

THE NATURE OF POSSESSION IN SISWATI: A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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THE NATURE OF POSSESSION IN SISWATI: A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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DECLARATION

I declare that **THE NATURE OF POSSESSION IN SISWATI: A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS** 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

22-02-2016

Date

MN MATFUNJWA

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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents who made sure that I received the best education possible to enable me to be successful throughout my entire life.

ABSTRACT

This study is an analysis of the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural perspective. The study seeks to uncover how possession is expressed in siSwati and also the socio-cultural traits of the Swazi people that are revealed through possession. A written corpus was used to collect the requisite data and the relevant data was subsequently analysed. The study adopted systematic functional linguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to analyse the nature of possession in siSwati.

Key terms

Possession, siSwati, socio-cultural, analysis

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background

SiSwati is a Nguni language which falls in the same language group as isiZulu, isiXhosa and isiNdebele. It is the official language which is spoken by Swazi people in Swaziland. It is also an official language in South Africa and is spoken primarily in the Mpumalanga province. There are structural similarities between siSwati and isiZulu (Patrick, 2000). Written material in siSwati was first codified by European missionaries during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of the written material was produced for religious purposes. It was only after Swaziland had gained political independence from Britain in 1968 that the siSwati language developed, with numerous literary works being produced and introduced into schools (<http://www.education.stateuniversity.com/pages/1450/Swaziland-constitutional-legal-foundation.html>).

The siSwati language is a major element of Swazi society and culture. It is through the use of language that society is able to communicate effectively and efficiently. The Swazi people use specific words and expressions to convey specific messages. This study will address the concept of possession because it has become apparent that, through the possessive, the Swazi people have been able to express various degrees of nuances from purely linguistic to socio-cultural.

This study explored the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural perspective. In other words, the study examined how the notion of possession is expressed in siSwati both socially and culturally. As pointed out by scholars such as McGregor (2009:1), the notion of possession may be expressed in various ways in several languages. It covers a range of conceptual relations between entities such as human beings, between people and their body parts and between people and cultural and intellectual products. Therefore, the notion of possession involves different linguistic constructions.

In the Nguni languages, the concept of possession is not only expressed through the use of possessive constructions. This view is supported by Bosch and Poulos (1996:7) who state that the concept of possession can be expressed in many different ways in isiZulu. They maintain that “possession can be expressed by fully fledged lexical items in some cases and by more complex constructions in others”. Therefore, various ways are used to express possession in the Nguni languages.

1.2 Statement of the research problem

The possessive in siSwati has always been analysed as a part of speech which has a specific structure and which performs the function of qualifying the substantive in speech. This approach tends to focus on the morphological and syntactic aspect of the possessive, with little attention being given to the semantic aspect of the possessive. Words which do not display the morphological structure, but which nonetheless express the concept of possession, are not included in the classification of possessives by Bantu linguists. For example, words such as *uyihlo*, which loosely translates as ‘your father’, and *unyoko*, which loosely translates as ‘your mother’ in English, have the equivalents of *babe wakho*, which also loosely translates as ‘your father’, and *make wakho*, which also loosely translates as ‘your mother’ respectively in English and which fall short in any classification of possessives. Social and cultural nuances which are expressed by the use of possessive have also not received the attention they deserve in research and, as a result, there was a need to revisit the analysis of the possessive from a socio-cultural point of view. This was done in this study.

1.3 Aim

The aim of this study was to examine how Swazi society uses the notion of possession to express both social and cultural nuances.

1.4 Objectives

The study sought to realise the following objectives

- To examine the different forms used in siSwati to express possession.
- To investigate how socio-cultural aspects of the Swazi people are exposed by their expression of possession.

1.5 Research questions

The following research questions were used in order to realise the aim and objectives of this study.

- How does Swazi society express the notion of possession?
- How does the possessive, as one of the linguistic devices used by speakers, express different social and cultural distinctions of meaning?
- Which socio-cultural aspects of the Swazi people are exposed by their expression of possession?

1.6 Rationale for the research

Possession is expressed in various ways in siSwati. It may be expressed through forms which are morphologically marked as well as through those that are not marked. In view of the fact that considerable attention has been focused on the analysis of the structure and function of the possessive, this study explored the way in which possession is expressed from a socio-cultural point of view. The study was driven by the need to examine how society uses the concept of possession through morphologically marked and unmarked forms to express various shades of meaning. Thus, the study exposed a further dimension to the use of the possessive in siSwati regarding how society uses possession from a socio-cultural point of view. This dimension has never been explored before.

1.7 Research methodology

This is an exploratory, descriptive and qualitative study of how Swazi people use possession in their language. Data was collected from siSwati written records and then analysed with a view to establishing the nature of possession among the Swazi people from a socio-cultural point of view. The methods used to collect and analyse data are discussed in detail. Firstly, the study explores what research methodology is and then elaborates on the qualitative method chosen for the purpose of the study. The research tools characteristic of the qualitative method are detailed while the qualitative tools used for the purposes of the study as well as the justification for the use of such tools are also discussed. The theoretical model that underpins the

arguments presented in this study on the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural point of view is also discussed.

The systemic-functional linguistics approach was used in the study as a model to support the discussions presented on the nature of possession in siSwati. The main reason for choosing systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) as a model for this study was that SFL is a theory of language that concentrates on the notion of language function. However, while this theory focuses on the syntactic structure of language, more attention is placed on the function of language as predominant. In other words, the main focus is on what language does and how it does it compared to the more structural approaches which place the elements of language and their combinations as central. SFL commences in the social context and pays attention to how language both acts upon and is constrained by the social context (www.isfla.org/./definition.html).

1.8 Definition of terms

Possession

Seiler (1983:4) explains the concept of possession as bio-cultural. Seiler (1983:4) further states that “possession is a relationship between a human being and his kinsmen, his body parts, his material belongings, his cultural and intellectual products. In a more extended view, it is the relationship between parts and whole of an organism”.

Taylor (1996:339) defines possession as “a relation between two entities, a possessor and a possessee”.

Socio-cultural

The term ‘sociocultural’ highlights the involvement of both social and cultural factors (The American Heritage, 2013).

Society

A society is a “particular community of people who share the same customs, laws, etc” (Hornby, 2005: 1399).

Culture

Mbiti (1975:7) postulates that:

... the word culture covers many things such as the way people live, behave, act and their physical as well as their intellectual achievements. Culture shows itself in art and literature, dance, music and drama, in styles of building houses and people’s clothing, in social organisation and political systems, in religion, ethics, morals and philosophy, in customs and institutions of the people, in the values, laws, and in their economic life.

Hornby (2005: 357) also expresses the view that culture refers to the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organisation of a particular community.

Possessives

Doke (1990:115) defines the possessive as a “word which qualifies a substantive and is brought into concordial agreement therewith by the possessive concord”.

1.9 Delineation of chapters

This study is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 deals with the introduction and background to the study, the problem statement as well as the aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2 contains the literature review.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and theoretical framework used in the study.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the use of possession in siSwati and the socio-cultural interpretation of such possession.

Chapter 5 concludes the study.

1.10 Conclusion

In this chapter the introduction and background that inform the study has been presented. The statement of research problem has been explained, research questions and rational for the research has been discussed. This chapter also outlined the aim and the objectives of the study. The research methodology has also been highlighted, key terms have been defined and the delineation of chapters in this study has been outlined.

Chapter 2

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of the literature on possession. Literature from isiZulu has also been included. The inclusion of scholarly work from isiZulu is motivated by the fact that there is a very close linguistic relationship between siSwati and isiZulu. This relationship may be traced back to the era when isiZulu was taught as a first language to siSwati learners and students before Swaziland gained political independence in 1968. Teaching and learning in isiZulu continued until siSwati was introduced in the school curriculum in 1969.

As a result of this close linguistic relationship between isiZulu and siSwati, isiZulu linguistic scholars have played a major role in analysing siSwati grammar. These linguistic scholars had a major influence on the way in which siSwati should be analysed with this influence persisting up to this day.

Extensive research has been conducted on possessives in both isiZulu and siSwati. The description of this part of speech has been carried out primarily from the perspective of morphology and little attention has been given to this part of speech as it is used by the Swati people socio-culturally.

2.2 Possession defined

Seiler (1983:4) explains the concept of possession as a bio-cultural aspect and states that it entails the following:

- the relationships between a human being and his or her kinsmen
- the relationships between a human being and his or her body parts
- the relationships between a human being and his or her material belongings
- the relationships between a human being and his or her cultural and intellectual products
- the relationship between the parts and whole of an organism

It is possible to illustrate the first type of relationship in siSwati by the use of the possessive *bafati besikhulu* 'the chief's wives'. This possession indicates a kinship relation between the chief and his wives. There are several possessives that indicate this type of relationship in siSwati. The second type of relationship may be illustrated in siSwati by the use of the possessive *tinyawo temfana* 'the boy's feet'. This type of relationship also abounds in siSwati. The third type of relationship also proliferates in siSwati and may be illustrated by the following possessive, namely, *tinkhomo tenkhosi* 'the king's cattle'. The fourth relationship is also used abundantly in siSwati as is illustrated by the possessive *lisiko lemaSwati* 'siSwati culture'. The same may also be said about the fifth relationship which may be illustrated by *emafasitelo endlu* 'the house windows' in siSwati.

It is clear that possession deals primarily with relations between entities in our society and also indicates how these entities are related to one another. Taylor (1996:339) posits that possession involves a relation between two entities, namely, a possessor and a possessee, and states that, in English, different expressions highlight various aspects of possession. He further alludes to the fact that, in the main, possession is expressed by the use of verbs such as 'own', 'have' and 'belong to'. 'Own' focuses on the legality of the possession relationship. The use of 'own' is restricted in that its usage range denotes a possession relation that relates to legal aspects, for example, 'I own a house in the suburb' (Taylor 1996:341). 'Have' is used in a wide range of contexts. It is commonly used for non-human possessors, for example, 'the dogs have food'. 'Have' may also be used when the possessed entity is not a physical object, for example 'she has a name'. 'Have' may be also used to indicate accessibility and exclusive rights of access, for example 'I have a bank account.' In addition, 'have' may be used for whole-part relations such as 'the head has hair' (Taylor 1996:341). In English the word 'have' is used to express different notions of possession. These notions may also be expressed in siSwati by using the possessive marker **[na-]** as illustrated by the possessive construction *tinja tinekudla* 'the dogs have food'.

Heine (1997) postulates that there are various manifestations of the possession. One such manifestation lies in the conceptual properties of the possessor, the possessee or both. The manifestation of possession may be either human possessors and/or non-

human possessors. In other words, a person may possess something, as is illustrated by the possessive *tinkhomo tababe* 'my father's cattle' in siSwati. In this example, the possessor is a human being, that is, *babe* or the 'father' who owns the cattle. The possessor may also be non-human, as is illustrated by the possessive *tibuko temoto* 'the mirrors of the car'. In this example, the possessor is a car which is non-human and the mirrors belong to the car. Heine (1997:34) claims that, in a wide range of languages, there are seven possessive notions that may be distinguished from each other. These include the following, namely, physical possession, temporary possession, permanent possession, inalienable possession, abstract possession, inanimate inalienable possession, and inanimate alienable possession. He explains the different types of possession as follows:

Physical possession refers to a situation in which the possessor and the possessee are physically associated with one another at the reference time. This is illustrated by the following example in siSwati, namely:

Themba uhlala agcoko sigcoko sakhe. 'Themba always wears his hat'.

In the example above, Themba is the possessor and the *sigcoko* 'hat' is the possessee. Themba physically owns the hat which he always wears.

Temporary possession refers to a situation in which the possessor may dispose of the possessee for a limited time, although it is not possible for him/her to claim ownership to it as is illustrated by the following example:

Vusi unemoto layisebentisa uma aya emsebentini kepha umnikati wayo nguJudy.
'Vusi has a car that he uses to go to the work but it belongs to Judy'.

In the example above, Vusi is a temporary possessor of the *imoto* 'car' because he uses it for a short period of time. However, Judy is the actual possessor and she owns the car. The car is a temporary possessee as regards Vusi as it belongs to Judy. The fact that Vusi has short-term access to the car does not make him the true owner of the car. However, he has temporary possession because he uses the car with the owner's consent only when he goes to work.

Permanent possession refers to a situation in which the possessee is the property of the possessor and the possessor has legal title to the possessee. This type of possession may be illustrated by the following example:

Sipho unemoto layitsenge eMbabane uyisebentisa sonkhe sikhatsi. 'Sipho has a car that he bought in Mbabane and he uses all the time'.

In this example, Sipho is the permanent possessor because he has legal and full ownership of the car. The car, *imoto*, is the possessee it legally belongs to Sipho. Hence, we call the relation between Sipho, who is the legal owner, and the car, which is a possessee, permanent possession.

Inalienable possession is when the possessee is typically conceived of as being inseparable from the possessor, for example body parts or relatives, such as the following:

Nginemehlo laluhlata. 'I have blue eyes'.

In this example, *emehlo*, 'eyes', are body parts belonging to the human body and the possessor of these body parts is the person concerned. The body parts form part of the human body and, hence, they are regarded as an inseparable possessee in relation to the possessor body.

In abstract possession, 'the possessee is a concept that is not visible or tangible, like a disease, a feeling or some other psychological state' (Heine 1997:34). For example,

Unemkhuhlane. 'He has flu'.

In this example, *umkhuhlane*, 'flu', is regarded as the abstract possessee because it is not part of the possessor although the person is suffering from it.

In inanimate inalienable possession, the possessor is inanimate while the possessee and the possessor are conceived of as being inseparable, for example,

Lesihlahla sinemagala lamanyenti. 'The tree has many branches'.

In this example, *sihlahla*, 'the tree', is the inanimate possessor while the inalienable possessee is *emagala* - 'the branches'. The branches, *emagala*, are regarded as the inalienable possessee of the possessor tree, *sihlahla*, because they form part of the

tree. The branches, *emagala*, make up the whole, *sihlahla*, tree, and, hence, we say the relation between the *sihlahla* tree and *emagala* branches denotes inanimate inalienable possession.

In inanimate alienable possession, the possessor is inanimate while the possessee is separable from the possessor, for example,

Litafula lami linencwadzi. 'My table has book on it'.

In this example, *litafula*, 'the table', is the inanimate possessor while the separable possessee is the book, *incwadzi*. The table, *litafula*, is a possessor as long as the book, *incwadzi*, remains on the table. However, the book is said to be an alienable possessee because it may be removed from the table and, therefore, no longer be a possessee.

Baron et al. (2001:2) define the term "possession" as "the linguistic expression of the relationship between two entities, a possessor and possessum, such that one, the possessor, is seen as being in some way related to the other, the possessum, as having it near or controlling it". With the term "possessum", these scholars refer to an entity that is possessed or owned, while the term "possessor" refers to a person/entity that owns/control the possessee. This means that there is a relation between the possessor noun and the possessee, for example:

Inja yaMuzi ifile. 'Muzi's dog has died'.

The relation that exists between the possessor noun, which in this case is *Muzi*, and the possessee, which in this case is the dog, is that of ownership.

In *The expression of possession*, McGregor (2009:1) postulates that the notion of possession is a "relational concept that covers a wide range of conceptual relations between entities". These conceptual relations between entities include the following:

- a relation between a person and his/her body, for example *lunyawo lwemuntfu* – 'a person's foot'
- a relation between a person and his/her products, for example *ingati yami* – 'my blood'
- a relation between a persons and his/her kin, for example *umzala wami* – 'my cousin'

- a relation between a person's and his/her representations (e.g. names, photographs), for example *libito lami*, 'my name', and *sitfombe sami*, 'my photograph'
- a relation between a person and his/her material belongings (animate and inanimate items the person owns own), for example *tinkhomo tami* – 'my cattle' and *imoto yami* – 'my car'
- a relation between a person and the things to which the person has usership rights to, for example *likhadi lami lasebhange* – 'my bank card' or control over *umphatsi welidolobha* – 'mayor of a town'
- a relation between a person's and cultural and intellectual products, for example *emasiko esiSwati* – 'siSwati customs'.

According to Chappell and McGregor (1989:26), in many languages inalienable possession is not marked but is expressed by nominals in juxtaposition, where the nominal referring to the possessor is juxtaposed with the nominal referring to the possessed, but without the intervention of morphological markers, for example,

Umfana ugeza imoto tivalo – 'the boy washes the car doors'.

Inalienable possession is associated with inherent relations such as body parts and kinship (McGregor 2009:2). In siSwati, inalienable possession may be marked by a possessive marker, for example,

Umlente waThoko uphukile. 'Thoko's leg is broken' and *umntfwana wami uyagula* 'my child is sick'.

Chappell and McGregor (1989:24) explain that in alienable possession a possessor is realised by a noun phrase which is separated from the possessed constituent by an overt linking marker. This type of construction expresses true ownership and direct possession. The alienable possession is associated with less inherent relations such as owned material objects, for example:

Indlu yami iwile. 'My house has collapsed'.

McGregor (2009:2) also proposes three main types of possessive constructions, namely, attributive, predicative and external. By attributive possession, he refers to 'constructions in which that which is possessed form a noun phrase', for example:

Inja yami. 'My dog'

Predicative possession refers to a 'construction in which the possessive is expressed in a predicate, often by a possessive verb, for example:

Mine nginenkhomati. 'I have a cow'

Thirdly, external possessions refer to a construction in which the possessive relation is not specified either by the lexical verb or within the noun phrase. The possessed entity and the possessor do not belong to a noun phrase but rather at the level of clausal construction, as in the following example:

Dokotela ujovalumfana tibunu. 'The doctor injects the boy on the buttock'.

2.3 Literature on possessives in the African languages

In *The possessive in Xhosa*, Hoza (1991) posits that, in the isiXhosa language, there are numerous types of possession and that these may be expressed in various ways, thus resulting in different meanings to the possessives. She outlines different types of possessive and their meanings, namely, individual possessives, family terms and communal possession. By individual possessives, Hoza (1991:76) denotes ordinary possessives which signify possession by an individual or individuals. She alleges that this type of possessive is used primarily with Noun Phrases (NPs), including nouns of all classes. She further argues that in all constructions denoting individual possessives, the possessive morpheme /-a-/ is overtly exhibited, for example, *amanzi abo* 'their water'. However, class 1a nouns take *ka-*, for example, *isisu sikaNoxolo* 'Noxolo's stomach'.

Hoza (1991) further points out that "family terms are possessives which make reference to family terms and signify kinship between the possessor and the possessee." Only class 1a nouns are used to express possessive indicating kinship, for example; *utata ubhubhile* 'my father is late' (Hoza 1991:76). The class 1 noun *utata*

'my father' is a family term that has been used to express the possession that indicates kinship.

Hoza (1991) claims that communal possession is another type of possessive that denotes communal or collective possession. It also includes possession by family or peer groups. This type of possession is expressed through the use of locative *kwa* or *ku* which is prefixed either to class 1a nouns or to pronouns (Hoza 1991:80).

The following examples illustrate communal possession in isiXhosa:

(a) *Ndiya kwamalume*. 'I'm going to my uncle's place.'

(b) *Ndiya kwakhe*. 'I'm going to his place.'

In example (a), the locative *kwa-* has been prefixed to the class 1 noun *umalume* 'uncle' while, in example (b), the prefix has been prefixed to the possessive pronoun stem *-khe* in order to express possession. From Hoza's (1991) work we observe that there are numerous types of possession, that these possessions are expressed in various ways and that they have several meanings in isiXhosa.

Wilkes (1989:87) asserts that 'there are two types of possessives, namely, the marked and the unmarked possessive. Marked possessives are possessives formed by means of genitive marker called concord which links the possessor noun (NP) to a preceding possession noun (NP). The marked possessives signify alienable possession and unmarked possessives lack a genitive marker and signify inalienable possession. The structure differs in accordance with their syntactic function in sentences. When acting as objects they usually consist of two nouns appearing in juxtaposition without a genitive marker separating them.

The following examples illustrate marked and unmarked possessives:

Marked possessives:

The marked possessive is noticeable by a form which is termed a marker which connects the possessor noun and the possessive nouns. The following examples illustrate this:

(a) *Imali kababa*. 'my father's money'

(b) *Ibhayisikili lomfana*. 'the boy's bicycle'

In example (a) above, *kababa* (father's) is regarded as a marked possessive because it exhibits both the possessive marker [ka-] and the possessive noun while, in example (b), *lomfana* (boy's) is regarded as marked possessive as it has the possessive marker [la-] which combines with the prefix [u-]. When these forms are prefixed to the possessive noun *umfana*, vowel coalescence occurs, for example:

la- + u > lo- (possessive concord)

la- (possessive concord) + *umfana* (possessive noun) > possessive

Unmarked possessives:

Unmarked possessives are nouns which function as possessives although they lack the marker that connects a possessor noun and the possessive nouns. The following examples illustrate this:

(a) *Udokotela ukhiphe umfana izinyo*. 'The doctor has extracted the boy's tooth'.

(b) *Balimaze uNomusa umlenze*. 'They injured Nomusa's leg',

In example (a) above, the juxtaposed noun *umfana* functions as a possessor noun in the context while *izinyo* functions as a possessive noun. Thus, in this example possession has been expressed without using any form with which to mark it. In example (b), *uNomusa* is the possessor and *umlenze* the possessive.

It is apparent from the examples above that, possession may be expressed both as marked and unmarked.

Doke (1990:115) defines the possessive as a "word which qualifies a substantive and is brought into concordial agreement therewith by the possessive concord". Possessives can be classified into two categories. He contends that possessives may be classified as direct possessives and descriptive possessives. Direct possessives are formed with a pronominal stem, that is, they are formed from nouns and pronouns only and they indicate the actual possessor, for example *kudla kwebafana* 'children's food' and *kudla kwabo* 'their food'.

Descriptive possessives are formed when possessive concords are prefixed to both nouns and some other parts of speech, for example *tinkhomo tamalume* – ‘my uncle’s cattle’. In the descriptive possessives formed from nouns, the concord agrees with the possessor of some quality, characteristic or material; it is the antecedent which possesses in the descriptive possessive (Doke 1990:121).

