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From the Editor's Desk

This is our Second publication which encompasses basic linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics and Culture. We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed with articles to this publication, peer reviewing and in all the other ways, directly and indirectly.

Please enjoy yourself.

Editor in Chief ZIJLC

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The Phonological and Morphological Interlocking Patterns in Tonga: A Generative Approach

by

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The paper discusses the general interaction between phonological and morphological processes that exist in the Tonga Language. The study stems from a research, conducted by the authors between 2006 and 2009 in Binga, Gokwe and Kariba. The findings of the research posit Tonga as a complete and integral language since it has integral morpho-phonemic functions. This paper therefore, discusses the major features identified in the Tonga morphological environment that depict a functional interaction between phonology and morphology. The paper seeks to handle morphological processes that explain word building in Tonga. However, only those processes that demonstrate functional interaction with lower order phonological entities are discussed. This therefore, compels the researcher to discuss only the morphological processes that give insights into morpho-phonemic patterns of the Tonga language. Morphology is defined by Smith (1999:1) as the study of meaningful units of a language and how they are combined to form words. The researcher analyses lexical items, morpho-phonetically at three levels, namely, the base word level, vowel alteration level and the affixation level. These are the three major morphological levels that demonstrate morpho-phonemic functions in the Tonga morphological environment. There are however, other higher order levels like the post lexicon level, which are not very important in determining the morpho-phonemic legitimacy of the Tonga language.

Key Terms

MORPHOLOGY, LEGITIMACY, AFFIXATION, VOWEL ALTERATION, BASEWORD, LEXICAL ITEMS, MORPHO-PHONEMIC.

Introduction

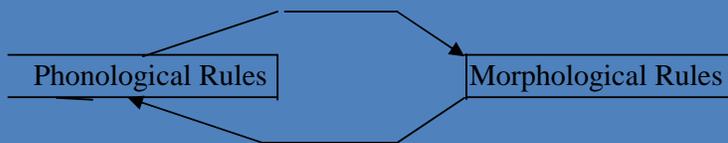
Tonga is one of the 450 languages belonging to the Niger-Congo language group (Shilington 1995:51). Bantu is therefore the parent name of all the languages belonging to the proto-Bantu. The language evolved from the current day Cameroun, though there are speculations that it was a language that was being spoken in the Niger-Congo area. From there, two Bantu streams emerged, one stretching west then southwards while the other one stretched east and then south as well. Tonga belongs to the eastern stream. This stream included areas in the present day Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, South Africa, Swaziland, Botswana and Zimbabwe. According to Shilington (1995:57), early Tonga occupation of the Zambezi valley seems to have started in the second century AD. They are thought to belong to the eastern stream from Transvaal. In Zimbabwe, Tonga is prominent in areas such as Hwange, Binga and Kariba, which is the northern part of Zimbabwe (Raymond 2005:1). The Zimbabwean Tonga has four main dialects, namely, Lla, Lwe, Toka and

Leya.

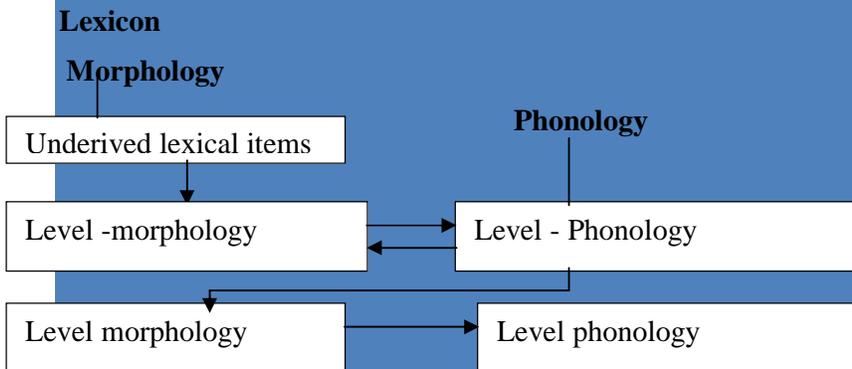
Theoretical Framework

The discussion adopts the Lexical Morphology and Phonology approach. According to Booji and Rubach (1984:1) the Lexical Morphology and Phonology Theory was developed by Kiparsky and Mohanan in 1982. The theory was developed from Chomsky’s generative theory of 1970. In so doing, it is also a generative theory. Kaisee and Show (1985:1) claim that the theory is grounded on arguments propounded by Chomsky (1970) and the preceding generative scholars. Aronoff (1976:13) says that the theory was developed to address the problem of the interaction between phonology and morphology. The main argument is that morphological and phonological rules are interwoven in languages that are complete and integral (Zivenge 2005:26).

The lexicon theory is regarded as nothing but rather an appendix of generative phonology but it idiosyncronises properties of lexical items and morphemes. In this regards, a lexicon is recognized as the main component of grammar, which contains properties of words and morphemes. The theory accounts for word formation using both phonological and morphological rules in a cyclic fashion:



The underlying principle in this theory is that not all sequences of morphemes and phonemes in a language produce ‘well-formed’ words. Hence, there are morpho-phonemic rules generated from grammar of a language that make lexicon formation permissible. Constraints on a word structure serve as a filter allowing only certain morpho-phonemic sequences to occur. In this theory, it is assumed that word formation rules or the morphology of word is directly interwoven with phonological rules at various levels as shown below:

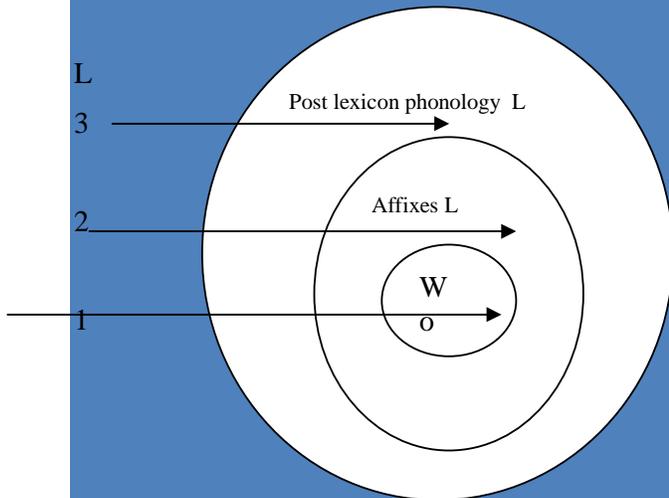


>From the diagram, it is established that the morphological rules are cycled through their phonological counter parts at the same level and above. This follows that both inflectional and derivational word formation processes can be computed and analysed on a series of linked levels, which Katamba (1983:257) refers to as same strata.

The main concern of the theory is to show how morphological and phonological rules that govern lexicon formation apply to the word root first and then out wards to the affixes. Katamba

(1983:258) likened a word to an onion, which he says has the word root at the core (level) and the affixes in the inner layer (level) and other post lexicon phonology in the outer layer as the skin of the outside of the onion:

Word Structure

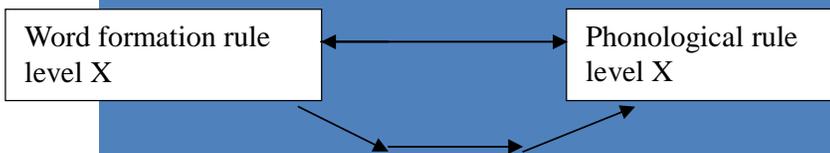


Pos=post lexicon
L= levels
W=word
A=affixes

When major morphological processes like derivation and inflection will be taking place, there is always a constant cycling of data through the interlocking phonological and morphological rules at each level as shown below:



This can be summarized as follows:



Where:



e.g. 1. insert (past) /fi:d/ → /Verb/ → /fid +past/V (fed)

This is interpreted as below:

2. “feed + past” → “fed”

>From the illustration above, it shows that a lexicon has an internal structure and also that it is hierarchical. The number of layers is not very important but what’s important is the understanding that morphological data is stratified and that is sufficient to account for the wrinkles in the data found in languages. The onion metaphor discussed earlier on captures only the essential processes. According to the Lexicon Phonology Theory, the centre of the word comprises of an underived lexicon item (single morpheme), whilst the outside indicates other processes like inflections, prefixations and so on. Generally, there is no lexicon information rule that effectively account for such items. These appear in the word with the phonological, grammatical and semantic properties with which they surface (Katamba 1983:259).

The level, above this, contains bound morphemes like /ʌn/ ‘un’ as in the word /ʌngreɪtʃəl/ ‘ungrateful’. Such morphemes /ʌn/ ‘un’ cannot occur independent of the root word. The word root is regarded as the base morpheme and none of the bound morphemes can occur in isolation but rather together with the base. Affixes attached to this level have a much more intimate relation with the root to which they are attached as compared to those on level 3. The theory has a number of tenets, which include the following:

Inflectional Morphology

Inflectional morphology can be described as grammatically determined alteration in the shape of the root word, involving categories such as number and tense.

Level 1: Vowel Changes

e.g. *rɪŋ* (present) → *ræŋ* (past) → *rʌŋ* (perfective)

These changes in tense show the sub-regulative which a grammar of English needs to capture and its clear that level 1 would be used to state vowel changes and this opens way for level 2, where higher affixations occur in a language.

Level 2: Affixation

e.g. walk (present) → walked (past)

The theory stipulates that level 2, affixes takes precedence over those of level 1. Thus if a rule applies at level 2, then it takes precedence over that of level 1.

In this account, the ordering of levels has serious implications for the way in which rules interact for instance derived words as shown below:

Base word	Derivative	Language
<i>Bleed</i>	<i>blood</i>	English
<i>pfambi</i>	<i>famba</i>	Shona
<i>isihambi</i>	<i>hamba</i>	Ndebele

To derive verbs from nouns, as according to this theory, two level rules are applied. One rule, which is applicable to all examples, is the change of the vowels as in the word *fambi* (walker) to *famba* (walk), *blood* to *bleed* and *isihambi* (walker) to *hamba* (walk).

The second level will be that of inflections e.g.

NOUN	VERB	LANGUAGE
Walker	walked	English
Fambi	<u>ka</u> famba	Shona
Isihambi	<u>sa</u> hamba	Ndebele

The inflection *-ed*, *-ka* and *-sa* are used at a level higher than just changing a vowel, which is level 2, for English, Shona and Ndebele.

At this level, number can as well be included as follows:

NOUNS	SINGULAR	PLURAL	VERB	LANGUAGE
Fambi	<i>-a-</i>	<i>va-</i>	<i>-ka-famba</i>	Shona
Isihambi	<i>-u-</i>	<i>ba</i>	<i>-a-hamba</i>	Ndebele

Level 3 includes higher order suffixation, and prefixation e.g.

e.g. *mu* + *fambi a-ka-famb-a* 'the walker walked' Shona
mu-fambi a-ka-famb -ir- a (appl) 'walker walked for'

Where; prefix (L3) + root word (L1) = number (L2) + tense (L2) + suffix (L3).

The morphological process involved is derivational morphology, which changes nouns to verbs. In addition to that the suffix is also added to come up with higher order verbs. At level 1, the change of the vowel phoneme affects segmental phonology of the lexicon, as well as the insertion of affixes and suffixes. The affixes and suffixes also affect stress (word bound) depending on whether the affix or suffix takes the form of light or heavy syllable.

Stress

e.g.1. Strong Mode Suffix

[electric] = *electricity* = stress is on (tri)
 [account] = *accountable* = stress is on (nta)

2. Weak Mode Suffix

[medicine] = medicinal = stress is on (di)
 [congress] = congressional = stress is on (ngre)

In light of what has been discussed, suffixation does not only have influence on segmental change but also supra-segmental change on the lexicon in question.

The theory also stipulates that not only does the presence of the strong mode suffix make stress move to the immediate preceding syllable, as is the case with the lexicon *electricity* or *accountability* but it also causes the shortening of the diphthong or long vowel of the root, which as a result is realized on the corresponding short (lax) vowel. This notion of vowel shortening (laxing) as a result of suffixation is called trisyllabic laxing or vowel shortening but only applies to forms with at least three syllables.

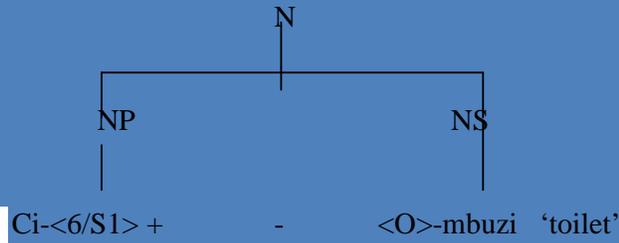
Tonga Base Word Morphology

This is the lowest indivisible level of a morphological construction, as according to the Lexical Phonology and Morphology Theory (Kiparsky and Mohanan 1982:2). At this level, base words are the product of combining the smallest meaningful morphological units. In other words, base word morphology entails analysing words into their immediate constituencies. This is a level where words are analysed into basic structures, which cannot be decomposed further at the morphological level.

Noun Base Word Morphology

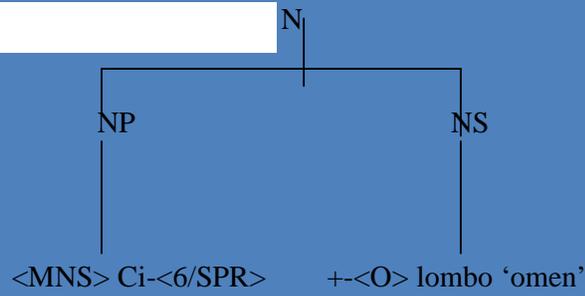
A noun can be defined as the smallest meaningful morphological unit that signifies an object as its name. In other words, a noun can be seen as a name accorded to an object. In the Tonga language, like any other linguistic system, a typical noun comprises of a Noun Prefix (NP) and a stem (NS) as immediate constituencies. This decomposition of a noun is illustrated below:

Noun Base Word Morphology

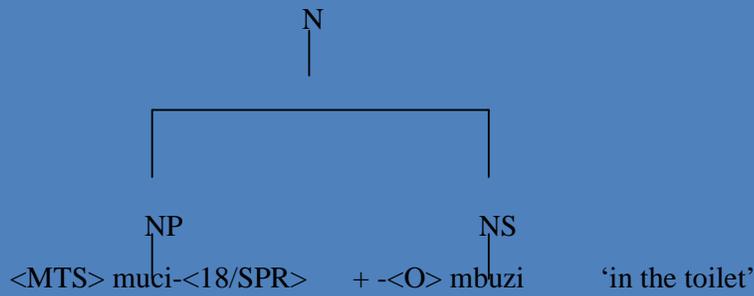


From the diagram above, *Ci-* is the prefix of the base word in class 6, whilst *-mbuzi*, is the noun stem of the word *mbuzi* (toilet). Above all that, the prefix *ci-* is singular in address. Thus in Tonga, the singular (SPR) or plural prefix reference (PPR) is either monosyllabic (MNS) or multi-syllabic (MTS), as shown below:

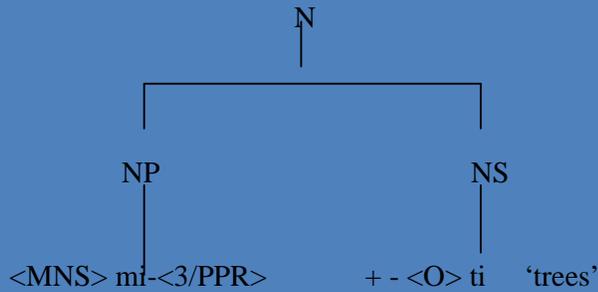
Monosyllabic Singular Prefix.



Polysyllabic Singular Prefix

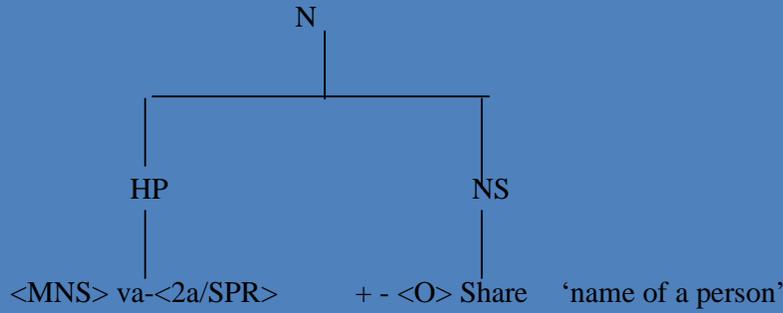


Monosyllabic Plural Prefix

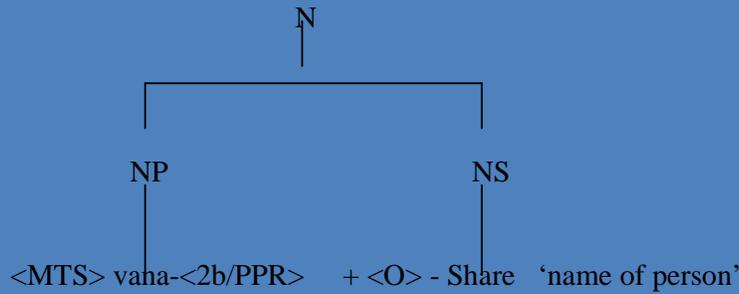


1 Abbreviations, where <S>=singular form, <6>= noun class, <O>=object, <-> =information omitted on the left or right.

Monosyllabic Honorific Plural (HP) Prefix



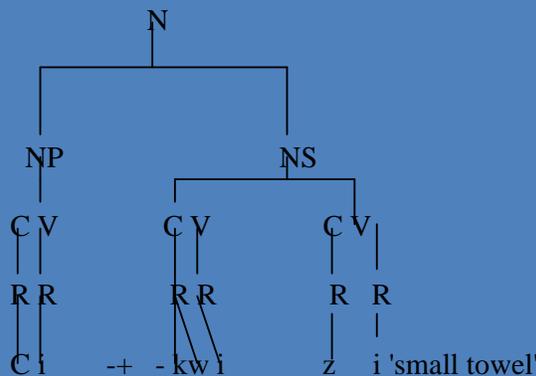
Polysyllabic Plural Prefix



Discussed above are the five categories of monosyllabic and polysyllabic prefixes in Tonga. The interpretation is that Tonga has monosyllabic and polysyllabic prefixes for both singular and plural prefixes. It is also important to note that only polysyllabic prefix reference is the only one applicable to honorific plural prefixes. Unlike *Ci-* in example 1, which is monosyllabic, the plural prefix *vana-* in example 5, is polysyllabic. Another prefix, which is monosyllabic is the honorific plural prefix *va-*, in example 4. The plural prefix *Va-*, in the word *VaShare* is not just plural but rather honorific plural. Whilst English has stress, Tonga has tone. Normally monosyllabic prefixes have high (H) tone and stems have low (L) tone, for example *va-Gudo* 'Mr Gudo', *Ci-mbuzi* 'toilet'. This is because all initial syllables in Tonga nouns, which happen to be prefixes have high tone. Where there is a polysyllabic prefix as in the 2b prefix *vana-Share*, the whole prefix with two or syllables is characterised by high tone. This takes us to the understanding that Tonga prefixes have a high tone.

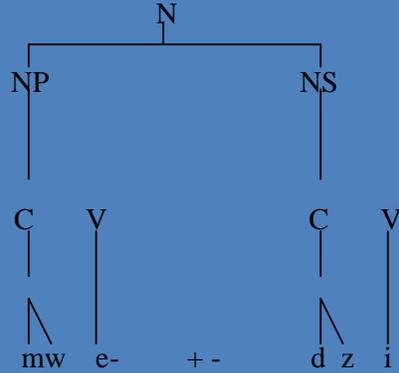
Apart from that, Tonga prefixes are characterized by both simple and complex onsets for prefix syllables. The following diagram illustrates this notion:

Simple Onset Syllable Prefix



The prefix *Ci-*, is characterized by one oral feature [alveolar] as the onset segment. This implies that it is a simple consonant, hence simple Onset Syllabic Prefix. Even an onset characterised by two oral features may be simple onsets, for example /kw-/ is a simple onset because both /k/ and /w/ are alveolar. So simplicity and complexity of onsets is determined by the nature of the oral features associated. Simple onsets, therefore refers to onsets with one or many oral features but without conflicting distinctive features (Zivenge 2005:33).

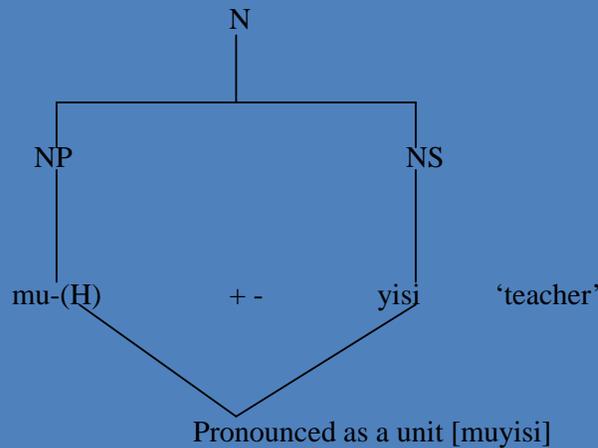
Complex Onset Syllabic Prefix



The onset consonant for the syllable *mwe-*, the prefix, is characterized by conflicting distinctive features, thus /m/ is [+nas] and /w/ is [-nas], hence two conflicting manner features are involved. This implies that, *mw-* is a complex onset for the syllable *mwe-*. The noun stem *-dzi*, is characterized by a simple onset and monosyllabic prefix, [alveo]. However, though simple or complex, as initial syllables with prefix function in the noun structure, they are therefore, characterised by a high tone. Tonga has generally three main categories of prefixes namely, visible, non-visible and zero prefixes, characterised by a high tone.

Visible Prefixes

According to Ibrahim (1998: 26), visible prefixes are prefixes that are attached to a stem of the same word during pronunciation. Thus the prefix and the stem are articulated together, signalling high tone on the prefix position. Such prefixes are acoustically visible and grammatically visible. The following example demonstrates this scenario:



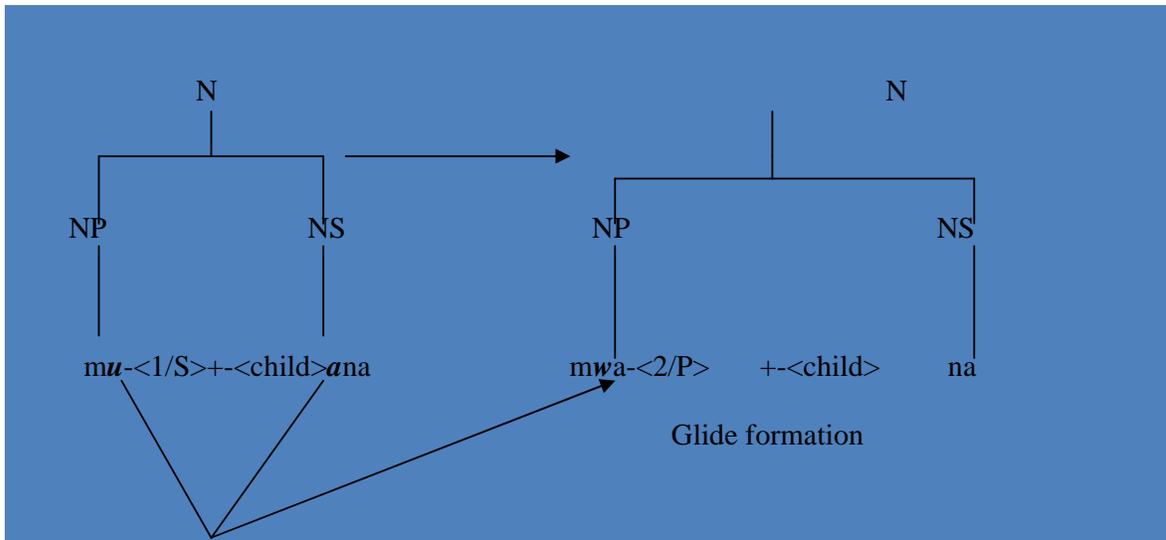
From the example given, *mu-(H)* is a monosyllabic visible prefix, for human objects in class 1.

The two (NP) and (NS) are articulated as a single unit, where *mu-* is a grammatically visible prefix constituent. Visible prefixes exist on nouns in class 1 and 2 as follows:

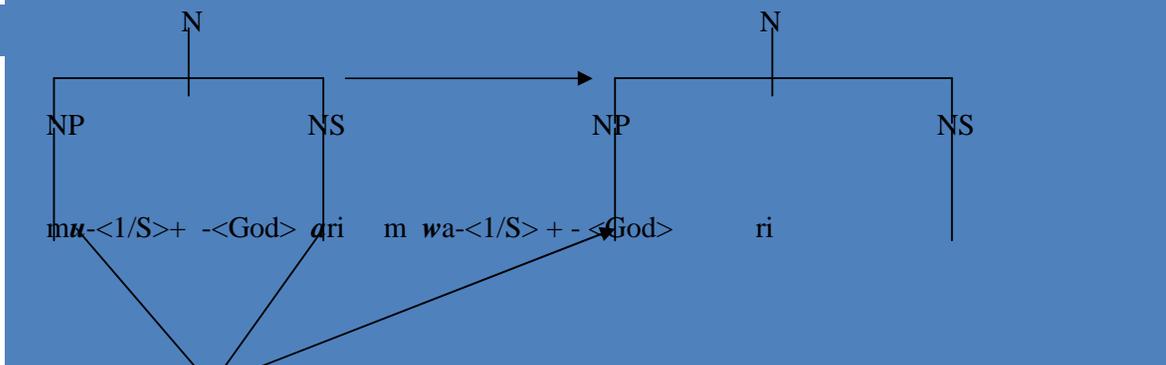
Visible prefixes for noun classes 1 and 2 in Tonga

WORD	GLOSS	NUMBER	NP	NS
	Child	S	Mu-(H)	-ana
	children	P	Va-(H)	-na -yisi
	teacher	S	Mu-(H)	-yisi
	teachers	P	Va-(H)	-cikana
	girl	S	Mu-(H)	-cikana -silisi
	girls	P	Va-(H)	-silisi -luti
	doctor	S	Mu-(H)	-luti
	doctors	P	Va-(H)	-zwilidi
	professor	S	Mu-(H)	-zwilidi
	professors	P	Va-(H)	-anaa
	president	S	Mu-(H)	-nama -kambausi
	presidents	P	Va-(H)	-kambausi
	cousin	S	Mu-(H)	
	cousins	P	Va-(H)	
	pastor	S	Mu-(H)	
	pastors	P	Va-(H)	

The prefix of class 1 nouns is *mu-*, in Tonga, with the allomorph *mwa-*, which is monosyllabic and singular in reference. The prefix *mu-*, becomes *mwa-* due to morpho-phonemic changes on the vowel /u/, commencing stem, *-ana* on the word *mu-ana* (child). This can be illustrated as Follows:

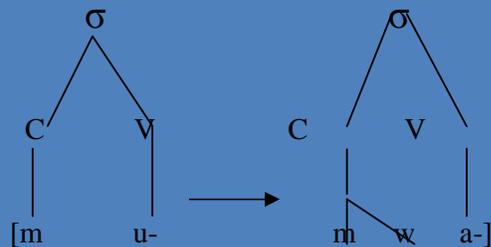


Morphophonemic change (allomorph)

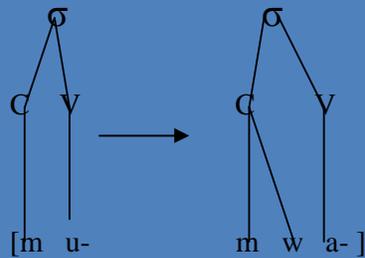


Morphophonemic change (allomorph) → Glide Formation

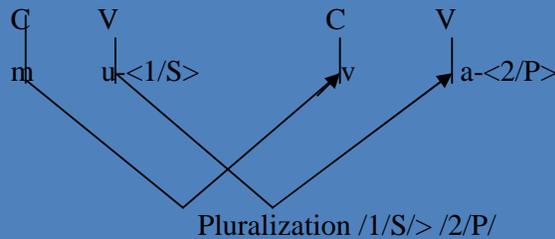
The noun prefix *mu-* of class 1, changes to *mwa-* <1/S>, an allomorph, which result from morpho-phonemic change on the vowel commencing stem. This process results in glide formation (allomorph). Thus the labio-velar [w] is created, resulting in the branching of the onset of the syllable as follows:



Thus the glide [w] becomes prenasalized (existence of a preceding bilabial nasal [m]). The other change at phonological level is from the core-syllable [CV] to a prototypical syllable prefix [CCV], hence the following scenario:



However, both *mu-* and *mwa-* remain monosyllabic, signal high tone and singular prefixes. When changed to its plural, *va-*, the rounded, nasal [m] is replaced by the unrounded, labiodental [v] and the rounded back vowel [u] is substituted by the unrounded central vowel [a]. This can be illustrated as follows:

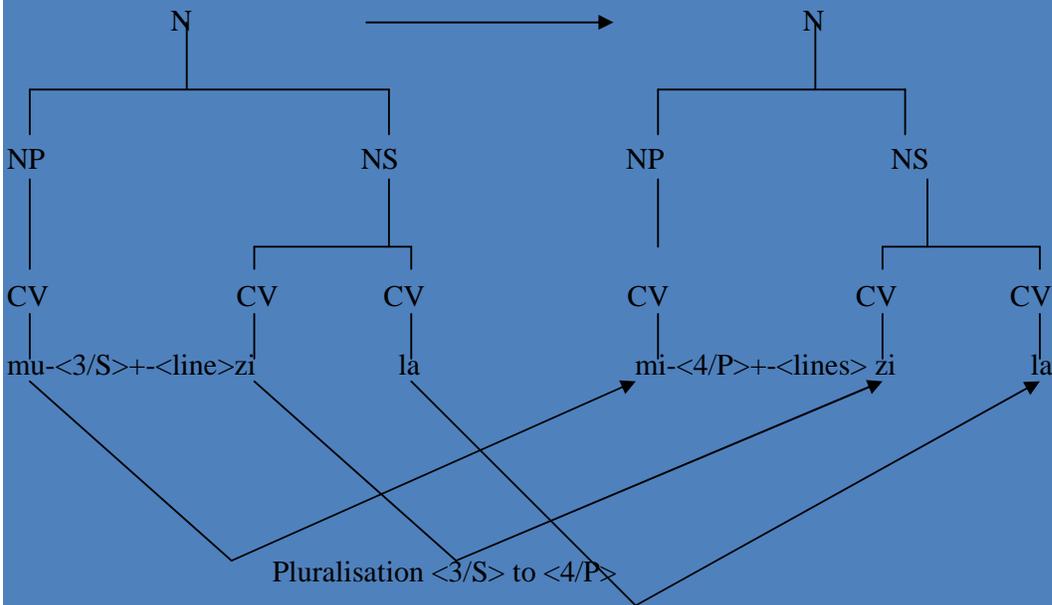


From the table given earlier on, *mu-* <1/S> for the word mucikana 'girl', changes to *va-*, <2/P> respectively, for the word vacikana 'girls' when pluralized. This means that Tonga has a singular and plural sequence for prefixes. However, *va-* does not have allomorphs, as is the case with *mu-*. The visible noun prefix *mu-* also exists on the noun prefix of class 3 but denoting objects other than human beings. The plural reference for *mu-* <3/S> is *mi-* <4/P>. Both *mu-* and *mi-* are visible prefixes, since they are articulated together with the stem, hence grammatically visible. This is demonstrated in the examples below:

