

**A CASE STUDY OF SOME SOCIAL VARIETIES OF
NORTHERN SOTHO AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE
STANDARD VARIETY**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that **A CASE STUDY OF SOME SOCIAL VARIETIES OF NORTHERN SOTHO AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE STANDARD VARIETY** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: 
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Date: _____

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SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation investigates some social varieties of Northern Sotho spoken in Makhutswe. Traditionally, these varieties have not been recognised because researchers have focussed mainly on linguistic differences which characterise the so called Northern Sotho 'dialects'. Most of these dialects are mutually intelligible and they occur within identifiable regional boundaries. They are also mutually intelligible to speakers of the standard form known as Northern Sotho.

In this dissertation, it is argued that the term 'dialect' is far too restricted to account for the various spoken forms which characterise the Northern Sotho language. In order to address this, the term 'language variety' is introduced to deal with the shortcomings of the traditional approach to language differences. A detailed discussion of social varieties occurring in Makhutswe is presented. These varieties can be categorised as 'closed social varieties' or 'open social varieties'. The closed social varieties are secret in nature and examples of these include Bodika, Bogwera and Bjale. The 'open social varieties' are overt in nature and examples of such varieties are Mawa a ditaola and Malopo.

Key Terms:

Social varieties, standard variety, Koma, traditional healers, mourning variety, Malopo, politicians' variety, marriage variety

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 PREAMBLE

This study investigates social varieties of Northern Sotho which are determined by social, religious and political causes. This study was prompted by the fact that the traditional approach to the study of African languages look into account only regional varieties which differ from the standard variety. In this study, the researcher investigates language varieties used during social gatherings by speakers in Makhutswe, an area near Tzaneen.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to present a detailed description of Northern Sotho social varieties spoken in the Makhutswe area. According to scholars who subscribe to the traditional approach, these social varieties should not be given the status of language varieties.

1.3 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- (i) To determine how language reflects underlying social differences.
- (ii) To investigate the significance of different social varieties.
- (iii) To describe the relationship between the standard variety and various social varieties.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Perhaps it would be relevant to open the discussion by investigating the manner in which studies such as the one reported on in this dissertation were once perceived. This study would have been regarded as a study of dialect. In the traditional sense, the term 'dialect' refers to a regional variety of the standard language. In this instance, dialects can be distinguished from languages per se as they are regarded as a different form of the same language. As a result, Kutšwe, Pai, Tlokwa and Lobedu, amongst others, should be regarded as different forms of the Northern Sotho language. In this regard Petyt (1980:11) notes:

Using a language necessarily involves using one of its dialects, whether, in the case of English, this is the dialect of Yorkshire, Berkshire, Suffolk or the Standard English.

Unlike traditional dialectologists, modern dialectologists interpret the term 'dialect' to mean any speech variety, whether it be the variety used by the educated, the illiterate, juveniles, women, men, religious groups, or members of a community located in a particular geographical area. This approach poses a problem to people who still subscribe to the traditional approach. Such people only accommodate the term 'variety' when it is used in a particular geographical area, and not when it is used to refer to a variety used in religious practices etc.

1.5 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

The Makhutswe people belong to the Northern Sotho group and they follow several cultural practices which dictate differences in the use of the language. In the past, the differences in language used in cultural practices were ignored or not taken into consideration. As in the case of the standard dialect, namely Pedi, other regional spoken forms of Northern Sotho such as Lobedu and Pulane have been researched and studied. All these spoken forms are known as dialects of Northern Sotho but not necessarily as regional dialects. The people of Makhutswe, like other Northern Sotho groups, are forced to use the standard variety instead of Khutšwe which is actually their spoken language.

As indicated above, there are several Northern Sotho dialects and they are not classified in the same manner by various scholars. Mokgokong (1966), Van Wyk (1969) and Van Warmelo (1935) differ in their classification of Khutšwe and other Northern Sotho dialects such as Lobedu and Pulana, although they all base their classification on geographical area. Their classifications are discussed in the following sections.

1.5.1 Van Warmelo (1935)

1.5.1.1 Central dialect cluster

Pedi (Maroteng), Pedi (mixed), Tau, Kwena, Ntwane, Kone, Tswako, Mohlala (Schoonoord), Nareng of Tswako, Mohlala (Pilgrims' Rest), Mphogo (Kgwedi), Nkawane and Roka.

1.5.1.2 Eastern dialect cluster

Khutšwe, Pai and Pulana.

1.5.1.3 North-eastern dialect cluster

Lobedu, Phalaborwa, Šai (Mašišimala), Mametša, Letswalo, Nareng, Mahlo, Mmamabolo, Kolobe, Kgaga and Hananwa

1.5.1.4 Northern dialect cluster

Tlokwa, Birwa, Kgaga (Kone, Mphahlele), Kgaga (Kone, Tšhwene), Kgaga (Kone, Mathabatha), Kgaga (Kone), Kone, Kone (Matlala), Molepo, Tlou, Mojapelo, Hlalerwa, Birwa, Tlaloga, Kwěna, Hananwa, Tsorwana and Těbělě

1.5.2 Van Wyk (1969)

1.5.2.1 Central dialect cluster

- Pedi (also spoken by the Tau, Masemola, Kwena, and other tribes)
- Kone
- Certain dialects of the Pietersburg district, inter alia Mamabolo
- Kopa (which today has a very restricted occurrence)

1.5.2.2 East-central dialect cluster

- Kutswe
- Pulana

1.5.2.3 Northern dialect cluster

- Tlokwa (also spoken by the Kgaga and Kone tribes north of Pietersburg)
- Hananwa (also spoken by the Kwena, Moletsi and Birwa)

1.5.2.4 Eastern dialect cluster

- Pai

1.5.2.5 North-eastern dialect cluster

- Lobedu (also spoken by the Khaha, the Letswalo and probably other smaller tribes)
- Phalaborwa (probably also spoken by the Tlhabine, the Kone of Maake, the Narene and the Tubatse)
- Mahlo

1.5.3 Mokgokong (1966)

Mokgokong, on the other hand, has classified them differently:

1.5.3.1 The Pedi-like cluster:

This cluster includes Pedi (Mamone and Mohlaletsi), Tau (Masemola, Nchabeleng, Marishane, Nkadimeng, Phaahla and Kgaphola), Kone (Maserumole, Phokwane, Marangrang, Mathabatha, Tshwene, Maja), Roka (Nkwana) and Moletlane.

1.5.3.2 The Tlokwa-like cluster

This cluster includes Tlokwa, Hananwa, Matlala, Moletši, and Mamabolo.

1.5.3.3 The Lobedu-like cluster

- Lobedu, Phalaborwa, Khaga and Dzwabo are included in this cluster.

1.5.3.4 The Kopa-like cluster

- This cluster comprises Kopa, Ndebele-Sotho, Molepo, Mothiba, Mothapo, and Makgoba.

1.5.3.5 The Pulana-Khutswe cluster

According to Mokgokong (1966: 129), if Ziervogel's (1954) work on Eastern Sotho is taken into account, the two dialects of Kutswe and Pulana could form a fifth cluster.

1.5.3.6 Pai

Mokgokong (1966: 129) is of the opinion that this dialect should be classified as a cluster on its own. He quotes Ziervogel(1954) who observes the following in regard to Pai:

The relationship between Pulana-Kutswe on the one hand and Pai on the other is not sufficiently close to warrant the three dialects equal status within the subgroup. It is evident that Pai is in many respects quite different from Pulana-Khutswe.

1.5.4 The debate on the classification

Researchers such as Mokgokong (1966), Van Warmelo (1935) and Van Wyk (1969) have characterised dialects such as Pulana, Roka, Pai, Hananwa and Tlokwa as dialects of Northern Sotho. The comparison of their three classifications gives an idea of the difference of opinion which can exist amongst Northern Sotho dialectologists. These three scholars based their classifications on different criteria. One of the reasons that such divergent classifications exist today is that there is insufficient linguistic data available on these dialects to establish a well-founded classification.

In order to confront the problem raised by these differences in classification one needs to examine Francis' (1983: 1) definition. He defines dialects as equivalent to:

... varieties of a language used by groups smaller than the total community of speakers of the language.

Traditionally, scholars such as Mokgokong (1966), Van Warmelo (1935) and Van Wyk (1969) refer to different speech varieties spoken in different regions as dialects. According to these researchers, a dialect was primarily defined in terms of:

- (i) The difference which existed between the dialect and the standard language and

- (ii) The geographical region in which such differences occurred.

In a traditional sense, a dialect was regarded as a language variety of lower status than the standard language, and usually spoken by illiterate or poorly educated people or people with a low social standing. In later developments, the term dialect came to be interpreted as referring to any speech variety, be it the variety used by the educated, the illiterate, juveniles, women, men, religious groups, or members of a community situated within a particular geographical area.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis in this study is:

When people interact as groups at a social level, they eventually develop a distinctive mode of communication.

The people of Makhutswe serve as a good example of this hypothesis.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study of dialectology is the study of dialects. Unfortunately, there is no consensus among dialectologists on a definition of the concept of dialect. According to Louwrens (1995: 1), to the traditional dialectologist the term 'dialect' refers to a regional variety of the standard language. According to this approach, dialect is primarily defined in terms of the differences which exist between the

dialect and the standard language in a geographical region. Furthermore, Louwrens (1995: 1) says

... a dialect, in the traditional sense, was looked upon as language variety of a lower status than the standard language, usually spoken by illiterate or poorly educated people or people with a low social standing.

In this instance, one would regard Khutšwe, spoken in Tzaneen, Hananwa spoken in Blouberg and Pulana spoken in Bushbuckridge as dialects of Northern Sotho.

In the modern approach, however, the term dialect has a different meaning altogether. The use of the term 'variety' is neutral in the sense that it refers to any form of speech such as idiolect, dialect, register and standard language. In support of this Petyt (1980:27) observes:

The more recent use of variety is a neutral term for any form of language considered for some purposes as a single entity.

The term 'variety' is neutral in the sense that it can refer to any form. Social varieties are based on social groups but also depend on several factors such as social class, religion and ethnicity. Wardhaugh (1992: 132) believes that

...a social dialect would be a variety associated with a specific social class or group, marking that class or group off from the other classes or groups.

According to Mulaudzi (1999:124), '[t]he term "social varieties" refers to varieties of certain groups regardless of the geographical area from which they come'.

Traditionally, the term 'dialect' was perceived as referring to a regional variety of the standard language; the focus was on the spoken language used in a specific region or area. In the modern view, dialect refers to any speech variety which is located within a particular geographical area.

1.7.1 The debate on 'dialect' and 'variety'

Traditionally, the term 'dialect' was perceived as referring to a regional variety of the standard language and the geographical region in which such differences occurred. In the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (Hawker and Waite, 2001:331) dialect is defined as:

Forms of speech peculiar to district, class, or person, subordinate variety of a language with distinguishable vocabulary, pronunciation or idioms.

Hawker and Waite (2001:331) add:

... a vocabulary and a way of using it prevalent in one or more countries, method of expression, words and their use, faculty of speech, person's style of expressing himself.

With regard to these definitions, there is no precise dividing line between dialect and language variety.

The following quotation from Fries (1962:43) provides a more comprehensive explanation of the terms `dialect` and `language`:

Language and dialect ... are only two names for the same thing, as looked at from different points of view. Any language expressions used by community, however limited and humble, for the purposes of communication and as an instrument of thought, is a language; no one would think of crediting its speakers with the gift of dialect but not of language. On the other hand, there is no tongue in the world to which we should not with perfect freedom and perfect propriety apply the name of dialect, when considering it as one of a body of related forms of speech. The science of language has democratized our views on such points as these: it has taught us that one man's speech is just as much a language as another man's; that even the most cultivated tongue that exists is only the dialect of a certain class in a certain locality – both class and locality limited, though the limits may be wide ones.

Francis (1983: 1) defines dialect

...as varieties of the language used by groups smaller than the total community of speakers of the language.

According to this definition, the concept of dialect encompasses much more than the speech of isolated groups of speakers located in identifiable geographical areas. Petyt (1980: 11) adds to what Francis (1983: 1) says:

In popular usage the term dialect and language are sometimes opposed to other forms of speech with no corresponding written form, or those used by uneducated people labeled 'dialect' and contrasted with the true 'languages' of the literate and educated. Thus, for example, we often hear the speech of African or South American tribes referred to as dialect, or an English farm worker of minimal education may be described as speaking a dialect; the educated person from any of these countries would on the other hand be said to speak a language—French, Spanish, English or whatever. A distinction along similar lines which we shall note below, is to speak of 'standard English' on the one hand (with the implication that this is the real 'language') and 'dialect' on the other.

Dialects can therefore be distinguished from languages because they are regarded as different forms of the same language, as Petyt (1980:11) explains:

...using one of its dialects whether, in the case of English, this is the dialect of Yorkshire, Berkshire, Suffolk or the Standard English dialect.

A problem arises when dialects are defined as different forms of the same language. It is not clear how different two forms need to be before they can be considered to be different languages rather than dialects.

As far as the problem identified by Petyt (1980) is concerned, Louwrens (1995) observes the following with regard to Northern Sotho:

Researchers will not hesitate to characterize varieties such as Lobedu, Pai, Hananwa, etc. as dialects of Northern Sotho. The reason for this is that these differences are never quantified so, for example, the differences between Pai and standard Northern Sotho are much more numerous than the differences between Hananwa and Standard Northern Sotho.