Doke (1990:121) outlines six notions in isiZulu which are expressed by descriptive possessives formed from nouns; namely, those indicating material, content, use, type, features and characteristics. The following examples illustrate these notions:

(a) The possessive that indicates the material out of which something is made

According to Doke (1990:121), the possessive may be used to express the material out of which something is made. The following examples illustrate how the possession expresses the material out of which something is made:

Indlu yotshani. ‘A grass house’

Imbiza yobumba. ‘a clay pot’, etc.

In the above examples, the possessive indicates that the possessor nouns, namely, *indlu* ‘house’ and *imbiza* ‘pot’, are made of *tshani* ‘grass’ and *ubumba* ‘clay’ respectively.

(b) The possessive that indicate the contents of something

The possessive may also be used to express something which is contained. The following examples illustrate this use of the possessive:

Isaka lommbila. ‘A sack of mealies’

Ibhodlela lemanti. ‘A bottle of water’, etc.

In the above examples, the possessive indicates that the possessor nouns contain *ummbila* and *emanti* respectively.

(c) The possessive that indicates the purpose for which something is used

The possessive may also be used to express the purpose for which something is used. The following examples illustrate how possession may be used to express the purpose for which something is used:

Indlu yokugezela. 'A house used for washing'

Izicathulo zebhola. 'Soccer shoes', etc.

The examples above indicate that *indlu* is used as a facility for washing, while *izicathulo* are used when soccer is played.

(d) The possessive that indicates type, features, and characteristics

The possessive may also be used to indicate type, features and characteristics. The following examples illustrate the use of the possessive to indicate type, features and characteristics.

Umfundisi wesilisa. 'A male teacher'

Umntwana wesikole. 'A school child', etc.

The possessives *wesilisa* and *wesikole* in the examples above specify the type of teacher and the type of child.

(e) The possessive that indicates verbal state or action

The possessive may also indicate the verbal state of the noun, for example:

Ummese wokuhlaba. 'A slaughtering knife'

Indlu yokudlela. 'A room for eating in'

In the above examples the possessives *wokuhlaba* and *yokudlela* indicate the verbal states of the nouns *ummes*e and *indlu*.

(f) The possessive that indicates order

Possessives may also indicate the chronological order of entities, for example:

Incwadi yesibili. 'A second book'

The possessive *wesibili* was used to indicate the chronological order of the books.

In *The possessive in Zulu*, Sabelo (1990:109) argues that “meaning rather than form should be taken as the decisive criterion in identifying possessives”. She classifies possessives into two types; namely, subjective and objective possessives. According to her the subjective possessive refers to the possessive case where the possessor denotes that which owns something, for example: in *izinkomo zabantu* ‘the cattle of the people’, while the objective possessive refers to the possessive case where the possessee further describes the possessor or where the possessor possesses a certain quality or character, for example: *isiphalaphala sentombi* ‘a very beautiful lady’. The possessive *sentombi* expresses a particular quality of the possessor, in this case is the beauty of the lady.

Taljaard and Bosch (1993:86) posit that “the possessive construction expresses possession. It consists of a possessive concord which refers to the noun which is the possession, and a stem which is the possessor”. This may be observed in the following example, *emanti ebantfu acitsekile* – ‘the people’s water spilled’. The people own the water and the possessive *ebantfu* ‘of the people’ has a possessive concord /e-/ which links the noun *emanti* ‘water’ and the possessor stem *-bantfu* ‘people’. Thus, it is the possessive concord that has been attached to the noun and that introduces the notion of possession.

There are various constructions that express a relation of possession in isiZulu. The notion of possession is usually expressed by a possessor and possessee connected by a separate element which is a possessive concord. This is the most salient way of expressing a possessive relationship morphologically in isiZulu, in which two nouns are connected by means of a connecting element (Bosch 1995:141). For example:

Inja ya-umfana > inja yomfana ‘the boy’s dog’ (Bosch 1995:142)

Possession may also be expressed by two nouns in juxtaposing constructions. These constructions include nouns without the morphological marking of possession. Juxtaposed nouns without morphological marking are usually restricted to either a part whole or an inalienable relation (Bosch 1995:73–74). For example:

Udokotela uvula umntwana umlomo. 'The doctor opens the child's mouth.'

Uyayikhipha inkukhu ulimi. 'He takes out the chicken's tongue.'

From the above examples we observe that the juxtaposed nouns *umntwana umlomo* (child's mouth) and *inkukhu ulimi* (chicken's tongue) express inalienable possession.

Another construction that expresses the notion of possession is the noun plus reflexive prefix /-zi-/ (Bosch 1995:111). The reflexive prefix /-zi-/ is prefixed to a verb that follows a subject noun in a sentence in order to express possession. For example:

Intombazane i-zi-penda ubuso. 'The girl paints her face'.

Bosch (1995:121) maintains that another way of expressing a notion of possession is through the use of compound nouns. She points out that in isiZulu, compound nouns often contain a notion of possession although not marked. The following examples illustrate this:

Umninimuzi 'The owner of a kraal; head-man'

Abanikazimpahla 'Owners of the goods'

Umninimina 'My master'

Abanikazizo 'Their owners'

She also asserts that "a combination of a noun and possessive also express the notion possession" (Bosch 1995:121). For example:

uMandlempisi 'Mr Hyena's strength'

uMandlembumbe 'Lion's strength'

Bosch (1995:123) further points out that "the other type of compound noun that conveys possession is the abbreviated noun plus noun". In this construction of a compound noun, the formative *so-* 'owner' is abbreviated to a noun which semantically expresses possession, for example:

uSobantu 'The father of the people'

uSokulunga 'The owner of goodness/father of righteousness'

According to Van Eeden in Bosch (1995:127), the abbreviated forms *-ma-* and *-no-* also express the notion of possession. The formative *-ma-* conveys the meaning of ‘daughter of’, while the formative *-no-* means ‘mother of’. Bosch (1995:128) cites the following examples in isiZulu:

uNobantu ‘Mother of people’

uNomvula ‘Mother of rain’

uMaKhumalo ‘Daughter of Khumalo’

uMaThwala ‘Daughter of Thwala’

There are also verb phrase constructions which Bosch (1995:184–185) aptly terms “verbs of possession”, that is, verbs that express possession in isiZulu. When used in the stative form verb stems such as *-fuya* ‘own stock’, *akha* ‘build’ and *-zala* ‘bear/give birth’ express a notion of possession, for example:

Ubaba ufuye izimvu. ‘My father owns a herd of sheep’.

UThoko uzele. ‘Thoko has many children’.

UZulu wakhile. ‘Zulu owns a house’.

There is also locative concord *kwa-* possessive construction in isiZulu which expresses possession. This notion of possession is inherent in the locative possessive concord *kwa-* (Bosch 1995:161) for example:

USipho uhlala kwamalume. ‘Sipho stays at his uncle’s place’.

Abantwana bahlala kwakho. ‘The kids stay in your home’.

Another construction that is used to convey possession is the conjunctive formative *-na-* which, in most cases, conveys the notion of possession (Bosch 1995:40). For example: *umuntu unomfana* ‘the person has a boy.’

It is clear from the above example that the conjunctive *-na-* which means ‘and’ also entails a semantic meaning ‘has’, which brings about the notion of possession in the sentence despite the fact that it joins the nouns *umuntu* ‘a person’ and *umfana* ‘a boy’.

In *The categorial status of the possessive in Zulu: a new perspective*, Bosch and Poulos (1996:63) posit that the notion of possession may be expressed in several different

ways in isiZulu. They maintain that “possession can be expressed by fully fledged lexical items in some cases and by more complex constructions in others”. They further argue that it is not possible to reduce the notion of possession to a word category. Bosch and Poulos (1996) suggest the following four major ways in which the concept of possession may be expressed in isiZulu:

- Nouns, where a single noun without any morphological marking may be used to express possession, for example, kinship terms such as *ubaba* – ‘my father’ and *umama* – ‘my mother’ express possession regardless of the fact that they lack a possessive marker.
- Two nouns in juxtaposition may be used to express the notion of possession, for example; *udokotela uvula umntwana umlomo* – ‘the doctor opens the child’s mouth’. The two adjacent nouns *umntwana umlomo* after the verb express a relation between the child and the mouth in that the mouth belongs to the child. These nouns have, in turn, been used to express possession without any morphological possessive marker.
- A predicative form or verbal element occurring between two nouns may also express the notion of possession, for example; *uthisha unemali* (u+na+imali) – ‘the teacher has money’.
- A single verb stem such as *-fuya* ‘own stock’ and *-akha* ‘build’ which, in context, may mean owning a house expresses possession, for example; *umakhelwane ufuyile* ‘the neighbour owns a lot of stock’ and *indoda yakhile* ‘the man owns a house’ (Bosch and Poulos 1996:72–73).

In siSwati, possession is a term which is used to describe relationships between two or more entities. Possession involves some of the following concepts, namely, ownership, belonging, control, kinship and other relations between entities. SiSwati linguists use the term ‘possessive’ to express the notion of possession. They usually use this term to refer to a part of speech which is used in siSwati to express various notions of possession.

Ziervogel and Mabuza (1976:70) state that "the Swati possessive consists of a possessive concord (pc) plus a possessive stem (ps)". This means that the notion of

possession in siSwati is expressed by a word which is constructed with a possessive concord and a stem. The use of the term 'possessive' to describe the word constructed is apt because it expresses a notion of possession, that is, a relationship between two entities such as ownership and other relations.

The definition of the possessive suggested by Ziervogel and Mabuza (1976:70) focuses on the formation of the possessive as a part of speech, that is, possession is expressed by a single word termed a possessive. Thus, the possessive is explained from a morphological point of view.

In his work *Luhlelo LweSiSwati*, Dlamini (1979:43) describes a possessive as a word that qualifies a noun and which is linked to the noun by means of an agreement with a possessive concord and a stem. He further states that the possessive fulfils several functions in a sentence; for example, the possessive may be used in a sentence to indicate what something is made of, it may indicate the period for which something is used, it may be used to describe the function of something, it may indicate the content, it may be used to indicate what something uses in order to operate, and it may also indicate order.

It is clear from Dlamini's analysis of the possessive in siSwati that he focuses mainly on the formation of the possessive as a word with a possessive concord and a stem. He analyses the possessive from a morphological point of view and briefly indicates the functions of a possessive in a sentence.

Taljaard et al. (1991:84) grammar manual entitled *Handbook of siSwati* posits that "the possessive construction expresses possession. It consists of a possessive concord which refers to a noun which is the possession and a stem which is the possessor." The possessive concord is formed by means of the subject concord and by adding the possessive -a-. In siSwati each noun class has its own possessive concords. The possessive stem indicates the possessor while the possessor may be expressed by almost any word or part of speech which may aptly express possession (Taljaard et al. 1991: 84).

According to Sibanda and Mthembu's work, *Sihlatiya SiSwati* (1996:74), the possessive is a part of speech that may be classified under the qualificative. The possessive describes a relationship between two things. This relationship also indicates the owner of a particular entity.

The possessive is made up of a concord and a stem. The possessive concord expresses the concept of possession. The possessive has no primitive stems as all possessive stems are derived from other parts of speech. On the other hand, possessive concords are all derived from noun prefixes by adding a possessive morpheme /-a/ to the first syllable of the noun prefix, for example:

Class	Prefix	Possessive morpheme	Possessive concord
1 singular	<i>u-</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>wa-</i>
2 singular	<i>u-</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>wa-</i>
5 singular	<i>i-</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>ya-, etc.</i>

Sibanda and Mthembu (1996) also analysed the possessive as a word which has a concord and a stem. However, in their analysis they do not explain clearly how the concept of possession is expressed by the words which they consider to be possessives.

Vilakati and Sibanda (1997:88) define a possessive in siSwati in the following manner:

Buniyo luhlobo lwesichasiso lolukhomba tintfo letinyenti. Lungakhomba kutsi intfo yabani, yentiwe ngani, isebenta ngani, nalokunye nje – A possessive is a type of qualificative which expresses various things. The possessive can indicate ownership, what something is made of, what something uses to function, and many other things.

Vilakati and Sibanda (1997:88) go on to state that:

Buniyo sibakha ngesivumelwano kanye nesicu. Letivumelwano tebuniyo takhiwa sitisuselwa eticalweni temabito ngekutsi sisebentise lilunga lekucala lesicalo sihlanganise nesakhi sebuniyo lesingu -a. Leticu tebuniyo sitisusela emabitweni,

esabitweni selucobo, esandzisweni kanye naletinye tinhlobo tesichasiso – The possessive is constructed with a concord and a stem. The possessive concords are derived from noun prefixes by taking the first syllable of the noun prefix and combining it with the possessive morpheme [-a]. The possessive stems are derived from nouns, absolute pronouns, locatives and other types of qualificatives.

This is also confirmed by Sibanda and Dlamini (1997:194) who offer the following explanation of the possessive:

Buniyo buchaza libito ngekutsi labani, lisebentani, lisebenta nini njani. Buniyo bakhiwa ngetivumelwano neticu – The possessive qualifies a noun by indicating its owner, its functions, when and how does it function. The possessive is constructed with concords and stems.

Dlamini et al. (2008: 95) describe the possessive as follows:

Buniyo luhlobo lolunye lwesichasiso. Luluhlobo luchaza libito ngekutsi lukhombe umnikati walokutsite. Lona nguwona msebenti wemvelo webuniyo. Lobuniyo bakhiwa ngesivumelwano nesicu. Sivumelwano sebuniyo sinesakhi lesimcoka lesingu [-a-] lesimumetse umcondvo webuniyo – A possessive is another type of qualificative. This type of qualificative describes a noun by indicating an owner of something. This is the basic function of a possessive. The possessive is constructed with a concord and a stem. A possessive concord has an important morpheme [-a] which expresses the notion of possession/ ownership.

Dlamini et al. (2008:96-97) suggest the following functions of the possessive:

- (i) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo iphetseni* – It can indicate content.
- (ii) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo yakhiwe ngani* – It can indicate what something is made of.
- (iii) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo isebenta ngani* – It can indicate the energy something uses in order to operate.

(iv) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo isebenta nini* – It can indicate the time when something is used.

(v) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo isetjentiselwani* – It can indicate the function of something.

(vi) *Bungakhomba kulandzelana kwetintfo* – It can indicate chronological order of things.

Mohammed et al. (2009:80) focused primarily on the construction and functions of the possessive. They maintain that the possessive is formed by combining a possessive concord and a stem. They cite the following functions of the possessive:

Buniyo bungakhomba naku lokulandzelako: The possessive indicates the following:

(a) *Bungakhomba umnikati wentfo* – It can indicate an owner of something.

(b) *Bungakhomba luhlobo lwentfo letsite* – It can indicate kind/ type of certain things.

(c) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo yakhiwe ngani* – It can indicate what something is made of.

(d) *Bungakhomba sikhatsi sekusetjentiswa kwentfo* – It can indicate time/ period when something is used.

(e) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo isetjentiselwani* – It can indicate use of something.

(f) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo isebenta ngani* – It can indicate the energy something uses in order to operate.

(g) *Bungakhomba kulandzelana kwetintfo* – It can indicate order.

(h) *Bungakhomba kutsi intfo iphetseni* – It can indicate content.

It became evident from the relevant literature on the possessive in isiZulu and siSwati that no scientific study on this subject has ever been undertaken in either language. It is, thus, anticipated that this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by investigating the phenomenon from a socio-cultural perspective.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter investigated the various approaches and perspectives that have been used to analyse how possession is expressed in isiZulu and siSwati. Linguists have analysed the possessive from the morphological, syntactic and semantic perspectives. It is apparent that the notion of possession may be expressed in numerous ways, that there are different types of possession and that various constructions may also be used to express possession.

It emerged from the literature discussed in this chapter that siSwati linguists have paid considerable attention to how possessives are formed. The main focus has been on morphological and semantic analyses of possessives. The emphasis has also been on marked possessives. Unmarked possessives, that is, words with no overt possessive markers, have not been analysed at all by siSwati linguists although those words also express possession.

Other siSwati linguists have a partial syntactic and semantic analysis of possessives. They investigated both the functions of possessives in sentences and the concepts indicated by marked possessives. Nevertheless, there is a gap in the analysis done by siSwati linguists and this study will endeavour to fill this gap. According to my own knowledge and the literature reviewed in this chapter, there had been no study that has analysed possession from a socio-cultural point of view. There is, thus, a need to review the way in which possession has been previously analysed. Chapter 4 contains a re-examination of the possession from a socio-cultural perspective. This chapter investigates the use of possessives in siSwati literary works with a view to finding out how Swazi people express possession in their speech. In other words, the chapter will examine the various socio-cultural aspects that manifest in the use of possession.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methods that were used to conduct the study. The methods used to collect and analyse the requisite data are discussed in detail. The chapter first explores what research methodology is and then elaborates on the qualitative method that was used for the purposes of this research study. The research tools used in the qualitative method are explained in detail. The qualitative tools used in the study as well as the justification for their use are discussed. The theoretical models that underpin the arguments presented in the study on the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural point are also discussed.

3.2 Research methodology

This section discusses what a research methodology is. Scholars on research methodology have suggested several explanations and interpretations of the phenomenon. Some of these are explored in this section of the study. According to Kothari (2004:5), “research methodology is a way to systemically solve a research problem”. He explains that research methodology encompasses the various scientific methods and approaches that are adopted by a researcher in order to solve the research problem in question, as well as the logic behind such methods and approaches. Research methodology occupies a unique position in research. A methodology not only frames a study but also identifies the research tools and strategies that will be employed in the study and relates their use to the specified research aims (http://writerightteam.com/Sample/Sample1259087649_18.pdf).

Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013:5) view research methodology as “a systemic way to solve a problem.” They see research methodology as a science of studying how research is to be carried out. This systemic way involves the procedures by which a researcher goes about doing his work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomenon”. Polit and Hungler’s (2004: 233) interpretation of a research methodology is that it “refers to many ways in which data is obtained,

organised and analysed for research purposes”. They maintain that the methodology employed in a study depends on the nature of the research question.

The explanations and interpretations cited above indicate that research methodology encompasses the research design, setting, sample, methods used to collect the requisite data, methodological limitations and techniques used to analyse the data in a study (Burns & Grove, 2003:488). According to Henning et al. (2004:36), research methodology refers to “a logical and clear collection of methods that complement one another and have the ability to fit to deliver data and findings that reflect the research question and suit the researcher’s purpose”. Crotty (1998:3) defines research methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research questions or hypothesises”.

In simple terms methodology may be said to provide a clear idea of the methods or processes the researcher intends to use in his or her research in order to achieve the research objectives. Thus, research methodology refers to various scientific techniques, methods and ways used in research to describe and analyse the data which has been collected with the purpose of achieving the goals, aims and objectives of a study.

3.3 Method of research for this study

According to Kothari (2004:5), there are two basic methods/approaches to research, namely, the quantitative and the qualitative methods. The research method that was considered to best suit the discussions presented in this research study was the qualitative method. It was felt that this method would help to describe and analyse how Swazi people express possession. According to Holloway (1997:1), qualitative researchers are interested in answering the why? It is, thus, a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way in which people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. A number of different approaches exist within the wider framework of this type of research. However, most of these have the same aim: namely, to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures, with researchers using qualitative approaches to explore the behaviour, perspectives

and experiences of the people they study. The basis of qualitative research lies in the interpretive approach to social reality.

Kothari (2004:5) emphasises that quantitative research involves the generation of data in quantitative forms which are then subjected to quantitative analysis. Quantitative research is based primarily on the measurement of quantity or amount. According to Thomas (2003), most of the writers of today view the qualitative and quantitative approaches as complementary rather than antagonistic. He further points out that quantitative methods are, in general, supported by the positivist or scientific paradigm, in terms of which we regard the world as made up of observable, measurable facts. In contrast, qualitative methods are generally supported by the interpretivist paradigm which portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever changing. As a result of the fact that the positivist and the interpretivist paradigms are based on different assumptions about the nature of the world, they require different instruments and procedures in order to find the type of data desired. Nevertheless, both the qualitative and the quantitative methods may be used effectively in the same study.

Qualitative research aims at discovering underlying motives and desires. With reference to the the use of qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (2008:4) assert that “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, and attempt to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”.

Patton (2002) views qualitative research as attempting to understand the unique interactions within a particular situation. The purpose of such understanding is not necessarily to predict what may occur but rather to understand in depth the characteristics of the situation, the meaning brought by the participants to the situation and what is happening to them at that moment. The aim of qualitative research is to truthfully present findings to others who are interested in what the researcher is doing. Merriam (2009:13) considers qualitative research to involve understanding the meaning people have constructed with the researcher as the primary instrument for the data collection and analysis. In the main, qualitative research involves fieldwork which primarily employs an inductive research strategy

which focuses on process, meaning and understanding, thus resulting in a richly descriptive product.

Berg (2001:3) states that “qualitative research methods are observations of experimental natural settings, photographic techniques, historical analysis, document and textual analysis”. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) are in agreement:

...that qualitative research focuses on the interpretation of phenomena in their natural settings to make sense in terms of the meanings people bring to these settings. Qualitative research involves collecting information about personal experiences, introspection, life story, interviews, observations, historical, interactions and visual text which are significant moments and meaningful in people's lives.

Thomas (2003:2) advances the notion that qualitative enquiry is an umbrella term for various philosophical orientations to interpretive research in which the researcher makes an attempt to understand a specific organisational reality and occurring phenomena from the perspective of those involved. He tries to grasp qualitative research “from the inside out”. Researchers describe this knowledge about reality as knowledge that can be obtained only through “the eyes of someone else”.

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, including studies, personal experiences, introspection, life stories, interviews, artefacts, as well as cultural texts and productions, and also observational, historical, interactional and visual texts that describe the routine, problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:3–4). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) affirm that the “qualitative method is a detailed description of specific situations using interviews, observations and document review”.

3.3.1 Data collection

Data collection refers to the process during which information is gathered from various sources. Cooper and Schindler (2005) suggest that the researcher must identify the type and nature of data required and then select those collection methods which are best suited to the collection of the data types which have been identified.

This is reaffirmed by Axinn and Pearce (2006), who maintain that the researcher must use various data collection methods in order to collect the most relevant and authentic data.