Visible Prefixes for noun classes 3 and 4

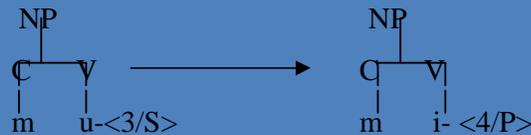
WORD	GLOSS	NUMBER	NP	NS
Clss 3. muzila	Line	S	Mu-	-zila
Clss 4. mizila	lines	P	mi-	-zila
Clss 3. mulimu	duty	S	mu-	-limu
Clss 4. milimu	duties	P	mi-	-limu
Clss 3. mulonga	river	S	mu-	-longa
Clss 4. milonga	rivers	P	mi-	-longa
Clss 3. muceka	cloth	S	mu-	-ceka
Clss 4. miceka	cloths	P	mi-	-ceka
Clss 3. muti	tree	S	mu-	-ti
Clss 4. miti	trees	P	mi-	-ti

The prefix *mu-*, of class 3, like that of class 1, is monosyllabic. This *mu-* <3/S> is singular in number and is substituted by *mi-* when pluralized, as shown by the illustration below:



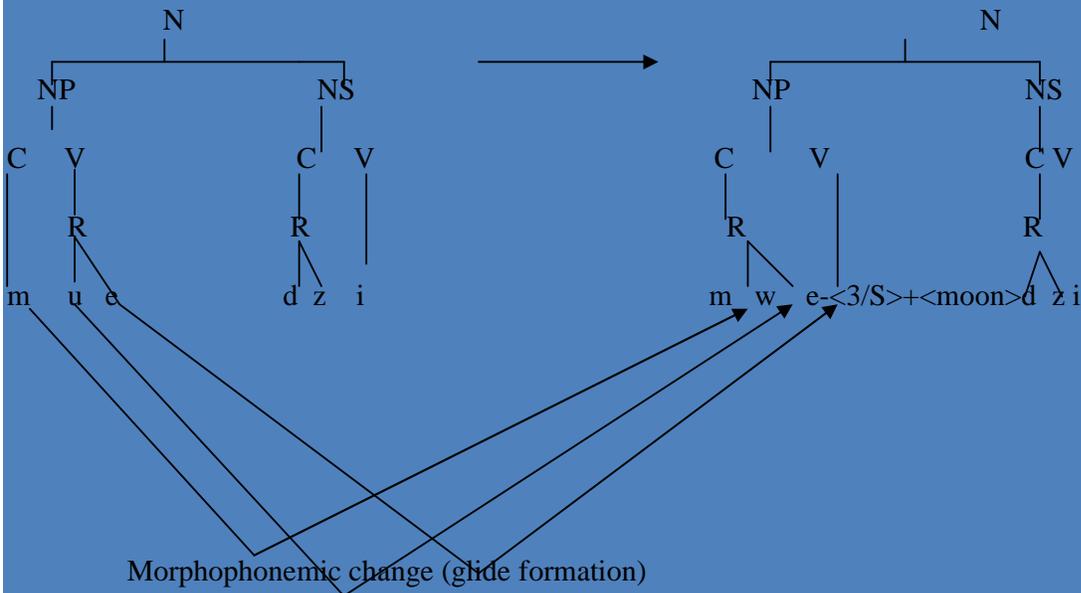
Unlike class 1 *mu-*, where [m] is replaced by the labio-velar [v] and the short vowel [u], [+ round],

is replaced by the unrounded central vowel [a], **mu-** of class 3 is replaced by **mi-**, as illustrated above. In Tonga, the stem is not altered in any way as shown by the above stem, **-zila**, which does not change during pluralisation of **mu-zila** (line) to **mi-zila** (lines). It is only the prefix, which changes as the word changes from singular to plural, as shown below:

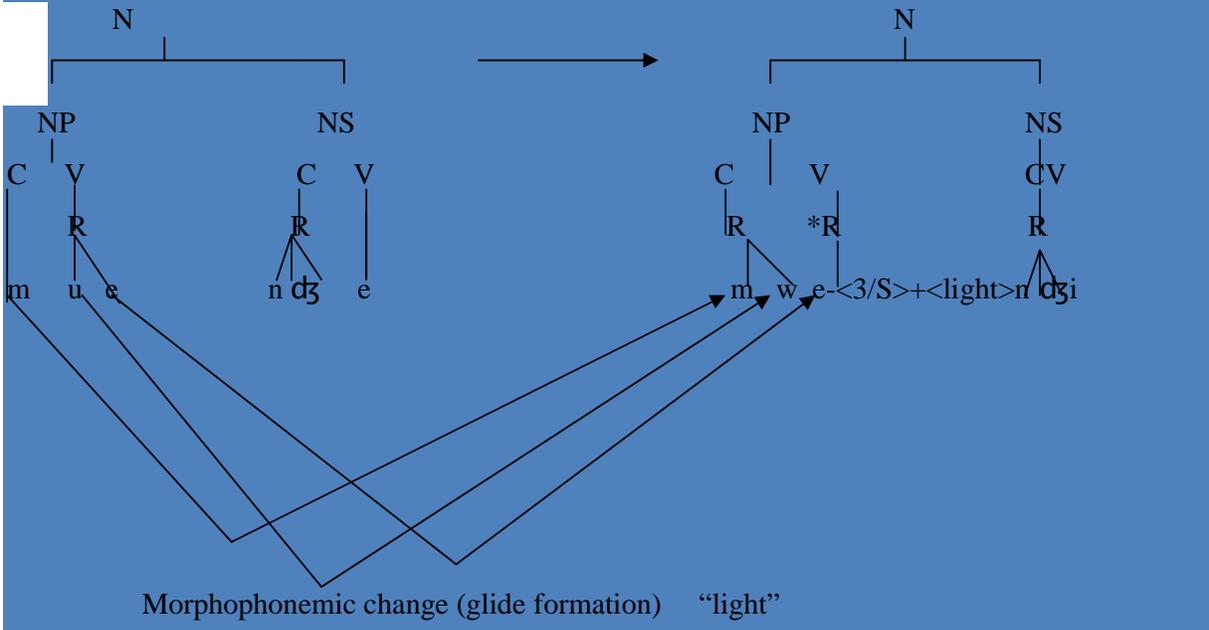
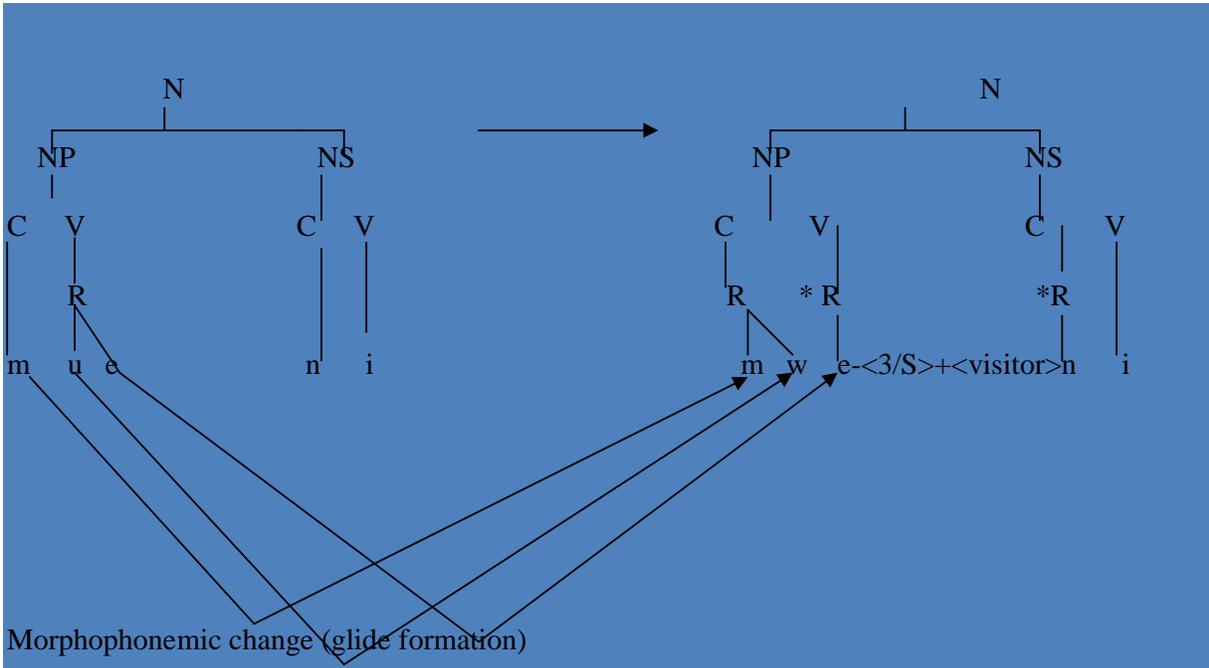


Pluralisation is achieved by altering the vowels, [u] to [i] and not the accompanying onset consonant, [m]. Similarities between class 1 [mu-<1/S>] and that of class 3, [mi-<3/S>] is that both prefixes have allomorph mw-, realized as **mwa-** for class1 and as **mwe-** for class 3. The following illustrations demonstrate the allomorphs of mu-<3/S>:

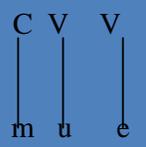
Allomorphs of [mu]



The interlocking of phonological and morphological rules change the vowel commencing stem to a consonant, thus morpho-phonemic change, resulting in glide formation, in particular the labio-velar approximant [w].



Morphophonemic changes that occur on the vowel-commencing stem [**ue*], such as the one below,



creates a labio-velar approximant [w] and the resulting prefix is *mwe-*, an allomorph of *mu-* *<3/S>*. Pluralisation of the *mu-* *<3/S>* and its allomorphs creates the prefix *mi-* *<4/P>*. All these prefixes and allomorphs are grammatically visible in a noun construction.

The other noun class with a visible *mu-* prefix is class 18, signifying place objects, as shown by the following illustrations:

1. *mu*-+*-cikolo* ‘in school’

NP-+NS

mu-<18/S> + -<place object> *cikolo*

2. *mu*-+*-booma* ‘in the district’

NP+NS

mu-<18/S> + -<place object> *booma*

3. *mu*-+*-mu-longa* ‘in the river’

NP+NP+NS

mu-<18/S> +*-mu*-<mu-<3/S> <place object> *longa*

4. *mu*-+*-ma-booma* ‘in districts’

NP+NP+NS

mu-<18/S> +*-ma*-<6/P> <place object> *booma*

5. *mu*-+ *mi-longa* ‘in rivers’

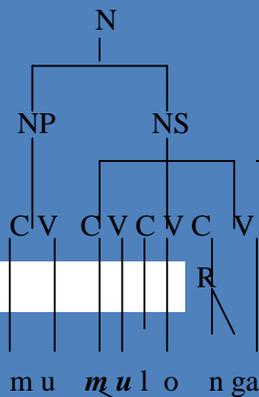
NP+NP+NS

mu-<18/S> +*mi*-<3/P><place object> *longa*

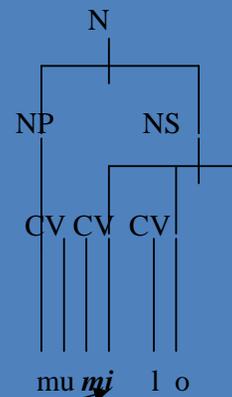
The prefix *mu-* of noun class 18, refers to place objects. It is both singular and plural in reference. Pluralisation is achieved by changing the prefix number of the noun pre-prefixed as shown by the illustration below:

Pluralisation

Singular <18/S>



Plural <18/P>



mu-<18/S> +*-mu*-<3/S><in the river>*longa* → *mu*-<18/S>+*mi*-<4/P><inrivers> *longa*

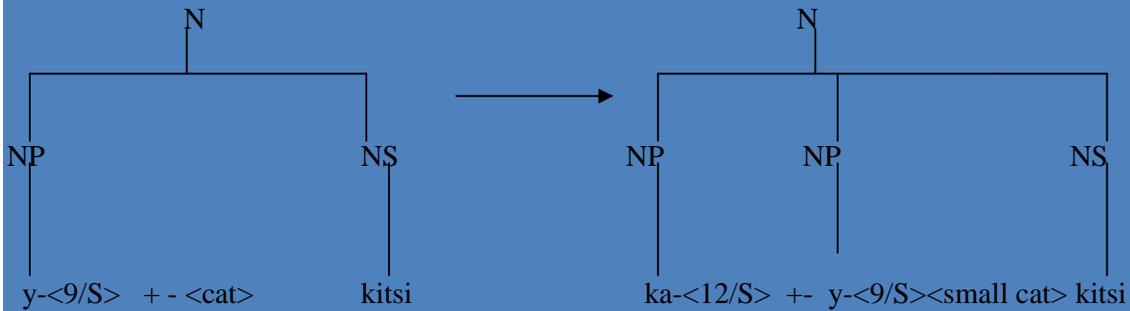
Pluralisation of class 18 nouns in Tonga entails pre-prefixed a plural noun as shown by the above illustration, where the singular form has *mu*-*mu*-*longa* and plural form has *mu*-*mi*-*longa*. The alteration of the vowel from the back, high, rounded [u] to the high, front, unrounded [i] result in

the change in number reference (singular to plural). The word *mu-mi-longa* is therefore the plural form of *mu-mu-longa*. One thing to note is that the real prefix *mu-* of class 18 does not change but what changes is the initial prefix [cl. 3] associated, for example *mu-longa* (river), which changes to *mu-mi-longa* (rivers). Pre-prefixing of a singular word follow that *mu-* of class 18 remain singular and pre-prefixing a plural word also makes *mu-* of class 18 plural, hence *mu-mu-longa* (in the river) is singular and *mu-mi-longa* (in the rivers) is plural.

Other grammatically visible prefixes in Tonga are as illustrated below:

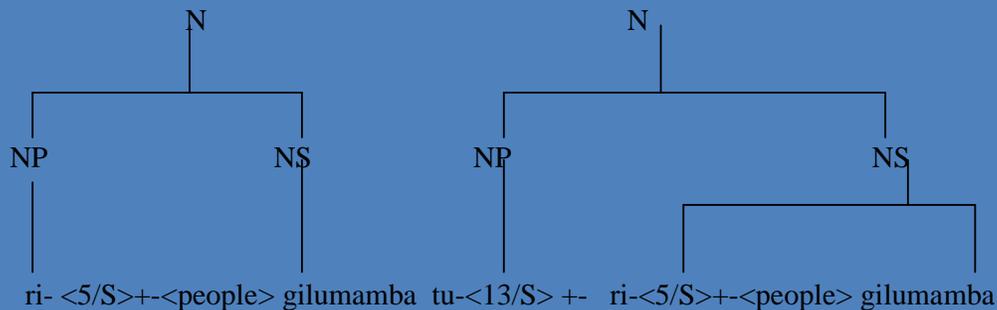
1. ka+-kiti ‘small cat’
 NP--NP--NS
 Ka-<12/S>+-y-<9/S>-kiti

The prefix ka-<12/S> is pre-prefixed to another noun, singular in reference, as follows:



2. tu-gilumamba
 NP--NP-NS
 Tu-<13/S> +-ri-<5/S>-<people> gilumamba

On illustration 2, there is an element of pre-prefixing of another word (gilumamba) from class 5. This process can be illustrated as follows:

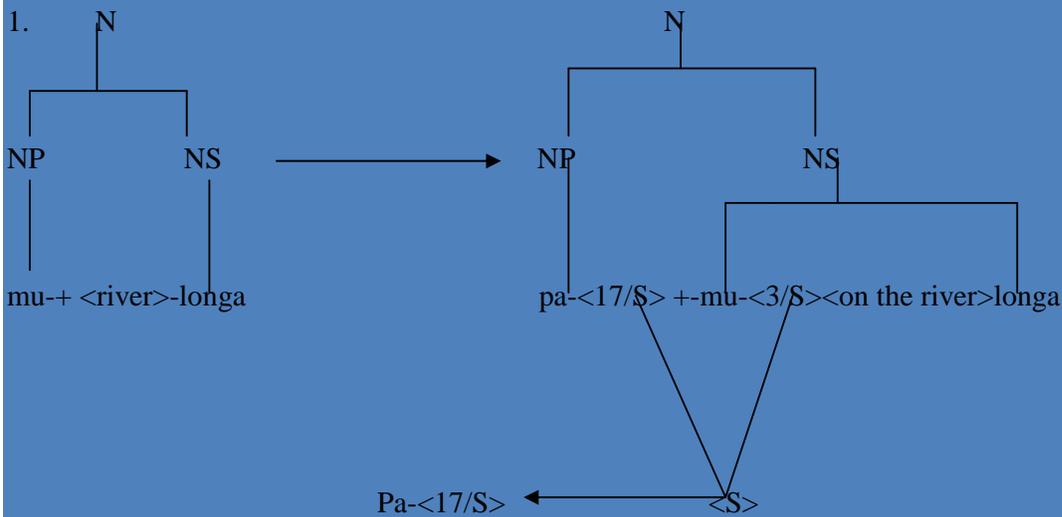


The above illustration demonstrates pre-prefixing of nouns changing class from class 5 to 13. The prefix is grammatically visible as compared to that of class 5, which is grammatically invisible.

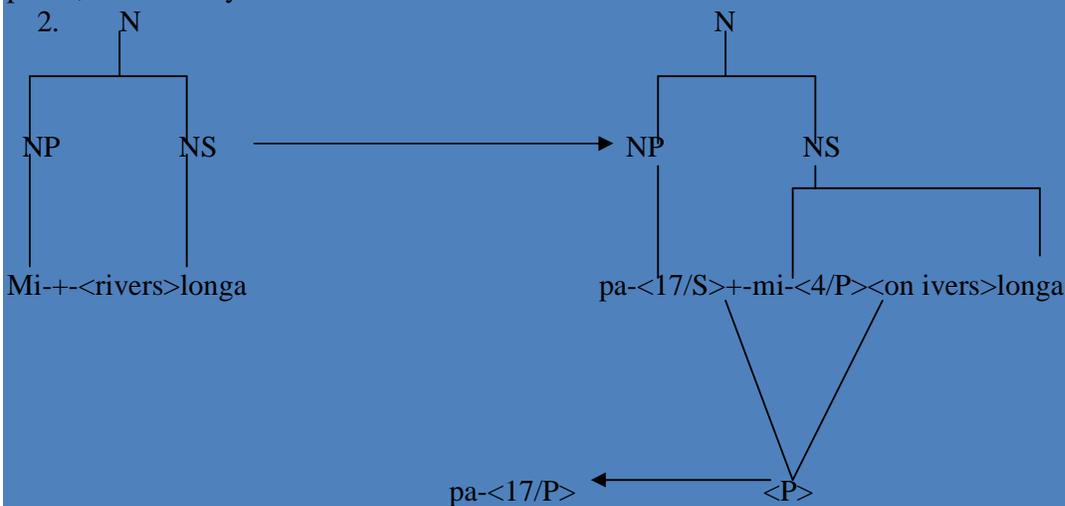
3. ku-+ -tanta 'ride'
 NP+NS
 ku-<15/S>+-<ride>tanta

4. pa-+-mulonga 'on the ride'
 NP-+-NP-+-NS
 pa-+-<17/S>+-mu-<3/S><on the river> longa

The prefix *pa-*, of class 17 is both singular and plural. Like *mu-*, of class 18, it becomes plural when it pre-prefixes a plural noun, for example:



Since the pre-prefixed noun has a singular reference it also follow that the prefix *pa-* of class 17 is singular. In the same way if the pre-prefixed noun is plural then the prefix *pa-* of class 17 becomes plural, as shown by the illustration below:



The grammatically visible class 17-prefix *pa-* is both singular and plural as demonstrated above. Illustration 1 shows the prefix *pa-*, is being pre-prefixed to a singular noun prefix *mu-*, on the word

mu-longa and the resulting word is singular, *pa-mu-longa*. On illustration 2, the same prefix *pa-* of class 17 is pre-prefixed to a plural prefix *mi-*, on the word *mi-longa* to become *pa-mi-longa*, which is plural.

Invisible Prefixes

Invisible prefixes are identified grammatically but being omitted during pronunciation (Ibrahim 1998:39). The high tone which characterises prefixes in Tonga is not realised here. During articulation such prefixes are morphologically existing but segmentally and acoustically invisible. Such prefixes are not felt during articulation of a word but only the stem is visible. This means that some sounds constituting a word cannot be articulated when pronouncing the word. Tonga has basically three invisible prefixes of this nature. These can be illustrated as follows:

1. y- (-H) ++imbeli 'razor'
NP--NS
y-<9/S>+<O>imbeli

This illustration shows that *y-* cannot be articulated during the pronunciation of the word *imbeli* 'razor'. This implies that the noun prefix *y-* is invisible but grammatically existing on the word.

2. dzi- (-H) ++imbeli 'razors'
NP--NS
Dzi-<10/P>+<O> imbeli

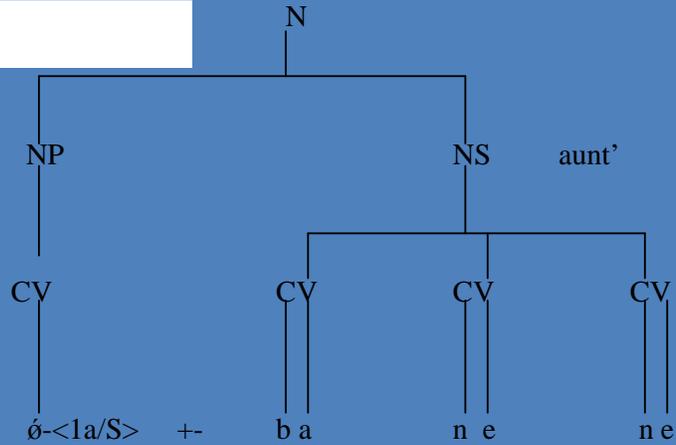
In this current example the prefix *dzi-* is plural. However, it cannot be uttered together with the stem, implying that it is grammatically present but acoustically omitted.

3. ri- (-H) ++kobili 'cent'
NP+NS
ri-<5/S>+<cent> kobili

Nouns of classes 9, [*y-*], 10, [*dzi-*] and 5, [*ri-*] are the only invisible prefixes in the Tonga language, thus they are acoustically silent during pronunciation of the word and only the stem is acoustically visible. However, they are grammatically visible. The noun prefix *y-<9/S>* is singular and *dzi-<10/P>* is its plural form. The prefix *ri-<5/S>* is singular and its plural form is *ma-<6/P>* (visible). These prefixes are just omitted during pronunciation such that only native speakers can realize their existence.

Zero Prefix

Ibrahim (1998:13) says that words with zero prefix are those that show only number and not prefixes, during articulation. Such prefixes are both acoustically and grammatically silent. Such prefixes are not omitted but are completely silent grammatically and acoustically. Only the stem is realized during articulation, as shown below:

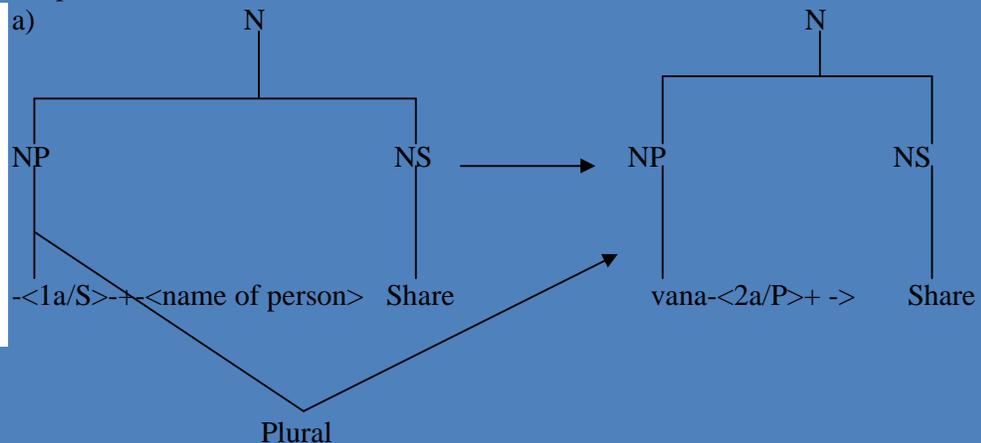


In the illustration given, above, only the stem is pronounced, whilst the prefix is silent, hence zero (ø) prefixes. Other examples are as follows:

1. ø +- siyanene
 NP-+-NS
 ø -<1a/S> +-<grandmother> siyanene

2. ø +-sininsesu
 NP-+-NS
 ø -<1a/S> +-<uncle> sininsesu

Pluralization of nouns in class 1a entails adding a visible prefix *va-<2a/P>*, hence falls into class category 2a. Examples of words in this class are as follows:



b)

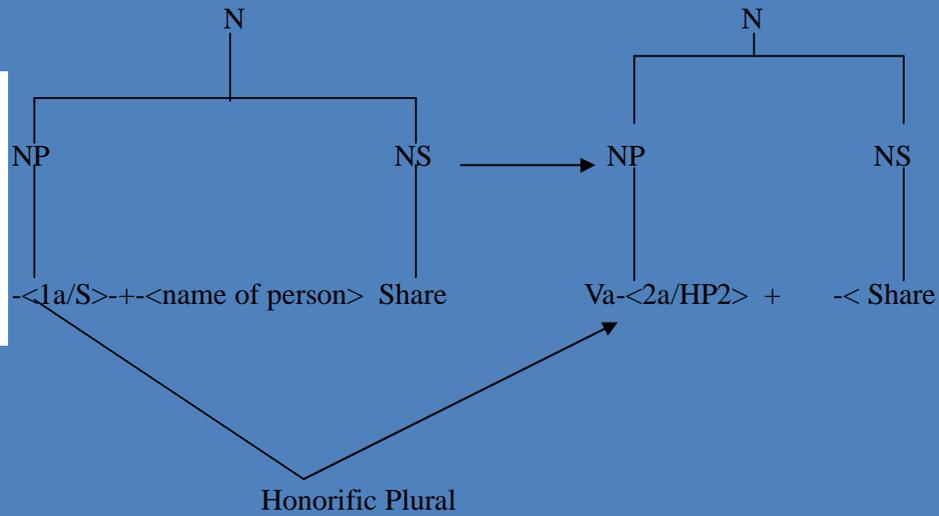
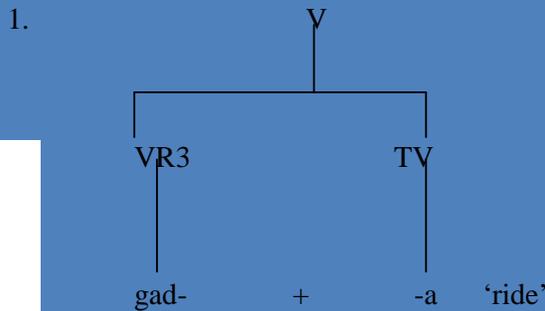


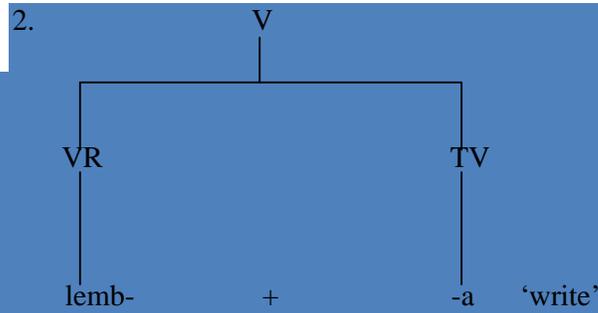
Illustration a) shows ordinary pluralisation of the name Share, *vana-Share* (those known as Share), denoting number, whilst the second illustration, (b), demonstrates honorific plural but in terms of number it signifies a single person called Share. The first (a) pluralisation indicates number while the second one indicates respect. The plural prefix *vana-<2a/P>* and *Va-<2a/S>* are both visible. Thus they are articulated together with the stem during pronunciation.

Verb Morphology

Ibrahim (1998:20) defines a verb as a base word that denotes action. In other words, a verb is an action signifier, implying that a verb is a word that carries action in an utterance. The following entities normally carry out this action: <agent, beneficiary, maleficiary, causee, causer and so on>. Verbs have the base pattern realized as VR--+TV. This can be illustrated diagrammatically as follows:



2 <HP> is abbreviation for Honorific Plural
 3 VR stands for verb radical , V for verb and TV for terminal vowel.



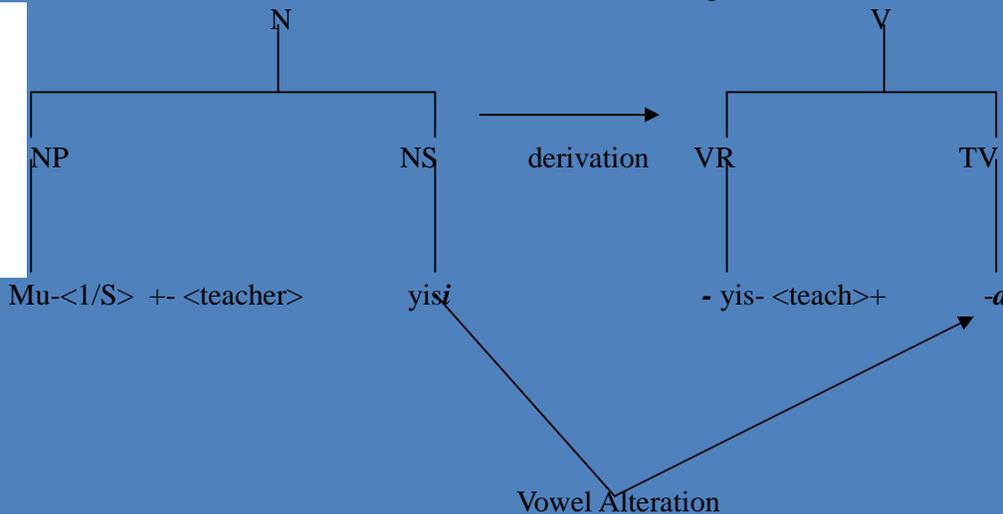
The basic constructional pattern of a verb in Tonga, as demonstrated above is Verb Radical (VR) - + -Terminal Vowel (TV). According to Kiparsky and Mohanan (1982:20), this is the basic morphological pattern of a base verb. A base verb is an indivisible grammatical pattern of a word, which denotes action.

