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Expansion of South African Xitsonga terminology through importing from agrarian pursuits of Xitsonga linguistic communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This research report delves into the redundancy of the agrarian terminology in South African Xitsonga. Agrarianism signifies farming and spirituality in a rural setting. As the mainstay of Vatsonga culture, the agricultural lifestyle boasts a host of terminology attached to it. There is an overt need for agrarian terminology in the South African Xitsonga today to enhance its lexicon. This study posits that the erosion of agrarian terminology in the South African Xitsonga can be linked to the disruption of native farming by colonial powers and the far-reaching effects that Christianity had on Vatsonga faith, which had exisited since antiquity. The intellectualisation of Xitsonga also facilitated the eschewing and eventual loss of the longstanding agricultural elements of the language. The Xitsonga linguistic communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe still use some of the agrarian terminology that could serve to aid the expansion of South African Xitsonga.

Keywords

Xitsonga, Vatsonga, agrarian, agrarian terminology, linguistic communities, speech communities, language, South African Xitsonga.

Plagiarism Declaration

I **Godfrey Machisana Mabunda** (Student Number: **2512962**) am a student registered for Masters in Translation Studies in the year 2022. I hereby declare the following:

- I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
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Signature:  Date: **1 June 2023**



Acknowledgements

Lest I plunge into oblivion, it had never occurred to me among my dreams, nor my career goals that language studies, let alone translation, would become one of my fondest disciplines in the humanities. Thanks to an opportunity granted to me by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) to become a Court Interpreter, this has changed. I became a student not only of the other languages I interpreted, but of my very own – Xitsonga. I had only appreciated the role of language in getting things done. However, its balanced and relevant role in science, health, justice, finance, social media and any other future frontiers remains a Borgesian labyrinth that calls for linguistic magnifying lenses.

The night-long telephone calls and Whatsapp texts that I exchanged with Dennis Mhlanga, my colleague and friend in language, have been priceless on all fronts.

It would be a great folly if I did not mention the ever-helpful hands of Dr Bongeka Selepe and Eugene Mathey whenever I called for assistance at the School of Literature, Language and Media (SLLM) and the Wits Language School (WLS), respectively. Natasha France has my deepest gratitude for meticulously proofreading and editing this research report. Last but not least, my supervisor, Dr. Alice Leal, who became the ethyl for the lenses that were becoming opaque in the twists and turns of the linguistic labyrinth. I owe to her an eternal debt of gratitude for the Transphil research and reading group that she brought as *skaftin* (lunchbox) for us when she considered Africa. I became a direct beneficiary!

Rifumo na Mixo, ndlela hi yaleyi! (Rifumo and Mixo, this is the way!)

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

In the same way that a builder needs stones and bricks to do their job, a translator needs to be familiar with a wide range of terminologies and concepts to do their job effectively. The builder, having gained an understanding of the construction project at hand, collects his stone from the quarry and, depending on the composition of the soil on the site, decides whether to use sand brick or clay brick in the construction of the building. Similarly, once the translator becomes aware of the skopos of the translation - the purpose it intendeds to fulfil in the target culture they can select the strategies they will employ to achieve the desired effect on the target text.

Where does the translator get the appropriate terminology and concepts to use in a translation project? Although it is challenging to respond satisfactorily to this question because each linguistic community has its own distinct culture and set of norms, it is possible that the mutually intelligible Xitsonga spoken in Mozambique and Zimbabwe could enhance and enrich the Xitsonga spoken in South Africa because they are *mutatis mutandis*. Thus the building blocks of one Xitsonga from across the border may aid in the renovations of [an]other.

Catford (1965) proposes that translation is the substitute of textual material in one language of origin (the Source Language, henceforth SL), by equivalent textual material in another language (the Target Language, henceforth TL). In addition, Nida & Taber (1982) propose that translating entails reproducing the closest natural equivalence of the SL in the TL. The message of the source text (ST) is thus the translator's paramount concern, lies first in context and then in design. Both definitions demonstrate that translation is more than simply changing an utterance from one language into another. During the process of translating,



some considerations include ensuring that the essence, ideas, or messages are conveyed accurately, clearly, and in a natural way.

Many studies have shown that one of the challenges of translating into African languages is finding suitable translation equivalents for English terms. Hadebe (2006) contends that the politics of terminology, or the lack thereof, is used as an excuse to keep indigenous languages outside the domain of contemporary technology, relegating them to less formal roles in society. The culture of adapting, adopting, and translating English words into a TL results in the excessive borrowing of English terminology, even when not strictly necessary. H. A. Junod (1927) foresaw the erosion of a rich Bantu language (Xitsonga) when he said:

> It is to be feared that books and book languages will destroy this most interesting way of speaking, so much used by those Natives who are truly Bantu, and the genius of the races will certainly suffer from this loss.

As one of the progenitors of written Xitsonga, it is worth investigating whether Junod's premonition has proven to be accurate.

This research report intends to demonstrate that Xitsonga linguistic communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe have rich agrarian terminology that could prove valuable terminology for South African Xitsonga. The study follows Whorf (1956, cited in Boroditsky et al., 2019) who, impressed by linguistic diversity, proposed that linguistic categories and distinctions embody a way of looking at and engaging with the world (other civilisations). Despite the difficulty of answering the question of whether “language shapes thought”, several studies have presented evidence favoring the affirmative (Boroditsky et al., 2019). Sapir (1912) corroborates this assertion, stating that the setting in which a language is spoken has a direct bearing on the vocabulary of a particular linguistic community.



The growth of a language's terminology and the effective use of that vocabulary are two of the most critical factors in that language's success. According to Lyons (1981), the primary mode of communication utilised by distinct human groups is the use of languages. The Xitsonga language and its associated communities are predominantly agrarian, much like most other African tribal languages. For the context of this research, the term "agrarian" refers to a way of life characterised by land cultivation. This way of life involves rearing animals and cultivating crops in a rural setting while adhering to traditional customs, and often reflects a mode of living that is not influenced by European cultures.

In contrast to the existing state of the Xitsonga language spoken in South Africa, there is an expectation that the Xitsonga language would have an immense lexicon of agrarian origin, following Lyons's position. The utilisation of South African Xitsonga agrarian terminology has significantly decreased in day-to-day Xitsonga oral interactions, possibly leading to its eventual evaporation from current literature.

1.1.1. The role of the translator

According to Martínez & Benítez (2009), translators must perform descriptive terminological work to produce a text that is understandable for the target audience because they play the role of language mediators in interlinguistic communication.

Gambier & Gottlieb (2001) see a translator not only as a mediator of languages, but of cultures too. In their view, a translator is a seasoned professional in the field of intercultural communication who translates between two languages. Translators act as cultural mediators, and the completed text is a semiotic cultural product. Translators are familiar with mediation methods that would be most successfully fitted to the sociocultural settings of both the SL and the TL. The culture of each language used in a translation will have a role in determining how



the meanings are created and how they are interpreted. The translator bridges the gap between the languages to arrive at a satisfactory product. This action is accomplished by manipulating the implicit and explicit links between the languages. Hermans (1996) emphasises that translators need to consider the social norms and practices, national and/or corporate identities, and relationships within the social and political structures of each culture, all of which have the potential to impact a translation in some way or another. Thus the distinction between the cultures associated with English and Xitsonga respectively cannot be cast aside when studying their linguistic differences.

1.2. Problem statements

The following is a summary of the issues that prompted this line of research:

- Most specialised topic areas lack terminology when translated from English to Xitsonga, which results in extensive transliteration, borrowing, and adoption – even in situations where this is avoidable. However, borrowing is sometimes unavoidable in interlingual translations because it closes the linguistic gaps where a source language has an unknown concept in the target language (that is, the target language does not have a lexical equivalent).
- In his book *Vutlhari bya Vatsonga (*which translates to *Wisdom of the Vatsonga*), Henri Philippe Junod describes Xitsonga as a language "broken by the unfortunate incidents of history". Xitsonga linguistic communities were partitioned into four Southern African countries: Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland (Lee & Burheni, 2014), making the language nearly a minority language in all four nation states which had different language policies.



- Xitsonga was divided between anglophone and lusophone imperial regimes, which further contributed to linguistic and cultural disintegration. The language lost touch with the vast fund of agrarian terminology that could help fill the gaps in interlingual translations as well as in general use, thus reducing the "necessity" for borrowing.

1.3. Aims of the study

This study intends to demonstrate that, despite the national boundaries where the Xitsonga language is domiciled, it can still be considered to be a single linguistic community that shares a massive corpus of agrarian[1] terms that respects neither fence nor national boundary. It also endeavours to expand African Xitsonga terminology by importing from agrarian pursuits of the Xitsonga linguistic communities still ubiquitous in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

1.4. Rationale of the study

This research is about more than the issues of the orthography of the Xitsonga language in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. It is not an analysis of the pros and cons of the Xitsonga language, nor whether missionaries and the first crop of Xitsonga black scholars were heroes or monsters in their pioneering work of language writing. It is not an assessment of the rights or wrongs of what the Xitsonga language has become in all the countries where it is domiciled. It is not a judgement of the justifications or condemnations of that process. It is also not

[1] For the sake of this study, the term "agrarian" refers to the cultivation of land and all associated activities taking place in a rural environment where it still follows its traditional cultural norms.

about its successes or failures. All these are essential and worthy issues for discussion. However, the remit of this research is limited to the terminological realities of the Xitsonga language and its implications for present and future South African generations: what is the current state of this language, how did it become so, and what does it mean for Xitsonga speakers and translators?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Against Benjamin's utopia of a "pure language", this research report "has nothing to say but to show" how Xitsonga agrarian terminology and concepts have all but vanished from regular day-to-day communication in South Africa and other urbanised Xitsonga speech communities. As (innately) agrarian societies, Xitsonga speech communities are expected to have a decent command of agricultural concepts and terms, or to at least fully comprehend them. Sapir's (1968) attestation posits that language is a guide to social reality and that human beings are at the mercy of the language that has become the medium of expression for their society. Against this backdrop, the Xitsonga speech communities in South Africa have undergone a change that both challenges and validates Sapir's conclusions. The fact that Xitsonga as a language does not convey the agrarian nature of the Vatsonga culture is a point of contention. Still, the fact that it reflects the new "social reality" – that of being situated in colonised regions – is a point of affirmation. As Pennycook (2015) further ratifies that language is indeed dynamic.

2.2. The nexus between a people and their language

According to Menkiti (1984), the African concept of man denies that humans may be described by this or that physical or psychological attribute of the lone individual. Instead, a person's surroundings serve as a lens through which one may view them. Against the French philosopher Rene Descartes's "I think, therefore I exist" (*cogito, ergo sum*), the Kenya-born philosopher Mbiti (1975) writes, "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am", summing up the African perspective on the individual. Not only does an individual's biological set

allow for identification via a shared gene pool, but so does the language they speak, which plays no small role in shaping their mental dispositions and attitudes (Menkiti,1984).

It is thus observable from these African philosophical guiles that a person's sense of worth can never be outside the pillars of their societal framework. Language, the primary tool of expression and communication, embodies the tenets those societies chiefly value. For instance, repeatedly telling a child, "*munhu i munhu hi van'wana vanhu*" ("a person is considered a person by how they relate with other persons") is a life-long assignment of civility and courtesy. The child's way of using language is likely to reflect a great deal of politeness stemming from this philosophy.

Mbhanyele Jameson Maluleke (2017) upholds that "humans are social creatures and historical actors who have an identity". In this sense, identity symbolises a people's particular qualities – including its singularity – which remain constant and survives in their quotidian speech. On the other hand, Kembo-Sure & Webb (2002) describe language as an identity *marker* in South Africa.

According to Mbiti's (1975) claims, African cultures place a high value on language and believe that it governs and connects people who have lived lives that span the past, present, and future, thus forming a commonwealth. Therefore, this research seeks to explore the commonwealth fund of terminology of agrarian descent in the Xitsonga speech communities in Zimbabwe and Mozambique to enhance the South African Xitsonga terminology.

In *General Manifestations of African Religiosity* (2001), Mbiti raises the question of what migrating people took with them as they moved from their places of origin in eastern Africa at the dawn of evolution. This question suggests a connection between a people's ancestry and an aspect of their lives that follows them wherever they go – language.

In terms of numeracy and mathematics, H. A. Junod (1913) found that Vatsonga people count on their hands beginning with the little finger of the left hand and progressing to the opposite hand, beginning with the thumb. The number five is represented by the left hand, with the thumb split from the other four fingers, forming the Roman symbol of a V. Both hands represent the Roman numeral ten joined together, fingers crossed, creating an X. Junod responded to this observation by saying, “This shows that our numeration, of which we are justly proud, probably began in the same way as it did amongst most of the Bantu!” If European numeracy has connections to the Vatsonga (Bantu) of southern Africa, what more can these tribes – speech communities – learn from each other having one common fund of linguistic antiquity?

2.3. History of Xitsonga speech communities in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Xitsonga is a Southern Bantu language in South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The Vatsonga (Xitsonga-speaking people) is a multi-state African ethnic group composed of many distinct clans. This spread has its roota in colonial history, beginning with the European powers' establishment of African nation states (Dyrness, 1990). The Vatsonga people now live in South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland, although they lived in various countries across the continent before the continent's partitioning. The geographic and cultural homeland where Vatsonga resides is called Vutsonga. The native language of the Vatsonga people, Xitsonga, is spoken in all four of these nations. There are around 2 million native Xitsonga speakers in South Africa, or 4.4% of the total population (Census, 2001). 60% of Xitsonga speakers are found in the traditional Vutsonga of Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces – which previously belonged to the Gazankulu Bantustan – while the remaining 25% call the

Gauteng metropolitan areas home (Van der Merwe & Van der Merwe, 2006). This minor shift towards the south demonstrates how urban centres significantly impact regional migration patterns.

According to records taken by Portuguese explorers, by the middle of the 17th century, well established Vatsonga chiefdoms existed in the regions surrounding Delagoa Bay in Mozambique. These chiefdoms extended southwards and inland from the sea, encompassing a large portion of the surrounding landscape (Bill 1984). Bill & Masunga (1983) documented in *Mbita Ya Vutivi* that Xitsonga is one of the languages that make up the Tsonga group of languages spoken in the southeastern Bantu zone. This information was gathered as part of their assignment to write the centenary bibliography of Xitsonga written literature. Xitsonga differs from the Sotho group (Setswana, Sepedi, and Sesotho), the Nguni group (IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, IsiNdebele, and IsiSwati), and Tshivenda in terms of phonetics, lexicon, and syntactic constructions.

Mozambique, southeastern Zimbabwe, and the provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North West, and northern KwaZulu Natal in South Africa are all home to distinct Xitsonga varieties. What we have come to know as Xitsonga is a collection of several dialects, including but not limited to the following: Xihlengwe, Xinkuna, Xihlave, Xiluleke or Xin'wanati, Xibila, Xikomati, Xichangana, Xidzonga, Xin'walungu, Xirhonga, Xicopi/Xilenge, Xitshwa, Xindzawu, Xirhonga, Xihlanganu, Xigwamba, Gitonga, and Ximbayi.