The most common qualitative research instruments that are used for data collection include interviews, observations and document and textual analysis. Qualitative methods of data collection such as interviews, observations and document reviews are classified under the umbrella of ethnographic methods (Kawulich 2005). Interviews are used to explore the views, experiences and motivations of individuals on specific matters. They are suitable for exploring sensitive topics where the participants may not want to disclose information within a group environment (Gill et al. 2008:292). Gill et al. (2008: 292) emphasise that qualitative methods such as interviews and document reviews provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative methods such as questionnaires.

The data collection method used in this study was document analysis. The main reason for choosing document analysis as a tool for collecting the data was that it was felt that the documents would help the researcher to uncover meaning and develop an understanding both of how Swazi people express the notion of possession and also the socio-cultural traits expressed through possession. The documents would provide the context in which the Swazi people operate, while the researcher would be able to obtain the relevant data which would then be analysed. The use of documents in research is supported by Merriam in Bowen (2009:29) who stated that documents help researchers to develop an understanding and discover insights relevant to the research problem. In addition, this tool for collecting data is deemed to be reliable as documents are not affected by the research process. This, in turn, increases their trustworthiness as the researcher has no influence in the data collecting process, as may also be the case with the other tools used for collecting data.

3.3.1.1 Document analysis

According to Corbetta (2003:305), a document may be regarded as any material that provides information about the social phenomenon being investigated and which

exists independently of the researcher's actions. It is usually produced for specific purposes other than those of the research in question, although it may be used by the researcher for cognitive purposes.

Bowen (2009:27) defines "document analysis as a systemic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic material, in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed".

Bowen (2009:32) also postulates that "document analysis involves skimming, reading, an interpretation". For Bowen (2009), who examined document analysis as a form of qualitative research, documents that may be used for systemic evaluation as part of a study can take a variety of forms. The long list of documents that may be analysed include all types of document that can be found in libraries, newspaper archives, historical society offices and organisational or institutional files. He further argues that documents may be the only data sources necessary for studies within an interpretive paradigm and may be the only viable sources in historical and cross-cultural research.

The following advantages may arise from the use of documents (Bowen 2009:29):

- Documents can be produced on the context within which the research participants operate. Bearing witness to past events, documents provide both background information and historical information.
- The information contained in documents may suggest some questions that need to be taken into account as part of the research.
- Documents provide supplementary research data. The information and insights derived from documents may be valuable additions to a particular knowledge base.
- Documents provide a means of tracking change and development. Where various drafts of particular documents are accessible, the researcher can compare them to identify any changes.
- Documents can be used as a way to verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources. In situations in which there is a convergence of information from different sources the readers of the research report usually

have greater confidence in the trustworthiness or credibility of the findings than may otherwise have been the case.

Bowen (2009:31) lists the following advantages of using documents analysis against compared to other research methods:

- *Efficiency.* Document analysis is less time consuming and also more efficient than other research methods. It requires data selection instead of data collection.
- *Availability.* Many documents are found in the public domain and are obtained without the authors' permission. This increases the reliability of the method.
- *Cost effectiveness.* Document analysis is less costly than other research methods and is often the method of choice when the collection of new data is not feasible.
- *Lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity.* Documents are unaffected by the research process. Bowen (2009) argues "that document analysis counters the concerns related to flexibility inherent in other qualitative methods".
- *Stability.* Documents are stable and, in the main, the researcher's presence does not alter what is being investigated.
- *Exactness.* Exact names, references and details of events and social settings are used in documents. This makes documents suitable for research purposes.

Buckland (1997:804) defines "a document as textual records that are written and stored" while Schurmeyer in Buckland (1997:805), alleges that "a document is any material basis for extending our knowledge which is available for study or comparison".

A document review is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. The review of printed materials and existing records is considered to be an important source of data for research purposes. The data obtained from documents may provide new insights into a setting or group of people, with the information found in both written documents and recorded information providing useful information for a researcher about the culture of the participants involved in a study. The advantages of documents include the following: they are available locally, not expensive,

grounded in the setting in which they occur and also useful for determining value, interest, cultural norms, political climate, public attitudes and historical trends (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/chap_3html).

It is clear from the various definitions of a document that, in the main, documents constitute written material which may be used as a source of data in research.

Yin (2003:87) lists the following advantages of documents:

- The most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources.
- Documents are helpful in verifying the correct spelling and titles or names of organisations that may have been mentioned in an interview.
- Documents may provide specific details to corroborate information from other sources.
- It is possible to draw inferences from documents. However, inferences are only clues worthy of further investigation.
- Documents play an explicit role in any data collection process. Systemic searches for relevant documents are important in any data collection plan.
- Documents are stable and unobtrusive and provide exact and broad coverage.

Documents are also used in research because they have strong validity compared to interviews. They present local settings and describe behaviour that occurred in natural settings. This means that the information obtained from documents is trustworthy with fewer biases compared to information collected via other methods. In addition, it is easy to obtain and analyse data which then makes it possible to employ both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods (www.bcps.org/develop-docreview.html).

The abovementioned advantages of document analysis meant that document analysis was particularly suited as a research method to collect the data required for this study. The main reason for choosing this method was because the use of possession in the siSwati language is widely found in various siSwati printed materials which could, in turn, be regarded as representing the spoken language. The data obtained

from documents is easily available for analysis. In addition, the data found in many textual sources is also reliable and valid, as it may be verified in order to ascertain whether a researcher has manipulated the data. Thus, the written corpora will enable the researcher to analyse the way the concept of possession is expressed in siSwati and to explore the social and cultural aspects that are expressed through possession.

In addition to scholarly works on possession and the possessive, literary documents in siSwati were also reviewed with a view to examining whether it was possible to observe the social and cultural traits of the Swazi people. The textual data was taken from the following literary works, namely, *Engcongwaneni* by Mavuso et al. (1985), *Fikile* by Mkhonta (1987), 'Inyoni Yamake' by Malangwane, 'Duduzile Abeliphupho' by Nyembe, 'Nabondvukutihlala Kakhe' by Mkhonza, 'Ayilali Namuntfu' by Masuku, 'Kuyalotjolwa KaLubhedze Nebakitsi' by Masuku, 'Pum Yafa Ingula' by Ntshangase, 'Uye Enkompolo' by Dlamini, 'Masheshayinike' by Sibandze, 'Lijazi Lensimbi' by Sibandze, 'Matfole Nesikolo' by Ntiwane, 'Mudle Mali Yakhe' by Magagula, 'Litsembe Emva Kweludvonga' by Magagula and 'Sijubo' by Manana in *Idubukele* by Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a). 'Mandlenkhosi Akabe Yinkhosi' by Nyembe, 'Ngiboniseleni' by Sibandze and 'Hhawu Ngemntfwanami' by Masuku in *Ingcamu* by Mthembu and Ntuli (1987b). 'Litfuba Lekugcina' by Mhlanga and 'Indzangala' by Malangwane in *Inkhundla* by Mthembu and Msimang (1988), *Siyatfutfuka 1* by Mthembu and Mpofo (1988), *Tentile* by Magagula (1990), *Nalu lubhambo lwami* by Mgabhi (1990), *Umjingi udliwa yinhlitiyo* by Nsibandze (1991), *Umtsala 1* by Sibanda and Dlamini (1997), *Bungani bebangani* by Magagula (1997), 'Sihhanya' by Ntshangase, 'Umshana Wami' by Dlamini and 'Sagila Semnikati' by Sibanda in *Khulumani sive* by Motsa (2004), *Kuba njalo nje* by Dlamini (2004), *Giya sigiye* by Vilakati and Msibi (2006), *Kubuka ngeliso lelibanti ligalelo lemasiko nenkholo yebantfu ekutalweni kabusha kwe-Afrika kubukwe ngco sive semaSwati* by Lubisi (2002), *Lucwaningo ngenhlonipho kanye nemitselela yayo esiveni semaSwati* by Malangwane (2004) and *The indigenous law of contract with reference to the Swazi in the kingdom of Swaziland* by Van Schalkwyk (2006).

3.3.1.2 Data analysis

LeCompte and Schensul (1999: 3) define data analysis as:

... the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and interpretation. Data analysis is the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them. The analysis of data reduces them to a more manageable term that permits ethnographers to tell a story about the people or group that is the focus of their research.

The interpretation of data permits the researcher to answer some of the most important questions that both researchers and non-researchers ask.

Patton in LeCompte and Schensul (1999:3) states that data fulfils the following three functions:

- It brings order to the piles of data an ethnographer has accumulated.
- It turns the big piles of raw data into smaller piles of crunched or summarised data.
- It permits the ethnographer to discover patterns and themes in the data and link them with other patterns and themes.

Thus, data analysis may be said to be “the process of extracting, compiling and modelling raw data for purposes of obtaining constructive information that can be applied to formulating conclusions, predicting outcomes or supporting decisions in business, scientific and social science setting” (www.investorwords.com/19279/datanalysis.html).

Based on the data collected from the literary documents, an exploration of how possession is expressed in SiSwati was conducted. The traditional perspective adopted when investigating the issue of possession was revisited, that is, the morphological and syntactic approaches were first re-considered. The semantic perspective was then also re-considered. The study then explored the nature of possession from a socio-cultural point of view.

3.4 Theoretical framework

Linguists use different theories and approaches in order to study and analyse human languages and human behaviour. In view of the fact that this study explored the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural perspective, a functional approach, that is, systemic functional linguistics (SFL) theory and socio-linguistics made up the theoretical framework that informed the arguments presented in this study.

The systemic functional approach was developed based on the work of the social semiotic linguist, Michael Halliday. He developed the functional approach in the 1960s with the aim of studying language beyond its structural form. The principles and techniques that are fundamental to the systemic functional approach enabled the researcher to analyse and explain how meanings are made by Swazi people in their everyday linguistic interactions. People constantly use language for a variety of reasons. Based on the work of Halliday, FSL is increasingly being recognised as an extremely useful descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic, meaning-making resource (Eggins 2004:2).

The SFL approach explores how language is used in social contexts in order to achieve particular goals. Essentially, this approach is concerned with language use and the emphasis is placed on language function, that is, the reason(s) for which language is used other than language structures (O'Donnell 2011:2).

Allen (2007:254) "holds that linguistic structure can only be understood and explained with reference to the semantic and communicative functions of language, whose primary function is to be a vehicle for social interaction among human beings".

It is for this reason, as presented by Allen (2007), that SFL theory was deemed to be relevant to this study as it enabled the researcher to study the functions of possessive in siSwati and how the Swazi people use possession to fulfil their socio-cultural needs.

O'Donnell (2011) also highlights the importance of the SFL approach to language studies such as this study. He states that "the systemic functional approach views

language as serving social functions, conveying information, and establishing/maintaining social relations”.

SFL has emerged as the most applicable theory in recent language studies and there is no doubt that it is relevant to this study, especially since this theory centres on the concept of language function. The main focus of SFL is the role played by language; what language does in society and how the function of language is achieved. The theory starts with the social context and investigates how language acts in and is constrained by social context (www.isfla.org/./definition.html).

Chappelle (1998) also postulates that the SFL theory looks at language as a social tool and resource which people use in society to fulfil their purposes by expressing meanings in context. In SFL theory, language is scientifically and socially studied in order to find out how people exchange meaning in context. Accordingly, this theory presents the study of language in context and how aspects of a particular context influence the language to be used. Chappelle (1998) argues that linguistic structures occurring in texts express the meaning which is required in a particular context because texts are regarded as natural. Thus, when studying a language all the components of a language must be studied from the viewpoint of their contribution to the meanings expressed by the total text in context (www.public.iastate.edu/~carolc/ling511/sfl.html).

Linguists such as Eggins (2004) advance theoretical claims about language. These claims include the following: language use is functional; its function is to make meanings, and these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged. The functional theory of language states that language is best understood with reference to the function it performs while the meaning of words is context bound. It is for this reason that the SFL theory of language was deemed to be appropriate for the purposes of this study, as it would help the researcher in investigating how Swazi people expresses the notion of possession in the siSwati language from a socio-cultural perspective.

The socio-linguistic approach complemented the SFL approach adopted in the study. The study of sociolinguistics emerged in the 1960s as a result of the inadequate

methods advanced in earlier approaches which focused solely on the grammar of a language. Before the emergence of sociolinguistics, traditional approaches were used in the analysis of language. These approaches emphasised language structure only and neglected the study of language in its social context. However, sociolinguistics emerged with its focus on the functions of language and is concerned with identifying the social functions of language and the ways in which language is used to convey social meaning (Ammour 2011:2).

Ikeda (1997:127) argues “that sociolinguistics is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon. It examines the relation between language and society with insights and implications beyond grammatical or phonological approaches”. Coupland and Jaworski (1997:1) explain that “sociolinguistics is the study of language in its social contexts and the study of social life through linguistics”.

In view of the fact that sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal of acquiring a better understanding of the structure of language and how languages function (Wardhaugh 2006:13), this approach was deemed to be appropriate to this research study as it assisted the researcher to examine possession as an element of language and also how possession as part of language functions in Swazi society.

Thus, employing a sociolinguistic approach for the purposes of this study helped the researcher to examine the way possession is expressed in the siSwati language and its socio-cultural use, that is, the socio-cultural traits that are presented in the use of possession in siSwati.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology, data collection methods, data analysis and theoretical framework used in this study. The study used a qualitative method as this method helped the researcher to analyse, describe and interpret the use of the possessive in siSwati. Of the various research tools provided by the qualitative method, the researcher chose document analysis in order to collect the

requisite data. The document analysis involved an examination of the use of the possessive in a number of siSwati literary texts.

Both SFL and sociolinguistics were used as the theoretical approaches to underpin the arguments presented in the study. The SFL approach regards examining what language does in socio-cultural contexts as more important than looking at how it does it, that is, its structure.

The use of the possessive in siSwati was also investigated from a sociolinguistic perspective because of the fact that sociolinguistics examines the relationship between language and society with insights and implications beyond grammatical or phonological approaches.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF POSSESSION IN SISWATI AND ITS SOCIO-CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains an analysis of the different forms in which possession in siSwati is expressed and also examines its socio-cultural interpretation. The chapter first investigates marked possession and the notion it expresses. It then moves on to unmarked possession and its socio-cultural interpretation. Heine (1997:1) argues that “possession is a universal domain, that is, any human language can be expected to have conventionalized expressions for it”. When language is used there are always socio-cultural aspects that manifest in the language. McGregor (2009:1) suggests that a possessive relation “is a relational concept that potentially covers a wide range of conceptual relations between entities, including for human beings, between persons and their bodies and products, between persons and their representations, between persons and their material belongs, between persons and cultural and intellectual products”. This explanation reveals that possession involves various relationships and is not limited to ownership only.

The examples of possessives which are analysed in this chapter are drawn from siSwati literary works.

4.2 Marked possession

Wilkes (1989:87) clarifies that “marked possessives are possessives formed by means of a genitive marker called a possessive concord which links the possessor noun (NP) to a preceding possession noun (NP)”, for example:

*Imali y**ab**abe* ‘The money of father’ / ‘My father’s money’.

Doke (1990:115) posits that marked possessives are formed by two parts – the first is a possessive concord and the second is a stem/ root. It is the possessive concord in marked possessives that denotes the meaning of possession, for example:

Libhayisikili lemfana ‘The bicycle of the boy’/ ‘The boy’s bicycle.’

Tinkhomo tababe tiyadla – ‘The cattle for father are grazing/My father’s cattle are grazing.’

The possessive concord in marked possessives must be in concordance with the possessor noun because it derives from this noun, for example:

Bafana bagogo bayahamba. ‘My grandmathor’s sons are going’.

As indicated by the examples used above, in general, the possessive in siSwati is used to express the notion that something is owned by another. However, as indicated below, in siSwati, the possessive may also be used to express different notions of possession.

As indicated below marked possession may express various notions.

4.2.1 Possession in matters that relate to marriage

In the Swazi culture marriage is highly regarded and, hence, we find a widespread use of possession in marriage and *lobola* terms. In terms of Swazi law and custom marriage is considered as a permanent contract between the bride, the bridegroom and their respective families. The institution of marriage is completed and sealed by the the bestowal of gifts in the form of *emalobolo* (‘the bride price’) between the families of both the bride and the bridegroom.

Fannin in Van Schalkwyk (2006:151) defines the bride price as:

... cattle which the bridegroom, his father or his guardian agree to deliver to the father or guardian of the bride for purposes of ratifying the matrimonial contract between the group of bridegroom and the group of the bride and of ensuring that the children of marriage adhere to the family of the bridegroom.

Van Schalkwyk (2006:150) suggests that “*emalobolo* is one of the main requirements or elements for a marriage to come into being in terms of the Swazi law and custom”. It is the negotiations of the bride price between a bride’s family and that of the groom which results in the *emalobolo* which forms part of the whole process of the

negotiations which initiate the creation of marriage between two families (Van Schalkwyk 2006:150).

Scholars have provided various explanations of the custom of *lobola* in Swazi society. Nhlapo (1992:48) maintains that “the important rationale in the minds of those who practise the custom is that the cattle transferred to the woman’s family compensate them for the loss of their daughter and her reproductive capacities”.

The main significance of the lobola ceremony is to cement the relationship between the families, thus creating a bond that cannot be broken. The acceptance of *emalobolo* shows that the bride’s family have accepted the groom’s family. As a result the marriage is permanent and the bride will die in her marital home. This is one of the reasons why divorce is not allowed in Swazi law and custom (Nyawo et al. 2009:60).

Ensminger and Knight (1997:10) argue that “bride-wealth or bride price relates to the value of women’s labour; the higher the productive value of woman’s labour the higher the bride wealth.” Msimang in Lubisi (2002:44) asserts that, in its origin, *lobola* was merely a token of appreciation presented by the fiancé to the parents of his future wife as a way of thanking them for bringing her up for his benefit. He argues that the bride price was not a compensation for the parents losing their daughter as they believed that the future home of a girl is at her in-laws. Therefore, every woman was culturally expected to marry eventually.

Various writers have used the possessive in their writings to express different social and cultural nuances. The following sections contain examples that illustrate the use of possessives in various siSwati literary works. It is hoped that these will, by extension, illustrate siSwati spoken discourse with a view to establishing how these possessives express Swazi social and cultural life.

Nasekulotjolwa labobantfwana lolongenile uniketwa inkhomo yelidvolo kumbonga (Lubisi 2002:49).

‘When bride price is paid for those children, the levirate husband is given a cow of the knee to thank him.’

Lubisi (2002:49) has used the possessive *inkhomo yelidvolo* to express cultural nuances. Literally the possessive expression *inkhomo yelidvolo* means a cow of the knees. Culturally *inkhomo yelidvolo* refers to a cow that is paid to a man who 'inherits' his deceased brother's wife in a levirate marriage. A levirate marriage is defined as "a type of marriage in which the brother of the deceased man is obliged to marry his brother's widow, and the widow is obliged to marry her deceased husband's brother" (www.en.wikipedia.org/./levirate_marriage). It is a common practice that, when a man dies, his wife is given to his brother. It is then incumbent on the brother to care of the widow, as well as his late brother's children, and also to give her conjugal rights. This custom is known as *kungena* - 'levirate marriage'. The levirate man is said to rebuild his brother's house *kuvusa indlu yemnakabo* because all the children born out of this family arranged relationship are considered to belong to the deceased husband. When the female children marry a cow is included in the bride price paid for the children born out of this relationship and the cow is given to the levirate husband. This cow is a token of appreciation for the brother of the deceased husband who has been able to successfully rebuild his brother's house by producing children on his behalf. The cow which is given as a token of appreciation is aptly called *inkhomo yemadvolo*. Culturally, this connotes that a cow is given for rendering conjugal rights and giving children to the deceased brother.

Bekhabomakoti logile lowo mhlolo nanabo bayahlawuliswa ngetinkhomo letimbili lekutsiwa tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi (Lubisi 2002:52)

'The bride's family who has committed the shame are fined two cattle called cattle for washing/cleaning sleeping mats.'

Lubisi (2002) also uses the possessive expression *tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi* to express cultural nuances. Literally, the expression *tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi* means cattle for washing/cleaning sleeping mats. In Swazi society, sleeping mats are neither washed nor cleaned but, if they get damp, they are put in the sun to dry out. Lubisi (2002) used the expression *tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi* cattle for washing/cleaning sleeping mats to refer culturally to cattle which are paid as a fine by the father of a wife who has committed adultery. Adultery and witchcraft are the main malefactions which are highly frowned upon in Swazi culture. These two malefactions often lead to the

breaking up of families. If a man catches his wife committing either of these two offences, he is culturally allowed to divorce her. However, the bride's family is entitled to send messengers to appeal to the bridegroom's family and to ask their forgiveness. If the husband of the wife who has committed the offence forgives her, then a fine is imposed by the bridegroom's family. There is also the fine imposed by *umphakatsi* 'the royal residence'. The fine consists of five cattle paid. In addition, the man must plead for forgiveness from the chief as he has not only embarrassed himself but also his *umphakatsi* and, hence, the need to ask for forgiveness from the chief who is in charge of the entire *umphakatsi*. The father of the adulterous wife also pays cattle on behalf of her daughter to the bridegroom and asks that he forgive his daughter. If the husband is willing to forgive his adulterous wife, he then accepts the *tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi* which are meant to clean the 'dirt' left by another man on his wife.

*Njengekhomba yekutsi emalobolo ayemukelwa, babe wamakoti ubese uniketa bayeni inkhomo lebitwa ngekutsi **sidvudvu semyeni** lehlatjwako.*

As a sign of his acceptance of *emalobolo*, the bride's father will give the groom's people a beast which is referred to as *sidvudvu semyeni* and which is slaughtered (Van Schalkwyk 2006:188).

Van Schalkwyk (2006) uses the possessive expression *sidvudvu semyeni* to express certain cultural connotations. *Sidvudvu semyeni* literally means pumpkin porridge for the bridegroom. The word *sidvudvu* ('pumpkin porridge') in this context refers to a beast. Therefore, *sidvudvu semyeni* is a possessive expression which is culturally used during the *kulobola* process of paying bride price to refer to a beast that is given by a bride's father to the bridegroom's party and which is slaughtered and consumed by the bridegroom's party. This beast is very important during the *lobola* ceremony because it symbolises that the bride's father is happy about the number of cattle which have been paid by the bridegroom as the bride price for his daughter. It also provides evidence that he gladly accepts the *emalobolo* 'bride price' and, thus, it cements the newly established relationship between the two families.