Derivational Morphology

According to the Lexical Phonology and Morphology Theory (Kiparsky and Mohanan 1982:1-100)) derivational morphology is a higher order morphological system as compared to base-word morphology. However, derivational morphology stems from base word morphology. This means that derivational morphology is a development from base-word morphology. This process handles all the morphological processes that derive new constructions from base-words. The morphological processes that fall under derivational morphology are vowel alteration, affixation and suffixation. Though vowel alteration, affixation and suffixation are higher order morphological processes, they stem from base-word morphology. They build upon base-word systems to come up with new morphological processes of higher order concepts.

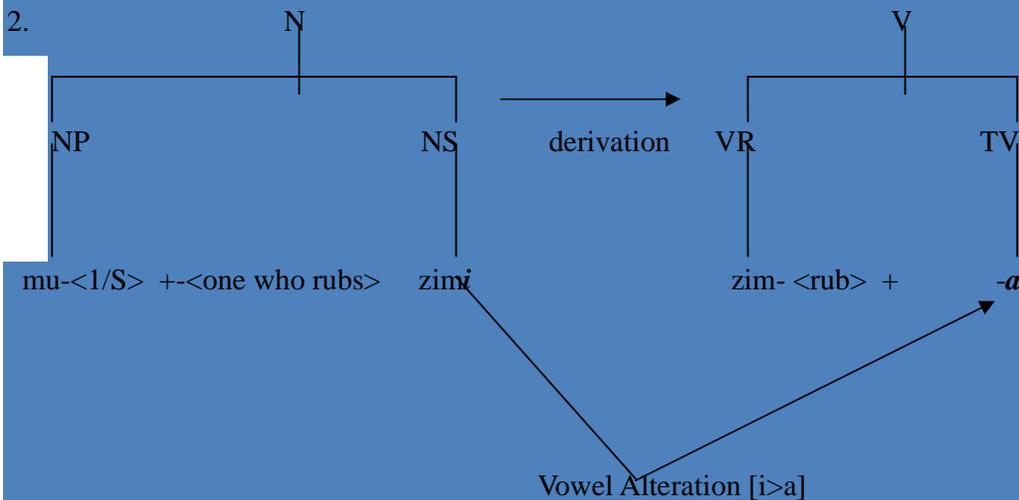
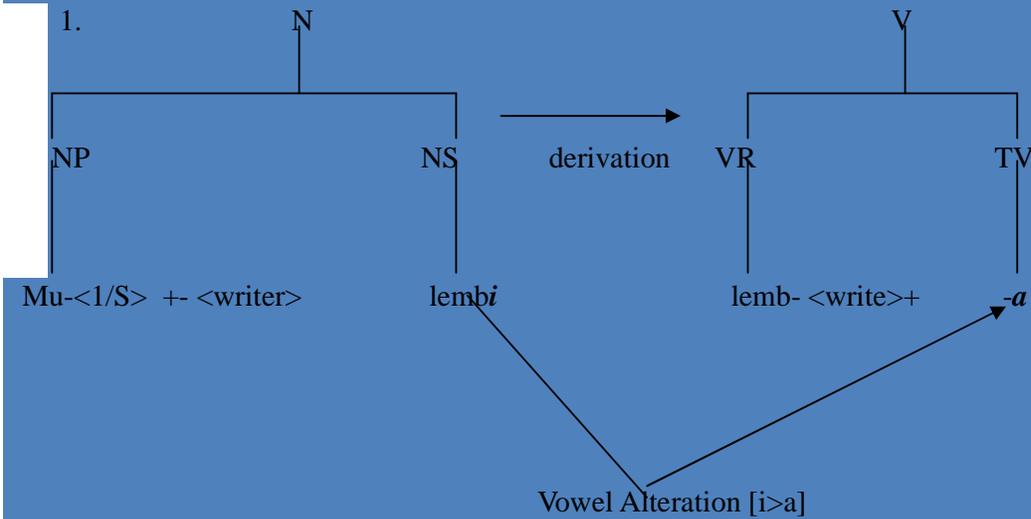
Vowel Alteration

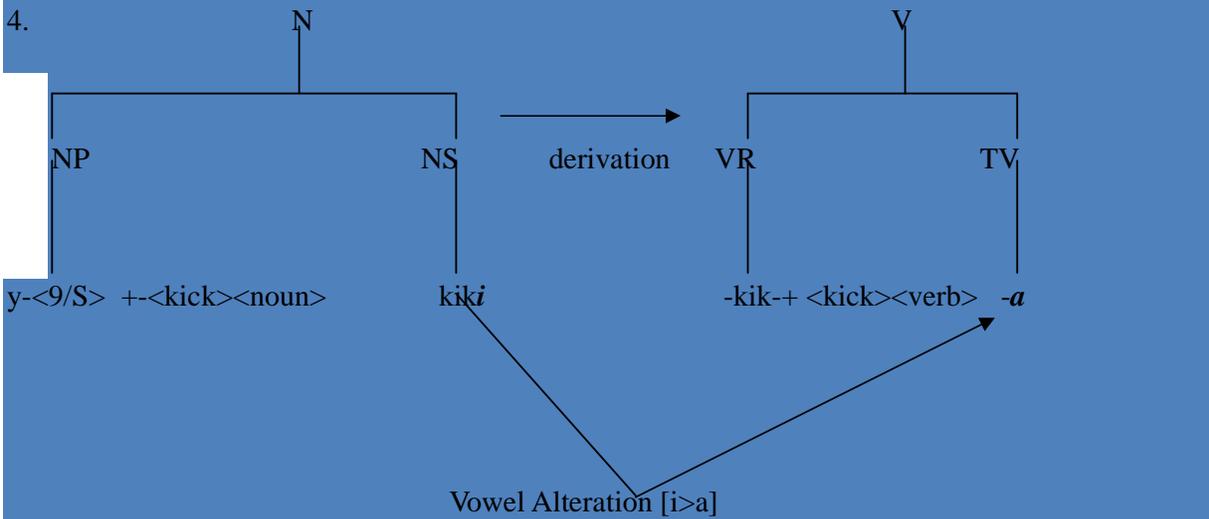
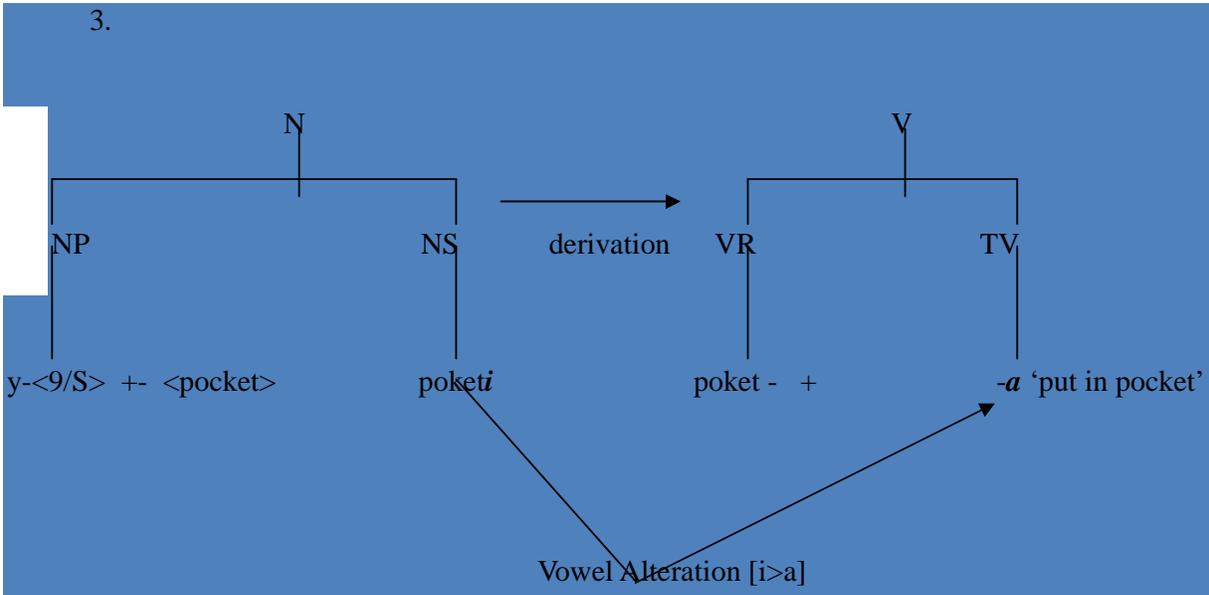
This is level 2, of word morphology, as already indicated in the theoretical framework, Lexical Phonology and Morphology Theory (Kiparsky and Mohanan (1982:30-60). While base words have base constructional patterns, vowel alteration entails substituting the last vowels on a noun word with other vowels. This can be demonstrated in the following illustration:



In this particular example, vowel alteration occurs on the last vowel of the noun base-word, *mu-yisi*. In this alteration morphological process, the high, front vowel [i] on the word *mu-yisi* (teacher), is substituted by the central low vowel [a], to finally have *yis-a* (teach). The morphological system changes simultaneously from a noun to a verb, thus from signifying a human object to signifying an action carried by a human object (causer).

The following vowel changes illustrate the sub-regulative, which the morphology of Tonga demonstrates:





The trend demonstrated by the four examples given above, is that Tonga verbs are derived from base nouns by altering the final vowel [i] of the base nouns, replacing them with [a]. The base word *mu-lembi* is a noun, referring to human object (writer), class 1, denoted by the singular prefix *mu-*. When the final vowel [i] which is [+front] [+ high], on the word *mu-lembi* is substituted by the central vowel [a] [+ central] [+ low], then the whole base word changes in terms of meaning, morphological structure and the subsequent word category, thus from noun to verb.

This can be illustrated as follows:

Vowel Alteration

WORD	mu- <i>lembi</i> (vowel alteration) → <i>leb-a</i>	
WORD MORPHOLOGY	NP-+-NS	VR-+-TV
WORD CATEGORY	Noun	verb
MEANING	writer	write

The table above demonstrates that vowel alteration changes noun base words to verbs. It also follows that meaning changes, for example the word *mu-lembi* ‘writer’ changes to *leb-a* ‘write’ (by the process of vowel alteration). Meaning changes from noun to the action performed by the noun. The subsequent word category changes from noun (*mu-lembi*) to a verb (*leb-a*).

The fact that there is change of the word class category (noun to verb) also entails change of the morphological pattern. The morphology for *mu-lembi* is NP-+-NS and *leb-a* becomes VR-+-TV. This derivational process accounts for a number of words in Tonga. The process of vowel alteration is however a reversible process as illustrated below:

1. Forward Process (vowel alteration)
 - a) mu-<1/S>+- <writer>leb *i*
 - b) leb-*i* +-< write> leb - *a*
2. Reverse Process (vowel alteration)
 - a) Leb-*a* +-<write> leb-*i*
 - b) mu- +-< writer>-*leb i*

Affixation

Affixation is on level 3 (according to Kiparsky and Mohanan 1982:1-100). This is a higher level, associated with higher order morphological processes. At this level, affixations and suffixations occur on the derived word or verb base word. In Tonga there are higher order morphological processes, which occur on the base word, since the language is agglutinative or conjunctive.

Tense Inflection

Tonga is a language with verbs that always denote tense. Verb constructions indicate time, to show when the action was carried out. Since the language is agglutinative, as already been asserted, it also follow that the tense affixes are inserted onto the base word (verb). Tense affixes are basically of three categories denoting the past, present and the future. Tense affixes can be inflected as follows:

1. Remote Past Tense [-ka-]

a-<1/S> **-ka**-li-<1/S> lim-a 'he/she rubbed it'

The above verb is derived from [lima] 'rub' and the insertion of the affix [-ka-] before the radical serves to denote time when the rubbing took place. The tense affix [-ka-] signifies the remote past. There is no change to the meaning of the word but more information is provided. The word [Lima] 'rub' does not denote time, so the epenthesis of the remote past tense denotes time of the action.

2. Recent Past Tense [-a-]

a-<1/S> **-a**-li-<1/S>-lim- -a 'he/she rubbed it'

>From the example above, vowel [-a-] serves to denote time. In Tonga, the tense is inserted preceding the radical. The [-a-] denotes recent past. This is an action that has recently been carried out. Contrary to English, Tonga does not denote gender of the subject.

3. Present Tense

li-<1/S>-lim-a 'rub'

4. Present Continuous tense [-no-]

a-<1/S>**-no**- li-<1/S>-lim-a 'he/she rubs it'

The affix [-no-] denotes present continuous tense. This means that the action of the verb becomes a continuous action.

5. Future Tense

a-<1/S> **-ca**-li-<1/S>-lim-a 'he/she will rub'

The Tonga tense is inflected before the VR of the base verb as demonstrated by:

-ka-lim-a: which is a past tense affix,
-a-lim-a: which is present
-no-lim-a: present continuous affix,
-ca-lim-a, a future tense affix.

The Tense affix does not change the meaning of the word but rather it specifies the time setting of the action.

Suffixation.

Suffixation involves inserting a suffix after the verb radical but before the terminal vowel, as shown by the illustration below:

a-<1/S>- ka-lem- **na** -a
 SA TA-VR- RP- TV

The reciprocal suffix has been inserted after the VR and before the TV. This is the sequencing of suffixes in the Tonga language. Tonga has a number of verb extension (suffixes) that can be demonstrated, some of which are:

lek- + -a 'beat' = lek-<beat>-is-<causative> -a 'cause to beat'

The word *lek-a* changes meaning after the causative affix *-is-* is inserted [*lek-is-a*]. There is now an element of causer and causee in the action referred to by the base word. The following schema can illustrate this:

causer = -lek- is- a -causee/causer

The causative affix *-is-* has *-es-*, as its allomorph.

The verb [lek-+ -a] 'beat' becomes [lek-<beat>-an-<reciprocal> -a] 'beat each other' following the insertion of the reciprocal affix.

It is worth noting that the meaning of the word *-lek-a* has changed significantly to mean beating each other, such that there is no indication of a single causee in the subject but rather each of the two subjects has either functions, thus causee and causer in the morphological out put (reciprocal). The following schema demonstrates reciprocal affix insertion:

Causer = - lek- an-a (causer)

The reciprocal affix is *-an-* and has no allomorphs.

lek- + -a 'beat' = lek-<beat>-iw-<passive> -a 'beaten'

The illustration above shows a morphological change from the base word (lek-a) to the extended verb (lek-iw-a/lek-w-a) 'beaten'. Apart from that the meaning of the word changes from beat to beaten.

lek- + -a 'beat' = lek-<beat>-irir-<applied> -a 'insert'

The applied affixes are *-erer-* and *-irir-* also affects the meaning of the word *-lek-a*. The morphology also changes and more importantly the meaning. There is no longer the element of beating but rather a new concept is arrived at. There are a number of verb extensions (suffixes) that are applicable to the Tonga language. The four discussed (causative, reciprocal, applied and passive) are representative of verb extensions that characterises the Tonga language. The significant change caused by the insertion of these affixes is notably the defining effect of how action has been carried out.

Apart from affixes, suffixes are also inserted on verb formations. The suffixes are inserted after the VR and the TV. These are mostly the particles. These are suffixes such as enclitics that are inserted on base words. These particles are inserted after the terminal vowel, unlike SAs and OAs that are before the VR, as well as the verb extensions that are inserted after the VR but before the TV.

Suffixation of particles also changes the meaning of words in Tonga, as demonstrated below:

lek- + -a 'beat' = lek-<beat>-a-<particle>-wo 'also hit back'

The inclusion of the enclitic -wo, changes meaning from 'beat' to 'also hit back'.

lek- + -a 'beat' = lek-<beat>-a-<particle> - ze 'beat again'

The insertion of ze- (again) changes not only the meaning of the verb 'to beat again' but adds additional segments onto the morphological properties that constitute the base word. Morphologically, the paragogic insertion of the enclitic shifts the position of the terminal vowel from rightmost to an intermediate position. This is the only morphological construction (particle), which restricts the TV to the rightmost position.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that Tonga is a complete and integral language since it has functional interlocking patterns of phonology and morphology. Base words and derived words can be decomposed to atoms (phonologically) through elements from morpho-syntactic patterns. Base words can create new words by affixation, prefixation and vowel alteration. This is an intricate behaviour demonstrated by languages that are integral. This study therefore, posits Tonga as a complete and integral language. It then follows that Tonga speakers are capable of designing their own phonological rules, phonotactic constraints, morpho-phonemic, morphological, morpho-syntactic, syntactic and semantic rules. As such the paper appraises Tonga as equal to any human language. It is therefore, a minority language (few speakers) but not an inferior language (functional legitimacy).

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Classroom Challenges Faced by Khoe Children in Reading English Texts at Motshegaletau Primary School.

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Abstract

The present paper aimed to investigate if universal basic education will be achieved by the year 2015 for Khoe children regarding the reading skill that the children need to acquire as literate citizens. The argument is based on an initial study carried out in 2005 – 2006 that investigated the reading competence of primary school children of Khoe background. Data collected showed that there are contributory classroom factors that affect the teaching and learning of reading in a negative way examples of which are: pedagogy employed in the teaching and learning process, lack of appropriate reading materials, ineffective use of teaching techniques, negative attitudes by the teachers towards Khoe pupils and lack of interest in reading by pupils. All these factors impact negatively on the Khoe children's reading competence and make it difficult for them to achieve educational goals. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students' artefacts were studied, teachers' lessons were observed and a reading test administered to all standards. In addition, questionnaires were administered to both teachers and students. The results of the study indicated that Khoe pupils encounter the challenges mentioned above. In view of the results, the question as to whether achievement of universal education is a myth or reality for Khoe children becomes important.

Keywords: *education for all, ten year basic education, marginalised groups, constructivist theory, remote area development programme, reading skill.*

Introduction

An educated and informed nation is one whose citizenry is literate. This literacy is most often acquired at school, especially at primary school level, where the children's academic as well as cognitive skills are developed (Mokibelo and Moumakwa, 2006). Williams (1998) notes that education for all implies reading for all, which means reading in a world language that is globally recognized. This world language is English in the case of Botswana. One of Botswana's policy documents, Education for Kagisano (1977), also puts a lot of emphasis on the teaching and learning of reading because it is a skill that is cross-cutting within the curriculum. A student who is able to read should be able to decode print from a text and construct meaning out of it (Laufer, 1997 as

cited in Mokibelo and Moumakwa, 2006). Learners should therefore acquire reading as a lifelong skill because it is necessary for learning to take place. However, learners in classroom situations in Botswana are not homogenous. In this context, teaching the skill of reading to children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds might be problematic. This means taking into consideration the fact that classroom interactional dynamics should take cognizant of this diversity.

In order to expose all learners to the opportunity of learning how to read, Botswana has endorsed the concept of “Education for all”. This is an initiative by UNESCO which is based on the belief that education needs to be promoted both as a fundamental human right and as a key issue in development (UNESCO, 1990). In this regard universal education should not be biased against marginalized groups such as ethnic minorities, the poor as well as rural people. Nation states were encouraged to ensure that their learners received the necessary nutrition, health care and general physical and emotional support needed to be active participants in the teaching and learning process (UNESCO: 1990).

It was against this backdrop that Botswana introduced ten-year basic education program, commencing at Primary School level and ending at Junior Secondary School level. The program aimed at ensuring access to basic education for all children of school going age. Within this context, the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) was also introduced, which, apart from providing learning environment in the form of schools, was also aimed at reducing poverty amongst rural and remote area dwellers, the majority of which are the Khoe(Mokibelo and Moumakwa, 2006).

Motshegaletau Primary, which is a RADP school in the Central District, has an enrolment of five hundred pupils each year. The school follows the standardized syllabi used by all pupils at primary school level in Botswana. The official languages of the classroom are English and Setswana and Khoesan languages do not play any role in the classroom as they are not officially recognized.

Background Information

Education is said to be a key factor in development and a powerful tool that reduces poverty and inequality. In recognition of this fact, the government of Botswana has made efforts to alleviate the problem of illiteracy in rural and remote areas through policies that inform and guide the education system on how best education can be developed for the benefit of all citizens. To achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which advocate for universal basic primary education for all children, primary schools are built under the Remote Area Development Programme (RADP) to cater for children, especially of Khoesan background and other disadvantaged groups who are unable to attend Tswana Primary Schools for one reason or another. Motshegaletau Primary, a school built at a small village of Motshegaletau between Thabala and Moiyabana in the Central District, is an example of such government initiative. The catchments areas for the school are neighbouring cattle posts and villages. This school caters mostly for Khoe children although there are a few children from Pedi and Tswana ethnic groups.

Children are transported in a government truck to and fro and vice versa, the hostel situated at Sehunou village at the beginning and end of each term. The Central District Council supplies the children with clothing, food, books and provides general maintenance of the school buildings and hostels. The school, which has standard 1 up to standard 7 has an enrolment of around five hundred pupils, and nineteen teachers (Mokibelo and Moumakwa, 2006).

Research Objectives

The objectives of the present study were as follows: To investigate

- a) The techniques used for teaching and learning the reading skill at Motshegaletau primary school.

- b) How these techniques impact on the teaching and learning of the reading skill at Motshegaletau Primary School.
- c) Challenges encountered by both the teachers and students in the process of teaching and learning the reading skill.
- d) Ways in which the teachers and the learners could overcome these challenges.

Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized in the present study although the study was skewed towards qualitative methods. Bogdan and Biklen (1992), state that qualitative research is the key instrument in the natural setting that gives the researcher masses of data. In this context, teachers and their pupils would share with us their experiences in the reading classroom, and this type of data collection would allow for a detailed and comprehensive picture of what transpired at Motshegaletau Primary School when reading is taught and learnt at both lower and upper primary (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1996).

Questionnaires were administered to all the nineteen teachers at the Primary School, including the School Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher. Questionnaires for the teachers solicited information about the techniques they used in teaching learners how to read, the challenges they encountered, and how these challenges could be overcome. For students, the questionnaires were administered as follows: standard 5 – 7 have two classes each and only one class per level was picked. Standards 3 and 4 comprise three classes each and two classes per level were picked. The questionnaires administered to pupils solicited the same information as in the teachers' questionnaire, that is, what strategies were used in the teaching of reading, what challenges they encountered when reading was taught and what they felt should be done to assist them overcome the challenges and help them acquire the reading skill.

All standard 1 and 2 classes participated in the exercise but were not expected to answer the questionnaire because of their level of cognitive development. Instead, their artefacts were studied such as exercise books, and they were also made to read orally and answer questions on texts prepared by researchers. The standard one and two teachers' schemes were studied and teachers also interviewed to find out if the teachers and their pupils' perspectives about reading were complementary.

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with all teachers. Semi-structured interviews were utilized because they are open ended and it was hoped that the teachers would describe their experiences about the teaching of reading, how Khoe children responded to the English reading texts, the techniques they used in teaching the reading skill, as well as the challenges that impacted on the reading competence of Khoe children. Through interviews, information about the extent of the discrepancy between the reading texts and the reading abilities of Khoe children would be established.

Theoretical Framework

The discussions in this paper will be biased towards Bruner's constructivist theory which purports that education should develop the intellectual power in students and therefore students should be encouraged to construct hypotheses, make decisions, discover things by themselves through exploration, and that new ideas should build on what the students already know. In this case, experiences and contexts should be utilized in whatever the students are learning. Again, learning should help the students to go beyond what they are learning in the classroom. In support of Bruner's theory, Hutchins (2002) argues that the chief purpose of learning is to cultivate reason and develop basic language skills such as reading and writing to enable learners to progress later in life, be it in the world of work or further education. Further, Bruner argues that rules and concepts learnt

in the classroom should be contextualized to real world situations for better comprehension and understanding by the students, as such; this will enable them to solve problems and construct knowledge. Furthermore, the theory fosters collaboration amongst students as learning is seen as a social process. In addition, the environment in which learning is taking place should be conducive to learning. Lastly, this theory articulates well the role of the teachers as facilitators of the learning process.

This theory suits well the situation on which the present paper bases its line of argument. The Khoe children at Motshegaletau Primary School should benefit from the teaching and learning of the reading skill in the classroom. Reading should enable the pupils to interact with the text successfully, be able to use their school and community experiences in interpreting the messages contained in the texts, work collaboratively with others to analyze these texts and reach conclusions based on the message contained in the texts. Thus, the texts they read should sharpen their intellectual power. The paper, argues that due to hostile conditions of learning such as lack of reading materials, inappropriate use of teaching techniques, lack of teaching aids to support the reading lessons, as well as the negative attitudes of both teachers and their pupils towards each other, then education for all or reading for all will for a long time remain a myth for pupils at Motshegaletau Primary School. This is because at this school, learning is not contextualized as learners are not active participants due to the fact that their out of school experiences are not used as a resource in the reading classroom.

Educational factors and the teaching and learning of reading

Below are the findings that are focused to the classroom teaching and learning only. However, there are other contributory factors apart from the ones discussed below which will not be discussed in this paper. Both the teachers and students problems will be high lighted.

Lack of reading skills

At Motshegaletau Primary School there is evidence of lack of reading skills amongst the pupils at all levels. Most of the comments from students revealed that they read their school texts at a frustration level due to inadequate vocabulary knowledge. English acts as a barrier to understanding even those texts judged to be at their level. The other problem could be that teachers do not adapt English texts to suit the reading abilities of their pupils, neither do they adapt them to suit their learning styles or cultural backgrounds. In view of the foregoing, teachers held ambiguous attitudes towards their students' lack of reading skill. On one hand they acknowledged that the students lacked adequate vocabulary that would enable them to read with facility. On the other hand, they put the blame on the students for being passive and lacking motivation in their work. It was also found through interviews and lesson observations that teachers rarely attempted to address the problem in a manner that might bring about improvement. According to Spolsky (1986) mother tongue is a language through which learners perceive their surrounding world and enables them to conceptualize it. Also Hays (2002) argues that the fact that Khoe children are taught in a language or languages that are different from their own makes learning difficult. Arguably, Khoe children at Motshegaletau Primary are far from developing their reading skill. This is an unfortunate situation as reading is a skill that is required in all subjects across the curriculum.

Techniques used in teaching reading

Teachers used a variety of techniques at both lower primary and upper primary. In most cases however it appeared that the teachers were using these techniques just for the sake of it without necessarily assisting the students to read for meaning. Students for example could repeat words aloud without looking at their books or at the board, which indicated that they had memorized these words without understanding what they meant. It appeared that teachers were confusing reading for meaning with reading aloud. In most cases reading lessons were merely pronunciations orientated

so that teachers tended to dwell too long on correcting student's pronunciation instead of assisting them to read for meaning.

These teaching methods work well for lower primary where pupils are still grappling with letters and sounds but as they go into upper primary one would expect them to be able to read longer texts for meaning. It was noted that there were long sessions on repeating words and sentences, which students could do quite well without reference to any kind of text.

Lack of teaching aids to support teaching and learning

At primary school teaching aids are an integral part of teaching and learning in the reading classroom. It would appear that children generally retain what they have learned better if they store it both visually and linguistically, especially at lower levels where their concentration span cannot be maintained by long texts that demand a lot of concentration. The fact that teachers at Motshegaletau Primary School are not using teaching aids for teaching a third language might contribute to student's lack of interest in reading. Teaching aids that are colourful, attractive and appropriate should be used to support the teaching and learning of reading. Also teachers should support their teaching with those visuals and other resources that reflect the culture and experiences of Khoe children. Wright (1998) states that the teacher should provide reading materials that are both culturally and linguistically appropriate, and at the level that students can handle. The same could be said of teaching aids. Visuals bring the outside world to the classroom, therefore if visuals are used, Khoe students will find learning meaningful and would have a reason to attend school to achieve their goals.

Lack of interest in learning English

The general feeling of teachers at Motshegaletau Primary was that Khoe children do not have interest in learning English as a subject or reading as a skill. There could be a lot of contributory factors such as the type of learning materials used, or the methods used to teach reading. It is also possible that teachers, most of whom are Bangwato, might not be aware of any culturally relevant examples they could use in the classroom to supplement for the lack of understanding of English texts by Khoe pupils. This would mean that learning becomes difficult and abstract for the Khoe children, as there is a clear dislocation between the home and the school. Multicultural awareness level of members of staff is crucial to the teaching and learning process. In this context some teachers at Motshegaletau could be said to be unprepared to meet the reading needs of culturally different and language minority children hence learners lose interest in their work. In addition Serpell (1987) points out that the dislocation between home and school caused by the use of English as a medium of instruction at the foundation level makes learning incomprehensible. Eventually students can lose interest in learning because they cannot associate what is going on in the classroom with their home experiences and this result in making the millennium development goals unrealistic for the Khoe child.

Lack of reading materials

There was a general concern from teachers at Motshegaletau about lack of reading materials to support the reading skill. The few books that are available in the school library are not accessible to the students because the understanding is that the Khoe children tear, burn and lose books. So they are not allowed to take books to the hostels to read in their spare time. On the issue of support materials, Williams (1998) argues that if there is inadequate supply of learning materials and books then the input will not be enough. To increase the learners' academic success they need additional practice with materials. Williams (ibid.) noted that pupils can only become good readers through reading, and therefore an ample supply of reading materials is necessary. For citizens to be informed and educated they have to read and acquire knowledge.

Negative attitude by the teachers

Teachers at Motshegaletau Primary School lamented on the negative attitude of their pupils towards reading and school generally. To confirm this, most of the Khoe children's books were characterized by unmarked work, dirtiness, torn pages, incomplete work and very low marks. This could also be a reflection of the teachers' negative attitudes towards Khoe children. Teachers are supposed to act as guides and motivators for students who are unwilling to practice and learn. The situation at Motshegaletau pointed to a situation where only Khoe children's books were not attended to adequately. If the students' work is incomplete and unmarked, the teachers should encourage the students to complete and submit their work.

Lack of Participation in lessons

Most of the teachers were concerned about low participation of pupils during lesson times. There could be some reasons why students do not participate in class. One reason could be the problem of language barrier where pupils lack necessary vocabulary to express themselves in English. The other reason could be that the Khoe children find topics uninteresting because the teaching and learning does not reflect the cultural background of the Khoe. Also, the pedagogy used by teachers could not be reaching the students. With the reasons outlined above, students could find learning abstract and this could result in lack of participation in class because they consider the learning situation alien. However, Little wood (1981) advocates for high participation of students in lessons and that teachers should design activities that will keep the students on their toes. What is happening in the present situation could mean that although the children are going to school, minimal learning takes place. In this regard, Chisholm (1994) suggests that for teachers to be effective and equitable they must be made aware of the complexity and diversity in their classrooms so that they can focus their teaching accordingly. In addition, Zeichner (1996) cites Dewey (1943) as saying that a situation whereby students are passive during lesson time calls for teachers to reflect on their methods, materials, content and everything that could affect effective teaching and learning to take place.

Lack of implementation of the Communicative Approach

The communicative approach was introduced to Botswana classrooms in the late 1990's. This is an approach to language learning that takes into account the learner and his experiences as an integral part of language learning. It is based on the realization that language learning should privilege real life situations and advocates for the development of the four basic language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Hence, learners should take an active role in the language classroom by interacting with each other while the teacher facilitates this interaction and supervises pair, group and class discussions. However, teachers still do not understand the principles of this approach and do not accommodate the multiple learning styles, abilities and needs of students. At Motshegaletau Primary School, it was found that teachers still used traditional ways of teaching and did not encourage the learners to play any significant role in the classroom. They preferred to lecture to students instead of allowing them to talk amongst themselves and read texts and discuss them in groups.