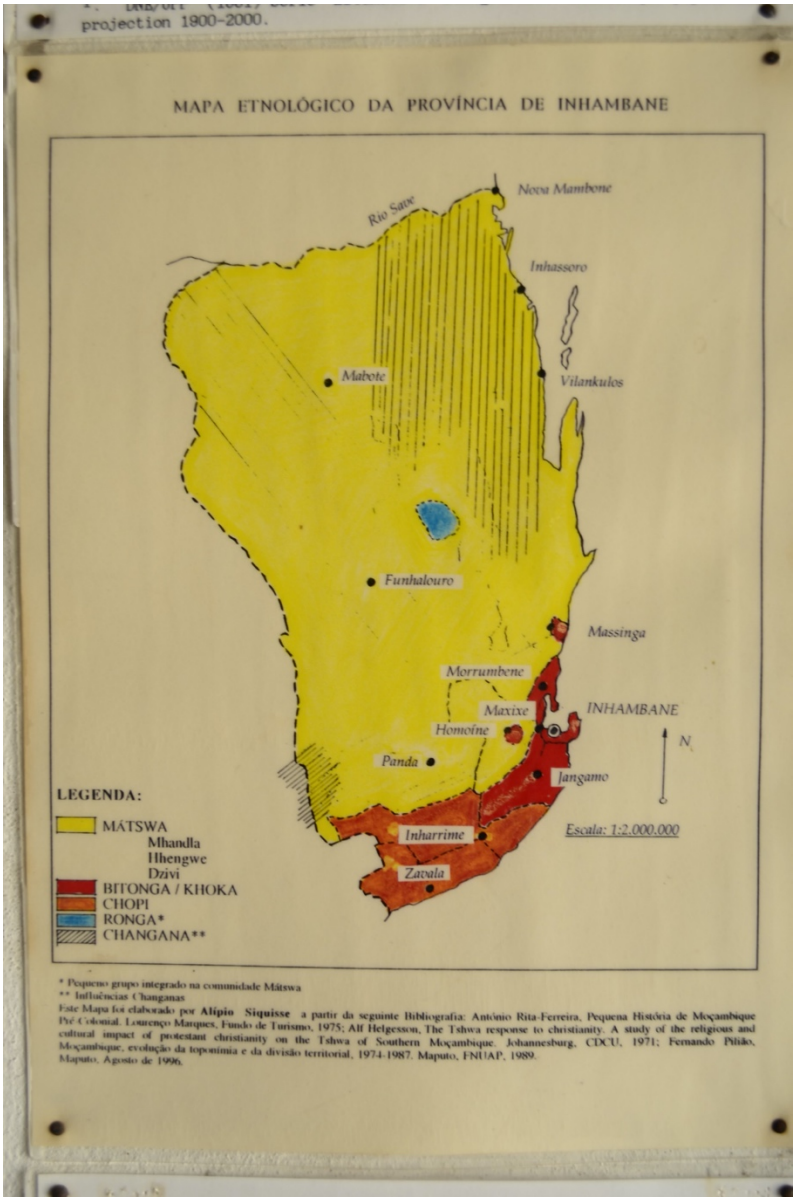
Before South African Xitsonga standardisation, one would have considered these dialects full-scale languages from which writing rules could be determined and adopted. Txitxopi (Xichopi), Xirhonga, and Xichangana have different orthographies (Bible Society of Mozambique 2007). Although Sitoe (2006, cited in Madlome, 2020) shows that the umbrella language is Tsonga, whose primary variant forms are Xirhonga, Xitshwa and Xichangana.

South African Xitsonga seems to have – wittingly or unwittingly – adopted the motto suggested in 1776 by Pierre Eugene du Simitiere to the committee responsible for developing the Great Seal of the United States of America, *E Pluribus Unum*. Loosely, this means, “Out of many, we are one”. It united and welded all (or most) of the Xitsonga dialects into what is now commonly referred to as South African Xitsonga. Although H. A. Junod (1927) vehemently contended that the Hlengwe were an influential group of Tsonga-Thonga dialects, he also identified the Hlengwe as a distinct group with distinctive traits.

Bill (1983) reveals that language classifications by H. A. Junod (1927), Cole (1959), and Guthrie (1962) all concur on the exclusion of Tonga (Gitonga) spoken around Inhambane (Nyembane), Mozambique) from Xitsonga. Despite these scholars having contributed immensely to the development of Xitsonga, they have missed some crucial aspects related to Tonga’s exclusion from Xitsonga. It fell in their blindspot that Gitonga is in fact the Xitsonga proto-language.

The reasons attributable to this folly could be as follows: Firstly, European languages do not use prefixes when referring to languages and what they call Tonga or Thonga in Nyembane, Mozambique, which is in fact Gitonga (sometimes called Bitonga). Missionaries, H. A. Junod in particular, refer to Gitonga (as shown in Figure 1 below) as Thonga. In the same way, Europeans often call Xitsonga “Tsonga, IsiZulu, “Zulu”, and Setswana, “Tswana”. Secondly, Junod was a Swiss missionary and the Swiss were most predominantly present in the Northern Transvaal (now Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces) and southern Mozambique between the Limpopo and Nkomati rivers. The Methodists were more dominant in the present-day Nyembane province in Mozambique, extending westwards to southeastern Zimbabwe. Methodist missionaries in Nyembane hardly made a reference about Thonga. Instead, they wrote and published bibles and hymn books in Xitshwa (a Xihlengwe variant) for their congregations in Nyembane, western Mozambique and southeastern Zimbabwe.

Figure 1: Map of the province of Inhambane (Nyembane), Mozambique



However, Junod argues that the Zulu or Nguni conquerors who enslaved most Thonga tribes between 1815 and 1830 gave them the generic name of Thonga. Junod said that the name Thonga comes from a Rhonga phrase that meant “orient” (vuronga) and was famous in Lourenco Marques (Maputo) clans. For example, in Rhonga, *ku rhandza* (to love) becomes *thanda* in Zulu, and *nharhu* (three) becomes *thathu* in Zulu. Thonga may have been a Zulu moniker, almost



comparable to the word slave. The Thongas of southern Mozambique's northern clans, particularly those of the Bileni and Djonga (Dzonga) groups, preferred Tjongas (Tsonga) and Hlengwe. Tsonga, on the other hand, became more popular than Thonga over time.

The Junodan “Tonga” could also be confused with the Tonga language of Polynesian kingdoms of the South Pacific islands (although no such mistakes have been recorded yet) and the Bantu Tonga of Southern Zambia and northern Zimbabwe (Zambezi plateau). Thirdly, Gitonga of Nyembane is, according to oral history, the proto-language of present-day Xitsonga and all its dialects. Gitonga of Nyembane is the most ancient version of Xitsonga. For example, if Gitonga were Latin, Xitsonga would be Spanish. Xichopi, Xindzawu, and Gitonga speakers claim that when they hear Xitsonga speakers speak, it is akin to hearing their children speak at the formative phases of their speech acquisition. Besides, Xitsonga, Xindzawu, Xichopi have a vast inventory of shared terminology.

On the other hand, Henri Philippe Junod, son of Henri Alexandre Junod and a Swiss Ramaine Mission missionary, wrote extensively about the Xitsonga in South Africa and Mozambique. Like his father, he contended that the name given to the Thonga (Tsonga) tribe was ancient and should be spelt VaThonga, which was the orthography used by his father in his monography on the Thonga (Tsonga) people.

One of H. P. Junod's distinguished inaccuracies about Vatsonga and Xitsonga as a wider and transnational language is in the book *Matimu ya Vatsonga* (1977) when he discusses the Vahlengwe people of the Ulundi River. He confused the Ulundi (Mahlabathini) in the Zululand District municipality, KwaZulu Natal province – the former Zulu kingdom's capital in South Africa – with the Runde River (previously Lundi River) in southeastern Zimbabwe. The Methodist missionaries would not have committed such a folly because one of their well known mission schools is built on the banks of the Runde River, ironically named



after it – the Lundi mission. The Free Methodist Church's Lundi Mission was founded in 1939 by Reverend Ralph and Ethel Jacobs, is located near Masvingo (formerly Fort Victoria) in the Mwenezi (formerly Nuanetsi) district of southeastern Zimbabwe.

Danielson (2015) presents a possible explanation for this error by revealing a letter written by Reverend Tillman Houser in 1955 detailing some of his daily life in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). After spending two years at the Lundi Mission learning the language and culture, Houser and his wife Gwen moved on to work with the Hlengwe (Vatsonga of the Xihlengwe dialect) at the Dumisa Mission in 1951 under Chief Sengwe. In the letter, Houser wrote:

> In South Africa missions have been prevalent since the 1800s. Our particular area seemed to be overlooked because it is in the low veldt, meaning generally unhealthful for human occupation, because of malaria and other diseases. Also the usual heat ranges from 90° to 105° everyday for about seven to eight months a year. Then, too, it gets very dry here, some years only 5 to 10 inches of rainfall.

Houser describes the likely cause of missionaries' neglect of the Vahlengwe region in the lowveld of modern-day Zimbabwe and western Mozambique. Houser's concerns could, among other factors, be responsible for the errors and stark language barrier that are observable when investigating the Xitsonga speech communities in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa ethnographically.

On the other hand, H. P. Junod (1977) displays humility about his knowledge when he says, "*Vutsonga i byikulu, byi entile, byi anamile. A byi tiviwi hi lavanyingi, a byi tiviwi hi munhu un'we*". Which means that Xitsonga is broad, comprehensive, and deep; no individual can claim absolute knowledge of it all.

2.4. Xitsonga speech communities in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Of course, human memory fades, becomes blurred, and then forgotten (Wa Thiong'o, 1992), hence these events from the past must be recorded before the significant loss of forgetfulness. Chauke (2009), citing Hammond-Tooke (1974) in his book, *The Bantu Speaking Peoples of Southern Africa*, held that "about the history of the Tsonga-Hlengwe little has been recorded and perhaps there has been little to remember". The reality is not that there was not much to recall, but rather that very few people, if any, had attempted to write about the history of the Vatsonga (also called Shangaan-Hlengwe) people who lived in Zimbabwe and western Mozambique – let alone their terminologies.

As an established traditional agrarian economy, the Vahlengwe of Zimbabwe and Mozambique possessed (and still do possess) exquisite terminology of agrarian pedigree. An inventory of terminology in these Xitsonga speech communities would still likely be understandable in South African Xitsonga, as these languages function *mutatis mutandis*.

H. A. Junod acknowledged in his book, *The Life of a South African Tribe* (1927), that Vatsonga possessed excellent minds and thought they were worthy of the utmost respect. He discovered thousands of words that developed intuitively to convey the impression generated on the brain by any experience, demonstrating the language's remarkable capacity for description. His emphasis reads:

> The Bantu mind vibrates with an astonishing intensity at any shock from outside, and it finds a way of expressing interest and color to speech. Bantus are far superior to us in this respect, which is why few Europeans can really learn and properly use these descriptive adverbs (without mentioning those who look upon them with contempt). And this is one of the signs that I am not ashamed of the literary sense of the Bantu mind.



However, H. A. Junod was not cordial in his descriptions of the Bantu people he met throughout his missionary travels. Despite Junod speaking in high regard about Vatsonga's communication prowess, the rhetorical question about the constitution of their self-reliance and pride needs to be clarified. The above quotation captures a singular insight in which he had to be modest and acknowledge that the Bantu's (Vatsonga) mind was significantly more linguistically sophisticated than that of Europeans. One notable feature about Junod in *The Life of a South African Tribe* is his lack of diplomatic language to lessen the severity of his critique of Vatsonga, whom he called Thongas. In one instance, he stated the following about the Bantu (Vatsonga):

> The "civilized" attain the height of bliss when they are able to procure an irreproachable suit of clothes, and it is a sight to behold these young men returning direct from Johannesburg, dressed in the latest style, with a white starched shirt, a silk cummerbund, and trousers to match. They think themselves handsome! We do not share their illusion! How often have we longed to see them adopt some costume that would tone their colour, their customs, their occupations, their climate! They want to be like us! What can be done?

Although his purpose for being in Africa was to "civilise", it is abundantly clear that Junod had no respect for the people that he encountered in Africa – "civilised" or not. However, he did appreciate the Vatsonga for their distinctive use of language to describe various circumstances. It is thus compelling to investigate the topic using such terms that enthralled Junod.

2.5. Probable causes for the dearth of Xitsonga agrarian terminology in South Africa

Bill (1984) indicates that from 1830 onwards, the Xitsonga way of life changed through the combined influences of Christianity, foreign western culture patterns, and the townward drift of men and, later, women in search of work.

Wa Thiong'o (1992) reasoned that the belief was that English, together with French and Portuguese, would serve as the language of literary and perhaps even political mediation between Africans living in the same country and between Africans living in different countries on other continents. In some instances, there was a belief that European languages had the potential to unite African people against the dividing effects of the *variety* of African languages spoken within single African states. By the same token, Xitsonga speakers living with Swiss and Methodist missionaries used the common lingua franca of their nation states – English in South Africa and Zimbabwe, and Portuguese in Mozambique.

Bill (1984) credits the famous Swiss protestant pastor H. A. Junod as an early proponent of Xitsonga oral studies. She claims that Xitsonga's oral history research began with him since the Portuguese administration – which had been present in the area of the eastern African coast (Mozambique) since the 16th century – was preoccupied with other matters. Similar to Bill's claim, Brock-Utne (2017) posits that European and American Christian missionaries were responsible for the first codification and printing of most African languages used today. Although missionary efforts were crucial in creating the framework for the literary interpretation of African languages, their primary purpose was not to teach the African people how to engage with their languages in written form. Nonetheless, early Christian missionaries focused on learning African languages to more effectively spread the gospel (Brock-Utne, 2017).

The quasi-promotion of Xitsonga (and other African languages) as mediums of the evangeliscal project not only hampered its development, but also reduced the use of concepts and terminologies deemed sinful by the missionary network, which happened to be the social elite of the day. A colony's population was forcibly turned away from its traditional belief systems and inculturated towards the Christian faith, starting with chiefs and other community leaders.

Kgosi (Chief) Sechele of the Bakwena tribe in the present-day Botswana is a unique case study of the severity of suppression of a lifestyle that was considered pagan by David Livingstone to his converts. The Tswana tribes, like many other African tribes, had rainmakers whose mission was to utilise magic to bring rain. Livingstone, like other missionaries, fiercely opposed rainmaking on religious grounds. Kgosi Sechele happened to be his tribe's rainmaker as well as its chief, and Livingstone's stay coincided with one of the most destructive droughts ever recorded. Therefore, Sechele's decision to quit rainmaking was unsurprisingly unpopular among his people (Tomkins, 2013).

The other difficulty in Kgosi Sechele's case was polygamy. He had five wives, and Livingstone urged him to divorce the "superfluous" ones in order to become a Christian. The nightmare was both personal and political, endangering the tribe's own political system as well as its relationships with other tribes.

Sechele, however, divorced four of the women in 1848 and underwent his baptism. The following year, Sechele got one of his ex-wives pregnant, and he strayed. He repented and implored Livingstone: "Please do not give me up because of this. I shall never give up, Jesus. You and I shall stand before him together" (Tomkins, 2013).

The staggering arrogance of Livingstone to order and beseech a political principal of a nation to which he was but a guest is shocking. A nation faced an extreme famine, and although the remedial action lay with Kgosi Sechele to perform rainmaking rituals, he chose to endure the drought that took the lives of livestock and human beings because Livingstone was policing his activities. On the order of the dissolution of his marriages to the four wives, it is possible that as a royal, Sechele might have been married into neighbouring royal families. His compliance with the missionaries' standards might have caused an irreparable dent in his reign within his own nation as well as that of his in-laws. If such directives could apply to the Chief of a nation who may have been the equivalent



of a king, what could have been the weight of such an order to an ordinary man? From this case study alone, it is clear that European influence was all but inescapable in these colonial times. If even a king of a nation was susceptible to the power of a coloniser – so much so that he abandoned his way of life, forsaking the needs of his people – what chance did linguistic heritage stand at resisting this force?

Chidester (1996) notes a widespread assumption among early missionaries, explorers, and colonial administrators that indigenous people had no religion. Such an assumption encompassed an effort to repress any outward manifestations of spirituality or rituals that had nothing to do with the purview of the Christian faith. In these circumstances, stigmatisation and profiling of those who defied the clergy was an ostensible likelihood. One can imagine how the persistent presence of missionaries among Vatsonga might have resulted in the dearth of terminology and concepts related to African religion and other forbidden agrarian pursuits.