Kuvakashelana ebusuku kukudlala ngemlilo ngobe kulapho laba lababili bewetana khona, intfo lengekho esikweni ngobe lijaha alilali ndzawonye nentfombi nayiyewujuma ngobe kubalekelwa kutsi lingahle lifohle sibaya semnumzane Lubisi in Malangwane (2004:58).

'Visiting one another is playing with fire because it is when the two have sexual intercourse which is something that is culturally unaccepted because a man does not sleep with a woman when they have visited each other. This is done to avoid the man from getting into the man's kraal.'

Lubisi in Malangwane (2004:58) used the possessive expression *lifohle sibaya semnumzane* ('to break into a man's kraal') to refer culturally to penetrating a woman's genitals. A woman's genitals are regarded as a man's kraal in Swazi culture because, when a woman is married, her father benefits through the cattle that are paid to him in the form of the *emalobolo* ('bride price') which he receives. *Emalobolo* is paid according to the sexual status of the woman. For example, if the bride is still a virgin, several cattle are expected to be paid as she is regarded as having been well behaved as compared to those who have lost their virginity. A man is permitted to ask for a discount on the number of cattle to be paid as bride price if the girl who is to be married has lost her virginity. If a woman has allowed a man to sleep with her before marriage, this impacts adversely on her father as it means her father will receive fewer cows than would otherwise have been the case. Accordingly, sex before marriage is discouraged in Swazi society. Both boys and girls are taught not to sleep together before marriage and a man is allowed only to 'play' on the thighs of a woman but not to penetrate her.

In Swazi society marriage is highly regarded and married men enjoy more respect than successful but unmarried men. There are two main ways in which a man may approach a woman whom he wants to marry. A man may either choose for himself a woman whom he wants to marry or a woman's father may approach a wealthy man and offer his daughter in marriage to the rich man. The latter guarantees that he will receive the entire bride price.

Umfati wekukhiwa ngesiSwati kutsiwa lonjalo akadleli phansi (Vilakati and Msibi 2006:152) 'A picked wife in Swazi custom does not eat without a dish'.

Vilakati and Msibi (2006:152) use the possessive expression *umfati wekukhiwa* to refer culturally to a wife who was first approached by the bridegroom's father to ask her hand in marriage. Thus, this refers to the wife that a bridegroom's father selects for his son. A woman married as a result of this approach enjoys more privileges at home as opposed to *umfati wekwendziswa* – 'a wife whose marriage has been arranged by her father'. A wife who has been chosen by a bridegroom's father for his son (*umfati wekukhiwa*) has the right to inherit her husband's estate if her husband dies, and an heir is appointed from among her boy children. She is regarded as the old wife and *umfati wekwendziswa* must respect her. Thus, the use of the possessive distinguishes between the various approaches which may be taken to marrying a wife in Swazi society while it also plays a distinctive function by differentiating between the old wife (*umfati wekukhiwa*) and the other types of wives known among the Swazi people.

Umfati wekwendziswa kusuka uyise wentfombatana atsandze lesikhulu salenzawo bese uletsa umntfwanakhe lotiphetse kahle nalohloniphako kutsi atekwenzisa kulesikhulu (Vilakati and Msibi 2006:152).

'A wife whose marriage is arranged when the girl's father loves the chief of that community and brings his well behaved child to marry the chief.'

Vilakati and Msibi (2006:152) use the possessive *umfati wekwendziswa* to differentiate between a wife whose marriage has been arranged and the other types of wives known among the Swazi people. The possessive expression *umfati wekwendziswa* refers culturally to a wife whose marriage was arranged. Customarily, it is the girl's father who arranges the marriage of his daughter. The prospective bridegroom is offered the girl in marriage and, thus, he does not need to ask for her hand in marriage as everything is arranged on his behalf. This type of marriage usually benefits both the girl and her father economically as a girl is usually offered to a wealthy man who is capable of taking care of his wives and who will also pay the bride price to the bride's family on time.

*Bantfu abafani kuyake kushiyashiyane kwenta kwabo mayelana nalomcimbi kepha labavamise kungasali nakuhlanjiswa bogogo, mkhulu, lusendvo, **umntfwana welibovu**, gozolo, kanye nemkhwenyane lucobo lwakhe* (Lubisi 2002:48).

'People are different and their actions during the ceremony vary but, during the presentation of gifts ceremony, the following are usually given gifts, namely, the grandmother, the grandfather, the extended family, the child of the ochre, the bride's messenger, and the bridegroom.

Lubisi (2002) uses the possessive in the expression *umntfwana welubovu* ('foster child') in order to express cultural connotations. Culturally, the expression refers to the child who is given to a bride during the traditional wedding ceremony immediately after the bride has been smeared with ochre. When a bride is married, a child from the bridegroom's family is presented to her immediately after she has been smeared with the red ochre. The bride is obliged to take care of this child (*umntfwana welubovu*) and her welfare becomes the bride's responsibility. The bride is usually married before she bears biological children and, thus, *umntfwana welubovu* helps her to do the household chores and she sends for her whenever she requires a helper. The bride must consider *umntfwana welubovu* as her own child because, culturally, this child is perceived as her first born and, she has to look after her. In other words, the *umntfwana welibovu* becomes a foster child for the bride until the child grows up.

*Angitsi nguwe Monase loweta lapha kimi watsi ucela kutsi ngikuyele kaMakobhane ngiyekutsengela **lijazi lensimbi** ngobe indvodza yakho seyitsetse indlu yekugugela?* Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:100).

'It is you, Monase, who came to me to ask that I go to Makobhane to buy you a metal coat because your husband has taken a house to get old in (married a young wife).'

Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:100) uses the possessive *lijazi lensimbi* to express cultural nuances. The expression *lijazi lensimbi* literally means a metal coat. It is semantically incongruous to have the noun *lijazi* co-existing with *lensimbi* as its qualifier. It is common knowledge that a coat is a piece of clothing which is usually worn to protect a person from chilly weather. Such a coat is usually made of wool and other material that helps to keep the body warm. However, culturally the expression *lijazi lensimbi* is used to refer to a love potion that a woman in a polygamous

relationship may obtain from a traditional healer and secretly put in her husband's food. This love potion is often used where there is rivalry between the co-wives, and it is believed to possess supernatural powers that will make the husband love the woman in question more than he loves the other wives. The expression *lijazi lensimbi* is used with the understanding that, once the husband is firmly under the influence of the love potion, this will weigh so heavily on him that his entire focus will be on this woman only. This is the reason why, culturally, this type of 'coat' is considered to be made of steel.

Another example that illustrates possession and used by Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:100) in the above example is *indlu yekugugela*.

In this example the possessive has also been used to express a cultural meaning. *Indlu yekugugela* literally means a house in which to grow old. In Swazi culture, *indlu yekugugela* refers to a woman who was the last to marry a man when his wife or wives were already old. The expression illustrates the socio-cultural nature of Swazi men. Swazi men practise polygamy and they marry women at will from early manhood stage up until to old age. It is a common trend that, once the man has married a young woman, he will receive special attention from this new wife. The young wife is likened to a house in which the man will grow old because he will find comfort and be sheltered when his physical strength wanes.

Bekhakhakhe babese bamnika inkhomo yeliphakelo kute avumeleke kudla noma ngukuphi kudla lokulungiswe ngelubisi (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988:56).

'Her in-laws then gave her a dish cow so that she is allowed to eat any milk product'.

Mthembu and Mpofu (1988) have used the possessive *inkhomo yeliphakelo* ('a dish cow') to convey the importance of the husband presenting his new wife with a cow. *Inkhomo yeliphakelo* is an expression which culturally refers economically to a heifer which is presented by a man to his wife as a gift. The presentations of the heifer to the married woman is a rite of passage which confers on the woman a right to eat milk products such as milk and sour milk in a traditional homestead. A married woman is not allowed to eat any milk products at home unless she has been given a heifer of her own *inkhomo yeliphakelo*. Once the woman has been given the heifer, a ceremony is held. This day is celebrated as it gives her a cultural right within the family to consume

milk products. However, she begins to drink the milk produced by her cow only once it has given birth. The aim of this cultural practice is not only to give the woman permission to consume milk products but it also enables her to acquire wealth. All the young cows borne by her cow become her livestock. However, a man is not obliged to give her wife *inkhomo yeliphakelo* even though this may deny the woman a chance to own her own livestock.

*Tindvuna tikhwela titehlele timemete tintfombi kuyewudliwa **tekondza** ekhabontfombi nekhabojaha lelo* (Mavuso et al. 1985:180).

‘The leaders called the girls to go and eat thin cattle from the girl and boy’s home’.

The possessive (*tinkhomo*) *tekondza* – ‘thin cattle’ – culturally refers to cows which are paid as a fine by a person who fails to adhere to the regulations prescribed when girls are carrying *umcwasho*. *Umcwasho* is a cultural practice in terms of which girls are expected to wear tassels on their heads. Girls who have boyfriends wear red and black tassels while young girls wear blue tassels. During the period in which the girls wear the tassels, they are forbidden to engage in any sexual activity with either boys or man. If a girl is found to have broken the rules, all the other girls throw their tassels into the cattle kraal at her homestead. The father of the culprit then pays a fine on behalf of his child in the form of a cow which the other girls slaughter at a location that is remote from any home. This cow is eaten only by the girls who were wearing the tassels in the girl’s village. In a situation in which a boy has impregnated or touched a girl wearing the tassel the same rule applies and his father also pays a fine on behalf of his son. Swazi people prefer to call the cattle fined by those who have broken the *umcwasho* rule (*tinkhomo*) *tekondza* (‘thin cattle’) because, once the girl or boy has committed the offence, he or she is regarded as guilty. There is embarrassment, shame and guilt associated with being thin –*kondza* as the guilty party does not feel free once it has been found that he or she has committed such a forbidden act during *umcwasho*. This embarrassment is not only experienced by the parents of the one found guilty, but it is also felt by the entire community. Accordingly, *tekondza* implies the loss of livestock suffered by the father through giving one of his cows as a fine on behalf of his child.

*Waze wangeta nangekutsi uyamangala kutsi Sibongile uwatsatsaphi emandla ekuhambela **timvimba takhe** amsikati* Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:46).

'He added that he was surprised how Sibongile, as a woman, had the right to ask for (her fined cows).'

The possessive expression *timvimba takhe* ('her fined cattle') refers to the cattle paid as a fine by a man who has impregnated a woman before he has married her. The SiSwati culture discourages cohabitation and giving birth before marriage. Once a man has impregnated a woman before marriage a fine in the form of cattle has to be paid as punishment. Of the cattle paid as a fine, one cow must be slaughtered and eaten by the mothers only. Unmarried girls and those who have not yet borne children are not allowed to eat the meat from that cow. It is believed that this cow is meant to dispel bad luck and to prevent the bad habit (sexual intercourse before marriage) from spreading to other young girls. Other cattle are paid as compensation for having impregnated the girl and as a punishment for the failure to marry her. After the man has paid *timvimba*, that is, the cattle fine, he is allowed to take his child to his parents' home. Culturally it is the duty of the father whose daughter has been impregnated to send messengers to the boy's family to ask for *timvimba*.

*Wo, ucinisile Chibikhulu, akushiwongo noko kutsi bayeni bafanele bashaye umtsetfo emtini wendvodza, bete sebakalile kodvwa babe bangati nekutsi **lukhalo lwentfombi** lunganani, kuchuba Lubhedze lomncane* Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:53).

'You are right Chibikhulu, it was not said that the party that negotiates the bride price must make decision in another's man home, and come already decided without knowing how worth the woman's waist is said Lubhedze junior.'

The expression *lukhalo lwentfombi* literally means 'a girl's waist'. In Swazi culture, when *lobolo* negotiations are entered into, there is talk about *lukhalo lwentfombi* 'the girl's waist'. This refers culturally to the number of cattle which are determined by the girl's father as bride price. The prospective son-in-law has to send a delegation to his future wife's father to ask for permission to marry his daughter. The discussions will centre on *lukhalo lwentfombi* – 'the girl's waist'. These discussions will focus on the number of cattle the father of the girl is demanding as the bride price before his daughter will be allowed to marry. It is important to note that this expression is used during marriage negotiations and that it never used outside this forum. The expression is used as a polite form of *lilobolo*.

*Yena ngekubona kwakhe watsi bakaLubhedze bafuna **neteboya tinkhomo**, kungabi yimali yodvwa* Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:53).

‘He said the Lubhedze family wanted real cattle, not money alone’.

The possessive **tinkhomo teboya** has been used in this example to contrast it with the modern practice of using money as the bride price. Traditionally, in Swazi culture, cattle *tinkhomo teboya* (‘cattle with hair’) were the only means used in marriage negotiations. However, with the introduction of modernity, customary approaches to life have been replaced with modern ones. Cattle, which were a prized commodity in Swazi culture, have been replaced by money. Accordingly, when marriage negotiations are entered into, the bride price is calculated in terms of money and, hence, Mthembu and Ntuli (1987) distinguish between *tinkhomo teboya* (‘cattle with hair’) and *imali* (‘money’). The money which serves as the bride price is often referred to as *tinkhomo telikhikhi* – ‘cattle that are kept in pockets’. In the example above, Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987) indicate that the Lubhedze family were requiring both forms of exchanges as the bride price.

*Kungako-ke lamuhla ngisabuka **letinkhomo leti temabheka**, ngifikelwa ngulemicabango, kungumthandazo wami lona lotsi bantfu bangabotikhandza sebasigalajela batsi sibotidla sitibeke ematsambo* (Sibanda and Dlamini 1997:100).

‘That is the reason today I’m looking at the bride price of cattle, a thought comes to my mind and it’s my prayer that people must not mock us by saying we must eat them and keep their bones.’

Sibanda and Dlamini (1997) use the possessive **tinkhomo temabheka** (‘cattle for taking care of’) to refer to the bride price. In *Isichazamazwi sesiZulu* Mbatha (2006) defines *ibheka* as *inkomo yelobolo*. During negotiations *emabheka* will exclude *insulamnyembeti* – ‘a cow intended to wipe tears’, that is, a heifer given to the mother-in-law as a token of appreciation for raising the bride. *Lugege*, an ox which is slaughtered after the families have agreed to accept *emabheka*, is also excluded. The number of cattle to be paid for a bride is determined by the bride’s father based on the status of the girl’s family, for example, if the girl is a first born in the family, the bride price will be more cattle than it would be when the last born is to be married. *Emabheka* must be accepted by the bride’s family during the *lobolo* negotiations. If the

family is not satisfied with the bride price set by the prospective bridegroom's delegation, then the ox intended to indicate that the bride price has been accepted is not slaughtered until the bride's family is satisfied with the bride price.

Impela imbali lenjena ingalikhanyisa likhaya lababe, ingaba lubhaca lwakagogo Nyembe in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:15).

'A rose (lady) like this one can light my father's home and it can be a lantern of the grandmother's hut.'

In the sentence *imbali lenjena ingalikhanyisa likhaya lababe, ingaba lubhaca lwakagogo* indicates the importance of a woman or a wife in a traditional homestead. The woman is accorded the features of a rose and is also likened to a lantern which lights up the grandmother's hut. This creates a positive image of a woman in the home as well as in the grandmother's hut which is the heart of the family. The woman is regarded as a lantern in the grandmother's hut because she will deliver her babies in the grandmother's hut. These children will then be of assistance once they are adults. Thus, the light symbolises the children which the woman is going to bear in the grandmother's hut. Accordingly, the possessive expression indicates the socio-cultural importance of woman and the role they play in a homestead.

Ngaloko kumele silimele liciniso noma kulukhuni kulitje, setsembe nekutsi loyi Vika utakuyivusa indlu yemnakabo Manana in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:155).

'We must be truthful even if it is not easy, let us assume that Vika will raise his brother's house.'

The possessive expression *utakuyivusa indlu yemnakabo* ('he will raise his brother's house') culturally refers to a family practice which allows a man to sleep with his brother's wife for the sole purpose of producing children for his infertile brother. When a man in the family is infertile, a fertile brother may be asked, together with the brother's wife, by the elders of the family to sleep together in order to conceive a baby. The man and his brother's wife then sleep in the grandmother's hut for this purpose. The elders of the family send the woman's husband far away for several days so that his brother is afforded an opportunity to father a child on his behalf. This act is concealed and regarded as classified information within the family because it is vital that the woman's husband never finds out that any children born are not his biological

children. In Swazi culture this is not considered as adultery. Instead, it is said that the man is raising his brother's house. This is appreciated by the elders of the family in view of the infertility of one of their sons.

Babete bametsa khona lena basho nekutsi nguNabondvukutihlala kakhe Mkhonza in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:41).

'They even named her there and said that she is Nabondvukutihlala kakhe (weapons stay in her hut).'

The possessive expression *Nabondvukutihlala kakhe* ('mother of weapons that stay in her hut') refers to a favourite wife in a polygamous family. A polygamous man usually has one among his wives whom he loves deeply. Swazis then call this favourite wife *Nabondvukutihlala kahle* which literally means the mother of weapons that stay in her hut. *Tindvuku* refers to the weapons used by a man to defend himself and his family members. Under normal circumstances these weapons are found in the man's hut – *elawini lemnumzane*. Once the man has a favourite wife it is said that the weapons are found in this best loved woman's hut. The man rewards his best loved wife by allowing her to keep some of his weapons because he trusts her very much. The woman is also given greater privileges as compared to the other wives as she is able to visit her husband more frequently than them.

4.2.2 The use of the marked possessive to express other social and cultural connotations in siSwati

The marked possessive may be used to express the social functions performed by the possessive noun in siSwati. This is illustrated by the following examples:

Gugu wase ukhipha liduku lakhe lekufinya, wesula umnganakhe Lenhle tinyembeti Ntshangase in Motsa (2004: 22).

'Gugu then took her handkerchief and wiped tears from her friend, Lenhle.'

The possession *liduku lekufinya* (handkerchief) for wiping nasal mucous is used to differentiate this kind of cloth from other types of cloth. The possessive in these expressions indicate that the cloth, *liduku*, is used for removing nasal mucous from a person's nose. It also plays a distinctive role as it qualifies the polysemous noun *liduku*.

This possessive has been formed from a borrowed noun, *liduku*, and a qualifying word, *lekufinya*. The borrowed noun is derived from the Afrikaans word 'doek'. Through the process of meaning extension the word refers to a number of concepts in siSwati, for example the cloth used by elderly women to cover their heads; the cloth used as a napkin for babies; and the cloth which is used to wipe one's face or to remove mucous from one's nose. The specific function performed by an entity will be used in order to distinguish between the various entities which are polysemous in a language. This tendency is not unique to siSwati, but is also prevalent in other African languages. In speech the use of a possessive noun will distinctly identify the entity which is being spoken about. Therefore, the possessive indicates the purpose for which the cloth is used and clearly distinguishes it from similar objects.

Kukhala kwensimbi yekukhipha sikolo kwephuta kulamantfombatana Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:24).

'The ringing of the bell for the end of school delayed the girls.'

The possessive *kukhala kwensimbi yekukhipha* indicates the function which the bell performs. In this example the ringing of the bell indicates that school has ended. The possessive noun, together with its qualifier, differentiates between the various types of bells. This bell is specifically for school use and signals the different activities that happen at school such as when school begins, when there are breaks and when school ends. This distinct function is brought about by the use of the possessive *yekukhipha*.

Emthoyi Lenhle waphindza sento sakhe lesetayelekile, emehlo akhe awatsite mbe lapha ejikeni lelita ngasendlini yakubo, kancane, kancane, ashaye emanti emthoyi Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:26).

'In the toilet Lenhle continued doing her normal action, her eyes staring at the corner leading to their house; slowly she flushed the water of the toilet.'

The possessive *emanti emthoyi* ('toilet water') has been used to indicate that this water is used for the toilet. Water is used in many different ways by the Swazi people. For example, they use water to drink, cook, wash, etc. In speech, therefore, they illustrate the type of water about which they are speaking by using the possessive which indicates the differences. In the example above the water is referred to as toilet-water,

emanti emthoyi, because this is water used for the purpose of flushing the toilet after it has been used.

Mkhulunyelwa: wetsembekile impela lomfokati, tinkhomo temasiso ativamisi kubuya malula nje (Nsibandze 1991:1).

‘The man is trustworthy because loaned cattle do not return so easily’.

Nsibandze (1991) used the possessive *tinkhomo temasiso* which literally means loaned cattle as a possessive which expresses siSwati cultural nuances. When a person has no cattle, another person who owns several cattle may ‘loan’ a few of his cattle to the person who does not own any cattle. This is done to enable the person who has no cattle to benefit from the loaned cattle. The loaned cattle may include *tinkhabi* oxen, *ematfokati* (heifers) and *tinkhomati* (cows). The poor person is loaned these cattle so that he may benefit economically from the loan. The needy person will use the loaned oxen *tinkhabi* to cultivate his fields, thus enabling the person to produce food so that he may feed his family members. He is also able to obtain kraal manure from the loaned cattle which he then uses to fertilise the fields and improve the harvest. In some instances the poor person benefits substantially as the cattle may reproduce and he is entitled to some of the young ones. This, in turn, may eventually enable him to own his own livestock as a reward for taking good care of the loaned cattle. The *kusisa* ‘loaning’ custom is a communal habit which is intended to promote communalism and the spirit of *buntfu* or kindness and sympathy among the Swazi people as they are a generous society.

Ngibingelela bobabe tikhulu, tindvuna temcuba kanye nani beKunene (Dlamini 2015).

‘I greet the chiefs, headmen of kraal manure and everybody’.

The possession *tindvuna temcuba* is used culturally to refer to the headmen in chiefdoms as it alludes to the job they perform in a community on behalf of the chief. A headman is aptly termed *indvuna yemcuba* because *umcuba* (‘kraal manure’) is found in a kraal where cattle reside and, thus, the possession refers to the task given to a headman in the chiefdom to look after the welfare of the chief’s cattle as well as all his subjects. The headman then reports to his chief who is in charge of the chiefdom on behalf of the king. When people wish to acquire land in the jurisdiction of the headman,

they have to offer the headman cattle as gifts. The cattle which received as a symbol of *kukhonta* are gathered together and are looked after by the headman on behalf of the chief. Thus, the headman is called *indvuna yemcuba* ('headman of the kraal manure') as he looks after both the chief's kraal and also his subjects in the chiefdom.

