is the shepherds, the prisoner's and others view.

Normally we think of the sun only when it has been raining for too long or when it is chilly. It is the poet's extensive knowledge of language and his ability to select words precisely relevant to his feelings, thoughts or ideas, that defamiliarise the object (sun) and its functions (acts).

Secondly, Shklovsky "locates the literariness of a literary text (poem) on the roughened texture of speech sounds in verse" (Ryan et al 1982:17). Poetic speech sounds do not differ from ordinary speech sounds, only in the basis of constructions or vocabulary not found in everyday language, but because formal devices like rhyme and rhythm freshen and defamiliarise our visual and auditory perceptions of words. Poetic language is characterised by alliteration, assonance, rhymes and pararhymes.

All these contribute to the musical aspect of a poem, which is the highest valuable aspect of poetry. To the novelist these poetic devices are not as important as they are to the poet.

Besides, speech sound cluster have the ability to emphasise or reveal hidden meanings of words in a verse. The aesthetic and the semantic effect of speech sound sequences are more discernible in the poem 'Phušulang'. The strong fricative sounds in 'ph' and 'š' clustered in the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the poem, clearly illustrate the demand of physical force necessary for the unwarranted breaking or the demolishing of the long established community village, by those in power. The speech sounds express anger from the point of view of the audience.

First two lines:

Phušulang le fihle ka tlhokatekanyo  
Phušulang, phušulang.

(Demolish immeasurably  
Demolish, demolish).

Middle lines:

(1) Phušulang le ikgotsofatše

(Demolish and satisfy yourselves)

(2) Phušulang le hlompha bao ba ithobaletšego

(Demolish respecting those asleep)(dead ones)

(3) Phušulang lena bahlokalešoko

( Demolish you merciless people)

At the end:

Phušulang, phušulang.

(Demolish, demolish)

(Kgogamašego:37)

In this context the speech sounds serve to reinforce meaning through repetition and also through their imitative effect (Onomatopoeia). Pretorius (1989:22) has this to say about the poet and the sound: "The poet is the usually more sensitive to sound than the novelist,

and that of sound which generally distinguishes his genre from that of prose.

Bosasa ke bosasa,  
Tša bosasa ke tša bosasa.

(Kgogamašego :39)

(Tomorrow is tomorrow  
Of tomorrow is tomorrow's).

The repeated use of the stem - 'sasa' in this context emphasises the fact that no one knows what will happen the following day, for those who are busy analysing other people, should not forget that the day following is another day, when today's happenings may take a new turn altogether.

For aesthetic purposes the poet uses a combination of alliteration and assonance in the two lines. Ten 'a's and eight 's's in two lines are just enough to illustrate the poet's objective. On the average the poet uses very strong and noisy sounds in this poem - a lot of 'kg', 'tš' and 'th'.

The third aspect contributory to the literariness of a text (poetry) is according to Shklovsky (Ryan et al 1982:17) the 'laying-bare of devices of construction in a



poem'. The importance of a device cannot lie in its abundance but on its function in the work in which it appears. It is also important to note that the device of poetry as Jefferson et al (193:38) says, "are studied not for themselves, but for their defamiliarizing capacity". Familiar techniques used precisely for defamiliarizing and also for their remarkable effectiveness in committing poetic violence on ordinary language are repetition, alliteration and parallelism which can be visually perceived. Imagery and hyperbole are some of the poetic devices that can not be done without.

Alliteration - repeating and playing upon the same letter especially at the beginning of words is reserved for the achievement of special effect in poetry. In the second line of the first verse in 'GO HLOKA SEETS<sup>Y</sup>A' (Mokgako:10) the dominant sound is 'b'.

Botse bja naga ga ke bo bone,

(I do not see the beauty of the country.)

For the purpose of creating aesthetic effect and regular rhythmic conditions the poet uses parallelism best described as linguistic similarities observed between successive lines in a verse. At a glance the reader can see whether a poet has used the device or not. Poetic

language allows for repetition of words and phrases, the restating of ideas by synonyms and repetition of syntactical slots. You don't have to search for them, you will be attracted to them.

Lerato ga le na gore o Mošwešwe,  
Ga le na gore o Motswana goba Motswetla  
Ga le na gore o Motsonga goba Mopedi  
Ga le na gore o Lezulu goba Lethosa.  
(Mokgako:52)

Love does not have to say you are Southern Sotho,  
Does not have to say you are Tswana or Venda,  
Does not have to say you are a Tsonga or Pedi  
Does not have to say you are a Zulu or Xhosa).

But images and hyperbole are sported in the process of reading. Imagery is according to Pretorius(1989:31) a "general term that covers the use of language to represent objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind, and any sensory or extrasensory experience". In 'RE MOLOKOMONG' (We are the same nation) the poet uses the word 'Mphato', a name for a traditional School (Initiation School) instead of a "University".

Ke wetš<sup>e</sup> mphetong o mogolo wa Leboa,  
Mphato wa go makatš<sup>a</sup> wa Mamabolo.

(Mokgako:50)

( I discovered a big institution in Leboa  
An astonishing institution at Mamabolo)

Traditionally young boys and girls complement their informal education from home with what they are taught at the initiation school. So the poet uses the principle of moving from the known to the unknown, in the process of introducing the idea of a modern institution where people of different sexes and from different cultures are grouped and taught together.

It is the inclusion of such devices in one's work that makes poetic language rich, intense, interesting and so effective. Ryan et al's (1982) definition of poetic language falls not far from Jefferson et al's (1989). They both regard sound texture and rhythm as contributory factors to the poetical nature of a language. Jefferson et al (1989) has semantics as "the third aspect of ordinary language which is violated by poetry". According to him "poetry differs from ordinary language in that it activates the secondary or collateral meanings of a word simultaneously". Sharing this view with him is Nowotny (1980:2). He cites as the characteristic of

poetic language, "the presentation of a word at more than one level at the same time - or, alternatively, if one and the same utterance has more than one function in the structure of meaning in which it occurs". In poetry words are accorded more than one meaning, that is, meaning does not stop at the edge of the dictionary definition. The poet may intend his audience to understand his poem at different levels, first at literal level of simple meaning - denotation, or at a level of deeper meaning which is not obvious, connotation.

When an object, concept or action does not possess characteristics qualifying it to be labelled what the poet says it is - the existing label is connotative . Good examples are found in praise poems where a brave man is said to be a 'lion', a beautiful girl - a 'flower'.

2nd Verse:.....

Maloba ke be ke fahlilwe  
Ke bušwa ke tshehlanà ' mabele,

3rd Verse:.....

Tša bošemane di mpatlile  
Ke di khoše, ke tše di mpipetše.

(Yesterday I was blinded  
Being controlled by beer)

(I am enough with boyhood circumstances  
I have had enough, they constipated me).

What we drink goes straight into the stomach. Blindness or disturbances in visual perception in this context seems to be a result of some beer being poured into one's eyes, and yet it is not. The implication is that the drunken man cannot account for what happened or what made his wife desert him.

Also whatever boyish things he was doing, had in actual fact not gone in to his stomach. We eat food and when we are stodgy we stop eating. The poet here wants to emphasise and put weight to the drunkard's confession: He is going to stop taking beer. He has had enough with the after-effects of taking alcohol.

The two words 'fahlilwe' and 'khoše' have been defamiliarized. The context in which they are used, is outside or beyond their dictionary meaning. What the poet says is, something foreign obscured the mind from functioning in the usual manner. (Second Verse)  
(Fahlilwe) and he has done a lot of things wrongly (third verse) (Khoše).

### CHAPTER 3

#### 3. POETIC LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate from the various linguistic disciplines' point of view how the ordinary everyday language is being used in poetry. The language is analyzed, and its constituent elements examined to see the extent of the extortion done and also to admire the beauty that comes out of these irregularities.

##### 3.1 MORPHOLOGICAL LEVEL

Wheeler ( 1966:2) Says :

"Poetry is an art of words; so recognising that poetry is an art of words is merely the first step in the study of poetry."

Morphology is that discipline of the science of language which makes an analysis of the structure of polymorphemic words. Polymorphemic words always contain one root and one or more morphemes commonly referred to as prefix and suffix. For the purpose of rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, words in poetry are used either in their original form or as formatives.

It is common to find in the language of poetry deverbative nouns, products of the process of affixation of prefixes and suffixes to verbal roots as in "Botšhabelo" (hiding place) from - tšhab - ( run away ).

**Ke kobo ya thuto, ke botšhabelo.**

( Botšhabelo ) : -bo- : prefix

: -tšhab- : root

: -el- : suffix

: -o- : ending

( Direti tše 4 (1):55)

The poet creates words. The created words are special and specific and relevant to the poet expressions. This is another way of extending the horizon of the poet's vocabulary.

From the root - hlalef - ( becoming clever ) the prefixes ( di-) and "se-" are affixed to give two new words with the suffix -i ending of verbal nouns.