Nonetheless, both Pai and Hananwa are regarded on an equal footing as dialects of Northern Sotho. On the other hand, there are no clearly definable reasons why certain minor dialects such as those spoken around Pietersburg [Matlala, Moletsi etc.], Tzaneen [Dwabo, Khaba], Bushbuckridge [Pulana, Khutšwe, etc.] are listed as dialects of Northern Sotho in academic writing, since there exists usually no information on the linguistic structure of these dialects.

Louwrens (1995) has identified two issues which make the classification of varieties as dialects of Northern Sotho difficult:

- i. The criteria which are used when these varieties are characterised as dialects of Northern Sotho.
- ii. Where the line between language and dialect should be drawn.

In South Africa, communities which speak different dialects such as Lobedu, Dzwabo, Tlokwa and Phalaborwa, settled in specific regions in ancient times. As a result, the traditional notion of dialect is particularly applicable to the linguistic situation in South Africa; although it is very tempting to adopt such a traditional view for the investigation of Northern Sotho dialects, it must also be noted that the regional variety within modern dialectology refers to much more than merely the speech varieties of those who are settled in specific geographical areas.

1.7.2 Standard variety (language)

A standard language is any dialect that has been written down and that has dictionaries and grammar books that determine its 'correct' usage. A standard language is therefore one that is used in more or less the same way by all members of that speech community.

Trudgill (1983:17) highlights the functions of the standard variety in the following definition of Standard English:

Standard English is that variety of English which is usually taught in schools and to non-native speakers learning the language. It is also the variety which is normally spoken by educated people and used in broadcast and similar situations.

According to the researchers mentioned above, German missionaries played a major role in the development of Northern Sotho as a written language. Kosch (1993:3) notes:

Through Geriachshoop, as the station was called, the Germans gained a foothold in the Northern Sotho area. The dialect spoken in the immediate surroundings was Kopa, but missionary work was soon extended to speakers of the Pedi dialect.

The aim of these missionaries was to develop a writing system for Northern Sotho which they could use to spread the Gospel. They made a huge contribution in the field of Bible translation. Mokgokong (1996:118-119) remarks with regard to the Northern Sotho Bible:

By historical accident, however, their [i.e. the Bakopa's] language has had a marked influence on the written form of Northern Sotho as evidenced in the first Northern Sotho Bible which was a mixture of Pedi and Kopa.

As far as the relationship between early Bible translations and the development of standard Northern Sotho is concerned, Kosch (1993: 3) notes that

[t]he dialect in which missionaries first recorded the Bible invariably became the standard language, and Pedi is no exception.

The fact that Pedi became the foundation for what is today known as standard Northern Sotho can therefore be regarded as a historical coincidence. If the German missionaries had started their work amongst the speakers of another dialect such as Tlokwa, Khutswe or Lobedu, and had the Bible first been translated into one of these dialects, the chances are very good that such would be the present day standard language.

Richards, Platt and Platt (1992: 351) define the standard language variety as

... the variety of a language which has the highest status in a community or nation which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated native speakers of the language.

A standard variety is generally:

- (a) Used in the news media and in literature;
- (b) Described in dictionaries and grammars;
- (c) Taught in schools and taught to non-native speakers when they learn the language as a foreign language.

According to Crystal (1993:325), the term standard is used in sociolinguistics

... to refer to a prestige variety of language used within a speech community. 'Standard languages / dialect / varieties' cut across regional differences, providing a unified means of communication, and thus an institutionalized norm which can be used in the mass-media, in teaching the language to foreigners, and so on. Linguistic forms of dialects which do not conform to this norm are then referred to as sub-standard or (with a less pejorative prefix) non-standard.

In the case of Standard Northern Sotho, the missionaries played an important role, but Petyt (1980:32 -33) observes the following with regard to the equalisation of language:

If a society is relatively homogenous [i.e. with few important social or political divisions] the various dialects which have developed may exist alongside each other on an equal basis. This situation exists today in some countries and did so in Western Europe up to the Middle Ages; all varieties of language were equally acceptable, and a person spoke and wrote in his native dialect. But just as in ancient Greece, where each city-state had formerly used its own dialect in both spoken and written forms until wider communication led to the dialect of Athens being adopted as the common dialect, so in many other countries improved communications, a more unified nation and a more developed

civilization have resulted in one of the dialects becoming the vehicle for everything that affects the nation as a whole.

In most instances, the dialect which has been adopted as a common dialect plays a dominant role in social economics and cultural activities. As a result, such a dialect attains dominant status for non-linguistic reasons, which makes it possible for this dialect to enjoy linguistic prestige. Petyt (1980:32-33) explains:

It serves as a standard against which the usage of other groups is measured, and speakers of other dialects begin to feel inferior about their vernacular variety and attempt to use the more prestigious dialect, at least in some of their activities, while their native dialect, if retained at all, is reserved for more intimate situations. The local dialects may thus begin to have connotations of lower social or cultural status and to be used mainly by groups of this status.

Such a 'standard language' usually originates as the dialect of a particular region, but it may develop away from this, for two reasons, firstly, while retaining its basic character as dialect of that part of the country, it may as it is more widely used, acquire some features from the dialects of these areas. Secondly, the popular speech of the region where the standard has arisen continues to adopt innovations, not all of which find their way into the standard language ...

Once established, a standard language may become actually or virtually obligatory in many areas of activity, such as the law courts, the government, official ceremonies, and so on. It therefore usually becomes the medium or at least an object of education, with the result that the non-standard dialects, though in no way inferior as linguistic systems, frequently come to be regarded as sub-standard and incorrect.

This picture painted by Petyt reflects the current situation with regard to Northern Sotho: Pedi has become the standard official language. This status has paved the way for this dialect's use in the media, schools and in official communication, and other dialectical forms are viewed as sub-standard.

Louwrens (1995: 78) observes that, with regard to Northern Sotho as a language:

It is important that whenever we speak of Standard Northern Sotho we should be aware of the historical factors which gave rise to what we today know as the standard from a purely linguistic, and more particularly a dialectological point of view. Today standard language is also but another variety of Northern Sotho since this standard variety has become the common means of communication and instruction throughout the Northern Sotho region which comprises a number of dialects. It came to be known as Northern Sotho. Nowadays there is a growing tendency to refer to this standard variety as Pedi of course this is seen as political influence, but as has already been indicated above,

clearly identifiable differences exist between the standard variety and the original dialect which served as its basis. In simple terms this means that, from a linguistic point of view, standard Northern Sotho and Pedi are not one and the same thing. It is therefore not scientifically correct to use the terms standard Northern Sotho and Pedi as synonyms.

When a standard language is selected as the language to be used by central government it can be called an official language. Standard Northern Sotho is based mainly on the Pedi variety. In addition, when considering Northern Sotho's situation it should be clear that there is no linguistic reason whatsoever for us to elevate standard Northern Sotho to a more prestigious position than other dialects such as Lobedu, Hananwa, Tlokwa or Pai.

1.7.3 Social varieties

Mulaudzi (1999:124) describes social varieties as varieties which are not determined by geographical area. The existence of social varieties is determined by various factors, such as occupation, education, religious practice, class, politics, sex, age and culture. These factors appear to be related fairly directly to how people speak. The existence in a speech community of a social distinction such as class and occupation gives rise to differential rates of linguistic change, favouring the creation of new speech differences or the preservation of existing ones.

Hudson (1980: 28), quoting Bolinger, observes:

There is no limit to the ways in which human beings league themselves together for self-identification, security, gain, amusement, worship or any of the purposes that are held in common, consequently there is no limit to the number and variety of speech communities that are to be found in society.

Social varieties are based on social groups but also depend on several factors, such as social class, religion and ethnicity. Wardhaugh (1992:132) says:

A social dialect would be a variety associated with a specific social class or group, marking that class or group off from other classes or groups.

On the other hand, Ferguson and Gumperz (1960:) believe:

Any group of speakers of language x which regards itself as a close social unit will tend to express its group. The existence within a speech community of social distinctions such as those of caste, class or professional guild therefore gives rise to differential rates of linguistic change, favouring the creation of new speech differences or existing ones.

The social varieties in Makhutswe may be divided into two groups: 'closed' varieties and 'open' varieties. 'Rural social varieties' refer to spoken forms across all regional boundaries. According to Mulaudzi (1999:124):

...Their existence depends on social groups rather than physical boundaries or artificial 'boundaries'.

With regard to some social varieties, Saville-Troike (1982:790) notes:

...varieties of languages are often used when the purpose is to be secretive or to deceive.

This is illustrated by the following spoken forms used in Northern Sotho at **dikoma** (initiation schools):

- Bjale
- Bokgopa
- Bodika
- Bogwera

These varieties are secret in nature in Northern Sotho. As Mulaudzi (1999:124) puts it:

Most of the lexical items and expressions of these secretive varieties are not standardized because they are restricted either to males or females.

Some varieties, such as marriage, mawa a ditaola, Malopo and others are characterised by lexical items and expressions which are also used in the standard variety. Brook (1979:13) notes in this regard:

Sometimes a variety of language seems to depend not on the people using it but on the occasion when it is used.

In support of this observation, Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens (1964:487) claim that a social variety is selected because of its appropriateness to a given situation.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section focuses on research, population sampling and data collection procedures. The research data was collected during field trips to the twelve villages in the Makhutswe area that the researcher was able to visit. Data was collected by interviewing various individuals including traditional doctors, indunas and parents. In addition to these interviews, questionnaires were administered to all these participants.

In an effort to cover as much of the area of Makhutswe as possible, the researcher engaged clan research assistants who collected information during June and July of 2009, when it was time for **lebollo** (circumcision). The researcher also spent some time observing how the social varieties were used as languages of instruction in schools in Makhutswe.

The researcher took advantage of the information and help which was freely given by members of the royal family and elderly people in the villages. **Koma** (initiation school) and **Mawa a ditaola** (consultation through divining dice) was also gathered in this study through the use of questionnaires and the analysis of curriculum documents. The interviews allowed the researcher to probe more deeply into some of the questions. Findings from interviews revealed the existence of efforts being made by different social groups and institutions in Makhutswe.

1.8.1 The research design

A descriptive survey method was used to collect the primary data required in the study. It was found to be the most appropriate design for a study of this nature.

The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature and the researcher had to carefully record what was observed and discussed during interviews. Results obtained were quantified and described. This method naturally places the study within the ethnographic approach which fits appropriately into the qualitative research paradigm. Ethnography relies heavily on listening to and interviewing of participants.

1.8.2 Population and sampling

Representative samples from each target group were selected in all the twelve villages of Makhutswe which participated in the study. The villages from which samples were selected were:

- Mošate

- Ballon
- Lorraine
- Hlohlokwe
- Sofaya
- Madeira
- Makgaung
- Bismark
- Enable
- Butswana
- Turkey
- Metz

1.8.3 Research instruments

(a) The questionnaire

A questionnaire is a series of carefully planned and approximately worded questions or items on a specific subject set down on paper and provided with spaces where the respondent can fill in the answer by putting a mark in the appropriate space. In this study a questionnaire was used to extract data that was embedded deep in people's minds or in their attitudes, feelings or reactions. This instrument enabled the researcher to cover a wide area with the minimum money, time and effort. The instrument also allowed greater uniformity in the way questions were asked and this enhanced comparability of the responses. The questionnaire instrument was self-administered and this gave the researcher an opportunity to

explain to the participants the purpose of the research and other aspects that required clarification.

(b) Interviews

Collins, du Plooy and Grobbelaar, (2000:177) define an interview as ‘a face to face meeting between two or more people in which the interviewer asks questions while the respondent answers back’. In this study the interview was used to collect data. The main advantage of the interview is that it is flexible and adaptable to individual situations. It was used as the second instrument to make up for the weaknesses of the questionnaire. The interview method enabled the researcher to probe vague or inadequate answers. It also allowed the researcher to remain in command of the situation throughout the investigation.

(c) Document analysis

Data gathered from various villages in Makhutswe were completed and also assessed

(d) Listening

Listening as a research technique consists of gathering information from the villages through relevant informants. Listening has a shortcoming, though, in that it relies exclusively on the researcher’s perceptions which makes it more susceptible to bias.

1.8.4 Data analysis procedure

Processing of collected data was both qualitative and quantitative. Simple quantitative methods of data processing and analysis were used. About 95% of the inhabitants of Makhutswe contributed towards the development of this dissertation.

1.9 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study embraces some social varieties spoken in the Makhutswe area which are dependent on factors such as social class, religion and ethnicity. A detailed discussion of the following social varieties will be provided:

1.9.1 Koma (initiation school) – various types of koma

A koma is an initiation school for both boys and girls. They are given lessons and also rules on a daily basis. Lessons and activities are different every day, and there are two stages to the instruction at both boys' and girls' schools.

STAGE 1

Bodika (first initiation of boys) – boys undergo compulsory circumcision.

STAGE 2

Bogwera (second initiation at boys' schools) – boys wear a costume made of grass. This is not compulsory.

STAGE 1

Bjale (first initiation at girls' schools) – a kraal is built beside a river and the girls live there for some weeks. This is compulsory.

STAGE 2

Bokgopa (second initiation at girls' schools) – this is done at home and is not compulsory.