Ungumlomo weNkhosi phela Lusekwane (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988: 64).

'Lusekwane is a king's mouth.'

The possession *umlomo weNkhosi* literally means king's mouth. Culturally, the expression is used to refer to a king's headman who works as a traditional governor. The headman is a messenger and is responsible to deliver messages from the king to the nation at large. A king is the highest figure of authority in the Swazi political hierarchy and is expected to appoint someone who will speak on his behalf and be his messenger. The appointed messenger is responsible for socio-cultural order as society look to him as a custodian of Swazi culture. He also oversees traditional matters such as resolving disputes and facilitates cultural ceremonies. As a king's messenger the headman is also the chairperson of the king's advisory committee.

EmaSwati-ke njengobe kufa kwemuntfu kuwo kubumnyama abese enta lisiko lekugeza emanti (Vilakati and Msibi 2006:227).

'The Swazi people perceive death as darkness – they then perform a ritual of cleaning the water.'

Vilakati and Msibi (2006) use the possessive in the expression *lisiko lekugeza emanti* to refer to a cultural ritual which is performed 30 days after the death of a relative. In the *Swazi Observer* dated 8 June 2014, Simelane (2014) explains that *kugeza emanti* is a custom whereby a month after the death of an adult, the family comes together and assembles in the grandmother's hut. Those who took *tincotfo* mourning tassels bring them to the grandmother's hut so that they may be burnt. This ritual is very important culturally as it cleanses the spirit of the living from the death. It is also performed to counteract any form of witchcraft or curse on the bereaved family. The ritual also purifies the family members so that they may mix freely with others without bringing bad luck upon them. During the cleansing ritual all the family members bathe in a

concoction known as *tihlati* and which is considered to bring luck so that the bad luck associated with death is removed from them.

*Ngiyabonga make wenta njena-ke umfati. Bese kuba ngatsi wangivalela esipatjini njengasheleni kantsi cha **tandla takho*** Dlamini in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:79).

‘Thank you, mom, a wife is expected to act like this. It’s as if you closed me in a wallet like shillings but, no, these are all your hands.’

Dlamini in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a), use the possessive *tandla takho* (‘your hands’) to refer to the work carried out by a woman of integrity. Culturally, the possessive expression *tandla takho* refers to the good deeds performed by someone and which are envied by everybody. The majority of Swazi people are industrious and laziness is strongly discouraged. An industrious person is a role model in the community and every person looks up to him/her. In the context of the example above, the man applauds his wife because of the good works she has performed. He appreciates the fact that his wife is taking good care of him.

*Ngativela nje ngingena emasangweni emuti wami kutsi shengatsi kunelitfunti lelikhulu lekufa leliwumbonyile. Kunjalo ngativa vele kutsi sengingene **esigodzini selitfunti lekufa*** Magagula in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:129).

‘I felt as I stepped on the entrance of my home that there was a big shadow of death that covered it. I really felt that I had entered in the valley of death.’

Magagula in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a) use the possession *litfunti lekufa* (‘a shadow of death’) to express the terror experienced by the man when he reached his home. The possessive *lekufa* (‘of death’) is used to describe the kind of shadow under which the person finds himself when he is terrified by something beyond his control. Culturally this idiomatic expression *litfunti lekufa* (‘a shadow of death’) is used when a person senses that something bad or sinister is about to happen. Shadow is used metaphorically to express the dilemma in which one finds oneself when one is so frightened. Death in Swazi society is feared and is not wished upon anybody because of the pain and sorrow experienced by a family when a loved one has died. Therefore, when one senses that something bad is about to happen, the idiomatic expression *litfunti lekufa* (‘a shadow of death’) is used to describe the frightening situation.

*Uma lowo mfati lokhonjiwe angenabo bantfwana kumbe endlini yakakhe kute bafana, uyabese ukhetsa munye umntfwana kubantfwana bendvodza yakhe lababafana, **afakwe esiswini sakhe*** (Vilakati and Msibi 2006: 152).

‘If that appointed woman does not have a son of her own or any other children at all, she then adopts one of her husband’s sons and raises him as her own.’

The possession *afakwe esiswini sakhe* literally means to be put someone in the stomach of the woman in question. This possession has certain cultural nuances. Adoption in Swazi culture does not happen in accordance with Western procedures and adoption and fostering are practised within the extended families. Children play an important role in Swazi culture and a married woman is expected to bear children. In addition, society places more value placed on a woman who bears male children as compared to a woman who bears female children. If a married woman does not bear children of her own or she does not bear a male child, she has the right to foster a male child from among the children of her husband and raise that child as her own. Once the child has been fostered by the stepmother, the child is expected to honour the mother, and when grown up, the child is expected to look after the mother as way of showing appreciation. The aim of fostering the child is to help the woman who has no child and to protect her reputation in the community as she will now have a helper to assist with some of the household chores. Thus, adoption and fostering of children within the extended families is intended to benefit those unfortunate women who are not able to bear children of their own and they are, therefore, afforded an opportunity to raise their husband’s children from other wives.

*Kwakubita kuhlala esibhedlela ubuke **ematfumbu akho** akulesimo abekuso Thuli* (Magagula 1997:131).

‘It was painful to stay in hospital and see your own child in the situation in which Thuli was.’

Magagula (1997) uses the possession *ematfumbu akho* (‘your intestines’) to describe the relationship between a mother and a child. When you say someone is *ngematfumbu akho* (‘is your intestines’) culturally this means he/she is your biological child. This saying is used by women because they who conceive. The expression *unesisu* has both

a literal and a figurative meaning in siSwati. *Unesisu* may literally mean 'she has a stomach' and it may also mean 'the woman is pregnant'. Therefore being pregnant is incorporated into this meaning. This stems from the fact that, when a woman is pregnant, her stomach bulges.

Waphakamisa tandla wabonga eNkhosini yakhe. Ingilosi lebekatsi yekufa wasale wabona kutsi bekuyingelosi yemphilo imholela etsembeni lakhe, Tsandzekile Magagula in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:139).

'He raised hands and thanked his king. He eventually realised that the angel he thought was an angel of death was actually an angel of life which led him to his trust, Tsandzekile.'

Magagula in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:139) has used the possessive in the example *ingilosi yekufa* ('the angel of death') to highlight the contrast between the angel whom he perceives as bringing death and the angel whom he regards as bringing life. In the dialogue *ingilosi yekufa* ('the angel of death') is differentiated from *ingilosi yemphilo* ('the angel of life'). Swazi people who profess the Christian faith usually associate angels of life with peace, protection and guidance. However, they also believe in the existence of angels of death and which are assumed both to cause destruction and to punish wrongdoers. Accordingly, the use of possession in the example above alludes to the religious belief of the Swazi people. The character in this story thanks God because, what he had seen as something that would bring him pain and destruction, he then realised would bring him peace and guidance and would lead him to his loved one, Tsandzekile.

Matfole Ludzibi lwami utawunyatsela lakunyatsele mine khona Ntiwane in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:107).

'Matfole is my personal assistant and he will step in my footsteps.'

Ntiwane in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a) uses the possessive *lwami* (my) with the noun *ludzibi* (a personal assistant) to express the authority the leader has over Matfole. In Swazi society personal assistants are appointed by traditional leaders. In this example, Matfole is a leader's personal assistant. Traditional leaders such as kings and chiefs have full control over their personal assistants. A personal assistant is expected to

carry out all orders and duties he is assigned by his leader. *Ludzibi* ('personal assistant') also acts as a personal bodyguard for a king or chief. Culturally, *ludzibi* is expected to accompany a traditional leader wherever the leader goes. In the case of a king, when a king dies, he is buried with his *ludzibi* because the latter is privy to all the king's secrets. Hence, a king does not even go to his grave alone as he must be accompanied by his *ludzibi*. Thus, the possessive has been used to express the control and authority the leader exercises over Matfole who is a personal assistant to the leader.

Asabangenisile endlini wacala umsebenti wekuphengula (Malangwane in Mthembu and Ntuli 1987b:7).

'After he welcomed them in the house, the work of consulting began.'

The possessive in the expression *umsebenti wekuphengula* ('the work of consulting') indicates the purpose of the work. Culturally, *umsebenti wekuphengula* alludes to the religious nature of the Swazi people. *Kuphengula* refers to when a sick person, usually as a result of witchcraft, consults a traditional healer in search for help. This is a common practise among the Swazi people as they often consult traditional healers when misfortunes and illness affects a family member. After the sick person has consulted a traditional healer, the healer then offers help.

Bemanti baphumela emtini webukhosi, eSigodlweni lakugidzelwa khona iNcwala, lapho kuhlala khona iNdlovukazi (Vilakati and Msibi 2006:135).

'Those of the water (water party) depart from the king's home, in the royal residence where the *iNcwala* is held and where the queen mother resides.'

Vilakati and Msibi (2006:135) use a shortened possessive formed from the noun '*emanti*' to refer to a group of people who are culturally termed *bantfu bemanti* ('the water party'). *Bemanti* refers to groups of people who play a significant role during the *iNcwala* festival. The groups, *BeLwandle* and *beNyakatfo*, are despatched by the king to fetch water from the sea and from various rivers. The *BeLwandle* group comprises members of the Mkhathjwa clan and they fetch water from the Indian Ocean. The second group, *BeNyakatfo*, fetches water from the Sabie, Olifants and Crocodile rivers. The waters are then used by the king when performing the secret *iNcwala* rituals during the *iNcwala* ceremony. There is also another group of people who are also known as

the *Bemanti* 'water party' and who walk around the homestead demanding a fine in coins from anyone they encounter. For example, women who are not properly dressed; wear pants, paint their finger nails and are not wearing headgear (women are meant to cover their heads) are heavily fined by the water party. Matsebula (1987:331) posits that "from the day *Bemanti* are sent out the king goes into seclusion and he is not expected to attend public functions until the *Ncwala* period is over".

Ngesikhatsi seNgongoni kuya kuNcibijane kumenyetwa bafana belusekwane (Dlamini et al. 2008:139).

'In December, towards Christmas, the boys of lusekwane (scrub) are summoned'.

Dlamini et al. (2008:139) use the possessive *bafana belusekwane* ('boys of the scrub') to make a distinction between the regiments that participate in the *iNcwala* ceremony. *Bafana belusekwane* ('boys of the scrub') are boys who are 'pure' in the sense that they have never slept with a woman and, thus, never impregnated a woman and fathered a child. These boys play an extremely important role during the *iNcwala* ceremony. Their main task is to cut the *lusekwane* ('a scrub') which is used to build *inhlambelo* ('a sacred place where a king performs certain rituals') during *iNcwala*. Thus, the boys are named after the task they perform during the *iNcwala*.

Manje-ke sesaphucuka saba nemasosayathi lasiphekelako, lapha kuba bantfu labalala emakhaya abo babuye ekuseni batewuphakela kudla kantsi loku navele umtimba wakho umelula utawuphatfwa sifo setinsila kuba tiga umhlola (Lubisi 2002:54).

'Now we are civilised, there are catering companies which cook for us. These people sleep at their homes then come in the morning to dish food. If your body is weak you will suffer from a disease of dirt, then it becomes a disaster.'

Lubisi (2002) uses the possessive *setinsila* to qualify the noun *sifo*. Literally, *sifo setinsila* means 'sickness of dirty'. The possessive in the expression is used to describe this type of sickness and to differentiate it from other known diseases suffered by the Swazi people. Lubisi (2002:54–55) describes *sifo sentila* as a sickness which has similar symptoms to those of HIV/AIDS. A person suffering from this kind of sickness often coughs and displays symptoms similar to those of tuberculosis. This sickness is believed to be cured with traditional medicine only. Thus, if a person who is suffering

from this sickness is taken to a hospital, once the hospital has administered modern medication that person will definitely die.

Kwatsi seabingelelene babutana nemphilo, kantsi futsi aseville kutsi abete ngani lapho ekhaya, waphuma uLaSihlangu wacondza entsangeni yaThandi asayawubuta kutsi ngabe abengakhulumisana yini nenina waMefika njengobe abevele acondze kuye? (Mgabhi 1990:101).

'After they had greeted one another and had heard the reason for her arrival, LaSihlangu went straight to Thandi's hut to find out if she could speak to Mefika's mother whom she wanted?'

The possession *entsangeni yaThandi* ('in Thandi's hut') has been used in a cultural sense. In a traditional homestead, the head of the family, who is usually the father, constructs huts for his family members. Various huts are built to accommodate members of the family according to the positions they hold in the family, their age and their gender. Until they marry, girls from the age of 3 are culturally expected to sleep alone in their hut which is known as *intsanga*. Culturally, girls have the privilege of using this hut as a bedroom where they may even entertain their boyfriend occasionally. They enjoy the privilege of making use of the *intsanga* while they are not married and have no children. Thus, culturally *intsanga* is a hut which is built to accommodate unmarried girls only and where they may enjoy their privacy away from boys who are not allowed to enter *intsanga* except when they are the boyfriends of older girls who seldom pay them a visit.

Wafika ekhaya watimisela kucondza elawini lakhe ativalele khona angaphatanyiswa ngumuntfu, asake acabange ngalolo luhambo lwakhe lonkhe kanye nekwehluleka kwakhe kutibika kuSiphilile (Mgabhi 1990:17).

'He arrived at home and intended to go to his hut where he did not want to be disturbed as he thought about his journey and the fact that he had failed to woo Siphilile.'

As indicated above, culturally a girl's hut is called *intsanga* while a house used by a boy is called *lilawu* ('a traditional hut for (a) boy(s)'). In Swazi society *lilawu* is a hut which is built by a father to accommodate boys. This hut (*lilawu*) is traditionally meant to

accommodate all the boys in the family and they may enjoy the privilege of having a place they may call their own while they are not yet married. Once a boy has grown up, he must marry and he is then expected to move out of the *lilawu* ('boys' hut'). The married man then builds his own hut (*lilawu*) which is called ***lilawu lemnuzane*** ('an honourable man's hut'). This marks the transition stage from boyhood to manhood as the man no longer shares his *lilawu* with other boys but now has the right to his own hut which he shares with his wife.

Indlunkhulu noma kagogo kusenhlityweni yelikhaya, iba sekhatsi nekhatsi nelikhaya (Vilakati and Msibi 2006: 187).

'The main house or grandmother's house is the heart of the home and is located at the centre of the homestead'.

Vilakati and Msibi (2006) use the possessive *kagogo*, which refers to location to describe what is regarded by the Swazi people as the most important place in the homestead. Culturally, the use of *kagogo kusenhlityweni yelikhaya* ('the grandmother's house is at the heart of a home') expresses the importance of a grandmother's house in a traditional Swazi homestead. Thus, a grandmother's house is referred to as the heart of the home because of the important role it plays in the family. Every Swazi traditional home must have *kagogo* – a grandmother's house. The grandmother's house is a sacred place and it is culturally believed that the ancestors reside in this house. Thus, it is a place where all family members meet with *emadloti* ('ancestors'). The *kagogo* (grandmother's house) is regarded as the heart of the family because, once a human heart malfunctions, the person does not survive. Likewise a Swazi homestead is believed to be dysfunctional if there is no grandmother's house. In order to demonstrate how significant this house is, the grandmother's house is still built in the form of a thatched rondavel, even in homes built in townships or in cities. The grandmother's house is culturally very important because it is a place where the ancestral spirits are revered. Family members converge on the house in order to ask their ancestors for protection and guidance and to bring luck to the family (Mabundza and Mciza 2012:147). Ndlovu et al. (2007:77) also support the notion that *kagogo* ('grandmother's house') is regarded as the heart of every Swazi homestead as it is an ancestral hut in which a variety of family activities, such as crucial meetings, rituals and childbirth, take place. In addition, it also serves as a place of refuge and a neutral

zone in which family tensions may be resolved amicably. Culturally, physical fights and corporal punishment may not happen in the grandmother's house.

*Gogo naye sigaba sakhe sisetulu kakhulu ekhaya, naye njengamkhulu nguye **sisekelo selikhaya*** (Vilakati and Msibi 2006: 196).

'Grandmother has a very high position and role in the homestead, just like grandfather – she is the foundation stone of a homestead.'

Vilakati and Msibi (2006) used the possessive *sisekelo selikhaya* ('a foundation stone of the homestead') to express cultural connotations. They used this possessive to express the importance of a grandmother in the Swazi traditional homestead. When strong buildings are built, they are built on foundation stones. These stones support the structure that is built. A building without such support becomes weak and may easily collapse. Vilakati and Msibi (2006) regard the grandmother as such a foundation stone in Swazi homesteads because of the social, cultural and religious functions she performs on behalf of the members of her family and which are meant to benefit all the family members. In the absence of a grandfather in a Swazi homestead, all the powers vested in the grandfather are transferred to the grandmother. The grandmother leads family members in *kuphahla* ('making family offering to the ancestors (*emadloti*)') and she also plays an intermediary role between family members and the ancestors. In addition, she settles disputes and make sure that peace is maintained in the family. Thus, the use of the possessive *gogo sisekelo selikhaya* ('the grandmother is a foundation stone of the homestead') expresses the cultural role and importance of a grandmother in the Swazi family.

*Gogo nguye futsi lowati nemisimeto yalelikhaya, aphindze ati **netinyamatane talelikhaya*** (Vilakati and Msibi 2006: 196).

'The grandmother is well versed in family traditions and symbols.'

Vilakati and Msibi (2006) use the possessive *tinyamatane telikhaya* to express Swazi cultural connotations. This possessive literally means wild animals that belong to the family. However, culturally this expression also refers to specific symbols which are magic and which are used for certain rituals in a family. In Swazi society each family possesses specific magic that is used for ritual sacrifice and offerings and to cast out

bad spirits during pregnancy and childbirth. This magic is regarded as symbols, and members of the family/clan are not supposed to eat or touch them except during family ritual practices. The *symbol* is used to ensure that a family member is accepted by his/her ancestors. Kasenene (1993:50) defines *tinyamatane* as 'a special medicinal concoction which is usually kept in a horn and is used in rites of passage rituals'. Usually when a baby is introduced into the clan by giving the baby a clan surname, the *tinyamatane* is burnt to protect the baby. It is also burnt when a wife or woman becomes pregnant. She has to inhale the smoke to protect both the foetus and herself. It is culturally and religiously believed that *tinyamatane* may cast out a type of spirit possession known as *emafufunyane*. Swazi people also believe that, if the ritual of burning the *tinyamatane* is not performed for a baby, the baby will be a sickly child and will become a deviant in society (Kasenene 1993:54).

Nasekuviwe kubemanga, kubulawa silwane kucitfwe umhlolo, kuphahlwe kushweletwe ngalokonakele (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988:68).

'After they have heard from 'those lying' (traditional healers/prophets), an animal is slaughtered to cast out the bad luck, and a ritual is performed to ask for forgiveness'.

The possessive *kubemanga* literally means those that lie. For the Swazi people *bemanga* refers to prophets and traditional healers who cannot completely be trusted. Swazis often consult prophets and healers when they are sick or when there has been misfortune in the family. The prophets and healers are often called *bemanga* because they at times provide wrong prescriptions/false information with regard to the cause of the sickness/misfortune. Thus, the possessive *bemanga* indicates how people perceive prophets and traditional healers in Swazi society.

Kufa kwaShongwe kwabonakala kutsi kusekhaya kwentiwe ngulomunye webanakabo lekutsiwa nguMcusi njengoba nyalo sekuvakala kwangatsi babantfu labangakahlobani kantsi belisendze linye Shongwe in Lubisi (2002:120).

'It was clear that Shongwe's death happened in the home, he was killed by one of his brothers named Mcusi but now it seems they are not related yet they are of one testicle.'

The possessive *belisendze linye* literally means they are of one testicle. Shongwe in Lubisi (2002:120) has used the possessive to express certain cultural nuances. Culturally the possessive refers to children who have the same father. In this example the possessive *belisendze linye* means that Shongwe and Mcusi were biological brothers and were, thus, offspring of the same father. This possessive is widely used in Swazi society to express kinship. In Swazi society children may have different mothers because of polygamous marriage but all the children born within these relationships will have the same father. They are referred to as children of the same testicle (*bantfwana belisendze linye*) because all the children are borne from the same father but to different mothers and, culturally, all the children will assume the surname of their biological father. Accordingly, this possessive also alludes to the patriarchal nature of the Swazi society because the man's genital organ, *belisendze*, only is used in such a possessive expression to refer to the relationship between the children and their father.

Batsi nje basavula imilomo indvodza yavutsa ngelulaka yetsembisa kushayela ummeli wayo khona nyalo ngoba bayayihlukubeta 'kantsi ngatihlolela yini bafana benkhosi?' Sibanda in Motsa (2004:145).

'As they started speaking the man became angry and threatened to call his lawyer because they were ill-treating him. – "Did I bring trouble to myself, boys of the king".'

The possessive *bafana benkhosi* literally means boys of the king. However, Sibanda in Motsa (2004), used the possessive to express certain cultural connotations. Culturally the possessive *bafana benkhosi* ('boys of the king') and which may alternatively be expressed as *bafana bembube* ('boys of the lion') is used to refer to policemen. In Swazi society policemen are known as *bafana benkhosi* ('boys of the king') because the king is the chief commander of the police force in Swaziland. As a result of the power and authority bestowed on the king, all the policemen/women are under his authority and command. They are, thus, regarded as the boys of the king, that is, his servants because they work for the king to protect and maintain peace in the country under his leadership.

Ngaba yintfo yembhedze Dlamini in Motsa (2004: 72).

'I became a thing of the bed'.

The possessive in the sentence *intfo yembhedze* indicates that the individual concerned had become bed-ridden. Swazi people use this expression when referring to a person who is confined to bed because of sickness. It is a polite way of saying that the person is not able to do anything for him- or herself and is forced to rely on the help of other people in every regard.

LaMsibi: *Uhambe nembita yemanti* (Nsibandze 1991:6).

LaMsibi: 'You must go with the pot of water.'