" dihlalefi and sehlalefi.

dihlalefi ( many clever people)

sehlalefi ( exceptionally clever person )

In emphasising characteristic qualities of certain people the poet may choose to repeat the root forming a

new word with an extended meaning, as in *Ga di wele ka mo go be*, where words such as these were used

bannanna ( real men ) - nna

basadisadi ( real women ) - sadi

Mašabašaba ( multitudes ) - šaba

( Mokgako : 43 )

Compounding words is another technique used by poets for rhythmic as well as for aesthetic purposes. It may also be used as a means of congesting information. For example, **Mophamoladikanapa** which is the title of a poem, is also a phrase in itself.

( Motho ) yo a phamolelago ba bangwe dikanapeng

**Mophamoladikanapa**

( Mokgako:32)

In some case two words are connected as in

Noun + Adjective

bjang - Noun

botala - Adjective : bjang-botala ( Letl:32 )

The meaning in the new word has no connections whatsoever with either of the two words,

**bjang botala ( unknown place)**



From - Kgoši- ( King ) + -gadi ( suffix denoting feminine  
we get -Kgošigadi ( a female king )

( Letl. 42)

Another aspect of compounding words is elision used by  
poets to achieve the required rhythm in sentences. For  
sentences in a certain stanza to be of the same length or  
to have the same number of syllables, some linguistic  
items are left out.

Motse-mogolo ( big city )

Motsemogolo

( Mokgako :32)

Ignoring or disregarding the conventional orthography in  
the formation of words is another characteristic of  
poetic language. In the beginning love between Mosebjadi  
and her fiance was very strong and was said to be.

Le tuka le kgauma,

La koša bopelompe bohloko

( Mokgako 48 )

( It burned and inflamed)

( It inflicted the ill-hearted with pain )

'Koša' (made to feel ) was supposed to be "kweša"

The same word is repeated in MEAPARO YA KGAREBE TŠA SEFSA

A gata nke a tšhabo koša lefase bohloko

( Mokgako: 37)

( They step as if afraid to inflict the earth  
with pain ).

At times the poet leaves out the class prefix, still as a  
means of keeping to the developed rhythm. In GA SE YA  
LEŠAKA LE, Lentsoane says:

La mo lahliša - kgopolo tše mpe.

Letl: 42

( It made her forget evil thoughts )

The class prefix di- is left out, to shorten the  
sentence.

(di-) kgopolo.

The class prefix shall always be in agreement with the  
pronoun ( di.....tše ) dikgopolo tše mpe.

### 3.1 SYNTACTIC LEVEL

The aim of this section is to indicate how specific linguistic items may be analyzed and explained syntactically from the point of view of poetic language. Syntax is a linguistic discipline which looks into the rules according to which words combine with one another to form larger entities such as word groups and sentences. It is concerned with the arrangement and relationship of words and other morphological construction in sentences. Combinations and arrangement of words are controlled by a strict system of rules. With poetry, respecting and abiding by these rules is a little laxed.

In poetry openness to some syntactic deviation and violation of grammatical rules is known as poetic licence. What it means is , the poet is at liberty to exploit, bend and twist the syntax of the language to suit his own purpose. Even where no deviation is experienced, word order plays a very big role in poetry. Aesthetic effect, characteristic of a good poem, is subject to effective and sensitive word choice. Poetic devices dependent on word choice and arrangement are rhyme and rhythm. Other factors falling within the domain of syntactic level of investigation are transformation,

refrain and enjambment. Reduplication and word economy also form part of this section.

Poetic violation found in the above syntactic structures will now be discussed as part of Lentsoane's use of language in poetry.

### 3.2.1 TRANSFORMATION

The basic sentence in Northern Sotho always consists of at least a subject and a predicate. The subject is basically positioned to the left of the verb. Poets are of course allowed to orchestrate a complex variety of transformation with the effect of moving crucially semantic materials from their canonical position to the left of their syntactic position or from their canonical position to the centre of the string or to the end of or right of their syntactic positions

( Fowler 1975:30)

#### 3.2.1.1 OBJECT PREPOSING

Transferring an object to the left or beginning of a sentence in poetry is done with an aim, which is either to create a better sound effect or to contribute towards emphasising a specific idea or thought.

In Lewatle the poet has nothing against the existence of the ocean, but dislikes what it does to the countries

Mafase o a arogantše

( Kgogamašego: 34 )

In ordinary everyday speech the sentence should read  
( Lewatle ) O arogantše mafase.

You have separated the countries

### 3.2.1.2 SUBJECT POSTPONING

This is concerned with the movement of the subject to the right of the sentence. In THEELETŠA<sup>ŷ</sup>  
KGAETŠEDI<sup>ŷ</sup>, the poet says:

Thibolla ditsebe tšobana lešo

( Direti tše 4 ( 3 ): 49 )

( Open/unlock your ears, my flower ).

The subject is left to the end of the sentence with the hope of showing the girl concerned that the existing relationship between them is an ever lasting bond, irrespective of her intolerable behaviour.

### 3.2.2 REFRAIN

There are other types of repetitions besides rhyme words. One of these is refrain in which all or substantial parts of lines are repeated. Various types of refrains found in poetry, will be discussed in full in chapter five. Poets use refrain to emphasise points and also to extend some thoughts.

"A phrase, line or lines are repeated at intervals during a poem and especially at the end of a stanza. Very often it is an exact repetition."( Cuddon 1979:559)

In MODIŠA there is a repetition of the sentence at the beginning of the two stanzas. An idea found in the first line of the first stanza is linked up with the one found opening the second stanza. It is a continuation of the description of the subject - MODIŠA (Shepherd )

( Ke modiša O mogolo )

Ke modiša go katana.

( Mokgako : 6 )

( He is a great shepherd )

( He is an active shepherd )

3.2.3 ENJAMBMENT

Enjambment is the overflow of sense from the first line to the next line without pausing at the end of each line. In Northern Sotho the device is rarely used, especially that the concept of couplet mentioned by Cuddon (1979:222) is also not found in this language.

In *Ge TŠOHLE DI FEDILE*, Lentsoane has an example of the continuation of an idea that overflows from the first into the second line. The absence of a comma at the end of the first line is an indication that, it is in fact one sentence broken into two "poetical lines"

O ntebetš<sup>h</sup>e ka mašadiš<sup>h</sup>a  
Wa gopola dimpš<sup>h</sup>a le dikatse.  
( Mokgako :65)

( You forgot me with the leftovers  
You thought of dogs and cats.

In that case there was not to be a capital letter to start the second line.

3.2.4 REDUPLICATION

To emphasise a point, thought, action or feeling the poet may choose to have one and the same word in more than two successive lines or have it scattered in the whole poem. At times it is the title of the poem that is being repeated.

In GE NAKO E FIHLILE, he has used the word "Fihlile" or Fihla ( has come ) more than twelve times. His main concern is the "time" ( nako), if it "has come" "one" has to leave this world, whether one likes it or not.

1. Ge e fihlile, e fihlile,
2. Ga e na go katakata

( Mokgako : 51)

( If it has come, it has come,  
It cannot reverse).

In the first line the poet left out a word in order to achieve a more compact expression from his words.

Ge e fihlile..... e fihlile ( nako )



This is called ellipsis. The device was used for the purpose of achieving assonance from the vowel sounds "e" and "i" . The use of high sounds enlengthen the reading or uttering of the sentence to achieve the desired rhythm.

### 3.3 SEMANTIC LEVEL

Semantic is a linguistic discipline which involves the study of meaning. It is one branch of linguistics which is the study of language. A study of semantics presupposes that all words in the lexicon of a language always stand in a certain semantic relationship to each other. The standing relationships of words are controlled by the rules set up in a particular language. A study of the language of poetry focuses on the poet's ability to defamiliarise the ordinary semantic relationship of words by deviating from those standard rules of their language.

On this level deviations will be looked at from the point of view of antonyms, synonymy, and hyponymy, An analyses of how they are used to achieve a certain effect will be supported by excerpts from some poems in Lentsoane's anthologies.

### 3.3.1 ANTONYMS

Antonymy is a general term for oppositeness in meaning. A distinction in any language is drawn between lexical antonyms and morphologically derived antonyms.

#### 3.3.1.1 LEXICAL ANTONYMS

Lexical antonyms are words which their inherent meaning is such that they are semantic opposites. The oppositeness is not the result of certain morphemes in the structure of these words. In *GE KE LE GOPOLA*, Lentsoane closes the poem with this words.

Kgole ke moo ke tšwago bjale

Kgauswi ke moo ke lebilego.

( DIRETI TŠE NNE 3:42.)

( It is far where I came from  
It is near where I am heading  
to)

The two extremes here "far" and "near" represent the beginning and the ending. The poet has already spent most part of his life with the teacher's help and he is just about to come to the end of it and the teacher's help still existing. The poets used these words

to illustrate the duration the poet spent with his teachers.