1.9.2 Mawa a ditaola

This refers to the position of the divining dice. The position of the dice inform the diviner of the nature of the problem or disease.

1.9.3 Mourning variety

This variety is associated with grieving when a member of the family or community passes away. In some instances, this variety is also used when rituals related to the death of a member of the family or community are performed.

1.9.4 Malopo

Lelopo comes into the existence when a person is possessed by the spirit of a departed ancestor. When lelopo is around, a suitable variety is used.

1.9.5 Politicians' variety

This variety is used by politicians for the promotion of their aims and ambitions. Politicians use the existing lexical items and expressions with a semantic shift to create a sense of trust among their listeners. Words like viva, comrades etc. are used.

1.9.6 Marriage variety

This variety is used by members of families or communities in order to express the concept of marriage and also its values and norms when negotiations for lobola take place. Words like mabotšo (who informed you), monyalo (marriage), mankgakgathe (forgive us) are used.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The modern approach taken in this study covers the use of language in a social context such as mourning, malopo, politics, marriage etc. Traditionally, the term dialect is used in the literature to refer to speech forms which are spoken within certain regional boundaries. Unfortunately, the use of this term in the traditional sense does not embrace other forms of language. In order to address the shortcomings of the traditional usage of the term 'dialect' it is suggested in this study that the term 'variety' be used. This term differs markedly from the traditional term 'dialect'; in other words, the term 'variety' is an umbrella term which includes, amongst others, dialect.

The study reveals that some varieties occur in both rural as well as urban areas. The standard variety is a language which has been chosen as an official language; this is taught and learnt at school. As indicated above, people use the social varieties discussed in this dissertation at social gatherings, initiations schools, political meetings and in marriage negotiations.

CHAPTER 2

THE ORIGINS OF THE MAKHUTSWE/SEKORORO PEOPLE AS PART OF THE NORTHERN SOTHO GROUP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the composition of the Makhutswe people and their historical background, including the influences from other ethnic groups. The existence of various social varieties will be discussed in the chapters following this one.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF NORTHERN SOTHO CLANS

The Northern Sotho speaking people are divided into various groups such as the Bapedi, Baroka, Bakwena and the Banareng. Mokgokong (1966:8-9) points out that:

The Northern Sotho speaking tribes live in several districts of the Northern and North-eastern Transvaal, such as Lydenburg, Pilgrim's Rest, Middelburg, Globersdal, Waterberg, Potgietersrus, Pietersburg, Letaba and Leydsdorp. The most important Northern Sotho group is that formed by the Pedi (Bapedi), Tau (Batau), Roka (Baroka) and Kone (Bakone), who are concentrated in Sekhukhuneland and adjoining areas.

North of the Pedi area, we find the Mphahlele (Ba ga Mphahlele), Tshwene (Ba ga Tshwene), Mathabathe (Ba ga Mathabathe), Matlala (Ba ga Matlala), Dikgale (Ba ga Dikgale), Mothiba (Ba ga Mothiba) and Nkwana (Ba ga Nkwana) tribes, who are all of Kone origin, as well as the Molepo (Ba ga Molepo), Mamabolo (Ba ga Mamabolo), Tlokwa (Batlokwa), Birwa (Babirwa), Kwena (Bakwena), Moletsi and Hananwa (Bahananwa) tribes.

In the North-eastern part of the Sotho area, there are the Lobedu (Balobedu), Phalaborwa (Baphalaborwa, Makhusane, Selwane, Masisimale), Nareng (Banareng, Sekororo and Letswalo), Maake, (Ba ga Maake), Mametsa (Ba ga Mametša) and Thabine (Bathabine).

The Kušwe tribe, which is part of the northern group, is found in the eastern region, mostly in the districts of Pilgrim's Rest, Bushbuckridge and Lydenburg. They inhabit this region together with the Pai tribe who, although comparatively few numerically, have yet maintained their identity.

2.3 ORIGIN OF THE MAKHUTSWE PEOPLE

The Makhutswe people are made up of two clans: (i) the Banareng ba Sekororo/Mahlo (Makhutswe people). Their totem is Nare (the buffalo) or Kgomo (the cow) and they are settled in Makhutswe near Tzaneen; (ii) the Banareng ba ga Letswalo or Mamathola. Their totem is also Nare (the buffalo) or Kgomo (the cow) and they are settled in a place called Metz near Tzaneen.

2.3.1 Ba Letswalo

Banareng ba ga Letswalo have lived in Makhutswe at Metz since 1958. They speak a Northern Sotho variety which is much like Lobedu. This variety occurs only in spoken language and has no written form.

Van Warmelo (1944:3) points out that:

Tradition has it that originally this people lived in a country called Balaodi, which is supposed by them to be around the present town of Sabie in Eastern Transvaal. The first kgoši was Lenokhunokhu I who lived and died there. The next kgoši was Lenokhunokhu II. He led his tribe from Balaodi to the area of the Wolkberg above New Agatha where the clan have lived for the past century. The reason for their departure from Balaodi was the invasion of Makhema, a cannibal tribe from the South. They found a safe place to hide temporarily at Lebjeni, which is in the mountains overlooking the Lepelle or Olifants river.

They moved in a westerly direction past Khegorwane (Lorraine 183), where Timamogolo, a man standing with a large following, got eye-trouble and stayed behind, thus finding the Ba-Mahlo tribe of Sekororo, still living there today.

According to my informants, Mr MS Makwela and Mamarothi Letswalo, the tenth and last wife of the late Kgoši Molalatladi (Ramatau) Letswalo, the two tribes Banareng ba Sekororo/Mahlo and Banareng ba ga Letswalo/Mamathola were

brothers, both from Balaodi. Their reason for leaving Balaodi was that they were looking for greener pastures. On their way they found a safe place to hide at Lwaleng la Makgema (Echo Caves). They then moved in a westerly direction past Khegorwane (Makhutswe). Lorraine... His brother with many followers, developed eye-trouble and stayed behind. The younger brother (Letswalo) continued on his journey and settled at Mabeleke which today is known as Mamathola location near the town of Tzaneen.

Van Warmelo (1944:5) continues the story:

The Letswalo people moved on and settled, true to their mountain-bred nature, at Mabeleke within their present location but a little further west from the present mošate. They found Modiba and Makwela and some other clans in occupation under the Ba ga Mphelo at Ga Makwela or Moritiding, these later being viceroys for the Lobedu rulers. The Letswalo invaders attacked them and the Mphelo overlords fled back to Modjadji whilst the Letswalo took possession of all the neighbouring mountain country.

According to my informants, Mamarothi, the younger brother, paid visits to his brother regularly, each time bringing the tender meat of the Nare (buffalo) and letswalo la Nare (fillet of beef). One day the older brother asked his younger brother: 'Why do you always give me fillet when you come to see me?'

'There are many buffalo in this area', said the younger brother. The elder brother told him that he was Letswalo because he always gave him **letswalo la nare** (fillet of beef). The younger brother replied that he was Mahlo because he had eye problems that could not be cured. That is why today the clans of Letswalo and Mahlo exist.

One of my informants indicated that in 1954 the Baletswalo were forced by the old government to leave the Mamathola location. The government built them two schools, namely Metz Junior Primary and Mamathola Higher Primary. At the same time men were forced to carry identity books. In 1958 the Baletswalo were again forcibly removed in trucks to Metz, a farm in Makhutswe where they are still living to date. In 1959 all women were also forced to carry identity books.

... it was during this time that their farm (Monavein 478) at Mamathola location was allocated to the Forestry Department. This event also took place because the Mamathola (Letswalo) people lived scattered on the Wolkberg mountains at Monavein and they also asked for their own local government and other arable land. The farm Metz 75 was allocated to them. (Van Warmelo, 1944:9)

2.3.2 Ba Mahlo

According to MC Mahlo, one of the Indunas of kgoši Sekororo, the Banareng ba Mahlo or ba ga Sekororo speak the Seroka variety rather than Northern Sotho. Seroka is only spoken in this part of the Lowveld but has no written form. The two

divisions of Banareng ba Sekororo/Mahlo and Banareng ba ga Letswalo/Mamathola are from Balaodi or Bokone. Their reason for leaving Balaodi was that they were looking for greener pastures. On their journey they found a safe place to hide, known as **Lwaleng la Makgema**, meaning grinding stone for cannibals. Today this place is known as Echo Caves. After leaving **Lwaleng la Makgema**, the Bamahlo moved in a westerly direction past Khegorwane until they reached Makhutswe. Mahlo had a large number of followers, but he was unfortunately troubled by his eyes and stayed behind. The younger brother (Letswalo) continued with his journey and settled at Mabeleke, the place which is today known as Mamathola. This area is near the town of Tzaneen. According to my informants, Letswalo received the piece of land through an agreement with the then government and kgoši Sekororo. Another version of this story is that the Banareng ba Mahlo migrated to Mphanama in Sekhukhuneland but could not stay there long. As a result, they moved to Segodikane (Penge mine). Later on they moved on again to Ntswaneng where they still live today, and this place is known as Makhutswe.

According to Mr MC Mahlo who is one of kgoši Sekororo's subjects, kgoši Sekororo has large numbers of followers and his subjects are spread over all eleven villages which are under his jurisdiction. These villages are listed below:

- Mošate where kgoši Mahlo lives
- Ballon
- Lorraine
- Hlohlokwe
- Sofaya

- Madeira
- Makgaung
- Bismark
- Enable
- Butšwana
- Turkey

The members of this tribe, who are the occupants of these villages, are not proper Kone. As Van Warmelo (1944: 28) explains,

...the tribe came to its present haunts from the direction of Bokone, i.e. the south-east, but they are not themselves of Kone origin. After migrating from the direction of Bokone, the tribe first settled at Thukatse, a hill on the Selati Ranch.

In addition, Mr Mahlo says there are ten chiefs who have ruled these tribes and names them as follows:

i Ramahlo



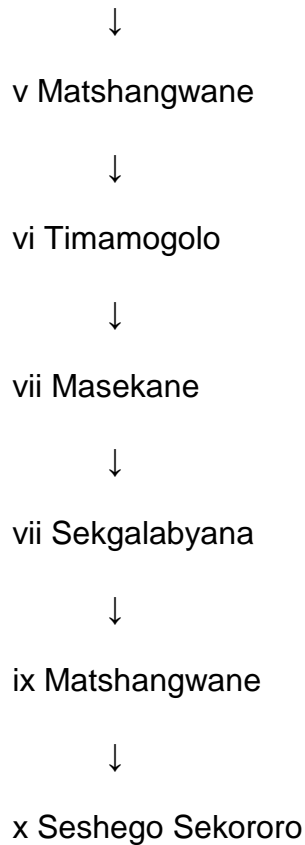
ii Thubisane



iii Ramasete



iv Malobane



The Sekororo tribe has also incorporated the Mohlabe people who are non-Sotho clans. The Mohlabe and Mametša are now considered part of the Sekororo tribe.

2.4 MAIN SECTION OF BANARENG PEOPLE AT MAKHUTSWE

According to my informants, Mr SC Mahlo and Letswalo Marothi, Banareng ba Sekororo/Mahlo and Banareng ba ga Letswalo/Mamathola were brothers, the elder being Mahlo and the younger Letswalo. Banareng ba Mahlo and Letswalo are the main clans of Makhutswe.

According to Mokgokong (1966: 27):

The Nareng, whose totem is **nare** (buffalo) or **kgomo** (bovine), comprise three sections, the Letswalo or Mmamathola who are now settled at a place called Metz in Tzaneen; the Mahlo or Banarene ba ha Sekororo, and the Banareng ba Mmutlana on the farm Putney 290 in the Lulu area of Sekhukhuneland.

The Banareng ba Letswalo speak Lobedu because they were influenced by the Lobedu during the time they spent in Agatha. The Balobedu were their neighbouring tribe and the Banarene ba Sekororo retained their Roka languages as they were from Boroka. The two tribes have as their totem the **Nare** (Buffalo) or **Kgomo** (Cow).

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the history of Banareng ba Sekororo people. They migrated from a place known as Bolaodi or Bokone to their present location. On their arrival here, they incorporated other groups such as the Mohlabé who are part of Batsonga tribe. They also lived together with the Balobedu. The integration of the Banareng with non-Banareng groups influenced their social and cultural practices as well as their spoken language.

CHAPTER 3

'CLOSED' RURAL VARIETIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the social varieties used in various indigenous institutions. The term `social varieties` refers to varieties used by certain groups regardless of the geographical area from which they come (Mulaudzi, 1999: 123). Various factors play an important role in determining the existence of such social varieties. The factors in question are closely related to how a group of people speak, e.g. the group of people attending koma will use the koma variety. A variety such as this is characterised by particular phrases and registers. Wardhaugh (1992: 49) describes registers as `sets of vocabulary items associated with discrete occupational or social groups`.

In instances where different registers are used, there is a tendency to call these special speech registers. In terms of the research topic and in support of the argument of this dissertation, the use of a particular register in spoken language is referred to here as a social variety. Closed rural varieties such as koma and bjale are used in specific indigenous institutions.

3.2 RURAL SOCIAL VARIETIES

Mulaudzi (1999: 124) refers to rural social varieties as

... varieties spoken across all regional boundaries. Their existence depends on social groups rather than physical boundaries or artificial boundaries.