The use of the possessive in this sentence distinguishes the pot which is used to carry water from other pots that are used by the Swazi people. In Swazi homesteads pots are used for a variety of purposes. For example, there are the pots that are used for cooking and which are referred to as *timbita tekupheka* ('cooking pots'), those that are used to store water, referred to as *timbita temanti*, to store maize meal, referred to as *timbita temphuphu*, to boil and store traditional medicine, referred to as *timbita temutsi*, and those that are used to store the traditional beer commonly known as *timbita tetjwala*, etc. These kinds of pots differ in size and shape as each pot is made for a specific purpose. The distinct use of a particular pot is expressed by the possessive. It is possible to know which type of a pot is being referred to because of the possessive used with the noun.

Kukhona labatsi banatsa emehlo abo abe angekho kuphela eludziweni nome embiteni yetjwala (Magagula 1997:19).

'There are those that drink while their eyes are not only focusing on the beer pot.'

The possessive in the sentence *imbita yetjwala* ('beer pot') is also distinguished from the other pots used by the Swazi people. This type of pot is used to store the traditional beer which is aptly known as *umcombotsi* and which is prepared primarily for cultural ceremonies in Swazi homesteads. This type of pot is commonly known as *lukhamba* – 'a calabash'. This pot is normally used during traditional ceremonies when beer is presented in the grandmother's hut in order to be blessed by the ancestors before it may be served to people. Some women also use the beer pots to prepare the traditional beer which they sell for economic gain. Accordingly, the possessive *yetjwala* indicates

the use of the pot and also illustrates how this pot differs from the other pots used in traditional homesteads.

Hha, nasiya sitja semali! (Ntuli 1979: 3).

‘Wow, that is a money dish.’

The possessive *sitja semali* indicates the use of this particular dish. Ntuli (1979) refers to this dish *sitja semali* (‘money dish’) to demonstrate the purpose for which the dish is used, that is, to store money. Swazis often use possessives to indicate and make distinctions between entities which are used for different functions. With the advent of Christianity among the Swazi people, general activities became associated with the Christian practices that were being performed. Accordingly, when the church offertory was collected, a dish in which the offerings were placed was used. This type of dish is commonly referred to as *sitja semali* – ‘an offertory dish’.

Wefika kaMakepisi wacondza emadladleni etjwala Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987b:59).

‘He arrived at Makepisi’s home and went straight to the beer houses.’

The possessive in the expression *emadladleni etjwala* (‘liquor huts’) has been used to differentiate this kind of hut from the other types of huts that are found at homesteads. In a Swazi traditional homestead there are various types of huts, *emadladla*, that are used for different purposes. These types of *emadladla* (‘cooking hut’) include *lidladla lendlunkhulu* – the main cooking hut which is a type of hut built close to the grandmother’s hut. This hut is used only by the first, older wife and the grandmother in polygamous family. This main cooking hut is also used only on special occasions such as family ceremonies and is also a place where the grandmother performs all her hand craft activities such as making sleeping mats and clay pots. Each married woman in the family must have her *emadladla* (cooking huts). The huts differ according to the task performed in them. For example, *emadladla ekuphekela* (cooking huts) are used by women to store and cook food for family members while *emadladla ekuphisela/etjwala* are used to prepare and store traditional beer. In a polygamous family each wife is given her own huts (*emadladla*) which she uses for specific purposes. Culturally no wife is allowed to enter into another wife’s hut without the approval of the owner. The

aim of this is to avoid conflict in the home. Accordingly, possessives are used to make a distinction between the various huts and to indicate the purpose of each hut in the homestead.

*Yebo, bebakhona banumzane bendzawo labebafuye mbamba **timphahla tabo** tibulala inyoka, nakutsiwa nyama ungakuphi, bavele bachamuke* (Mgabhi 1990:1).

‘Indeed there were respected men in the area who had large herds of cattle. If you asked for meat, they hastily gave it to you’.

Mgabhi (1990) uses the possessive *timphahla tabo* to indicate what the respected men owned. Culturally the noun *timphahla* refers to livestock, especially cattle. Thus, the possession *timphahla tabo* is an expression which is used in Swazi society to mean livestock/cattle. For the Swazi people livestock is a major source of wealth with cattle playing an important role in cultural ceremonies such as *kulobola* – ‘payment of bride price’ and in other cultural activities. A man who possesses livestock in abundance is envied and well respected in the Swazi community.

*Ingani phela uninatala lebekaye asale nabo usandza kushona. Enyangeni leyengcile nje kwakususwa **tibi takhe*** Dlamini in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:76).

‘Her mother in-law who, at times, looked after them died recently. Last month her litter was removed’.

The possessive *tibi takhe* literally means her litter. Culturally, *tibi takhe* refers to the black mourning gowns and tassels which close relatives wear as a symbol of mourning for their beloved one who has died. They wear them for a month after which a cleansing ritual is held. During the mourning period the family members are not permitted to attend cultural activities and ceremonies as they are perceived to carry bad luck with them. This is, thus, the reason why they need to be cleansing after the end of the mourning period. When the cleansing ritual is performed the mourning tassels which were worn by close female family members are burnt during the day of the ritual. Those family members who were wearing them and other family members are washed with cleansing luck concoctions, *tihlati*, to dispel the spirit of death in them. The cleansing ritual marks the end of the mourning period and the family members are now free to attend cultural activities.

*Ngiphindze ngitimise sibindzi ngekutsi ngitibute kutsi yini umehluko emkhatsi wekuya esontfweni ngiyekubona umfundisi ashumayela ngobe nalaba lengibalalele bashumayela lamsakatweni nabo **bashumayela livi leNkhosi**, futsi nabo babafundisi ngalokuphelele* Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:92).

'I ask if there is a difference between going to church to see a pastor preaching and listening to them preaching on radio as they preach the Word of God, and those who preach on radio are also true pastors.'

The expression *live leNkhosi* is used socially to refer to the Word of God. Since their conversion to Christianity the Swazi people have made a distinction between *livi leNkhosi* as referring to the voice of the King and *livi leNkhosi* as referring to the Word of God. *Livi leNkhosi*, which is preached by pastors in church, refers to the Word of God. The messages that are presented to the people and which come from God, the Heavenly King, are different from the messages which come from an earthly king. The messages conveyed to the people from the Heavenly King carry Christian values which encourage people to prepare for life hereafter whereas the messages conveyed to the people from their earthly king often pertain to their day to day living here on earth.

*Sekukhulunywe kanyentana nabo **ngalenzaba yembeleko**, kufunwa likhambi, kucelwa kulabaphasi, kushaywa tandla* Manana in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:154).

'Several talks have been made to discuss the issue of the baby carrier, searching for a solution, asking from the ancestors and appeasing them.'

The expression *indzaba yembeleko* literally means 'an issue of the baby carrier'. Culturally the noun *imbeleko* ('baby carrier') refers to the ability of a woman to bear children. The expression *indzaba yembeleko* indicates the importance of bearing children. In Swazi culture a married woman must bear children. If a woman experiences problems relating to giving birth, traditional healers are consulted to find solutions to help the woman to conceive. The Swazis find barrenness in a family difficult to accept. No stone is left unturned as everyone seeks help. The ancestors are consulted and asked for children while rituals and sacrifices are carried out to appease the ancestors. It is believed that the ancestors have the power to bestow on a woman the ability to conceive children.

Kwakhanya nekutsi lenhlamba yekunuka umuti waMahlalela yayichamuka ngephandle etitseni takhona kaMahlalela Manana in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:151). 'It was clear that the insult to sniff Mahlalela's home came outside from their enemies.'

The expression *inhlamba yekunuka* literally means a sniffing insult. The possessive indicates the purpose of the insult. Culturally *kunuka* refers to a situation in which a person suspects that another individual is practising witchcraft. This often happens in communities when a person is ill or experiences misfortunes. The person in question will often suspect that someone is bewitching him or her. In Swazi culture it is an offence to say that someone is practising witchcraft without proof and a person may be fined cattle for insulting someone by saying the person is bewitching him or her. Only a traditional healer is able to identify someone who is practising witchcraft. Once a person has been found to be practising witchcraft, the person is evicted from the community and his or her home is burnt down.

Kufanele ngihambe ngobe ngisesandleni sebatali bami (Mgabhi 1990:107).

'I have to go because I am still in my parents' hands.'

The expression *ngisesandleni sebatali bami* (I am still in my parents' hands) is culturally significant in Swazi society as it reveals the way which children perceive their parents. All unmarried children in Swazi culture are under parental control in all aspects of their lives. They are expected to always consult with their parents, especially the father, who is regarded as the head of family. Thus, children are not allowed to make decisions without consulting their parents first. According to Swazi culture a child in Swazi is not allowed to overrule his or her parent's decision. Sound moral values are integral to Swazi culture and are instilled in young children so that they adhere to these values throughout their lives. Parents have to account for their children's wrongdoings. It is the parent who has to pay a fine if his or her child or children is/are found guilty of any misconduct.

Uhamba nje ubonile kutsi lapha endlini tatishubile tintfo, noko angakatimiseli kuyingena yemndeni (Mgabhi 1990:103).

'He went after he had seen that the feeling was tense in the house, he was determined not to interfere in family matter.'

The possessive *kuyingena yemndeni* ('to interfere in family affairs') describes a situation in which family members only are expected to become involved. The family in Swazi culture is a complex structure. When family members disagree, the situation may deteriorate if any one who is not a member of the family becomes involved. Family squabbles are supposed to be resolved by members of the family only because it is felt to be easier for them to reconcile their differences and members become easily forgiving to one another. Interfering in family squabbles is strictly forbidden in the Swazi culture, hence it is strongly discouraged. Non family members are not expected to attend family meetings in the house that is specifically reserved for such meetings, namely, grandmother's hut – '*kagogo*'. Feuds and disputes are supposed to be resolved amicably in the grandmother's hut without any outside intervention by non-family members.

Lamuhla vele sengilo lusuku lwekumbeka endlini yakhe yekugcina LaMdlalose Ntshangase in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:71).

'Today is the day to put LaMdlalose to her last house'.

The possessive *endlini yakhe yekugcina* literally means her last house. Culturally the possessive expression refers to a grave. Swazis use polite expressions to refer to the things they respect in their culture. Graves are respected by Swazis as the ancestors are believed to reside there and a person is laid to rest in the graveyard. Graveyards are used as places of worship in Swazi traditional religion and are where the elders communicate with ancestors and when they ask for protection and guidance from the ancestral spirits.

4.2.3 Possession that manifests the patriarchal nature of Swazi society

Possessives in Swazi culture are also likely to be used to express patriarchal tendencies. The following examples from siSwati literary works are a case in point.

Nx! Asebeve! Watsi ungatihluphi? Unyoko ukhuluma ingcondvo yebufati (Mgabhi 1990:4).

'Nx! Listen, did she say don't stress? Your mother speaks a woman's mind'.

Mgabhi (1990) used the possession *ingcondvo yebufati* to what may loosely be referred to as 'a woman's way of thinking' in order to express a cultural notion. In Swazi

patriarchal society the noun *bufati* ('womanhood') is associated with being weak and naive and, thus, there is a widespread tendency for men to look down on women's thought and concepts as they believe their ideas are pointless. In the above example Mgabhi (1990) has used the possessive *ingcondvo yebufati* ('a woman's way of thinking') in a situation in which a man is telling his son not to take his mother's ideas seriously because she is woman and her thinking is shallow and not as deep and profound as that of a man. The expression reflects commonly perceived notions of women in patriarchal societies. In using this possession Mgabhi (1990) is promoting and endorsing patriarchal belief systems.

Yekela lomuntfu bo, nawe Zibonele ubuye sikhulume letibhadlile tebudvodza (Mgabhi 1990:50).

'Leave that person, come here, Zibonele, and let us discuss mature ideas of masculinity.'

Mgabhi's (1990) use of the possessive (*tindzaba*) *letibhadlile tebudvodza* loosely refers to 'mature ideas of masculinity' and also has cultural notions. It expresses the patriarchal mindset and the perceived notion that, in Swazi society and culture, men are more competent in all spheres compared to women. Men are perceived always to be wise and always to speak sense. This mindset results in men thinking that they are dominant members in society, that they are superior to women, and that their ideas, decision and thoughts must automatically be accepted by the women in society. They should also be nominated to social positions as they regard being led by a woman as equivalent to being led by a child. This phenomenon occurs in almost all areas of Swazi life, including home, work, and church as well as government structures. There is also an assertion in Swazi culture that commends a meritorious undertaking by a woman and which is expressed as *udvodzile*, that is, she has acted like a man. This assertion is also patriarchally biased as it implies that it is only men who are able to perform meritorious deeds.

Yebo, bebakhona banumzane bendzawo labebafuye mbamba timphahla tabo tibulala inyoka, nakutsiwa nyama ungakuphi, bavele bachamuke (Mgabhi 1990:1).

'Indeed there were respected men in the area who had large herds of cattle, if you asked for meat, they hastily gave you.'

Mgabhi (1990) used *banumzane bendzawo* ('men of the area') to express cultural nuances. *Banumzane bendzawo* ('men of the area') has been used here to express the notion of the respect and honour which society bestows on a wealthy person. Culturally, a rich person is one who owns large herds of livestock. The men whom Mgabhi calls *bamnuzane bendzawo* are those he describes in the above examples as *labebafuye mbamba timphahla tabo tibulala inyoka* – 'who had large herds of cattle that by their numbers killed a snake'. Cattle are highly valued in Swazi culture and play a pivotal role in assessing a person's wealth. A man who owns several cattle is given a privileged title and is referred to as *Mnumzane* which is equivalent to the title 'Sir' in English. Through the respect accorded to him, this person also occupies a privileged position during gatherings as compared to a person who does not own cattle. The latter is often referred to as *umuntfukazana* – 'member of rank and file'. This, in turn, demonstrates the importance of cattle in Swazi society and the extent to which Swazis value a person who owns cattle.

Mabuza-ke yena kwakuyindvodza yelibandla (Mgabhi 1990:1).

'Mabuza was just an ordinary man in the community'.

Mgabhi (1990) uses the possessive *kwakuyindvodza yelibandla* to describe Mabuza, who is one of the characters in her novel. The use of this possessive indicates how Swazi society perceives men who are not wealthy and who own few cattle. The man is referred to as an ordinary man because he does not occupy a high position in society as a result of his economic situation. He is not termed *umnumzane wenzawo* (a respected man in the society) but is, instead, called *indvodza yelibandla*. This possessive indicates that Mabuza was just an ordinary member of the community without any status because he owned few cattle and was not regarded as the equal of those who owned several cattle.

Johane! Kumemeta NaboLenhle ngekwetfuka, abuka indvodza yakhe ayisusa phansi ayiyisa etulu Ntshangase in Motsa (2004: 27).

'Johane! Lenhle's mother screamed, shocked, as she looked at her husband from head to toe.'

The possessive *indvodza yakhe* literally expresses an intimate relationship (wife-husband relationship). The possession reveals how the woman is related to the man. In other words, they are legally married as husband and wife. This expression has certain cultural connotations as it expresses the cultural submissiveness of the woman to her husband. Men have supreme dominance over the female gender in Swazi society with women being regarded as the children of the man in the household. A man often counts his wives among his properties in his homestead as a result of the *emalobolo* (bride price) which is paid by the husband to the wife's family. After the payment of *emalobolo* the man receives the right to place his wife under his guidance and she is expected to abide by the rules of her husband and obey him at all times. This perception of the woman as a child is evident in the conversation below between LaMasuku, the wife, and her husband, Sibandze.

Sibandze: Ye LaMasuku, beka umoya wakho phansi. Noma singamgcina Sebentile, sitawutsi singaketeleli, sive kutsi kukhona lasebamfuna, kute umehluko mntfwanami (Nsibandze 1991: 20).

'Sibandze: "LaMasuku calm down, even if we can keep Sebentile, someday unexpectedly someone will request to marry her, so there is no better solution, my child".'

The noun *mntfwanami*, which literally means 'my child', has been used to express the supremacy, domination and control enjoyed by men in Swazi culture. In the conversation LaMasuku is called a child by her husband to show that Sibandze is superior to his wife. As a 'child' it is incumbent on LaMasuku to follow all the rules and instructions of her husband. She has to respect her husband's word and accept it as final. This possession clearly demonstrates how men in Swazi society treat their wives and reaffirms the patriarchal nature of Swazi society.

Sibandze: Ngiyabona nine bafokati, sesitawucabana ngobe kantsi nitekweyisa la ekhaya. Nilitsatsaphi lilungelo lekutikhombela emtini wami? (Nsibandze 1991:19).

Sibandze: 'You see, gentlemen, we are going to quarrel because you are being disobedient in this home. Where do you get the right to choose in my home?'

In this sentence Sibandze calls the home *emtini wami* (my homestead) to express socio-cultural attributes other than just ownership. The possessive *emtini wami* (in my

home) has been used to express the supremacy and authority a man enjoys in a home. This is the reason why he asks the people whom he has given them the right to choose in his home. Culturally if a person requires something from a certain homestead, the person must request permission from the owner of that homestead, that is, seek the consent of the older man in that homestead. Culturally, a woman has no right to lend anything to the neighbours or to make an important decision without first consulting with her husband and asking for his permission. The home and everyone who lives in it is under the guidance and control of the man who heads the family.

*Umfati ungaphansi kwendvodza, kufanele atsatse ngekutsi **indvodza yinhloko yelikhaya njengoba Jesu Krestu ayinhloko yelibandla*** (Magagula 1997:51).

‘A woman is below a man, she must accept that a man is a head of a home as Jesus Christ is the head of a church.’

In this sentence the possessive *indvodza yinhloko yelikhaya* (a man is a head of a household) demonstrates the supremacy and authority a man has over his household. He commands everything that happens in a homestead and all important decisions are made by an older man in a family as he is the leader/head of the family. Magagula (1997) equates the status and role of a man in a household to that of Jesus Christ in the church. Jesus Christ guides, protects and provides for every member of a church and, likewise, a man is supposed to be the protector of his family. He has to provide and take good care of every member of his family. Thus, this expression is used to depict the approved and accepted image of a real man in families in Swazi society.

Madlozi: (*Ngekutitfoba*). *Nakadze bobabe, nakadze boGudunkomo. Tiphosiso tetfu asikwati kutiphika. Siyeva nangemsebenti lekufanele siwente kugeza **likhaya lababe*** (Dlamini 2004:22).

‘Madlozi: (respectfully). “We apologise our fathers, we plead Gudunkomos. We cannot deny our mistakes. We understand the work we have to do in order to cleanse my father’s home”.’

In this conversation Madlozi calls the home he has built for himself his father’s home. The possessive *likhaya lababe* (my father’s home) expresses cultural nuances. Culturally, a married man may build his home but he has no control over it as long as his father is still alive. A son must first request permission of his father to build a new

home. If his father approves, the father then facilitates the process of *kukhonta* by acquiring new land in Swazi nation land on behalf of his son who has just married and wishes to build a new home. Once the home has been built, the son must always consult his father before he makes any major decisions in his home. Culture dictates that his father has the right to approve or decline the son's requests. If the father refuses to endorse a decision of his married son the father's word is final. This ensures respect for the elders in the Swazi culture with obedience being practised in the family as an institution. Nkuna (2001:63) highlights that, in the Swazi nation, the father or elderly male has authority over the family group. He is the one who makes decisions. A married man who owns a home does not control his home but the son's home being controlled by the elders. The son regards the home as his father's home – *likhaya lababe*. Thus, possession has been used in this case to illustrate the control older men exercise over the homes/families of their sons. A son is groomed to respect his father and the son regards a home he has built as his father's home as a sign of respect to the elders as well as appreciation of the control his father exercises over his family.

4.2.4 Possessives in euphemism

A euphemism refers to an inoffensive expression which is used in place of a more blunt expression that is felt to be either disagreeable or embarrassing (Abrams 1985:83). In siSwati some euphemisms involve a possessive construction. Let us look at the following euphemism used in context.

*Wavele wabamba **buntfu bakhe** etama kuvala* Ntshangase in Motsa (2004: 27).

'He held his sex organ, trying to hide it.'

In siSwati possessive are used with indirect words referring to sex organ. In the above expression the indirect word *buntfu bakhe* has been used to refer to a male sex organ in a polite and respectful way. Alternatively an indirect word *indvuku yakhe* (his stick) may be used to refer to the male sex organ in an inoffensive way. Thus, possessives are used with indirect words in siSwati to render offensive words denoting the sex organs less offensive and more acceptable to people of different ages in Swazi society.

*Ingani phela kwakuholiwe, labanye baye emakhaya kantsi labanye bebatihlalele emabhaleni **tibuya tinyembeti temntfwanemlungu*** (Mgabhi 1990:16).

'It was pay day, some people have gone home, and others were in the bars drinking tears of a white man's child (whiskey)'

The possession *tinyembeti temntfwanemlungu* literally means tears of a white man's child. Swazis use this possession to refer to whiskey, aptly terming it tears (*tinyembeti*) because its colour is similar to that of tears, namely, colourless. This possession has been used as euphuism for alcohol. The whiskey is associated with a white person because it was introduced to the Swazis by the white colonials. Swazi people value western liquor highly and, hence, whiskey is preferred by wealthy men as it is expensive compared to the traditional beer, *umcombotsi*. Thus, the euphemism *tinyembeti temntfwanemlungu* also expresses the socio-cultural status associated with this type of liquor.

4.2.5 Possessives used in idiomatic and proverbial expressions

The siSwati language is rich in proverbs and idioms which are commonly used in everyday speech and also appear in most written work. Kasenene (1993:30) argues that these proverbs and idioms could be regarded as the core of Swazi culture as they express the philosophy of the Swazis. He furthes states that siSwati proverbs contain many images and it is from the images contained in the proverbs that one is able to learn about the norms and values of the Swazi people, what they admire or despise, what they like or dislike, the way they think and their general outlook on life.

Meider (1993:5) defines a proverb as a short and generally known sentence used by the people and which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorisable form and which is transmitted from generation to generation.

Idioms are indigenous and figurative expressions, whose meaning cannot be ordinarily/merely deduced or inferred from knowledge of the individual words that make up the idioms. Proverbs and idioms have a very important socio-cultural function in siSwati. They are used primarily to comment on social situation and to maintain the social status quo. They are also used to teach, warn, encourage, discourage, mould good behaviour and uphold the siSwati traditional values that make Swazi society so respected. In addition, as part of folklore, idioms are used for didactic

purposes. They also maintain subordination to accepted patterns of behaviour (Bascom 1965:297).