Conclusions

Education for all remains a myth as far as the study is concerned. Bruner's constructivist theory purports that there should be collaborative learning, learning should be contextualised, students should be able to apply what they learn to real life situations and that they should be allowed to share and explore their ideas. Therefore the conclusion is drawn basing on this theory and observations made from the data collected. The following were noted:

Classroom teaching and learning of the reading skill in English classrooms does not reach the students due to inappropriate and ineffective teaching methods used. Teachers do not use

exploratory methods as Bruner's theory of constructivism suggests. The ones used do not impact on the students learning and therefore minimal learning takes place.

Classroom teaching and learning is not contextualised to the experiences and culture of the learners and as a result learning becomes irrelevant to the Khoe children. Teaching and learning in the classroom should reflect the students' culture and out of school experiences. This is also dovetailed to the materials used in the classrooms that are inappropriate. Constructivism views learning as a way in which students should internalize concepts and rules and also applying them to real world contexts. This can only happen if learners are allowed to read materials that are culturally relevant.

Teachers still dominate classrooms, something that Bruner's theory and the communicative approach to language teaching negates. It should be the students who are learning and actively participating in the classroom. Students should be given the opportunity to work collaboratively, in effective groups and making decisions on what they are doing. As Hutchins (2002) points out, education should cultivate reason. In addition, they should be given the chance to be responsible for their own education by employing learner centred activities.

For students to master reading English texts they need to practice regularly. They should not associate reading with classrooms and not beyond that. Since reading does not only affect English texts, it is a skill required across the curricula, it means that the students performance will be affected in all subjects because they do not practice how to read, how to use good reading techniques and do not even apply the concepts of reading on their own.

Teachers also strongly pointed out the negative attitude students have towards reading and learning in general. However, this situation can be brought about by a lot of factors such as the teaching methods, materials used, learning activities, conflict of cultures and the teachers' negative attitude towards the learners. In addition, the fact that their books remained unmarked and unchecked most of the time does not motivate them to learn.

A variety learning styles and activities that challenge the students intellectual ability are not being utilized in the classrooms. Learning styles should be able to motivate the students and keep them on their toes.

The fact that students are not taught using their mother tongue, contributes a lot to the passiveness and lack of participation in lessons. This is because languages used as medium of instructions act as a barrier and so there is communication breakdown.

An atmosphere that is child friendly is also vital to the teaching and learning process. If the environment is not conducive enough for learning to take place, goals of education will not be achieved. This could be brought about by a lot of factors, teachers attitude, being ridiculed, stigma attached to your ethnicity and so on.

All of the above arguments make the goal of universal basic primary education for Motshegaletau Khoe learners to remain unrealistic.

Recommendations

An inclusive language policy that addresses even the marginalized groups needs to be drawn. Multilingual and multicultural language education policies guide the use of all languages in the country and also contribute to the reasons why a particular language could be used as a medium of instruction. Such is based on the needs of the country.

Teacher training programmes should be designed such that they cater for multicultural and multilingual education. It is important to design their training programmes such that they will be able to handle the diversity in their classrooms.

Rigorous training in terms of workshops and seminars to implement the Communicative Approach syllabus needs to be done. Teachers cannot be training every now and then when new concepts are introduced, but workshops and seminars could keep the teachers abreast with current issues.

Learning should be contextualised to bridge the gap between home and school. It is vital for students to make a relationship with what they learn at school with their lives. If such are divorced they will find learning abstract and alien.

An environment that is child friendly needs to be created for effective learning to take place. If the environment is in conflict with that of the students, it may result in a situation where students remain passive, uncomfortable and confused.

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**Determining a National Literary Nomenclature: Creative Ascendancy
in Lesotho Literature in English**

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Abstract

Historically, the emergency and evolution of literature in Lesotho has been closely linked to the Evangelical mission of the church and the dominance of Sesotho as a sole linguistic vehicle for communication and creative imagination. This scenario has meant that, for years, literature written in the vernacular – Sesotho – has tended to take pride of place at the expense of literary writing in English or in any other language. With time, however, translated works and original literature written in English have arisen and developed, though with imperceptible gradualism. This paper is intended to demonstrate that, although the corpus of this brand of literature continues to be in a state of being and becoming, Lesotho Literature in English has already achieved some recognisable modicum of ascendancy and distinctiveness. The paper also contends that, even though the matrix of its definition and context resides with African literature as a whole, there is clearly something singularly independent, autonomous, unique and apart in the nomenclature, identity and social history of Lesotho Literature in English. To that extent, the literature cannot and should not be viewed as a mere appendage of the broad rubric of South African creative writing. To realise these aims and objectives, the paper has relied heavily on empirical research through workshops held with various authors and critics of the literature and on library readings mostly carried out in Lesotho, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Introduction

Although recently Lesotho Literature in English has evinced significant growth, there has been very little critical material on the literature by Basotho literary scholars. Here and there, there have been book reviews, one or two journal articles but no book-length criticism of the literature. There is, of course, Kunene's ground breaking book, *Thomas Mofolo and the Emergence of Written Sesotho Prose* (1989), which predominantly addresses Sesotho literature. Given this paucity of analytical material by Basotho themselves, this paper seeks to open with a personal and pedagogic apologia, an explanation as to why the authors have opted to carryout analytical research on this literature.

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After all, the researchers are outsider who might be legitimately accused of being on the fringes of the contextual history, culture, politics, religion and the socio-economics of the literature. Be that as it may, the researchers have sojourned in Lesotho for a fairly long period and believe that their examination of the literary history of the country is partly informed by an added comparative advantage of the knowledge of their own national literature and, of course, those of other African countries. They also believe that their outsiders` eye gives the examination of the literature some semblance of disinterestedness and objectivity. This research has been prompted by the following overall aims and objectives:

- a) to interrogate an area of study which embodies the nucleus, development and future trajectory of Lesotho Literature in English;
- b) with the advent of graduate studies in the literature unit of the English Department, the research hopes to provide critical perspectives and secondary material on Lesotho Literature in English, thereby making the area of study more attractive, more readable and better accessible to students and independent researchers;
- c) the research seeks to address a long-shelved but geographically and topically vital area of literary study; and
- d) above all, the research is designed to mount a platform for more informed critical debate on Lesotho Literature in English, thereby marketing, popularising and academising it within and without the country.

Taking cognizance of these aims and objectives, the paper specifically seeks to problematise the status of Lesotho Literature in English in terms of its categorisation or classification as a national literary output, its generic make-up and ascendancy, as well as its recognition regionally and further afield. In doing so, the paper attempts to define the identity of the literature and, in a sociological survey, to provide its social history (Veit-Wild, 1992).

Apparent Anonymity of Lesotho Literature in English in Contemporary Literary Regional Classification

In 1970s, the Department of English at the National University of Lesotho (NUL) was in a state of flux, experiencing some kind of academic revolution, revamping the nature, context, content, scope and relevance of its courses – a transformative process. From the period of Pius IX to the end of UBLS, the department had had a distinctively Euro-centric focus on its literary studies. Both required and optional courses were generally structured on the so called pillars of English literature with little or no African content in the syllabus. With the advent of NUL in the mid-70s, a group of lecturers in the Department, they distinguished creative writers and critics of African literature, spear-headed the said academic revolution, transforming the studies from a Euro-centric bias to an Afro-centric one.

New courses were mounted on numerous African writers from the Maghrib, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa. Yet, it was quite apparent that Lesotho was not authentically integral to this regional literary representation. Due to the shortage of literary output in the country, there was no independent full fledged course on “Lesotho Literature” as was the case with some nationally-driven English literature courses in other universities in neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa, Malawi and others.

Only one translated text written by a Mosotho, Thomas Mofolo's *Chaka* was offered in a preliminary course entitled "Introduction to African Literature." In addition to that, Southern African literature then and perhaps even now, was, to all intents and purposes, erroneously considered as almost synonymous with South African writing, as evidenced by a text called, *The Treasury of Basotho Lore* studied in the late 70s as part of only South African writing in a course entitled, "The Southern African Short Story."

Recently, although Basotho writers in English have made significant strides in the amount and quality of their writing, the national literature in English itself remains almost anonymous in nomenclature and devoid of autonomy and distinctiveness, particularly in its appreciation by an outside readership. Despite the independent literary continuity just mentioned above, some critics continue to view the literature as an appendage of other Southern African literatures. Gray (1998:49), a former external examiner in the Department of English at NUL, has made observations bearing out this assertion. He argues that, in Michael Chapman's recent survey of *Southern African Literatures* (1996), Chapman finds no place in his grand scheme for a category of "Literature in Lesotho" or more precisely for the English-and-Sesotho-language production of the Basotho people and expatriate writers who have joined them. Gray goes on to observe that, where Chapman deals with writers unique to Lesotho, like Thomas Mofolo or A. S. Mopeli-Paulus, he simply annexes them into the larger "South African literature" in general. Similarly, not so long ago, there was critical talk about the paucity, dearth and limited nature of the literary output in Lesotho (Shava, Mokuku and Radebe, 2005), especially in relation to the creative production of other Southern African countries. Most disturbing, book titles like, *Do the Bantu Have a Literature*, (Beuchat 1962), equally insinuate that black people in the Southern African region, not only do not have literature in English but do not have any form of literature, be it oral or written, even in the vernacular.

Given these observations, there is clearly an urgent need to put the record straight in terms of the actual status of the literary landscape of Lesotho and this research believes writings produced so far manifestly testify to the steady imperceptible growth of the literature.

Brief Literary History: the nature and substance of Lesotho Literature in English

Although the discussion will demonstrate that, like the literature of any other country, there are unique and distinctive peculiarities about Lesotho literature written in English and indeed about all the literature in Lesotho, its nature and substance can easily and logically be derived from the overall corpus of African literature. As part of a continent which has had a shared history of colonial conquest and occupation, colonial protectiveness, cultural and economic imperialism, Lesotho's literature in English should be characteristically cognate in essence to that of other African countries and indeed to that of other once foreign dominated countries the world over. In this connection, the definition and subject matter of Lesotho literature in English can safely be distilled from one or two or all of the following descriptions of African literature, in general, enumerated by Ngara (1982) and Chinweizu (1983):

- a) creative writing in which an African setting is authentically handled or to which experiences originating in Africa are integral (1962 African Writers Conference held in Kampala, Uganda.);
- b) a group of associated units – in fact the sum total of all national and ethnic literatures of Africa (Achebe – a few years later after the 1962 conference.);

- c) writing done in any language by Africans themselves and by others of whatever skin colour who share the African experience and who have an Africa-centred consciousness (Gordimer, 1973); and
- d) works done for African audiences, by Africans and in African languages, whether these works are oral or written, constitute the historically indisputable core of African literature (Chinwezu et al, 1983).

Similarly, though specific and distinct, Lesotho literature in English like Sesotho literature, created by Basotho and non-Basotho of whatever skin colour, deals with a historical and contemporary consciousness anchored in Lesotho and its enclave realities (Writers Workshop, Maseru West, 2008). Like or unlike in other African countries, the emergence and development of Lesotho literature in English have been shaped by unique factors that have determined its creative impulse, its identity, its output and its recognition.

First, with regard to the historical experience of colonial domination so pervasive in most African writings, Shava, Mokuku and Radebe (2002:1-2) are of the opinion that Lesotho was probably not as culturally and psychologically brutalised as most other African countries. Because of its 'protectorate' status, the process of decolonisation in the country was much more benign and less painful. Therefore, the urgency felt in other countries to 'imagine the nation' has probably been less acutely felt. Although this situation has not completely adversely affected the ascendancy of the literature, unlike the rich multi-faceted and prolific writings of other African countries, especially some of the neighbouring ones, Lesotho Literature in English has been less abundant in productivity, particularly at its inception, lacking a more vibrant thematic diversity and too preoccupied with its contiguity with South Africa geographically, economically, politically, culturally and otherwise (the issue of migration and its implications).

Second, although the church must be commented for its pro-activity in evolving and disseminating written literature, its emphasis on the use of Sesotho as the predominant linguistic evangelising instrument resulted in Lesotho Literature in English lagging behind in its growth. In addition to this draw back, the missionaries themselves were largely French speaking. This state of literary affairs has been rectified only recently by literary catalysts such as:

- a) the creative efforts of the National University of Lesotho which has been offering creative writing courses in fiction, drama and poetry as well as mounting creative writers` forum and providing publication channels such as ISAS. NUL has also housed House 9 which publishes and disseminates creative and other academic works;
- b) individual effort (self-made writers);
- e) annual National Arts Festival at Morija;:
- f) encouragement and promotion of literary writing by government education arms like the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC);
- g) print media (newspapers carrying serialised fiction and poetry); and
- h) role of donors and NGOs sponsoring basic research culminating in abundant literary material for social awakening on contemporary issues such as HIV and AIDS and matters of development.

Third, and perhaps most important, in determining the creative impulse output and recognition of the literature, there has been a growing uneasiness in literary circles with the drought, hunger, disregard, isolation and lack of recognition surrounding the status of Lesotho literature in English. This uneasiness has tended to be a literary catalyst in its own right.

Periodisation and Analytical Overview of the Literary Works

Most literatures in other African countries are categorised according to yearly time spans or major political-cum-literary events or generational differences of the writers themselves. For instance, in classifying Zimbabwean literature, Veit-Wild (1992) divides it into three generations representing categories for older, middle and younger writers. In South Africa, what Ndebele (1991) refers to as the literature of 'spectacle' is divisionally determined by yearly time spans and the advent of major politico-literary events. To that extent, critics like Nkosi (1965) can safely allude to the writings of the 1950s in South African literature as the 'Fabulous Decade.' Similarly, Visser quoted in Shava (1989) calls the same decade 'the Renaissance that Failed.' Watts (1989), Shava (1989) and Barnett (1983) periodically subdivide South African literature into colonial conquest and occupation, the Defiance Campaign, the Sharpeville Crisis, the Black Consciousness Movement, the Soweto Uprising and the dawn of the new South Africa.

Currently, however, Lesotho Literature in English unlike Sesotho literature does not seem to have similar periodic categories. Perhaps because, compared to the literature of Zimbabwe, South Africa and other bigger African countries, Lesotho Literature in English has not yet ascended to a level of output which requires this kind of neat literary categorisation. Also, apart from the economic impact of the imposition of hut tax (between 1871 and 1881), the outbreak of rinderpest (in mid-1890s), the *coup de tat* of 1986, the blockade of the Maseru border in 1986, the military intervention and bombing of the country in the 1980s, the Manthabiseng crisis, the burning of Maseru in 1998 and recurrent political struggles, there do not seem to be other major protracted political episodes in Lesotho which promote the kind of literary periodisation like the one spelt above. This categorisation also depends on whether these crises and episodes have provoked any significant written literature in English to-date.

Nevertheless, for purposes of the analytical overview of the literature to be examined below, this study has taken the liberty of dividing it into three rough working categories of Lesotho's creative effort. They are as follows:

- A) **Early Writings:** representing pioneering works such as Mofolo's *Chaka* and Mopeli Paulus's *Blanket Boy's Moon*. Though these writings are bedevilled by minor weaknesses of having been translated and queried authorship (Dunton 1990, Jones 1995) respectively, they are authentically part and parcel of Lesotho Literature in English by virtue of having been written by Basotho nationals and partially containing material on Lesotho. Prior to these two novels, there had appeared Mackie's *Black Man's Rock* (1911) and Westrup's *The Land of Tomorrow* (1912) respectively, dealing with the Moroosi War and the unequal social relations between black and white people in the Lesotho of the author's time (Ambrose, 2007).
- B) **Mid-Period Creativity:** with his *I Am a Mosotho* and *Echoes of Passion*, Bereng stands out in this group on the basis of seniority and relative output. Belonging to the same group are *Expression*, a University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) periodical of creative writing, *Mda (The Hill in We Shall Sing For the Fatherland, She Plays with Darkness)*, Mokhoane (*Teba*) and Hoeane (*Let My*

People Play).

- C) **Contemporary Works:** with his high-school-prescribed-collection of poetry, *African Passion*, Rakotsoane, together with Nhlapo, Radebe, Mofelehetsi, Molupe, Masemene, Sefali, Leshota, Mokhele, Sephooko, Khosi, a new crop of spoken word poets and many others in edited works *Na Le Uena (Anthology of Creative Writing in Lesotho, Basali, Campus Voices, A Harvest of Eight Basotho Plays)*, fall under this category for their treatment of burning contemporary issues.

Like in any literary milieu which employs the three literary genres, poetry, drama and fiction, these writers set out to expand our horizons by exploring both historical and contemporary issues shaping our human condition. Without delving into their detailed depiction in individual texts, these issues generally subsume the portrayal of the past and its ramifications on social, political, cultural, religious and economic life. The writers also explore concerns such as physical and metaphoric landscape, migration, identity, unequal distribution of wealth, love, marital infidelity, retrenchment of labour, livestock theft, social status, ritual / medicine murder, the impact of pandemics like HIV and AIDS, funerary, ideological concerns, xenophobia, ethnicity, family, governance, gender, gay life, crime and punishment, exile and return, concealment and revelation, the African renaissance, Pan Africanism and many others. In dealing with these issues, the writers are generally inward and outward looking, consciously or unconsciously seeking to connect their own experiences with those of the region, the African continent and indeed the entire world. By doing this, the writers fulfil numerous functions, first to the Basotho and next to world readerships. They educate and inform their people – both old and young – of this generation and also the ones to come. They hold up the mirror to reflect and predict the ills and foibles of their society. They make known to the world the wisdom and philosophy of their people as embedded and expressed through the subtleties and ambiguities in their language, idioms and substance.

As expressed by the title of the paper, these writings must be viewed as an initiative in the ascendancy of the literary output of the entire country. Whereas over the years, it has not been quantitatively and qualitatively feasible to talk of Lesotho Literature in English, now indigenous literary writings in English by Basotho authors and their expatriate counterparts are visibly blossoming. True enough, there are recurrent thematic issues revolving around labour migrants, cultural issues and others but, judging by the list of sensibilities enumerated above, there are newer and more topical issues that have emerged from these traditional areas of our experience, thereby creating diversity, transcendence and wholeness in the imaginative effort of Lesotho. Yet, there is room for continual ascendancy and below are recommendations for increased literary productivity:

- ❖ There is a need to transcend language barrier by broadening the medium of creativity. Since there is already a distinct and fully established literature in Sesotho, attempts must be made to increase literary output in English and other official languages. Obviously, this would lead to multiple identities of the literature, but posing no pedagogical problems since the accompanying disciplines would take care of the disparate literatures;
- ❖ Tertiary institutions must of necessity mount full scale courses on Lesotho Literature in English as is the case with say “South African Literature,” “Zimbabwean Literature” or “Malawian Literature”;
- ❖ Creative writing courses currently offered in tertiary institutions should be broadened in thematic concerns, internationality of content and experimentalism in style;
- ❖ With the mounting of graduate studies at university, students and members of faculty

must be encouraged to pursue more research, prepare papers for conferences, symposia, debates and come up with engaging and topical critical perspectives on Lesotho Literature in English;

- ❖ Administrative organs at NUL, perhaps also at Limkokwing, Department of Arts and Culture, the National Festival of Arts and Culture at Morija and other communities of the arts must demonstrate more will power in promoting the national literature in English by facilitating, financing and reducing impediments to its growth and ascendancy;
- ❖ There is also need to increase publishing facilities as well as revitalising existing publishing houses;
- ❖ For the purchase and dissemination of literary material, currently, Lesotho has stationery shops. There is urgent need to establish full scale book stores, the likes of Exclusive Books in South Africa and Grassroots in Zimbabwe;
- ❖ All the arts should be conglomerated under the aegis of an umbrella body tentatively referred to as the “Lesotho Council of Arts and Culture.” Such a body should be directly responsible for the promotion of Lesotho Literature in English and the other arts inside and outside the country (Shava, 2002).

CONCLUSION

With the ascendant literary culture in Lesotho presently, it can be safely concluded that the writing has become credible, autonomous and capable of holding its own in form and content. With these qualities, the writing clearly deserves an independent national nomenclature promoted inside and outside the country by our writers` organisations, literary scholars, lower and higher educational institutions, patrons of the arts and culture and the Department of Culture. Like any other productive forces, literary books are indispensable for development (Zezeza, 1989). At university, our goal is not simply to discover new knowledge, we also have an obligation to encourage the application of knowledge to meet the challenges of the world in which we live. This is why members of faculty and students publish books and papers, write columns in newspapers, give public lectures, work with companies, civil society organisations, and other entities that have the capacity to effect positive and meaningful change (Tilghman, 2003). In this connection, universities today, particularly in Africa, have become the modern patrons for the artist. As this article has already demonstrated, most African writers are products of the university (Ngugi, 1986).

Wolf, the critic of the famous Greek poet, Homer, says “I call all teaching *scientific* which is systematically laid out and followed up to its original sources” (Gribble, 1967). As indicated by the various issues dealt with by our enumerated writers, literature itself, as a Human Science, preoccupied with the inculcation of values and universal truths, is not only morally and emotionally engaging, but it also enables us to come to terms with our own human condition as a nation state, to grapple with matters of identity in defining who we are, what we stand for (Piper, 2002) and what we mean by being Basotho. But, again, as the diverse and wide- ranging concerns of our literature demonstrate, only knowing who we are is not enough – we must also understand others. For, if we are to live in one big interconnected world, we must assume and fulfil our responsibilities as global citizens (Piper, 2002). In its national and transnational exploration of historical and contemporary sensibilities, our literature in English is clearly a corpus of writing which empowers us to know

ourselves, know others and which embodies the growth, ascendancy and establishment of a distinctive national category of Lesotho Literature in English.

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Metaphysical Aspects of Selected Shona Proverbs

By

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Abstract

This paper seeks to analyse selected Shona proverbs and expose their metaphysical underpinnings. It tries to classify Shona proverbs according to the manner in which they describe, analyse and evaluate reality in the Shona conceptual framework. It posits that Shona proverbs are laden with metaphysical content that sums up their worldview. These claims centre around, among others, Causation, Change, Time, Essence, Perfection, Good and Evil, Substance – Accident Structure, Death, Intrinsic worth of the human being, Free Will, Potentiality and Finitude. Thus, the paper advances the contention that proverbs are one among Shona folklore through which the universe can be examined and understood.

Introduction

Recent studies on the philosophical implications of Shona proverbs (Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008) have demonstrated their epistemic content but no extensive research has been done on their metaphysical underpinnings. Kahari (1990, p. 1) rightly notes that “some of the Shona people’s profoundest philosophical concerns are enshrined in their proverbial lore” including their metaphysical thought. The Shona people are arguably a dominant indigenous ethnic group of people in Zimbabwe. About 75% of Zimbabwe’s 13 million people speak Shona (Mberi, 2009). A significant Shona population is also found in Manica Province of Mozambique. Their language is rich in philosophical sayings and their proverbs aptly demonstrate this attribute. Though Shona proverbs contain their epistemology, ethics and logic, this paper will focus on their metaphysical thought system. It is important to note that the task of exposing the deep and intricate meaning of Shona proverbs is not an easy one but requires careful and systematised thought and interpretation (Gelfand, 1968; Gelfand, 1981). However, such an intellectual task of attempting to go beyond the surface meaning of proverbs and get to their hidden meanings is indispensable in giving both the young and the old knowledge about the nature of the universe. The Shona, just like any other ethnic grouping in Zimbabwe, have intellectual curiosity about their surroundings that result from keen observation of and reflections about nature. Thus, proverbs reflect the Shona people’s ability to find answers to these problems without being merely informative and simplistic.

Metaphysics, for the sake of this paper, is considered as the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of reality. Historically, Eurocentric perspectives have denied metaphysical thinking among the Bantu languages (Viriri and Mungwini, 2009, p. 180) in general and Shona language is no exception. However, for Gelfand (1979, p. 120), Shona proverbs, just “...like riddles...sharpen the mind and encourage the thought processes as well as being a useful method of teaching the truth. Through them the child learns of the existence of social values and acquires yardsticks to measure them.” The paper attempts to bring Shona culture to the forefront and it tries to argue that the Shona metaphysical contributions are part of the marginalized traditions. It attempts to give a close examination of the metaphysical content of some Shona proverbs and assert that they are at par if

not better than the highly publicised and documented Western metaphysical systems.

Situating Metaphysics in the Shona Worldview

The term Metaphysics is an aggregate of two terms namely *meta*, which means beyond and *physics* meaning nature. The term was coined in an attempt to describe the writings of Aristotle, which came after physics (Hamlyn, 1984; O' Hear, 1985). The fundamental subject matter of metaphysics is existence (Rescher, 1984; Barrow, 1988). Metaphysics tries to answer the question; why is there being rather than nothing? (Edwards, 1967; Malcolm, 1986). In contemporary usage, metaphysics is conceived as the study of the intrinsic nature of reality. As a branch of philosophy, metaphysics focuses on transcendent (Mohanty, 1985), non-empirical reality that can be grasped only by the intellect through inference. This is done through the search of ultimate principles that govern reality. It also focuses on the subject of the human being who formulates metaphysical questions (Powell, 1990). The two main parts of Metaphysics are ontology and cosmology. The former focuses on the theories of being and the latter on the universe as an orderly system. As such, Metaphysics is the most abstract and the most speculative branch of philosophy. It is, therefore, the study of being in all its manifestations and relations (Wanjohi, 1997).

Hegel (1931) argues that Africans are incapable of doing Philosophy given the low capacity of their intellect. The implication of Hegel's view is that Africans are incapable of doing Metaphysics, which is the most intellectually challenging branch of Philosophy. Against the above view, Ramose (1999) maintains that there is no logical or ontological ground of denying philosophy among indigenous Africans. For Ramose, the denial of reason to traditional African societies by Western scholars is simply racist and Africans are philosophical by virtue of being rational. Africans are philosophical by virtue of belonging to the homo sapiens species. Thus, Ramose (1999, p.44) asserts that "we therefore posit the thesis that there is no ontological defect inherent in indigenous African people by virtue of which they may be excluded from membership of homo sapiens."

If we grant the existence of metaphysical thinking among all Africans in general (Wiredu, 1995), it follows by logical deduction that the Shona also possess metaphysical thinking since they belong to the genus, Africans. The following deductive argument validates the actuality of metaphysical thinking among the Shona:

Premise 1: All African traditional societies have metaphysical thinking in their cosmologies.

Premise 2: The Shona are a traditional African society.

Conclusion: Therefore, the Shona have metaphysical thinking in their cosmology.

While the above proof is a logical one, a more concrete or empirical manifestation of metaphysics among the Shona people is demonstrated in some of their proverbs. The Shona people use proverbs to describe, analyse and evaluate reality (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987, p. xiii). In other words, some Shona proverbs express some universal truths or principles based on the grasping of reality or experience in totality.

Metaphysical content of some Shona proverbs

Shona proverbs are laden with metaphysical content that inform and reflect their world view namely Causation, Change, Time, Essence, Perfection, Good and Evil, Substance – Accident Structure, Death, Intrinsic worth of the human being, Free Will, Potentiality and Finitude.

Causation

Sanford (1975, p.193) defines causation as "making something happen, allowing or enabling something to happen or preventing something from happening." This understanding springs from

the view that there is no effect without a cause and no action or reality may bring itself into existence. In metaphysics, the principle of causality states that every event or action has a cause. In addition, the principle of causality underlies all scientific investigation (Sellars, 1968; Kant, 1970). Aristotle mentions four basic causes as principles of explaining reality namely the material cause, formal cause, efficient cause and final cause (Irwin, 1988). The material cause is the stuff out of which something is made. The formal cause is the shape of the object. The efficient cause is the agent who effects the change and the final cause is the purpose of the object in question. To demonstrate these causes in more concrete terms, wood (material cause) is used to make a student's desk (formal cause) by a carpenter (efficient cause) for the purpose of learning (final cause). While Aristotle's basic four causes are meant to give a total explanation of reality, the Shona people focus more on material and efficient causality.

The following Shona proverbs capture the principle of causality:

Chiutsi hachipfungairi pasina moto

(There is no smoke without fire)

Unaki hwemukadzi huri pamwana

(The moral goodness of a woman is seen in the child)

The first proverb asserts that there is no smoke without fire. This implies that whenever there is smoke (effect) there is always fire (cause). From a given effect, one can infer a cause. Thus, there is a strong interconnectedness between the cause (fire) and the effect (smoke). It is a contradiction in terms, therefore, to say that smoke, as we ordinarily conceive it, can occur in the absence of fire. The Shona people use fire and smoke to formulate this proverb but in its wider application, the proverb transcends the context of fire and smoke to capture any kind of causality that is experienced by human beings or inferred by the human mind. The significance of this proverb is that it points to the metaphysical axiom that every event has a cause. The Shona people have conceptualized this proverb out of sharp observation of phenomena. Causality underlies all events and actions in the universe. If the human being fails to experience A causing B, he can always infer that B (effect) has a cause. For instance, a mishap in the family can never be thought to have occurred naturally. A cause for this mishap is always sought and found through the help of a traditional healer. A person may die as a result of a road accident but the Shona would go further to ask why such a misfortune befell their relative (Masaka and Chingombe, 2009, p. 190). For the Shona, the proverb would be used to explicate all empirical reality in the sense that every being, action or event has a cause.

The second proverb demonstrates that the goodness of a woman (*unaki*) is manifested in the child. The Shona word *unaki* can mean either physical beauty or moral goodness. In the context of the proverb, *unaki* makes reference to moral goodness. For the Shona people, the morality of a woman is reflected in the conduct of her children. The assumption in this proverb is that if a woman is morally upright, then she can bequeath this moral uprightness to her offspring by encouraging them to, among others, respect elders, to be polite, to be humble and to be virtuous. Conversely, if a woman is morally irresponsible, this irresponsibility can be reflected in the undesirable conduct of her children.

In the Shona worldview, the correct standards of human behaviour are inculcated in children by elder family and community members in general. Therefore, signs of moral failure in a child are normally blamed on the moral educators, primarily family members who would have failed to provide moral guidance to the children. The mother is, by and large, blamed for children's lack of *unhu* (virtue) mainly because in the Shona cosmology the mother has to ensure that children pick up desirable character traits as they grow up and she is the one who spends more time with children.

Unhu, among the Shona, is an outcome of moral education administered by, among others, parents, sages, group practices and inheritable from past generations. Thus, those who engage in antisocial behaviour may be publicly ridiculed and the effects on the culprits (Gelfand, 1973, p. 53) and their family members in particular are, among others, fear, guilt and shame because the family members and the mother in particular, are thought to be morally complicit in the culprit's moral failures as reflected in his or her antisocial behaviour. On the other hand, a person who exhibits good behaviour (*tsika*) towards others as reflected in his actions and interactions with fellow beings is, by and large, a product of appropriate moral education administered by the parents, in particular, the mother. Similarly, the mother is morally praised if people discover that her children exhibit commendable traits as reflected by their actions and deeds.