In addition, Saville-Troike (1982: 79) notes that

... varieties of language are often used when the purpose is to be secretive, or to deceive.

Bogwera or bjale are secret institutions in Makhutswe and the varieties used in these institutions are also secret. Most of the lexical items and expressions in these varieties are not standardised because they are restricted to either males or females. Some varieties such as those associated with mourning and marriage are characterised by lexical items and expressions which are also used in the standard variety. As Brook (1979: 13) says:

Sometimes a variety of language seems to depend not on the people using it but on the occasion when it is used.

Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens (1964: 87) support Brook in their observation:

Some varieties are also selected as appropriate to a given situation.

3.2.1 Closed Rural Varieties

Mulaudzi (1999: 125) defines the term 'closed' varieties as '[v]arieties restricted to initiates of the initiation schools'.

In Makhutswe, for example, the use of **bodika** (a stage at male circumcision school) and **bogwera** (also a stage at male circumcision school) varieties are restricted to males who are attending or have attended these institutions. The same applies to **bjale** (a stage of female circumcision) and **bokgopa** (another stage of female circumcision) which are restricted to females who are attending or who have attended these institutions.

(a) **Bodika variety (first stage in initiation of boys)**

People who attend **bodika** use a special language variety. Hudson (1980: 28) defines this type of group as '... a set of people who have something in common linguistically.... As a result, like in any other social activity, there is particular vocabulary and expressions to describe the institution of **bodika**. The discussion in the following paragraphs will illustrate this.

Bodika is an initiation institution for boys. The activities of **bodika** are not meant to be revealed to women, girls or children. Among the Sotho-speaking people, initiation school is not merely an institution, it is a means of investing the initiate with the status of citizenship. In addition to this Monnig (1967: 112) notes that

[a]s an institution it is the means of investing the initiate with the status of citizenship of the tribal community, and of according the potential of

full participation in the social, political and rural activities of the tribe, according to the sex of the initiate.

The noun **bodika** is derived from the verb **go dika** meaning to encircle. In this instance, men who were previously circumcised join hands together to assist the **mašoboro** (uninitiated boys) to graduate to manhood.

According to one of the informants, Mr Samuel Seokoma, the attendance at **bodika** (a stage of male circumcision school) was traditionally compulsory for all boys of the appropriate age, usually between six and twelve years. He insisted that these days many parents do not allow their children to attend the initiation schools because of their Christian beliefs. The arrival of the missionaries among the Basotho-speaking people changed the perception parents have about **bodika**. Some discouraged their sons from attending **bodika**, influenced by the education brought by missionaries. Those parents who wanted to maintain the culture, however, sent their sons to **bodika** at an early age.

In addition, one of the informants, Mr Seokoma, indicated that as initiation (**go bolla**) centres around the son or grandson of a chief, it may be necessary to wait for such a boy to reach the appropriate age. Mr Seokoma's statement is supported by Stayt (1931: 127):

It is held at intervals of about five years, provided that at least one of the chief's sons takes part in the ceremony...

Koma (a Northern Sotho word for initiation school) is an umbrella term for **bodika** (a first stage of initiation) and **bogwera-friendship** (the second stage of initiation). **Bodika**, like **bogwera**, is under the personal direction and control of the chief. The term **koma** (a Northern Sotho word for initiation school) is always associated with the activity of **go bolla**, meaning to circumcise.

To start the initiation (**go bolla**), the chief fetches a leather bag containing the foreskins of previous initiates. The foreskins are roasted on **lebea** (a piece of broken clay pot) and mixed with **tšhidi ya mošate** (chief's medicine used to treat initiates). This medicine is also used to safeguard the initiates at the site where the initiation lodge is built. Sometimes a traditional doctor is hired to use his medicine to protect initiates against witchcraft.

When the initiation school is about to start the expression **ge koma e hlaga** is used. This expression informs the villagers and other people that the circumcision school is about to start. When the initiation school starts, the chief makes it a great occasion, and neighbouring chiefs are invited to attend the ceremony. By **mahube a banna** (before daybreak), or early in the morning of that day, the boys will have their hair shaved off. They also cast off their old clothes, commoners wear skins prepared from goats and sons of the nobles wear skins prepared from sheep.

After this activity boys are assembled at **kgorong** (the chief's place). **Baditi** (boys who were initiated during the previous session) entertain the men who slept at **kgorong** (chief's place) all night. **Kgošana ya mphato**, the diminutive form of the noun **kgoši** (the leader of the initiates/ boys), the son or grandson of the chief, will

always lead the boys, followed by others of lower rank. The last boys should be **balata**, meaning the followers/servants (boys who are not from chief's family). **Rabadia** (the headman of the initiation school) holds the **meretlwa** (thin sticks for lashing boys) which have been smeared with **tšhidi ya mošate (o fotlilwe)** (medicine prepared from tshidi fruit). He lashes the boys on their backs starting with the **kgošana ya mphato** (junior leader of circumcision school) and ending with the last **molata** (follower/servant). According to Mr Seokoma, if a boy is lashed with **moretlwa** and later on manages to escape from the initiation school, he will become mad or die because of this **tšhidi ya mošate**.

The following morning **Rabadia** will blow the **lepapate** (the kudu horn used to alert people to gather at the chief's place) and all the boys, accompanied by **baditi** and men move to **thabeng/morotong** (at the mountain) where the boys will be circumcised. **Thipana** (the man who circumcises the boys) does the work of initiation, and the foreskins are collected to use to make medicine (**tšhidi**) in the following session.

When the circumcision (**lebollo**) takes place, the boys take their place one by one on the **sehlabo** (the stone where they sit during the operation). At this moment the initiates are surrounded by loudly singing men. The process of circumcision should be completed before sunrise, and the boys are then led to stand in the river. As the initiation takes place during winter, the cold water helps to relieve or numb the pain; Stayt (1931: 127) observes that "...the school lasts for three months and is always held in winter". After the circumcision process has been completed at Makhutswe, the men return home, singing joyously, to prove to the women and

uninitiated children that nothing has happened. In the meantime, the boys will rest and nurse their wounds. The **baditi** will be building the initiation lodge, known as **moroto**. The initiates will spend the nights there for the duration of the session. **Moroto** is a fairly large, temporary structure fashioned from wooden poles lashed together in a lattice-work. The whole structure is covered with grass and the branches of trees and shrubs. Boys are required to fetch **motšala** (water) on their own. While the boys are at initiation school, women are required to prepare meals twice a day at home. **Mogale** (thick, unsalted, maize meal) is used to prepare porridge and this is poured into a wooden bowl (**mogopo**). At a given time the women gather at the chief's place and sing some songs and the **baditi** will come and fetch the bowls from them. **Baditi** serve the boys the porridge according to their rank.

According to one informant, Mr Seokoma, things have changed over the years. Every family that has a **modika** (boy who was initiated during a previous session) has to pay a sum of money called **sehlahle** (money that is paid in order for the boys to be circumcised). With this money the family buys a bag of maize meal for the **baditi** who use it to cook for themselves at initiation school. The families also provide **sešebo** (vegetables and meat), and sometimes even go hunting. **Baditi** build a sort of table with sticks (**sehladi**). The cook puts the porridge on the table and all the boys kneel down and eat from the table.

The main aims of the **bodika** in Northern Sotho are to:

- Perform **pollo** (circumcision), which takes place at the beginning of the session, and is usually accepted as sufficient proof that an individual has attended **koma**.
- Teach **melao** (laws), which must be kept secret and which serve, in the case of a stranger, as a means of ascertaining whether he has been initiated. (*Motho yo a bolotšego o tsebja ka melao.*)
- Instil **boikokobetšo** (obedience). The boys receive harsh treatment in order to teach them to be obedient.

Badikana (boys at initiation school) are taught to be obedient by being punished for every little mistake they make. According to Mr Seokoma, this harsh treatment is part of **koma**.

When the initiation school closes a big feast is held at the **morotong** (initiation lodge) and this celebration is expressed by the phrase **ge koma e aloga**, or closure of the initiation school. **Ge koma e aloga** is uttered when the initiates have completed their lessons satisfactorily, and this is regarded as a symbol of maturity.

Mantlakalana (initiates who perform by dancing during the closing ceremony) entertain the audience while the initiates who have graduated wash **kgetli** (wash off the white clay painted on the bodies of initiates). This process of changing the colour of their body symbolises the transition from **bodikana** to **dialogane** (the survivors). The noun **dialogane** comes from the verb stem **-aloga** (growth).

Before the initiated boys return home, the men break up the lodge and the boys stand in queues according to their rank and receive a last lash from the **Rabadia** (master of the initiation school). The boys run to the chief's place without looking back and **Rabadia** sets fire to the lodge.

If a death occurs during the session the parent (father) of the deceased boy will be told on that particular day, before the boys arrive at the chief's place. Men are supposed to go to the deceased's family and break up **mogopo** or **sego** (clay or calabash utensils). The breakage of these utensils is a sign that their son is dead. In **bodika** variety it is said '**o llwe ke koma**' ('the circumcision school has swallowed him'). This expression (personification) associates the death of the initiate with circumcision activities. As a result, the parent has no right to ask what happened.

Those parents whose children are alive will sing joyfully to honour their children. Presents such as chains of sweets, beads and blankets are placed around their neck and shoulders. Each parent collects his or her own son but if he/she still owes **sehlahle**, the child remains with the chief. Those initiates who completed **bodika** are known as **magaola**. The name **legaola** (one who still owes money and cannot go to the secondary level of **bogwera**). They keep this name for six months, and in the seventh month the second stage of initiation school, known as **bogwera**, begins. These days, because of formal education, this process has changed and **bodika/bogwera** are only practised during the winter school holidays (a period of about two weeks).

LEXICAL ITEMS AND EXPRESSIONS

The tables below reflect some of the lexical items and expressions which distinguish the **bodika** variety from other social varieties.

- (i) Some nouns (lexical items) and verb stems which reflect a shift in meaning.

BODIKA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
Baditi	Leaders	Bahlokamedi
Dikwalo	Meat	Dišebo
Fotlilwe	Smeared	Tloditšwe
kgetli/Phuphe	White clay	Motaga
Lebea	Piece of broken clay pot	sekgero sa pitša
Lepapate	Kudu horn	Phalafala
Legaola	Boy (initiated bodika only)	Mošemane
Lešoboro	Boy who has not attended bodika	Mošemane
Sehladi	Table made of sticks	Tafola
Mantlakalana	Name of feast	Mokete
Sehlahle	School fund	Sekolofisi
Sehlabo	Stone	leswika/Letlapa
Sehlabi	Stick	thupa/Kgati
Matšala	Water	Meetse

- (ii) Some expressions with a shift in meaning.

BODIKA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
ge koma e aloga	the end of initiation	e tswalelwa
ge koma e hlaga	the beginning of initiation	e thoma
mahube a banna	early in the morning	ka masa
o llwe ke koma	died while attending initiation	o hlokofetše
tšhidi ya mošate	Medicine	sehlare

(b) Bogwera variety (Second session of initiation for boys)

This is the last session which boys have to attend. The word **bogwera** comes from the noun **mogwera** (friend). **Bogwera** does not last long, and takes only three to four weeks. As in any other social activity, there are special expressions and a particular vocabulary linked to the institution of **bogwera**. The discussion in the following paragraphs illustrates this.

When the chief convenes the second stage of initiation, or **bogwera**, the expression '**go tia bogwera**' is used. This expression indicates that the chief initiates friendship among the graduates from **bodika**. During this session or stage the boys must collect a special type of grass to clothe themselves; in Northern Sotho it is expressed as **go thetha hlokwa** (cut a certain type of grass).

According to one of the informants, Mr Sam Moeng, a lodge called **matšididi** (a place where they spend some time) is built outside a village and boys receive instructions here during the day. During the night, they sleep in the shelter called **thupantlo** (secret place) built for them by men at the chief's place. The routine of **bogwera** is largely a repetition of what happens during **bodika**, although it is not as formal or strict as the former session. Initiates are allowed much more freedom, and spend much of the day hunting animals for the chief or collecting **moilega** (firewood) for the tribal fire.

Unlike the **badikana**, **bagwera** has only one fire surrounded by stones and called **sesipi** (fire). **Bagwera** eat a variety of foods and they use the word **motšala** for drinking water.

As indicated above, **bogwera** is more or less a repetition of **bodika**. Again, the **Rabadia** (master of the initiation school) is there to control everything and every **mogwera** (boy) has his own **moditi** to assist him in making his costume with the grass. Women go to the chief's kraal to shave (**beula**) their children's heads and the hair remains with the chief. **Sehlahle** (the school fund) is again required for the duration of the initiation.

After collecting enough grass or **hlokwa**, the boys go to the chief's place to make it more secure. When they perform this ritual they utter these expressions: **ba hupa mošate** (sprinkle medicine on the chief's place) and **ba be ba ikaga** (protect) so that they will not be bewitched when they get to **thupantlo** (secret place).

According to Mr Sam Moeng, the main aim of this session is neatness. This is expressed by the words **bothakga/bokgwari/botswerere**, meaning neatness, and this ritual also prepares the boys for adulthood and making things on their own. Their neatness is shown in the costumes they make. The complete costume consists of:

Setsiba loin cloth (the upper hat)

- the top of the hat is made out of feathers from a cock known as **mokoko**.

