



**A comparison of three Northern Sotho dialects for possible
inclusion into the standardized writing language form.**

BY

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the *Kgoši ya dikgoši* My God, for the gift of life, strength and courage to embark on this journey.

Secondly to the only human who knows the sound of my heart beat from the inside, my beautiful daughter Ditebogo Tlhonololofatso Leshabane. Thank for choosing me to be your mother and allowing me to study for you and with you. It has been nothing, but a wonderful journey with you.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the relatedness of the three related Northern Sotho dialects, that is, Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu. The rationale of this study is that since Sepedi is the standardized dialect to the exclusion of other dialects it has created attitudes amongst excluded speakers of Northern Sotho dialects and social instability within the speech community. The dialects of the Northern Sotho are assumed to have originated from one language and later diverged as result of different societal exposures such as status based on the socio-historical or political forces of a language that are in its favour. Thus, nouns, locatives and verb cognates, from the three dialects will be analysed. Analysis will involve comparing for morphological and phonological similarities and differences. As a result, this study will shed light on the relatedness of these dialects. Finally, the results will serve as recommendations for possible inclusion of the other two dialects in the standard variety

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

C Consonant

IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
Khe.	Khelobedu
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
Morph.	Morphology
MCS	Morpheme Correspondence Set
NS	Northern Sotho
R	Root
S	Stem
Sep.	Sepedi
Setl.	Setlokwa
Suff.	Suffix
SR	Surface Representation
SVO	Subject Verb Object
SCS	Sound Correspondence Set

CONVENTIONS

[] phonetic brackets

//	phonemic slash
-	binary sign which shows the absence of a feature
∅	null/ zero-prefix
→	transformational arrow
ɔ	High vowel [o]
ɛ	High vowel [e]

KEY TERMS

Cognates: considered a phone or a morpheme which is related to another, sound or morpheme in sister languages/ dialects as a result of inheritance from a common ancestor

Comparative Method: a method analyses sound correspondences between Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu and further address issues of morphological and phonological variations which are thoroughly exemplified in the section below, following the steps of the comparative method.

Correspondence set: a set of cognate sounds; the sounds found in the related words of cognate sets, which correspond from one related language to the next because they descended from a common ancestral sound.

Dialect: distinguished from languages as they are considered as variations of that language which have their own characteristics in the grammatical forms, choice in terminology and punctuations.

Language: an arrangement of correspondence which is a characteristic of medium for thought and a vehicle of scholarly articulation, social organizations, and matter for political controversy and a catalyst for nation building

Morphological Process: a linguistical process of forming new words using the existing POS, such as nouns and verbs. They are derived from prefixing or suffixing the required class prefix and suffixing the required verb root. This process takes place in accordance with the rules of lexical derivation

Standard form: selected variety that is accepted by the wider community. This variety enjoys government recognition or status as official languages

Standardisation: is the process of one variety becoming broadly acknowledged throughout in a particular speech community as a super dialectal form of the language related above territorial and social dialects, despite the fact that these might be felt to be fitting in certain areas

Phonological Process: When morphemes are combined to form words, the segments of neighboring morphemes become juxtaposed and sometimes undergo change. When this happens, some of the juxtaposed segments under various conditions may undergo changes

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction.

In simple terms, the concept language is the capacity to interconnect and share thoughts and expression-using words, phrases, sentences etc. Similarly, the nature of language is such it allows words with high variability and a strong potential for semantic change (Coestsem, 1992) thus all languages of the world, have dialects. This is due to the fact that, linguistically a homogenous community splits into two groups, through a process such as migration due to constantly changing environmental factors or invasion (this can be a result of wars) that creates a geographical separation between them. Therefore, a dialect is diversification of languages, which are mutually intelligible. Diversification is a concept used to define the separation or splitting up of languages into its descendant branches (Campbell 2013:109). In addition, through linguistic discourse language is a result of different aspect that further influenced it to develop into different varieties, variety is an unbiased term used to refer to dialect.

1.2. Background of the study

In South Africa currently the constitution of the country only recognises eleven official languages, which automatically regards that the existing others are mere dialects or language varieties. This is thus an indication that Sepedi is a language or a variety that is arranged by methods for standards which set down the right composed and oral use, it is then used in authentic procedures and social foundations that includes schools. The standardisation of this language has not only resulted in the speakers of these languages developing attitudes amongst each other and mostly towards speakers of Sepedi but, has resulted in debates of the designated name for the official language. While other argue for Sepedi as the official language, others

argue that Sesotho sa Leboa is the correct name for the official language. The standardisation of Sepedi over the other language variety has proven to be very challenging and problematic in a sense that there is political inequality amongst these languages. Speakers and non-speakers have since become confused, especially considering the designated name of Northern Sotho

There has been some vulnerability concerning the right name of the official language by the Constitution of South Africa (1996). From the period of 1993 to 1996, there has been constrictions by the Constitution, wherein the Act of 1993 assigned Sesotho sa Leboa as one of the eleven official dialects of South Africa and Act of 1996 proclaimed Sepedi as one of the eleven official dialects of South Africa, to the exclusion of other existing dialects. Rakgogo (2016:2) states that this use of two different names in informative and descriptive documents has caused confusion in the domains of language study and language practice sectors. He further asserts that this ongoing debate is a result of decisions made at an official level with an exclusion of the speakers of these languages. Sepedi is an elevated language variety, resulting in many speakers including the constitution mistakenly propounding Northern Sotho for Sepedi. Sesotho sa Leboa and Northern Sotho is one name written in two different languages meaning Sesotho spoken in the North or the Northern part of South Africa. This policy has led to speakers of other language varieties to develop an attitude towards their own language varieties, considering them as inferior and underdeveloped. As a result, these language varieties are usually ignored and remain marginalized while other language variety of a single language is elevated over the existing others. Some speakers are taking initiatives of developing their own language varieties as independent languages. The Khelobedu dialect speakers are requesting that their dialect be made the 12th official language of South Africa. A newspaper article published by News 24(Nqakamba 2019:1) state that;

the plea from the royal family, prominently known for its hypothetical rain-making powers, comes from the way that community's children go the worst part of the deal because

of their language not being legitimate. As per the chairperson of the council, John Malatji. The former and the late president Nelson Mandela had propelled the family and their clan's status, however had not gone as far as giving the language an official status in the country.