Beyond the context of the moral sphere, the proverb serves to show that effects are traceable back to causes. A good or bad effect can be traced back to its source. For the Shona, the process of tracing back from an effect to a cause is necessary because of the perceived close correlation between a cause and its effect as reflected by the above proverbs. In Shona traditional thought, therefore, the study of effects is a reliable way of getting to know about the causes of certain events in this world.

The Concept of Change

Smith (1987) argues that a subject undergoes change if and only if it possesses a property at one time and does not possess this property at an earlier or later time. Objects or subjects that undergo the processes of change are viewed as wholes or substances (Mellor, 1981; Hirsch, 1982). Smith, Mellor and Hirsch present a Western conception of change that is similar to Shona traditional thought system as reflected in their proverbial lore. For the Shona, change can be either positive or negative but the underlying factor is that the universe is not non-static. The following are some of the proverbs that demonstrate the Shona people's metaphysical understanding of positive change.

Chaitemura chava kuseva

(He who used to eat without relish, can now afford relish)

Kugarika tange nhamo

(For one to be comfortably rich, one must undergo hard times)

The two proverbs demonstrate the Shona people's understanding of positive change. Positive change is associated with new things, advantages or improvements. The first proverb reflects a positive transition from a state of miserable poverty to a life of plenty. Ordinarily, a person who eats *sadza*, for example, without relish is regarded as miserably poor because *sadza* tests well when it is taken in with some relish. In traditional Shona society, the staple food *sadza* could be consumed without relish (*kutemura*) or with relish (*kuseva*). *Kutemura* is an embodiment and prime indicator of poverty in general. This poverty as represented by *kutemura* can be caused by laziness or one's social conditions that make it impossible for him to live a materially comfortable life. In the context of this proverb, one who progresses from *kutemura* to *kuseva* experiences positive change in the sense that one is making a positive transition from a state of poverty to a state of relative material possession and satisfaction thereof. This proverb presents a rags to riches scenario whereby the one that was in a state of extreme poverty eventually escapes from this vicious cycle of poverty and enter into a life of relative plenty. Therefore, *chaitemura chava kuseva* exudes with optimism of positive progression from a state of poverty to a state of riches.

While the above proverb is coined in the context of food consumption, its meaning is much broader and looks at all kinds of positive changes that human beings experience in their existential circumstances. It is a proverb that pictures positive transition whereby the one who, in the past was poor, has now acquired material possessions that positively transform his lifestyle. Among Shona traditional societies, reality is not static and has utility to people if it is of a positive nature.

The second proverb also captures positive change. For the Shona, living pretty well (*kugarika*) only comes after some hard times (*nhamo*). Only the individual is capable of shaping his or her present circumstances through hard work. Thus, the Shona try to foster the ethos of hard work in people so that one is not tempted to steal from those who employ their labour efficiently thereby amassing significant wealth or use other unorthodox means such as juju to gain wealth. In the application of the proverb, all kinds of difficulties or hardships that individuals face can be used to bring out some good results. A hard worker may initially face problems but continuous hard work can bring about favourable outcomes. The metaphysical contribution of the proverb is that the subject can shape or transform his or her destiny as he or she faces existential problems in this world. This metaphysical thinking of the Shona people is not very far from Western existentialist metaphysics where existence of an individual must precede essence. This, therefore, means that an individual shapes or develops his or her potentialities through hard work.

Shona metaphysical worldview is quite conscious of the fact change can either be positive or negative. Life that is characterised only by positive change is logically inconceivable because a slide into negative changes gives humanity the challenge to strive for positive change in life. Negative change is associated with deterioration or degeneration from good to bad states of affairs as aptly reflected by the following proverbs:

Aiva madziva ava mazambuko
(What were previously pools, are now crossing points)
Ushe idova, hunoparara
(Chieftainship fades away just like morning dew)

In the first proverb, *madziva* (pools) can be transformed into *mazambuko* (crossing points) due to number of number of reasons. This change is seen in pools within rivers that may run dry due to, among others, prolonged dry spells and excessive siltation. This is a kind of negative change and for the Shona, this type of change is part and parcel of the broad concept of change that affects the universe in a negative way. Shona metaphysics accepts that anything that is good comes to an end.

While the literal meaning of this proverb points to the actuality that once flourishing pools can be obliterated by natural processes, the proverb's application transcend this literal interpretation to show the possibility of change of a negative nature. For instance, the one who was once agriculturally successful and self-sustaining (*hurudza*) can at some point be reduced to a state of poverty (*urombo*) due to a number of factors that can be within and outside his control. For the Shona, things can deteriorate from a state of goodness to a worse state and this is an inescapable phenomenon which is captured proverbially. Aspects of reality can deteriorate independently of human causes in the Shona metaphysical conceptual scheme.

A person may be feared in the community perhaps because of his magical powers, but these magical powers may vanish through a dint of time such that he is reduced to just but an ordinary person.

Negative change is also reflected in the second proverb. *Ushe* (chieftainship) can vanish like *dova* (dew). This negative change is primarily centred on human beings. In traditional Shona society, the institution of chieftainship revolves around a dynasty (family of rulers) in which the chance to rule would be passed on from one family member to another according to an agreed formula. Therefore, the actuality of change in chieftainship is undeniable given that, among others, man is mortal and can sometimes fail to efficiently discharge his duties due to old age, and failing health. In this scenario, chieftainship is something that is non-permanent to a particular family. It follows, therefore, that negative change is part and parcel of the politics of chieftainship.

The above proverb goes beyond political settings to capture the metaphysical point that human reality involves change of a negative nature. No one, for instance, is guaranteed to live privileged life in perpetuity. Anything that is good comes to an end. For the Shona, there is a limit to human institutions and privileges. Such contingent nature of, among others, human life, institutions and privileges must be accepted because it is an inescapable reality. It is a reality that there are limits to the powers and lives of human beings and this is something that ought to be accepted.

Time

Some Western philosophers view time as a totality of concrete durations (Friedman, 1983; Winterbourne, 1988). Despite the fact that Friedman and Winterbourne are representing a Western understanding of time, the Shona people exhibit similar conceptions and they express their perceptive insights proverbially. Their understanding of time shapes their attitudes towards these realities. The following proverbs have a temporal implication:

Munda hauperi nezuva rimwe
(A field cannot be weeded in one day)
Nhasi haasi mangwana
(Today is not tomorrow)

The first proverb is conceptualized in the context of farming whereby the farmer has to take his time to efficiently weed his farm. This is a proverb that extols patience as a virtue that ought to be exercised when one is carrying such an important task such as weeding. Beyond its literal application, this proverb implores humanity to be patient in whatever they do. Thus, as man faces the challenges of this world, he has to do so with well calculated steps. *Munda* (field) cannot be weeded in one day and this is an indicator of time. By saying a field cannot be weeded in one day, this Shona proverb simply want to imply that people ought to be patient in whatever they do and face in this world. In this regard, patience ought to be the guiding principle of humanity in their interactions with the external world. Thus, in the Shona metaphysical worldview, time is a reality, which is lived, and as a result, individuals should not hurry in the performance of tasks. Patience has to be exercised when dealing with time. For the Shona, therefore, more time in the performance of certain tasks enhances perfection in the very performance of such tasks.

The second proverb indicates the uniqueness of time frames. For the Shona, to assert that *nhasi* (today) is not *mangwana* (tomorrow), this is a product of reflection out of the realization that time frames are not identical. This proverb confirms the actuality of change whereby, logically, today can, in great many ways, be different from tomorrow. Greek philosopher, Heraclitus believed in eternal change and he expresses this notion of eternal change and mobility in terms of the continuous flow of the river which always renews itself (Popkin and Stroll, 1998, p. 118). What makes a time frame unique for the Shona, are the events that shape that particular moment, day, month, season or year. Since it is logically impossible to have an exactly same copy of events in any two days or occasions, it follows logically for the Shona that no two days are identical. The identity under discussion is strict identity (exactness) and not weak identity (similarity) meaning to say that no two days have exactly the same characteristics.

The above understanding helps the Shona people to plan their events more carefully. Out of the realization that days are not identical, the Shona use this metaphysical actuality to approach life with knowledge that it is faced with ever changing circumstances that require appropriate responses. To demonstrate this abstract point more concretely, a hunter, for instance, knows that no two days can bring exact catches and he uses this insight to avoid wasting meat from his previous hunting expeditions. Thus, such a metaphysical insight helps the Shona in making informed decisions and plans for the future with the knowledge that the future may not exactly resemble the past.

The Concept of Essence

Shona worldview has a clear conception of the qualities without which a thing cannot be, that is, the essence of things. These are properties of things that define their uniqueness. Cohen (1977:788) argues that “the essential properties of a thing, collectively called its essence, are those properties that it must have so long as it exists at all; they are properties that a thing should have in any possible world.” Cohen’s view shows that a thing should have certain characteristics for it to be defined in a certain way. In contrast, accidental properties are characteristics a thing could exist without (Wiggins, 1980). For the Shona, although a number of characteristics can be used to define things, some properties are central while others may be negligible. The awareness of essence helps the Shona to shape their conceptions of reality and the following proverbs manifest this:

Chenga ose manhanga hapana risina mhunzi.

(Carry all pumpkins for none is without seeds)

Kutya hakuna gobvu

(Fear does not spare the heavily built)

The first proverb asserts that, when collecting pumpkins (*manhanga*), it is wise for one to collect all for none of them is without seeds (*mhunzi*). In the Shona understanding, one essential quality of a pumpkin is to have seeds inside and if a pumpkin does not have this characteristic, it ceases to be one. This means that, essentially, the qualities that define pumpkins are similar.

The extended significance of the proverb surpasses the context of pumpkins to show that categories of things have essential properties that are key markers of define and differentiates one substance from another. For the Shona, the implication is that if such characteristics were absent, then definitions would be virtually impossible. For the Shona, therefore, classes of reality can be defined on the basis of important properties. This metaphysical insight allows the Shona to shape their views towards reality. If one is choosing things of the same class, then one must understand that they are essentially similar primarily because they share similar essence even though they may appear different superficially.

The second proverb asserts that fear does not spare the heavily built. For the Shona, if fear is one of the characteristic features of human beings, then it is universal and nobody is left out no matter how physically imposing one can be. Broadly, this metaphysical understanding helps the Shona people to tolerate one another in times of weakness because weakness is taken as a reality that affect all human beings. In the similar fashion, all mortal beings, despite supposedly differing life situations, are fated to fall prey to certain inescapable realities such as death and a host of other imperfections that are characteristic of humanity.

Perfection

For the Shona, there are certain things in reality that demonstrate a degree of excellence to the extent that no significant improvements may be required. According to the Shona metaphysical worldview, such things are indicators of perfection. As a result, individuals should not waste time trying to improve what is perfect because such attempts may unfortunately corrupt it. A proverb that reflects this metaphysical standpoint is:

Chakanaka chakanaka mukaka haurungwi munyu

(What is perfect is perfect; milk does not require addition of salt for it to taste good)

For the Shona, addition of salt to certain foodstuffs such as meat, vegetables and beans makes them taste good but the same cannot be said of milk. Thus, it is futile to try and make better a thing that already has perfect qualities lest one risks making it imperfect. In its wider application, this proverb implores people not to try and perfect things that already have perfect qualities. The Shona maintain that certain things, events or individuals may not require additional improvements because

they may possess enough properties of perfection. In addition, this understanding helps the Shona to have a positive attitude towards reality that possesses earmarks of beauty. Thus, Shona aesthetics discourages people from trying to alter things purportedly for the better if they already exhibit hallmarks of perfection. People who try to do so may be branded *vanamuchekadzafa* (people who do not add any relevant value to things) primarily because their efforts for improving certain things are in vain.

Good and Evil

Augustinian philosophy has maintained that goodness and badness are both fundamental features of the universe (Davies, 1993, p. 33) and it is practically impossible to find something that is wholly good (without defects) or something that is wholly evil (without a grain of goodness). According to this line of thought, therefore, reality is a mixture of both good and evil though the degree of goodness or evil varies. Traditional Shona thought has a fair share of such thinking whereby worldly events are characterised by good and evil. Thus, traditional Shona conception of the world proverbially captures the actuality of good and evil, and right and wrong in this world as shown below:

Chikomo shata divi, rimwe ritambire pwere

(A hill ought to have one bad side so that the other side becomes a play ground for kids)

Misi mizhinji ndiyo minaki, musu wenjodzi ndomumwe chete

(The majority of days are good, but only one day is disastrous)

The first proverb apparently directs the hill to have one bad side so that the other side may be a playground for kids. Traditional Shona thought acknowledge that reality cannot be wholly bad or wholly good but a balance of the two. This scenario is probably due to the imperfect nature of the universe as a whole. The awareness of this metaphysical problem among the Shona people helps them to appreciate that badness and goodness co-exist and are very much part of life. Logically, it is absurd to talk of good things without acknowledging the actuality of bad things primarily because talk of good things presuppose a certain category of actions or things that can be classified and characterised as bad or evil. Similarly, a person ought to not always exhibit undesirable conduct, but also some virtuous traits of behaviour. Although, it would be ideal for a person to always do good deeds and actions, the Shona are aware of the imperfection of human nature. Therefore, despite the moral shortcomings of human nature, the Shona expect human beings, in a large measure, to exhibit commendable character traits through their deeds and acts.

The second proverb states that while the majority of days would appear good, only one day can bring about misfortunes. For traditional Shona society, therefore, goodness appears to characterise more days of people's lives than evil does. The Shona have noted, therefore, that there is a limit to goodness and this realisation helps them to prepare for the potential risks in several ways.

Substance – Accident Structure

Aristotle distinguished between underlying reality and external qualities. The former is technically the substance and the latter are the accidents (Loux, 1978). For Aristotle, the distinction between the two is only logical since in reality substance and accident are found in the same individual thing (Hartman, 1976; Barnes, 1982; Gill, 1989). A tree, for instance has certain intrinsic qualities that make it a tree and it has accidental qualities such as height, shape of trunk and colour of leaves. In this understanding, a tree remains a tree even if it gains height, shades its leaves or develops more roots. The following proverbs capture the Shona conception of the substance-structure relationship:

Azvuvu sanzu azvuvu nemashizha aro.

(He who pulls a branch, pulls it together with its leaves)

Hamba hairemerwi nemakwati ayo.

(A tortoise does not feel the heaviness of its bony shell)

The first proverb asserts that one who carries a branch carries it together with its leaves. Leaves are accidental to the branch implying that a branch can exist with or without leaves. In its deeper application, the proverb demonstrates that individual things exist together with their accidental features. Among the Shona, therefore, it may not be necessary for one to try and separate accidental qualities from a thing. The acceptance of this fact offers a metaphysical basis of tolerance and acceptance of one's mistakes and shortcomings in great many aspects of human life. For example, if a young man marries a lady who had a child in her previous marriage or outside the wedlock, the young man will have to accept the lady together with her child in order to foster harmony in the new marriage.

The second proverb focuses on negative accidental features. For the Shona, if a person has supposedly defective features (resembling the bony shell of a tortoise) on himself or herself, that person has no choice but simply to accept that reality. The Shona are quite aware that even if somebody is, by and large, beautiful there are certain dislikeable features that may corrupt an otherwise impressive aesthetic outlook. A beautiful lady, for example, may have some disproportionably large teeth that may compromise her beauty. The awareness of such realities enables individuals to shape positive attitudes towards themselves and others, and consequently appreciate the reality of certain dislikeable features as part and parcel of themselves and others.

Death

For the Shona, it is a truism that all human beings will one day perish. Similarly, traditional Western philosophy, notes that death occurs when the body and the soul are separated (Donnelly, 1978; Fischer 1993). In Shona traditional thought, death is inescapable even if one is politically or materially powerful. Despite attempts to prolong bodily life through use some traditional medicines, bodily death is inevitable as rightly conceived by the Shona people. The following proverbs are indicative of the actuality of death in the Shona cosmology:

Ivhu hariguti

(The soil does not get satisfied)

Rufu haruna ishe

(Death does not spare the chief)

In the Shona society, the dead are buried in the ground and the first proverb demonstrates the apparent fact that soil does not get satisfied since it continues to bury dead human bodies. The Shona people analogize the act of burying dead human bodies in the soil to consumption of human bodies by the soil. On the basis of this analogy, the soil continues to exhibit signs of insatiable appetite for dead human bodies because it, as it were, continues to consume dead human beings. In this particular proverb, the metaphysical aspect is that of the actuality of mortality as a human attribute. Human beings are mortal and as such, each and every human being will one day die and be buried in the soil. This understanding of death allows the Shona people to accept the reality of death even if it is emotionally painful to those who remain behind. Despite the elaborate mourning at funerals, the Shona are aware that death is ultimately an inescapable human phenomenon that gives a limit to one's bodily lifespan.

The second proverb asserts that death does not exclude the politically powerful and it spares no mortal being. Literally, the proverb maintains that the traditional Shona chief, despite his political power and claims of unique spiritual protection and embodiment, has still to face bodily death. For the Shona, therefore, political power is not an escape route from the reality of death. Beyond political power, the proverb shows that influential figures in Shona communities such as rainmakers, spirit mediums and warriors still have to face death.

Intrinsic worth of the human being

Shona traditional thought recognized the dignity of the human being despite unfortunate vicissitudes of human life such as poverty, evil spirits or immorality that confront individuals. Among the Shona, a human being is considered as having intrinsic worth owing to the possession of the soul. Human life is taken as sacred among the Shona and each and every human being has to be treated with respect. For the Shona, it is unheard of to make merry over the death of someone even if that person may have been a witch, thief or murderer. Thus, the Shona recognise the fact that despite one's immoral conduct, such as thieving or witchcraft, one's life is still taken as sacred and worth of respect thereof because some immoral action may be caused by circumstances beyond one's control such as evil spirits (*mashavi*). The following Shona proverbs emphasize the importance of the human being:

Murombo munhu

(A poor person is a human being)

Muroyi munhu

(A witch/wizard is a human being)

The first proverb asserts that even if someone is poor, the circumstances of poverty ought not to compromise personhood. Among the Shona, poverty may have many causes such as laziness, disability, lack of resources or ancestral anger but these unfortunate life situations ought not to negate the intrinsic worth of a poor person. For the Shona, poor people ought to be treated with dignity primarily possible poverty is problem that can afflict anyone and may not be a permanent feature of a given individual. This is why Shona communities would provide food, clothing and shelter to destitution because the one who is a destitute today may be financially well in future. Thus, all human beings ought to be treated with respect irrespective of their financial status here and now.

The second proverb states that a witch or wizard is still a human being despite his or her apparent anti-social acts. In the Shona society, witchcraft may be a result of *shavi* (evil spirit) or it can be attained intentionally. The witch or wizard is seen as a person who brings about evil to individuals and communities. Despite being social misfits, witches are still considered as possessing intrinsic worth and it is possible to reform them by getting rid of their evil tendencies. In practice, this is why people still continue to mourn elaborately at the funeral of a witch or wizard.

Free Will

Western philosophers tend to identify two values connected to free will. The first is moral responsibility, which entails justified praise, blame, punishment and related aspects, and the second is autonomy or self-determination (Harper and Ralf, 1984). For Watson (1995, p.175), "autonomy is the view that one is not merely a passive bystander but indeed shapes one's own life from the world as one finds it to the extent that one is the author of one's biography." Although Watson's perspective is Western in orientation, traditional Shona thought exhibits a very close understanding of freewill. Freewill is the basis of moral responsibility because praise or blame is given on the basis of free choice (Carnois, 1987; Kane, 1985; Honderich 1988).

The Shona understand freewill as the capacity to make moral choices without coercion or force. The following proverbs show the Shona people's understanding of the concept of freewill:

Chidamoyo hamba yakada makwati

(It is out of choice that a tortoise has a bony shell)

Zviri kumwene wejira kufuka kana kuwarira.

(It is up to the owner of a blanket, to cover himself with it or to make it a sleeping mat)

The first proverb indicates that among the Shona, the individual ultimately defines his personal destiny in this life on the basis of moral choices. It is the individual who decides what is good for him or her. As a result, the metaphysical basis of freewill allows the Shona to respect each other's choices. In real life situations, even if someone chooses a seemingly ugly husband or wife, the Shona people continue to respect such a choice since it is grounded on one's freewill. In this regard, ugliness is analogised to the tortoise's bony shell (*makwati*).

The second proverb which is also based on the concept of autonomy, maintains that it is the individual who ultimately makes his or her moral choice. Literally, the proverb says an individual can cover himself with a blanket or to make it a sleeping mat. For the Shona, the point is that autonomy allows individuals to make choices and those choices must be respected as such. If individual choices are continuously determined, then the aspect of moral responsibility is diminished. This shows that the concept of autonomy provides a metaphysical basis for morality in the Shona system thought.

Potentiality

Potentiality is the capacity of something or someone to develop to another state or level. Goodman (1955:54) argues that, "...potentialities are not always realised, conditions either external or internal to a specimen may block such realisations." For Goodman, it is clear that what has the capacity to develop may not have such potentialities realised because of limitations external or internal to it. A boy, for instance, may fail to grow into adulthood due to a number of life limiting situations. In contrast, the Shona are of the view that even if some potentialities are not realised, potentialities must not be trivialised but taken seriously.

Chikova rwizi kuyambuka unokwinya nguo

(A stream is also a river, to cross it one has to fold up one's clothes)

Regai dzive shiri mazai haana muto

(Let eggs develop into birds because eggs do not have soup)

The first proverb shows that traditional Shona thought takes potentialities seriously as a measure to guard against possible and probable risks. A stream must be treated with similar caution as a river for prudential purposes because it has the capacity to sweep away human beings if flooded. In addition, it can be a habitation for dangerous aquatic animals such as hippopotamus and crocodiles that pose a threat to human life. In the deeper application of the proverb, the Shona transcend the context of the streams to posit that anything that has a potential to develop gradationally must have its potentiality recognised. If such potentiality is taken for granted, then tragic consequences may occur.

The second proverb asserts that people should be patient enough to allow eggs (of birds) to develop into young birds. This is a kind of a biological potentiality that the Shona capture in their proverbial lore. The recognition that individual biological things develop into fully-grown adults is based on this metaphysical concept of potentiality. In traditional Shona society, for example, it was unheard of for an adult man to marry a teenage girl but he had to wait until the girl reached a marriageable age.

Finitude

Farrer (1943:3) asserts that "crudely, the finite is limited and the infinite is the endless." The Shona recognise the finitude of things. In traditional Shona society, all events, individuals and things will

one day come to an end. There is nothing that is capable of continuous and unlimited existence. The following Shona proverbs capture this understanding of finitude:

Chinobhuruka chinomhara

(That which flies would eventually lands)

Chisingaperi chinoshura

(That which does not come to an end defies logic)

The first proverb asserts that what flies will eventually lands. In its wider application, this Shona proverb shows that all contingent reality shall one day come to an end. For the Shona, therefore, it is unthinkable to talk of physical reality whose existence is endless.

The second proverb asserts that what does not perish is likely to give a bad omen. This is out of the Shona people's realisation that reality is limited in so far as it's duration of existence is concerned. Unlimited continuity is unthinkable among the Shona. All events, persons and things shall eventually come to an end and this understanding is arrived at on the basis of inference from the finite things the Shona people come across in their existential situation.

Conclusion

The paper has shown that metaphysical aspects are clearly identifiable in certain Shona proverbs. It has argued that the Shona people reflect on the cosmological and ontological aspects of the universe and they express these reflections in proverbial form. Metaphysical thinking discussed in this paper centres around, among others, Causation, Change, Time, Essence, Perfection, Good and Evil, Substance – Accident Structure, Death, Intrinsic worth of the human being, Free Will, Potentiality and Finitude. The claims by Eurocentric philosophers such as Hegel and Kant that Africans are incapable of metaphysics are, thus, refuted by the presence of metaphysical content in some Shona proverbs.

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Ethnic Diversity and the Dilemma of Adopting the Local Language for Instruction in Sengwe Primary Schools, Zimbabwe.

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Abstract

The study focused on how multi-ethnic education was implemented in Sengwe multi-ethnic area located in the South of Chiredzi District, Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study identified the local language predominant in this multi-ethnic area and unveiled how it manifested itself as a local language of instruction through instructional materials that were in current use. Owing to the qualitative nature of the study, a case study research design was adopted. Face-to-face interviews, observation schedules and documentary analysis were used to gather data. A sample of 43 participants was purposively drawn consisting of nine school administrators, ten teachers and twenty-four learners. Following a detailed thematic data analysis, it emerged from the study that multi-ethnic education in Sengwe area remained declared but not implemented. This was evidenced by the predominance of Shona as a local language of instruction in the area although it was spoken by a handful of people in the linguistically diverse Sengwe area. The instructional materials used in the area were biased towards the Shona culture. Recommendations were made for policy makers to declare multilingual education compulsory in Zimbabwe for the benefit of learners in marginal areas like Sengwe.

Introduction

Ethnic diversity is eminent in Zimbabwe especially in marginal areas such as Hwange, Kariba, Chiredzi and Beitbridge. Areas become multi-ethnic due to the influence of migration, political, social and economic developments that propel various ethnic groups to relocate to areas other than their original districts (Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk, 2006; Indabawa and Mpfu, 2006). Sengwe area is multi-ethnic in that it hosts four distinct ethnic groups namely the Shangani, Ndebele, Shona and Venda. That being the case, the issue of the local medium of instruction that should be used not only for teaching and learning but also for displays in and outside the classroom is a dilemma faced by Sengwe multi-ethnic community, which is situated in the south of Chiredzi District in Zimbabwe. In line with a linguistic dilemma in a multi-ethnic area, Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen (1992) identify three prominent questions that arise in the transmission of culture via language as follows: (1) Whose culture is to be transmitted by the schools? (2) Whose language is used? (3) Whose values, knowledge and beliefs should be incorporated? The second question is a pillar upon which this paper is built as it naturally leads us into the language policy of Zimbabwe and other African countries.

Language policy in Zimbabwe and other African countries

The language-in-education policy for Zimbabwe is similar to other African countries. The general trend is that English is adopted as an official language because African countries thought that it would become a unifying force for all ethnic groups, building national unity and political stability (Kiah, 1998). After English, in former British colonies, one or two indigenous languages is

accorded the national status with the minority language being recognised as media of instruction at lower levels of primary education. Similarly in French speaking Africa, French takes the centre stage.

In Kenya, Ogotu (2006) observes that the Kenyan language policy conditionally recognises the indigenous languages for the first three years of primary education. This implies that a particular mother tongue happens to be the language of the catchment area (the dominant language of the school's neighbourhood). Kiswahili is taught as a subject from the first day of primary school up to the last day of secondary school. Ogotu (2006) further notes that English is taught as a subject for the first three years of primary education and it then takes over as a medium of instruction from the fourth year of primary education up to the highest level of education apart from being the official language.

In Zimbabwe, just like Kenya and other African countries, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MoESC) (2002) declared that indigenous languages are compulsory media of instruction at Early Childhood Development (ECD) level on condition that they are the languages of the catchment area. After ECD level, English takes over as both the medium of instruction and the official language while Shona or Ndebele is offered as a subject up to the higher levels of learning. Minority languages such as Tonga, Nambya, Kalanga, Venda, Shangani and Sotho are taught up to grade seven depending on the catchment area of the school. The 2006 amendment to the language-in-education policy which states that prior to form one, indigenous languages may be used as media of instruction, led to the formulation of the Director's Circular No. 26, 2007 on Policy Guidelines on teaching of local languages. However, after Grade seven, the minority languages are relegated and accorded a lesser status as optional subjects. Given the multiplicity of indigenous languages in Sengwe area where Ndebele, Shangani, Venda and Shona learners learn in the same classroom; and the stipulations of the language-in-education policy document, a dilemma that haunts smooth implementation of multi-ethnic education centres around the mother tongue(s) that should be used as media of classroom instruction at ECD level and primary school level in general as the policy stipulates. There is danger that one language may override others at the expense of innocent learners who deserve to receive instruction in their mother tongue.

Theoretical Overview

Sociologists, especially the Neo-Marxists of the calibre of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Antonio Gramsci (1971) developed plausible theories that attribute dominance of certain languages to the nature of classes that exist in society. Bourdieu's (1977) cultural capital theory states that middle class children possess cultural capital that is relevant to education (Sadovnik, 2004; O'Donnell, 1992). Cultural capital implies linguistic and social competencies such as qualities like style, manners, know-how as well as aspirations of the objective chances of success (Blackledge & Hunt, 1985; Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). Linguistic competencies of the dominant group tally with the language of education. In a multi-ethnic area like Sengwe, the dominant class may be likened to those ethnic groups whose culture corresponds to the school culture while the working class are those ethnic groups whose cultural attributes are overshadowed by the dominant ones. Put more closely in the context of Sengwe area, if the school culture of Sengwe multi-ethnic schools reflects the Shangani and Shona way of life, then the Ndebele and Venda learners learning in such schools are disadvantaged. Given this scenario, Bourdieu acknowledges that examinations certify the success of middle class children and the failure of working class children (Sadovnik, 2004; O'Donnell, 1992) since they come as a formal ritual occasion, in which the already produced cultural ascendancy of the middle class children is ratified and legitimised.

Antonio Gramsci's hegemonic theory states that a social group, which in this case is an ethnic group, can achieve and maintain its domination of another by using education or media as an instrument to propagate its ideology. Hegemony means political leadership and ideological domination of society (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). A dominant group achieves its domination not by force but by persuasion. Persuasion is attained through concessions. The dominant group ought to make concessions with the dominated group in order to control it by consent instead of force (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004; O'Donnell, 1992). In the case of Sengwe multi-ethnic schools, ideological domination manifests itself through indigenous languages rewarded in the classroom. The indigenous languages (Venda, Ndebele and Shangani) that are visible in the locality seem to be bracketed out of the curriculum while Shona, which is only spoken by a handful of people in Sengwe area, is predominant in schools. As a way of silencing the minority, the dominant group for instance, may include an appendage of the minority culture in the mainstream curriculum. In Zimbabwe, the language-in-education policy confines the use of minority languages as languages of classroom instruction to primary level while the dominant ones are honoured up to the highest level of education. By confining minority languages to lower levels of education, this policy silences the speakers of these languages. To worsen the situation, the aforementioned language policy stipulation remains declared but not implemented since there are limited human and material resources.

Indigenous languages as media of instruction

The problem of adopting a local language of Sengwe area as an indigenous medium of instruction lies in the multiplicity of African languages that exist in the area. Kiah (1998) and Bamgbose (1991) rightly observe that it is not possible to generalise on African culture since it presents cultural diversities that have been exposed to external forces. Put in the context of Sengwe area, four distinct ethnic groups existing in the area complicate the task of choosing the local medium of instruction. Other educationists feel that colonial legacy especially mental colonisation makes most African countries hesitant to adopt their local languages as media of instruction (Chiwome & Gambahaya, 1998; Madadzhe & Sepota, 2004). Madadzhe & Sepota (2004) argue that the need to use mother tongues as media of instruction is now known and that being the case, African governments and academics should go beyond the debating stage by embracing the implementing stage. Great Zimbabwe University is offering Venda and Shangani at university level as an initiative to raise the status of minority languages. This is a plausible move towards implementation of multi-ethnic education.