In another example Lentsoane avoiding the use of a common word "Ka mehla" (always ) used the two words with opposite meaning to extend our experiences of the feeling that the reader feels. In SELLO SA MOHLOLOGADI he says

Gobane ge le phirima ke a mo gopola  
Ge le hlaba ke a mo gopola.

( Kgogamašego : 45)

( Because when the sun sets I remember him,  
When the sun rises I remember him).

It shows here that the widow never forgets her late husband. He is remembered when the sun rises , when the sun sets.

### 3.3.1.2 MORPHOLOGICALLY DERIVED ANTONYMS

It is for rhythmic and also for aesthetic purposes that poets use this type of antonyms in their works. It also shows how good the poet is at playing with words, something he cannot do without a good command of his language. Morphologically derived antonyms result from the affixation of morphemes to verbal stems and nominal

roots. In MORWALO a pregnant woman feeling that pregnancy should be a shared responsibility between husband and wife, says,

Ke yola o gata a gatoga  
Nna ke yoo a gogagogago dinao  
( Kgogamašego :5)

( There he is treading  
I am the one dragging feet)

The meaning in the first line is completed in the second one where the difference on movement between the two people is compared. The woman looks at her strong, lively, healthy and active husband and feels she has been deprived, robbed of her fitness and physical appearance by this man.

The reversive suffix - og - in "gatoga" is responsible for the semantic relationship of oppositeness in this respect. In the same way tanywa/tanyollwa and fahlwa/fahlollwa are morphologically derived antonyms.

In Ba ile, Lentsoane says.

'Moo di bego di tanywa le be le di tanyolla'  
Teng tša go fahlwa le di fahlolla,

( Kgogamašego : 47)

( Where they were trapped you untrapped them  
Destabilised stomach you stabilised).

The emphasis here falls on the reversed action that brings relief and satisfaction to the poet or the reader

### 3.3.2 SYNONYMY

According to Guddon ( 1979:677) a synonym is:

" A word similar in meaning to another.  
It is rare to find an exact synonymous meaning. It is usually a matter of "Shades of meaning"

Repeating the almost same idea using different terminology, not only pleases and satisfies the reader, but drives the poet's point home. In GE KE LE GOPOLA, Lentsoane uses the words "nnete" and "therešo" (truth) in three separate sentences to magnify the significance of the reliability of the teacher in the eyes of his students.

Ke bona bahlahli ba nnete

Ke bona therešo ya go se fetoge

Ke bona nnete ya bophelo,

( Direti tše 4 (3) :41)

( I see the true guides

I see the truth that never changes

I see the truth of life).

Lentsoane goes on to say:

Ke bona boineelo le lerato la lena,

Ke bona boikgafo le kwelobohloko,

Re sa ikhomotša ka dikeletšo tša bona,

Re sa ikgala ka maele a bona,

( I see your dedication and love,

I see your dedication and compassion,

We are still comforting ourselves with your  
advice,

We are still reprimanding ourselves with your  
advice).

Other examples of synonymy are found in GA DI WELE KA  
MO GO BE when Lentsoane says

.....go foka moya wa kwano,

Go tšutla wa tľhabologo le lerato.

( Mokgako : 43 )

The literary meaning of the words "foka/tšutla" in this content is "prevail", and "moya" represents an "atmosphere" . The poet connotated the meaning of these words to relate the created meanings with his thoughts:

( There prevailed an atmosphere of unity,  
prevailing is that of civilization and love)

### 3.3.3 HOMONYMY

A homonym is according to Cuddon (1979:310)

"a word having the same sound and spelling as

another, but a different origin and meaning".

How to differentiate between those forms will depend on the reader's conversance with the language used. The surroundings within which the words are found, also facilitate the comprehension of their meanings.

The word "bona" in GE KE LE GOPOLA is used more than twice as an ornament in this poem. Lentsoane says:

Tsela ke sa e bona ka baka la bona

( The way I still see because of them )

Re sa ikgala ka maele a bona

( We are still reprimanding ourselves with  
their advice )

Here we have : bona "see" (verb)

bona "them" ( pronoun)

bona "their ( pronoun)

used at the end of three successive sentences for rhyming purposes

### 3.3.4 HYPONYMY

"Another relationship of meaning it is useful to distinguish is "meaning inclusion or hyponymy. This relationship exists between two meanings if one componential formula contains all the features present in the other formula" Leech (1969:92) By this term we refer to cases where the meaning of one word includes the meaning of another word or words. The poet's use of words is not restricted, so is his association of meanings to words. For instance the word "Sefatanaga" in Northern Sotho means a Lorry, Van, Combi, or a Car. It



excludes vehicles such as a ship and an aeroplane, in itself Sefatanaga is a compound word Sefata + naga It "digs the earth". In Mosebjadi, Lentsoane says

Bašemane ba go fofa ka difatanaga.

Mokgako :49

( Boys who fly in cars )

referring to either one of the above mentioned vehicles.

### 3.3.5 GENERAL

The use of poetic language involves the use of linguistic structures as set out by linguists in their research works. The poet and his audience enjoy poetry because they understand how linguistic items combine into words, words into sentences, and sentences into verses or stanzas. To understand fully what the poem is all about, one needs to read it all over again and again. At the end of it, a general meaning of all the words as interpreted by the audience, emerges.

Thomson ( 1946:65) once said:

" The poet speaks not for himself only, but for his fellowmen. His cry is their cry, which he only can utter..... But if he is to speak for them, he must

suffer with them, rejoice with them, work with them, fight with them."

Lentsoane in his capacity as a poet took this opportunity of using language as his powerful tool to express his and his audience's grievances; where and when necessary to comment on certain issues and also to share with them valuable information. In his works Lentsoane speaks from within his community. He is not an observer, but an active participant directly affected or involved in what is being said -but, to understand him, that is, to get the gist out of his poem, one has to look for deeper meanings of the words used. His poetry is heightened by the use of connotations. For instance in BOPHELO ( Life ) nothing at all is said about "birth" "fighting", "looking for a job, Unions and such things. The poet gives a picture of a river and all that goes with it with the use of collocations:

**E ela motšhaotšhele**

Beng ba madiba a magolo  
Bokubu, kwena le bomamokebe  
E tlatšwa ke dinokananokana

( Mokgako :1 )

( It flows forever)

(The owners of the deep waters  
Hippopotamuses, crocodile and  
watersnakes.

It is made full by a number of rivulets ).

For better understanding Lentsoane compares life, an abstract concept, to a large river that started flowing during the time of Adam. The ups and downs of life are compared with dangerous animals such as crocodiles and water-snakes and the meek ones such as fish and snails.

The rivulets which keep it flowing are like sorrow and happiness, misfortune and good luck, jealousy and fellowship, which are all part and parcel of life. It is by visualising a river that one gets to understand Lentsoane's view of life.

In the same way Lentsoane instead of talking to his audience directly about the pastor, he talks about a Shepherd ( Modiša). Even here one has to look deep into the nature and involvement of this particular shepherd to understand the connotation of the information in

general. Instead of herding in the veld, he herds in a house, instead of using a stick, he uses a " book of books"

Ke modiša o mogolo,  
Modišà go diša ngwakong,  
Modišà go gapa ka Puku ya dipuku,  
( Mokgako :6)

( He is a great shepherd.

A shepherd who herds in a house,

A shepherd commanding with a Book of books ).

With these words Lentsoane is trying to focus his audience's attention to the role that the pastor plays in the community which he serves.

Lentsoane experienced special disparity and felt the need to bring this to light but in a way that it will inspire the oppressed. To the washerwomen he says:

Bommamerwalo, ga le merwalo,  
Le a rwala bophelong.

Re itiantšha matolo ge re le bona  
Gobane matsogong a lena go tšwele dinaledi,  
Go sa tla tšwa mahlasedi:

( Mokgako:36 )

( Load-carriers, you are not loads,  
You do carry in life.

Our knees knock against each other when we see you,  
Because from your hands came stars  
Sunbeams are still to come).

Lentsoane wanted his audience to share with him the plight of the washerwomen who walk with difficulty under the heavy loads of washing belonging to whites. He nevertheless applauds the washerwomen's painstaking efforts, for they have produced teachers, nurses, policemen and doctors, the society's 'leading-stars'.

Using language as a means of communication Lentsoane tries to correct some of the misconceptions about leadership in women. He selected a few women to illustrate that their potential should not be undermined. In ( GA DI WELE KA MO GO BE ) he says:

\* Mohumagadi Indira Ghandi o fetotše polelo tša  
Baswana Masese.

A tsena moo go gahlanago banna,

\* Israele go nyaretše mosadisadi,  
Go rotogile mogale Golda Meir.

- \* O gahlana le Noko e kgolo ya Bopedi,  
Kgošigadi Thorometšane Dinkwanyane
  
- \* Bolobedu kolobeng tša Letlatša,  
Go rokame kgošigadi Modjadji,
  
- \* Swarang le tiišeng basadisadi,  
Lefase ke la mang le mang.