Seala plume of honour (tail of the hat)

- a tail at the back of the hat (**setsiba**).

Ngwanabitsana underside of the hat

- the underside of the hat is under the loin cloth or **setsiba**.

Sebitša the openings

- the openings in front of the hat.

Mogala the strap

- the strap of the hat around the chin.

Malebela the front horns

- the front horns on the hat. There are five and the middle ones are called **patlanala**. These horns are made of **hlokwa**.

Kgotlwane the back horns

- the three horns at the back of the hat.

Merapala belts

- the two belts on the shoulders.

Maserella bangles

- the bangles which the boys wear around their wrists and ankles, also made from **hlokwa**.

Motšhabe the skirt

- the neat skirt made from hlokwa.

Kgape belt

- the belt around the waist; it is like a pocket, used to carry peanuts.

Ngwanakgape part of the belt

- the underside of the belt.

Setsiba the edges

- the magnificent edges of the suit.

If the initiated boy, the **mogwera**, successfully manages to make all these items, he is honoured by being called **lerumo la kgoši** or a spear for the king. One of the rules a **mogwera** must follow is that he may not stand still; he must shake himself all the time. When these boys have finished their costumes, they visit their villages every two days. They carry a **sehlabi** (stick) in their hands like real warriors. The **sehlabi** is a symbol of protection. The presents which they are given are called **dikwalo**, and these may be in form of food or money.

On the day before the closing ceremony a pole is raised next to the lodge, attached to which is a flat, woven grass object known as **sepekwa**. This object has the shape of a bird with its wings spread out and is something like a flag. This indicates to the villagers that the session has come to an end. The height of the pole, known as **mosemolele**, depends on the size of the regiment.

The following morning the boys will take a bath and follow the prescribed ritual; their hair is shorn by their fathers who clothe them in new loin skins. The boys then march to the chief's place in order of rank. As in the previous sessions, the remains of their lodge, together with their hair, will be burnt behind them.

A feast is then held. Monning (1976: 124) explains:

Towards the end of this period they are again addressed by a senior councillor who formally pronounces them to be men, by saying '*Lehono le banna*' (On this day you are men).

The new men will now formally greet the chief and return home with their family members.

- (i) Some nouns and verb stems with a shift in meaning

BOGWERA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
Dikwalo	Presents	Dimphe
Moilega	Firewood	Dikgong
Mosemolele	Pole	Kota
Mothatapala	Fireplace	Sebešo
Motšala	Drinking water	Meetse
Sehlabi	Stick	Thupa

- (ii) Some expressions with a shift in meaning

BOGWERA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
ba hupa	to sprinkle medicine	go tšhela dihlare
ba ikaga	to vaccinate	go itlotša dihlare
go thetha hlokwa	to cut a type of grass	go ripa hlokwa
go tia bogwera	to open bogwera	go ntšha bogwera

(c) Bjale variety (First initiation of girls)

Attendance of **bjale** (the first initiation of girls) was compulsory for all girls of the appropriate age in the past, but nowadays only girls whose parents understand **bjale** school initiation attend. Christian beliefs and other religions have influenced parents against allowing their daughters to attend **bjale**.

Bjale functions as a method of social maintenance among the people who attend it and it helps to express their needs and values. Wardhaugh (1992: 221) believes that this type of social ritual

... determines how the speakers perceive and organize the world around them, both the natural world and the social world.

Bjale is controlled by the wife of the chief, but under the protection and authority of the chief himself. As a man, the chief is not allowed to have any knowledge of the secrets of **bjale**. The arrangements are made by his principal wife, but he is held responsible for the conduct and safety of those taking part. The chief's wife is

assisted by the elderly women of the tribe, and girls who have already been initiated during a previous session.

According to one of the informants of the study, Mrs Annah Mafogo, at the end of the **bogwera** session for boys, the girls, known as **mathumaša** (uncircumcised girls) are summoned by the war-horn known as the **phalafala** to come together as the boys did when the **bodika** started. **Bjale** centres around the daughter of the chief; if she is not available the most senior girl of the royal **kgoro** (chief's place) will assume this position. The leader is named **molobe**. Like the boys, the girls line up according to their rank. The principal wife of the chief will lash the girls' backs with **sehlabi** (stick), starting with **molobe**, and ending with the last girl, **molata** (servant), who will be reciting a poem about the chief's surname.

Bjale is performed at the chief's place and this must be secluded so that the rites can be easily performed. This is similar to what happens at the boys' circumcision school. The girls are told that an operation is to be performed on them. A knife is sharpened in their presence and they are taken one by one, made to lie down, and covered with a blanket. The knife is then pressed between their legs. Although they are not injured at all, the girls cry with fright when feeling the cold metal. As each girl is led away from those who are still waiting, the women who perform the 'operation' emerge from the blanket with their hands reddened with plant juices. Those girls who are still waiting their turn, thinking that the women have blood on their hands, are very frightened. Although they do not undergo the same pain as boys when they are circumcised, their fright is equal to that of the boys. After the

'operation' the girls are raised from the status of **mathumaša** to a transitional period called **bjale**.

As already explained, **bjale** takes place at the chief's place. Every night they go to the first lodge known as **segolong** to sing consolation songs called **go fepeletša**. Singing and dancing plays a significant role in the initiation of girls. The girls may sing for two weeks; after that they go to **segolong** two (lodge number two) to sing complicated songs, thus going through **fetolela** which means bringing change.

Sometimes the girls will do what in Northern Sotho we call **go tswala dikoma** (introduce the secrets of life) e.g.

- *Go hlapa bokona* (to wash off smell)
- *Go gotša mollo ka meetseng* (to kindle fire in water)
- *Go nyela ke koma* (relieving oneself is part of initiation)
- *Sepowana se a lla* (a little bull is crying).

After introducing **dikoma** (**go tšwala dikoma**) *go hlaka ga koma* (the revealing secrets of life) follows. This is performed by women who have already been initiated. They stand far away from the initiates (girls) **bale**, in untidy clothing which makes them unrecognisable. They usually do this at the chief's place. The women frighten the girls and some of them may cry. Some of these secrets of life are:

- *Maribaneng* (at the river bank)
- *Ka topa thari ya ngwanaka* (I fetched the towel for my child).

When the initiates complete this session in which secrets of life are revealed, the expression '**dikoma di a hwa**' is uttered. Towards the end of the session, the girls again have to be secluded in the field **malapong** (a lodge outside the village next to a river) for a period of one month. It is at this time that they receive formal instruction on the work and duties of men, and particularly on their relationship with men. Their families cook stamp mixed with beans (**tšhima**) for them and they eat this during the night. During this period various **dikomana** are revealed to them:

- **Mothomohu** (dead person)
- **Go hlaba melao** (to start reciting rules of initiation school).

Before they leave the lodge next to the river, the girls go and collect a needle (*go tšhwana le go kga mokgose*) which they use to sew the girls with. The needle is taken during the night, and when a girl leaves the lodge she has to say:

'Mmamma ke a ya' (My mother, I am going).

Then certain voices will answer her:

'A riye tsa go ngwanaka' (Just go, my child).

The girl will sing this song until she reaches the place where she will find what she needs. Some things will frighten her on the way. After collecting the needle she will sing another song:

'Mmamma ke a boa' (Mother, I am coming back).

The answer will be:

'Boa tšago ngwanaka' (Just come back, my child).

The same night that the girls collect the needle, they return to the chief's place where they enter a shelter which has been built, known as **lefago**. In this shelter there is a special drum (**moropa**) which is used during the **bjale** session. When the drum is beaten the **sekokoi** (a dwarf-like person) comes to dance (**go sebetha**). When the girls wake up in the morning, to alert the **sekokoi** that they are awake it is said that they brighten the sunrise and this is expressed by the phrase '**go fetolela molalatladi**'. If it happens that the **sekokoi** wakes up before the girls, he will be angry and send the girls to **mahlahlane** (a place where he will punish them). During the punishment he says, '*Ngwale koriye, koriye mahlahlane*' (girls come, come to a place where I will punish you) three times.

When he gets angry, the girls have to give him presents (**go serufa**) so that he will forgive them. These presents include small pieces of white wood (**marate**) and the seeds of the **marula** (**dikoko**). When the king visits the girls in the shelter, the **lefagong**, he has to cough outside so that the leader (**moditi**) knows that the chief is coming and can alert all other women and girls so that they can dress properly.

During this brief transitional period girls are no longer **bjale** (initiation girls) but graduates (**dialogana**), a period similar to the conclusion of the **bodika** session.

After a few days, the girls will go to the river to take a bath for the last time. They will receive new clothes from their parents. They also change their hairstyle to a

haircut (**peudi**) which is worn by marriageable and married woman alike. The hair is formed into flat bun on top of the head, with the hair at the back and sides shorn.

When they are thus newly attired, the girls return to their homes where, on receipt of a small gift, they introduce themselves to everybody, using their new name. The new names of the girls are usually names like **Mologadi, Mahlako, Molotwadi** and **Pebetse**. The girls are then called **methepa**. In the girls' initiation school (**bjale**), school funds (**sehlahle**) are also required and if someone has not completed paying them, on the last day she remains behind at the chief's place.

(i) Some lexical items (nouns) with a shift in meaning.

BJALE VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
Mahlahlane	in the river	Ka nokeng
Marate	wood for fire	Dikgong tša go tia
Molapong	at the river	Kgauswi le noka
Molobe	leader of bjale	Moetapele

(ii) Some expressions with a shift in meaning.

BJALE VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
Dikoma di a hwa	They disappear	Di a timelela
Go fepeletša	To sing simple songs	Go opela dikoša tša boleta
Go serufa	To pay	Go lefa
Go fetolela molalatladi	To sing complicated songs	Go opela dikoša tša bothata
Go tswala dikoma	To introduce dikoma	Go tšweletša dikoma

(d) Bokgopa variety (Second initiation in girls)

As in other initiation institutions, **bokgopa** has its own language variety which makes it different from other social institutions. There are unique vocabulary items and expressions used to describe the institution of **bokgopa**. The discussion in the following paragraphs will illustrate this.

Bokgopa is attended by girls who have just experienced their first menstruation and in Northern Sotho it is expressed as **go bona kgwedi/ go ba matšatšing**. The initiates who attend the second initiation school are known as **dikgopa**. Bokgopa is rarely practised in Makhutswe but most people in this area went to **bolobedu go epelelwa** (to be initiated), that is why there are many people in Makhutswe who have attended **bokgopa**. **Bokgopa** takes place inside the hut of the chief or headman (**ntona**).

Unlike other **dikoma**, **bokgopa** does not require school funds known as **sehlahle**. When one attends **bokgopa**, the expression 'go **wela**' is used, meaning to begin the process of initiation. The Northern Sotho people take one week to initiate **kgopa** while the Tsonga take two weeks. According to one of my informants, Mrs Martha Mahaleamalla, the **dikgopa** always starts on a Saturday. Every morning for three days the girls go to the river to dig a well and this process is known as **go fata sediba**. This takes place over three days, from Saturday to Monday. On the Tuesday, **kgopa** (mature girls) get into the water and sit down and this is expressed by the phrase **go kokobala**, to soak. This session determines whether a particular girl is a virgin (**mosadisadi/yo a sesogo a robala le monna**); if the water does not flow from the vagina when she stands then she is a real woman.

On the Friday the phrase '**selala se eme**' is used when initiate girls spend the whole night awake. The day after **selala se eme**, the night is taken up with **bjale** activities, **dikgopa** come out of the hut and a great feast is prepared and they dance for the last time as graduates (**ba aloga**). They put on a skirt (**letolo**) made of grass (**mohlahle**), on their arms and legs they wear bangles (**difoto**) and on their head they wear a cap (**lekafore**) which has a mirror (**seipone**) at the front.

Bokgopa has four phases:

PHASE ONE:

This has been discussed above (**bokgopa**).

PHASE TWO:

This is characterised by servants known as **fepeletša** who wear leather tops (**mekgopa**) and cook (**ba apea**)

PHASE THREE:

This phase is characterised by waiters known as **batshodi**, from the verb stem - **sola**. Their role is to serve the food

PHASE FOUR:

This phase is characterised by leaders known as **šolwe**. They lay down the rules. Some of these rules are meant to teach the initiates respect, particularly when one goes in and out of the hut. They are also taught to be patient and to bear the hardships of marriage and childbirth.

When a **kgopa** has gone through these phases she is ready to be married.

- (i) Some verb stems and nouns (lexical items) with a shift in meaning.

BOKGOPA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
-epelelwa	initiate	-bolla
-kokobala	sit in the water	dula fase ka meetseng
lekafore	hairstyle	Ntlopo
-wela	initiate	-bolla

- (ii) Some expressions with a shift in meaning

BOKGOPA VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
Mosadisadi	virgin	Kgarebjana
selala se eme	to sit all night	Moletelo

3.3 THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL VARIETIES ON THE STANDARD VARIETY

Varieties which are used during initiation school for the purpose of conducting lessons are closed varieties because their vocabulary and expressions are used in secret and are generally not known to the public. The initiation institutions such as **bodika**, **bogwera**, **bjale** and **bokgopa** are well known to the public but the activities and language employed by these institutions are not known to individuals who have not attended them.