The speakers of any second language face a cognitive block in their understanding and use of a second language since the translation from conceptualisation to expression is no small task (Ogutu, 2006; Vambe 2006). Some scholars refer to the battle of thinking and expressing ideas as code switching. Code switching occurs when a child has to move from the language they normally speak and possibly think in, to the language they regard as appropriate for school writing (Ogutu & Kanana, 2004; James and Jeffcoate, 1985). For the first speakers of a language, code switching is much easier than it is for the second speakers.

History has shown that students tend to do well in classrooms if languages they speak at home are the same as those they use in education (Vambe, 2006; UNESCO, 1996). The indigenous languages play a significant role in and outside the classroom. The mother tongue plays the informational function, expressive function, aesthetic function, directive and phatic (interpersonal) function (Halliday, 1985; Ogutu, 2006). In the classroom, the mother tongue plays an informational function

(Ogutu, 2006). The teacher conveys the message to the learners perfectly well using the mother tongue. Notably, cognitive development is achieved faster if the mother tongue is used (UNESCO, 1996; Yates, 1993). It therefore follows that in Sengwe area, Shangani learners learn better in Shangani while Venda learners learn better in Venda. Apart from relieving stress in the classroom, mother tongue helps learners to be creative (Chimhundu, 1997; DAE cited in Wolff, 2002).

Outside the classroom, the indigenous language performs a phatic function which has to do with the interpersonal relations. Thus in an area like Sengwe, notices and songs as conveyors of information should cater for diversity. An indigenous language accords a social group its identity (Ogutu, 2006; Meighan & Siraj-Blatchford, 1997). Children form a sense of identity, community and belonging through the languages they speak and also through the way the languages that they speak are perceived.

Instructional materials and the local language of instruction

Implementation of multi-ethnic education is visible in instructional materials that are used in schools. It is not only a child's right but also the responsibility of the state to put at the child's disposal instructional materials which are of social and cultural benefit while protecting him or her from detrimental ones (UNICEF 2000: Article 17). Children should have access to instructional material of practical value to them. If instructional materials are to benefit the child, they should be written in the languages that the children speak. Nziramasanga (1999) recommends that official notices, speeches and signs should be made available in English, Shona and Ndebele, three languages which are used by government and industry. This recommendation excludes minority languages that deserve such a privilege in their catchment area.

Instructional materials that learners are exposed to at school shape their world view (James and Jeffcoate, 1985; Lemmer, Meier and Van Wyk, 2006). Thus learners who are oriented toward racist materials may become racists in the same manner learners who are exposed to a dominant language learn to accept domination as just, when in fact it is unfavourable. Ethnic bias may also manifest itself through assessment instruments such as tests and testing procedures. The tests can be psychometrically biased against minority groups in the sense that item content can reflect typical experiences of the dominant group (Berry et al, 1996; Dekker & Lemmer, 1993). Biased assessment instruments should be screened so that they become multicultural. This can be done by means of eliminating insulting and denigrating terms apart from treating with proper rhythm and cadence the language of the minority (James & Jeffcoate, 1985; Lemmer et al, 2006).

Instructional materials carry the language of instruction used in the school and the two are difficult to split. Bamgbose (1991) and Mutasa (2006) acknowledge that instructional materials are written in a language that is used in education (language of instruction). Bamgbose (1991) advises teachers to create materials for indigenous languages by translating texts written in English or other languages to the indigenous desired ones. However, the process demands vibrant translation services with a high budget if the translation is to succeed (Mutasa, 2006). Implementation of multi-ethnic education can be checked through a close analysis of the language of instruction as well as the available instructional materials.

In Zimbabwe, little research has examined the dilemma of using the mother tongue in a multi-ethnic set up like the Sengwe case. This study hopes to add literature to the growing body of local research on the implementation of the language-in-education policy (Magwa, 2007; Ndamba, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

This study undertook to investigate the implementation of multi-ethnic education in Sengwe area. The area hosts four distinct ethnic groups in a situation that stirs up pedagogical problems. Specifically, the problems centre on the local language of instruction and the instructional materials to be used.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- ❖ Are the indigenous languages of Sengwe area reflected both inside and outside the classroom?
- ❖ Do the instructional materials used in schools cater for the ethnic diversity in Sengwe area?

Method

Research Design

This study is a case study which is largely qualitative. In a case study, the researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit - a child, a group, a class, a school or a community (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, situations or materials are frequently referred to as qualitative research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996: 442). In addition, data for qualitative research are expressed in words (Neumann, 2000). The researchers found out that since a case study emphasises describing in detail all what goes on in a particular activity or situation, it was a suitable research design for investigating multi-ethnic education. In this study, the researchers preferred the case study research design because it enabled identification of the ethnic biases that underlie the multi-ethnic primary school curriculum.

In conjunction with the case study research design, the researchers also used documentary analysis. Fraenkel & Wallen (1996), Franckfort-Nachmias & Nachmias (1996) and Neumann (2000) all refer to documentary analysis as content analysis. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or any message that can be communicated.

Selection of participants

This research was conducted at three primary schools namely Maose, Rutandare and Malipati in the Sengwe area to the south of Chiredzi District, Zimbabwe. A purposive sampling method was used (Best & Kahn, 1993). Ten (10) teachers, 9 school administrators and 24 pupils were selected as these were considered key sources of information pertaining to multi-ethnic education.

Research Instruments

To enhance validity, the researchers used interviews, documentary analysis, and observation schedules to collect data. Each was influenced by the design adopted above.

A semi-structured interview schedule was developed by the researchers to collect data. Two themes were covered: indigenous languages used inside and outside the classroom and instructional materials used for teaching and learning. Fielding (2003) observes that interviews permit the researchers to gather both verbal and nonverbal data. Furthermore, the researchers could probe for clarity and detail where ambiguity was a hindrance. Researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with 3 school heads, 3 deputy school heads and 3 teachers-in-charge. These administrators were chosen because of the strategic nature of their positions in influencing policy at primary school level. Ten (10) teachers were also interviewed as these were directly involved in handling multi-ethnic learners. For the learners, the panel interview was used with the assistance of a local interpreter who is a teacher by profession. This technique was chosen so that the learners could participate in this study with confidence (O'Donnell, 1992). The adherence to a prepared interview schedule enhanced the content validity, that is, the ability of the interview as a data gathering instrument to measure what it purports to measure (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004).

Documents such as letters, records, memos, reports, manuals, Ministry of Education policy instruments, publications, statements of philosophy and musical lyrics were used as sources of data. The researchers found analysis of these documents appropriate for this study because ethnic biases are reflected in the written documents through which schools receive and send messages (Lemmer et al, 2006). The researchers also observed the activities of the learners and teachers without becoming participants in any way. The observation method was chosen because it enabled the researchers to pick up ethnic biases that manifested during the teaching and learning process.

Procedure

The three schools which were chosen for study were among those which hosted four distinct ethnic groups. To gain access to these schools, researchers sought permission from Masvingo Provincial Education Office. Researchers spent two days at each of the schools in order to observe lessons, analyse documents and carry out interviews. Face-to-face interviews were personally conducted by the researchers. The study was conducted in July 2009.

Data Analysis

The main method that was used to analyse qualitative data from interviews was thematic content analysis. This involved identifying, coding and categorising patterns in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Descriptive analysis was used for the observation and documentary analysis data.

Findings and Discussion

Data gathered from participants were presented and discussed in order of research questions. The data comprised indigenous languages used inside and outside the classroom and instructional materials used in the three multi-ethnic schools.

Indigenous languages used in and outside the classroom

A total of nine school administrators consisting of three heads, three deputy heads and three teachers-in-charge (TICs) were interviewed. They were asked to identify indigenous languages they offer at their respective schools, the local language in which memos appear, ethnic groups from which topics were drawn as well as the level up to which pupils were taught in local languages.

All the 9 (100%) participants indicated that they offered Shona up to Grade 7 level at their respective schools and consequently drew topics for creative writing from this language. Eight (8) 89% of the participants indicated that their notices and memos including minutes of meetings appeared in Shona while (1) 11% of the school administrators said that their notices and memos were written in Shangani. Two (2) 22% of the participants claimed that they offered Shangani up to Grade 3. Notably, 1 (11%) school administrator intended to introduce Ndebele as an indigenous language in the year 2010.

The above results indicate that Shona dominated other local languages. When the administrators were asked to justify the dominance of Shona, they gave three reasons. The first was the observation that, only Shona was examined at Grade 7 level in Sengwe area. One school administrator articulated that:

Shangani was discouraged because it's not examinable at Grade 7... It's reducing someone's choices by teaching them in Shangani and then to examine them in Shona.

These results confirm that schools focus on getting students through the examination at the expense of the students' individual needs (Kirby et al, 1997; Sadovnik, 2004; O'Donnell, 1992).

The second reason that was given for the dominance of Shona was that staff turnover was very high in Sengwe Schools. The bulk of the teachers who were new could converse competently in one local language. For example, out of the ten teachers sampled only two came from the local area while eight were new. The few local teachers, who were multilingual, avoided teaching lower grades where local languages mattered. They opted for upper grades admitting that diverse learners were difficult to handle at lower levels of learning. This meant that learners were taught in second and third languages. These findings indicate that the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture's (2002) language policy that the mother tongue should be a compulsory medium of instruction at Early Childhood Development level depending on the catchment area was not being implemented. Thus Sengwe learners who learn in a second language could be facing a cognitive block in their understanding as they have to first confront the problem of conceptualizing issues in an unfamiliar language and then secondly, struggle to grasp the grammatical rules and principles of those languages (Ogutu, 2006).

The school administrators felt that the third reason for the dominance of Shona was that local languages had not been accorded adequate attention since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. One participant, a local school head, emotionally indicated that the government was using tricks to gain political mileage by pretending to be concerned about the status of minority languages. The way local languages of Sengwe Schools were treated seemed to annoy local administrators. Maybe this was due to the observation that the way the languages that are spoken by students and adults are perceived influences the way they feel about themselves (Meighan & Siraj-Blatchford, 1997).

The responses given by the teachers when they were asked to indicate the local languages they use as media of instruction in and outside the classroom showed that 9 (90%) used Shona as medium of instruction. Only 1 (10%) of the teachers used Ndebele. These findings indicate that Shona was the predominant local medium of instruction used in Sengwe Schools at the expense of Shangani, Ndebele and Venda indigenous languages that are common in the area. It was evident that Sengwe learners were not taught in their local languages both in and outside the classroom. As such their creativity was likely to be hindered (Chimhundu, 1997).

When the teachers were asked to justify the dominance of Shona, they echoed administrators' perceptions that other local languages were not examinable. Thus the teachers' sentiments indicated that instruction was biased towards Shona. The language of education was at variance with the language of daily expression, a scenario that could affect learners' performance. African students could improve in their learning if that learning was carried out in their language of conceptualization and daily expression (UNESCO, 1996).

The above findings also meant that local languages were excluded from the school proceedings implying that Sengwe learners hardly ever saw reality through their mother tongues. This inference is in tandem with the Sapir-Whorfian hypothesis that certain aspects of the new language (items of vocabulary and grammatical features) often imply concepts for which the local language has no equivalent (Henslin, 1998). For example, the word 'kukundwa' means 'fornicate' in Shangani but the same word means 'to be defeated' in Shona. Such terms become a cognitive barrier for Shangani learners who learn through a Shona medium of instruction. Cognitive development is achieved faster if the mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction in primary education rather than the language of wider communication (LWC) (UNESCO, 1996; Yates, 1993).

Teachers were also asked whether or not they gave diverse learners the same treatment. The findings revealed a bias by teachers towards their own ethnic group. With regards to the treatment of multi-ethnic learners, one respondent said, *I prefer Ndebele learners because I am of Ndebele*

origin and the Shangani speakers can also speak Ndebele. This outcome confirms the cultural hegemonic theory by Gramsci cited in Haralambos & Holborn (2004) that groups in a society strive to achieve dominance over others not by war but by persuasion. In this case, each member of staff endeavoured to put his or her ethnic group on top of the situation within the school set up.

Twenty-four (24) learners, half in grade three and the other half in grade six were separately group-interviewed with the aid of an interpreter. The learners were asked to indicate the language they spoke both in and outside the classroom. All learners concurred that they spoke Shona inside the classroom. When probed further, the learners revealed that their teachers who belonged to the Shona ethnic group imposed Shona language on them. One Shangani learner said '*himhaka ticha wahina muKaranga*' meaning '*because my teacher belongs to the Shona ethnic group*'. To some extent the teacher's ethnic origin influenced the local language taught in and outside the classroom. Thus, an ethnic match between the teaching staff and the learner population is necessary in a multicultural school (Lemmer et al, 2006).

The learners who were group-interviewed indicated that each spoke his or her mother tongue when playing outside the classroom without the interference of the teacher. All the local languages namely Shona, Venda, Shangani and Ndebele were spoken outside the classroom. This confirmed that learners were multilingual. Berns (2007) proclaims that bilingual and also multilingual education enhances students' communicative and academic competence. Thus multilingualism facilitated socialization among diverse learners.

The documents, minutes of meetings, school-based tests, mission statements, sign posts, timetables, scheme books, national anthem, National Association of Primary School Heads (NAPH) music set pieces, notices charts inter alia were observed and analysed for each of the three primary schools.

Of the ten documents that were observed and analysed, all the 3 schools agreed that school-based vernacular tests, timetables, national anthem, NAPH set pieces, charts and scheme books were written in Shona. One school indicated that their minutes of meetings appeared in Shangani as well as some charts, notices and infant timetables. Two schools revealed that their minutes of meetings and notices were written in Shona. Like the interview data, documentary analysis data revealed that Shona was the local language dominating Sengwe primary schools although it was spoken by a handful of people. The view that displays on the classroom walls and notice boards should of necessity be representative of diversity is contradicted (Lemmer et al, 2006).

Teachers who were observed teaching subjects other than Shona code-switched to Shona. In addition, they gave their instructions, examples and comments in Shona. One teacher who was observed teaching English remarked; *tose* let's go, *ah ah nyararai* and *eh umwewo*, indicating that code switching was done mainly in Shona. This disadvantaged learners who did not understand Shona. A child sorts out its impression of the world in the language that both produced and expressed the child's first thoughts (Miller, 1985). Learners and instructors code switch to mother tongue in the classroom when facilitating self-expression and communication (Ogotu & Kanana, 2004) and this code switching is vital in multi-ethnic education in that it facilitates understanding of concepts among diverse learners.

Instructional materials used in schools

School administrators, teachers and learners were interviewed and observed in order to examine whether instructional materials used in Sengwe schools were representative of linguistic diversity. The majority of the school administrators 6 (67%) agreed that Shona had more literature than other local languages common in the area. They used scarcity of literature on local languages other than Shona as an excuse to justify the predominant use of Shona in a multi-ethnic area. Mutasa (2006)

made a similar observation that the local language that is used as medium of instruction should have a lot of teaching material written in it. In the case of primary schools in Sengwe area, instructional materials were biased towards one ethnic group, the Shona.

Administrators were also asked the reason why Shona claimed a lot of space in an area dominated by other local languages. One administrator pointed out that:

It is because this is the language in which teachers can be able to express themselves. It's difficult to translate materials to other languages. Shona syllabi are readily available.

Multi-ethnic teachers could avail instructional materials for local languages by means of translating the existing materials into other languages (Bamgbose, 1991) but these school administrators were reluctant to do so. Another administrator who commented on the dominance of Shona instructional materials said Shona had a lot of literature by comparison because it was examinable. Thus teachers have a tendency to teach for examination without catering for diversity (Whitty in Kirby et al, 2000).

All the 10 (100%) teachers acknowledged that their school based tests, examples they gave as well as the reading materials and textbooks they used reflected the Shona culture. This result is similar to the one derived from school administrators on school-based tests, especially on the bias towards Shona culture. Assessment instruments like school-based tests were biased against minority groups (Berry et al, 1996). These school-based tests reflected a bit of Shangani and Ndebele way of life in that a few reading materials and textbooks were written in Shangani and Ndebele. Three 3 (30%) of the teachers indicated that they drew examples from the Shangani and Ndebele cultures. None of the teachers made reference to Venda culture although Venda learners existed. It follows that, instructional materials that teachers used bracketed out the local culture.

Twenty-four (24) learners were interviewed in groups. They were asked whether or not the textbooks they read contained stories or examples drawn from Shangani, Venda, Shona or Ndebele culture. The learners were also asked to indicate whether vernacular charts they saw in their respective classrooms were written in their local languages. When asked the above questions, one learner responded by saying *hai* in Ndebele and another said *e-i* in Shangani, both denying that charts and textbooks reflected their respective culture. Instead, the instructional materials were fraught with the Shona culture. These results echo those of the administrators and teachers on the bias of instructional materials towards one ethnic group, the Shona. Learners' responses seem to indicate that the majority of them were deprived of their right to read materials which were of social and cultural relevance to them.

Documents such as mission statements, songs, school-based tests, charts, minutes of meetings, and scheme books were analysed. These documents were as good as instructional materials. When the abovementioned documents were screened for biases, they proved to be in favour of the Shona. Parents who spoke Ndebele, Shangani or Venda opted to write their minutes in Shona, a language less prominent in the area. Probably, they regarded Shona as an ethnic neutralizer of Sengwe area just as English is used as a foreign language that neutralizes potential linguistic based conflicts in Africa.

Recommendations

Government should as a matter of urgency, consider the unique needs of Sengwe schools where learners who belong to four distinct ethnic groups learn in the same classroom. Learners in Sengwe primary schools deserve to learn in their mother tongue before they are introduced to a second language. Thus the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture should ensure that the language policy is implemented in Sengwe primary schools especially at Early Childhood Development

level. This could be done through refresher courses and workshops for teachers. Teachers could become multilingual and tolerant if they are further trained. Stakeholders need to furnish the schools with instructional materials that are sensitive to ethnic diversity. The existing materials should be translated to local languages while new and appropriate materials replace irrelevant ones. Instructional materials in a multicultural school should be reformed to depict diverse events from the ethnic and cultural perspectives.

The Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture and other tertiary institutions should emulate Great Zimbabwe University's initiative that seeks to raise the status of local languages by offering minority languages at University level.

Further studies should be done to establish the utility of multilingualism as a skill or resource for teaching and learning.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Shona dominated as the local language of instruction in Sengwe primary schools. This was evidenced by the use of Shona both in and outside the classrooms as well as the availability of Shona literature while books written in Ndebele and Shangani were lying idle. The scenario was attributed to the fact that Shona was offered up to grade 7 and examined at that level. Notices and memos were mainly written in Shona besides using it for creative writing. The teachers who did not come from Sengwe area were incompetent in handling learners from diverse backgrounds as they did not have multilingual skills which are critical in a multi-ethnic set up. It was felt that the Government should elevate the status of the local languages of Sengwe people.

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Aspects of Ndebele Idiomatic Language Change

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Abstract

This paper seeks to analyse Ndebele language change with regards to idiomatic expressions. It is an analysis of the derivation of new proverbs and sayings in Ndebele, which amounts to language change, as Ndebele does not remain the same when new idiomatic expressions, are now part of the language. The paper looks at the sources of these new expressions and how they are encoded into the Ndebele language as idiomatic expressions. The new expressions are then evaluated to establish whether they satisfy the notion and function of idiomatic expressions in Ndebele. Idiomatic expressions are part of folklore. For the purposes of this paper, these include proverbs and sayings. Languages change semantically, lexically and phonetically, these changes affect idiomatic expressions because proverbs and sayings rely on other areas of a language as they are syntagmatic in form. This paper explores language expansion and change through proverbs and sayings. It further analyses the attitude of the Ndebele towards these new idiomatic expressions. Languages change to accommodate change from outside, which is non-linguistic change. Language contact is almost synonymous with language change, linguistic processes of borrowing, coining and loan translating affect idiomatic expressions as much as they affect other areas of the language. The paper also investigates the contribution of 'fashion trends' type of language change in the development of new idiomatic expressions in Ndebele. The aspects that help develop new proverbs and sayings in Ndebele are identified, analysed and the products are evaluated using Ndebele and linguistic standards of idiomatic expressions.

Introduction

The Ndebele are a Nguni group established by Mzilikazi in the south-western parts of Zimbabwe. The Ndebele language is rich in traditional philosophical orature, which is its folklore. Embedded in Ndebele folklore are sagacious sayings in the form of proverbs (*izaga*) and sayings (*izitsho*) respectively. Idiomatic expressions are illocutionary acts in their application in the Ndebele language; they are performatives as some acts are accomplished by uttering a proverb or saying. The illocutionary aspect of idiomatic expressions is in that they have a deep meaning that carries a particular action. Proverbs and sayings are figurative speech that obtains from people's experiences. They change with culture while old ones are retained thereby preserving the cultural history as well. Modernity, which in most cases in Ndebele is from colonialism has seen derivation of idiomatic expressions based on it. Some idiomatic expressions are simple loan translations from other languages, while some are too informal and mostly used by the youth as lunatic fringe idiomatic expressions. It is from the above aspects that Ndebele idiomatic expressions are derived and continue to increase.

Understanding Language Change and Idiomatic Expressions

Language is a very dynamic human resource that changes to accommodate new phenomena and new environments; it also changes as other languages affect it. There are many distinct groups that

use the Ndebele language and all contribute in some way to the growth of the language. Culture is the source and base of a language. The culture of a people includes their customs, arts, social institutions, religion, mythology and folklore. Language is deeply rooted in the culture of the people who speak it. Culture can be as lived and celebrated by the greater community or a micro-culture in the community like that of professionals in the same trade. What is seen and done by people develops their language, Chinweizu et al. (1980), point out that the historical circumstances that presently compel people to use language the way they do, need to be changed before language is changed. This enforces the fact that when people's experiences change their language inevitably changes too.

A change in culture amounts to a change in language. All elements that make up a people's culture are constantly changing and to accommodate these changes language has to change as well. There are factors that influence language change, and these operate within and without a culture. The factors include some of these; language contact, borrowing, occupation, sex, age, and religion. Meinhof and Warmelo assert that:

The spoken language does not remain as it is, but is subject to continued change as long as it is spoken at all (1932:12)

Idiomatic expressions are part of a language and they have a particular affinity to the culture, they are part of the Ndebele folklore. Idiomatic expressions in this paper are words, phrases and sentences whose meaning is not clear from the meaning of its individual words, and they must be learnt as a whole unit. The expressions are short and well known to state a general truth and perform acts in the Ndebele language. Proverbs and sayings in Ndebele make for idiomatic expressions. They are wise sayings that are performatives as Bourdillon says:

When you cite a proverb, you are not communicating new knowledge everyone knows the proverb already... you are trying to persuade, to get others to accept your point of view – and you choose the proverb mostly suited to achieve this aim (1993:10)

Proverbs and sayings are taken from what people experience. They mirror the way of life of their owners. Ndebele idiomatic expressions are taken from their history, tradition, and way of life, wealth, mythology, legends, folklore and religion. Ndebele institutions from which idiomatic expressions are derived have changed over the years and are constantly changing, this change amounts to a change in idiomatic expressions deriving new proverbs and sayings. The Ndebele culture has changed drastically in the face of colonialism and globalisation. This has seen new proverbs and sayings that are derived from the obtaining culture.

There are many elements that have found their way into the Ndebele culture and these are exploited by the Ndebele to derive proverbs and sayings. The ability to create idiomatic expressions did not die with the Ndebele ancestors hence the present generation and those to come will continue to use their experiences to derive idiomatic expressions. Globalisation brought with it many activities that people experience and ideally there should be more proverbs and sayings today than in the days of Tshaka and Mzilikazi. Suffice to note that Ndebeles in general resist language change. These conservatives do not spare idiomatic expressions. Conservative they might be but no one can stop language change without eliminating the people altogether.

Modern Idiomatic Coinages in Ndebele

It is obvious that the Ndebele way of life has changed; they do not use the same tools, utensils and weapons as did Lobhengula in his time. Their clothing, communication and work have changed. As Ndebeles now live a different life it means new proverbs and sayings are created to capture these experiences and preserve them, as did the forefathers. Slabbert in Maddieson and Hinnebusch (eds) (1998:293) expresses that idiomatic expressions and other linguistic items are not just attributes of groups or communities, they are themselves the means by which individuals both identify

themselves and identify with others.

Colonialism brought many things to the Ndebele worldview and these have been a source of changes in the idiomatic expressions. The Ndebele of old used their worldview to derive idiomatic expressions, which is why old Ndebele proverbs and sayings have words like *inkomo* (cattle), *ukuzingela* (hunting), *udiwo* (clay pot), and *umkhonto* (spear). In this day Ndebeles do not depend on cattle as much as in the yesteryears. Many are employed professionals; they do not hunt but buy meat from butcheries, and now use guns, missiles, and steel pots. The modern elements come with new proverbs and sayings just as the old ones did in the olden times.

Before the advent of Cecil John Rhodes and his pioneer column that colonised Matebeleland in 1893 after the Anglo-Ndebele war, missionaries had already established links with the Ndebele. Robert Moffat had established Inyathi Mission and started teaching Christianity to the Ndebele, most of whom are Christians today. The Christian religion that has almost decimated Ndebele religion has had an impact on Ndebele idiomatic language change. Ndebeles have experienced Christianity as a religion and they take aspects of Christianity to drive idiomatic expressions, because these come from experiences. Proverbs and sayings of the Ndebele are not confined to the old life, they have been changing over the years to derive new ones from new experiences as Nyembezi asserts:

The proverbs in use are not confined, however, to the old expressions, because we may clearly discern some proverbs, which must have come into the language in fairly recent times, for instance, the expression, *wahambis'okwejuba likaNoah* (he went like Noah's dove) (1963:1)

Noah is not part of Zulu history and experiences although the dove is; the same proverb obtains in Ndebele. The proverb refers to one who has gone for a long time. The meaning is based on the bible story of the deluge. The Ndebele coined this proverb after Christianisation, meaning the proverb only came along after the Christian experience marking a change in the Ndebele idiomatic expressions.

The Christian bible is laden with stories of Jewish literature, mythology, history and legends. Characters in these domains have been mastered by the Ndebele in their practice of Christianity, and these characters are used to derive meaning for idiomatic expressions. The aspect of Christianity is then established as a factor in Ndebele idiomatic language change. Bible stories are used in Christianity to warn and guide people morally just as folktales are used in Ndebele. Ndebeles derived proverbs and sayings from folktales in the olden days. Experiences in the folktale are used to attach meaning to an idiomatic expression as in the following Ndebele idiomatic expressions:

- a) *ukufel'amanga njengo mpala* (dying without a crime like mpala/impala)
- b) *imbila yaswe'umsila ngokulayezela* (the rock rabbit did not get a tail because of sending others)
- c) *sibambe elikantulo* (we got gecko's word)

In (a) *Mpala* was tricked by Hare and he was killed by other animals for what Hare had done. This experience in a folktale is now used to express the same predicament in Ndebele human life. In (b) the rock rabbit asked other animals to bring it a tail from the king who was giving them tails, as a result he got there late when tails were finished, up to the present day the rock rabbit does not have a tail. People who behave like the rock rabbit in the folktale are warned using an idiomatic expression derived from the folktale experience. The idiomatic expression in (c) is derived from the Ndebele myth of human origin. In the myth the chameleon was sent by the king to tell people that they should live forever, the gecko went faster and mischievously told people that they must die. The late message from the chameleon became irrelevant and people said we have heard gecko's

word; this experience has been used to derive an idiomatic expression.

In the same way these wise sayings were derived from folktales, some have been coined from Christian bible stories; experiences in bible verses are used as a factor and foundation for idiomatic expressions in Ndebele. The aspect of Christianity is a factor in Ndebele idiomatic language change, deriving the following idiomatic expressions among others:

- b) *Ukuba nguRazaro* (to be Lazarus) – refers to a poor person.
- c) *Ukukholwa ngokubona njengoTomasi* (believing by seeing like Thomas)
- d) *Ukuba nguJezebeli* (to be a Jezebel) – refers to one who is a prostitute
- e) *Ukuba nguJudasi* (to be a Judas) – refers to one who betrays a friend
- f) *Hamba kohele!* (Go to hell) – when telling an undesired person to leave you alone.
- g) *Ukuba nguFaro* (to be a Pharaoh) – refers to a hardhearted and cruel person.
- h) *Ukuba nguSamsoni* (to be a Samson) – refers to a strong man.

All the idiomatic expressions from (d) to (j) were coined by the Ndebele after Christianity came to their culture. Lazarus is a poor legend from the bible parable given by Jesus, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16 verse 19). Thomas did not believe when he was told that Jesus had resurrected he only believed when he saw the scars on Jesus' hands (John 20 verses 28). Jezebel is an evil scheming, jewellery donning, loose queen (1 Kings 21 verses 5), while Judas is the one who betrayed his master Jesus to the enemies (Matthew 26; Luke 22; Mark 14) and Pharaoh is the cruel Egyptian king who captured the Israelites and did not want to free them to Moses who was sent by God (Exodus 5). Samson is portrayed as a gargantuan, with dread locks and very strong man who single handily defeated the Philistines (Judges 13). Hell is the biblical lake of fire meant for the devil and sinners at the end of time, a dreaded place by those who believe in it.

The Ndebele before the coming of Christianity used proverbs and sayings. However, the idiomatic expressions that are derived from Christianity are evidence that the expressions change, they cannot stop today. The experience of Christianity in Ndebele is an aspect of Ndebele idiomatic language change as Gwaravanda and Masaka point out:

A closer analysis of these proverbs would clearly show that they are laden with people's experiences and their interactions with both fellow humans and nature. (2008:4)

Idiomatic expressions coined from the Christian bible are in a way derived from Jewish history. Ndebeles also use their own history to derive proverbs and sayings. The Ndebele history is captured in their idiomatic expressions from time immemorial, the younger Ndebeles use these sayings in ignorance of the history embedded there in. The following idiomatic expressions are coined from Ndebele ancient history, some date as far back as the time when Ndebeles were still in Zululand.

i) *uTshaka usekhaya* (Tshaka is in the home) – this is to warn that the killer or bad person is a relative not a stranger.

j) *Ukulala obukaBhuka* (sleeping Bhuka's sleep) – refers to one who is dead asleep.

k) *Sobohla Manyosi* (your stomach will deflate Mr. Manyosi) – warning to one who boasts that one-day he will be poor.

l) *Ukuvus'ekaBhambatha* (causing a Bhambatha war) – this is to warn someone who is courting trouble.

The above old Ndebele wise words are derived from Ndebele history, a clear evidence that history is an aspect of idiomatic language change. In history Tshaka was a powerful but allegedly cruel king of the Zulu. He ruled the Ndebele in Zululand and they used him to coin a proverb. Bhambatha is a hero of the anti-colonial resistance in South Africa, he led a bloody revolt against the whites, while Bhuka is infamous for sleeping for a long time. Nyembezi (1963:5) says Manyosi was king

Dingane's corpulent warrior who had cause to rue the day he went away with Mpande. History has proved to be a source of new idiomatic expressions in Ndebele.