Similar to Love's (1983) observation regarding the Maori language in New Zealand, Xitsonga, as an indigenous language, has been subjected to forces that have challenged its maintenance. Thus, despite recent efforts to make the language official and promote linguistic diversity, terminology loss is almost certain to occur. Multilingualism, diglossia, domain separation, and fusion are all factors in the erasure of Xitsonga terminology.

Because of factors such as the number of people who speak each language, the status of each language, and interactions between distinct cultures, there will invariably be a shift in used terminology when two or more cultures come into contact with one another.

Both Henri Alexandre Junod and his son, Henri Philippe Junod, undoubtedly played a vital role in the intellectualisation of South African Xitsonga, from which

new generations of scholars drew inspiration. However, de Souza (2003) asserts that to intellectualise language means to reduce it to writing, thus standardising and disconnecting the language from the community's oral tradition. In the Xitsonga linguistic communities in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, this process only began in 2013 with the 2013 Zimbabwean constitution (Sithole, 2017) and in 2017 in Mozambique through the Food for Knowledge (FFK) project funded by US aid and the local action group ADPP Mozambique (Fritzboger, 2018). Despite Christian interference in these countries, Xitsonga still has a high command of agrarian terminology, as shown in Annexure 1.

With Junod as a pioneer of written Xitsonga (Bill, 1996) and other black elite scholars that later joined him up the ladder, a top-down linguistic posture of Xitsonga development was created. However, this top-down linguistic posture places the responsibility of language development in the hands of the elite, who have largely lost touch with the masses whose everyday terminology is incumbent. Further, the black elite with the fountain pen captains the language in the direction that appeases the masters – European powers – and in a way that ensures their proximity to these powers. Thus, loan words began to take preference over what these black scholars considered too foreign for the masters, therefore eroding and obscuring the rich terminology of the Xitsonga linguistic communities.

It is also ineluctible that Junod, as an evangelical pioneer of written Xitsonga, may have censored other terminology related to agrarian (traditional) religious beliefs that he deemed pagan. This viewpoint is supported by Magorian (1964, cited in Nkomazana & Setume, 2016), who asserts that the missionaries' goal was for the Africans to abandon their religions and cultures and adopt the western religion and culture that they ported with the goal of furthering the colonial project. The missionaries' goal was to produce a new generation of Africans with the capacity to abandon their previous way of life.

Missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) imposed a similar requirement on Africans, requiring them to entirely give up their agrarian (traditional) cultures to become Christians. They viewed African religions as demonic and worked ceaselessly to eliminate them. Moffat (1842, cited in Nkomazana & Setume, 2016) held that the missionaries associated non-western civilisations with degradation, barbarism, ignorance, and evil. As a result, Christianity is at the centre of South African Xitsonga linguistic culture, leaving a significant gap in the terminology that falls outside the bounds of Christian interests.

For instance, during the ethnographic engagements of this research, it was identified that a substantial proportion of adult Xitsonga-speaking men of Christian background was reluctant to use the following terms:

Figure 2: Commonly avoided Agrarian terms

English	Avoided Agrarian term	Preferred term	Remarks
Church	*Ndhumbha*	*Kereke*	A hut in which rituals are performed. *Kereke* is borrowed from Afrikaans *kerk*.
Pray	*Gandzela*	*Khongela*	*Gandzela* is associated with soliciting the intervention of the gods/ancestors.
Nun	Nyankwave	Wansati wa swikwembu.	An unmarried woman who is offered to the gods/spirits as a token of appeasement.
Eucharist	*Mphahlo*	*Xikhongelo*	Ceremony to perform communion for the gods/God.

Offering	*Magandzelo*	*Munyikelo*	Giving unto the gods/God for supplication.
Surrogate mother	*Mufukati*	*Sarogeti*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Sperm donor	*Mumbewu*	Xipemudona	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Tombstone unveiling	*Sosonola*	*Ku koka nhlapfu*	While *ku koka nhlapfu* also applies, kusosonola is very common in the Zimbabwean Xitsonga agrarian communities.
Altar	*Gandzelo* *Xiluvelo*	*Alitari*	*Gandzelo* seems to be avoided as it is assumed to be directly linked to practices relating to the spirits and gods. Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Memorial	*Marilo*	*Memoriyali*	A ceremony to remember the deceased's life and work, usually after a year of burial. Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Percussion	*Ncomani*	*Xigubu*	*Ncomani* is used by people at traditional ceremonies. The fact that *xigubu* has phonetic features that replicate percussive sounds may be the reason that it is more common than *ncomani*.
Coloured	*Mujiti*	*Khaladi*	*Mujiti* is the offspring of a person of Asiatic descent and a black African. It owes its name to a reddish/brownish

			garment used by the ancestral spirits called *njeti.* Transliteration of the colonial classification of this group is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Sister	*Tati*	*Sesi*	*Sesi* is a borrowed term from English.
Butter	*Rimbyindla*	*Botoro*	*Botoro* is borrowed from English.
Cotton clay Alluvial soil	*Tshovolo*	*Xilogo*	*Xilogo* is a bastardisation of “slog”, which means to work hard over a period of time. How the verb “slog” became a representative of a Xitsonga noun “xilogo” is still a wonder.
Yoghurt	*Hongwa*	*Yogati*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Milk	*Ntswamba*	*Meleke*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.”
Court	*Huvo*	*Khoto*	Justice has always been a deep seated fabric of Vatsonga before the advent of the Roman-Dutch courts. Offenses were dealt with at the tribunals called *huvo* in Vatsonga communities. However, a transliterated word is used more commonly used than the original despite its rich history.
Cream	*Rivomba*	*Khirimu*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.

System	*Endlelo*	*Sisiteme*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term.
Cheese	*Riveya*	*Chizi*	Transliteration is preferred than the real Xitsonga term.
Skills	*Vungayila*	*Swikili*	Skills have been vast among Vatsonga even before contact with the Europeans. *Swikili* therefore does not represent an ideal position of Vatsonga having inveterate skills which even the Europeans themselves have substantiated.
Modern	*Ximanguvalawa*	*Ximodeni*	Transliteration is preferred over the original Xitsonga term. It would be unjust to accept the implication that modernity is a purely Western concept.
New year	*Lembe ritshwa*	*Novinjara*	A year is a median point of which Vatsonga have a clear understanding. The use of a transliterated Afrikaans term *nuwe jaar* appears inattentive to this fact.
Withdraw (of money from the ATM)	*Ku juluja (Verb) from a noun julu which means "termite"*	*Ku humesa mali/ku withdirowa*	Vatsonga eat termites of the drywood variety (red or brown bodies). To catch the termites from the anthill, they would use a palm leaf or a string from a tree to insert in the hole for a while. After a short period, termites would bite on the string/palm leaf. Then termites would be pulled out of the anthill into a container. The

			process of pulling out the termites is akin to a cash withdrawal from an bank ATM.

Missionaries were the first to reduce African languages into written form when they produced bilingual dictionaries that combined African languages with more hegemonic European languages like English. These dictionaries supported early missionaries' learning of African languages for evangelisation (Gouws, 2007; Nkomo, 2018). According to Khumalo & Nkomo (2018), this tactic lies at the heart of the issues in South African Xitsonga dictionaries. The specialised terminological and conceptual data in Xitsonga are scarce in these volumes. This is concerning because few Xitsonga dictionaries are available in monolingual varieties in order to strengthen the standing of African Xitsonga in translation studies and other linguistic pursuits.

The lack of use and availability of Xitsonga terminology related to agrarian origins supports the centrifugal principle of Gile's gravitational model of linguistic availability, which states that words (terminology) tend to drift outwards and away from the centre of the system (working memory) if they are not stimulated (Gile, 2018). When particular terms are out of use in day-to-day communication and written work, there is a chance that individuals will become less familiar with the words and even lose the ability to recall them. This issue is intensified with each generation that departs without those left behind having used the words that were once part of everyday life.

Hall (2014) demonstrates that it is impossible to overstate the magnitude of the change brought about by the South African parliament's passage of the Native Land Act in 1913. The Act constituted the foundation for a dualistic agrarian structure –land and livestock dispossession in the countryside and development of commercial farming in designated farmlands. The Land Act left native

communities in the urbanisation of the population, without their means of subsistence, and with a significant chunk of the wealth that was made possible with mass evictions. These communities became storehouses for cheap migratory labour for factories, farms, and mines with the advent of urban life (Hall, 2014).

It is plausible that the radical change in lifestyle brought on by urbanisation also influenced a linguistic shift. Wa Thiong'o (1992) would call it "one memory burying another", because "we are the products of what we can remember". In these new settings – towns and cities – people wanted to fit in and thus became victims of a "cultural bomb":

> The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves; for instance, with other peoples' languages rather than their own. It makes them identify with that which is decadent and reactionary, all those forces which would stop their own springs of life.

Despite their differences in ages, Wa Thiong'o and Junod made nearly identical predictions, with Junod (1927) famously declaring:

> How often have we longed to see them adopt some costume that would tone their colour, their customs, their occupations, their climate! They want to be like us! What can be done?

This quote would come back in many iterations. In 1964, Chinua Achebe, in a speech entitled "The African Writer and the English Language", said:

> Is it right that a man should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it.

Wa Thiong'o (ibid) argues that the paradox is that the possibility of using mother tongues produces levity in phrases like "a dreadful betrayal" and "a guilty feeling", whereas the possibility of using foreign languages produces a categorical, joyous embrace, which Achebe himself would describe ten years later, cited by Lynn (2017) as the "fatalistic logic of the unassailable position of English in our literature".

2.6. They want to be like us! What can be done?

The text below is taken from the Republic of South Africa's Department of Basic Education's 2021 Xitsonga Paper 2 National Senior Certificate Exams.

Source Text 1: South African Xitsonga

MA'AM JOYCE: *Yimani ku ndzi byela swo tala mi ndzi dyondzisa hi swa vuthicara leswi mi nga swi tiviki.*

MZAMANI: *Ku va thicara a swi vuli leswaku u fanele u nghena tindhawu hinkwato. U hoxa na tintiho laha swi nga fanelangiki, hikuva u thicara? Wa hloniphiwa no chaviwa hinkwako lomu u nghenaka kona?*

MA'AM JOYCE: *Se ndzi nghenisa tintiho eka vana loko ndzi ya vutisa hi ta mapapila ya mina ya phenxeni? Piet i mabalani laha a tirhaka kona, wa swi tiva swa tiphenxeni. Vukosi i thicara, wa swi tiva na yena. Kutani ho burisana na Vukosi hi swa vuthicara, ku hava mhaka yo nghenisa tintiho.*

MZAMANI: *Kambe i swa yini leswo u tshika mitirho ya wena laha kaya? Loko u nga yangi eka vana a wu nga ta hlaya mali ya siku na ku vona loko xitoko xi ri kona laha spaza shop? A hi ku hoxa tintiho eka ntirho wa mina sweswo?*

Xana eka mapapila wolawo a va ku hoxelangi cheke ya swin'wana swa phenxeni?

MA'AM JOYCE: *Sweswo i swa nkarhi wun'wana, ndzi ta mi byela nkarhi wun'wana.*

MZAMANI: *A swi twali leswi u swi vulaka. Nkarhi wun'wana u hlamusela no bula na mina hi ta muholo wa wena, kambe sweswi a swi twisiseki. Va na erivaleni man! Ku vile na malinyana leyi va nga yi nghenisa eka mapapila lamambirhi xana?*

Target Text 1: English Translation

MAAM JOYCE: Stop telling me many things. You know nothing about teaching.

MZAMANI: Being a teacher does not mean having automatic access to every place. You are poking your nose unnecessarily; is this because you are a teacher? Are you respected and honored in all the places you get into?

MAAM JOYCE: Am I poking my nose in children if I enquire about my pension papers? Piet is a clerk at his workplace, he has information about pension issues. Vukosi is a teacher; she also knows. Thus, we are just discussing the teaching career, there is nothing about poking my nose.

MZAMANI: But what good is all that if you're ignoring your housework? Shouldn't you have counted the money and checked if there is enough stock in the tuck shop if you hadn't visited the children? Isn't that interfering with my work? Didn't they write you a cheque from the proceeds of your pension in those documents?

MAAM JOYCE: That is for another time, I will update you some other time. MZAMANI: That doesn't make any sense. You occasionally tell me about your salary, but it's currently absurd. Just be honest! Is there any payments made as a result of these two documents?

The following is a list of words from the above text that have been borrowed and transliterated from English, Afrikaans, and IsiZulu:

Text 1's transliterated words and their comparable Xitsonga terms

Borrowed/transliterated word	**Xitsonga comparable terms**

1. Ma'am : *Manana/Mhaki/Mhani*

While "ma'am" is a short form of Madam in English, the polite form of address for a woman in Xitsonga is *Mnn*, a shortened form of *Manana*. Although "ma'am" is specially linked to teaching in the African language context, *Manana* is an ideal term to use in this respect as it accords respect to women in general as well as in formal settings.

2. *Vuthicara* : *Vudyondzisi/Vugondzisi(Tshwa)/Vudzaberi*

Vuthicara is a transliteration from the English noun "teacher" (*tichara*), which means *mudyondzisi* in Xitsonga. While it has became common among Xitsonga speakers in South Africa to use *tichara* in lieu of *mudyondzisi*, the latter is an ideal term if transliteration is avoided.

3. *Thicara* (teacher) : *Mudyondzisi/Mudzabi/Makombandlela*

The transliterated version for a teacher is *tichara,* but the original Xitsonga term is *mudyondzisi.*

4. *Mapapila* (paper) : *Matsalwa*

Mapapila is the plural form of *papila*, a transliteration of the Afrikaans term *papier* which would be *tsalwa* in Xitsonga. In Afrikaans, the term could denote just a piece of paper with no text written on it, while the Xitsonga version, *papila,* carries a concomitant sense of something written on the paper. Therefore an ideal term here would be *tsalwa* rather than *papila*, since *tsalwa* means “something written”, usually on a paper. It is also worth mentioning that, although *matsalwa* has been largely associated with scared scriptures, it would be correct in such a context.

5. *Mabalani* (clerk) : *Matsalani*

Mabalani is an IsiZulu term from *ukubhala* which means “to write” and *ku tsala* which prompts an expectation of a *matsalani* (one who writes or performs clerical tasks) in Xitsonga.

6. *Phenxeni* (pension) : *Mudende*

Phenxeni is a transliteration of “pension”, and Xitsonga would accept and embrace *mudende* despite its association with many other types of grants, such as child support and other welfare grants.

7. *Tiphenxeni* (pensions) : *Midende*

The plural form of the item above.

8. *Xitoko* (stock) : *Nhundzu ya muxavisi*

Xitoko is derived from the English term “stock”. N*hundzu ya muxavisi* is an ideal equivalent.

9. *Mali* (money) : *Xuma*

Mali is a common and conventional transliterated equivalent for money; however, it is worth mentioning that the Xitsonga concept of money and value exchange is *xuma* which could be also acceptable in this regard.

10. *Malinyana* (little money): *Xumanyana*

The dimunitive form of item (9) above.

11. *Muholo* (payment) : *Hakelo*

Muholo is an acceptable term for “payment”, however it has other synonymous terms like *hakelo*, or *ndziho*.

12. Spaza shop : *Ndzawu yo xavisela*

Colloquial South African term for a small informal shop in a township, often run from a private house

13. *Cheke* (cheque) : *Ndziho/Hakelo*

A clear transliteration from the English “cheque”, the Xitsonga terms *ndziho* or *hakelo* could have been ideal in this case.

14. Man! : *Kunene!*

: *Nandziwe/nandzuwe/nandiwe/nduwena*

: *Mundina/mundzina*

Example:

Va na erivaleni kunene!