One of the major concerns of this speech community is the fact that their children regularly comprehend better when they communicate in their own language, however that is not the situation with the Balobedu speech community. They are generally compelled to make an interpretation of Khelobedu into Sepedi when they write examinations and tests. That is the reason a majority of these learners/ students do not progress their first language; when sit for exams and tests they bite their tongues with no sense of understanding and comprehension because Sepedi it is not their mother tongue. Regarding the above mentioned view, Mutasa (1996:79) opposes the idea of standardising as a single dialect in which the writer states that it is important that every single significant language assumes the role in writing as opposed to deciding on standardization based on the exclusion of other dialects. This basically means that the harmonization or standardisation of various dialects will not only bring about diversity amongst speakers but will always contribute to the improvement of the language as a whole. Mutasa (1996:79) further argues that assortment among dialects should be seen as an advantage or a potential asset and not as a challenge.

Thus, this study will also make highlights on some of the challenges encountered by speakers of other dialects once compromise is in place or once a single dialect has been proclaimed as a standard language or granted a status above the remaining others. It further argues that all languages are believed to have previously compounded together before they later diverged into separate entities, entities known as dialects/ language varieties. These language varieties have a degree of relatedness in them making it possible for them to become harmonised or standardised together.

Northern Sotho is a language spoken by the speech communities mostly in the Northern parts of South African Bantu region. It is originally part of the Sotho- Tswana language family (Guthrie 1948). It is also proclaimed as an official language of South Africa. Northern Sotho is a language that is not spoken only in the Northern parts of South Africa (Limpopo province) but a majority of its speakers can be found in parts of Gauteng and the Mpumalanga Province. The Sotho- Tswana language is comprised of Northern Sotho, Sesotho and Setswana, all these three languages are considered to be linguistically closely related. Northern Sotho which is also known as Sesotho sa Leboa as its name suggest is a Sotho language spoken North of South Africa, it consist of 29 dialects if not more, including Sepedi, Setlokwa, Khelobedu, Sepulana, Hanwa and etc. It is a Bantu language popularly known by its standardised dialect version Sepedi. The following diagram indicates the linguistic representation of Sotho-Tswana Language family.

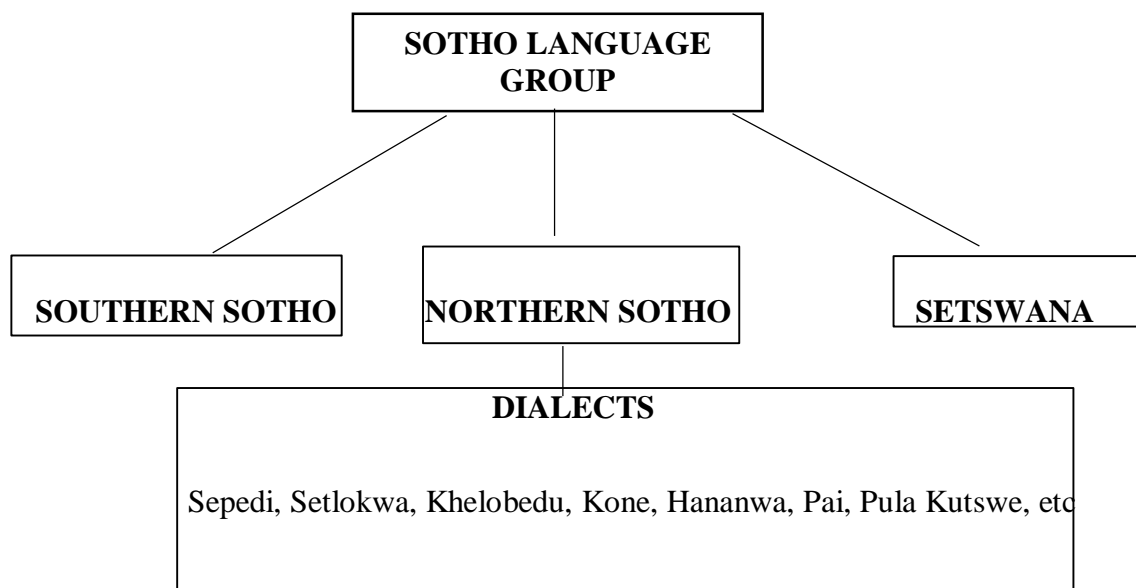


Figure 1. Linguistic representation of Sotho language Family tree

1.2.1. Background of Northern Sotho dialects

In tracing down the migration patterns, one group in particular Sepedi was an interest in the works of Mokwana (2009:32) who cites from Prinsloo (1979) to give a background history of this speech community, in which the scholar indicates that the Bapedi speech community

voyaged from parts of central Africa to Southern Africa through Botswana. This is where they came into close contact with the Batswana people, as it is evident in their linguistic borrowing from Botswana. At Gaborone, the Bapedi divided into two groups. One group joined the Batswana speech community and another group went further South to occupy an area called Lesotho forming the Basotho speech community. The Basotho society was customarily systematized into different villages in accordance with the different chiefs that ruled. During the settlement of the Bapedi into the Sotho society, Moshoehsoe developed as a skilful representative and military leader who became the Basotho chief. Sekhukhune and his followers fled to occupy a territory in the Transvaal the Northern part of South Africa after a conflict brewed between Sekhukhune I and his brothers. Figure 2 indicates a geographical map of an area covering the location of Sepedi variety speakers.

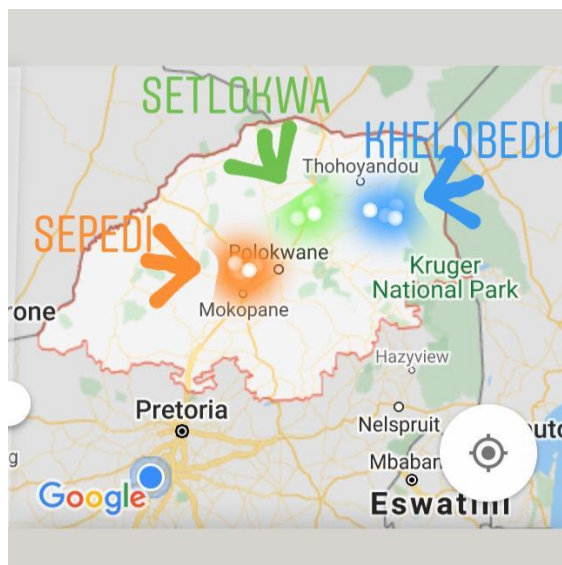


Figure 2. A geographical representation of the Bapedi, Batlokwa and Balobedu speakers

1.2.2. Background of Batlokwa

According to Bothma (1969) and Grobler (1990) as quoted by Thamaga (2012:3) the Tlokwa dialect speakers were originally part of the Bakgatla of the Batswana tribe in Schilpadfontein

they separated from this tribes 300 years ago, migrated North of the Southern Africa previously known as Lebowa region where they settled under the leadership of Thulare. (Tlokwa) The term Batlôkwa (also Batlokoa, or Badogwa) refers to several Kgatla communities within the geographical location of three different countries, Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa. The Kgatla tribe is part of the sub-divisions of the Bantu-speaking Tswana classified as Sotho-Tswana.