History is never static, time passes everyday to make the present history and the future the present. Recent Ndebele history has seen new idiomatic expressions being coined from the recent experiences of history. History becomes an aspect of Ndebele idiomatic language change, as it has introduced the following new expressions and continues to do the same by the day:

- e) *ukuba lolusaka* (to have Lusaka/Zambian capital) – refers to one who is a liar.
- f) *Umnyama kaBanana* (Banana's misfortune) – refers to gross misfortune.
- g) *Opasi* (the down people) – refers to the Shona people.
- h) *Ukubangumfanekiso kaRozi* (to be Rhodes's statue) – refers to standing still.

During Zimbabwe's war of liberation, Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and its military wing Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) led by Joshua Nkomo and Jason Moyo respectively ran a propaganda radio station from the Zambian capital Lusaka. The propaganda from Radio Lusaka carried stories of mysterious escapades by Nkomo and the fighters. The Ndebele knew that all this was a lie; hence one who lies is associated with the radio station long after independence. The proverb in (p) is taken from the history of Zimbabwe after the Gukurahundi civil war and massacres. The feuding parties PF-ZAPU and ZANU (PF) signed the unity accord in 1987 making Mugabe leader of a united ZANU (PF) and Nkomo became his deputy. This arrangement meant that the then titular president Cannan Banana was to leave his office and the State House, which was considered by the Ndebele as unlucky. The wise saying in (q) is coined from the history of political sloganeering in Zimbabwe. The ZANU (PF) party which is predominantly Shona uses the slogan *pasi na-* which is Shona for 'down with'. This was directed to the Ndebele during Gukurahundi hence the Shona are then identified by it. The saying in (r) is derived from Zimbabwe's colonial history led by Cecil John Rhodes who had his statue erected in Bulawayo; this statue is the source of the idiomatic expression.

Christianity and history are aspects of Ndebele idiomatic language change, however they are not the only aspects. Modernity that has engulfed the Ndebele culture is responsible for many Ndebele proverbs and sayings. Ndebele culture has changed to accommodate modernity, and culture is what Bourdillon defines as:

Everything that we learn in our society: the language we speak, how to behave, music and dancing, knowledge and ways of thinking, values, beliefs, the technology we use at work and at leisure – everything (1993:7)

Idiomatic expressions in Ndebele include very old utterances. Some of the proverbs in Ndebele are found common in many African languages, such as the proverbs about wild and domestic animals. The similarities point to a shared environment in the collective African experience. The Tsonga in South Africa and Zimbabwe share idiomatic expressions with Ndebele as in the following example given by Junod:

Nyuku wa mbyana wu helela voyeni (1990:66)
(A dog's sweat does not go beyond the fur)

The Ndebele have an identical proverb:

Izithukuthuku zenja ziphelela eboyeni
(A dog's sweat does not go beyond the fur)

Things around people provide them with food for thought. Gone are the days when the African was surrounded by domestic and wild fauna and flora, a new environment obtains and this has seen the emergence of new idiomatic expressions.

Some old proverbs and sayings are revisited to create new ones from the present environment. In this aspect of idiomatic derivation the meaning is maintained. Nyembezi cites this aspect of

idiomatic language change when he notes that:

When a person wishes to convey the idea that a thing can not happen, he says, *umlung'angathung'isicoco* (A white man may wear a head ring) (1963:1)

Zulus and Ndebeles have an old form of expressing the idea in the above proverb:

Inkom'ingazal'umuntu (A cow may give birth to a person)

In this case a new expression from the new culture is used to express what an old saying means thereby creating a new expression. Nyembezi also cites the proverb:

Wakhahlelwa lihashi esifubeni (He was kicked by a horse on the chest) – refers to one who does not keep a secret in his heart/chest.

He notes that the above proverb has three versions, differing on the animal used, the original versions use an elephant and zebra. There is a latter version of the same proverb that uses a donkey, now it is the horse, which came from other areas due to modernity and contact with people of other cultures.

Below are examples of idiomatic expressions that depict the aspect of using new forms to replace those from an older culture while retaining the meaning of the expression. The expression in (a) is from the old culture and (b) is from the modern culture, the pairs of expressions have exactly the same meaning:

1(a) *Ukwanda kwaliwa ngabathakathi* (witches do not want people to multiply) – thanking someone who has helped you.

1(b) *Ukwanda kwaliwa yifamily planning* (family planning does not want people to multiply)

The above proverbs have the same meaning and function in Ndebele. It is the same proverb realised in different times in Ndebele history. They are premised on the fact that people multiply so as to help each other, so what stops population growth stops help. This would be directed to a person who has helped you. In the old culture witches were known for malice and reducing the population by killing would-be helpers, now these are killed through birth control, which is a modern aspect.

2(a) *amajod'awelabangel'ambiza* (those without pots harvest many melons) – refers to one who has had luck but has no means of benefiting from the luck.

2(b) *amapatapat'awelabangela'mazwane* (those without toes get slippers)

The two proverbs above mean and are used in the same situations in Ndebele. The idea of failing to benefit from an opportunity is conveyed using aspects of the modern culture, creating idiomatic language change in Ndebele.

Modernity does not only modify existing idiomatic expressions but totally new ones can be coined from what makes the Ndebele environment and culture today. Ndhlukula alludes to this aspect in Ndebele when he says:

Izaga lezitsho ezintsha yilezi, inkomo yomlungu iselitsheni, umfazi womunye litshukela, ikati selilala eziko. (1980:129)

(Some new proverbs and sayings are these, a white man's cattle are in a rock, another man's wife is sugar, the cat now sleeps in the fireplace)

In the first saying there is mention of cattle, white men and minerals and money are implied in the rock. It simply means that whites do not depend on cattle but on money. The second one uses the aspect of sugar to express the pleasure derived from an adulterous sexual encounter. The third one is an expression of poverty when no fire is made to cook, the cat ends up sleeping in the fire place. Money, sugar, white men and cats came into the Ndebele culture latter and these are part of modernity and they show its influence in Ndebele idiomatic language change. The examples given by Ndhlukula are just the tip of an iceberg; many idiomatic expressions are coined from modernity creating a marked change in Ndebele idiomatic language. Some of the idiomatic expressions coined

in recent times from modernity are listed as sample syntagmatic dictionary entries below:

Ukuyifund'ivaliwe (To read a closed letter) – refers to seeing something sinister without being told.

Uzabhalela ekhaya (You are going to write a letter home) – means you are going to suffer.

Ukubamba ngekhona njengelacto (To hold by the corner like a packet of lacto) – refers to treating badly or cruelly.

Uzaqonda njengosolobhoni (You are going to be straight like Selbourne Avenue) – means you are going to suffer.

Ukuba yinjanji (To be a railway line) – to be very strong.

Ukugadisa imota engelamaviri (To make one board a car without wheels) – to deceive or lie to someone.

Ukuzwa ngebhatshi (To feel from your jacket) – not warned but expected to learn from the problem.

Ukubona okwabonwa yingidi (To see what was seen by the smoking pipe) – to suffer like a pipe that is bitten on one end and burning on the other.

Ukubarafu njengombheda wamaplanka (To be rough like a wooden bed) – refers to an insensitive person.

Ukubayirediyo (To be a radio) – refers to one who is too talkative.

Ukubhalela incwadi (To write one a letter) – to cast a bad spell on someone.

Ukuba yireza (To be a razor blade) – refers to a man who is involved in many sexual liaisons with different women.

Ukuba ngumtshina (To be a machine) – to be very efficient.

Ukuthwal'amagabh'avuzayo (To carry leaking tins) – to suffer.

Ukubaluhlambu (To be a bullet) – to be very fast.

Ukubalikhwiwa (To be a white man) – to be rich/ be honest or civilised or a customer.

Ukubangumsuzo wehovorosi (To be wind passed in an overall) – to be confused.

Ukuthatha kancane njengestimela samalahle (To take slowly like a steam train) – refers to a slow learner.

Ukuba ngumfundisi (To be a pastor) – one who is a good person.

Ukuba ngu fata (To be a Catholic Father [Priest]) – one who is celibate.

Ukuya emakhazeni (To go to the frost) – to die/go to mortuary.

Ukusebenz'ukhala njengekhandlela (To work while crying like a candle) – one who complains when given work to do.

Ukungagcinwa ngumsebenzi njengesepa (Work makes you slim like a soap) – one who does not benefit from a job.

Ukung'jayela njengo thomi (To get used to me like canvas shoes) – warning one to respect you.

Ukubangumpondokayitshintshwa (To be one who does not change a pound) – one who is stingy.

Ukuzifonela (To phone oneself) – one who is proud.

Ukudlisiwij'ephepheni (To eat a sweet wrapped) – to have sexual intercourse using a condom.

All the idiomatic expressions in the above mini-syntagmatic dictionary are coined using elements that came with modernity to the Ndebele language and culture. This point to the fact that the aspect of modernity is also responsible for Ndebele idiomatic language change.

Loan Translations

Some idiomatic expressions become part of the Ndebele language due to idiomatic borrowing. It is very difficult to tell which culture borrowed from the other, however, what is clear is that borrowing is inevitable in language contact situations. It also becomes very difficult to tell what is borrowed, is it the wording, the expression or is it the meaning. For example, Junod gives the Tsonga proverb:

U nga teki sava u ba ngwenya. (Do not throw sand to a crocodile)(1990:22)

The idea is that a crocodile lives in sand it has plenty of it; therefore it does not need more. The English use this idea when they say:

Do not take coal to Newcastle.

In the United Kingdom coal is mined largely in Newcastle. The two proverbs advise people to give to the poor not the rich who own the riches. It is hard to tell the direction of borrowing or may be it is just coincidental. Ndebele however bares some elements of idiomatic expressions that point to the fact that they are borrowed from other languages. Borrowing then becomes an aspect in Ndebele idiomatic language change through loan translations. Anderson supports the aspect of borrowing when he says:

When cultures come into contact with one another, borrowing takes place primarily in the realm of lexical items. (1973:95)

Anderson also points out that the direction of borrowing is usually downward from a prestigious culture to one of less prestige, this explains the many loan expressions in Ndebele from English. In this aspect idiomatic expressions are taken and just translated to Ndebele *rephonologising* some terms where necessary. An interesting example is one borrowed from Shona. The Shona have the proverb:

Mutumwa haana mbonje (The messenger has no scars)

This expression is used to warn angry people not to vent their anger on innocent messengers. The Ndebele borrowed the expression and translated it to:

Umthunywa kalampontshi (The messenger has no puncture)

The expression in Ndebele should be *umthunywa kaladuma* for it to match the Shona wording, however puncture serves the same purpose. The same happens with the English expression:

Go to hell

It is translated to be *hamba kohele* creating deficiencies in the surface meaning of the expression.

The aspect of loan translations has influenced Ndebele idiomatic expressions. Below are examples of loan translations with (a) giving the possible original form and (b) the Ndebele borrowed form:

3(a). Taking the law into your own hands

(b) *ukuthatha umthetho uwufake ezandleni zakho.* (Meting an extra-judicial punishment)

4(a). To wash your hands

(b) *ukugeza izandla.* (To clear your name and have nothing to do with something, taken from Pontius Pilate's action of washing his hands to show his innocence in the death of Jesus as related in the Christian bible)

5(a). Taking coal to Newcastle.

(b) *ukusa'malahl'eHwange.* (Taking coal to Hwange. Advising people to give to the poor not those who have. In Zimbabwe coal is mined in Hwange.)

6(a). Get into my shoes.

(b) *ngena ezicathulweni zami.* (Appealing to one to understand your problem as you do)

7(a). Borrowed clothes.

(b) *impahla zokwebolekwa.* (Referring to one who is someone's front who does not act on his own.)

8(a). Petticoat government.

(b) *ukubuswa yipitikoti.* (To be dominated by women)

9(a). My bread

(b) *isinkwasami*. (My source of income)

10(a). Concrete.

(b) *ikhonkili*. (Something strong. Derived from the strong mixture of cement and sand in building)

11(a). Shedding crocodile tears.

(b) *ukukhala inyembezi zengweya*. (One who pretends to be sorry yet they are responsible for your pain)

All the above examples are probably loan translations from English. It cannot be ruled out that English might have borrowed some from Ndebele. The loan translations seek to concretise the claim that this is an aspect in Ndebele idiomatic language change. Almost all the examples do not need a translation because the English version is a full translation.

The Lunatic Fringe Contribution to Ndebele Idiomatic Language Change

The lunatic fringe idiomatic expressions are those that initiate with a small group within the language, usually by eccentric members of a social group that decides to use a type of slang. In most cases these expressions are offshoots from fanaticism, obsession with trends like fashion and other social institutions. These expressions are often used informally for purposes of vividness and novelty. These groups use these expressions just to avoid conventional use of language at times, usually to achieve abuse and group identity. Aitchison asserts that:

An extreme view held by a minority of linguists is that language change is an entirely random and fortuitous affair, and that fashions in language are as unpredictable as fashions in clothes. (1972:107)

The lunatic aspect in Ndebele idiomatic language change is synonymous with the youth and their versions of Ndebele. It is the *tsotsitaal* derivation of idiomatic expressions. Slang does not have words only, it also has proverbs and sayings, and since there is Ndebele slang it follows that there are slang expressions that are now part of Ndebele idiomatic language. The lunatic fringe expressions are adapted into Ndebele idiomatic language increasing them through slang. There are many lunatic fringe idiomatic expressions in Ndebele today that started as slang 'madness' but with time they are used by all Ndebeles, young and old. Lunatic fringe Ndebele idiomatic expressions are schematised into a mini syntagmatic dictionary below:

Ukudlisepa (To eat soap) – to be foolish

Ukutshaya theni nothi (To beat ten nought) – to trick

Ukubases'mokweni (To be in smoke) – to be in trouble.

Ukungenamanzi (To have water getting where you are) – to be in trouble.

Ukubasjeneni (To be in a dog) – to be in trouble.

Ukutshayinyawo (To hit the legs) – to have sexual intercourse, usually used by boys and some young male adults

Ukufakilayini (To put a line) – to propose love.

Ukudlalisel'amadrakoni (To play dragon sticks at) – to beat.

Ukutshis'amaphatsi (To burn parts) – to spoil something.

Ukubangutitisi (To be a small dog) – to be someone's disciple.

Ziyabuya (Things are coming) – refers to trouble

Ziyabheda (Things are mad) – refers to trouble.

Ziyawa (They are falling) – refers to extreme entertainment.

Ziyakhupha yini? (Are they bringing out?) – A greeting or asking whether something is interesting.

These expressions are used everyday in Ndebele discourse. The older Ndebele did not use them, but this does not mean they did not have lunatic fringes of their time. These expressions slowly and surely find their way into the body of Ndebele idiomatic expressions creating new idiomatic expressions for the language.

Attitudes Towards Ndebele Idiomatic Language Change

It is very important to note that many Ndebeles are very conservative and do not want to formalise new language. Idiomatic expressions take a long time to be regarded as formal; they want to stick to old forms that are not very prevalent today. This attitude has created deficiencies of expressive force in written Ndebele when the language is rich in these new idiomatic expressions from the aspects discussed in the paper. The Ndebele geopolitical history creates the conservative nature. Ndebele in Zimbabwe behaves like a travelling language that fears extinction through excessive contact; this prompts the Ndebele to guard jealously their old language from change. Ncube in du Plessis (ed) notes Ndebele conservatism when he says:

However, the conservatives propagating a pure Ndebele language suppress the political causality by arguing for language 'emancipation' from Shona and English. Tribal causality is also suppressed by arguing for 'language purism' free from corruption by minority languages such as Kalanga and Tonga. (2005:301)

All languages do not rush to accommodate new elements; otherwise there would be no proper language. It takes time for the language to accept change. In most cases the change adapts to the language in time regardless of the conservative resistance. Nkosi and Msomi explain that the same is true with proverbs when they write:

Isaga sihlala sihlale sizesivumeleke ukuthi sesingasetshenziswa njenge saga, noma singaqanjwa isaga.(1992:135)

(A new proverb stays for a long time before it is accepted or used as a proverb)

While conservativeness is good, it cannot militate and win a war against language change. Language change is a natural process in all languages; therefore the aspect of Ndebele idiomatic language change should be considered as inevitable and be accepted as a force that helps the language to express itself in a better way and more relevantly.

Conclusion

Idiomatic expressions that are proverbs and sayings are derived from a people's experiences. No people can ignore their environment in language change, and idiomatic expressions cannot be left out. Ndebele idiomatic expressions increase through aspects such as contact with other cultures, borrowing, a changed culture and also from the lunatic fringe type of change as seen in Ndebele youth varieties. The nature of language change is such that it cannot be controlled and this explains that conservative language purists cannot stop change. They have failed in the past and they will continue to fail while Ndebele idiomatic expressions continue to grow from the discussed aspects.

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The Articulation and Projection of Gender Identities in Post Colonial Popular Music in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The modes of cultural expression predominant in any given society have a significant bearing on the organisation of that society and its modes of thought. Inadvertently or even deliberately, the dominant class in any named society can unilaterally exploit the main mode of expression to buttress and reinforce hidden agendas and machinations of their own subculture. An attentive examination of post-colonial popular music in Zimbabwe unmasks the inherent socially driven gender-typical traits embedded in popular songs by both female and male artistes. The male subculture seems to implicitly rear a male hegemonic agenda and an inherent passion to project the feminine class as exploitable and necessary adjuncts for its own socio-psychological gratification. The music tends to articulate and reproduce gender identities in society. In an industry that is dominated by male artistes, and in a decidedly patriarchal society, the male sub-culture's propensity towards perpetration and perpetuation of gender imbalances becomes a 'normalised' and irresistible urge. Taking this as a point of departure, this article seeks to throw light on the depiction of gender issues in music as a starting point in an endeavour to a fair portrayal of gender issues in national discourses. Taking music as a serious form of discourse, the study seeks a reconceptualization of the study of society through the examination of the social traits populated in musical composition. Cultural products should, thus, be appreciated through evaluating the ideological frame of the class that moulds them.

Key Words

GENDER, STEREOTYPE, PARTRIARCHY, HEGEMONY, DOMINANCE, PROJECTION, ARTICULATION.

Background

That music is locatable in every known culture, past and present, varying between times and space

(Durant and Graham, 1995) is a globally transacted truth closed to any dispute, what occupies crux space is what music is to these cultures. Meaning and use of music are persuaded by different philosophies of life in specific cultural events peculiar to a given social entity. Even birds sing beyond biological necessity (Storr, 1992:12). Music production can be viewed as a confluence of the need to express socially viewed concerns and an expression of the individuality of the composer. The creation, performance, significance and even meaning are instructed by the cultural milieu of that music.

In traditional African societies in general and in traditional Zimbabwe in particular, music has always been considered an integral form of cultural expression. From time immemorial music was regarded as a fundamental and authoritative form of discourse through which states of feeling were let out. Love, death, agony, anger, pity, and sorrow found expression in and through music (Durant and Welch, 1998). Being predominantly context specific, music was instrumental in the articulation of society's philosophy of life or culture at specific cultural occasions and processes. Important social occasions like deaths, war, traditional ceremonies and rites of passage were graced with songs that bore society's philosophical persuasion in these issues (Finnegan, 1970). Coordination of communal activities like weeding, harvesting, or threshing of millet was achieved through music. Chiwome (1996) observes that songs harmonised and eased communal labour.

In pre-colonial Zimbabwe music was regarded both as a repository of cultural values as well as a conduit for communicating the individual or group mind. As a repository, in music was embedded the vital traditional values of society like honesty, true love, respect and social solidarity. Music was therefore a critical way of cultural transmission. The song was considered a serious form of discourse alongside other oral art forms. Women and men communicated important messages in song as an interactional tool (Shepherd, 1991). Courtship and communication of feelings of love were laced with songs that carried society's conception of beauty and the sanctity of the institution of marriage. Through songs, Batidzirai (1998) observes that women would communicate to by-pass register restrictions by their husbands and in-laws. Since direct protest was considered heinous, women resorted to the song as an avenue for veiled protest. Through *jikinyira/mavingu* (veiled protest), songs were taken seriously by those to whom they were intended. Any woman who engaged in direct protest was considered uncultured or 'filthy mouthed' (*ane pamuromo*). She could incur upon herself a *gupuro* (divorce token) for projecting behaviour unbecoming of a wife. Songs therefore afforded women an opportunity to communicate their concerns and outwit the cultural censorship mechanisms imposed against them.

In a society where women bore the brunt of the harsh realities of life both man made (man as in male) and natural, women took refuge in music as a pain relief- an aphrodisiac of some kind (Makwenda, 2010). As they went about doing their household chores, women sang their sorrows away. They composed lullabies to soothe their crying babies and communicate with them while their husbands could hardly stand the sight of a crying baby. Social problems afforded women an opportunity to compose music and the power to populate it with their sub-cultural private limited agenda yet there is little evidence to convince one they abused this opportunity.

On one hand men had the audacity to say what they wanted in song or otherwise without any fear of reprisals particularly in a patriarchal society where they defined daily realities of life. A close analysis of the development of music shows that traditional music has always been a male domain through which their masculinity was amplified and stressed. Through it they communicated and paraded their exploits as expressed in war songs, and celebrated their dauntless achievements which

to them did not have anything to do with women in spite of their contribution outside the ring (champions are made outside the ring but are discovered in the ring, Kamwendo, 2005). Music carried within it the power and the self concept of the patriarchal domination of the other sex. The oppositional values of the male sub-cultures and their music have been grounded particularly in the traditional and conservative notions of gender roles and relations (Shepherd, 1991). Zimbabwe being a patriarchal society, the understanding of social reality as regards gender issues tended to sustain socially held perceptions of male superiority in virtually all aspects of life. Music tended to assist the masculine desire to dominate the feminine world through the infusion of the patriarchal agenda. Shepherd (1991) extrapolates this argument saying that the male desire to control women parallels their desire to dominate the world.

A closer attention on the content of war songs, traditional legendary songs and clan praise poetry attests to the thesis that males have always peddled a male chauvinist agenda ahead of feminist concerns. The male voice is evidently behind the composition while the female voice features in the rendition if not totally left out. The male subculture tended to control and manipulates the female counter-culture by means of objectification and isolation. This conceptualization of females as objects implied their exposure to wanton abuse by the male subculture for its psychological pleasure and socio-political manipulation. Viewed this way music, thus, became a contrivance by men to launch a well-calculated and determined onslaught on the other gender

In the post-colonial, Zimbabwe is signatory to a number of regional and international conventions on gender. Since the 1980s Zimbabwe has enacted and ratified many laws on women empowerment and gender. This commitment to gender issues is underscored by the various protocols ratified, such as; The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination, The Beijing Platform of Action, The African Protocol on Women's Rights and The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development . Locally, Zimbabwe has promulgated many pieces of legislation on gender, for instance, The Equal Pay Regulation, The Administration of Estates Act and The Sexual Offences Act, *inter-alia* (The Herald 27 April 2010).

Against a backdrop of ever-proliferating gender forums, ever-incubating gender theories and general awareness of gender issues internationally, it is intriguing to note that 30 years after independence the musical space is predominantly male dominated. Across the whole spectrum of musical genres more than 90 % musical space is occupied by male artistes with the gospel genre providing some consolation space for female artistes. Most females feature in music circles mainly as backing vocalists or as dance troupes without active participation in the creation and composition of the song. Their involvement in the performance instead of composition hazards an anomaly and alerts a feeling that their voice may not be heard or they may be used to sate the male sexual appetites.

Music is a site of power and influence; those who participate in the process of its composition have the prerogative of populating it with their own agenda. With the statistic that musical composition is lopsided in favour of men, it becomes interesting to find out what gender concerns are raised in Shona music after independence.

Conceptual Framework

All interpretation of works of art, consciously or implied, draws on the insights of an existing or evolving literary theory. Likewise, this research is instructed by the gender literary theory as a tool for analysing the projection and articulation of gender issues in music. The gender literary theory explores the instances and portrayal of gender in various universes of discourse. It is a halfway house between feminism and the masculine or male gender theory. The theory came to the fore first as a feminist theory but has subsequently developed to include the investigation of all gender sexual categories and identities as identifiable in works of art. It is, therefore, neither exclusively feminist nor masculine making it a fair option for analysing the dichotomous subject of gender. Other options like feminism and masculinity, though useful, adopt rather extreme idiosyncratic positions on gender issues thereby making them too one-sided.

The gender theory as an interpretive tool starts on the premise that every process and activity in society is gendered, masks or exudes a gender mantle (Stanely and Zinn, 1994: 232). Gender is imbedded in every expression of culture, and culture in the widest sense. The gender theory attempts to interrogate these cultural expressions in order to examine how the concept of gender runs through them, with a view to establishing how accurately or fairly is such a portrayal of gender (Klarer, 2004). The theory examines the use of language, theme selection, behaviour and identity projection, gender roles, access to wealth and opportunities as familiar platforms of gender expression. Interestingly, these motifs are recurrent in musical composition and as such this article can not be released from the obligation to employ the gender theory as an interpretive tool.

Gender Issues in Music

An attentive exploration of musical composition in Zimbabwe exposes the centrality of gender and gender-related issues in music. Issues to do with authority, power, marginality, and access to resources, domestic violence, love; family and many others are prevalent in music and are normally parcelled out along gender lines. With the male dominance, in terms of space in musical composition, it is interesting to note how the male sub-culture seems to rear a systematic agenda to belittle and objectify the feminine class and solidify their own hold on authority and influence. A close examination of Zimbabwean popular music confirms Pollak's (1985: 183) fears that since texts (musical texts included-) are products of a phallogocentric culture it seems an *a priori* certainty that they will mirror their misogynist interests. Indeed, there is very little evidence to calm her nerves. Contrary to Vambe's (2002: 90) observation that Zimbabwean music cannot be reduced to gender essences, the prevalence of gender issues in music is indeed startling.

The Blame shift motif

Although in all the societies of the world the tag of war of the sexes is palpably evident, the issue of its genesis begs explanation. Pseudo-genetic, cultural and religious theories have been used to explain the battle of the sexes. Explanations steeped in biological theories account for the gender issue from the chromosomal and hormonal differences between women and men (Stanley and Zinn, 1994). The cultural theories base their explanations on 'what our forefathers used to do' without committing themselves to interrogating the validity and fairness of the same cultural practices. The biblical theories are predicated on the well known story of creation and the subsequent 'Adamic deception' at the instigation of the 'Evean connivance' with the scheming serpent.

In Zimbabwean music the relationships that subsist between the genders seem to subscribe to some of these theories. The biblical story of the 'fall of man' (man as in humanity- though in itself unfair) has been extrapolated to imply the fall of the biological male and not the fall of humankind. Paul Matavire's *Dhiyabhorosi Nyoka* (The Evil Serpent) which rhymes with Bob Marley's *No Woman No Cry* traces the problems facing the male human species to the treachery of the women as documented in the Biblical story of Genesis 3. The artist's reference to Adam as the custodian of the law of Eden and as the one from whom Eve was taken seems to legalise and remind women of the authority of men over them and on one hand inscribe their subsidiary role to men. In placing the blame on women the male persona seems to run away from his culpability of abnegation of responsibility on a law divinely handed down for his custody. It was folly on the part of Adam to succumb to the scheme of the devil. In his self defence, Matavire seems to suggest that Adam should have asked the Lord,

"What sin did I commit before this woman was created?
Check my record!"

His defence seems to place men on a moral high ground while women are presented as the opposite of the moral plane. Matavire, like Adam, seems to imply that treachery (as represented by women) is a higher order transgression than folly (men). In many other works of art, women are generally considered shallow, rootless and inherently immoral and as Kurts (1998) observes, men are presented as victims of the female sub-culture.

In sharp contrast to the above interpretation of the biblical story, Mutukudzi, the 2010 Africana Womanism Award winner justifies why he was considered for the award when he flows against the common masculine tide of opinion to regard a woman as a perfect life partner. In *Mbabvu Yangu* (My Rib), the male persona admits that prior to his marriage he was incomplete. The artist thus sings:

Ndiwe mbabvu yangu...
Wadzisa upenyu hwangu
Hwange huri gasva
You are my rib
You have made my life whole
My life was incomplete

Mutukudzi adopts the Biblical story of the rib transplantation. Eve was created from Adam's rib to become his helper. Like Yvonne Vera whose *Under The Tongue*, (1996) attempts to recreate the male and female gender as equal and complementary, Mutukudzi does not blame the woman but considers her as timely intervention to save him the blushes of extended bachelorhood. He seems to peddle the position that life without a woman is incomplete, diametrically opposed to Matavire's thesis that women constitute a stumbling block against masculine interests.

The male subculture seems to exploit the musical space to portray women as their own worst enemies. In a number of songs, women are portrayed as engaging in some sisterarchy of their own. Sisterarchy is the domination of the weaker female by the dominant female. Although this is rampant within the feminine ranks, by some extension one can say that men can be implicated as shifting the blame of exploitation onto the very victims of their vice

Leornard Dembo's in *Vamwene neMuroora* (Mother and Daughter in Law) becomes the

unsanctioned arbiter in an age old duel of the in-laws as he encourages the two hostile camps to locate common ground and thus he pleads:

Vamwene nemuroora ndapota
Pindai mose vhuserere
Mugochengeta vana ava zvakanaka
 Mother and daughter in law, I beg you
 Be in harmony
 For the proper upbringing of children

Women are presented as their own enemies when in fact men are normally at the centre of it all. Sheddie in Macheso's *Sheddia* is urged to connect well with the mother in-law and thus the artist says:

Gara mushe Sheddie muroora
Vamwene havarohwe
Vane mwoyo wokubereka
 Stay well Sheddie the daughter in law
 The mother in law should not be beaten
 She has a motherly spirit

The centre of attrition is the man himself who can not balance his attention on both his mother and wife. Like Svinurai in Sharai Mukonoweshuro's *Akafuratidzwa Mwoyo* (1983) whose heart has been torn between his mother and wife, the husband tries to restrain the wife from quarrelling with his mother. Sheddie stands her ground and vows that she will not run away from her matrimonial home in spite of the challenges posed by her in-laws.

Oliver Mutukudzi, champions the crusade to reclaim the soiled value of the woman. In *Mamuramba*, the artist censures the unrealistic expectations of society on the daughter in-law. No matter how good the daughter in-law may be, society always sees a blemish in her,

Muroora kushinga kuita madanha,
Mamuramba
Ndomuwanepi ane ndoro chena?
 Even if the daughter-in-law tries to do anything to please her in-laws
 You still reject her
 Where can I get the best woman?

The three lines encapsulate a sense of persistent ingratitude, dissatisfaction and lack of appreciation for the *muroora* (daughter in-law) even if she tried to do anything good.