( Mokgako:42)

( Mrs Indira Ghandi has nullified the Blacks  
saying)

She entered where men meet.

There appeared a women's -woman  
in Israel.

There appeared the brave Golda Meir.

You will meet with the great Noko of Bopedi  
Mrs Thorometšane Dinkwanyane,

Bolobedu at the pigs of Letlatša  
There jutted out queen Modjadji,

Hold tightly women's-women  
The world belongs to everybody).

It is therefore high time that the world should use other criteria other than sex in determining who belongs to which position, and why. Contrasting this group of responsible women are some whose behavioral conduct is not up to standard. Women do not just drink liquor, but are the slaves of this dreadful drink. It is a taboo among Blacks for women to become alcoholics.

Malapa a lebeletšwe,  
Dihlogo di gahlane,  
( Mokgako:39)

(Families are forgotten  
Heads are mixed up ).

Behind every successful man is a woman: If that is the case, now what is going to happen to families with such mother? Disaster.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the role that figurative language plays in poetry. It is further to illustrate how Lentsoane uses the skill to enhance the quality of his work.

Figurative language is according to Abrams (1981:63) "A deviation from what speakers of a language apprehend as the ordinary, or standard, significance or sequence of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect".

Figurative language is as such the poets most powerful tool or device, towards aestheticity and enrichment of his language. It is deviation with a purpose.

Peck and Coyle (1984:37) say

"Figurative' means language being used in a non-literal way: most commonly the poet uses either a metaphor or a simile to extend the significance of what he is saying."



Figurative language is studied in two main ill-defined categories, namely, imagery and figures of speech

#### 4.1 IMAGERY

Heese and Lawton (1979:62) say,

"The words employed by a poet need not be different in themselves from ordinary words used in straight forward prose or everyday speech, but in the context of a poem they may acquire that extension of meaning which stimulates and delights the imagination. His use of language here is not straightforward, because it is non-literal. He is creating, with words, what we call an image."

Now, what do we understand by the term 'poetic image'?

In its simplest form, it is a picture made out of words. "Originally, the word image meant a visual picture. But in the language of literary criticism its meaning has been extended to include the calling up in the hearing, taste, touch, and smell. An image may be presented in a phrase or a verse, by conveying to our imagination, something more than the accurate reflection of an

external reality", LEWIS (1968:18). In short, an image is a word or cluster of words that stimulates sense perception. The manner in which words are used should appeal to the reader's five senses, because it is primarily the striking freshness and precision of the images which give the reader the aesthetic or poetic pleasure necessary.

'Imagery' ( that is, images taken collectively) is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perceptions found in a poem or other works of literature. Imagery is employed by the poet as a means of making the readers 'see' and also 'feel' what he is describing, by giving them word pictures which their senses can appreciate. For example, Lentsoane appeals to his readers' senses in GALASE YA BYALA when he says:

Gobane matsogo ke swerwe ke a mehutahuta

A makgwakgwa, a boleta

A go tonya, a borutho

A go tšofala, a mafsa,

( Kgogamašego:13)

(Because I was handled by different types of hands)

Rough ones, soft ones

Cold ones, warm ones

Old ones, young ones.

Sense perceptions stimulated are rough/soft (tactile) cold/warm (feeling) and old/young (visual). To add to the impact of the images built is the antonymy relationship of the words used. Here Lentsoane made the beer glass to talk directly to the reader, sharing with him its frustration

There are also direct descriptions in poetry which fulfil the function of imagery, description of some actual scenes or objects which are perhaps the ostensible subjects of poems which serve different functions. Though direct in their form, what they say to the imagination is similar to metaphor, they are not themselves, they stand for something else. In *Matšoba*, Lentsoane used a direct description of flowers, which serve a different function. The flowers stand for something else, Human beings in this context. Clarity is gained from reading the whole poem in this instance.

#### MATŠOBA

Re matšoba a lefase,  
Re a bjalwa, ra mela.  
Ra nošetšwa ka mekgwanakgwana  
Ra kgolokgolelwa ka mehla,

Ra gola ka go fapana,  
Ra tielela,  
Re a khukhuša,  
Ra ata,  
Ra kgabiša lefase,  
Mola ke bona a maswana.  
Mola ke bona a mašwaana,  
Ga a taloge mebala,

Marega le selemo a dula a tagile  
Go pona a pona,  
A pona letšatši le la.  
A tla mela gape.  
( Mokgako:4)

(We are the flowers of the earth,  
We are planted, we germinate,  
Are watered differently,  
Are supported always,  
We grow in different ways,  
Are strengthened.  
We grow leaves,  
We multiply,  
We decorate the earth.  
There I see black ones,  
There I see white ones.  
They never discolour

Winter and summer they remain bright

They do weather

They weather on that day

They will grow again

Human beings, black and white, together, beautify the world with their permanent skin colour year in, year out. But, they will one day die, and will be born again or rise to life with Jesus. Many common sayings and proverbial expressions are based on images, for example, a dull student may be called a 'donkey'; or we may say that the man is as poor as a church mouse. Images are used as some sort of verbal short-hand, for instance when we say "Ke Masenya-a- homotše" ( Mokgako:30) (Silence destroyer) we mean, 'he destroys silently'- and so without going further into details, the reader has a complete picture of the type of person being referred to. A lot of information is packed into this image. This is what is called fresh, bright and minted language.

BURTON & CHACKSFIELD ( 1979:44 ) rightfully say,

"We expect a poet's use of language in general, and his use of imagery in particular, to be fresh, compressed and exciting - and thereby, to give us pleasure, but those qualities, important though they are, serve a larger purpose". Of vital importance is that images must enable the reader to enter the poet's mind and to share fully in the

experiences that he offers, to discern his intention so as to make sensitive and balanced judgement of his success or failure. Good poets know how and when to use metaphor, simile, symbol or personification in their works.

#### 4.1.1 METAPHOR.

The concept metaphor is described and defined as an applied comparison. Two objects are compared with each other in their totality. One may thus represent the other to evoke a deeper or figurative meaning. In Northern Sotho praise poems, brave men are referred to as lions. In a metaphor, a word which in standard language denotes one kind of thing is implied to another in the form of identity instead of comparison.

**Wheeler (1966:152) says**

"The word 'metaphor' gives a clue to its own definition. It is nothing more than the Greek

Version of 'transfer', a familiar word derived from Latin, Thus:

Meta-phor

Trans-fer "

Both words add up to exactly the same thing - a carrying over or across (cf. "ferry"), a change of location. In a metaphor a word or word group is transferred from one context to another. The function of a metaphor is to turn one thing into another by transferring certain characteristics of a metaphorical object to the literal one. In *Botšofadi*, Lentsoane says:

Botšofadi; o morwalo  
O kotlo, o kgati.

*Botšofadi* (old age) is spoken of not as being like morwalo (load); 'old age has become a load'.

( Mokgako:5)

The poet does not tell us that 'old age' is like a punishment, like a cane. 'Old age' is 'punishment', is a 'cane'. Metaphor is as such a way of amplifying meaning, without necessarily increasing the amount of verbal space required, by adding the connotations of one word to the connotations of another.

( Wheeler 1966:176)

By means of metaphor, feelings can be fused without losing their individual clarity, that metaphor is the fundamental mode for transmitting feelings into words, that metaphor is the process by which the internal relationships peculiar to poetry are established. A word that applies literally to one kind of object or idea, is applied by analogy to another. In *Botšofadi* the poet says:

Maoto re a oketša,  
Mahlo re a oketša  
( Mokgako: 5)

(Feet we increase  
Eyes we increase)

'Increase' has to do with quality or size. The poet's implication here is that the quality of the deteriorated function of the parts of the body is being supported or revitalised by the use of 'walking stick' representing an additional foot, the third one. Spectacles are additional eyes to the aged with poor eye-sight. The same idea of 'additional' parts of the body being offered to the aged is found in *Ga se ya lešaka le*. On his return from the big cities, *Marabe*, found his mother in a physical state he never expected.



Ke Mmaphoko o šele,  
Mmaphoko wa maoto a mararo,  
Mmaphoko wa mahlo a mane,  
Mmaphoko o mošweu hlogong,  
Mmaphoko wa mašošo.

(GA SE YA LEŠAKA LE: 1)

( She is a different Mmaphoko  
Mmaphoko with three legs,  
Mmaphoko with four eyes  
Mmaphoko, white on the head  
Mmaphoko with wrinkles)

Further more, metaphor is felt to add forcefulness, and evidently the forcefulness has some relation to sharpness of detail and concreteness of expression. Forcefulness and sharpness of detail, especially of sensory detail, tend to go together. In **Matšoba** a human being is equated to or with flowers.

Re a bjalwa, ra mela  
Ra nošetšwa ka mekgwanakwana  
Ra gola ka go fapana.