The Batlokwa are very ancient tribe which can be traced back genealogically to the early 16th century. The Bakgatla or Batlokwa originated from the Hurutshe during the time of a common chief Modise. Many Batlokwa are said to have broken away during the reign of Chief Modise, including the Batlokwa under a leader Motlokwa whose grandson was Kgwadi. It appears that Kgwadi's son, Mankotupi and Maimela, did not rule and after their demise. The senior branch under Mmatshaka Mokgalaka moved to the North, but Chief I Morare remained in West Transvaal and split into several tribes two generations later. The movement of the Batlokwa continued both South and North of South Africa. In the North they lived in the Northern Transvaal not far from Thabazimbi (neighbouring the Bakgatla) and later crossing to the Limpopo River where they finally settled and started a life ahead.

1.2.3. Background of Balobedu

Khelobedu refers to a language variety spoken in and around the Limpopo Province, the speakers of this language are known as the Balobedu and the people of the Rain Queen Modjadji. According to Mönning (1963: 49) the Lobedu dialect speakers divided from the Karanga speech community of Rhodesia currently known as Zimbabwe this was at the time of the well-known Kingdom of Monomotapa. The division of this Kingdom into two chiefdoms was due to a conflict that brewed between two of the former monarch's sons. The daughter of one these sons known as Dzugudini, had an incestuous union with her own brother, and through this union they had a son who was named Magaphimo. As a result, the mother and

her son together with some followers fled towards the south some time during the 15th century, landing in the Northern parts of South Africa. The group of migrators took with them the sacred rain charms and the knowledge for their use. Upon settlement in the present area. These group of speakers consisted of three ancestries, which originated by the founder of the tribe, namely, Mohale, and those originated by half-brothers of his father, Mohasa and Modiga (Mönning, 1963:60). Krige & Krige (1943) indicates that the Karanga migrated from the north in many successive waves, culminating in the arrival of the royal Kwinde group of the Vha-venda and later became Sothoised to the east of Volovedu, mixing there with other Sotho groups.

The promotion of the two represented language varieties through political, social and even economic aspect, resulted in policy makers focusing less on the promotion of other dialects and therefore considering them to be less important. This may later result to these excluded language varieties being completely lost into oblivion and to a point of difficulty in reconstructing their historical interrelations with each other.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Dialects of the Northern Sotho are assumed to have been compounded together as one language and later diverged as result of different societal exposures such as socio-historical or political forces that are in its favour (Mojela,1999). The standardisation of Sepedi has deliberately created a sense of discrimination between competing dialects, and thus created a sense of social instability within the speech community with the speakers developing a superiority and inferiority attitude. In this way, speakers of the excluded language variety chose to accept the written form of standard Northern Sotho without even interrogating the legitimacy of the written form as a result of an inferiority complex. Furthermore, speakers whose dialects are represented in the standard form are considered prestige whereas the excluded dialects are

considered dialects associated with rural and uncivilised which will eventually disappear because its speakers and policy consider to it makers as corrupt and imperfect. The researcher is a home language speaker of the standardised form (Sepedi) who speaks Khelobedu and Setlokwa moderately and also lives with external family members who are speakers of both Khelobedu and Setlokwa. The researcher has developed interest in improving and developing the vocabulary of Northern Sotho and by so doing recognizing parts of the languages which were side-lined. This has thus implicated on the development of the language and its vocabulary.

1.4. Aim of the study

- a) To investigate the possible inclusion of two excluded dialects, Setlokwa and Khelobedu through a comparison with the standardised form of Sepedi.

1.5. Objectives of the study

- a) To explore the morphological or phonological features that are evident in the three dialects show a possible inclusion of two varieties into the standard form
- b) To identify the relatedness of three dialects of Northern Sotho through their morphologically and phonologically difference and similarities.

1.6. Research Questions

- a) To what effect has Sepedi as a standard language have on the exclusion of the language varieties such as Setlokwa and Khelobedu?
- b) What morphological or phonological features that are evident in the three dialects show a possible inclusion of two varieties into the standard form?
- c) How will the collected data of the two excluded dialects contribute to the vocabulary of the existing standard form?

1.7. Literature review

1.7.1. Nature of Language and a dialect

Rakgogo (2016:30) who cites from Stroud (2014:304) distinguishes between the terms dialect and language by stating that: dialects are conventionally distinguished from languages as they are considered as variations of that language which have their own characteristics in the grammatical forms, choice in terminology and punctuations. They further say dialects are often mutually intangible, which means that speakers of related dialects can generally understand one another. For instance, Pulana and Pai are completely two different dialects but speakers of both can understand each other. Thus the distinction language and dialect through recognition and established orthography and grammar can be bias in that it does not acknowledge dialects that exist only in a spoken form and has not yet been established into written form.

1.7.2. The role of missionary activities on Northern Sotho

The works of Mojalefa (2007) and Kosch (1993) clearly indicates that credit for the pioneering of the Northern Sotho language development belongs to the missionaries. Thus, generally it has been accepted that the missionaries pioneered writings of Northern Sotho, which increased the use of and preservation of the language allowing speakers to access and understand its recorded materials and traditions. A lot of scholars point out major issues the missionary has created amongst languages and their varieties. Mojela (1999:42) indicates that the downgrading of what is referred to as 'low-class' dialects had a negative effect on the development of these dialects. Some speakers even avoid using their dialects to communicate in public spaces because they are afraid of being associated with the low class or an uneducated individual

1.7.3. Standardization of Northern Sotho

The issues of standardizing one dialect have thus resulted in a huge gap between written and spoken language further limiting the excluded speakers from the written vocabularies, which are contained in the standard dictionaries as they only have access to the real practical vocabularies used in their speech communities. This limitation results in the distortion of the term language which is considered to be as a crucial means of gaining access to knowledge and a driving force to the cognitive development. Vic Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:3) aptly state that Language is seldom thought of as an issue. As long as people are able to communicate and understand one another, and find solutions to their inquiries or even provide information to others and are also able to read a newspaper, listen to the radio, or watch television, they are satisfied.