Va na erivaleni nandziwe!

Interestingly in the extract, the speaker (Mzamani) is male and is addressing a female (Ma'am Joyce) as "man!" *Kunene* or *nandziwe* could have been better than the English term "man!" – *Kunene* is an exclamation imploring for openness while *nandziwe* or *mundzina* is the speaker calling their audience to attention in engagement. On the other hand, the "man!" in the extract could be a misprint of "*mani*" – an equivalent of the impolite "damn it".

The above Xitsonga text, Source Text 1, comprises 223 words and its objective is to assess the comprehension abilities of pupils who are Xitsonga first language speakers at the highest level of high school national examinations. Of the 223 words, 26 are transliterated or borrowed from English, Afrikaans, and IsiZulu. This is a whopping 11.66%. This number is too large for such a minor article in an examination that seeks to stimulate (or is expected to induce) critical thinking in the students' native language. Besides, just like in economics, borrowing is never a superfluous activity and should only be done when all the other avenues have been exhausted. The use of transliteration and borrowing is unessential in this text (Source Text 1).

2.7. Mozambiquean Xitsonga (xiChangana)

The article below is an extract from the Jehovah's Witnesses website written in Mozambiquean Xitsonga (xiChangana).

Source Text 2: Mozambiquean Xitsonga (xiChangana)

Mintlhanganu Ya Timboni Ya Yehovha

Tiva swilo swaswinyingi hi mintlhanganu ya hina. Kuma ndhawu leyi hi tlhanganaka ka yona leyi nga kusuhi na wena.

Ku Yentxeka Yini Ka Mintlhanganu Ya Hina?

Hina Timboni ta Yehovha hi tlhangana kambirhi hi vhiki leswaku hi gandzela Xikwembu. (Vaheberu 10:24, 25) Mani na mani lweyi a swi lavaka a nga nghena ka mintlhanganu leyi. Ka yona hi kambisisa leswi Bibele li swi djondzisaka ni leswi hi nga li tirhisaka xiswona ka wutomi la hina.

Ka mintlhanganu ya hina ku ni nkama lowu vayingiseli va hlamulaka. Hi sungula mintlhanganu hi ku yimbelela se hi yentxa xikhongelo.

Ka mintlhanganu ya hina a ku ngheni Timboni ta Yehovha ntsena. Hirhamba mani na mani. Ku nghena i mahala. A ku hlengisiwi mali.

<u>Target Text 2: English translation</u>

Jehovah's Witnesses Meetings

Please get to know many things about our meetings. Look for a meeting place that is closer to you.

What happens in our meetings?

The Jehovah's Witnesses meet twice a week for prayers. (Hebrews 10:24,25) Everyone is welcome in these meetings. We do some analysis about what the Bible teaches as well as how we may apply it in our lives.

In these meetings, there is an opportunity whereby the audience is allowed to air their views. We start the meetings by singing; after that, we pray. Our meetings are not only exclusively for Jehovah's Witnesses. We invite everyone. Everyone is welcome. No payment for access.

This extract (Source Text 2) of 238 words from the Jehovah's Witnessess website in the Mozambiquean Xitsonga (xiChangana) presents at least seven words that come with a number of synonyms of agrarian origin. The seven words bring with them 29 diverse synonyms – almost a quarter of the total number of words from the extract with no borrowed or transliterated term.

1. *Mintlhanganu* – "meetings". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Mihlengeletano, hubyeni, maxuxweni, khorhweni
2. *Swaswinyingi* – "many things". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Swo hlaya, swo tala, nyandza, matutu
3. *Yentxeka* – "what happens". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Ku maheka, ku humelela, ku endleka, ku vangeka
4. *Gandzela* – "pray". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Phahla, dzunisa, khongela, khongotela, xengetela
5. *Kambisisa* – "analyse". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Xiyaxiya, xuxa, lavisisa, xopaxopa, endla hi vukheta
6. *Djondzisaka* – "teaches". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Dyondzisaka, letelaka, dzabelaka, kombisaka
7. *Nkama* – "a chance" or "opportunity". Xitsonga synonyms are, but not limited to:
   Nkarhi, xikhati, nguva

2.8. The geography and terminology of a speech community

According to Bonvillain (2019), linguists and anthropologists have focused increasingly on how social power and control are mirrored in language, language use, and language ideologies. Speech communities generate ideas about language usage conveyed through communicative behaviour and how people discourse about language and linguistic activities – whether they are small linguistic groups, homogeneous villages, or vast, heterogeneous state societies. “Ideologies of language are not about language alone”, writes Woodlard. “They underpin not only linguistic form but also the notion of the person and the social group, as well as fundamental social institutions like religious customs, socialisation, gender relations, social livelihood, schooling, and law, through linkages [to identity, aesthetics, and morality]” (Woolard, 2020). Bonvillain’s perspective lends credence to the notion that speakers convey messages about their identities, their understandings of the world, and their places within it through the structure and use of the language they use.

According to Magga (2006), the physical environment (or the people’s primary activities) in which a language is used impacts culture. The Saami civilisation has a long and close link with the Arctic climate, and the Saami languages have a vast vocabulary for reindeer, snow, and ice. Magga claims that there are at least 180 phrases related to snow and ice and a whooping 1000 words devoted to describing reindeer in the language of the Saami people, who live in the northernmost parts of Russia and Scandinavia. Thus, it is confirmed that Sowa’s (1993) assertion that a concept depends on culture holds water.

Consistent with Magga's findings, Robson (2013) found that the Yupik people (formerly referred to as “Eskimos”) of Alaska and throughout the Arctic, Canada, and Greenland have more than 21 words to describe the varied conditions of ice. Similarly, Prah (2017) reveals that the Masai people of Kenya and Tanzania have

a unique relationship with the grass and vegetation due to their pastoral and nomadic lifestyle. As a direct consequence of this, they have the terminology of more than 17 words to describe the various phases of grass that their animals consume. It is interesting to find that the case of South African Xitsonga is dissimilar with regard to agrarian terminology despite the fundamentally agrarian background of the language.

According to linguists, the linguistic exuberance of the Saami, Yupik, and Masai peoples is not surprising, because languages develop to accommodate the concepts most essential to the lives of those who speak them. Prouhet et al. (1905) would argue that the interest is in the competence that these words convey rather than in the argument about how many terms there are.

Sapir (1968) corroborates that language is a guide to social reality and that human beings are at the mercy of the language that, in the terms of Pop & Muresan (2017), has become the medium of expression for their society. The linguistic norms of the community substantially govern these assertions, and each distinct structure represents a unique reality: “No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be viewed as embodying the same social reality”.

Aristotle said, “A man's virtues are formed in him by his doing the actions”. According to one interpretation by author Will Durant, “We are what we repeatedly do”. As a result, a people’s understandings of the world – and the languages with which they communicate these understandings – is best interpreted through the community in which they exist.

2.9. The profits of Xitsonga's transnational character

Xitsonga is a Southern Bantu language in South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe (Lee & Burheni, 2014). The language's transnational nature opens up many opportunities for rich terminology throughout the southern African Xitsonga linguistic communities. The Xitsonga speakers in these countries form a speech community consisting of people who, albeit heterogeneous, are united in numerous ways (Bonvillain, 2019). The term "speech community", according to Bloomfield (1933, cited in Bonvillain, 2019), refers to "a group of persons who connect employing speech". Bloomfield acknowledges that in addition to sharing a common language, these individuals also share a common understanding of what constitutes "proper" and "improper" linguistic usage in that language. Hymes (1974, cited in Bonvillain, 2019) emphasises that norms concerning the uses of language unite members of a speech community. The importation of agrarian terminology from Mozambique and Zimbabwean Xitsonga linguistic communities into South African Xitsonga is thus a realistic pursuit, given that the variations between the different versions of Xitsonga are not insurmountable as they form part of the same speech communities.

Thaman, Unesco Chair in Teacher Education and Culture at the University of the South Pacific, said that the late king of Tonga (his country of origin) once referred to education as a *kato he loto kato* (a basket within a basket). He interpreted this terminology to imply that the knowledge, skills, and values that we learn as a result of our various journeys – and which are stored, interpreted and shared within a broader, all-embracing cultural context – are what define us, and the means with which others define us, too (Thaman, 2010). This concept highlights the significance of realising that cultural expressions, such as dances and rituals, are rooted in a more comprehensive cultural setting. This "basket" contains how various social groupings relate to the world other groups within it. The ability to acknowledge the "basket" or cultural environment from which we came and the



willingness to accept the offerings of other "baskets" appear to be essential to achieving educational goals. In a similar vein, for Xitsonga linguistic communities to have an adequate understanding of other cultures, they need to have an adequate understanding of their *own* culture so that they can construct comparable terminology in their own context. Such an understanding of the function of language – one of sharing and exchange within more similar societal groupings – would bring about a reduction in the overuse of loanwords.

2.10. Xitsonga as a quotidian language of communication of Vatsonga in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe

As stated above, Xitsonga is a collection of various dialects that sometimes contest standard Xitsonga for autonomy. However, these dialects may be seen as tributaries of concepts and terminology from the standardised Xitsonga. Having various ways of naming an item or concept in different Xitsonga dialects enriches the language. With the existence of all these dialects, Xitsonga should be able to assign lexicon to numerous notions, providing the language with a high semantic value. Higher semantic value would be of great service to the profession of translation and the field of translation studies.

"The translator is a privileged writer who has the ability to rewrite masterpieces in their language", observed Spanish translator and author Javier Marias. It is hard to believe that by "masterpieces" he could be referring to the excessive use of loan words. A masterpiece is a work of exceptional artistry, skill, or quality – a labour done with exceptional expertise. As much as borrowing and transliteration are inevitable and often useful translation tools, the assignment of the word "masterpiece" calls for *more* than borrowing and transliteration.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, ethnography is the primary research methodology. Terminological data on the Xitsonga speech communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe has been gathered and analysed. In line with Agar's (1985) views, ethnography involves “encountering alien realities and making sense of them”. This research method aims to demonstrate how practices in one environment can be made sense of when viewed from a different perspective. Cameron (1990), understands ethnography as “learning from people”, while Leininger (1990) defines ethnography as “the systematic process of observing, detailing, describing, documenting, and evaluating the distinctive patterns of a culture (or subculture) to comprehend the patterns of the individuals in their familiar environment”. The researcher thus attempts to gain a deeper understanding linguistic features of Xitsonga by way of observing and understanding the people who use the language.

The researcher entered Xitsonga speech communities to observe and document daily communications. The researcher investigated the farming, rites, and rituals practised in Xitsonga communities and spoke with community members and those regarded as cultural experts. These figures were crucial sources of information. A combination of participant observation and clarity-seeking questions to gather the data was employed. The researcher set aside their preconceptions to understand the daily lives of these people. Concurrently, data was gathered and analysed. The researcher sort answers to new queries that emerged as terminological data emerged. The researcher adopted a nonjudgmental stance by refraining from providing a personal evaluation of any specific cultural practice to provide an environment where the participants freely discussed their traditions and practices.

3.1. Data Collection

The data collection method for this study is the examination of focus groups to explore the varied use of agrarian terminology amongst them. The research aims required in-depth group work due to an interest in the social context of public comprehension. Listening to exchanges amongst participants provided the researcher time to acclimate to, for example, their preferred terms for discussing sorghum and stopped him from prematurely shutting off the formation of meaning in his search for an explanation.

In contrast to more traditional techniques of data collection, the fact that group members act as each other's audience encourages a broader range of communication among them. Work done in groups is extremely helpful in allowing individuals to describe their understandings naturally, to avoid falling into the trap of stereotypical representations of the dominant cultural conceptions. Since knowledge and attitudes partially revolve around rational responses to straightforward inquiries, it is essential to utilise various communication channels. Standard modes of communication – such as tales, jokes, and casual word association – may reveal much, if not more, about what individuals know. In this way, focus groups cover areas that other approaches cannot reach, revealing understandings that may have remained untapped in a more formal one-on-one interview or questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Agrarian terminology as a key component of early language acquisition in Xitsonga linguistic communities

The agrarian oral storytelling tradition is one of the pillars upon which Xitsonga literature and communication was built. Vatsonga, like many African tribes, had extraordinary storytelling giants in their communities. The distinctions of a great storyteller lay in the use of words, images, and vocal inflections to achieve tonal variety. In this way, the audience learned to appreciate words for their meaning and nuance. As Wa Thiong'o (1992) rightly observed, at the height of oral storytelling tradition, language was more than just a collection of words. It had an evocative impact that extended beyond its immediate and lexical meaning. Word games such as riddles, proverbs, syllable transpositions, and nonsensical but musically arranged words reinforced the appreciation for the suggestive magical power of language. Through images and symbols, language provided the audience with a view of the world that had its own unique beauty.

Regrettably, urbanisation brought television to these communities, with viewing material strictly governed by offensive Apartheid policies. Its seemingly endless array of shows replaced the Vatsonga's and other African tribes' literary learning rendezvous of storytelling, fine-tuning them to prefer Hollywood, Pinewood, and other English language channels at the expense of their own languages.

Before the arrival of Europeans, Xitsonga speakers relied heavily on their shared folklore, cattle husbandry, land tilling, and the various other operations involved in food production as a mainstay for their shared terminology and conceptual framework. Their first point of understanding the outside world – the other – was via agrarian life. Thus, their understandings came from the routines that formed their everyday agrarian existence.

4.2. Linguistic hospitality

Putting together a translation is akin to preparing a meal for a guest from abroad. As much as one has dishes to offer, consideration of the guest is inevitable, as Ricoeur (cited in Kearney, 2004) notes. Forfeiture of local cuisine in part or whole is considered geniality. French fries, Mexican *chilaquiles*, Cantonese *dim sum*, Nigerian *jollof* rice, Brazilian *moqueca*, South African *boerewors*, *chakalaka*, *pap*, etc., are frequently noted as typical dishes in those nations. It is upon the courtesy of the *Brigade de Cuisine* (the kitchen hierarchy) that one may offer a person a dish that represents their home. Through the comprehension of intercultural service, translators should also make the linguistic cuisine available to the target audience.

The pleasure of dwelling in a language of an "other" balances receiving the foreign word at home, "in one's own welcoming house", as Ricoeur (ibid.) would say. The concept of hospitality is linked to the concepts of beneficence, charity, and courtesy. In meal preparation, the cook will serve wholesome food to the guests based on their nationalities, just as the translator must use culture-specific terminology for each target audience. There is a profound connection between people and their food, just as a shatterproof association exists between people and their culture and, therefore, their language.

In his essay, "*The Task of the Translator*", Benjamin (2000) comprehensively illustrates that since the translator's work is not to please the reader, they must serve as a bridge, conduit, and negotiator between the two languages (Benjamin, 2000). This duty expounds on the kinship of all languages in that they are related, serve the same purpose, *and* describe the world in which they exist differently from one another. According to Benjamin, if the agency of a translator in the mediation between two languages is performed diligently, it raises the language



to a level of greater purity. This purity has nothing to do with the absence of practical linguistic contamination but rather with the constitution of comprehension, which according to Whorf (1956) does not represent the same social reality.

Benjamin contends that language serves communicative ends and designates the pure medium of man's “mental being”, because there is a difference in how different aspects of the world are seen and described. Khatib (2016), in accordance with Benjamin (1996), maintains that “all language communicates itself”. As a result, language is not the carrier of meaning in an instrumental sense. Instead, it is the “un-mediated” pure medium through which cognition can become communicable (Khatib, 2016).