( Mokgako:4)

( We are planted, we germinate,  
We are watered in various ways

We grow up differently).

Like flowers, human beings are 'conceived' and 'born'. They are nurtured so that they can grow up. Human life is an abstract entity. To simplify the process and stages it goes through, the poet uses concrete illustration, 'the growing of flowers'.

Scott ( 1977:133) says:

"One valuable function of the image is to make visible the invisible. If an abstract subject is to be linked with an analogue that is physical, then the abstract object, which cannot be imagined in itself, acquires for the time being a body form that we can perceive with our senses."

In the eyes of God, Blacks and Whites are his wonderful creation meant to beautify the earth. It was with a purpose that the colour of their skin differs - to brighten the earth

It is by looking beyond the literal words the poet used, that the deeper meaning of the poem is located.

Like many other poets, Lentsoane resorts to imagery to express his understanding of some great mysteries of human experiences - love, death, protest, jealousy and greed, Love, the subject of many poems has been represented as fire as in **MOSEBJADI**.

Ke ile ke a kgotlelela, la ntšhuma

(Mokgako: 47)

(I tried to resist but it burnt me)

Death is represented by 'a way', or 'road'.

Lehu (death)

Ke nna tsela ya bohle

( Direto tsa mang le mang in Sesegotheto:156)

Life is represented by 'river'

Ke noka-kgolo Bophelo

(Mokgako:1)

( It's a great-river Life)

Apart from some references to metaphor as a means of making language more colourful and for expressing our emotional responses, one practical use of metaphor is to

provide a concrete illustration of a point that has been stated more abstractly - to provide a soft rhetorical decoration. Metaphor justifies itself by making a real contribution to the poet's total expression.

#### 4.1.2 SIMILE

Simile is defined as an explicit comparison as compared to metaphor where the comparison is implicit. Simile draws an explicit or direct comparison between two elements that belong to usually dissimilar categories. The two elements consist of the tenor and vehicle. The vehicle is used to qualify the tenor. In Northern Sotho a simile is always introduced by explanatory conjunctives such as 'bjalo ka', 'nke', 'ka ka', 'swana', and so on (like, as, such as). A characteristic that exists in both is selected to form the basis of this association.

Leech (1969:156) says:

"Simile is an overt, and metaphor a covert comparison. This means that for each metaphor we can devise a roughly corresponding simile, by writing out tenor and vehicle side by side, and indicating by 'LIKE' or other formal indicators, the similarity between them." In Botšofadi

Lentsoane says:

Botšofadi o kotlo (metaphor)  
which (old age you are  
punishment)

as a simile it could read:

Botšofadi o swana le kotlo,

OR

Botšofadi e ke o kotlo,

OR

Botšofadi o bjalo ka kotlo

(Old age you are like  
punishment)

A metaphor is more concise and immediate than the corresponding literal version because of the superimposition, in the same piece of language, of tenor and vehicle. A simile, conversely, is generally more explicit than metaphor because it specifies the ground of comparison as in LEHUFA ( JEALOUSY).

(Lehufa) Ke le lethata boka leswika  
Ke le bogale boka legadima.

( Mokgako:28)

(It is hard like a stone  
It is sharp like a lightning).

In this case, 'thata' (hard) is the property which lehufa (jealousy) has in common with 'leswika'. In the second line the property shared by jealousy and lightning is 'sharp'.

In describing the conditions of a country during war times, Lentsoane associates the instability experienced with a stork standing on one leg, perceiving a state of imbalance: **MEHLA YA MARUMO** (Times of spears)

(Naga) E eme ka oto le tee  
Nke ke kokolohute.

( Direto tša mang le mang in Sešegotheto: 154)

(It is standing on one leg  
like a stork).

#### 4.1.3 SYMBOLISM

According to Cuddon ( 1980:671)

"The word symbolism derives from the Greek verb 'symballein' to 'throw together' and

its noun 'symbolon', mark, 'emblem',  
'token' or 'sign'. It is an object,  
animate or inanimate, which represents or  
stands for something else"

A dove, for example, symbolises peace; a rose, beauty.  
Actions and gestures are also symbolic. Shaking of the  
head signifies rejection, dissatisfaction or refusal;  
arms raised denotes surrender. A symbol is a part of  
the metaphor. Two objects are not compared, but the one  
object is automatically associated with the other.

A literary symbol, Cuddon, continues, combines an image  
with a concept ( words themselves are a kind of symbol).  
It may be public or private, universal or local. Words  
such as

Le a welwa .....

( You are being attacked)

are a kind of symbolic 'warning' used to alert people  
that they are been invaded. That is a public symbol.  
Lentsoane too, uses it in **MEHLA YA MARUMO**.

A universal symbol is 'Moses' who led the Israelites out of Egypt. Lentsoane also makes use of it in his poem -

MOENG-MOFSA WA BATHO ( People's new visitor)

(Mokgako:25)

Ke yena mophološ<sup>ī</sup>

Moš<sup>e</sup> wa Baswana

( He is the saviour  
Moses of the Blacks).

The word Koporo (copper) is a personal symbol for Lentsoane to represent Policemen. In O TLA BOLELA PELE, he says :

Dikoporo di sentš<sup>e</sup> difahlego

Dirumula tš<sup>a</sup> mphahla

( Mokgako:38)

(Policemen with sour faces

Torches blinded me).

In MOPHAMOLA-DIKANAPA (32) and APARA RE SEPELE (570) the same symbol has been used.



Ke gan'o bona koporo  
Ke tšhabela gar'a mašaba(Letl:32)

( On seeing a Policeman  
I ran into the multitudes).

Hlong ke yeo boradikoporo ba e  
hlokago (Letl:57)

( Shame is what the policeman do not have)

This copper (Koporo) is associated with the shining articles on the uniforms

From the above discussion it is clear that metaphor is a linguistic device different from symbolism which has no necessary connection with language. Metaphor very commonly involves 'images' - reference to concrete objects or perceptible actions. This is in support to Wheeler's definition of symbolism which says:

"Symbolism might be defined as a way of thinking with things. In theory, at least, the doubleness of a symbol is more distinct and radical than that of metaphor, since it is caused by the interaction of human thought with objects

of the material world, and is not confined to the realm of language alone, as Metaphor is"

(Wheeler 1966:182)

#### 4.1.4 PERSONIFICATION

Heese and Lawton (1979:63) say:

"Personification is a kind of image too. It is that kind of image where the 'something' concrete relates to human beings, while the 'something else' is not human."

The object in personification can be addressed as if it is a human being, or be made to speak. In so doing the poet makes the reader to identify himself with the object, so that the feeling expressed by the object have immediate and direct appeal to him. In **GALASE YA BJALA**,

LENTSOANE says:

Bodutu ga ke bo tsebe,  
Le go go fetola nka se fetole.  
(Kgogamašego:13)

(Loneliness I do not know  
Even though I shall not answer).

Instead of listening to the poet telling us about the object, here the object is made to speak for itself. In this context the beer glass is kept company by the drinkers. It only listen to their conversation, but does not take part in it

According to Cuddon (1979:501)

"Personification is the impersonation or embodiment of some qualities of abstractions; the attribution of human qualities to inanimate objects.

Personification is inherent in many languages through the use of gender, and it appears to be very frequent in all literatures, especially in poetry".

As a means of poetic expression personification is inherently part of traditional praise poem, a very scarce phenomenon in Letsoane's poetry.

In Lehu (death) Lentsoane says:

Ke nna tsela ya bohle

Tsela ya go se tsebje ke motho

Tsela sesepelwakakgang

Tsela sehlokadinamelwa.

( Direto tša mang le mang in Sešegotheto:156)

(I am the road for all

The road nobody knows

The road-you-go-through-by-force

The road-without-transport).

Death in this context takes the role of a human being, it is cheeky, it walks like GOLIATH, it chooses its victim and it was overpowered once - by the Son of God, Christ. The poet attributes human traits, actions or emotions to something that is not animate.

There are other figures of speech which are not used as associative devices or are based on comparison like the ones discussed above. They are regarded as deviations from the ordinary use of language for the sake of effect. We use figures of speech when trying to express something which stretches our experience or imagination, especially in poetry.

According to MASHABELA (1979:24), this is a subtle coinage that makes the concept expressed more lucid than ordinary language would make.

4.1.5 METONYMY

Abrams ( 1981:65) says:

In metonymy (Greek of " a change of name"),  
the term for one thing is applied to another with which it has become closely associated in experience:

In **KOBO YA THUTO**, the term 'maaparankwe' (Wearer of tiger skin) is closely related to 'King' because under no circumstances may an ordinary person wear such a garment. In education, the wearing of a gown is restricted to graduates only.

4.1.6 SYNECDOCHE

Cuddon (1979:676) defines synecdoche as:

"A figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole, and thus something else is understood within the thing mentioned."