In some cases the male subculture seems to load on their weaknesses on the female subculture. Matavire in *Ndimi Makazvitanga* seems to justify men's moral weakness in abusing his wife's young sister. Probably hiding behind the finger of culture where the wife's younger sister is regarded as a 'wife', the male persona blames his wife for setting presage conditions for the eventuality, thus he goes;

*Muramu: Ndimi makazvitanga vakoma,
Taurai babamukuru ndaneta...*

*Babamukuru: Kutora gonzo kuisa mudura renzungu
Rikadya zvaro mungati rakaipa here?*

Wife's young sister: You are responsible for this my elder sister
Speak my sister's husband, I am tired

Sister's husband: You put the rat into ground nut grenary
Can you blame it if it eats the ground nuts?

The rhetoric question is too obvious to beg an answer. It is too clear, the artiste seems to imply, that his wife is to blame for her sister's pregnancy. The cultural implication of the proverb '*muramu mukadzi*' (your wife's young sister is a wife) bears overtones of responsible custodianship not abuse. In this case it is deliberately manipulated to bolster the man's broken line of defence.

The issue of fertility is one area that has seen the woman at the receiving end of the blame trade motif. The marriage institution in Africa is seen as way of ensuring continuity of not only the human race but the continuity of male species as they finally bear the family name. Failure to conceive severely undermines the quintessence of marriage. The first suspect, if not the only, of infertility is usually the female. Women are merely seen as receptacles of men's generative seed. Their infertility is therefore seen as a failure to receive the seed than to conceive. Men are seen as possessing the generative powers to create offspring which guarantee the continuity of their family line. In Marshal Munhumumwe's *Mbereko* (fertility) the female persona behind the musical line laments her predicament of failure to conceive. The artist does not afford the listener mental space to imagine that it could have been the husband who was infertile, so observes Vambe (2007). Failure to conceive attaches negative labels on the implicated individual. It is worse with the male species, hence the tendency to impute blame on the woman as a way of saving themselves the blushes. Women usually endure the agony of the accusation since they are socially denied proving the contrary. Men on one hand can leap the marriage fence to test themselves with other women in the neighbourhood. Presenting women as the condemned party in fertility issues ascribes an indelible label on them that they are prime suspects each time such an issue arises and failure to acknowledge that both parties can be equally blameable is grossly unfair.

In some musical pieces men fail to acknowledge and accept their own weaknesses. Tongai Moyo's *Ndiro Yababa* (The father's Plate) is a true reflection of what some women have come to conclude about men. Men who are promiscuous and morally touselled are usually referred to as 'dogs'. Dogs can eat anything that comes their way including '*zvemusango*' (food from outside the home). This has led to domestic conflicts particularly in the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Moyo openly accepts that '*varume tinomboresva*' but objects to the label that men are dogs. Thus the male artiste sings;

*Inga varume tinomboresva
Asi kuvira kwezuva ndingori ini murume
Taneta nokutukwa kuti varume muri imbwa
Asi imbwa inofambidzana nembwa
We man sometimes stray
But at the end of the day I am the husband
We are tired of being labelled dogs
But a dog befriends a dog*

The artiste's fake admission of wrong is proved when he says if man are dogs, women by reason of marriage to man are equally dogs. Men want women to accept and understand them whenever they indulge in filth. He reminds us of Simon Chimbetu's *Comma* who attacks the woman in question for rejecting him because he has been arrested. The artiste casts an impression that women are irresponsible and inconsiderate. The reason for his incarceration is underplayed while the issue of rejection is amplified. It seems women must simply stay the course even when men indulge in waywardness.

Women are generally presented as jealous and talkative rumour mills whose business or lack of it is to major on trivialities and trifles while men are associated with serious discourses. Sugar Sugar's *Mune Pamuromo* castigates the woman for being talkative without really labouring to explain why the woman indulges in it. The greater breadth of the musical piece core cliques '*mune pamuromo*'. This slots women into a stereotyped character bloc. Daiton Somanje's *Mai Linda* on the same score continues to punch the label that women are pathetically bothersome as occasioned by his constant humming of the words '*mai Linda iwe unoshupa*' (Mother of Linda you are nagging). This has the effect of presenting women as generally pesky and irksome while covertly portraying the male subculture as victims of such annoyances.

Bye and large, although the female subculture has its own civil wars, the masculine class seems to be implicated in most of the injustices visited upon the former. They wield a lot of political power, control and own resources, and have the backing of culture which in most cases is easily abused.

The prostitute and pleasure seeking image

The pursuit of moral principles is one virtue characterising the Zimbabwean people yet the quest for pleasure for its own sake harbingers their downfall. In music, prostitution and pleasure chase are presented as the nemesis of *unhu/ubuntu* (African conception of model personality). The two are usually presented as subsisting *in locos*, albeit along gender lines. It is the observation of this research that the maledictory songs against unfaithful lovers are addressed in far greater numbers to women than men.

Probably stemming from the blame trade motif alluded to above, the issue of the prostitute portrayal of gender seems to be lopsided against the feminine class. Although it takes the two members of opposite sexual divide in any illicit heterosexual liaison, it is the feminine subculture that eventually bears the prostitute image as if the very practice is unilaterally transacted. Women are labelled as loose and dangerous. The male voice in Paul Mpfu's *KwaMurambinda* laments the betrayal of trust by a wife whom he married from the rural area (traditionally associated with sound moral upbringing) as she succumbs to the pressure of the 'town lights'

Ndakabva naye kure kure kwaMurambinda
Kuuya Harare ndichiti ndamuwana...
Ndakuvara musoro, ndakuvara...
 I came with her from out there in Murambinda
 All the way to Harare thinking that I had gotten the right one...
 I am totally confused

The artiste seems to project women as unstable and painfully low in fidelity to a point where the male persona in the musical text is heartbroken, troubled and loses his confidence in the wife. Kurts

(1998) observes, the prostitute image is used as grand metaphor for men's degradation, however, at the hands of the 'loose' feminine class.

Biggie Tembo's *Babamunini Francis* laments the infidelity of women. The female character in the text is accused of clandestinely importing a male partner in the matrimonial home in spite of all the food and clothes the husband brings home. She plays the ungrateful character by indulging in extra-marital affairs against a background of unlimited supply of 'goodies.' What is not clear is whether the husbands is optimally meeting his connubial sexual obligations or not. Matavire's *Ndakavinga Iye* (All I came for is Him) seems to imply that material gifts are nothing if the husband does not fulfil his conjugal obligation to the satisfaction of the wife. In some cases as Susan Mapfumo's *Baba VaBhoyi* (My Husband) would prove some husbands do not bring adequate money to the family and this becomes the source of friction in the family. In most cases irresponsible husbands spend on beer and pleasure more than they do on their family's upkeep while informally employed women are the power behind family sustenance in some marriages.

System Tazvida's *Anodyiwa Haataure* portrays women as vampires that prey on men to strip them of their hard earned resources and thus he says,

Dai pasina mabhebhi...
Kana imba ndingadai ndiinayo
Kana mota ndingadai ndiinayo
 Were it not because of these girls
 I could own a house
 I could even be driving

System Tazvida presents women as being greedy pests bent on sucking the wealth men accumulate. It is the masculine class who seem to be supplying material gifts in return for the love they eventually get from their opposite sex. Men seem not to realise their folly in exchanging love for money and in turn assault the feminine class for their own self inflicted injury. Instead they go on to project women as materialistic and outright crooks who cannot be trusted (Vambe, 2002: 88). The victim is thus crucified on the blame cross. This has the effect of stereotyping women as incapable of unconditional love.

An interesting observation to note is how some female artistes 'connive' with male artistes to present their classmates as loose and culturally unsound. Busi Ncube conspires with the masculine tendency to present women as loose. In her *Stembeni* the eponymous character is chided for going to nightclubs and leaving children unattended. This collusion by male and female artiste to pejoratively depict women hazards a feeling that there might be master narrative to which the artistes are responding and affirming. The cultural logic has trained people to purchase the malicious lie that women are loose and in Zimbabwean music that falsehood is oversold and sold out.

The street theatre comedian-turned-musician, Kapfupi's *Mai Nga* seems to regard men's engagement in multiple relations as a celebrated virtue when Baba Nga boasts:

Ndingagara nemukadzi mumwe gore rese,
Kuti ikarenda here?
 How can I spend a year with one wife

As if she was a calendar?

Implicitly imbedded in Kapfupi's piece is the vein that multiple partnership is considered a virtue only when men engage in it and is a vice only when the female subculture is involved in it. Prostitution is, thus, defined from the perspective of women although 'it takes two to tango.'

HIV and AIDS

The prevalence of HIV and AIDS from the closing stages of the 1980s decade to present has seen artistes develop a new discourse in which new conceptions of gender images were evolved.

The AIDS pandemic continues to be characterised with negative portrayal of both women and men with the blame scale tilting against the former. Paul Matavire's warning, *Yakauya AIDS*, seems to innocently rebuke men for their promiscuity when he says:

Kune vamwe vedu vasingadi kuona dhirezi kuti nzve, zvaipa!
Vamwe havadi kunzwa azora mafuta anonhuwira...
 Some of us cannot simply have ladies pass by
 Some cannot resist the pull of sweet fragrance

Implicitly, the artiste is warning members of his male subculture not pursue women since behind the good dresses and the attractive perfume is the deadly disease. Women are covertly labelled as dangerous AIDS infested people to be quarantined from men. This seems to be the undertone also conveyed by Zhakata when he says "*poison yakadirwa mutsime rinocherwa nemunhu wese.*" (poison was poured into the community well) Vambe (1998, p.64) observes that to say poison was poured into the *community well* is to imply female sexual organs and this transforms a genuine victim into a dangerous one. This label helps to peddle the malicious myth that AIDS is a women's disease. The one who 'poured' the poison into the well is equally culpable.

Closely aligned to the AIDS pandemic is an upsurge in the prevalence of rape and child abuse cases. Progress Chipfumo, a male artiste, scathingly attacks members of his own subculture for their sexual abuse of minors. Some members of the patriarchal subculture are presented as having morally declined to a point where they have raped their own girl children. The musician is puzzled; "*Kurhepa mwana wako here?*" (Raping your own child?) Rape from within has become a prevalent form of paternalistic incest in Zimbabwe. Fathers are seen as reneging on their parental responsibilities to the extent of abusing the very children who look up to them for security and protection. There is an undertone imbedded in the song that children ought to place trust in their fathers with hesitancy. For the girl child, it places fathers among the 'Bewares'

Equally shocking is Mutukudzi's realisation in *Todii* (What shall we do) that some HIV infected husbands are raping their wives hence the artiste sings:

Zinorwadza sei kubhinywa newaugere naye
Uchiziva kuti unahwo utachiwana
 How painful it is to be raped by the one you are staying with?
 Knowing that you now have the HIV virus

This is inconsiderate and a violation of the women's right of decision making. Women are presented

as people who are oppressed and without a voice. Traditionally the wife can not deny the husband the right of access to her body. If ever she does so it will be tantamount to giving the husband a green light to seek for an immediate alternate in her place.

Love and Gender

The subject of love is indeed an oversubscribed motif in Zimbabwean popular music. Love songs have occupied cradle space in the music industry. In the African cultural setting love songs were composed simultaneously before and after play (lovemaking). The songs would stimulate romantic feelings as they celebrated the sexual attributes associated with members of one's clan. However, few people ever bothered to analyse their content. Populated in their composition are diverse perceptions and images of gender that both male and female artistes labour to put across in a number of musical pieces. In this subject women and men are perceived differently in music.

True love is very elusive to find. Men believe that women are not that loving while women content that true loving men are very hard to come by. Ato in Buchi Emecheta's (1979: 75) *The Joys Of Motherhood* is convinced that, "Many men can make love and give babies easily but cannot love." Busi Ncube is a rare female voice against a platoon of male voices whose popular hit *True Love* is a genuine call for commitment to true love. Though the pen behind the composition is feminine, ironically, the male persona in the musical piece seems to plead for true love from a woman. To this point the female artiste seems to have assumed the masculine voice. The agony in her plea for true love doubts the genuineness of the love women must give to men. The song is synonymous with Bob Marley's 1970's hit, *Is this Love* composed for his wife Rita where reggae virtuoso questioned love women give to their husbands.

Marshal Munhumumwe in *Rudo Moto* believes that love, like a fire, requires continuous fanning for the ambers not to die. The male singer believes it is the responsibility of women to preserve their place in marriage through taking good care of their hygiene otherwise they send their husbands looking for 'greener pastures'. The artiste scathingly attacks women's complacency:

Rudo imoto runotokuchidzirwa vanaamai
Musasti zvandaroorwa ini handichageze
Chokwadi munosiwa mumba umu mave moga mai
 Love is a fire it needs fanning
 Don't say I am now married I no longer have to bath
 You will surely be left alone in the house

Men are likened to babies that have to be mollycoddled every time and easily attracted to well dressed and smart women. In sharp contrast, Nnu Ego in Emecheta believes 'men are never ugly.' Is it that women are as desperate for marriage as not be choosy or is it a question of looking at the heart? The debate dies hard.

Society has systematically portrayed women as desperate to preserve their marriage to a point where some women have gone to use love portions. Those who love their wives openly are said to be *vakadyiswa* (those who are said to have been bewitched by a love portion). However, Mutukudzi's *Mupfuhwira Rudo* seems to silence the critics in support of the wife. To him those who opposed to the intimacy that subsists within a couple should simply know that it is none of their

business.

In some pieces of music women are generally presented as delicate priced possessions to be striven for by members of their opposite subculture. Time, effort and resources have to be invested to secure their hearts. Macheso in *Sarah* presents women in relationships as products of tenacity and perseverance. The male character recounts how he shrugged off a stiff challenge from rival suitors to eventually land Sarah:

Zvandakarumwa nembwa dzekwavo maindiseka
Zvmainyenyeredza kureva maimutya imi
Zvandakapedza huswa hwesango
Ndichimufambira...
Nhasi ndave naye mave kugumbuka sei
 You laughed at when I was bitten by their dogs
 You were afraid of approaching her
 I had to visit her time and again to secure her love
 Now that I have her you start you become jealousy

The artiste sheds an impression that one has to strive against adversity, timidity, and jealous to secure a lady's heart. In sync with Macheso's observation is Simon Chimbetu who, in *Magobo*, is driven to a point where he has to take up any menial job in order to win the love of the woman. In Dembo's *Chitekete* the artiste sings:

Pauri pane dandemutande
Pane soso rinobaya
Zvandisina shangu ndokutora seiko?
 Where you are there is a web
 It is thorny
 I am barefooted how can I get you?

It is difficult to land the lady of his desire because of the many huddles he must overcome. Some fathers and even brothers can set a hedge around their children or sister to a point where it becomes difficult for the suitor to approach the girl. In some cases, as Mutukudzi, in *Nyanga Yenzou* observes, the bride price can be too prohibitive. To make an unreasonable demand like elephant tusk is to ask for the moon.

Men are considered jealousy as they are presented as clandestinely seeking to dethrone each other. Musical space is replete with instances in which male characters express their insecurity to members of their own subculture who seek to steal their girlfriends from them.

Perspectives of Gender in Marriage and the Family

There is a culturally driven notion that the only safe place for a woman and a man is in the institution of marriage, though the same 'solution' is riddled with its own gender related challenges. Such challenges range from gender roles to power relations within the subcultures. In her epistolary novel, *So Long a Letter*, renowned writer, Mariama Ba' (1982) observes that:

If only each would accept the other's failures... if each could correct bad habits without harping on about them... if each could penetrate to the other's most secrets to foretell failure and to support.

The ultimate terminus for love relationships is marriage which is replete with challenges such as failure to accept unpretentious and homely faults of either party.

Fungisai Zvakavapano Mashavave, a female artiste bears testimony to the view that women believe as their safe place – marriage. In her *Svitsa* (wedding), the musical diva owes it to God and congratulates herself for a feat other girls have failed to achieve. She sings,

Iyi isvitsa yangu tsvene...
Vezero vangu vakakundikana vachida
 This is my holy wedding
 My age mates wanted to have it but failed

Fungisai owes it to God that it has finally happened to her. There is frustration for those who fail to land a marriage because society attaches labels to such conditions. Even when one manages to secure a suitor another huddle that can delay or possibly block the marriage is the hefty *lobola* charged.

Mutukudzi and Simon Chimbetu seem to be against certain decisions taken by their own subculture, particularly the issue of hefty *lobola* charges. In *Nyanga yeNzou* (elephant tusk) and *Tezvara Waramba* (father-in-law has refused - to accept *lobola*) respectively, the artistes portray their class as greedy and exacting unrealistic *lobola* charges. In most of these *lobola* sessions the males dominate in the charging of the bride price at the exclusion of the females although they are critical in raising the children.

Gluts of musical pieces have been churned out along gender perceptions on marriage and the institution of the family. The traditionally received position of a family is that the husband is the head (*musoro*) and the wife as the support structure. Nicholas Zaccharia seems to stress the traditionally accepted roles of the partners in marriage when he says:

Musoro wemba ndiani?
Ndimika baba
Mukadzi ndiye mbariro
Inobata huswa hwedenga
 Who is the head of the family?
 Of course it is you the father
 The wife the supporting purlin
 Which binds the thatching grass together

The artiste tends to reinforce the traditionally held view of role specification but conveniently leaves out the concept of '*musha mukadzi*' (the women constitute the home) which recognises the important role women play in the home.

Untypical of the machoist stance characteristic of Matavire or even in counterfeit admiration of the opposite class, the artist in '*Dhindindi* (Discotheque Joy) *Full Time*' seems to venerate the role of

women in marriage when he congratulates the married:

Makorokoto kune vakaroora
Muchagara zvenyu muchinzwa inzwi dete mumba
Mukadzi mushonga unorapa
Dzungu rinopera kana uchinge waroora
 Congratulations to the married
 You will enjoy the soft voice in your home
 A wife is like a curing medicine
 The mentally unstable will be restored their sanity

The woman is regarded both as an entertainer and a prescription for the unstable man. The soft voice is considered sweet music to the male heart. However, upon closer examination Matavire seems to imply that married men are deprived of indulging in 'dhindindi' fulltime because of the women's restrictive curfews. It is not clear whether 'dhindindi' is a compensatory outing for the bachelors or it is an outing married men miss because of their commitment to their wives.

In Simon Chimbetu's 'SaManyika', the artist seems to certify the place of a married woman as the kitchen. The female character complains of the husband's encroachment into a field traditionally meant for women:

Pandinokanga wave kutora uchikangazve
Pandinobika woravira nekasiyanwa
 You recook what I have already cooked
 What I cook you scornfully taste with the last finger

It becomes clearer in the text that the husband has developed a small house that he seems to scorn everything the wife does but later due to the veiled protest by the wife he confesses that his love had been taken away by some material centred lady. This further pictures women as greedy vultures wont on assaulting the fidelity of men in marriage. Interestingly Samanyika's wife in her protest was considering going back her parents' home implying that women possess no right to remain even when they are objectionable to a situation in marriage. They cannot drive the husband out of the matrimonial home no matter the circumstances.

The Shona cultural system accepts polygamy as a symbol of power and wealth. Some parents actually betroth their children to rich polygamous men to bail themselves out of hunger or poverty. However Matavire's *Taurai Zvenyu* seems to project women as desperately jostling for recognition by the husband. The male persona clearly acknowledges that the women are not satisfied with the love he is giving:

Zvamuraimi munokomburena
Zvamuraimi musingagutsikani nerudo
 It is you who can be satisfied with love
 It is you who are always complaining

The polygamist is 'shockingly puzzled' that his wives are complaining of lack of attention. Although tension and rivalries characterise polygamous families as Turner (2002: 54) would note, for Matavire to blame the victim instead of exonerating them estimates to plain masculine

arrogance. He is starving them of adequate attention yet he goes on to brag about having five wives and still 'wanting some more' and in the process christening himself 'Dr Love' making himself a personification of love itself.

Marriage is presented as an unsafe place for some women as their husbands under the influence of alcohol or its pretext engage in domestic violence. Oliver Mutukudzi's *Tozeza Baba* (we are afraid of the father). The artiste through a child voice laments the common trend of husbands who constitute a threat to the very families whose custody they should certify. Wives are beaten for no apparent reason. The child behind the musical line sings:

Imi baba manyanya kurova amai
Imi baba manyanya kutuka amai
Munoti isu vana tofara sei?
Tozeza baba, vauya vadhakwa
 You daddy persistently beat mother
 You daddy persistently scold mother
 How do you think we can ever be happy?
 We are afraid of daddy who has come home drunk

Domestic violence has threatened family security and bliss. Men are projected as irresponsible and a real menace to the security of the family if they indulge in alcoholism and drug abuse.

Domestic violence normally leads to incidences of divorce and instability in families but once again women's commitment is evident as some steadfastly cling to falling ceilings all in the hope providing a motherly shelter for their children. Steve Makoni's *Handiende* is a classic example to this claim:

Handiende
Ndinogarira vana vangu
Ndinofira vana vangu
 I am not going anywhere
 I am staying for my children
 I will die for my children

Such a never say die spirit is locatable in Mutukudzi's *Tozeza Baba* where the wife says; *ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu* (kill me if you can, I will not leave my children). The woman is pledging her life for her children. Such is a feminine spirit which connects them to their children.

In divorce, men soon realise their vulnerability to the misery of pushing it alone. In most musical notes men later on rediscover their sanity and seek reunion with their wives. As a come back technique, they dangle memories of bliss and the issue of children in order to appeal to the conscience of their wives. The male voice in Leonard Zhakata's *Chiuuya* (Please come back) reminds his wife of the good times they used to have. Sings Zhakata,

Kana ndisingakanganisi takatenderana
Pakuyambuka tichabatana maoko...
Chiuyaka tichienda kwataichienda
Chiuyaka tichiita zvatachiita
Nechimiro pane vamwe handichina
 If I am not mistaken we vowed
 (In difficult times) we will cross together
 Please come back and we will visit those places we used to visit
 Please come back and we will do what we used to do
 I have lost all the respect that I used to have before the people

The male voice's appeal to the erstwhile golden days amounts to a crafted trap of word to win back the female for cheap manipulation. The phrase *tichiita zvatachiita* (that we may do what we used to do) is a loaded saying in Shona. It might imply even having sex, playing together or simply working together. If the former is implied then one can extrapolate it to infer that the male persona aims exploiting the female sexuality. The male voice believes that by reunion to the wife he recoups his soiled identity. The fear of loss of respect by the males is again amplified in Zhakata's *Mai Liossa* where the male voice appeals to Mai Liossa who has had to desert him because the marriage was not working. He says:

Wandihinda pamhanza kuti anoramaba vakadzi.
Richave zita rangu dakara mukufa
 You have put a mark on my forehead that I divorce women
 This shall be my identity till I die

The male voice like the Biblical Cain now has a mark on the forehead but Cain's mark would mean his sparing while in this context it is a negative signifier. If it is painful for the man it should equally be painful for the deserted woman as Susan Mapfumo would express in *KwaMurehwa*. Like Lawino, in P'Bitek's *Song Of Lawino* who is being abandoned for a young wife and the female artiste fears that she may end up with no home.

Authority and Access to Wealth

The issue of authority is one aspect that rears itself along gender lines. Most musical pieces project males as either having or abusing authority. Women on one hand are projected as victims of abuse of authority by men. The verbally pyrotechnic Paul Matavire caricatures men's abuse of their social status to coax women into submitting to their sexual advances. In *Tanga Wandida* he presents the powerful boss who imposes his authority on the female character to initiate love advances on her and realise his immediate selfish objectives. The boss uses his authority to cajole the powerless woman into trading her integrity on the alters of job security for the boss's own erotic satisfaction hence he says:

Muchafa nenyota makumbo ari mumvura
 You will die of thirst while your legs are in the water

The male persona in this piece goes on to attempt to snatch a married woman in the company of her husband by offering her a front seat. Like M.A Nanga in Achebe's *A Man of The People* (1966), who abused his political muscle to dispossess Odili of his love, property is here abused to oblige a

woman into yielding to men's selfish demands. The car, hotel rooms and office spaces are abused by some male bosses as private bedrooms for uncouth liaisons with female private secretaries. Authority, property and money are used as a decoy for securing the female's love. The gullible, like Eve, are easily wheedled into acquiescing to the predatory schemes of the 'dominant' class. The marginalised feminine class is systematically inveigled into yielding to the very pressure that sustains their marginality. Women are presented as an easily cheated people, who like children, easily succumb to the pressure of 'gifts'. They are presented as accepting superficial material gifts in exchange for personal integrity.

In some cases some unscrupulous affluent men have been projected as abusing their monetary authority to exploit young ladies. Tsve'Gie's (1998:16) poem *Sugar-Dad or Is He my Grandpa?* Says:

He smells of money
 Yet stinks evil
 He charms me
 But he is about to destroy me

The poet discovers that the sugar-dad is not genuine in his advances but is bent on destroying the unsuspecting victims. Men are projected as engaging in hit and run affairs where they explore and exploit female sexuality.

In family matters, the masculine subculture's propensity towards dictating the pace is evident. In Jonah Moyo's *Grace*, the male character shouts to quieten the women who wanted to have a voice in the issue of *lobola*. The persona yells:

E! E! E!
Madzimai ngaanyarare uko
 Ladies shut up!

The feminine subculture is presented as voiceless and unworthy of participating actively in serious discourses, incidentally, like *lobola*, even though it is their daughter who is being given in marriage.

The issue of access to wealth and resources is also a gendered motif in music. In African societies, once wealth is created, it is passed on to succeeding generations though a gendered inheritance system that tends favour male subculture more than it does the other gender. However, with increased intercourse with other cultural expressions, society has tended to procure and blend some aspects of the other cultures into their own.

The subject of inheritance is one issue male musicians have tended to handle in some of their pieces. However, Oliver Mutukudzi seems to present women as vulnerable to certain interpretations of the Shona culture. He represents what has been referred to as 'men writing the feminine'- to borrow Morgan's (1994) book title. In *Neriah*, the artiste seems to lend a shoulder on the bereaved wife the relatives of whose husband's brother had wanted to grab all the deceased's properties. The artiste seems to encourage his sister not to despair but to seek divine asylum as if to imply that the

only hope for the widowed is God and not the social fabric of the family. Vambe (1998:88) roundly castigates resorting to divine sanctuary as a solution:

...this song encourages Nena (sic) and women in general to pray to God instead of educating women to have recourse to the legal courts to have the women protected by law

Presenting women as helpless and vulnerable people requiring the saving hand of God both distances men from the very vices making women vulnerable and the very solution for the vices. However, Zimbabwe having promulgated some pieces of legislation since independence provides enough asylums to the victims of patriarchal domination. Unfortunately, the victim does not seem to know such a legal package exists.

In *Nhaka Sandi Bonde* (Inheritance is not about sex) Mutukudzi redefines to his male counterparts that inheritance is not about sex but all about responsibility for the family of the deceased. His piece comes at a time when the culture of inheritance was taking a jungle turn as many males used the platform to sate their sexual appetite and the artiste aptly advises:

Nhaka sandi bonde
Nhaka kuriritira mhuri yakasiwa nemufi...
 Inheritance is not about sex
 Inheritance means taking care of the deceased's family

The male subculture is presented as ravenous and covetous to point where they seek to exploit the female sexuality ahead of assuming social responsibility over the family of the deceased.

Language and image creation in music

The language that is used in music seems to construct images that provoke revulsion in members of the other class. The 'sweet chocolate' language that litters the musical space, on closer analysis leaves certain classes of people prone to the wiles of their opposite gender. On closer examination, the language that is employed in Zimbabwean music seems to perpetuate and reinforce male dominance by trivialising and sexualising the feminine class.

It is cogent to admit that a number of musical texts churned out avow and stress the appreciation of women's beauty. There are a number of songs that are dedicated to women, probably stemming from the sungura background of Zimbabwean music. Sungura beat is greatly influenced by the East African Kanindo genre where most songs sing about women (The Herald 25 November, 2009).

Consumptive images are also used to describe women. Images of flowers, fruits and other edibles used by male artistes can be interpreted as reflecting their subtle intentions of exploiting the feminine class. Leonard Dembo, in his *Chitekete*, an all-time romantic classic once used as a track sound during the Miss World Beauty Pageant 2005, describes Onai as '*ruva rechitekete*' (flame lily

flower). The flower symbolism is recurrent in The Pied Pipers' *Ruva Rangu* where it evokes feelings of deep admiration. On closer analysis however, the flower represents short-lived glory as a flower blooms for a short period and quickly fades away. Jones (1985: 83) believes that "masculine desire dominates speech and posits woman as an idealised fantasy-fulfilment for the incurable emotional lack caused by the separation from the mother." Men can, thus, be said to be overawed by the desire to fulfil their wild sexual imaginations via the aisle of music.

Women are appreciated during courtship, thereafter, they are endured. In his other hit *Paw Paw* Dembo equates his lover to a pawpaw which strikes an image of a cheap delicacy. The diction employed in music represents a voyeuristic male appreciation of the female eroticism. Dembo's *Sharai* reminds many of the old days of courtship where the suitor would exhaust his repertoire of expletives to win the heart of the lady. The artiste sings;

Gunzvenzve remoyo wangu
Ndikakufunga ndinochema
Ndinonzwa musoro huye handirari.
 My delicious one
 When I think of you I cry
 I develop a headache and I cannot sleep

In *Nzungu Ndamenya*, by referring to his girlfriend as ground nuts, the artiste creates an image of the consumable. The superficial and hyperbolic diction used to describe the feminine class serves to portray women as amenable to the flattery of words. It adds flesh to their susceptibility to deception as testified by the Evian Deceit. Dembo assumes the virtuoso of masculine flattery of the feminine class. Equally culpable is Marshal Munhumumwe who in *Vimbai* describes the lady as:

chichekererwa seshereni,
Mutsipa wake kunge bhiza ramambo
 A perfectly shaped coin
 Her neck is like the king's horse

The king and the horse are juxtaposed to covertly strike the image of the rider and the ridden, the exploiter and the exploited, in which case the latter is implied the woman. In fact the entire musical piece crowns on appreciating the external beauty of the woman, where the physical aspect is more celebrated than the internal beauty- the focus of *ubuntu*. Negative portrayal of women projects women as bodily, as opposed to mental or spiritual figures. This reminds one of the historical and ideological powers of the mind-body dualism which has wrecked havoc on women. Men are presented as more rational even when in most cases they control women through their physical aspect more than rationality. Women are to the body what men are to the mind. Is this the case?

Paul Matavire, Tongai Moyo and System Tazvida use sexist language that potentially exposes women to wanton abuse by members of their opposite sex. The use of sexist language paints women as exploitable objects for the masculine predatory instincts. To this end Zimbabwean music is, indeed, strictly female sexuality on display. This has had the tendency of limiting and relegating women to the margins and preventing their participation in society.

Conclusion

The flow of evidence from the above discussion has cogently shown that the culture of viewing women through predefined lenses has engulfed the music industry in Zimbabwe. The culture-instructed perceptions of gender are clearly noticeable in Zimbabwean popular music. Theme selection, diction and gender portrayal have tended to support the masculine class more than the feminine. Music, though a serious form of discourse has continued to stereotype certain classes of people.

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