1.8. Research design and Methodology

1.8.1 Research Design

While the comparative method is universally accepted and applied by most linguists for both classification and reconstruction, it has not been comprehensively and consistently applied to African Languages and their dialects, generally due to the sheer measure of information and work required as in contrast with the small number of linguists working in the field. Similarly, it is also the fact that African languages have a large family covering an extensive land area, with a large number of discriminable languages and dialects (Nurse 1997:362).

In order to make the comparative method a less complex one, this study makes use of a diffusion of both methods from Fox (1995) and Campbell (2013) which are further revised to suit the data in question.

1.8.3. Quantitative approach

Quantitative research techniques refer to the assortment and investigation of information so as to gain knowledge into the circumstances of the interest that the researcher is pursuing. Creswell (1994:2) considers the qualitative research as request procedure of understanding the social issues of humans, in light of building complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting the nitty gritty of a particular perspective conducted in a natural setting. The researcher conducted quantitative survey to identify and explore dialectical vocabulary of Khelobedu, Setlokwa and Sepedi in which randomly identified participants were handed questionnaires to fill out.

1.8.4. Sampling

a. Population

The research has explored the effects of Sepedi as a standard language to other excluded dialects and its speakers. Thus the Batlokwa and Balobedu as the excluded varieties speakers are the target population of this study, including the speakers of the standard form Sepedi as all three are compared for relatedness. These dialects were particularly chosen for this study as the researcher is a home language speaker of the standard form has had close contact with the speakers and, and has had first hand encounters with the experiences the speakers of the excluded dialects go through on a day to day basis. These participants were selected only based on the criteria of language and not based of the, profession; thus we have participants from different professions, including the unemployed. The age of the participants however was selected by the researcher as beginning from 20 to over 56.

b. Area of Study

The quantitative phase of study was conducted in three areas located in the Limpopo Province by the researcher. The places include, Louis Trichardt, Tzaneen and Polokwane. These are the

remote areas in which the Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu are spoken. A total number of 90 questionnaires for compiled for this study, in which 30 questionnaires were given to the participants in each area of dialects. However, not all of the collected questionnaires were used for data analysis. Only 20 form each of the collected questionnaires were used for analysis.

1.8.5. Ethical Considerations

An ethical clearance certificate has been applied for at the University of the Witwatersrand. The ethical clearance certificate is attached in Appendix below, from which clearance approval has been granted. Permission letters for recruiting participants within community are attached in Appendix which indicates that the researcher was given permission by respective community leaders in the three areas. In addition, the participants have the right to know what the research is about, how it will affect them and what the benefits of their participation to the study are. The participant is made aware the risks and benefits of participation, and the fact that they have the right to decline to participate or discontinue their participation at any time during the process if they choose to do so.

1.8.6 The Comparative Method

In order to make the comparative method a less complex one, this study makes use of a diffusional approach of the Comparative Methods proposed by both Fox (1995) and Campbell (2013) which are further revised to suit the data in question. In most studied the Comparative Method has been applied across one particular sphere of linguistics particular in phonology and it is in this sphere that the method has been most extensively employed and where its usefulness has been most clearly demonstrated with the others neglected. However, this method should in principle be more widely applicable hence this study considers applying this Method to other areas of linguistics which is morphology. Since the nature of morphemes is such that they are expected to be phonologically distinct. The main technique of this comparative method

is to compare for phonological and morphological differences which is typically carried out to the dialects presumed or demonstrated as related. The central focus is to identify recurrent sounds correspondences between the dialects under study. Thus, data is very important in this regard, all data used in this section will consist of written sources. It allows for an easy postulation of common morphemes and phonemes that exists among the dialects, without any information being skewed. Furthermore, Postulation of this relatedness allows us to compare these dialects without any bias. The steps of this method are followed respectively using the data at hand.

1.8.7. Data collection

The researcher used one tool for the collection of data that was provided to the researcher by participants, data was collected in a form of questionnaires. The following comprises of all the steps taken used during data collection. The data was thus collected from the three different speech communities, Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu. The designated places for data collection included Polokwane, Louis Trichardt and Tzaneen. The participants were given questionnaires to fill in, these questionnaires were explained to them before hand as to what the researcher requires them to do.

1.8.8 Data Analysis

The study makes use of three set of data to be analysed, the quantitative data from the Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu speech community. The researcher has employed both the Quantitative and the Comparative Method for this study. The Quantitative Method provided the researcher with the statistics involving calculation of the frequency of cognates provided by the participants which served as analyzable data arranged into different categories using Comparative method. The steps of the comparative method will be followed and used to analyze the data at hand.

1.9. Chapter Outline

Chapter One- Introduction: The founding chapter with the introduction of the study, the research problem and the purpose of the study is also outlined. The study sought to evaluate the re-standardization of Sepedi and assess the possibilities of the inclusion of the Khelobedu dialect in the standard language variety.

Chapter Two- Literature Review: This chapter will observe degrees of mutual intelligibility amongst three structurally related dialects of Northern Sotho. It will further review existing literature in descending order from the nature of language and dialect; Northern Sotho morphology and orthography; phonological variations between Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu and lastly the language classification

Chapter Three- Research Design and Methodology: chapter is to outline the research design, method, approaches and techniques applied in this study. The sample population and sampling technique are thoroughly explained. All methods and approaches of collecting data, analysing and interpreting the data collected from participants

Chapter Four-Findings: Discussed and presented the findings of this study. An application of the comparative method was employed to analyse the collected data. Furthermore, an interpretation and discussion of the statistical data is also presented, attaching meaning and drawing answers for the research objectives. The interpretation and analysis is fully dependent on the results of the data collected from the participants being the speakers of the three dialects in question

Chapter Five- Conclusion: Chapter summarized the overall findings of the study and thereafter provide the recommendations will be supplied on how excluded dialects can be documented or standardized into the standard form to contribute to the existing vocabulary of

the language. The study was conducted in order to determine the genetic relation that exist between the three dialects with the data collected by speaker of these dialect

1.10. Conclusion

In brief, this chapter gives an orientation of the entire study, defining key concepts, motivation, research problems, significance of the study and ethical considerations, just to mention a few. An in-depth literature is reviewed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will observe the degree of mutual intelligibility amongst three structurally related dialects of Northern Sotho. It will further review existing literature in descending order from the nature of language and dialect; Northern Sotho morphology and orthography; Sound changes amongst Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu and lastly the language classification. Existing research from noticeable researchers is reviewed under every subheading, developing to the motivation of this study. For example, speaking to the national identity of a nation or country.