According to **MASHABELA (1979:29)** in synecdoche, one element of a concept - the particular versus the general, the container versus the content, etc, is used to designate the whole concept. In **SE NTELELE MAHLAKO** Lentsoane says:

O e hlabane sesadi,  
O ba bontšhe tsela ya Modimo  
( Mokgako:35:)

(You fought in a womanly manner  
Show them the way of God).

Sesadi and tsela ('womanly' and 'the way of God') are general terms for particular aspects. 'Sesadi' refer to tutorship falling specifically within the domain of females. "Tsela ya Modimo" is on the other hand an inclusive term for a patterned behavioural characteristic of Christians.

Again in **BARWEDI BA AFRIKA** the same figure of speech is found in the lines:

Go tšwelele Bo-Yvonne le Bo-Sara,  
Melomo nke ba gamotše bobete.  
(Makgoko:40)

( There appear Yvonne, Sara and company  
Mouth (looking) as if they drank blood).

The proper name Yvonne and Sara do not refer particularly to the two girls known by those names. The prefix - BO - shows that other girls are also included in this context.

When Lentsoane says in GA SE YA LEŠAKA LE,

Ditlhahlobo di batametše ka bjako,  
Mahlo a Malete a lebelela Kgotlelelo Marothe,  
(Letl. 31)

(Examinations are nearing at hastily  
Eyes at Malete looking at Kgotlelelo Marothe)

he uses 'Mahlo a Malete' to refer to all the teachers and pupils at Malete School. Malete here is the container of the content - teachers/pupils eyes.

Three deceptions to be studied in this section are hyperbole, litotes and irony. The figures of speech are all connected in that in a sense they misrepresent the truth: hyperbole distorts by saying too much; litotes by saying too little; and irony which often takes the form of saying or implying the opposite of what one feels to be the case.

#### 4.1.6 HYPERBOLE

Cuddon (1980:316) defines hyperbole as:

"A figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis. It is used by poets to emphasise a feeling or to produce a

humorous effect; that is, to bring it to the listener to understand how great, how enormous, how extra-ordinary the concept described is".

In Abram's words:

"Hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration, it is a bold overstatement or extravagant exaggeration of fact, used either for serious or comic effect."

(1981:77)

During the 1976 Soweto riots, the situation was tense and critical with many casualties, but to say that:

Baragwanath ya fetoga lewatile la megokgo,  
Ya fetoga lewatile la madi.

( Ihlo la moreti in Sešegotheto:249)

Lentsoane uses a relevant figure of speech to show that those who were crying (tears) and the injured, blood oozing from wounds were in their numbers. The flow of tears and blood oozing from wounds of the injured, represented by the sea/ocean, only implied, it was more than what was usually the case on normal days.



Another example of an appropriate hyperbole is found in SE BA TSHEDIŠE MAHLO (do not undermine them), wherein the role played by mine-diggers, street-sweepers, coal-sellers, grave-diggers and news-vendors is brought under spotlight.

Madimong a go tomola mehlare,  
Dipuleng tša go epolla bahu.  
(Ihlo la moreti in Sešegotheto:241)

(In Storm that unearth trees  
Rain that exhume corpses).

What the poet means is that even though the storm was so strong, and the rain extraordinarily heavy, these people carried on with their various duties, which are most unfortunately, not indoor activities.

#### 4.1.7 LITOTES

"A litotes is a figure of speech which contains an understatement for emphasis, and it is therefore the opposite of hyperbole. A stock instance is 'not bad' meaning 'very good'".

Another simple definition of a litotes is that "it is a description of something by the negation of the opposite, to give emphasis. In Northern Sotho it is not just an understatement but a spirited attempt to eliminate the negative, thereby accentuating the positive"

(Mashabela 1979:30)

In DIRETI T<sup>ŵ</sup>SE NNE 3, Lentsoane is trying to warn his sister about the sinister smiles of her collaborators, he says:

La mohlagare ga ba fet<sup>ŵ</sup>še go le nt<sup>ŵ</sup>sha

( Letl:50)

( The molar, they do not stop showing).

Literally the proverbial figure of speech means the people involved are not themselves. Their smiles are hiding from her, their real feelings.

To illustrate that spies were too many, Lentsoane in MEHLA YA MARUMO says:

Ditlhodi ga se ditlhodi

(Direto t<sup>ŵ</sup>ša mang le mang in Sešegotheto:154)

(spies are not spies).

4.1.8 IRONY

Irony is according to Abrams (1987:89)

"A statement in which the implicit meaning intended by the speaker differs from that which he ostensibly asserts. Such an ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one attitude or evaluation, but with the implication of a very different attitude or implication"

Most forms of irony as Cuddon (1980:383) sees them, involve the perception or awareness of a discrepancy or incongruity between words and their meaning, or between actions and their results, or between appearance and reality. Verbal irony involves saying what one does, not what one means.

The return of **MARABE** FROM Johannesburg after years and years of silence is met with mixed feelings as his mother and relatives instead of cheering up, they all formed a crying choir:

O tsene lapeng a lapile Marabe,  
O se kgitlile Mmaphoko,  
Llo sa Mošopšadi se šišintše baagišane,  
Ba theogetše ba dikiša Mmaphoko

( GA SE YA LEŠAKA Le :1-2)

(He entered the courtyard tired Marabe,  
She cried Mmaphoko,  
Her crying shook the neighbours,  
They went all out to assist Mmaphoko).

The contradiction here is between the action and what is implied. Theirs, we believe, were tears of joy, and not of sorrow. They were so happy that they could not even control their emotions

In the same way Lentsoane talks of the smoke 'decorating' the sky during the burnings of the 1976 Soweto riots.

There is a discrepancy here between the words and their meaning, because the scene or the events of that year were disgustingly destructive and there is no way in which the smoke could be decorative. The smoke was the aftermath of the externalisation of the student's grievances.

Leratadima le kgabišitswe ke meši ye meso  
(Ihlo la moreti in Sešegotheto :248)

(The sky was decorated with black smoke)

There are nevertheless other images and figures of speech very much important to poetry which are not discussed in this analysis. A study of this kind cannot attempt an overall survey of a subject

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. FORM

"Form implies some kind of definiteness or coherence, shape of some kind, so says, Boulton (1982:1). She is referring here to 'form' in general, the form of a cake, a bottle or a building.

Cuddon (1979:277) says:

"When we speak of the form of a literary work we refer to its shape and structure and to the manner in which it is made (thus, its style) as opposed to the substance or what it is about."

Form in poetry is a form, a shape that the poem adopts from the way the language is used, that is, how the chosen words are arranged to give the desired sound and sense. Poetry is regarded as a way of using language, a form of speech, a mode of expression, or a patterning of words. A poetic form is thus far an established manner of mode of composition characterised by elements such as rhythmic patterns, lines and stanzas, and most importantly, words that are more appropriate than any one could put in their places.

Form in poetry can be discussed under a number of aspects, and for practical purpose a distinction should first be made between the physical and the intellectual aspects of form.

Boulton (1982:7) views the physical form as:

"That much of the form of poetry that can be perceived physically, by the ear and eye, without any intellectual process occurring. The physical form is the appearance on paper, and much more important, the sound of poetry."

The intellectual form of poetry is described as content, the physical as the sound heard when poetry is read. Sound will be studied in this analysis as phonetic form sub-divided into rhyme, onomatopoeia and internal patterns.

## 5.1 SOUND

### 5.1.1 RHYME.

Rhyme is a repetition of some arrangement of vowels and consonants at the end of lines, or sometimes in the middle. Rhyme consists in the identity in the rhyming words of the last stressed vowel and all the speech

sounds following that vowel. The poet uses rhyming to establish the pleasure that is experienced in the chiming of like sounds, especially in nursery rhymes. Rhyme is a pattern that arouses expectation as each successive rhyming word of a new set occurs creating the expectation of the other one of the pair. The close ringing of the rhyming words, lodges them into the reader's memory. Rhyme has often been very sporadic and unpatterned, especially in Northern Sotho poetry. Characteristics of modern rhyme usage are:

Ba tla ja ba feta  
Ba tla nwa ba feta.  
(Kgogamašego:41)

(They will eat and pass  
They will drink and pass).

There is rhyme, but no pattern or rhyme-scheme. What is experienced is repetition of the same words rather than true rhyme. An almost or irregular rhyme-scheme is found in very few of Lentsoane's poems. In LEIHLO he says:

Leihlo o a tshwenya	a
O bona tšeo o sa swanelago	b
Botsebe o a fenya	a



O ba fihliša moo ba sa gopolago b  
Moo ba sa kago ba lora go ka gata c  
maswiswing a ntšhotšoro o a fihla d  
Moo go sa sepelago dibata tša go gagola e  
Moo go bušago letšhogo le bošula e  
O a tsena ga o romeletše f  
Moo go sa tsenwego o a ipihla d

(Kgogamašego:56)

( An eye you are troublesome  
You see what you are not supposed to  
An ear you overpower  
You lead them at places they never thought of  
Where they never dreamt they can reach  
In the dark night you come  
Where marauding wild animals walk around  
Where fright and danger reign  
Where there is no entry, you do not degelate  
Where not possible to enter, you hide yourself.)