Ironically, those who attend these institutions are restricted by having to use closed varieties when at these schools. If the need arises, they can use these varieties in the presence of those who have already graduated. In public and in the

presence of those who have not graduated from these schools, Khutšwe, the regional variety, is used. This variety is used in all activities performed daily by the Makhutswe people.

The Khutšwe variety, which is closer to Lobedu, is used more than the standard variety in all the areas inhabited by the Makhutswe people. The standard variety is only used in schools and when writing. According to Mr Makwela, an informant and a resident of Makhutswe, children who attend school are more fluent in Khutšwe than in the standard variety.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, it was explained that varieties used for the purpose of initiating young men and women can be regarded as closed varieties because their vocabularies and expressions are used in secret. Only those who have graduated from the initiation schools are able to express themselves using these varieties. These varieties prepare young men and women for adulthood as they are used as a vehicle for imparting knowledge to make them responsible citizens of Makhutswe.

CHAPTER 4

OPEN (OVERT) RURAL SOCIAL VARIETIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'open' rural varieties refers to the varieties used when activities which are not secret are performed. In this regard, Brook (1979:13) says:

Such varieties have sometimes been called situational dialects...

These varieties, such as **malopo**, traditional doctors, marriage and mourning are classified as 'open' rural activities because they are not traditionally secret in nature. Most of the lexical items and expressions used in these varieties are part of the standard variety.

4.2 MALOPO VARIETY

Like any other social institution, **malopo** (the visitation of the spirit of a deceased person in the body of a patient) has its own variety. Mulaudzi (1999:168) observes:

The use of lexical items and certain expressions denotes the social unity, and reinforces communicative norms and the expectations of malombo as a social institution.

The noun **malopo** is used to describe the visitation of the spirit of a deceased person in the body of a patient. Van Warmelo (1932:141) believes that

[s]uch visitation is looked upon as an honour and the subsequent proceedings are designed, not to exorcise the spirit, but on the contrary to let it in.

In addition, Stayt (1931:302) notes:

The spirit, tšhilombo (pl. šwilombo), which is supposed to enter the host, is usually the spirit of some offended ancestors, sometimes absurdly remote. This spirit will cause its victims illness and subsequent death if it is not pacified.

According to Ms Molepa Mafogo, a specialist in the institution of **malopo**, both men and women are possessed by **malopo**. **Malopo** may mean the visitation of the spirit in the body of a patient or people who are possessed. The singular of **malopo** is **lelopo**. According to Ms Mafogo, the symptoms of **malopo** are:

- *Go tšwafa* (laziness)
- *Go kwata* (anger)
- *Go robala* (sleep)
- *Go ota* (emaciation)
- *Swele* (moodiness).

When an ill person shows symptoms of **malopo**, the traditional doctor prepares the patient for the arrival of **badimo** (the spirit of an ancestor who is troubling the patient).

These spirits - malopo - are said to be sent by the ancestor spirits, or by witches. Through spiritual contact with the supernatural world the wishes of the spirits are learnt and satisfied whereupon they withdraw from the afflicted person (Mönnig, 1969:87).

As in any other social activity, vocabulary and expressions exist to describe the occurrence of **malopo**. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

The process of invoking the ancestral spirit is known as **badimo**. The woman of the gods (**mosadi wa badimo/nyankwabe/mokwatši**) organises the soft porridge (**mapoto a go ba le di hlare tša malopo**) and pieces of wood (**ditshetla tša malopo**) and drums (**meropa le matšomane**) for **malopo**. **Mosadi wa badimo** is a virgin. She is a messenger and acts as go-between between the traditional doctor and each person who comes to the doctor for divining bones or **malopo**. She provides medicine and even talks to the **badimo** (ancestors) by clapping her hands. She is the only one who is permitted to talk to **badimo**. If she wishes to be married she must go through the proper channels, in other words she has to wear a white cloth and the traditional doctor must recite a poem to let the gods know that **mokwatši** is getting married. After that, a new **mokwatši / nyankwabe** must be appointed. The name **nyankwabe** (the woman of gods) has been borrowed from the Vatsonga people.

According to Ms Mafogo, there are three types of **malopo**, namely:

- *Malopo a Sesotho*
- *Malopo a Setšhakane*

- *Malopo a Sentau*

The nature of each sub-group will be discussed below.

4.2.1 Malopo a Sesotho

The vocabulary related to this variety has to do with religious beliefs and communication with the gods.

If a patient shows some of the symptoms mentioned above, such as *go tšwafa* (laziness), *go kwata* (anger), *go robala*, (sleep), *go ota* (emaciation), *swele* (moodiness), his/her family member should go to the traditional healer to search for a solution to the problem. This type of traditional healer is known as **Mahlwa a dibona** or the survivor. If he finds out that the ancestral spirits are the cause of the problem then the family members must brew traditional beer known as **bjala** which will be taken by the patient to the traditional doctor. On their arrival, **nyankwabe** (woman of the gods) will attend to them. She will prepare **ditshetla tša malopo**, sticks for the evil spirit and give the patient soft porridge mixed with **tšhidi ya malopo**, medicine used in the treatment of a person possessed by the ancestral spirit. Then the family members and the traditional doctor will beat the drums known as **letšomana and thuthumetša**. These instruments play an important role in invoking the ancestral spirit troubling the patient.

The patient joins in the dancing each morning and evening (this goes on for a month or two). In Northern Sotho the term is **go tielwa malopo** meaning to invoke spirits. They also spend some time outside looking for medicines (**go epa dihlare**).

The traditional healer teaches the patient how to use these **dihlare** (herbs). The patient has to be obedient at all times when talking to someone in the traditional healer's yard, and sometimes he/she even has to kneel down outside, with bent head, and talk while placing the hands together to show respect to the ancestors (**go kwatama fase a phuphutha**). The expression **badimo ba gabo** is used (his ancestral spirit) to determine the type of attire he/she should wear. When **lelopo** has been identified the patient has to **thwasa** (to be graduated). If a patient is to be relieved a goat is required. According to Ms Mafogo, the expression **ba e hupa ka dihlaire**, meaning *to make a goat take certain medicines* is used when the patient sleeps with the goat under the same blanket. The expression **ba e sena** meaning *to cut the goat carcass into pieces* is used. The traditional doctor and her/his graduates mix the pieces with **ditshetla** (herbs) and burn them; when herbs have turned to ash are grinded to make **tshidi** (medicine used in the treatment of barren women). The traditional doctor pours this into the goat horn, cuts one end of the horn, and puts **tatabaloi** (a kind of round red and black seed) round his or her neck on a thread of beads, like a necklace, and in so doing he or she will be healed.

The expression **diraka ngwaga**, when the trees start to grow, is used when the patient touches the medicine in the horn and then **a ithologa/a ithona** (to smear on the joints). The others will play the drum and the patient will dance.

The expression **go etla ngwaga**, meaning to celebrate new year, is used when there are new wild fruits, vegetables and maize available in a particular season. The patient must follow a particular procedure, **go loma**, before eating it otherwise

he/she will become ill again. In Makhutswe they say a person **o thwasitše** (has graduated) when the patient hangs a little medicine around the neck like a necklace and is qualified to be a traditional healer/doctor.

4.2.2 Malopo a Setšhakane

Just like any other **malopo** (invoked spirit of deceased person), **malopo a Setšhakane** is characterised by vocabulary and expressions which make this social activity unique. This is illustrated by the examples in the following section.

According to one informant, Mrs Mohlabe Rosina from Sofaya village, there are people who are possessed by **Malopo a Setšhakane** and **Sentau** in Makhutswe. The statement was supported by M.B. Shayi from Bismark village who said that the spirit enters a person through friendship known as **sekgotse**.

Makhutswe is a multicultural village and in most families there are people from other countries such as Mozambique. Some of these people are here on business, some are visiting their friends whereas some are married to locals. If one of these foreigners has **lelopo** and dies, his/her spirit will be left behind. Eventually, a child from that family may be possessed by the spirit of that person. This is how **malopo a Setšhakane** is practised. Sometimes a person may be possessed by a **Sentau** spirit which was rejected by its people. When this type of **malopo** possesses a person, the patient will become ill (showing symptoms of **malopo**). During consultation, the traditional doctor may throw the divining dice (**ditaola**). If all four main divining dice, **lengwana**, **legwame**, **thwagadima** and **selomi**, face up it means that that the person has been possessed by the rejected spirit.

Malopo a Setšhakane initially follows the same procedure as **malopo a Sesotho**. The difference occurs when a patient has to graduate, known as **go thwasa**. According to Ms Mafogo, a patient does not have to sleep with a goat but he/she is instead given an arrow to kill the goat. When the blood flows the patient must drink it while it is hot. Thereafter he/she is given medicine to drink which causes vomiting (**hlatšša**). The traditional healer cuts the important pieces of the goat (**a e sena**) and cooks them without salt. When the meat is ready and cool, it is placed on **leselo** (basket woven from grass). A **lobola** (type of stick) is found, and this is used to pull the **leselo**. The patient must run after **leselo**, eating the meat until it is finished. Then the patient is given medicine to drink in order to vomit up all the meat.

The patient is now given the bile (**nyoko**) to drink. The gall bladder is inflated and tied to a tree. The patient leaves the house to search for another hidden **nyoko** (bile). According to Ms Mafogo, if the patient is unable to find the **nyoko** this symbolises that **o tabogile legora**, meaning that the patient was having an affair with the traditional doctor which is not allowed, and the **badimo** (gods) do not want to be involved.

If the patient successfully traces the hidden **nyoko** then he/she is healed and can go back home. A great feast is held at the patient's home and a cow is slaughtered. During the feast, the family and the patient who was possessed with **malopo** perform a dance while **mapante** (cooked chicken mixed with herbs, forbidden because it has been doctored) is hidden in the house. Inside the house of the **badimo** traditional doctor and her/his graduates dig a hole and throw

mapante into it. Then the traditional doctor, together with his **mathwasana** (graduates), go home.

Unlike **malopo a Sesotho**, the patient who has gone through **malopo a setšhakane** puts a necklace made from a goat's horn around his neck and under his arm. This process is known as **letsheka**.

4.2.3 Malopo a Sentau

The discussion of **malopo a Sentau** covers the vocabulary and expressions which are associated with it. This is different from the **malopo** already discussed above. The patient suffers the sickness of **badimo ba sentau** by dreaming (**lora**) about water. This type of **badimo** likes white clothes. The patient uses not his/her feet to dance but his/her knees, known as **go kwatama**.

When **go thwasa** (graduating) traditional doctor uses white chickens instead of goats. It is called not **go thwasa** but **go parola** (graduate). They hide **dipheko** (divining dice) in deep water (**bodibeng**) in the river, the patient enters the water, and they slaughter some chickens, throwing them into the water. The patient must imitate what the chickens are doing. When they take the chickens out of the water the patient also gets out. Then they inject (**ba mo hlabela**) the patient with medicine and **tšhidi** (medicine) over his/her whole body and also on the tongue. **Mokwatši/Nyankwabe** (women of the gods), together with the patient, drink **seropa** (a mixture of herbs to protect the patient from evil spirits).

At home the traditional healer will give the patient the little tail of a jackal known as **sezinko**, or as **letšoba** in Khutšwe. The **sezinko** is used to **femba** (diagnose) in order to detect the illness which is troubling the patient. Most of the words uttered by the patient are in Nguni; for instance, in greeting they say **Thokozani a boMakhulu, thokozani** (We give to you, old people) because of the ancestral spirits. When the patient has completed **parola** (graduates) he/she can go back home and heal other people who are troubled by **malopo**.

(i) Some lexical items used by **badimo** during all three types of **malopo**

MALOPO VARIETY	MEANING	STANDARD VARIETY
-femba	Diagnose	Nyakišiša
Sezinko	Tail of jackal	Letšhoba
Seropa	Beer	Bjala
-tsheka	To cross	Phekagantšha
Nyoko	Gall	Sa bohloko/ Seno
Lobola	Stick	Phate ya mohlare wa lefatša madi
Ditshetla	Twigs	Dikotana tša dihlare

(ii) Some nouns which are used during **malopo** also occur in the standard variety:

- *Loma* - to eat fruit or vegetables for the first harvest of the season for the first time that year. These fruits or vegetables are mixed with medicine

known as tšhidi (go ja selo mo ngwageng la mathomo o hlakanya le dihlašana

- *Thwasa* - graduate
- *Badimo* - gods
- *Tatabaloi* - type of seed
- *Thuthumetša* - drum
- *Letšomana* - ornament
- *Malopo* - the visitation of the spirit in the body of a patient
- *Mahlwaadibona* - a survivor/ traditional healer

(iii) Some expressions used during **malopo** also occur in the standard variety:

- *Ba e šena* - to cut important parts of an animal
- *Dihlare di khukhuša* - trees start to bloom
- *Hupa ka dihlare* - administer medicine

4.3 MAWA A DITAOLA

This speech variety is used when throwing the divining dice. Lexical choice related to this variety covers the digging up of medicine, healing, protecting families, protecting initiation institutions known as **dikoma**, protecting weddings and parties. The throwing of the divining bones plays a vital role during the healing process. The traditional healer must first identify the fall, interpret it and prescribe the kind of medication and treatment suitable for the patient. In the Makhutswe area the throwing of **mawa / ditaola** is equated to a stethoscope used by the practitioners of western medicine to listen to the heart and breathing of a patient. According to

my informant M.B. Shayi, **ditaola** (divining dice) are thrown on a mat called **legogo**, as in Khutšwe and Northern Sotho. The bag which is used to carry the divining dice is known as **sebeba** and is made from the skin of a wild cat known as **tšhipa** in Khutšwe. Because of the presence of ancestral spirits in the traditional healer's process of healing and diagnosis, these healers use natural things, e.g. the divining dice, the bag and the mat. No one can interpret **mawa** except a traditional healer; only a healer understands the language of **mawa**. Makgopa (2008:10) observes:

Sometimes it is difficult for an indigenous healer to interpret the fall of the divining bones. When the indigenous healer is faced with this situation, he or she will appeal for support from the ancestors through praise poetry. In this instance the indigenous healer will plead with the ancestors, through the divining bones, appealing for power and support in order to interpret the divining bones properly. This dilemma will be communicated to the patient as follows:

'Se a nkgolela senamolomo

Senamme ga se nkgolele

Kgang tša ka di thata

Dintlaba di ntlabela lefela

Di reng tša nkgonela senko,

Tša ntsogela maatla e le tša ka

Ka tloga ke homolela ke tšona tše

Tšona tše e tlogago e le tšaka tše

Di thata di šita diroba le matlapa

Di thata ga di šitwe ke selo

Di kgonwa ke dintšhatšharatšhara

Yona morotwana ya bašimanyana.’