2.1. Nature of Language and a dialect

Language has been established as an arrangement of correspondence which is a characteristic of medium for thought and a vehicle of scholarly articulation, social organizations, and matter for political controversy and a catalyst for nation building. Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) who share the same view as Francis (1983:1) argue that language can be used as an instrument, which people use to form new speech communities or to even diverge from speech communities. Thus the distinction of language and dialect assume the role of parting different speech communities as the term dialect and language are restricted to different types of discourses with no communication with the written form, or those used by uneducated people labelled as *dialects* and compared to what is referred to as true *languages* of the proficient and educated. Thus, Knowles (2013:69) supports this assertion by providing an example of a linguistic situation of Native Americans, which are classified as national languages but are not enjoying the status of official languages, to name but few, Aromanian, Cherokee and Navajo. These National languages may instead, be a designation given atleast to one language or more which further articulated as the first languages in that particular territory of a country. These dialects are associated with inferiority and belonging to the low-class and the uneducated.

The situation explained by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), and Francis (1983:1) accurately reflects on Wardhaugh's (1992:132) views, who argues that their definition is known as a social dialect as it indicates an association with specific social class or group. These social varieties or socio-lect are for the most part described by explicit age gatherings, sexual orientation, or financial status. Moreover, they have an attribute of articulations, vocabulary and expressions; they may have a diversity in the syntactic structures as well as conforming social principles or standards for communicating and interpreting speech. Similarly, a dialect can mean that, for example, a majority of people in Polokwane speak the same language such as Northern Sotho. These Northern Sotho speakers are divided into different speech

communities which further have small amount of speech communities within them, who speak their own particular speech variety e.g. those small speech communities who speak their own speech variety are composed of speech varieties such a Pulana, Setlokwa, Hanwa, Khelobedu and etc who are originally located in or around the city of Polokwane.

Although traditional dialectologist such as Mokgokong (1966), Van Wyk (1969) and Van Warmelo (1935) used the term 'dialect' to describe a speech variety. Sociolinguists and modern dialectologist such as Ramajela (2011:121) and Ondendaal (2013:3) are against the use of the term 'dialect' which seems exclude certain groups of people from what is considered 'language purism' thus the term speech variety should be established as a neutral term. In this regard Sepedi, Khelobedu and Setlokwa should be considered as speech varieties of Northern Sotho and not 'dialect' of Northern Sotho. This is confirmed by Rakgogo (2016:30) who cites from Stroud (2014:304) distinguishes between the terms dialect and language by stating that: dialects are conventionally distinguished from languages as they are considered as variations of that language which have their own characteristics in the grammatical forms, choice in terminology and punctuations. They further say dialects are regularly mutually intengible, which implies that speakers of related dialects can generally comprehend each other. For instance, Pulana and Pai are completely two different dialects but speakers of both can understand each other.

Another popular sphere of distinguishing between language and dialect is through the geographical dimension. Trask (2004:46) and Mokwana (2009:9) hold the perspective that geographical separation of groups inevitably results in the rise of regional dialects. Therefore, any speech community with an exceeding number of speakers will result to it ultimately diverging into more and more dialects as long as there is no unifying force to intervene, these dialects will continue to grow without any limit. The growth of these dialects mostly be based on both social and geographical barriers. Bailey (1995:9) supports this assertion by stating that

the dialects like Lozi was proclaimed an official language of western Zambia due to the fact that Southern Sotho speakers invaded parts of the country. Extensive influence from local languages resulted in modern Lozi. Lozi poses interesting problems for genetic classification. Guthrie (1948) classified it as K.21 in zone k. It is also known case of language contact, and may help us in some kind of characterization of language mixing in Africa.

The notion is that a geographical situation is a special case of contact in boundaries between speech community with a similar language, drawn on more than just the usage of linguistic items, yet in addition on the attitudes and social implications connected etymologically with these linguistic items. A few features are shared across dialects; some are used more often in one area but understood everywhere, while others are geographically restricted.

The line of demarcation between language and dialect can therefore be confounding whether there is a contrast between the system and two speech communities reflect two dialects or different languages. Distinction through mutual intelligibility solely depends on the fact that change after some time and that individuals who live in a similar region or keep up a similar social identity share language norms, as it were they talk a similar variety and are able to understand each other (Knowles, 2013:642). This view is in line with what is argued by a much earlier scholar Hudson (1980: 35) declares that if speakers of two varieties can comprehend one another, at that point the varieties considered are equivalence of the same language; otherwise if the speakers cannot comprehend one another, their varieties belong to different languages, or may be different languages altogether.

Although this assertion may fail in instances where languages which share a lot of linguistic similarity, they speak two different languages but are able to understand each other. Their difference is based on an expense of political, historical, geographical, social and cultural

base. Similarly, the difference between the Setswana language that is spoken in South Africa and the Tswana spoken in Botswana are characterized by resemblances and a speaker of one form of Setswana can comprehend the speaker of another form of Setswana. Molepo (2014:14) indicates that other distinction can stem out from factors such as autonomy and heteronomy. Autonomy being the function of linguistic system as a unique and independent one. Heteronomy refers to the words which are spelled identically but have different sounds and meanings. An example of this is the Sotho languages, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho and Setswana which are independent and autonomous languages status as standard languages and could therefore be regarded as dialects of the same Sotho language

Hudson (1988) and Knowles (2013) hold the similar perspective as Molepo (2014) on the fact that the distinction of language and dialect can stem out from the manner in which a speaker utters their speech sounds, choice of words and grammar in comparison to the speaker in a different speech community. However, Molepo (2014) further asserts that differentiation can be as a result of a language and dialect possessing a specific pattern that is also systematic in a sense that it follows a particular order instead of it being used randomly. To follow a specific order either the language or dialect is carefully planned, in its planning different innovations are introduced and given a status with regards to its recognition and its established orthography grammar and spelling convention. In this case a language or dialect in Hendrikse and Cluver (1996) is defined language as one dialect that has been proclaimed as a standard language, selected from a group of other dialects or can be as a result of a combination of two or more dialects, which is systematized and expounded with the goal that it will be used in almost all formal domains for example the central government, legal system, the media, the school, and places of worship. It thus, it assists in uniting other dialect speakers into a larger political unit.