Many idioms and proverbs in siSwati use the possessive construction to refer to phenomena or actions involved in the day to day life of the Swazi people. Let us look at the following idiomatic expressions that use the possessive construction.

Wacala lapho umsebenti wekulima kufa (kuSemende) Dlamini in Motsa (2004:69).

‘That’s when the work of cultivating death started.’

In this idiomatic expression *umsebenti wekulima kufa* (the work of cultivating death), the individual words that constitute the idiom do not figure in the overall meaning of the idiom. Culturally it is known that *kulima* (to cultivate) cannot be used with *kufa* (death). *Kulima* refers to things associated with agriculture but, because Dlamini in Motsa (2004), wants to stress the fact that it was as if Semende was working very hard to bring death on himself and, hence, the use of the idiomatic expression which culturally means to do something that will cause or result in your own downfall and demise.

*Uyabona wena Welile, nasingeke samsita nanguLenhle kulenkinga yakhe, lolufu lutawuchubeka luye embili, lucobe luvungule, lapho-ke tsine timvana lesingati lutfo siyawuphela sitsi nya sicotfulwa ngunaba bobembumbulu labafana naJohane, **imphisi legcokeri sikhumba semvu*** Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:23).

‘You see, Welile, if we cannot help Lenhle in her problem, this disaster will spread and destroy everything. Then we will also be destroyed by these fake fathers like Johane, a wolf in a sheep’s skin.’

The possessive in the idiom *imphisi legcokeri sikhumba semvu* (a wolf in a sheep’s skin) has been used to describe the extent to which the wolf looks like a sheep. The true owner of the skin is the sheep but the wolf is now in temporary possession of the sheep skin and this makes it look identical to a real sheep. This comparison is made possible by the possessive *sikhumba semvu* which indicates the real owner of the sheep skin. The idiom *imphisi legcokeri sikhumba semvu* (‘a wolf in a sheep’s skin’) refers to person who appears to be friendly or harmless but who is really dangerous, cruel and an enemy. In the sentence in which this idiom has been used, Johane pretended to a good stepfather to Lenhle but he raped her. The idiom has been used to describe the

character of Johane and to expose that he was not as friendly as people perceived him to be and, hence, they appropriately call him a wolf in a sheep's skin. In the Swazi culture pretence is discouraged and, thus, idioms are used to paint a negative picture of such unacceptable behaviour.

Themba: Lalele Thembekile, musa kushisa, mine ngite la kuwe lomuhla ngalenzaba kungobe yonkhe imetamo yami lesengiyetamile kutsi sibuyelane nawe iphelele emoyeni njengetitfukutfuku tenja Mhlanga in Mthembu and Msimang (1988:5).

Themba: "Listen Thembekile, just be calm, I came to you today because I have been trying to get us back in love but my effort has not been a success".'

The idiomatic expression *imetamo yami lesengiyetamile kutsi sibuyelane nawe iphelele emoyeni njengetitfukutfuku tenja* is used to express disappointment. The siSwati idiom *titfukutfuku tenja tiphela emoyeni* means that all what you have been doing is futile and has not yielded good results. This idiom expresses regret and disappointment. In Swazi society an industrious person is highly appreciated while lazy people are despised and laziness is strongly discouraged. However, a person may be industrious only to find that, in the end, all his or her efforts were in vain. Thus, Swazis use such idioms to express their disappointment after a person has toiled and not achieved success.

Kuye kube lukhuni usho kukhuluma ngemtsakatsi ngoba nakase weva nje kutsi uyasoleka ngalesento sakhe, labo labamnukako batawuze bawukhombe umuti lonetjwala (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988: 42).

'It is not easy to talk about a wizard or witch, if he or she hears that you suspect him or her of evil deeds, definitely he or she will show you a home that sells beer.'

Mthembu and Mpofu (1988) used the possessive *bawukhombe umuti lonetjwala* as it occurs in the idiomatic expression *kukhomba umuti lonetjwala* to describe the threats of revenge that are uttered by someone who has been offended. This expression is used primarily when an offended person wishes to avenge him or herself in a manner that will never be forgotten by the offender. *Umuti lonetjwala* is a home in which beer is bought and consumed. It is associated with chaos and all sorts of unpleasant activities that take place once people are intoxicated. Therefore, the expression *kukhomba umuti*

lonetjwala ('to pinpoint a homestead that has beer') is an assertion commonly used by Swazi people to express extreme anger and to highlight that things will turn out very badly should the offended meet the offender.

Fana: *Ngeke ngitfwuse nguwe mine* – 'I am not scared of you'.

Fufu: *Utenta **umphini wembazo** wena* (Shongwe et al. 1993:185).

'Fufu: You make yourself an axe handle.'

Shongwe et al. (1993) used the possession *umphini wembazo* metaphorically in the above example. According to the Merriam Webster online dictionary, a metaphor is a word or phrase for one thing and which is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that the two are similar. In order to describe Fana and his unbecoming behaviour towards Fufu, Shongwe uses the possessive *umphini wembazo*. It is common knowledge that a human being does not have a handle. However, to show that Fana wants to treat Fufu in a manner that will not be pleasant for him (Fufu) he is described as an axe handle. This metaphor is used to show that, as an axe handle stabilises the movements of an axe, Fana also wants to control the movements of other people such as Fana. Swazi culture discourages people from bullying others and also frowns upon people despising others.

*Bengitsi asiphutfume kusengakasi nce, kungaze kufike bantfu labalukhuni batosekhuta, bese beva **tibi tasendlini*** Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:28).

'I am saying that let us have a meeting quickly now, at dawn, before non-family members arrive to mourn because they could hear the litter of the house (our secrets).'

Litter is something that is worthless and must be disposed of or discarded as it may be hazardous. However, in siSwati the noun *tibi* 'litter' is connotationally applied in speech to mean secrets/embarrassing classified information, as opposed to its literal meaning. Thus, the idiomatic expression which uses the possessive *tibi tasendlini* (house litter) in siSwati is used to refer to issues which are meant to be discussed and which are intended only to be heard by family members. These issues are aptly called *tibi tasendlini* (house litter) because they are secret of the family in question. In Swazi households usually there are issues which are regarded as classified information and which must be concealed. This proverb is used in many Swazi communities in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Every family has its secrets and these secrets

must never be disclosed to non-family members. Family secrets may include rituals and sensitive information about events which may have taken place within a family. If these secrets are disclosed this is often regarded as bad luck while causing embarrassment to the entire household. It is, thus, essential that they are concealed.

*Kusho kutsi wadla **lunyawo lwengulube*** (Sibanda and Dlamini 1997:196).

'It means he/she ate a pig's foot.'

The idiomatic expression *wadla lunyawo lwengulube* ('he/she ate a pig's foot') is used to refer to someone who travels frequently. A person who habitually travels is not highly regarded in Swazi culture because Swazis believe that home is the best place and it is where a person must be. Traveling frequently is associated with being idle. A lazy person is despised as he/she is perceived to exploit industrious people. The image of a pig in the possessive has been used to paint a negative picture of the unacceptable behaviour. The idiomatic expression discourages neglecting the homes. Swazis believe that a person must always be found at home as culture is rooted in the traditional homestead.

Abefe lwembita nakakhandza kutsi Lomacala akekho emkhatsini walowo mantfombatana Malangwane in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:3).

'He cracked as a clay pot after he realised that Lomacala was not among the other girls.'

The proverbial expression *abefe lwembita* is derived from the proverb *kufa lwembita* which means a person has lost something very useful that he/she values. It is often used when a person feels disappointed and dejected. The expression originates from the importance of pots in a homestead and it highlights the extent to which Swazi value their pots. In Swazi society, pots are used for cooking and storing food and water. If a person has lost a pot, this meant the person has lost his/her means of survival. The expression illustrates the socio-cultural life of the Swazi people and how Swazis value these utensils.

*Ngifuna nani batukulu nive kahle, nive ngami **gogo wenu mbamba hhayi welikhuhlelo*** Dlamini in Motsa (2004: 68).

'I want you grandchildren to listen carefully to your real biological grandmother and not the fake/stepgranny.'

The possession *gogo wenu mbamba hhayi welikhuhlelo* (your bona fide biological grandmother not fake/stepgranny) expresses the qualities of an individual. The possessive has been used to differentiate between a real, biological grandmother and a stepgrandmother. The possessive *welikhuhlelo* means foreign or imported. Thus, the person who calls herself *gogo wenu mbamba* is the real, rightful biological grandmother of the grandchildren as compared to a stepgrandmother (*gogo welikhuhlelo*) in order to indicate her qualities and the authority she has in the household. In Swazi society biological grandmothers play an important role in Swazi families. In the absence of a biological grandfather, when a grandfather has passed away, the biological grandmother assumes the position of her late husband. All the power and authority that was previously vested in the grandfather is transferred to the grandmother. As the rightful older grandmother she enjoys the right to make final decisions and settle family disputes and is respected by all members of the family. *Gogo welikhuhlelo* (a stepgrandmother) never has authority in the family as she is regarded as foreign when it comes to addressing important issues in a family.

Sibandze: *Angiseyuphindze ngimentele lutfo, ngigeza tandla tami* (Nsibandze 1991:70).

'Sibandze: I will never do anything for her, I wash my hands.'

The idiom *ngigeza tandla tami* (I wash my hands) uses the possessive. This idiom is derived from Matthew 27:24 in the Bible where Pontius Pilate refused to condemn and persecute Jesus Christ and washes his hands before the multitudes. In Swazi culture this idiom is used when someone is disappointed and gives up on someone or something. It expresses regret and annoyance as the person disassociates himself from someone/something and no longer wishes to be responsible or accountable in a situation.

LaNkhosi: Beka umoya wakho phansi mntfwanami (Nsibandze 1991:9).

'LaNkhosi: Calm down my child.'

The idiomatic expression *beka umoya wakho phansi* literally means put your soul down. Nsibandze (1991) used this idiomatic expression culturally to appeal for calm. The expression means to be patient and to accept unkind behaviour and difficult situations without becoming annoyed. This is, in fact, one of the cultural values which

are promoted in Swazi society. As a socio-cultural quality calm is encouraged and Swazi people are strongly warned against allowing their emotions to rule them. Culturally a quick-tempered person is not appreciated and, as a result, is often deprived of opportunities to speak in public gatherings.

Sikhulu: *Kulesigodzi saseNgcoseni, kwenteke **sentu lesibi sebutsakatsi*** (Nsibandze 1991: 70).

‘Sikhulu: In this village of Ngcoseni a bad deed of witchcraft happened.’

In the idiomatic expression *sentu lesibi sebutsakatsi* (a bad deed of witchcraft) the possessive *sebutsakatsi* has been used to describe the evil nature of what has occurred. Culturally this idiomatic expression is used to discourage evil, hatred, cruelty and selfishness among the members of a community. In Swazi culture the practice of witchcraft is discouraged in society. Any person found guilty of practising witchcraft is expelled from the community.

*Wevakala asabhavumula, “Yeyi yemnumzane, asetime nje **tinyembeti tengwenya!**”*
Sibanda in Motsa (2004:144).

‘He was heard shouting “Please, Sir let those tears of a crocodile stop!”’

The possessive *tinyembeti tengwenya* literally means ‘tears of a crocodile’. Culturally this possessive expression is used as an idiomatic expression. When used as an idiomatic expression it refers to a person who pretends to be in pain and distress and in need of help and, yet, who has hidden his genuine intentions. In this example the person’s tears are equated to those of a crocodile because he tries to trick the policemen by crying so that they will stop interrogating him and he will not be found guilty of the crime he has committed. Thus, the possessive is used culturally to discourage dishonesty and deceit among the Swazi people.

*Abuya **ndvuku yembangandlala emaphoyisa*** Sibanda in (Motsa 2004:141).

‘The policemen came with a stick of causing hunger’.

The possessive *ndvuku yembangandlala* literally means a stick that causes hunger. Culturally this is an idiomatic expression which uses the possessive construction to refer to a person who works hard but fails to achieve positive results. *Tindvuku* sticks

are used in Swazi society as weapons of hunting. When men hunt they carry their sticks and are expected to bring back the wild animals that will be slaughtered to feed their families. If they fail to kill any animals in the forests, their weapons, *tindvuku*, are said to have brought hunger instead of food and, hence, Swazis use *babuye nedvuku yembangandlala* to indicate that they came only with weapons that cause hunger. The possessive is widely used in daily life when a person was expected to be rewarded or to succeed but failed, to express disappointment and discontent.

4.2.6 Possessive used to express respect

As illustrated by the following examples possessives are also used in Swazi culture to express respect:

Mgijimi: *Ase silalelana **beKunene!** Thulani bo! Ngiyabonga* Malangwane in Mthembu and Msimang (1988:65).

‘Mgijimi: ‘Let us listen, people of Kunene! Keep quiet! Thank you”.’

*Hhawu **sive seMalangeni**, niyangivisa yini?* Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:4).

‘Oh nation of Malangeni, do you hear?’

The possessives *beKunene* and *sive seMalangeni* are used in Swazi society when one speaks or addresses community members in gatherings such as chieftom meetings, other community meetings, and cultural ceremonies. These possessives are used to demonstrate respect to the people and also to ensure loyalty to the ruling Dlamini clan. The Swazi nation is ruled by the Dlamini clan which is often referred to as eMalangeni. Thus, addressing the Swazi people using the possessives derived from the Dlamini clan praise name demonstrates respect, allegiance and a willingness to be part of the clan by virtue of being under the leadership of the Swazi king whose biological surname is Dlamini. These possessives are used culturally by *emaSwati* to maintain the status quo.

4.2.7 Possession in naming

In Swazi society, the names of people and places have socio-cultural and religious meanings. Names are given according to the circumstances of the people surrounding

the child when he is born. In Swazi society various socio-cultural aspects are manifested in the use of the possessive in people's names and places.

*Umdlalo webhola yetinyawo utsandvwa cishe ngabo bonkhe bantfu. Uyaye ubone nje nakutsiwa enkhundleni yesive **kaSomhlolo** kutakube kushayana tingculungculu, kugcwala sengatsi bantfu abasekho emakhaya, bonkhe sebasenkhundleni yebhola bayawubukela* (Sibanda and Dlamini 1997:160).

'Football is liked by almost everybody. If there is a derby at Somhlolo stadium people come in flocks to watch the game as if no one is left at home.'

The possession *kaSomhlolo* ('Somhlolo's place') indicates location and ownership. *KaSomhlolo* refers to a national stadium which was named after king Somhlolo. The stadium was named after the king in order to preserve Swazi history and to honour him. Culturally, heroes are honoured and celebrated in Swazi society through the naming process. This honour is usually demonstrated in the names of places such as towns, schools, stadiums and other places of importance to the Swazi nation. King Somhlolo is a legend in the Swazi culture and history and, hence, he is regarded as the wisest king of all time in the history of the Swazi people. As culture dictates that bravery, wisdom and heroism are rewarded, the naming of the first and only national stadium in Swaziland after the king Somhlolo was intended to pay homage to the late king and to preserve Swazi history.

*Umbukiso phela kulapho kukhonjiswa khona tintfo letehlukene letentiwa lapha **kaNgwane**, imisebenti lekhona, emahhovisi ahulumende, naletinye tintfo letehlukene letentiwa emaveni langaphandle kwalelakaNgwane* (Sibanda and Dlamini 1997:168).

'An exhibition is where people advertised various entities made in Ngwane's places (Swaziland), services provided by government offices and other things made outside this country of Ngwane (Swaziland).'

The possessive location, *kaNgwane*, literally refers to Ngwane's place. The possessive locative, *kaNgwane*, has been used traditionally to refer to current-day Swaziland. Ngwane was the founder of the Swazi nation who conquered weaker clans and finally settled in Swaziland. The place which is now known as Swaziland was named after him. The naming of the place also indicates his domination as people had to be submissive

after he had taken control of the land. Thus, *kaNgwane* not only expresses location but it expresses the historical establishment of the Swazi kingdom.

Kodvwa akutsatsanga sikhatsi acale kunatsa timbita tenyanga yakaMvubu, lobebayilayelwe eSibovu khona eNhlango, kutsi iyabasita bantfu labahlupheke njengabo, bamtfola umntfwana wemfana bametsa batsi nguMuziwakhe Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987b:62).

'It was no so long after she started taking the concoctions from Mvubu, a traditional doctor, which people was located at Sibovu in Nhlango. He helped sick people like them and they got a boy named Muziwakhe.'

The possessive proper noun *Muziwakhe* literally means 'his home' and is a name which is culturally given to a male child. In this sentence the child is named *Muziwakhe* because he is the only boy in the family. The boy was conceived after many efforts had been made to assure that a boy child was born. The name demonstrates the importance of male children in Swazi society. Boys eventually become the men who head their families. Cultural practises such as family rituals and ancestral sacrifices are transmitted from the father to his sons. Boys also play an important role as far as the passing down of the surname is concerned. A surname in Swazi culture is passed down through the male gender as children always assume the surname of their father, thus facilitating the growth of the clan. It is for this reason that boys are the preferred gender in Swazi society and it is every family's wish that the wife bear at least one boy child.

Naku phela bese kuphele iminyaka lemibili seloku anyamalala Mandlakhe (Mkhonta 1987:1).

'It was over two years since Mandlakhe disappeared.'

The possessive proper noun *Mandlakhe* literally means 'his strength or his power'. This possessive noun expresses the circumstances surrounding the birth of the child. The noun *Mandlakhe* alludes to religious belief of the child's parents. In this case the parents named their child *Mandlakhe* in thanks for receiving a boy child. Boys are preferred to girls in a Swazi traditional homestead.

Ngumbiko lotsi Mandlenkhosi akabe yinkhosi Nyembe in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987b:41).

‘The report says Mandlenkhosi must be a kin.’

The possessive proper noun *Mandlenkhosi* literally means ‘God’s strength or God’s power’. This possessive noun also expresses the circumstances surrounding the birth of the child. The noun *Mandlenkhosi* alludes to religious belief of the child’s parents. In this case the parents named their child *Mandlenkhosi* to honour God for giving them the strength and fertility to bear a boy child.

The possessive is also used in siSwati in the naming of females. The possessive proper nouns usually indicate various situations that relate to the birth of the female child. Let us look at the following female proper nouns which involve possessive constructions.

LaHlophe: Sagcina ngemaphahla bo-TemaSwati na-TakaHhohho (Dlamini 2004:11).

‘LaHlophe: We ended with twins: TemaSwati and TakaHhohho.’

Temvelo utsandza kakhulu unina, TemaShayina yena utitsandzela uyise (Msibi 2002:29).

‘Temvelo loves her mother so much while TemaShayina loves her father.’

The possessive proper noun *TakaHhohho* indicates the place of birth. The child *TakaHhohho* was born when her mother was in the Hhohho district visiting her parental home and she gave birth while she was there. The child was named after the place to indicate her place of birth.

TemaSwati indicates patriotism and cultural pride in bearing a girl child. In Swazi culture men value having female children because they become rich when the girls marry and *lobola* cattle are paid to their fathers. The possessive proper noun *TemaSwati* also indicates the socio- culture value attached to a female child by the Swazi people. The child belongs to the Swazi people as she will bear more children, who will be *EmaSwati* and, thus, in admiration of their girl child, the parents named her *TemaSwati* (a girl for *emaSwati*).

The proper noun *Temvelo* alludes to the method of delivery by which the baby girl was born. The girl was delivered through natural birth although the doctors had suggested she would be born by Caesarean section. The baby was then named after *Temvelo* which means natural in order to depict her method of birth.

TemaShayina indicates the place/country of birth in which the girl was conceived. The girl named *TemaShayina* was conceived during her parents' visit to China. Her name *TemaShayina* refers to the country of China where the baby girl was conceived.

4.2.8 Possessives used in greetings

As illustrated in the following examples possessive constructions are also used when greetings are exchanged in siSwati:

Vusi: Siyabonana jaha (Nsibandze 1991:36).

Vusi: 'Hello man.'

Lusekwane: Yebo wakitsi. (Nsibandze 1991:36)

Lusekwane: 'Hello my brother.'

Vusi: Utsini? Utsi ngiwakini mine? (Nsibandze 1991:36).

'What are you saying? You say I belong to your home?'

Lusekwane: Ngiyavuma wakitsi, bengitsi kumbe uyabingelela (Nsibandze 1991:36).

'Lusekwane: "I am also greeting you, as I thought you are greeting".'

The possessive *wakitsi* literally means 'ours'. Culturally, such a possessive is used in greetings to express respect for an unknown person of your own age. This possessive is used to acknowledge that, culturally, we belong to the same regiment. As part of the initiation into a regiment, a boy is taught to respect his elders, his contemporaries and every one in society. These teachings are practised by people who have been initiated into the cultural regiments and are judged by the way in which they behave in society.

Mshiyeni: Wena weKunene, unginyatselelani kodvwa? (Nsibandze 1991:65).

'Mshiyeni: "Hey you, person of Kunene, why do you step on me?"'

The possessive *weKunene* is commonly used to greet people with no leadership status/commoners or to address unknown Swazi people in society. A commoner or a person whose surname is unknown is referred to as *weKunene*. Addressing ordinary Swazis as *beKunene* indicates the good manners and courtesy of the Swazi nation. The expression *beKunene* is derived from the Dlamini clan praise name which includes the phrase *wena weKunene* (the right one). All ordinary Swazi people perceive themselves as *beKunene* because the kingship is vested in the Dlamini clan. The Swazi people are

under the leadership of the king whose surname is Dlamini and, thus, patriotically they call themselves beKunene/eMalangeni as an indication of their support for and association with the monarchy.

4.2.9 Possessives used to indicate a lack of courtesy

As illustrated by the following examples, possessive constructions are also used in the Swazi culture in situations characterised by a lack of good manners:

Mshiyeni: ***Mfana wami**, ngiyakuhawukela ngobe ngiyakubona shengatsi usemncane* (Nsibandze 1991: 65).

‘My boy, I pity you because you are very young.’

The expression *mfana wami* (‘my boy’) has been used to express a lack of courtesy to a contemporary. The fact that Mshiyeni calls his peer *mfana wami* (‘my boy’) shows that he perceives Lusekwane as a little boy who poses no threat to him. Thus, it indicates that he has no respect for Lusekwane as he regards him as a boy. Mshiyeni underestimates his peer and thus calls him a young boy. This possession also indicates boasting on the part of Mshiyeni as he claims he is able to beat his peer.