CHAPTER 5: TEXT ANALYSIS

5.1. Xitsonga online newspapers and documents and the gratuitous use of loanwords and transliteration

Source Text 1: South African Xitsonga (from NSC June 2021 examination, DBE)

Namadyambu o ya kamba[2] Violet. U kume Violet a ambele tifasikoti[3], a ri karhi a dyondzisiwa ntirho[4] wa le makhixini[5]. Tolly a fika a hlamala loko a kuma wonge a ka ha ri yena Violet wakwe. A kuma se a languteka ku fana[6] na vanhwana[7] va lomu madorobeni. Swi n'wi tsakisa[8] a xeweta[9] Violet hi ku ri: 'Vaxumi[10] N'wa

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[2] *Ku kamba* – a concept that originated in agrarian Vatsonga communities of southern Africa meaning "to check in after a while". The term is usually used when going to see if a trap that has been set up to catch birds has caught any. The term has come to refer to both paying a visit to someone who is ill or bedridden, and simply making a courtesy call. *Ku kamba* has other synonyms like *Ku hlomela* which means to look quickly and furtively at something.

[3] *Fasikoti* – transliterated from an Afrikaans word, *voorskoot (*"waistcoat" in English). Although the transliterated term is common in Xitsonga speech communities, there are Xitsonga terms that can replace it, such as *nkhancu*, which means "coat", related to Joseph's coat of many colors (Gen 37: 3). *Khiva* also fits perfectly in place of *fasikoti* and is prevalent in Vatsonga culture.

[4] *Dyondzisiwa ntirho* – Although the context is clear, *ku dyondzisiwa* is a school curriculum-oriented teaching, whereas *ku thwasisiwa* is a work-oriented training.

[5] *Makhixini* –a transliteration of the word *switangeni*, which means "in the kitchens". The word for a kitchen in Xitsonga is *xitanga*. When predominantly white families hired housemaids, the term *makhixini* gained popularity. *Makhixini* has come to represent a domestic worker. The educated black elite can now also afford the services of domestic housemaids (*vamakhixi*).

[6] *Fana* –translates to "similarity" and has another synonym, *ku yelana,* with a semantic sense close to "indistinguishable".

[7] *Vanhwana* –translates to "girls above childhood" and has synonyms such as *tintombi* and sometimes *tithokazi*, which means "heifers", lending credence to Xitsonga's predilection for agrarian settings.

[8] *Tsakisa* – "to make happy", with synonym *ku nyawuleriwa.*

[9] *Xeweta* – "to greet", with synonyms *pfuxela, zumbisa, xumisa, vutisa ntsako, ambisa*, among others.

[10] *Vaxumi* – common greeting statement which means "those who are working", or "workers". As it is a commonly accepted norm that a day is characterised by labour (usually in the field), *vaxumi* has turned

Makhanikhee!' Violet a hleka[11] a ku 'Hi xuma yini[12] hi nga ku dyondzeni ke?"[13] Tolly a ku: Dyondzani[14] swinene swi ta mi hakela ka rin'wana siku.' Tolly na yena a vhela a sungula ku hlantswa mimovha[15] ya ka Mininjere[16] Makhahlela a ri endlwini a ha dya mabulu na Valungu-kulobye. Loko va fambile a huma, a ku ka Tolly: 'Nandziwe u teke[17] mbhuri ya wansati, naswona wa ha rintsongo.[18] Mesisi[19]

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into a statement of salutation, hail, and obeisance in Vatsonga speech communities, mostly said in a high pitched tone.

[11] *Hleka* – "to laugh", with synonyms from other speech communities such as *ku n'wayitela*, *ku ba fenya,* among others.

[12] *Hi xuma yini?* – "we are doing nothing of value", a common greeting response that is a rhetorical question that shows that people are hard at work but responding with humility as in, "We are not doing much, but we are trying!" This is a typical response by Vatsonga men and women whose ordinary day is characterised by observable work with remarkable milestones. On the other hand, it worth noting that money is called *xuma*, with a more common transliterated version, *mali.* There appears to be an association between *ku xuma* of working and *xuma* of money. For example, "*Va xumile siku hinkwaro kutani va hakeriwa hi xuma xo nyawula", which means, "t*hey were hard at labor the entire day and eventually got paid good money".

[13] *Hi nga ku dyondzeni ke?* – "Are we not still under training?" The speaker, despite being addressed alone, uses the plural pronoun *Hi*, meaning "We". This is another remarkable sense of community shown by Vatsonga speech communities. This question implies, "I am learning because someone has dedicated themselves to teaching me". Possible responses to this question are: *Hi nga ku deyeni! ("*baby steps"), *Goza hi goza ("*step by step"), *Katsongo katsongo ("*tiny steps"), or *Swimatana* ("little waters"), which figuratively means small increments of progress.

[14] *Dyondzani* –translates to "learn", but here means "spread yourself wide and learn". Other Xitsonga speech communities would use *hlakulani* which means "weed out the (unwanted) grass", "dig up", or "focus and learn".

[15] *Mimovha* – meaning "cars", a transliterated term from "motor car". Xitsonga has an equivalent term *xipandzamananga*.

[16] Mininjere – "leader", a transliterated term for "manager". Xitsonga has an equivalent terms like *mulawuri, mufambisi,* or *murhangeri*

[17] *Teke* – "married", from a Xitsonga verb "teka" which means "to take". Xitsonga has more synonyms for marrying and marriage as a revered institution, such as *ku lovola, ku vuta, ku hlomisa, ku tloma (Xihlengwe)* (the official procedural visit to the bride's family by the suiter to request her hand in marriage), or *ku tlhakisa* (which literally means "to abduct", and although it is a prevalent way of marrying among Vahlengwe of Mozambique and Zimbabwe, it is considered unprocedural).

[18] *Wa ha rintsongo* – "she is still young". Other Xitsonga speech communities would go on to use terms like *wa ha ri thokazi*, meaning "she is still a heifer".

[19] *Mesisi* – "the boss's wife", a transliteration of "Miss". The woman being referred to does not need to be married; all she needs to be is white, educated, and commanding of some authority (if she is not white) over male subordinates or less educated black women.

wa mina wa n'wi tsakela. U ri hambi Violet a nga si tiva swa makhixi[20] u na mathatha,[21] naswona a nga lolohi[22]. U tsavule kunene![23] Loko timhaka ta yindlu to lulama ndzi ta mi xavela swo saseka'. Tolly u lo na heta ku hlantswa mimovha ya Valungu, o hlamba.

Nhwanyana loyi a tirha va ka Makhahlela (Macgallon) o phama swakudya a yisela Tolly na Violet le ndlwini ya vo vatirhi. Ko dyiwa ku xurhiwa. Tolly a lela[24] Mininjere na Mesisi[25] le ndlwini. Ku te loko a ku wa famba, va ka Mininjere vo sivela[26] Tolly ku famba hi milenge va ku: 'I vusiku[27], hi ta ya ku xixa kona Ghezini hi movha.'

[Xi huma eka: Xikotikoti wa Matshotsho, hi M. A. Mahuhushi]

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[20] *Makhixi* – kitchen affairs

[21] *Mathatha* – to be a go getter.

[22] *A nga lolohi* – "she is not indolent", with other synonyms such as *nghinghi* which means "assiduous" or "diligent.

[23] *U tsavule Kunene!* – "What a pick!". When eating with others, *Ku tsavula* is to select a piece of meat. The eldest picks first and then the rest the order of their ages down to the youngest, according to Xitsonga custom. The youngest are usually assigned the unfortunate situation of selecting either the smallest pieces of meat or eating only soup. As a result, *ku tsavula* means "having the privilege of selecting first, you chose the best" in this context. Other Xitsonga meanings associated with *u tsavurile kunene* include: *U langile khwatsi* (" perfect selection"), *U hlawurile ndluwa u siya hove* ("You selected the best among many"), *U khetile kahle* ("You chose the best"), *U na tihlo* ("You have an eye for choosing"), *A wu na nxanga* ("You do not have cataracts").

[24] *Lela* – to bid farewell, with synonym *ku sarisa* which means "goodbye".

[25] *Mesisi* – other than the meaning in footnote 18, the context in which the term has been used here simply means "whites".

[26] Sivela – to urge or stop someone from doing something. Other Xitsonga synonymous terms are *arisa* and *tsimbisa.*

[27] *I vusiku* – "it's dark".

Target Text 1.1: Xitsonga from Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Namadyambu o ya hlomela Violet. U kume Violet a ambele nkhancu, a ri karhi a thwasisiwa migingiriko ya le xitangeni. Tolly a fika a hlamala loko a kuma onge a hi yena Violet wakwe. A kuma leswaku se wa yelana na tintombi ta lomu madorobeni. Hi ku nyawuleriwa a pfuxela Violet a ku: 'Vaxumi N'wa-Makhanikhee!' Violet a n'wayitela a ku 'A hi va voni, hi nga ku deyeni!' Tolly a angula a ku: Hlakulani swi nyawula, mi ta tshovela mindzuku.'

Tolly na yena a vhela a sungula ku hlantswa swipandzamananga swa Mulawuri wa feme. Makhahlela a a ha xuxa na Valungu-kulobye endlwini. Loko va sarisile u lo humela handle a ku ka Tolly: Nandziwe, u tlome mbhuri naswona wa ha ri thokazi. Nghamu ya mina wa n'wi tsakela. U ri hambileswi Violet a ha dyondzaka swa makhixi, i nghinghi. U langhile khwatsi! Loko timhaka ta yindlu to famba kahle, ndzi ta mi xavela swo saseka'. Loko a heta ku hlantswa swipandzamananga swa Valungu, Tolly u ye ku hlambeni.

Ntombi leyi a yi tirhela va ka Makhahlela (Macgallon) u phamele Tolly na Violet swakudya a va yisela endlwini ya vatirhi. Loko va hete ku dya Tolly a sarisa Mlungu na Mesisi a ku wa tifambela. Ndyangu wa Makhahlela wu tsimbise Tolly ku ngwingwa kutani a n'wi tshembisa ku n'wi heleketa hi xipandzamananga.

[Xi huma eka: Xikotikoti wa Matshotsho, hi M. A. Mahuhushi]

Target Text 1.2: English

In the evening, Tolly went to check up on Violet. He discovered she was stunning in the waistcoat as she was under culinary training. Tolly was convinced that Violet was just indistinguishable from the town girls. Excitedly, he greeted Violet saying, "Greetings, dear Makhanikhe's daughter – the worker!" Violet smiled and

answered, “Far from it – ain’t I just but a novice?” Tolly replied, “Work harder; the future will hold hard workers in high regard.”

Tolly immediately started washing the manager’s cars. Macgallon was having discussions with his peers in the house. After they had bid farewell, he came out and beamed to Tolly, “My guy, you married a goddess, and she is still very young! My wife dearly loves her. She said that though Violet is still an amateur in kitchen affairs, she has proven to be assiduous. What an appropriate choice! If all goes well about the house, I will buy you some exquisite furniture.” Upon finishing washing the cars, Tolly went for a bath.

The Macgallons’ housemaid dished for Tolly and Violet in the servant’s cottage. Tolly said his goodbyes to the boss and his wife when they finished eating. The Macgallons stopped him from walking in the darkness and promised to drive him there.

[Extracted from: *Xikotikoti wa Matshotsho*, by M. A. Mahuhushi]

Source Text 2: South African Xitsonga (from 'Nthavela', a Xitsonga newspaper)

The footnotes of this text display other agrarian terms from the Xitsonga speech communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Mirhi[28] ya Xintu[29]

September 27, 2022 Dunisani Ntsanwisi

Hi Lulama Maluleke

Khale ka khaleni[30] va kokwana wa hina a va horisa[31] timbanga na ku tshungula swivavi[32] swihi kumbe swihi hi ku tirhisa swimilana swa nhova[33] na ku endla swa ku arhavela[34] hi ku katsa swimilana na mati ya ku vila. Swirho swin'wana swa swiharhi naswona a va swi tirhisa ku tshungula mavabyi yo karhi, ku dya tinyunghu ta mihandzu yo karhi, na ku dya/cakunya timintsu ta swimilana, na ku endla vukhongeri bya xintu ku nga ku phahla ku va va kota ku horisa mavabyi. Kambe hi ku famba ka nkarhi na ku cinca ka minkarhi leyi, mirhi leyi yi tirhisiwaka ku horisa vuvabyi, timbanga na swivavi eka masiku ya sweswi i mimirhi leyi yi nga endliwa hi swa xilungu- hileswaku yi processed[35]. Vakokwana a va dya

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[28] *Mirhi* – "medicinal plants" – *minsinya, minsinya, timitsu, mintsebyani, mirhi ya tin'anga naswin'wana*

[29] *Xintu* – "tradition" – *xikhale, ntolovelo, ndhavuko, ntumbuluko*

[30] *Khale ka khaleni* – "in the olden days" – *khale ka matiko, minkarhi leyi hundzeke, khale ka makongwa*

[31] *Horisa* – "cure" – *tshungula, lapha, ongola*

[32] *Swivavi* – "ailments" – *mavabyi, switlhavi*

[33] *Swa nhova* – "from the bush" – *swa le mananga*

[34] *Ku arhavela* –*"steaming"*

[35] Processed – *kandziweke, chikitiweke, kuyiweke*

swimilana swi ri tano kumbe va swi kandza kutani va swi dya, switirha. Nkarhi wun'wana a va tirhisa mati ya swimilana swo karhi ku va va swi tola emirhini ku horisa na ku sivela mavabyi lawa ya ha taka. Kun'wana a va teka mati ya swimilana leswi va tota laha ku nga na mbanga kutani va hola, munyu na wona i swin'wana swa minchumu leyi tirhisiwaka tani hi mirhi ya xintu. Kambe eka nkarhi wa sweswi, mimirhi yi endliwile hi swimilana swa ku hambanahambana kambe hi ku andza/ku kula ka thekinoloji[36], va nghenisa swimilana leswi emichinini leyi pfunaka ku antswisa matirhirhelo ya mirhi leyi. Nhlayo yi komba leswaku, i vantima vatsongo lava va ha tirhisaka tindlela ta xintu loko swi ta eka timhaka ta rihanyu. Vanhu vo tala va tirhisa tindlela ta ximanguva lawa ta mirhi ku kuma mpfuneto eka swa rihanyu ra vona.

Ti 31 ta Mhawuri 2022 a ku ri siku leri ku tlangeriwaka 'African Traditional Medicine Day'[37] hileswaku ku tlangeriwa siku ra mirhi ya xintu. Swimilana swa ku fana na moringa, xikwavava, swirhi, nyunghu ya ovacado, jojoba, olives[38], Aloe vera[39], basil, peppermint[40], ginger[41], Echinacea, makamba ma nsinya ya ku hambana hambana i swilo leswi a swi tirhisiwa tani hi mirhi ya xintu. "Swimilana swin'wana hi risema[42] ra swona, wa swi kota ku va u horisa kumbe u ti twa u va u hanya kahle emirhini." Lama i marito ya kokwana Gigwana lava va nga hi rungulela hi matirhiselo ya mirhi ya xintu. Kokwana Gigwana va kombisile

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[36] *Thekinoloji* – technology (transliterated) – *matirhiselo ya ximanguvalawa*

[37] African Traditional Medicine Day – *Siku ra Mintsebyana ya Xintu ya Afrika*

[38] Olives - *mitlhwari*

[39] Aloe vera – *mhangani, mhanga*

[40] Peppermint - *musundzungwani*

[41] Ginger - *mbvarhula*

[42] *Risema* – smell – *nuhelo, ripunga*

leswaku ku kandza makamba/matluka, na ku virisa tinyungu xikan'we na nyungu ya ovacado, kumbe ku dya swimilana swi ri swoxe a ku ri ndlela ya ku ti pfuna hi swa rihanyo khaleni ka masiku. Ku sindza rimintsu kutani u tola embangeni, a ku ri ndlela ya ku hatlisa swinene ku va mbanga yi hola. Hi ku tsundzuka na ku tlangela mirhi ya xintu swi fanerile leswaku hi tsundzuka maendlelo ya xintu ya vutshunguri, hi tlhela hi seketela lava na le ka minkarhi ya sweswi va ha yisaka mahlweni ni vutshunguri.