(It grows more taller for me

Someone whose mother is still alive should not undermine me

My news is difficult

Why are they not responding?

They defy me while they are mine

They refrain from speaking

Those that are mine

They are as hard as rocks

They are so difficult that nothing can defeat them

They can only be softened by the urine of small boys.’)

The praise poem alerts the patient to the frustration the divining dice are communicating. Ordinary people are unable to interpret the divining dice but the traditional healer can sometimes interpret their meaning.

4.3.1 Ngaka ya ditaola/Nkadingala (traditional healer who uses divining dice)

Some traditional healers dance for **malopo**; in the case of others, their forefathers show them **ditaola** and medicine. They use **ditaola/dikgagara**, divining dice. The word **ditaola** is derived from the verb **laola** and **dikgagara** (divining dice) from the verb **gagara** meaning divining dice.

It is accepted that **dikgagara/ditaola** can indicate, to those trained in their use, the answer to any question or the explanation of any situation. They can indicate whether the cause of a mishap should be ascribed to witchcraft or to the dissatisfaction of the ancestral spirits. They indicate the cause of disease and the curative methods to be administered. They can predict rain or drought, the course of a war, the results of a journey or any future event about which one wishes to know, as well as the precautionary measures which should be taken to ensure the desired results. The dice will show where one will find a lost or stolen object or strayed cattle, and also whether the fact that the object is missing should be ascribed to any supernatural cause. Ms Mafogo believes that the divining set, when used by a properly trained specialist, has no limits in its ability to divine or predict.

When a person comes to consult a traditional doctor, he or she first states the nature of the complaint about which he or she needs advice. After having established the fee, the **khunolla moraba**, the traditional doctor will hand the person a bag (usually made from the skin of a rock-rabbit) containing **dikgagara/ditaola** (divining dice). The person will then blow into the bag (**a di huetša**). The traditional healer then turns the bag upside down, shaking it by the bottom, until all the pieces have fallen out. Then the traditional doctor will diagnose (**phekola**) the problem.

4.3.2 Groups of Mawa/Dikgagara

Ditaola (divining dice) can be broken down into a number of groups. The most important of these is a group of two or four pieces, which represents a man, his

wife, their son and daughter. These four pieces are the basis of the set, and supply the most significant information. Without them, **go phekola** would be impossible.

The bones are:

- ***Dikhudu*** (tortoise)
this type of divining dice is made out of the shell of a tortoise. Everyone wishes to live long. **Dikhudu** divining bones diagnose the life span of a human being. The traditional healer uses this because a tortoise is able to live for a long time and defend or protect itself against its enemies.
- ***Dipetlwa*** (adze)
adzes are from bones of an elephant and they depict the relationship between man and elephant from time immemorial. According to Miss Mafogo, bones of an elephant are used because an elephant never forgets.
- ***Ditšhwene*** (baboons)
this kind of divining bone is made from baboon bones. Such bones are used to diagnose a person without a totem.
- ***Lewatle*** (sea shells)
the shells represent anything that lives in water or in a calabash that is used to carry water. The bones denote the importance of water in the life of a human being.

Each of these is centered on four bones (**dikgagara**), namely:

- **Legwame** (represents a man)

This is a big shell; when the dice fall face down, it is alive, its head will point to the east (where the sun rises) and it means **bokgatha**, alive.

- **Legwana** (represents a daughter or a daughter-in-law)

This is the smallest shell, and when it faces down it indicates life.

- **Thwagadima** (represents a woman)

This is the medium shell and when facing down it is alive, when up, dead.

- **Selomi** (represents a son-in-law or a boy)

Selomi is also alive when facing down.

Each of these bones has a living, smiling or happy surface. According to Ms Mafogo, the four **ditaola** can fall into sixteen basic combinations in relation to one another. All these **ditaola** are different in shape and this makes their interpretation easier. Each bone is identified by its shape. None of these bones can be used independently of the others. The combination of the set as a whole or each group is called **lewa**, plural **mawa** (thus the way they have fallen or the interpretation of this).

The language used by traditional doctors is specific and appropriate for the interpretation of the bones. **Mawa** are used in accordance with the groupings of bones as they have fallen. Each grouping will reveal aspects such as the gender

of the person with the disease or problem, the nature of the disease or problem, the manner in which the disease can be treated or the way in which the problem can be solved.

(a) Names of Mawa

There are four main **mawa** (***mawa a mathomo***)

- **legwame** > meaning **mokgalabje**, big shell.
- **thwagadima** > meaning **mokgekolo**, medium shell.
- **selomi** > meaning **mošemane**, small shell.
- **lengwana** > meaning **mosetsana**, smallest shell.

Other **mawa** are as follows:

- **Nongtšhitwa – mohlologadi** (widow).
- **Kwelakagobe – tholo** (kudu).
- **Kgapa ya dinku – motho wa maemo** (highly respected person).
- **Serolo – tšhuana** (orphan).
- **Modimo – thakadu** (ant-bear).
- **Malope – phudufudu** (steenbuck).
- **Mokone – phuthi** (duiker).

Mawa consists of the combination of sixteen - the other twelve are formed from the four main ones and they as follows:

- **bokgatha**
- **legwame**
- **lengwana**

- hlapadima
- mabjana
- makgolela
- mašupša
- mpherefere
- mogolori
- mohlakola
- moraro wo monyane
- moraro wo mogolo
- morupi
- sefara
- sehlako le selomi.

(b) The interpretation of Mawa

Ms Mafogo, one of the informants, indicated that every **lewa** is interpreted the way the person who needs **ditaola** desires; in the Khutšwe variety it is expressed:

Mawa a ya le gore motho o laolela eng?

- **Bokgatha** (when alive, its head points to the east (where the sun rises). Nice sleep. Before you get what you need you have to make movements. If it is a patient, she is a woman and shows fatigue. According to this **lewa** the woman will have a good rest.
- **Legwame** – when the divining dice falls face down, its head will point to the south. The patient will have the symptoms of diarrhea and vomiting. He will

be a man or a young man. The traditional healer will tie up **segokgo** (a bundle of medicine) for those who have brought the patient but he will not take their money (**thosaborola**) because he can see that the patient will not live very much longer.

- **Legwana** – this is the smallest shell of the four, and it faces down. Its poem is as follows: '**Ke la Mapholodi la go ja ke la go kgora.**' This is about a daughter-in-law with two or three children. This means that there will be happiness in the client's family.
- **Hlapadimo** – (**lengwana** faces **Bohlabela** east, **selomi bodikela** west and the two point down; **legwame** and **thwagadima** point up (they die). This means that the clients come from far away, or that a woman's menstruation lasts more days than it does usually, or that this menstruation causes pain and flows heavily.
- **Mabjana** – (**thwagadima** turns up). **Selomi**, **lengwana** and **legwame** fall face down. This indicates misunderstandings (**komano/tshele**), the noise of drums (**mabjana**) or some pimples inside the body.
- **Makgolela** – (**lengwana** faces down, **thwagadima**, **selomi** and **legwame** face up). This means that the maternal ancestors or spirits are causing trouble for the client or the family of the client. The patient has **malopo**. **Makgolela** goes hand in hand with **sefara**, the hidden sickness. The patient may even pass away. **Makgolela** also means that things will be hard for the

client. This is always connected with the head of the lineage who should perform the ritual of **go phasa**.

- **Mašupša** – (**selomi** and **legwame** turn down, **thwagadima** and **lengwana** turn up). This means that the lost property will not be recovered or somebody who has run away or has been lost will not return. It may even indicate sores or ulcers inside the body or diarrhea.
- **Mpherefere** – all the four main **mawa** fall face down (**selomi**, **thwagadima**, **lengwana** and **legwame**). **Gabo a lala dia ferehlana**. There will be noise in the community or a wedding: **leretha ke la eng?** meaning ‘what is noise for?’ It also means that the client who may be a young man will be involved in a fight or some danger. Sometimes, if it is in the family, it means to carry on with the work, (**ke mpherefereng**) or conflict among many people.
- **Mogolori** – **legwame** and **thwagadima** face down, **selomi** and **lengwana** face up. This indicates women, young or old. The traditional healer will search for the problem inside the body, perhaps in the womb. This is an intimidating fall, as it is coupled with threats to human life. It warns someone about something that is going to happen in the future. This fall normally alerts the patient that something is about to happen.
- **Mohlakola** – Again, the four main divining shells face up (**selomi**, **lengwana**, **legwame** and **thwagadima**). This means **o hlakolegile/hutšwe**, being stripped of your property. The client has lost property or

been burnt (**o timeletšwe ke thoto goba o swetšwe**). It may also mean that the client, who is seriously ill, is going to die. When the divining bones say **mohlakola**, the healer will not ask any more questions about the problem but will confidently tell the patient not to bother with the problem, as the divining dice will reveal it. The traditional healer will even praise the divining bones so that the patient does not suspect anything. This gives the patient the assurance that all the problems will be solved.

- **Moraro wo monyane/morarwana** – (**thwagadima**, **selomi**, **legwana** face down and **legwame** face up). The client has lost something but the property is still nearby, that is, in the family. The traditional doctor will say: ‘**sa morarwana ga se kgole se pulelong ya lebati**’, meaning the source of the problem is not far away, it is close by. If the consultation concerns a child’s illness, it may be something inside the body such as diarrhea (**letšhollo**), vomiting (**lehlatsšo**) or worms which may lead to **phogwana** (meningitis).
- **Morupi/thwagadima/mabone** – (**thwagadima** face down, **selomi**, **legwame**, **lengwana** face up). What are you afraid of? The **ngaka** will say: ‘**Ke se tšhoga maeba a tšhoga a bona.**’ This means that the client has seen something that frightens him, perhaps death (**lehu** or a fight). The expression used is **tšhollo ya madi**.
- **Sefara** – (**thwagadima** and **selomi** face down, **legwame** and **lengwana** face up). **Sefara** indicates a hidden ailment e.g. under the arm (**ka**

mahwafeng) or behind the ears (**ka morago ga ditsebe**). It may even indicate people of the same family.

- **Sehlako** – (**legwame** and **lengwana** face down, **thwagadima** and **selomi** face up). The patient's sickness has entered the body through a wound in the leg (**ke sefolwane sa leoto**). Sometimes it may indicate that one is going to undertake a journey (**mosepelo**).
- **Selomi** – (**selomi** faces down while **legwame**, **lengwana** and **thwagadima** face up). This indicates any male person. If **dikgagara** (divining dice) say **selomi** it means that the patient has a pain. The consultant should perform the ritual of **go phasa** the ancestors – **badimo**.
- **Moraro** – (**selomi** faces up while **legwame**, **lengwana** and **thwagadima** face down). If the client has lost something such as money or property it will not be recovered, and in the case of illness, the person will not be healed.

The Makhutswe traditional healers, like all Sotho traditional healers, use various instruments apart from those used for divination. These include a scalpel for making incisions and the quill of a porcupine known as **mootlwa wa noko** for bloodletting – **go lomega**.

4.5 THE MOURNING VARIETY

The mourning language variety concerns death, funerals and the cleansing activity which closes the mourning period. In this regard, Saville Troike (1982: 47) says:

...their meaning is dependent on shared beliefs and values of the speech community coded into communicative patterns, and they cannot be interpreted apart from social and cultural context.