4.2.9.1 Possessives used to describe peoples’ characters

As illustrated by the following examples possessive constructions are also used in the Swazi culture to describe peoples’ characters:

(Johane) ***Lesilima sesilwanakatana** lesiyimbhumbisa live ngitasikhomba indlela* Ntshangase in Motsa (2004: 22).

‘I will teach a lesson to this fool (Johane), a kind of an insect that has destroyed the country’.

The possessive in the expression *silima sesilwanakatana* (‘a fool, a kind of small insect’) has been used to describe the character of a person. Ntshangase in Motsa (2004) uses the metaphor *silwanakatana* (‘a small insect’) to ridicule the negative personalities traits of Johane about whom she is speaking. She refers to Johane an old man and as a small insect to portray a negative image. The possessive which involves the diminutive noun, *silwanakatana*, has been used to vividly express how foolish men are perceived in Swazi society. Approval is accorded to a man who is a good role model and a hero.

However, in this context, Ntshangase in Motsa (2004) disapproves of the character of Johane as she presents him as an animal who does not fit into the cultural status of a man and which is known and celebrated in Swazi society.

LaNkhosi: ***Bantfu betjwala phela ngiyabati, bayitsandze kabi inyama*** (Nsibandze 1991:9).

'I know that people who drink alcohol like meat very much'.

The possessive ***bantfu betjwala*** literally means people of alcohol. In Swazi society this expression refers to drunkard or alcoholics. The noun *tidzakwa* (alcoholics) may also be used. Such people are associated with *tjwala* (alcohol) because they spend most their time intoxicated. The consumption of liquor occasionally is accepted in Swazi society, especially during ceremonies. However, once a person is called *umuntfu wetjwala* (a person of alcohol) this means he/she has become an addict and is exhibiting the unacceptable behaviour which is not approved of in Swazi society. Thus, Nsibandze (1991) has used the possessive ***bantfu betjwala*** in this context to criticise the negative personality traits of an alcoholic.

Sikhulu: *Tsine la, **sibantfu bekuthula*** (Nsibandze 1991: 73).

'Sikhulu: Here we are people of peace'.

The possessive in the expression ***sibantfu bekuthula*** literally means people of peace. Culturally this expression is used when an individual appreciates and approves of the general conduct of and the treatment he receives from other people. It illustrates that the type of people spoken about is kind, welcoming, and generous and live a communal life. These are the qualities of societies that Swazi culture enforces and which are approved by the Swazi people. In this context Nsibandze (1991) not only describes the character of such people but he also expresses appreciation of their good conduct in society.

Abeyinkunzi yesigebengu, alisela lelibi, odvwa ngemuva kwekusindziswa washiya phansi konkhe (Ntuli 1979: 101).

'He was a great thief but he left everything after he repented'.

The possessive in the expression ***abeyinkunzi yesigebengu*** literally means a bull of a thief. In this expression Ntuli (1979) used the noun *inkunzi* metaphorically to describe

the character of the thief. He equates the personality of the thief to that of a bull – an animal. Like a bull the thief is uncontrollable, he has no respect for others and he lives according to his own will. These qualities are not accepted in human behaviour. Culturally the word *inkunzi* is associated with rude and offensive behaviour. Thus, Ntuli uses the possessive *yesigebengu* to qualify the bull which, in this context is the thief. The possessive has been used to show how Swazi societies perceive a thief and to portray the negative personality traits associated with a thief.

*Uyihlo, ngingatsini nje, ngingatsi waba semkhatsini wayemukela, washo nekusho kutsi lomfana uyakutivela yena **buntfu bakhe**, nekutsi sase siyawukuva ngaye matfupha yonkhe indzaba, hhayi nje emaphepheni* (Mgabhi 1990:75).

‘Your father was fair; he agreed and said that the boy will show his humanity to others by actions other than through the newspapers’

The possessive *buntfu bakhe* (‘his humanity to others’) refers to generosity. Culturally the noun *buntfu* is often used to reinforce and appreciate good and acceptable behaviour as exhibited by an individual or a group of people in society. The term is also applied to high morals, caring for other people, empathy and honesty. A person who possesses such a character is admired in Swazi society. In Swazi culture the spirit of *buntfu* is encouraged as opposed to greed. When a person is generous we say that *unebuntfu* he or she has humanity and, thus, the possessive *buntfu bakhe* expresses the good character which is generally associated with Swazis as, in the main, they are perceived as a peaceful nation. The spirit of *buntfu* in Swazi culture is also associated with communal life such as wedding fields which involves paying homage in terms of the cultural expectation and presenting gifts to both parents and superiors.

4.2.9.2 Possessives used to express sympathy

As illustrated by the following examples, possessive constructions are also used in the Swazi culture to express sympathy:

*Bekunguleso sehla senyuka lapho abona khona **lomfati webantfu** kutsi tingono temntfwanakhe tatimnyama kwishi ticwatimula titsi cwati, cwati* Ntshangase in Motsa (2004:28).

'It was at that time that the wife of the people ('poor woman') found out that the nipples of her child were pitch black and shiny.'

The possessive *lomfati webantfu* literally means 'a woman of the people'. Culturally in this context the expression means the poor woman. Ntshangase in Motsa (2004) has used the possessive *lomfati webantfu* in this context to sympathise with the woman. She is regarded as the wife of the people because she has no one to help her. Culturally a wife is expected to have one husband to provide for and protect her. Once the woman is vulnerable and helpless she is termed *umfati webantfu* to indicate that she needs a helper and that it has become the responsibility of everyone to take care of her. Thus, help from members of the community is required to rescue her from the problems she faces. Accordingly, this possessive *umfati webantfu* expresses compassion in this regard.

4.3 UNMARKED POSSESSIVES IN SISWATI

Wilkes (1989:87) defines unmarked possessives as "possessives that lack a genitive marker". Unmarked possessives are word categories and word structures/forms that express possession but are not formed with a possessive concord and stems.

Nouns of Class 1a express possession although they lack a possessive marker. In this study such nouns are classified as unmarked possessives.

4.3.1 CLASS 1A NOUNS EXPRESSING POSSESSION

Class 1a nouns are used in siSwati to express possession. These nouns are kinship terms that express possession although they do not have possessive markers.

*Sibandze: Ucinisile **unyoko** nakatsi ngiyakubita* (Nsibandze 1991:55).

'Sibandze: Your mother is serious when she says I am calling you.'

The noun *unyoko* ('your mother') expresses the notion of possession that indicates biological relationship/offspring. The same notion may be expressed alternatively with a marked possessive, namely, *make wakho*, which also means your mother. The unmarked possessive noun *unyoko* is culturally used by elders when they refer to 'your mother'. Young people are culturally not permitted to use this unmarked possessives

unyoko when they refer to their own mothers. They are expected to use the equivalent expression of the unmarked possessive noun, *make wakho* ('your mother'), instead of *unyoko* ('your mother'). When the possessive noun *unyoko* is used by young people it is perceived to constitute offensive language and to be insulting. Thus, there is a socio-cultural age restriction in the use of the noun *unyoko* in Swazi society as opposed to the marked possessive, *make wakho*, which is regarded as more acceptable and is perceived as inoffensive language.

LaMasuku: Uyihlo uvumile kutsi bakutsatse ngoba uyati nawe kutsi dzadzewenu akaphiwanga imbeleko (Nsibandze 1991: 27).

'*LaMasuku: Your father has agreed that they must marry you because your sister can not bear children.*'

The noun *uyihlo* (your father) expresses the notion of possession that indicates biological relationship. The notion *uyihlo* can be expressed by an equivalent marked possessive *babe wakho* ('your father'). The unmarked possessive noun *uyihlo* is culturally used by older people in society to refer to 'your father'. Elders are the only ones who are privileged enough to call 'your father' *uyihlo*. Young people are expected to use the polite marked possessive *babe wakho* when referring to 'your father'. However, when used by children the unmarked possessive noun *uyihlo* is not as offensive as the noun *unyoko* ('your mother'). As a result there is less restriction on the use of the noun *uyihlo* and elders are not as strict on children who use the noun *uyihlo* to refer to 'your father'.

Sibandze: kusho kutsi angisuye phela uyise, ngobe kube nginguye abetawutsi nome eva kutsi intfo leshiwo nguyise akayifuni asale angihloniphela kutsi nginguyise (Nsibandze 1991:70).

'*Sibandze: It means I am not her father because, if I was her father, she was going to do what I say even if she is not willing just to show respect that I'm indeed her father.*'

The noun *uyise* (his or her father) expresses the notion of possession that indicates biological relationship. The notion *uyise* may be expressed by an equivalent marked possessive *babe wakhe*. The unmarked possessive noun *uyise* is culturally used by older people in society to refer to 'his/her father'. Elders are the only ones who are

privileged enough to call 'his/her father' *uyise*. Young people are expected to use the polite marked possessive *babe wakhe* when referring to "his/her father".

Nesi: NanguGubevu adla sandla ngoba semangele kutsi unina utammunyisa nini (Dlamini 2004:8).

'Nesi: There is Gubevu eating hands as he is worried that when will his mother breast feed him.'

The noun *unina* (his/her mother) expresses the notion of possession that indicates biological relationship/offspring. The notion *unina* may be expressed alternatively with a marked possessive *make wakhe* which still means 'his/her mother'. The unmarked possessive noun *unina* is also culturally used by elders when they refer to 'his/her mother'. Young people are culturally not permitted to use this unmarked possessives *unina* when referring to 'her mother'. Young people are expected to use the equivalent expression of the unmarked possessive noun *make wakhe* (his/her mother) instead of *unina* (his/her mother). When the possessive noun *unina* is used by young people it is perceived to be both offensive and disrespectful. Thus, there is a socio-cultural age restriction on the use of the noun *unina* in Swazi society as opposed to the marked possessive *make wakhe* which is regarded as more acceptable and respectable language usage.

4.3.2 Compound noun expressing possession

There are compound nouns which express possession. These nouns express certain cultural connotations beyond kinship.

Akucale mine bantfwabami. Ngifuna kunitsi nje kancane senive kutsi ngisukaphi nalomfana loku lamuhla sekunje Dlamini in Motsa (2004:68).

'Let me start first my children. I want to tell you briefly where we come from with this boy up to present.'

The possessive noun *bantfwabami* literally means 'my children'. Generally, it is used by parents when they refer to their biological children. However, culturally the possessive is used by any elderly person at home to address any one younger than him. It is usually used by the grandfather, grandmother and father. All family members are

regarded as children in a family except for the one elderly person, either a grandfather or a grandmother. This possessive is also used by adults in the community to address any person younger than the person in question even if they are not related. In this context, the grandmother addresses every person as *bantfwabami* (my children) to indicate that she is the only elderly person in the home and, hence, she should be respected.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed and discussed the different forms which are used to express the notion of possession in siSwati. It was shown that possession may be expressed by both marked possessives and unmarked possessives. Marked possessives are used for various socio-cultural purposes in Swazi culture and portray the socio-cultural nature of the Swazi people. Many marked possessive are used in matters that relate to marriage. There is also a widespread use of possessives in idiomatic and proverbial expressions for various socio- cultural reasons such as giving warnings, demonstrating high morals and respect, ridiculing people and describing their character. Possessives are also used to express Swazi socio-cultural connotations. In addition, they are used in naming children, in greetings, in euphemisms and to express sympathy. Moreover, possession demonstrates the patriarchal nature of Swazi society. Unmarked possessives, which include class 1a nouns and some compound nouns, express mainly kinship relations and socio-culture traits such as respect.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is a summary of the study that was carried out on the nature of the possession in siSwati: a socio-cultural analysis. The study was undertaken in order to explore the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural point and in an attempt to analyse what emaSwati express by using marked and unmarked possessives.

5.2 Summary of the study

The study was organised into five main chapters, with the first chapter outlining the background of siSwati as a language. SiSwati is a Nguni language which falls in the same language group as isiZulu, isiXhosa and isiNdebele. It is the official language spoken by Swazi people in Swaziland. It is also an official language in South Africa and is spoken primarily in the Mpumalanga province. Written material in siSwati was first codified by European missionaries during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most of the written material was produced for religious purposes. It was only after Swaziland had gained political independence from Britain that siSwati developed as a language as numerous literary works were produced and introduced into the schools.

As with all natural languages, siSwati possesses various parts of speech which are used by the people to express various degrees of nuances from purely linguistic to socio-cultural. In siSwati, the possessive has always been analysed as a part of speech which has a specific structure and which performs the function of qualifying the substantive in speech. This approach has tended to focus on both the morphological and syntactic aspects of the possessive and little attention has been given to what these parts of speech express when used in their socio-cultural settings.

The study attempted to answer, among others, the question as to how Swazi society expresses the notion of possession, as one of the linguistic devices used by speakers to express possession, which meaning distinctions does the possessive express both socially and culturally?

The different forms of the possessive in siSwati were analysed in order to undertake an investigation of the socio-cultural nuances that are expressed by the Swazi people in their use of the possessive.

Chapter 2 investigated existing literature on the possessive and, thus, siSwati literature on the possessive was examined as was literature from isiZulu. The inclusion of scholarly work from isiZulu was motivated by the fact that there is an extremely close linguistic relationship between siSwati and isiZulu. This relationship stems from the era when isiZulu was taught as a first language to siSwati learners and students before Swaziland gained political independence in 1968. It became apparent that work on the possessive comprised mainly a morphological and syntactic analysis of the possessive in both siSwati and isiZulu. This, in turn, highlighted a gap in the existing body of knowledge. This study endeavoured to fill this gap by examining the possessive from a different standpoint.

Chapter 3 discussed the methods used to collect and analyse the requisite data. The chapter first explored what research methodology is and then elaborated on the qualitative method which had been selected for the purposes of the study. The research tools used in the qualitative method were detailed. The qualitative tools that were used in the study were then discussed as was the justification for their use. The theoretical model that underpinned the arguments that were presented in the study on the nature of possession in siSwati from a socio-cultural point of view was also explored. The systemic functional linguistics (SFL) approach was used in the study as a model to support the discussions presented on the nature of possession in siSwati. The main reason for choosing systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) as a model for this study was that SFL is a theory of language that concentrates on the notion of language function. While this theory focuses on the syntactic structure of language, more attention is placed on the function of language as predominant. In other words, the main focus is on what language does and how it does it compared to the more structural approaches which place the elements of language and their combinations as central. SFL commences in the social context and pays attention to how language both acts upon and is constrained by the social context (www.isfla.org/./definition.html).

Chapter 4 contained an analysis of the notion of possession in siSwati and its socio-cultural interpretation. It was found that possession may be expressed by both marked and unmarked possessives in siSwati. Marked possessives are used mainly to express the notion of possession although there are instances in which unmarked possessives are also used to express possession.

There is extensive use of possession in Swazi society with possession being used in different circumstances in relation to various socio-cultural functions. It became evident that Swazis use possession primarily in matters that relate to marriage. Marriage is an institution that is highly regarded by the Swazi people and, hence, the widespread use of possession in marriage. Possessions always form part of the socio-cultural and economic activities of society. The study highlighted that cattle play an important role in Swazi society and, hence, the use of cattle in the possessives that relate to marriage. Most importantly, cattle are used for socio-cultural purposes such as *kulobola* ('to pay bride price'). This was illustrated in examples such as *inkhomo yelidvolo* ('A cow for the knees') (Van Schalkwyk 2006:188), *tinkhomo tekugeza emacansi* ('Cattle for washing/cleaning sleeping mats') (Van Schalkwyk 2006:253), *inkhomo yeliphakelo* ('a dish cow') (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988:56), *tinkhomo teboya* ('cattle with hair') Masuku in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987a:53) as against *tinkhomo telikhikhi* ('cattle that are kept in pockets').

There were other possessive constructions which referred indirectly to cattle, such as *lukhalo lwentfombi* ('the girl's waist'). In Swazi culture, when *lobolo* negotiations are entered into, there are references to *lukhalo lwentfombi* ('the girl's waist'), which culturally refers to the number of cattle which the girl's father determines as the bride price. The prospective son-in law sends a delegation to his future wife's father to ask for permission to marry his daughter. The discussions centre on *lukhalo lwentfombi* ('the girl's waist'). This, in turn, involves the number of cattle the father of the girl demands as bride price before his daughter is allowed to be married. It is important to note that this expression is used during marriage negotiations and is never used outside of this forum. The expression is used as a polite form of *lilobolo*. Thus, the use of the possessive in marriage highlights the importance of *emalobolo* (payment of bride price) in Swazi society.

The study also found that possession is used in proverbial and idiomatic expressions. The siSwati language is rich in proverbs and idioms and, hence, the use of possession in these figures of speech. As illustrated by the following example, the use of these figures of speech describes the social and cultural behaviour of the Swazi people:

*Kuye kube lukhuni usho kukhuluma ngemtsakatsi ngoba nakase weva nje kutsi uyasoleka ngalesento sakhe, labo labamnukako **batawuze bawukhombe umuti lonetjwala*** (Mthembu and Mpofu 1988:42).

'It is not easy to talk about a wizard/witch If he/she hears that you suspect him/her of evil deeds, definitely she or he will **show you a home that sells liquor**'.

Mthembu and Mpofu (1988) used the possessive *bawukhombe umuti lonetjwala* as it occurs in the idiomatic expression *kukhomba umuti lonetjwala* to describe the threats of revenge that are uttered by someone who has been offended. This expression is used primarily when an offended person considers avenging him or herself in a manner that will never be forgotten by the offender. *Umuti lonetjwala* refers to a home where liquor is bought and consumed. It is, therefore, associated with the chaos and all sorts of unpleasant activities that take place when people are intoxicated. Thus, the expression *kukhomba umuti lonetjwala* ('to pinpoint a homestead that has liquor') is an assertion commonly used by Swazi people to express extreme anger and to point out that things will turn out very badly should the offended meet the offender. Accordingly, idiomatic expressions that incorporate possession are used to discourage bad behaviour, to encourage sound moral values and to maintain the status quo in Swazi society.

Possession is also used in the naming process. In Swazi society the names of people and places have both socio-cultural and religious meanings. Names are often based on the circumstances of people involved in the birth of a child. Various socio-culturally aspects are manifested in the use of the possessive in people's names and places in Swazi society, for example:

*Umdlalo webhola yetinyawo utsandvwa cishe ngabo bonkhe bantfu. Uyaye ubone nje nakutsiwa **enkhundleni yesive kaSomhlolo** kutakube kushayana tingculungculu, kugcwala sengatsi bantfu abasekho emakhaya, bonkhe sebasenkhundleni yebhola bayawubukela* (Sibanda and Dlamini 1997:160).

'Football is liked by almost everybody. If there is a derby **at Somhlolo stadium** people come in flocks to watch the game. It is as if no one is left at home.'

The possession *kaSomhlolo* ('Somhlolo's place') indicates location and ownership. *KaSomhlolo* refers to a national stadium which was named after king Somhlolo. The stadium was named after the king to preserve Swazi history and to honour him. Culturally, heroes are honoured and celebrated in Swazi society through the naming process. Their honour is usually demonstrated in the names of places such as towns, schools, stadiums and other places of importance to the Swazi nation. King Somhlolo is a legend in the Swazi culture and history and he is regarded as the wisest king of all time in the history of the Swazi people. In view of the fact that culture dictates that bravery, wisdom and heroism are rewarded, the naming of the first and only national stadium in Swaziland after King Somhlolo was meant to pay homage to the late king and to preserve Swazi history. Therefore, possession in naming may indicate heroism.

The study found that the patriarchal nature of the Swazi people is expressed through possession. Male domination in Swazi society begins in the home and spreads to entire society as a whole. The use of possession reveals the individuals who enjoy power and authority at home, in society and in the country. For example,

*Umfati ungaphansi kwendvodza, kufanele atsatse ngekutsi indvodza **yinhloko yelikhaya** njengoba Jesu Krestu **ayinhloko yelibandla*** (Magagula 1997:51).

'A woman is below a man, she must accept that **a man is a head of a home as Jesus Christ is the head of a church.**'

Magagula (1997) uses the possessive *indvodza yinhloko yelikhaya* (a man is the head of a household) to indicate the supremacy and authority of the man over his wife. He commands everything that happens in a homestead and all important decisions are made by the older man in a family as he is the leader/head of that family. The status and role of a man in a household is compared to the role of Jesus Christ in the church. Jesus Christ guides, protects and provides for every member of a church and, likewise, the man is supposed to be the protector of his family. He has to provide for and take good care of every member of his family. This expression is used to demonstrate the approved and accepted image of a real man in the family among the Swazis.

In addition, the study found that possession may be used to qualify various objects used in Swazi society, for example:

Wefika kaMakepisi wacondza emadladleni etjwala Sibandze in Mthembu and Ntuli (1987b:59).

'He arrived at Makepisi's home and went straight to **liquor huts.**'

The possessive in the expression *emadladleni etjwala* ('liquor huts') was used to differentiate this kind of hut from the other types of huts that are found at a homestead. In a Swazi traditional homestead there are various types of huts, *emadladla*. These huts are used for various purposes. The *emadladla* ('cooking hut') includes *lidladla lendlunkhulu* ('main cooking hut') which is a type of hut which is built close to the grandmother's hut. It is used only by the first, older wife and the grandmother in a polygamous family. This main cooking hut is used on special occasions only such as family ceremonies and is also where the grandmother does all her handcrafts such as making sleeping mats and clay pots. Each married woman in the family must have her own *lidladla* ('cooking huts'). The huts differ according to the task performed in them, for example, *emadladla ekuphekela* ('cooking huts') are used by women to store and cook food for family members while *emadladla ekuphisela/etjwala* are used to prepare and store traditional beer. In a polygamous family each wife is given her own huts, *emadladla*, which she uses for specific purposes. Culturally, no wife is allowed to enter another's wife's hut without the approval of the owner. This is in order to avoid conflict in the home. Accordingly, the possessives are used to make a distinction between the huts found and to indicate the purpose of each hut that exists in the homestead.

5.3 Conclusion

It is believed that this study has contributed to the research on siSwati language as regards the use of possession. The study analysed the different forms used to express possession, both socially and culturally, in siSwati. Based on the study findings it may be stated unequivocally that the possessive is a speech form that the Swazi people use extensively in order to express their social and cultural way of life.

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