Source Text 3: Xitsonga from Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Misava ya hendlela[43]

Hi titiva hi ri vinyi va misava leyi hina. Tiko ra Zimu i ra vakokwani va vakokwani va hina, a hi nga ri dzahangi[44] ro mi lo hi khumulela[45] mi hi hayekela mugiveni[46] wa tlhava[47], tshovolo[48] na xitakataka[49] ivi n'wina mi ya tshama nsekeni[50]! Laha gangala[51], xitichi[52], maxalani[53] na n'wahuva[54] swi chelaka[55] swi nga chengalangi.

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[43] *Hendlela* – to give away something you do not want anymore, usually clothes - *ku hlakatela, ku humesa nyiko, ku nyikela hi nchumu lowu u nga ha wu laviki*

[44] *Dzahangi* – from the verb *dzaha* meaning "to smoke", *dzahangi* means "did not smoke" (the context in which this word was used figuratively means "we did not get the information". Vatsonga often update each other on the latest information or village gossip over a cigarette or snuff)

[45] *Khumulela* – an act of giving clothes to someone (though the subject here is land, the term *khumulela* has been used metaphorically)

[46] *Mugiveni* – a string used to hang blankets and clothes – *ntambhu yo leha leyi ku hayekiwaka mpahla na maxuka*

[47] *Tlhava* – sandy soil favourable to the growing of nuts

[48] *Tshovolo* – alluvial soil – also referred to as *xitakataka*

[49] *Xitakataka* – see previous

[50] *Nsekeni* – granular sand – *savasi*

[51] *Gangala* – drought resistant red sorghum, commonly used by Vatsonga farmers of the lowveld

[52] *Xitichi* – sorghum variety

[53] *Maxalani* – sorghum variety

[54] *N'wahuva* – millet

[55] *Chelaka* – from the verb *ku chela* meaning to pullulate and spread prolifically

Laha mativa na min'werheti[56] swi halakaka ku kondza timbvumi[57] ta nguva ya xirhimo ti fafazela tiko na mintlangasi[58] yi chela[59], ku khuluka tiko hikwaro. Makhutla[60], mikwahle, swibodze naswona swi ku vuya!

Xana ma swi tiva hi ku hetiseka leswaku hi yi kumile njani misava leyi? A mi lo hi hendlela nakambe a mi lo hi fuyisa[61] misava leyi phela? Swona ya fuyiseka xana? Ya hendleleka ke? A ko va tintswalo! Loko a swiritano, ti pyisiwa hayini nyan'waka?

Tanani zumbyeni[62] mi ta khondza xitava[63] ndzi mi ambela hi ta tiko leri. Khwenutanani hi rhumbu[64] ndzi ta mi dlavela[65] kwhatsi. Mi ta hi maxuxu[66]

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[56] *Min'werheti* – from the noun *n'werheti*, water-filled tree holes

[57] *Timbvumi* – from the noun *mbvumo*, some rain-bearing clouds

[58] *Mintlangasi* – from the noun *tlangasi*, "marshy" or "swampy"

[59] *Chela* – to flow, also called *ku khuluka*

[60] *Makhutla* – singular *khutla*, a large frog that appears in the rainy season, used as relish by Vatsonga

[61] *Fuyisa* – to loan someone your livestock for a certain period of time with a payment of one animal per year (a common practice among Vatsonga and other African tribes, a form of empowerment to a member of the society who may have lost their livestock to theft or desease)

[62] *Zumbyeni* – from the noun *zumbo*, a concealed resting place for female initiates during the day

[63] *Xitava* – a way of sitting in which the legs are crossed, typically used by women, also called *ku khondla xitseve*

[64] *Rhumbu* – "intestines", but in this context it means "kinsmen", referring to people of the same clan

[65] *Dlavela* – to tell and narrate stories

[66] *Maxuxu* – a period of time in the evening after dusk when men meet and discuss serious societal or family affairs

tinyeje[67] *na tingholota swi miyele minkhwela ya swona yo vitana timbvumi*[68] *ta mpfula. Hi ku ti tolovele ku hi vitanela mpfula, kutani yi vuya hi xivutani*[69] *yi ku haraa! Tanani hi khungil*[70] *leto leva, tanani hi ta siyerisana mano. Hi ta mi fundza hi njemani*[71] *kasi na swin'wana swo lata nyoka*[72] *mi ta swi kuma.*

Rixaka ra hina ri fike tikweni leri khale ka khaleni ri ka ri huma evuxeni. Tanihi rixaka ra vurimi na vuhloti, hi ti kumile hi ka hi aka etindzhawini ta misava yo nona yo fana na tshovolo. Hi xitalo, hi kumeka emisaveni leyi kotaka ku hlayisa tshongo[73]*, yi tlhela yi kota ku seketela vutomi bya swimilani swa hina. Hambileswi tiko leri ri toloveleke ku va na dyandza*[74]*, ha swi kota ku hanya ku suka eka nguva yin'wana ku ya eka yin'wana handle ko sika. Hi vile na tindlela to hambanahambana to hanya na maxelo ya vukarhi etikweni leri. Xo sungula, timbewu leti nyenyelaka ku fana na xifake, xitichi na xichayeni tibyariwa mimfuveni na le minkoveni hakanyingi laha ku milaka byanyi bya ritsewani*[75]*.*

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[67] *Tinyeje* – an insect that produces a high-pitched shrieking sound, usually found in mopane trees (*colophospermum mopane*)

[68] *Timbvumi* – from the noun *mbvumo*, some rain-bearing clouds

[69] *Xivutani* – the sound of wind brings about precipitation, *mpfumawulo wa moya lowu susumetaka ku ta ka mpfula*

[70] *Khungile* – from the verb *ku khunga* which means "to tie down", usually a dog

[71] *Njemani* – *ilala* wine, also called *vucema*

[72] *Lata nyoka* – "to make the snake sleep", a metaphor for eating (there is a belief that when someone is hungry, the snake in the belly is hungry), sometimes *ku miyeta nyoka*, "to quieten the snake"

[73] *Tshongo* – high soil moisture content that is favourable for germination, also *ndzhongo.*

[74] *Dyandza* – a prolonged period of abnormally low rainful leading to a dry spell and water shortages resulting food shortages and famine, also called *ndlala, nsiko,* or *mumu*

[75] *Ritsewani* – a stubborn grass that shoots even after weeding, common in water-logged areas

Timbewu ta dzila[76], ti gobiwa na le gangeni kumbe endzhawini ya maribye kambe titshoveriwa swiritano. Gangala (mutod'o), phoho na n'wahuva i tin'wana ya timbewu ta dzila.

Xa vumbhiri, vuswikoti byo xiyaxiya maxelo i byin'wana vutlhari lebyi endleke hi hanya ku fika namutlha handle ko ya kangetela mphalalo wa mfumo na Minhlangano yo ka yi nga ri ya Mfumo. Mimiti ya hina yina tingula[77], madulu[78], switlati[79] na marhala[80]. Etinguleni, hi hlayisa timanga, tindluvu na tinyawa, emadulwini hi hlayisa gangala, xitichi, xichayeni, maxalani, kasi exitlatini hi hlayisa xifake. Leswi hlayiseriwaka erhaleni i mahlanga ya xifake kumbe mavele ku pfuna tihomu hi swakudya hi nguva ya Ximun'wana na Ximumu loko ka ha rindzeriwile mpfula yo sungula. Loko mahlanga ma nyikiwa tihomu, masungula ma lunghiwa[81] hi mati ya nga na munyu wo xuluziwa[82] ebambeni. Kasi hiletlhelo, loko mpfula yi hlwela, ku ceriwa mazombye[83] ma nyikiwa tihomu. Zombye i ximilani xa rhanga leri kulaka swinene emisaveni, ri ceriwa ri nyikiwa tihomu ti dya.

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[76] *Dzila* – to be relentless even in the face of harsh conditions (some sorghum varieties like *gangala* (*mutod'o*) are described as *ti na dzila*, meaning they are hardy and drought resistant)

[77] *Tingula* – singular *ngula,* "Vatsonga's Savings Bank" as Junod would say, keeps valuables, the best grains of maize, the best grown nuts, reserved for seed for the next rainy season

[78] *Madulu* – singular *dulu*, a storehouse for harvested grains

[79] *Switlati* – a version of *dulu* that is built on a raised platform to curb infestations of termites and other grain-eating insects

[80] *Marhala* – a raised platform where maize stalks are kept for stock feed

[81] *Lunghiwa* – from verb *lungha* which means "to add salt", believed to aid fertility

[82] *Xuluziwa* – from the verb *ku xuluza* which means "to produce salt" from saline soils

[83] *Mazombye* – nutritious tubers that grows underground and are a common cattle feed during dry spells

Xa vunharhu, hinkari wa Ximun'wana ha khatsa masimu hi seletela mahlanga ya tshovelo lowu hundzeke leswaku loko timbvumi ti halaka swi ta bolela ehansi kutani swi fuwisa misava. Nkari wun'wana ha palila timbewu leswaku timpfula xa xisungusungu timirisa na ximilani xa mavele. Hinkwalaho ka ku cinca ka maxelo, ku palila nkari wun'wana ku vangela ku lahlekeriwa hi mbewu loko mpfula yo hlwela ku suka eka yo sungula ku na. Hakanyingi gangala ra pona na loko ku tshuka ku va mbvumi yin'we. Endzhaku ka n'hweti, nhlakulo[84] wa ritsewani, risekeseke[85], rigakundzula na gasigasi wu endla varimi va aka swikupe[86] masin'wini. N'wana xi va xi ka xi an'wa hi tsheve[87]! Varisi va swifuyo va hiteka leswaku swi nga fohleli[88] tshangaveni ra munhu. Loko swimilani swi va na tin'hweti timbirhi swi sungula ku boha tinyimba[89] to rhumbuka[90]. Loko mavele ma rhumbuka, tinyenyani (nghozi), tinjiya (timherha) na mazekenene swi hlasela swimilani. Varimi va aka matilikwa[91] va chaya tinanga na midlomo hi ku rhingeta ku chavisa nghozi[92]. Hakanyingi timherha na mazekenene swo tshavuleriwa kunene ku ringeta ku ponisa swirin'wa.

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[84] *Nhlakulo* – from the verb *ku hlakula*, "to weed"

[85] *Risekeseke* – a type of tall grass that calls for swift weeding, otherwise it drowns the crops

[86] *Swikupe* – a temporary structure that is built in the field during the crops season (migrant workers may call mining towns *xikupeni*)

[87] *An'wa hi tsheve* – "suckling by the side", meaning that a mother is so busy in the field that she cannot afford the luxury of feeding a child from the bossom

[88] *Fohleli* – from the verb *ku fohla* which means "to sneak", "to creep"

[89] *Boha tinyimba* – the Vatsonga tie the period of plants beginning to bloom to the start of a pregnancy

[90] *Rhumbuka* – "to sprout" (when a girl starts to form breasts, Vatsonga may say *wa rhumbuka,* meaning "she is sprouting")

[91] *Matilikwa* – singular *tilikwa,* a pole-raised platform, can also be used to describe a multi-storey building

[92] *Nghozi* – a type of a grain-eating bird before harvest (distractors stand on a *tilikwa* (see previous) to distract *nghozi* from eating the grains)

Emakumu loko swimilani swi ponile eka mumu, byanyi, tinyenyana hi ngena eka tshovelo. Laha hi tsemaka mavele kumbe xifake hi ya phopha na ku khumudza hi chela madulwini. Tindzala[93] leti lukiweke[94] hi nala[95], tihlambvuti[96] na tisisi swi sungula ku tirha ngopfu hi nkarhi lowu. Tihlelo na mipulo[97] na swona i nguva ya swona. Mavele yo sungula ku tsemiwa hi lembe rolero ma endla vuswa byo sungula byi vitiwaka d'inditi[98]. Vuswa bya d'inditi byi nandziha na guxempfhumu, xipyisanga, tihoti hambi ku ri ximuwamuwani.

[Xi huma eka: Hi vinyi va misava, hi Hanyani Gwalale]

[93] *Tindzala* – singular *ndzala*, a common type of Vatsonga basket that is used during harvest to carry produce

[94] *Lukiweke* – from the verb *luka* which means "to weave"

[95] *Nala* – palm tree used for weaving baskets and *ngula* (see 76), also called *ncindzu*

[96] *Tihlambvuti* – some thin strings from *nala* for use in baskets and *ngula*

[97] *Mipulo* – sticks for loosening sorghum grains from stalks

[98] *D'inditi* – the *pap* (soft porridge) from the first harvest of the sorghum grains

Target Text 3: English

Borrowed land

We know on good authority that we are the bonafide owners of this land. Zimu is the land of our great grand forbearers; we had no idea that this land was parcelled out to us and spread on the loamy, alluvial, and cotton clays for us. Where *gangala, xitichi, maxalani*, and millet thrive very well. Where the fountains and tree hollows overflow until the season of the rain arrives, and the water table gets saturated.

Are you fully aware of how we acquired this land? It bothers us that you did not lend us this land! Can it be borrowed, in any case? Were you that merciful? Where did your mercy vanish to now?

Come, sit and relax at our private resting place; we will give you a complete account of the history of this land. Call upon all your relatives so that a full account can be detailed on the table for you. Come in the evening when all the insect world has quietened down from their rain-summoning sounds, for they are used to calling for rain on our behalf, and it indeed comes! Feel free and come so that we can reason together. We shall wine and dine you with *ilala* wine, among other goodies.

Our tribe arrived in this land ages ago from the East. As an inveterate agrarian and hunting tribe, we inhabited the Lowveld's rich ‘cotton’ clays, where the Mopani tree is common. We are usually along the high moisture retention ‘cotton’ clays, enabling our farming life. Although the Lowveld has some recurring dry spells, we can maintain sustenance from one farming season to another. We have grasped ways to navigate through the horrendous climatic conditions of the Lowveld.

Firstly, some less drought-tolerant crops like maize, *xitichi*, and *xichayeni* are planted in the field's nearly swampy and water-logged portions where usually *ritsewani* grows. Some drought-resistant crops are grown in rocky and hilly areas, yet they still yield a good harvest. *Gangala (mutod'o), phoho*, and *n'wahuva* are examples of drought-tolerant crops.

Secondly, our unique skills in analysing the climate are one of the inherent wisdoms that made us a self-sufficient community that needs no hand-outs from the state and NGOs. Our homesteads comprise *tingula*, *madulu*, *switlati*, and *marhala*. *Ngula* is used to store and preserve peanuts, bambara ground nuts, and beans; *edulwini*, we store and preserve *gangala, xitichi,* and *maxalani*, and in *exitlatini* we store maize cobs. *Erhaleni*, we store the corn or sorghum stalks for animal fodder during spring and summer while awaiting the first rains. Before being given to the cattle as fodder, the corn stalks are seasoned with saline water. The salt is made through *ku xuluza* from the saline soils. If the rains are delayed, the livestock is fed *mazombye*. *Zombye* is a tuber plant that grows big under the soil and is used as cattle fodder during drought or delayed rains.

Thirdly, during spring, we plough down the stalks from the previous harvest so that they decompose and enrich the soil when the rains come. At some points, we plant the seeds without rain so that if the first rains come, the plants germinate as well. Due to changing weather patterns, *ku palila* could be a risky bet for the seeds if the second rain takes forever. Usually, *gangala* tends to survive in the event of only one installment of rain. After a month, we get to the wedding season, when *ritsewani, risekeseke, rigakundzula*, and *gasigasi* make the farmers build *swikupe* in the fields. A period of extreme toil! Livestock keepers become extra vigilant so that the lives of their livestock run smoothly. After two months, the plants starts to prepare for fruit. When the sorghum blossoms, birds, locusts, and crickets devour the plants. The farmers build stairs and scarecrows, and beat tins

to scare away the raging birds. As for locusts and crickets, they are eliminated by hand-picking to save the plants.