It can thus be assumed based on Mutasa (1996:80) observation of dialects of Shona such as Zezuru, Korekore, Karanga, Manyika and Ndau. However, with Karanga, Mutasa (1996: 80) indicates it as a dialect that has a larger speech community than any other Shona dialect, which is geographically spoken in parts of Masvingo and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe. However, Zezuru popularly known for its prestigious status because of it is a dialect that is connected with Harare, the center of prestige. It is also the dialect on which the standard orthography of Shona is based solely on.

The researcher is of the perspective that the distinction language and dialect through recognition and established orthography and grammar can be bias in that it does not acknowledge dialects that exist only in a spoken form and has not yet been established into written form. The above mentioned is highlighted by Chebanne (2016:277) who claims that language which have little or no records the state of illiteracy in their speech communities are mostly related to issues of service delivery in that particular community which is a challenge as speakers have no resources to further make improvements, develop and promote their languages. Although recently assimilated into Sepedi as one of its dialects with little record, Khelobedu has recently received a lot of attention resulting from production of indigenous Khelobedu music, thus implies that this dialect can be written and have a linguistic structure (Malatji, 2017:1). Unlike Khelobedu, whose development is at a milestone there is still little or no records on dialects such as Setlokwa as it exists only as a spoken language. For the mere fact that this dialect can be spoken, it can also be recorded or be reduced in to writing. These dialects have little or no information on the linguistic structure and have therefore received little attention on the basis of being developed but are still listed by many academics as one of the dialects of Northern Sotho. Chebanne (2016: 277) thus argues for the implementation of harmonization (discussed later in this chapter) producers that are involved in the creation of a

common base for the development of orthography for less documented endangered languages that are in dialect continuum.

2.1.1. The role of missionary activities on Northern Sotho

Although having used their own language as their own tool of separation and manipulative purposes these missionaries had influential consequences in the improvement of vocabulary in most African languages. It is the work of missionary societies that resulted in the formation of language committees established from each of the South African languages.

Mojela (2008: 121-122) and Makalela (2009: 121) both indicate that the development of the Northern Sotho orthography along with other Sesotho language varieties of South Africa were influenced by the work of different missionary groups varying dominions. These missionaries had an urgent need to Christianise the indigenous people and also believed that the African people needed to be civilized thus the establishment of schools were also introduced. In order to Christianise the indigenous people they needed to learn their native languages. They used their knowledge of these languages not only to communicate but also to analyze the phonology and grammar of Africans to devise translation of materials. However, missionaries did not have any sufficient training in African linguistic thus most of their orthography was based on the English orthography. Molepo (2014:12) cites from Mojalefa (2007) to indicate some of the orthographies that are developed by the first missionaries in Northern Sotho, according to the scholar: In that period Alexander Merensky wrote books, one of those was *Kaschane Mamatlepa* in 1890. In a similar vein, Theo Wangemann authored *Maleo und Sekukuni* in 1868 wherein certain Sepedi words were found, such as *Sekukuni* (*Sekhukhune*), *makhoa* (*Makgoa*), *batu* (*batho*), *mosjate* (*mošate*), *Phatametsane* (*Phatametsane*), *pitsjo* (*pitšo*), *Kosji* (*Kgoši*), *Seguirigui* (*Sehwirihwiri*), etc.

Kosch (1993:14) confirms Mojalefa's (2007) assertion by maintaining that; the first words in Northern Sotho which were published in an article, appeared in a contribution by Merensky, namely "Beitrage zur Geschichte der Bapedi" (Contributions to the history of the Bapedi) in *Berliner Missions berichte*. Hereafter, references to Northern Sotho words and expressions appeared from time to time in reports by the missionaries in *Berliner Missionsberichte*. Furthermore, in 1874 a grammatical sketch of Northern Sotho of about 13 pages by K. Endemann appeared under the title "Mittheilungen uber die Sotho-Neger" meaning (Reports on the Sotho Negros) in *Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie*.

The works of Mojalefa (2007) and Kosch (1993) clearly indicates that credit for the pioneering of the Northern Sotho language development belongs to the missionaries. Thus, generally it has been accepted that the missionaries pioneered writings of Northern Sotho, which increased the use of and preservation of the language allowing speakers to access and understand its recorded materials and traditions. It has however, a lot of scholars point out major issues the missionary has created amongst languages and their varieties. Mojela (1999:42) indicates that the marginalization of the so-called 'low-class' dialects had a negative effect on the development of these dialects. Some speakers even avoid using their dialects to communicate in public spaces because they are afraid of being associated with the low class or an uneducated individual. For instance, a Tlokwa speaker would rather say **Ke kwa bose** 'I am enjoying myself' as opposed to saying 'Ke **thwa borwere**'. These speakers are constantly shifting to the standard form because of its relative prestige speech form and mainly because their own dialects are judged as, 'corrupted' forms. Thus, Mojela (1999:42) asserts that: the loss of dialectal vocabulary does not only have an impact on the dialects concerned but can also have a bad impact on the improvement of the vocabulary of, the Northern Sotho standard language form in general, since the vast majority of the terminology used in the *low-class* dialects continue to be used fruitfully to enhance standard language form of Northern Sotho.

The issues of insufficiently adapted African languages indicated by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) because of little attention paid to the excluded dialects of these African languages are thus central to this study. The stigmatization of the majority of the dialects of Sesotho sa Leboa can be ascribed to factors such as the influence of colonialism and lack of government co-ordination, the missionary activities and their role in the standardization of Northern Sotho. Mojela (2008:124) states that just about 66% of the vocabulary of the languages are stigmatized, being excluded from the standardized version. Mojela (2008:121) further argues that the governments which ruled over South Africa during the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, i.e. at first those of the British in the Cape Colony and Natal, and the two Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and subsequently that of the Union after 1910, paid little attention to the development of education and the development of the languages of the indigenous South African communities.

The linguistic dominance within countries has enabled the hegemony of the dominant groups to be transmitted from one generation to the other. Among those who are indigenous mother tongue speakers of the standardized language, class differences continue to be maintained by means of sociolects procured in essential and secondary socialization means of sociolects acquired in primary and secondary socialization. This has thus resulted in the low socio-educational status of the Bantu languages; and a strong drive towards linguistic 'purism' towards standard languages. The excluded speakers believe in their varieties as only useful instruments of social interaction or cultural expression. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:15) speakers often argue that their primary languages do not have the necessary vocabulary and speech styles, or sufficient status to be used spontaneously in public domains, and that it therefore makes no sense to study them at school.