The first four lines display a true rhyme-scheme, absent in the following or succeeding lines. When properly used, rhyme has got a regulating effect indicating the end of a line. The rhyming words stand out in the reader's consciousness, and because it is not normally found in ordinary speech, the reader is pleasantly surprised to encounter it

The type of rhyme we are familiar with is the exact rhyme found in English as in words such as dove / love - In Northern Sotho we would expect something like fiša / diša, which can be defined as the recurrent sound between two or more words due to the agreement of the stressed vowel sound and its succeeding consonants or syllable. Ordinary rhyming in English has more to do with sounds than with spelling, hence - write / knight / white . The poet finds pleasure in the richness of acoustic effect that the repetition makes possible. Rhyming of this type does not exist in all African Languages.

#### 5.1.2 ONOMATOPOEIA

Onomatopoeia is the imitation of natural sounds in the sounds of words. Sometimes the sound of words give more or great support to the sense. In words such as **SEGWAGWA** (frog), the name stems probably from the creature's sound made as it cries - gwaa-gwaa.

Onomatopoeia is more common in English poetry than it is in Northern Sotho. Its use is more of incidental than deliberate. For instance, strong sounds such as 'ph', 'tšh', 'kg' and 'th' are suggestive of violence, hushness, cruelty, conflict and discomfort.

In poems such as LELEME and LESEBO, Lentsoane uses strong sounds with the purpose of emphasising the conflict originating from their existence.

LELEME (TONGUE)

Mo o fihlago o a šwalalanya

Wa šala o tsošitše kgaruru

(Mokgako:26)

(Where you arrive you disperse

You create unrest.)

The tongue, a part of the body which when not properly used, that is when it is used to lie or as a provoking instrument, causes disaster. Utterance of these sounds leaves an unpleasant impression on the hearer's mind:  
šwalala, kga ru ru.

In LESEBO (Gossip) he says:

La phumphanya tšohle,

Gwa šala go šešerakane,

Le šwahlela o fahletše.

(Mokgako:27)

(It destroys everything  
Leaving behind confusion  
It encroaches where it is fortified).

The words 'phuphanya', 'šešerekane' and 'šwahlela' in themselves suggest destruction, that which 'gossip' is there for. It forcefully enters and uses all in its power to destroy well-founded love. Words such as 'Setseketseke' suggest an 'aimless' and 'clumsy' walker. To use a hard word, we can say a 'fool'.

O se kgitlile Morwa Setseketseke,  
A dikiša batswadi.

(Direto tša mang le mang in Sešegotheto:161)

(He cried the son of Setseketseke  
He joined the parents).

A self-sufficient person not ready or willing to take other people's advice ends up losing everything worth living for. Such are wanderers. Their movements too tell a lot about the situation in which they are.

### 5.1.3 INTERNAL PATTERNS

Under internal patterns of sound are found alliteration and assonance.

Altenbernd (1966:33) says this about alliteration:

"A sound effect closely related to rhyme is alliteration"

It is the repetition of a sound in the initial position of various words, or of a consonant sound within the words. Alliteration is of course one of the most generally used internal ornaments. As an example, many of our proverbial and idiomatic expressions gain much of their forces from alliteration, for an example, 'Pinyana ge e re ping e kwele ping e kgolo' meaning children copy from their parents behavioural patterns. The 'pi' appears thrice in this giving a cumulative effect, generally used for emphasis. In LABORARO LE LESOLESO, Lentsoane says:

Gwa nkgā nama' motho mosegare wo  
monana

(Leihlo la Moeti in Sešegotheto:248)

(There smelled a person's flesh in broad  
day light)

Three words in this line start with 'm' and the fourth 'm' starts the last syllable of 'nama' adding to the musical aspect of the poem..Alliteration as a literary form is usually applied to consonants only.

Another repetition of speech sound identified is known as Assonance, the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds. The repetition of internal vowel sounds contribute to the musical quality of poetry and can also suggest the moods and meanings the poet is trying to convey.

The use of the interjection too with double 'o ' adds to a certain extent the degree of coldness expressed by tonya (cold) with one 'o'.

Go tonya too!

(Mokgako:25)

(It is very cold).

Another example of the use of assonance is found in T<sup>Y</sup>SOHLE DI A FELA. The use of 'a' repeatedly in the two lines neutralises the mood in which the observer or the

reader is. He / She is neither excited nor depressed by the events in this poem. It is the echo of a's that contributes to that atmosphere.

Bana ba gagwe ba swana le ba mang le mang,  
Ba mamatla ka a magotsane,

( Mokgako:66)

(Her/his children are like every one else,  
Bare-footing with chapped feet).

## 5.2 PARALLELISM

Parallelism as defined by Cohen (1973:192) is:

"The balancing of equal parts of a sentence, the repetition of a sentence pattern, or the repetition of words at the beginning of lines of poetry".

Like many other forms of sounds, parallelism contributes to the musical quality of poetry. Parallelism is as such a general term for various forms of repetitions, sometimes used for aesthetic purposes. Kunene (1971:65) draws distinctions among three types of parallelism:

- (1) Parallelism of thought through the repetition of words and phrases;
- (2) Parallelism of thought through the restatement of ideas by synonym and indirect references;
- (3) Parallelism of grammatical structure through the repetition of syntactical slots.

#### 5.2.1 REPETITION OF WORDS

To avoid Monotony and boring his audience the poet repeats his thought not through quoting but by the addition of increasing phrases or formatives of some kinds. In GO KWA GA GO KWELWE, Lentsoane applied the technique to emphasise the loneliness experienced by the hard-nut-to-crack-person, while separate from his family. He personally turned himself into an orphan to the highest degree. The repetition of the word 'turned' in different positions in lines one and two gives a certain form to the eye: an oblique-line repetition pattern with right-to-left slant:

Bonna bjola bo fetogile bošemane,  
Bo mphetotše tšhiwana le sa ja meratha,  
Bo mphetotše tšhiololo bophelong,  
(Direti tše nne 1:44)



( That manhood has turned into boyhood,  
It has turned me into an orphan while  
you are still having meals,  
It has turned me into a real orphan in life)

The words 'fetogile' (turned) in line one, and 'mphetotše' (turned me ) in line two, with the same semantic content link the two lines illustrating what Kunene calls Parallelism of thought. A link between the second and the third line is established through the word 'tšhiwana' (orphan) and 'tšhiololo' (orphan without relatives). The third line, because of its association with line two, it is said to be indirectly linked to line one. Line two unifies the three lines together.

Another example of parallelism where words are aesthetically and emphatically used is known as Crossed -line repetition pattern. In KGAKGAMUŠI, Lentsoane says:

~~Banna lehono ba go kgalegile,  
Ba go kgalegile bokameetse a banna,~~  
(Direti tše nne 3:51)

(Men are today thirsty for you,  
Thirsty for you like they are for men's water)

The increamenting phrases in the above examples each in its place further qualifies the basic thought of:

For Example: TURNING.

The 'fabricated' manhood turning into .....  
turning while .....  
turning during .....

Of the commonest parallelism known, is the (Vertical-line repetition pattern) used mainly for the purpose of emphasis and for building up a climax. In such cases the repeated phrase or word occupies the same position in the preceding lines. In GA SE YA LEŠAKA LE, Lentsoane puts the following words in KGOTLELELO'S mouth.

Mantšū a gago tate a ntlhabile pelong,  
Mantšū a gago tate ke a boima,  
Mantšū a gago tate ke a mathata,  
Mantšū a gago tate nka se a lebale,  
(Letl. :29)

Your words father pieced me through the heart,  
Your words father are heavy  
Your words father are strong  
Your words father I shall not forget.

The more she talked the more she put pressure into his father's heart. He was drunk, but resisting the daughter's words was possible but not feasible. If this was a debate, Marabe would have said at the end of the daughter's speech:

"Your words too, I shall never forget"

Parallelism may take the form of repeating the same idea using synonyms. The point here is to drive the point home without repeating the same words. Only good poets, good at playing with words can use this technique successfully. In GE KE LE GOPOLA, Lentsoane says:

Ke bona thereṣo ya go se fetoge,

Ke bona nnete ya bophelo

( Direti ṭše nne 3:41)

(I see the truth that does not change,

I see the truth of life,)

Re sa ikhomotṣa ka dikeletṣo ṭša bona

Re sa ikgala ka maele a bona.

(We still console ourselves with their advices,

We still reprimand ourselves with their advices,)

In both examples the second lines support the first lines drawing the attention of the reader to the core of the matter under discussion - the 'truth' and the 'advices' respectively.