Finally, if the plants survive drought, weeds, and birds, we get into a harvesting period. We cut the sorghum and the maize cobs, prepare them, and store them in the granary. In this period, we used some baskets made from palm, *tihlambvuti*, and *tisisi*. Winnowers and sticks also start working. The first sorghum to be cut and made *vuswa* in that year is called *d'inditi*. *D'inditi* is very nice with *guxempfhumu, xipyisanga,* tihoti as well as *ximuwamuwana*.

[Extracted from: *Hi Vinyi Va Misava*, by Hanyani Gwalale]

The unique use of agrarian terms (synonyms) in the articles and extracts above, and other examples below, display that the ontological act of speaking is a way of not only translating oneself (inner to outer, private to public, unconscious to conscious) but also – more explicitly – of translating oneself to others. Jervolino (1990) would put it as follows:

> To speak is already to translate (even when one is speaking one's own native language or when one is speaking to oneself); further, one has to take into account the plurality of languages, which demand a more exacting encounter with the different Other.

For all these compiled agrarian terms to work effectively in translation, Ricoeur (cited in Kearney, 2004) advises that the language has to forfeit its native language's claim to self-sufficiency – which can sometimes go to the extremes of chauvinism – in order to host the foreign language.

5.2. The ethnography of Xitsonga speech communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe

The ethnography of speaking analyses how language is used in particular speech communities on a daily basis. The majority of Xitsonga-speaking communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe depend heavily on (peasant) agriculture. The agrarian activities that characterise their daily lifestyles in rural settings profoundly influence their way of life and language (Salite, 2019). Mathumba (1990) corroborates the link between Xitsonga-speaking communities and their agrarian lifestyle and observes the proverb *wansati a nga na fusi* ("A woman should not be left to lie fallow", meaning that a woman should be left without a man to "care" for her). He comments:

> This proverb further demonstrates that the Tsonga people are an agricultural community, because the content thereof refers to an agricultural practice used to rejuvenate soil which is gradually losing its fertility.

Hymes (1974) argues that the focus of language research should not just be on the understanding of rules but also on the various, chaotic, and creative ways that people use language for real communication in actual life situations or situated discourse. Situated discourse refers to a linguistic performance as the point at which socio-cultural order and language interact.

The Xitsonga-speaking communities in Mozambique and Zimbabwe employ a situated discourse that molds their speech and concepts around an agrarian paradigm, fostering a corpus of terminology derived from agriculture and allied traditional lifestyles as shown in the following section and Annexure 1. Such a position illustrates that language is a stubborn phenomenon that, at the very least, does not require any policing to display its rich descriptive prowess.

5.3. The ubiquity of traditional and agrarian Xitsonga terminology in Mozambique and Zimbabwe

Ethnographers like H. A. Junod and H. P. Junod, as well as oral historians, agree that Xihlengwe and its varients account for over 60% of modern (South African) Xitsonga. With this in mind, using and adopting inveterate agrarian Xihlengwe terms and concepts are expected to enrich Xitsonga. The following is a collection of traditional and agrarian terminology still ubiquitous in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Term 1: *Ku khatsa* – "to till"

Example 1

ST:

Ku rima nsimu ro sungula hi xikongomelo xo lulamisela xirimo handle ko chela mbewu emusaveni, hakanyingi hi ximun'wana kumbe tin'hweti ti nga ri tingani ka ha ku hela ntshovelo.

TT:

Tilling the land a few months after harvest without planting seeds, usually in autumn.

Example 2

ST:

Xikongomelonkulu xo khatsa i ku fuwisa (nonisa) musava leswaku timbewu ti ta kula khwatsi.

TT:

The primary goal of tilling is to improve soil quality and enrich it so that plants can flourish.

Example 3

ST:

Vadyondzi, hitekelani ku khatsa sweswi, hukuri na N'wendzamhala i swikambelo!

TT:

Students, make hay while the sun shines!

The above examples of the use of the term *ku khatsa* satisfy Vinay & Darbelnet's (1995) notion of equivalence in that the ST and TT express the same circumstance, while utilising different stylistic approaches. According to Vinay & Darbelnet (2004), most equivalences are set and belong to a phraseological repertoire of idioms, proverbs, and nominal or adjectival phrases.

Term 2: *Ku palila* – "dry planting"

Example 1

ST:

Ku rima nsimu na ku chela mbewu emusaveni ku nga ri na tshongo kumbe mpfula yo sungula yi nga si na.

Murimi u palila hi ku va na ku tshemba na langutelo wa leswaku mpfula yo sungula yi ta mirisa mbewu. Eka tindhawu ta ntolovelo wa mpfula leyintsongo, mbewu ya bola kutani murimi a lahlekeriwa na ku vangela leswaku a ya lava yin'wana mbewu

TT:

Sowing seeds and tilling the soil without waiting for the first rains or using an irrigation system.

The farmer employs dry farming faithful and is hopeful that the first rains will underwrite germination. Usually, in areas of extreme aridity, seeds decay, causing loss and the procurement of more seeds by the farmer.

Example 2:

ST:

Mi nga voni mbvumi mi palila yi nga hangalaka mi yi langutile

TT :

Do not let the cumulonimbus (cumulus clouds) fool you and do dry planting; they may disappear on your face.

Example 3:

ST:

Mbewu yo palila yi lava u ri na ngula

TT:

Dry planting demands a well-stocked seed bank.

Example 4:

ST:

Risenga u palile xuma xa wena xo hetisela hi ku tshema leswaku loko Afrika-Dzonga ri hlula, a nga yi rhwala hi saka.

TT:

Risenga bet his last money faithful that should South Africa win, he could be well off.

Ku palila (dry planting) is a term that is sometimes used as a metaphore for gambling, betting, venturing, and taking chances. Although there is a vast cultural gap between the concept of betting and the agrarian *ku palila*, it can be appreciated that an adaptation technique can link them. Newmark (1988) corroborates Vinay & Darbelnet's (1995) notion that adaptation involves the utilisation of a known equivalent between two different circumstances.

Term 3: *Ku hlwanya/ku haxa* – "to sow"

Example 1

ST:

Ku cukumetela (hoxetela) mbewu emusaveni hi xikongomelo xo yi hangalasela eka ndhawu leyi rimiwaka hi gejo.

Murimi u hlwanya/haxa mbewu hi voko kutani gejo ri seletela hi le ndzhaku. Xikongomelo xo hlwanya/haxa i ku fikisa mbewu eka ndhawu leyikulu hinkarhi wuntsongo.

TT:

To disperse seeds over the zone where the cultivator will cover the seeds.

The farmer scatters the seeds with their hand, whereas the cultivator (plow) buries them. The goal of dispersion is to cover a broader space in the quickest amount of time.

Example 2

ST:

Kokwani va hlwanyile/haxile mbewu ya gangala xipano xa tihavi xi ka xi landzela.

TT:

As the oxen follow behind, Granny spreads the *gangala* seeds.

Example 3

ST:

Hungu ra hlengeletano wa vavasati ri hlwanyiwile/haxiwile enkosini wa Tsatsawani.

TT:

Information about the women's meeting was disseminated at Tsatsawani's funeral.

Example 4

ST:

Hlwanyela/haxela tihuku mavele u ta kota ku khoma nkuku hi dlayela vayeni/vapfhumba.

TT:

Entice the chicken with some grains so that you can catch the cock to slaughter for the guests.

The meaning of Term 3, *ku hlwanya/ku haxa*, is akin to sowing in the agrarian sense, but it can be expanded to include other semantic connotations that go beyond the ordinary sense. This situation reinforces Sapir's (1968) claim that language serves as a guide to social reality and that people are at the mercy of the language that has evolved into the primary means of communication in their society.

Term 4: Ku phulela – "to insert a nose ring or string"

Example 1

ST:

Ku hoxa ngoti (muhalo) enhopfini ya homu leswaku yi ta lawuleka kumbe ku sivela mathokazi ku an'wela.

TT:

To control a bull and wean young cattle by prohibiting suckling, a hole is pierced in the bull's nasal septum or rim, and a rope (or ring) is inserted to keep it under control.

Example 2

ST:

Varimi va boxa mbhovo enhopfini ya homu leswaku loko va yi pana kumbe ku yi namela yi lawuleka.

TT:

Farmers pierce a hole in the nasal septum and insert a string to make it easy to control the cow in plowing and riding.

Example 3

ST:

Xikongomelo xo phulela muhalo i ku endla leswaku loko homu yi kokiwa hi ngoti leyi hoxiweke nhopfini, yi twa ku vava kutani yi lawuleka.

TT:

The major goal of the nose ring technique is to make the bull controllable as it feels pain from the nose.

Example 4

ST:

Phulela thokazi leyi leswaku yi (homu) ta paneka.

TT:

Insert a nose ring so that the bull can be controllable.

Example 5

ST:

Vatsonga va phuleliwe muhalo hi Xilungu, a va ha swi koti ku twisisa ririmi ra vona.

TT:

Vatsonga's command of their language has been greatly undermined by the English language.

Example 6

ST:

Nxaxamelo wa tidyondzo wu fanele wu phulela vadyondzi hi muhalo wo twisisa swilaveko swa nkarhi lowu taka.

TT:



The curriculum's goal should be to help students grasp the realities of the future.

The above examples highlight the malleability of *ku phulela*, and perhaps other agrarian terms in Xitsonga. These examples also expose the inherent problems with the concept of equivalence in translation. The term's function or misfunction fits Leal's (2018) argument that meaning is formed in language use, and differs significantly from language to language, making equivalence not only impractical but also pointless.

Term 5 : *Ku khayima* – "to drive livestock"

Example 1

ST*:*

Ku lawula fambelo ra swifuwo hi xikongomelo xo swi yisa endhawini yokarhi, ku nga va ku handzeni kumbe tshangeni.

TT:

Driving livestock to a specific place – it could be to the pastures or to a kraal.

Example 2

ST:

Ku fambisa vabohiwa emovheni (xigego).

TT:

To take the prisoners to the car (metaphor).

Example 3 Example A5

ST:

Ganyani u khayimile tihomu ti tlula nkova.

TT:

Ganyani drove the cattle across the stream.

Example 4

ST:

Rhulani u khayimele Nyeleti na Tsakani eka tinsulavoya ta ndhuma ta le Soweto (xigego).

TT:

Rhulani cajoled Nyeleti and Tsakani into some short-lived love affairs with well-known thugs from Soweto (metaphor).

Term 6: *Ku pfhumbula* – "to be on heat"

Example 1

ST:

Ku lulamela mirhini ka mbyana ya xisati ku hlangana na ya xinuna hi swikombiso eka xirho xa rimbewu.

TT:

To be on heat, especially a female dog, by displaying certain physical characteristics around the vulva.

Example 2

ST:

Ku sungula ku phuhla mavele ka nhwanyana.

TT:

Puberty stage (of girls).

Example 3

ST:

Hi mpfuka yi (mbyana ya xisati) pfhumbula hi na varhindzi la kaya hi ku ya landziwa.

TT: We have enough dogs on guard since it (female dog) went on heat.

Example 4

ST:

Hi mpfuka a khomba, swa n'wi tikela ku etlela enhangeni, u lo mpfhumbula? (Ximonyo)

TT:

Since she graduated from the initiation school (for girls), it proves difficult to sleep in her bedroom – is she on heat? (Sarcasm)

Term 7: *Ku futela* – "to guess"

Example 1

ST:

Ku ringanyeta leswaku mhaka yi ta yima hi ndlela yokarhi handle ka vuxokoxoko.

TT:

To estimate or conclude (something) without sufficient information to be sure of being correct.

Example 2

ST:

Futela leswaku hi xihi xipano xa bolo lexi nga ta hlula eka mphikizano wa mundzuku!

TT:

Guess which team will win the soccer tournament tomorrow!

Term 8: *Ku civela* – "meanness"

Example 1

ST:

Ku hunguta khuluko wa ntswamba (ka ntumbuluko) hi ntswele hi xikongomelo xo hlayisela rhole.

TT:

A natural behavior in which a cow reduces milk flow (through the teats) while being milked to save some for her calf.

Example 2

ST:

Ntswele yi hluleke ku tata na nkuwana hikwalaho ko civela.

TT:

The cow could not fill a mere jar because of its milk retention strategy, that is, meanness.

Example 3

ST:

Jamela u hi civele (xihundla) leswaku makwenu wa yena u kona, hi lo vona hi loko a humela handle.

TT:

Jamela kept it a secret that her brother is here, we just saw him when he came out.

Example 4

ST:

Gezani wa civa, u hi tsone nyama a hi phamela nkaka.

TT:

Gezani is mean – he refrained from dishing us meat and gave us *nkaka*[99] instead.

[99] Nkaka – A common bitter vegetable among African tribes, Vatsonga in particular believed to possess high nutrition content

Term 9: *Furheka* – a climacteric process

Example 1

ST:

Ku seletela mihandzu yi mbisi etaleni kumbe ku yi phutsela leswaku yi ta hatla yi vupfa yi nga ri ensinyeni.

TT:

To cover raw fruits (with soil, ash or plastic) with the aim of quickening the ripening process.

Example 2

ST:

Ku hlayisela ku ta tirhisa nkarhi lowu taka.

TT:

To reserve something for future use.

Example 3

ST:

Rhulani u furhekile tintoma etaleni.

TT:

Rhulani buried the raw jackal berries in the ashes.

Example 4

ST:

Risenga u rhuma va hina vana a furhekile va yena (xigego).

TT:

Risenga has made our kids messengers while his are relaxed (metaphor).

Term 9, *ku furheka* presents a fascinating philosophical demonstration of Xitsonga as a language and carrier of meaning. Mathumba (1996) lamented that Xitsonga does not have a variety of dictionaries (with varying terminology), which may help to develop and empower the language. The preceding samples of the terms appear to respond to Mathumba's clarion appeal. They put various ways of articulating meaning in a domesticated tradition at the speaker's disposal, making communication a smooth route of information flow among people of the same or similar kind. Mathumba contends that by defining terms in Xitsonga, the level of expressiveness of the language can significantly increase.

A brief aggregation of the above terms demonstrates that many agrarian terms can hold more than one meaning. These nine examples are among many others (see Annexure 1).

According to Prinsloo & Gouws (1996), most bilingual dictionaries in African languages are little more than glorified word lists with translations into English or Afrikaans. Mathumba (ibid.) also indicates that the bilingual dictionaries that are currently accessible in Xitsonga do not make a significant contribution to the development of the language.

5.4. Language and culture

Newmark (1988) posits that the meanings of some words can only be reached if they are juxtaposed with cultural connotations of a society's primary activity. He defines culture as a group's way of life, and its manifestation is unique to a community that uses a specific language as its means of expression. He acknowledges that each language group has its own culturally distinct characteristics. Thus, a language expresses the culture and uniqueness of the people who speak it. It affects the way that the speakers understand the world.

Wittgenstein (1958) states, "the limits of my language are the limits of my world". Language forms an integral part of the core of a culture. What people do with languages, such as narratives, poetry, songs, and plays, are examples of expressions of culture. Languages are systems of verbal symbols, both vocal and written, organised by specific rules (grammar). Specific communities use them to develop and communicate their thoughts and realities. Thus, Xitsonga's agrarian linguistic features are a direct result of the language's cultural heritage.