However, since the South African Government passed the Bantu Education Act in October 1953 (Act No 47 of 1953) and an appointment of Language boards and language

committees were formed (Mojela, 2008:121). There has been attempts in innovating the Northern Sotho orthography and unifying dialects. To date both orthographic innovation and unification of these Northern Sotho dialects have not prospered. There is still little role played by the government and language boards in the funding of unification or revitalization projects. The existing projects are often inclusive of only language officials who have been taken from the elite group, these groups are mostly products of the missionary schools. There has rather been great concern of dialect unification shown by linguist who are community members of the excluded variety involved in community organizations together with members of the community in need of dialect unification. Rakgogo (2014:46) states that a Joint Petition that was submitted to Constitutional Review Committee (2011: 3) by Magoši (Traditional Leaders) of the affected areas where they claim Sesotho sa Leboa language is spoken (Capricorn, Waterberg, Mopani and Mapulaneng) mentions that the sinister irony about the Sepedi language name is that, all the people fighting for the retention of Sepedi in the constitution are all Bapedi people residing in the Sekhukhune District. Furthermore, those Bapedi people (Sepedi speakers) and their researchers are not only fighting to keep their Sepedi dialect to themselves in Bopedi (Sekhukhuneland), but to impose it on all speakers of the Northern Sotho language, maintaining their superior status over the rest of the Northern Sotho dialects.

These speakers value the function of their dialects as a preferred speech form of the community, which will further favour intergenerational transmission and further expanding the speech community. The rich vocabularies of the side-lined language varieties which should be remembered for word references and utilized in abstract works are omitted from the standard language since (it is accepted) this inferior vocabulary will ruin the purity of the language. There is still little attention paid on the development of dialect, which will contribute towards the enrichment of the standard language form. Mojela (2008:124) further asserts that there is a major reduction in the role of Sepedi in the official standard language approved by the first

Northern Sotho Language Board. Mojela (2008) argues that the dialectal contribution to standard Sesotho sa Leboa today can be analysed as follows (citing only a few major dialects):

Sekone 50% Sepedi 30%

Selobedu 2% Setlokwa 8%

Seroka 2% Sepulana 1%

The remaining dialects constitute 7%.

2.1.2. Standard language and standardization

According to Ferguson (1996:31) as cited by Rakgogo (2014:3) the term standardization is the process of one variety becoming broadly acknowledged throughout in a particular speech community as a super dialectal form of the language related above territorial and social dialects, despite the fact that these might be felt to be fitting in certain areas. This definition is in line with Mutasa (1996:81) who states that standardization is a process of advancing a language as a real and understandable standard to serve the interest of a particular speech community. Mutasa (1996) goes on to define standardization by citing Dittmar (1976:8) who characterizes the standard as that speech variety of a language community which is legitimized as the obligatory norm for social intercourse on the strength of the interests of the dominant forces in that society.

From the above definition, standardization is understood as a selected variety that is accepted by the wider community. These varieties enjoy government recognition or status as official languages. An example of this can be seen in East Africa, the Kiswahili that was spoken on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (and which is called Kiunguja) was selected in 1927 as standard for the whole region. The chosen form was then taught in schools and used in the mass media and in all public official communication (Webb,2000: 19). As an elevated variety

this dialect automatically gains prestige among the other dialects and will subsequently be regarded as a language while other speech varieties will be dialects. Furthermore, the government-appointed bodies prescribe how it should be written, how it should sound like, its pronunciation, how its words should be spelt, which words are acceptable in formal situations, and what the appropriate grammatical constructions of this particular language is.

However, Northern Sotho as a standard language was deliberately created by the elevation of a particular variety, known as Sepedi. Sepedi was a result of the changes in economic and political activity that have led to disruptions in linguistic ecologies, favoring it over other dialects. This dialect was not selected and accepted by a wider community but was instead the first dialect missionaries came into contact with. Mojalefa (2007) as cited by Molepo (2014:1) argues that the fact that Sepedi became the foundation for this standard language can therefore be regarded as the result of a historical coincidence. Had the German missionaries started work amongst the speakers of another dialect such as Setlokwa, Sehanawa or Khelobedu etc. and the Bible first been translated into one of these dialects, the chances are such that a dialect would have become the basis for the present day standard language. In contrast, the dialect Sepedi like any other dialect was considered to be functioning or existing at a local level, with no existing orthography, not a standard form, be mutually intelligible. Thus because of political and geographical aspects, other speech varieties of Northern Sotho are considered to be unequal. Mojela (1999:21) further argue that usually the politicians take initiatives in standardizing the languages in their countries by way of appointing language experts or commissions to do the work on their behalf. Mojela (2011:6-7) further argues that decisions are made official even though there was no consultation with the affected speakers. This is due to that fact that these experts are entirely of the politicians' choice, and usually, they tend to satisfy the interests of the politicians, who had appointed them, more than the interests of the populace.

Excluded Northern Sotho dialects might have been stigmatized due to linguistic reasons which is being perceived as a less 'pure' form of the language, due to innovation, borrowing or attrition or even social reasons based on the status of its speakers. Standardization of one speech variety over the others, may thus result in speakers regularly moving to the dominant speech variety altogether to abstain from being criticized for speaking an incorrect or 'impure' form of the language. For instance, there the speakers of the excluded varieties find it a prestigious matter to use the Sepedi terminology while at the same time feeling inferior to use their own dialects especially in formal situations. Mokwana (2009:52) adds that standardization of a single speech variety has further resulted in internal language tension building up with speakers of the non-standard dialects feeling marginalized.

However, Trudgill (1983) as cited by Molepo (2014:17) has a different observation. The scholars argue that standardization is necessary in order to facilitate communication, to make possible the establishment of an agreed orthography and to provide a uniform educational material. The following is points deduced by Molepo (2014) following Trudgill's (1983) definition above

- Natural development of standard language in speech community
- Direct and deliberate intervention by society to create a standard language. Standard language is associated with prestige, providing a unified means of communication
- Standardization makes possible the establishment of an agreed orthography. It provides a uniform form for educational materials.