### 5.3 REFRAIN

There are other forms of repetition besides rhyme words and parallelism - the refrain. The refrain is a line, or part of a line, or a group of lines which is repeated in the course of a poem. The repetition comes in most cases, at regular intervals.

Wheeler (1966:258) views the refrain as a poetic device whose functions are amongst others:

"To contribute to the thematic or tonal unity of a poem, and its regular occurrence as a way of marking off structural divisions. By remaining unchanged the refrain acts to keep the poem always circling back upon itself."

In BOWELAKALANA KE BOWELAKANA, Lentsoane uses the refrain, first as a thematic expression starting as the title of the poem (East or West, home is best). The refrain emphasizes the importance of keeping touch with ones homeplace, by taking verb from other cultures,

everything they feel would conceal their original identity: Stretched hair, lighter complexion, red lips, new names and language that are adopted from the newly nominated relatives.

Again in LA GAGO LERATO (Your Love) Lentsoane repeats the title five times in sixty lines. In his own way he kept some of the hypnotic spell-like effect of a repeated refrain, yet avoided boredom or the suspicion of meaningless repetitions by varying the words of the refrain so that they contribute something to the logical content of the poem. The message is carried on to the next line following the refrain:

1. La gago bjale lerato,  
Ga e sa le lona.
  
2. La gago lerato  
Ke leo nkego le tla di gagatla
  
3. La gago bjale lerato  
A le leke go šele,
  
4. La gago bjale lerato  
Ke bona nke e be e le la boraro

5. La gago lerato Kanyane,  
Ke leo le mpolaišitšego  
( Ihlo la Moreti in Sešegotheto:243)
1. (Your love now,  
Is no longer the one
2. Your love  
Is that which seems would rave mad
3. Your love now  
Let it chance elsewhere
4. Your love now  
I suspect it to be the third one
5. Your love Kanyane  
It is the one that put me into trouble)

All the five lines include the words : 'lerato la gago' (your love) to keep on reminding the reader of the danger of having a concubine whose ulterior motive is to destroy the other partner.

#### 5.4 RHYTHM

According to Cohen (1983:194) rhythm is

" The measured movement or beat in the musical flow of poetry established by the technical resources of both the poet and the oral interpretation of his work".

Rhythm is associated with phrasing or grammatical grouping of words as well as such elements as pauses, speed of delivery, intonation of voice and volume of sound. This view is supported by Heese and Lawton (1979:14) who say:

"Rhythm is an affectual movement or flow that is brought about by the poet's use of emphasis and tempo."

The concept of 'flow' is further duplicated by Reeves in his explanation of rhythm when he says:

Rhythm comes from a Greek word meaning 'flow.  
Flow means movement from one point to another.  
(1966:113)

He associates rhythm with the flow of water along river beds, of blood in our view and of traffic or crowds along city Streets. He views rhythm as something similar to pulse - the alternating periods of effort and relaxation. The beating of our hearts and the course of our breathing are good examples of how rhythm is experienced in poetry. The basis of rhythm in African Languages are elements such as length, tone and pause.

Common sense enables the speaker of a language to place the natural stress of speech in sentences in poetry. The subject or content of the poem determines the poem's rhythm. Poems describing warriors on their march to a battlefield are bound to be fast as compared to the one by a man expressing his feelings for his lover, in which case the movement should be smoother, slower, and more graceful. A rough, faster and heavy movement is found in MEHLA YA MARUMO, when the poet says,

Ba fentš<sup>ě</sup>e Babinatau

Ba mo lwetš<sup>ě</sup>e kgoš<sup>ě</sup>i Senatla

(Direto tš<sup>ě</sup>a mang le mang in Seš<sup>ě</sup>egotheto:156)

(They have conquered, Babinatau

They have fought for king Senatla)



An aggressive type of voice in the reader's tone adds to the establishment of a particular rhythm suitable for a particular type of poem.

Rhythm is achieved and maintained through the observation and division into syllables of words in each line in a poem. The duration given to each syllable in the first line is continued in the second line. The reader is guided by his knowledge of the language and the understanding of the contents of the poem. It is agreeable that rhythmic patterns in a poem cannot be achieved in the first or even the second reading, hence it is correct to say that the sense of a poem or words suggest the appropriateness of the tempo.

Sound patterning in a poem also affects the rhythm which will either stumble or flow, speed up or slow down depending on the use of hard or soft sounds, long or short words, repetition or rhyme. Example of such experiences are found in the following lines:

1. Hard sounds and long words.

O e kgathile temakgolo Morutišimogolo,  
(Kgogamašego :60)

(He has done his work Great-Teacher)

Here the rhythm stumbles and is bound to be  
slow

2. Soft sounds and short words.

Pelong ya Hilbrow

Pelong ya Berea

(Mokgako:36)

( In the heart of Hilbrow

In the heart of Berea)

The rhythm here is smooth and fast.

Reeves (1966:113 is correct when he says that separating rhythm, words and thought in poetry, is impossible. The poet's ear and intellect support each other in his composition of poems. Conveying meaning, sound, movement and pulse of the poem to the reader, is the responsibility of all words selected. It is therefore the duty of the selected words to give a poem a form that either flows or stumbles, a form whose pulse is slow or fast.

## CONCLUSION

Drawing a line of demarcation between poetry and other literary works, based mainly on the difference in language usage. Poetry is language, though, it can not be said that language is poetry. In an attempt to define poetry, more than half the existing definitions regard language as the essence of poetry. The point is, poetry is language used or organised differently.. The poetic manner of expression is one characteristic that makes it distinctive, contributing towards the reaction of the uniqueness of its quality.

It can also be said that poetic language is 'every poet's own creation'. With the advantage vested in him with the acknowledgement of 'poetic licence', the poet is free to extort or twist the ordinary practical language. Mental processes at times interact with cultural millieu to create new meanings for old form. Words from one category may be paired with others from other categories (tactile + visual) or may be transferred from one category to another (from tactile to visual). Language in poetry serves as a mediator between man and his experiences.

Lentsoane provides, with language as his medium of expression, many of the clues necessary for the understanding of the type of world from which his resources are drawn. He tactfully drives the audience's imagination to a point with his rhetorical questioning, indirectly avoiding or suggesting solutions to man's ceaseless debate.

Substantiating the above view Serudu (1986:74) words are quoted:

"Lentsoane ke moreti wa leihlo le bogale,  
O kgona go potielala le go tsinkela ditiragalo  
le diphetogo tšeo di diregago tikologong  
ya gagwe. Di tiragalo tšeo nna le wena re sa  
di tšee go tsie, yena o di diriša ka mešogofela  
thetong ya gagwe".

(Lentsoane is a poet with a critical eye, able to go around focusing on events and changes taking place in his environment. Events that you and I do not take notice of, are the ones mostly used in his poetry.)

Testimony to Lentsoane's good work is reflected in the substantial number of researchers who showed interest in it:

1. MAMPA, S.M. : (1) Honours Article - Critical Appreciation  
(2) Masters Dissertation - Protest
- 2 KGOANA. P.O. : Honours Article - Elegies
3. NCHABELENG, C.K. : Article in Limi (Unisa)
4. SERUDU, S.M.: New trend in Northern Sotho Poetry  
(Article in Limi - Unisa)

Placing Lentsoane's poetry in a historical perspective, Mampa (1987:2) says: "Lentsoane is a prolific poet of Northern Sotho from whom many publications on poetry can still be expected". The implication is that, history is still going to repeat itself - Lentsoane is still going to produce more poetry. What Mampa (1987:58) has also realised is that, "by reading his (Lentsoane) poetry, one will be able to identify him with his time and situation easily."

In support to Mampa's view is again Serudu (1986:75) who says: "When viewed from the period of their publications most of Lentsoane's poetry addresses problems of the time of their publications and also of the future."

Approaching the study of the language of poetry from the linguistic point of view, has revealed that the meaning of a word is a collection of organised recollections of its many occurrences in different verbal contexts, that meanings of words in isolation are sometimes misleading.

This very approach simplified the process of analyzing, describing and explaining basic concepts against which the poets language is studied, more especially with regard to methodology and terminology. The approach further evince that meaning in poetry rests on the choice and organisation of sounds, words and sentences , and also on the relationship between them.

Deductions or discoveries made from the analysis are that exclusivity in the language of poetry comes to a climax with:

- 1) The use of legitimate deviations from the norm,
- 2) The use of imagery and figures of speech, and
- 3) The acquisition of a particular form.

Poetry is more concise and evocative than novel, play and short story. The poet uses figurative language to evoke figurative meaning. With the help of deceptions, intimidating issues are cordoned off meanwhile hidden information is being exposed. Less restrictions on the part of the poet's language usage, increases his latitude to bringing out joyous and sorrowful feelings with ease. By giving a particular form to his language, the poet is able to call his product, 'poetry'. It rhymes, it has got strong and weak, stresses, and it has got rhythm.

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