Like other social varieties, this variety is characterised by lexical items and expressions which articulate people's feelings during a time of mourning. According to one of my informants, E.M. Motloutsi, when a family member passes on there is a certain process which must be followed. In earlier times, when there were no undertakers, people were buried during the night. The expression **o tšerwe ke phiri bošego** is used in order to inform his/her children of the death of the deceased. In those days children were told that their deceased relative had gone for a visit and no one knew when they would return. In this way, the young ones would learn that someone had passed away. During the funeral, a cow would be slaughtered and the body of the deceased person would be wrapped in the hide and buried in it (**ba mo phuthela ba mmoloka ka mokgopa woo**). The food that was prepared was porridge and salt free meat called **mogoga**. The old men would eat this dejectedly at the funeral. **Mogoga**, from the verb stem **-goga** (to pull along) indicated the pulling of the deceased to the grave. Traditionally, graves were behind the house or in the kraal. Only close family and adult relatives attended the funeral. Early in the morning of the day after the funeral a traditional

healer would cleanse the family with a cleansing muti known as **go hlapa makgoma**. The widow or a widower of the deceased would spend a period of 12 months wearing black, known as **go roula** in Khutšwe and Northern Sotho. **Ba dira bjala bja dikgarafo ka magobe a go šala bo nwewa ke bakgekolo le bakgalabje fela** (the beer which is prepared from porridge not eaten previous day is only drunk by elderly people.). Nowadays, the mourning variety is no longer used secretly and even young children attend funerals; funerals are now look like joyful ceremonies. Food is prepared, expensive coffins and clothes are bought. Funerals take place on Saturdays or Sundays when everyone is off duty. After a funeral there is a party known as (**phimola dikeledi meaning to wipe out tears**) where people enjoy alcohol.

The term mourners (**ba lapa**) refers to the closest relatives of the deceased. The words **mohlologadi** (widow) and **mohlolo** (widower) refer to the wife or husband of the deceased.

4.5.1 Lexical items and expressions

The following are some of the lexical items and expressions which distinguish the mourning variety from other social varieties.

- (i) The following nouns are used during the period of mourning and also occur in the standard variety.
- **Mohu** (the deceased) – **motho yo a hlokofetšego**. At Makhutswe the verb stem **-hlokofala** is used instead of **-hwa** to show respect.
 - **Mamohwana** (the widower)

- **Mohwana** (the widow)
- **Lepokisi** (coffin)
- **Mabitleng/dirapeng/bo boloka bahu** (the graveyard) – where deceased are buried.
- **Ba mošate** (chief members) – **baemedi ba mošate**, chief representatives.
- **Diphiri/Bašomi** (grave workers) – young men from the community who do all the work associated with the burial in the graveyard .

(ii) The following expressions also used during the mourning period and are also part of the standard variety

- *Go hloboga* (to pay one's last respects)
- *Babo mohu* (family members of the deceased)
- *Go felegetša mohu bodulong bja gagwe bja mafelelo* (taking the deceased to the graveyard)
- *Baemedi ba mošate* (chief's representative)
- *Baemedi ba diphiri* (grave workers' representative)
- *Baemedi ba lapa* (family's representative)
- *Go alafa lehu* (to remove the spirit of the deceased from the family)

4.6 THE POLITICIAN'S VARIETY

The politician's variety is the spoken form used by politicians to promote their aims and ambitions. When politicians do this, they use existing lexical items and

expressions with a semantic shift in meaning to create a sense of trust and confidence in their listeners.

In Makhutswe politicians use specially coined lexical items as well those adopted from English. Words such as **maatla**, translated from Amandla in Xhosa and meaning power, are used to express unity, brotherhood and strength. The word **viva**, meaning 'long live' expresses a feeling of appreciation for someone or for any likeable concept. The word **mosabalatso**, on the other hand, means a feeling of dissatisfaction (protesting against something).

The following lexical terms have been adopted from English:

- **Bokomonese** (*Communism*) – from the word communism which means a system in which property is shared by the people.
- **Go dira mpherefere goba borabele ge batho ba sa fiwe ditirelo** (*Revolution*) – a situation in which people rebel against injustice.
- **Meruswi** – wild or violent behaviour by a crowd of people.
- **Melao ya naga** – a country's legislative assembly.
- **Go fetišwa ga melao ke palamente** – the passing of the laws by parliament.
- **Tokologo** – government of a country by representatives elected by the whole people.
- **Go menola** (*Overthrow*) – cause of someone or something's downfall.
- **Tshenyo ya dithoto** (damage to property) – deliberate damage or disruption to hunter or enemy.
- **Mmušanoši** (*Autocrat*) – a person with unlimited power (dictatorial person).

- ***Thlakahlakano ya batho or ya dilo (Heterogeneous)*** – composed of people or things of different kinds.

There are also some expressions which were used to undermine the apartheid structures:

- ***fase ka mmušo wa apartheid fase meaning*** – down with apartheid government.
- ***Fase ka bantu education fase*** – down with bantu education.
- ***Fase ka bomenemene fase*** – down with corruption.
- ***Godimo ka mmušo wa batho godimo*** – forward with the people`s government.
- ***godimo ka mosabalatso godimo*** – forward with the struggle.

The following lexical items are used in Makhutswe during an election and during political meetings:

- **Setišing** sa dikgetho – polling station.
- **Nkgetheng** – candidate for a party.
- **Kgetha** – vote.
- **Mokgethi** – voter.

4.7 THE MARRIAGE VARIETY

Marriage (**lenyalo**) among the Makhutswe people is not an individual affair, legalising the relationship between a man and woman, but a group concern, legalising a relationship between two groups of relatives. Primarily, marriage is a

legal act in which the relatives of the groom publicly transfer certain marriage goods (**magadi**) to the relatives of the bride (**monyadiwa**). **Magadi** used to comprise cattle but nowadays money is often given instead.

The following discussion on the process followed when a marriage takes place reflects the lexical items and expressions used in these circumstances.

According Mrs Makgalangake Mohlala from Hlohlokwe, one of my informants:

...in the olden days during marriage, the bride and groom retained the status of fully initiated members of the tribe.

The new status acquired with marriage can best be described as an advance in legal status, and an increase in the powers, obligations and duties of status already acquired. The groom must be a fully initiated (**a bolotše**) member of the tribe, as well as of the society..

The bride changes her status from **kgarebe** (mature girl) and **mothepa** (tribal initiate) to **mosadi**. In the past, the choice of marriage partner was usually dictated by preferential families. The decision and negotiations were, therefore, mostly in the hands of the two groups concerned. Nowadays, more freedom is allowed and the wishes of the bride and groom are considered. As soon as the choice of bride has been made, the negotiations will commence. The mother or father of the groom will usually try to establish what the attitude of the other party is. This phase of negotiation – **go hlotla madiba** (to test the waters) – is not part of the formal

negotiations, and may be dispensed with. A mediator known as **motseta / maditsela / sebaka** will be appointed to open the official negotiations:

- **motseta** – male messenger
- **maditsela** – female messenger
- **sebaka** – male or female messenger.

When the man has gathered sufficient money the close family is notified by **motseta** and they all come together and count the cattle (**magadi**) or money. At this gathering, the young man's father counts all the money and then puts his contribution on the table, followed by other family members according to their rank. These contributions are known as **tšhelete ya go gapa dikgomo**. The bride's family uses this money for things like:

- **Ditumedišo** – **tšhelete ya go kokota** (the money which is paid on the day of lobola when greeting the bride's family).
- **Difate** – **tšhelete ya go laela** (the money which is paid to the bride's family when saying goodbye).
- **Pudi ya kgata lapa** – to show that the groom is welcome in the bride's family, a goat is slaughtered.
- **Dithupa** – (**tšhelete ya go gapa dikgomo**) traditionally, lobola meant cattle and the sticks were used to drive this cattle to the bride's family. Nowadays, the participants still practise this by saying they want **dithupa** to drive the envelope (which contains the **lobola** money). The money represents cattle.
- **Pudi ya dithaka** – to indicate friendship, a goat is slaughtered at the end of lobola negotiation, the neck is given to the bride's uncle and the body is divided between the two families (bride's and groom's).

- **Mefaka** – knives. The money paid to represent the knives used to slaughter the goats. It is a custom in Makhutswe to allow the groom's messengers to slaughter the goat but they should first pay for **mefaka** and ask assistance from the bride's family. If they do not do so, they will be charged for breaking with traditional practice.
- **Thoko ya motšoko** – (snuff) money paid by the groom to buy snuff for the family members to sniff during **lobola** negotiations.
- **Tšale ya mokgekolo** – a shawl for the bride's mother.
- **Jase ya mokgalabje** – a jacket for the bride's father.
- **Pulo ya sefero** – if the in-laws leave with the bride.

When everything to do with the **magadi** has been dealt with, **motseta** (go-between) is sent to the bride's family to arrange a date for the marriage. On the appointed day, the groom's relatives send two or three boys or girls to the bride's family **go tshekga magogo**.

Lexical expressions such as the following will be used:

- **Re tlile go kgopela sego sa meetse** – they are there to ask to marry their daughter. On the first day the messengers will have to ask for a gourd of water.
- **Go bea patla** –the groom's messengers do not have the full amount to pay for **lobola**.
- **Mpšanyana ya lena** –the groom who will be marrying one of their daughters.

- **Go goroša ngwetši** - when the bride becomes a member of the groom's family after all the **lobola** negotiations have been completed.
- **Pudi ya kgata lapa** – goat indicating that the groom is now part of the family.
- **Tebogo ya molamo** - thanksgiving staff.
- **Mpheng ke jeng, a se ke kgolwe** - when there is not enough **lobola** money then the bride's father / mother will utter those words, showing dissatisfaction.
- **Ke molete sekuba** – when the bride's family needs more money.
- **Mohlobolo wo mogolo** – (lion) bridegroom's father is called 'lion' as he is an important man on that day.
- **Phura leboto** – (they chew the walls) there is nothing to eat.
- **Go tswalela sefero** – close the gate after the bridegroom.

There are also some proverbs (**diema**) given to the bride as laws to live according to in her new family, e.g.

- **Lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi** – the bride should live where she is married even if it is difficult.
- **Mosadi ke tšhwene o lewa matsogo** – the bride should show her in-laws that she is a hard worker.
- **Ba bogadi ge ba go roga o khupe lehlokwa** – the bride should not exchange words with her in-laws.
- **Ngwana wa bogadi ga a rongwe** – the bride should not rely on the children at her new home to run her errands.
- **Mosadi ke tšhipi ga a swe** – the bride should be strong.

4.8 THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL VARIETIES ON THE STANDARD VARIETY

The open social varieties are closely related to the Khutšwe variety spoken by most people in Makhutswe. Most lexical items and expressions of the open social varieties are used at social gatherings, in preference to lexical items and expressions from the standard variety. According to Mrs Makgalagale Mohlala, most learners are not acquainted with the standard variety because it is only spoken and written at school and, as a result, they struggle to write it correctly.

4.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, various open social varieties spoken at Makhutswe area were discussed. Although they appear to be typical rural area varieties, some are spoken in both rural and urban areas, as for example in the case of **mawa a ditaola**, the politician's variety, for instance. The nature of these varieties allows them to be transferred from rural to urban areas. In urban areas, they are spoken not only by people from Makhutswe but also by speakers from other regions such as Lobedu, Tlokwe, Kopa, etc. As a result they do not reflect Khutšwe lexical items and expressions. The openness of the social varieties in this chapter has played an important role in maintaining culture, indigenous knowledge and beliefs.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation has demonstrated that the term 'dialect' is used in the traditional framework of analysis to explain the various linguistic differences which occur in a specific language. In this dissertation a new umbrella term 'language variety' is used.

The term 'variety' refers to various speech varieties whether they be the variety of educated groups, political, the educated, men, women, or simply members of a community seated in a particular area. Each variety is determined in terms of specific factors which could have a bearing on the language variety, such as geographical areas and social groups or classes.

The term 'variety' differs markedly from the traditional term 'dialect' in that the latter considers geographical boundaries as the main reason or criterion for distinguishing different speech forms.

5.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Chapter 2 presented the origin of the Makhutswe clans, and the reasons they are today located in Makhutswe. The study of their origin is very important because it

explains the nature of various varieties spoken by Makhutswe people in the place of standard Northern Sotho.

Migration as well as the settlement of groups in specific regions influenced the Makhutswe people who settled with other groups who were non-Sotho speaking, such as the Vatsonga. These influences resulted in various social varieties being spoken in Makhutswe.

5.3 CLOSED SOCIAL VARIETIES

Makhutswe, just like any other community, has closed varieties. These varieties are secret in nature and they are used at initiation schools. The purpose of these initiation schools or institutions is to initiate young boys and girls into adulthood. These closed social varieties are used as a vehicle to impart indigenous knowledge which teaches them the secrets of life and how to take responsibility as adult members of society. It is at these schools that the roles of men and women as married adults are emphasised.

5.4 OPEN SOCIAL VARIETIES

These are overt in nature and are characterised by specific lexical stems and expressions which are well known to the general public in Makhutswe. These include the marriage variety, **mawa a ditaola**, and the mourning variety. The existence of these social varieties plays an important role in maintaining culture, indigenous knowledge and belief.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is indicated in chapter one, the term 'dialect' is far too restricted in its application to account for various spoken forms used by the Makhutswe people. In order to address this, the term 'variety' should be used instead. This caters for the shortcomings of the traditional approach to language differences. The term 'variety' can be interpreted in a wider sense to refer to speech varieties be they of juveniles, the educated, politicians and so on. It is thus proper to categorise the spoken form used by traditional healers as **mawa a ditaola**. All these spoken forms should be referred to as social varieties. The spoken variety used by all people in Makhutswe is the Khutšwe variety. Unlike the social variety, this should be referred to as the regional variety.

The use of both social varieties and the Khutšwe regional variety has had a detrimental effect on the standard variety. The speakers of the Khutšwe variety have mastered this variety as a social variety very well as compared to their mastery of the standard variety.

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