CHAPTER 6: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Focus groups have the same ethical concerns as many other types of social research (Homan, 1991). When choosing and involving participants, the researcher ensured that they all understood their contributions and how they would be useful to this research. A good practice is to be honest, to keep people informed about the expectations from the group and the topic, and not to force people to contribute. When it comes to working with focus groups, it is essential to consider sensitive information and how it can be kept private. At the start of each focus group session, the researcher clarified that each participant's contribution would be shared with the other people in the group and with the researcher. Participants were urged to keep what they heard in the meeting confidential, and it was the researcher's responsibility to ensure that data from the group could not be used as personal identifying information.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Christianity has played a frontline role in the intellectualisation of Xitsonga in South Africa. However, in equivalent proportions, it has also robbed Vatsonga of their inveterate agrarian (and spiritual) terminology by suppressing terms deemed pagan. The result has been a widespread degradation of terminology relating to traditional practices and agrarian lifestyle, which form the bedrock of the heritage of the Xitsonga speech communities.

The weaning of Vatsonga from agro-based activities and language by former colonial regimes aided in the complementation of Christian missionaries' wishes to guide the direction of the language development. The government and the missionaries worked hand in hand to create a new South African Xitsonga society that speaks and thinks in a way they deemed civilised. Despite rebellion induced by a desire for self-rule, the intellectualised language was reined in to a degree that European masters deemed adequate for kaffirs (blacks). A perfect mirror of this reality is shown in Hendrik Verwoerd's quote about his government's education policies in the 1950s when he said:

> There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour... What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live.

Like several other African languages, Xitsonga in southern Africa has an international linguistic presence. Owing to its scattered nature, Xitsonga holds a unique advantage of treating all its variants – Xihlengwe in southeastern Zimbabwe, Xirhonga, Xitshwa, Gitonga etc in coastal Mozambique, and many others – as tributaries to its standardised versions. The incorporation of agrarian and Xitsonga traditional practices' terminology has the potential to enhance the

South African Xitsonga lexicon, even to the extent of reducing (unnecessary) borrowing and arbitrary transliteration.

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Annexure 1: Xitsonga agrarian terminology

Xitsonga	English
Environment and weather	
Tshovolo	Alluvial soil
Tlhava	Loam soil
Nseke	Sandy soil
Bila *Nyaka*	Black clay
Tsumana	Ochre
Ripfula	Smooth clay and brownish soil
Ntlangasi	Muddy, loamy soil
Tlangasi	Water-logged area
Xitsalala *Loko wanuna a lova a nga tekangi nsati a ku ri ntolovelo leswaku va n'wi tlhoma xitsalala eka mpfila leswaku a nga pfhuki a koxa wansati.*	*Gardenia volkensii*, a semi-deciduous tree If a male passes on without having married, it used to be custom to insert a stick from the *gardenia volkensii* tree on his backside to dissuade his spirit from coming to demand a wife.
Mbveva	*Kinegia africana*, a deciduous tree
Patsa	Valley
Nhlaluko	River bank

Guvi	
Jelo	Water drinking point (for livestock) usually at a river
Nhlohla	Peninsula
Xihlala	Island
Xihlalana	Islet
Ganga	Hill
Mananga	Desert
Vembe	Plain
Khwati	Forest
Nhova *Phunga*	Veld
Byayela	High tide
Dzivativa *Nkhalana*	Lagoon
Lwamumbi	Indian ocean, home of Mumbi
Mahlanganini	Confluence
Mahlangano	Estuary
Munakan'we	Nascent river
Nambu	River
Nabyana	Stream

Nkova	
Nonga	Stream within a river
Tiva	Dam
Nkinga	Bay
Nsinga	Small bay
Riboboma	Waterfall
Ribuwa	Beach
Rigingiri	Coastline
Tiva	Lake
N'walungu	North
N'walungu vuxa	North-East
Vuhumadyambu *Vuxeni*	East
Dzonga vuxa	South-East
Vupeladyambu	West
Mberha	Dew
Hunguva	Mist
Nkungwa *Nkhuri* *Hunguva*	Fog
Mbhadlelo	Water vapor

Ntsuvi	A rainy, cloudy day
Rhefu *Xik 1: Mi nga kali mi susa na maxuka ku hava mpfula ro va rhefu.* *Xik 2: Vutomi i rhefu (xigego).*	An isolated cloud that rains for a short period (cumulus clouds). E.g. 1: Do not remove the blankets, there is not much rain. It's just some cumulus clouds. E.g. 2: Life is short (metaphor)
Xivutani	A sound of rain that comes with windy conditions
N'wembeti	Sun rays
Ximbhembhe	Cyclone
Xihuhuri	Whirlwind
Xidzedze	Storm
Moya	Air
Bubutsa	Strong wind
Gamboko	Snow
Dyandza	Drought
Gwitsi	Extreme cold
Xihangu *Xingulu*	Hail
Agriculture and fishing	
Ku phulela	Nose ring for livestock, usually cattle

Ku pana	Tying the oxen for ploughing
Ku rhumbuka	To sprout
Ku civela	To spare some milk from the udder of a cow for its calf
Gejo	Plough
Maendla	Harvesting season, also includes the produce from fields
Mpaya	Famine
Ku hakula	To remove excess soil after digging
Rhilekela *Ku tshivelela nsinya hi xikongomelo xo wu wisa.*	To put some fire next to the tree for the purpose of felling it overnight
Khuhu *I mahluke ya minsinya yo hambanahambana ensin'wini la matsemiwaka hi xikongomelo xo basisa nsimu leswaku yi ta rimeka*	Tree shoots The tree shoots from different trees that get cut for land clearing in preparation of a farming season
Xikupe	Temporary shelter built in the field during harvesting season
Xuluza *Ku endla munyu hi phomisa misava ya munyu hi mati na ku ya virisa ya pya.*	Salt-making process by filtration and evaporation

Vutshevi	Fishing
Muvasa	Fish trapping technique with a conical funnel-like trap
Byatso	Boat
Gudlwana	Submarine
Mpakani	Beacon
Mpolwe	Port
Mukhumbi	Canoe
Mutluti	Sailor
Muweti	Navigator
Ngalava	Yacht
Nsoma	Anchor
Ntluto	Sailing
Tsanga	Wind sailing craft
Xikwekwetsu	Ship
Xitatarhu	Raft
Rites, traditions, cultural practices, and beliefs	
Nkwembu *Vuswikoti byo hlawuleka (xigego)* *Arthur Mafokate i nkwembu wa vunanga bya kwaito.*	Deity

Ntimu	Eternal nature of God
Mugugudu	Sweet tree roots believed to possess curative powers
Pfhuko *Swikoxo swi endliwaka hi moya wa munhu loyi a loveka leswi fanelaka ku rhihiwa kumbe ku endliwa hilaha wu lavaka ha kona.* *Vandzawu va na ndhuma yo pfhuka.*	Some demands made by deceased spirits until they are appeased. People of Ndzawu extraction have a reputation for this act
Ku tloma	To formally ask a woman's parents for permission to marry her
Ku nenga	To walk slowly, usually in line by male initiates during pass out ceremony
Ku wiza *Xitluka*	To formally inform the elders by paying a certain amount of money
Ku sosonola *Ku koka nhlapfu*	A ceremony to bring the deceased's spirit home from the graves
Ku simekela	To ingest herbs for the purpose of increasing fertility for a married couple under the guidance of the herbalist

Ku tsapatsa *Ku langalanga*	To chase, catch, and kill a domesticated animal at the maternal grandparents' homestead
Sadza *Vuswa lebyi swekiwaka hi siku ro sosonola.* *Leswi dyiwaka emancomanini kumbe loko ku hele mphahlo.*	Porridge prepared on the day of the tombstone unveiling ceremony
Cineriwa (i ka vavasati) *Khomba* *Ku khombisiwa ka nhwanyana*	To be initiated (girls) When a girl is initiated
Yimba (i ka vavanuna) *Rhuba* *Ku ya engomeni ka mufana*	To be initiated (boys) When a boy is initiated
Palambati	A type of tree used in the male initiation camp to punish wrongdoers by inserting sticks into fingers and crushing them
People	
Ricece *Risana* *Rikhada*	Infant Baby Child

N'wana *Xihlangi*	
Nhondwe *Nhondzwana* *Mativula* *Madyondza*	First born
Nala	Enemy
Muluvisi	Tax collector
Muvalangi	Tourist
Muvuyeriwa	Beneficiary
Xirhota	A newly married wife
Animals	
Huku	Chicken
Khuhunu	Owl
Mhangela	Guinea fowl
Phowu/Yimbu	Ostrich
Xituvatuvani	A type of a bird
Tuva	A type of a bird
Khopola	A type of a bird
Kwenyani	A type of a bird
Ribyatsani	A type of a bird

Korho	A type of a bird
Swiyavava	A type of a bird
N'hwari	A type of a bird
D'ondindo	A type of a bird
Rhitinghoma	A type of a bird
Rhandzala	A type of a bird
Nghozi	A colony of small birds that eat sorghum
Xindzingiri	A type of a bird
Mbhewulani	A type of a bird
Bokota	A type of a bird
Helekele	A type of a bird
Xigwatla	Quail
Mavuvule	A smaller type of a quail
Tshowa	A type of a bird
Sekwe	A type of a duck that resides in rivers
Njanjirapa	A type of a bird whose name comes from onomatopoeia
Xikunguva	A type of a bird
Munyangani	Stork
Khwara	Pangolin

Halakuvhuma	
Ngholota	An insect that makes a melodious sound
Bavuri	Bagre
Byombya	Sardine
Medza	A small white fish
Dluwani	Small fishes that live in colonies
Sofu	A type of fish that is usually on its own
Ndungulu	A type of blue-black fish found in rivers
Dambi	Green eel
Ganju *Gakanje*	Crab
Gedle	Tilapia
Gumba	Hilsa fish
Hanti	Prawn
Hunga	Eel
Mbatsani	Clam
Mboma	Sea horse
Mfutsu	Water turtle

Mhongolwana	Dolphin
Mpfuvu	Hippopotamus
Mphavuti	Cod fish
Mundle	Shrimp
Muvanga	Tiger fish
Ndaka	Bream
Ngwenya	Crocodile
Nkavavangaheti	Whale
Nkavani	Tuna
Nyambengani	Shark (of the river)
Nyanchangi	River prawn
Nyankwave	Shark (of the sea/ocean)
Warhu	Oyster
Common nouns	
Mongwa	A type of a vegetable that grows naturally
Xiweti *Xikombeti*	Compass
Xinibi	Whip
Mphovo *Mpyandlani*	Soft mealie cob

Xihandze	Y-shaped pole
Xihuhu	Egg yolk
Fole *Ndondo*	Tobacco, including both cigarettes and snuff
Tshombo *Tshumu wo basa lowu humaka ndzhako ka loko vuvopfu byi humile loko ku kamiwa xidlayi.*	White solid material that comes out of an abscess after pus, usually regarded as a sign that the abscess is going to heal soon
Vusenga	Bracelet
Songwa	Aluminium-made bracelet
Vunjinji	The bushy tip of the cow's tail Switch
Khuwana *Yi hlayisela swihalaki swo fana na mati, vuputsu, vukanyi na swin'wana*	A traditionally clay-made container for the storage of liquids like water, beer, etc.
Hlambeto	A traditionally made clay pot for cooking relish
Mbita	A traditionally made clay pot for cooking porridge (pap)
Ndyelo	Plate
Jomela	Cup or beaker

Khalangu	A bigger beaker than *jomela* with a wider mouth, used for drinking beer and other fermented liquids
Xitseka *Xilovekelo* *Xitsori* *Mbita ya mindzovekelo*	A traditionally made clay pot for fermentation
Gota	String
Rhiwa *Nkwembe* *Hoti* *Rhangha*	Pumpkin
Nhlofu *Nhlungu*	Nipple
Verbs	
Chengela *Ku tsema nyama hi switsongotsongo leyi u yi dyaka na vuswa.*	To cut meat into small pieces using your teeth as you eat with pap
Thotha *Xeva* *Peta vuswa* *Covela*	To dip a morsel of pap (porridge) in soup

Dobida	
Xengetela	To earnestly plead
Ku futela	To guess
Ku phungela	To act mischievously
Ku sivama	To lie on the stomach
Ku horha misisi	To plait hair
Ku fuka	To soften, usually cow hide
Ku honyomoka	To speak with some aggression
Ku tshavulela	To remove something that got attached, usually to a garment
Ku phaha *Ku etlela*	To sleep
Ku pfhumbula *Ku landziwa*	To be on heat
Ku hendlela	To give away something you do not want anymore, usually clothes
Khunga	To tie, usually with a rope or string
Ku gungula	To display dissatisfaction with words or body language
Ku phota *Xik: Phota tigota u rhiya swinyenyana leswi thelaka masin'wini.*	To pleat/weave a rope/strings

	E.g. Weaving strings to make some traps for birds which are always in their numbers in the field
Ku kanuka	To be amazed
Mashwashwa *Xik: Mzamani u na mashwashwa, u hlayisile muti wa rharhi hi vukheta.*	To display an aptitude for taking responsibility E.g. Mzamani has brains – he kept his father's property very well.
B'andza *Mandza* *Faya*	To strike hard nut with a stone to extract from marula nuts To strike with force To break or strike using force
Ku gandzula *Ku tseketsela*	To use derogatives and augmentatives
Swirhi	To be aggressive
Dzila	To be less responsive while in severe pain, indicating a high tolerance threshold
Ku toka	To start building
Ku gingela	To close up spaces in the building process
Ku sungula lwango	To start making a roof

Kalava *Xisa*	To deceive, scam, swindle
Ku ba bandzu	To warn
Other	
Nonoka *Hlwela*	Delay
Phulo *Mbulo*	Second behaviour pattern, usually bad
Zukuzuku	Sultry
Rhukubya	Blister
Xilondza	Wound
Mbheva *Xilondza xo kala xi nga holi*	Chronic wound
Mbhanga	Scar
Tshavi	Ntolovelo
Xihena	Vice Addiction
Lunga *Ku chela munyu eka swakudya*	Salting
Cungwa *Gadi ra munyu*	A ball of salt

Lula *Munyu wo tlula mpimo eka xixevo/ncovelo.*	Excess salt in food
Tshuko *Nhlamba*	Obscene language
Ku tshika *Ku tshika mafurha ya makondlo*	The process of extracting oil from animals, including rats
Ku suma	The odd taste of ill-ripened fruit
Ku ganjila	An unpleasant taste of food or unripened fruit
Ku xoka	An odd taste of water
Dzuka *Ku dzuka*	Terrified To be terrified
Furheka	Climacteric process to keep things in abeyance for future use, usually home based
Kwitsi	A hole in the banks of the river which crocodiles use to keep their food
Sangu *Xitheve* *Xiandlalo*	Mat
Mukano/phingano	Demarcation

Mukano wa nsimu ya kokwani *N'waSekeni na Hasani i nkanyi*	
Nongoti	Concept
N'werheti	Water hole, usually on a tree
Muyoyo	Repeatedly
D'akad'aka *D'engele*	Butter from marula nuts
Mpalwa *Vukanyi byo bava ngopfu*	Marula wine in its mature state
Dzova *Hongwa* *Nhlova* *Hlohla* *Govola* *Vukanyi loko bya ha nyanganya/tsokombela*	Marula wine in its sweet state
Nambarha	Smooth taste
Nkenyengwani	A very painful wound under the toe, common in boys who walk bare footed in the fields

Ntongola	Nosebleed
Ntsiti	Most
Vungayila *Vutshila*	Unique skill
Nguva	Season
Vuconyela	A smelly secretion from eyes of a buck that indicate that it is on heat
Makulukujelengwa	Night-long games
Hlokela	A lump under the eyelashes
Swixexe	Pain under the feet that causes difficulty in walking
Byelela	A type of soft hair
Jekejela	Inability to stand up to graze or drink water, usually of a cow