Tulloch (2006:275) on the other hand, holds a view that standardization should be more than what Trudgill (1983) argues it to be. Tulloch (2006) compiles a bottom-up approach for a recognized 'right' form of the language acceptance of dialectal diversity. The following, points out the scholar's argument;

- Standardisation should have evident advantages in terms of mutual comprehension between regions, which increases opportunities to use the language.
- Perceived as a political strength, increasing the unity of the population.
- Have a standard literary model to relate spoken forms to also improve speaker's ability to understand other dialects.

Although Trudgill (1983) presents a thorough view on the contribution standardization of languages or speech varieties should have on language planning which includes providing unified communication. Tulloch (2006) is more concerned with the value, function and the preservation of a dialect in the standard form. The scholar further indicates that the dialect should continue favoring intergenerational transmission (thus expanding the speech community) and expanding the dialect's public space may also be priorities. Like Shona of Zimbabwe a standard language should be established by creating of one unified dialect from a composite of all main dialects. The Zimbabwean standard language was created from several dialects namely the Zezuru, Karanga, Korekore, Manyika and Ndau dialects. These dialects are said to have an underlying unity of vocabulary and share particular and grammatical features (Adegbija, 1994:45).

2.1.3. Attitude of the excluded dialect speakers towards the standard form

The Constitution of South Africa recognizes eleven official languages and further promises protection and promotion of languages is particularly important in South Africa's relatively new democracy, where language will be instrumental in its growth and development. However, South Africa continue to face challenges of bringing marginalized national language, cultures and identities into the mainstream and develops them to be core part of South African nation building project (Knowles, 2013: 641). Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:9) who reasons that, there seems to be little signs on basic values and beliefs of democracy such as respect for

fundamental human rights and respect for opposing points of view confirm this. This also includes the acceptance of decisions that may be contrary to sectarian interest that are operational to a meaningful extent: and the national communities are divided, with strong potential for group conflict.

Instead of having a standard language being based on that is winning the struggle of regional opposition at both the lexical and phonological level, harmonizing can be implemented in instances where language varieties are considered as mutually intelligible, having a degree of mutual comprehension both written text (this is having mixed vocabulary and spelling systems of the language varieties). In some parts of Africa, linguists and policy makers have, taken initiative in addressing this issues Mutasa (1996: 83) asserts that standardize Shona have met with problems which appear to be universal in parts of Africa. For example, four Shona orthographies have succeeded each other within a span of three decades. The first three orthographies were designed in an attempt to provide a unified spelling for all the Shona dialects, while the fourth was aimed at accommodating more phonological differences.

Standardization of the excluded dialects has become a thorny issue in the linguistic field. There has been a relatively very little mention of dialect diversity by scholars. Some scholars have however made attempts of this issue, one such scholars are Malatji (2017) who explores the re-standardization of Sepedi with the aspiration of including Khelobedu dialectal lexicons in the standard form. The study considers an issue that affects different stakeholders, including language policy and its findings was beneficial to the Pan South African Language Board. However, the study pays little local groups who are themselves speakers of these dialects. Since it mostly focuses on the language practioners who have already failed at implementing new ways of including the excluded dialects into the standard form.

The issues of standardizing one dialect have thus resulted in a huge gap between written and spoken language further limiting the excluded speakers from the written vocabularies, which are contained in the standard dictionaries as they only have access to the real practical vocabularies used in their speech communities. This limitation thus results in the distortion of the term language which is considered to be as a crucial means of gaining access to knowledge and a driving force to the cognitive development. Vic Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000:3) aptly state that Language is seldom thought of as a problem. As long as people are able to communicate with one another, and get answers to their questions or can provide information to others and are able to read a newspaper, listen to the radio, or watch television, they are satisfied

However, they have the proposed that the two main language families in the country, the Nguni (isiNdebele, siSwati, isiZulu and isiXhosa) and the Sotho languages (Sepedi, Sesotho and Setswana) should be harmonized internally. In other words, a single variety common to all the languages within each of these families should be developed, as a way of facilitating closer unity between the different language communities in the black sector of the population (Webb & Kembo-Sure 2000:19). The linguistics' suggestion seems promising on a basis that harmonization is introduced first at a dialect and standard language, as these are the primary creation or invention of what makes a language. The reduction of dialects into the standard for will not only result in the newly established standard language being used in more prestigious function but its significance will extend to the African linguistic diversity.

2.2. Northern Sotho Morphology and orthography

The structure of all languages can be studied through the linguistic discipline morphology described as a term that is used in linguistics, it is the science and study of the forms and

formation of words, in all their aspects. It further deals with grammatical elements which make up words. For the purpose of this study the term morphology can thus be defined in accordance to Beard (1995) cited by Nhlapo (2015:2) who states that morphology is superficially the sum of all the phonological means for expressing the relations of the constituents of words in phrase, and of the phrasal constituents of sentences. The key element of morphology is the word, a symbol comprising mutually implied sound and meaning. The central purpose of morphology, therefore, is to map sound to meaning within the word and between words. The notion of lexeme is very central to morphology, and thus, many other notions can be defined in terms of it. For an example, the difference between inflection and derivation can be stated in terms of lexeme: inflectional rules relate a lexeme to its forms, and derivational rules relate a lexeme to another lexeme. Lexemes are often composed of smaller units with individual meaning called morphemes. Beard (1995: 46), postulates that lexemes are the only minimal grammatical elements in the language and each lexeme has a set of three representations. These lexemes can have a phonological, morphological and grammatical representation within them.

2.2.1. Standard Northern Sotho structural morphology

Polous and Louwrens (1994:4) argue that in Bantu languages there are numerous similarities that can be seen in the structure (i.e. morphology) as well as the syntax of words and word categories, in the various languages of this family. Like most of the Sotho languages Northern Sotho is written disjunctively thus the structural feature of this language should be the same as that of its dialects i.e. Sepedi, Khelobedu and Setlokwa.

The word morpheme is described as minimal meaningful units from which words are composed. According to Katamba (1993:20) a morpheme cannot be decomposed into smaller units which are either meaningful by themselves or mark a grammatical function like singular or plural number in the noun. These morphemes are arranged in linear order and they are found

in words. We define different kinds of morphemes based on various properties like where they show up in words. There are two types of morphemes, the free morpheme and the bound morpheme. Free morphemes can stand on their own while bound morphemes need affixes in order to be a word. Different languages such as most Bantu languages and English have different morphological systems, which means that they form words in different ways. For instance, English has both types of morphemes the free morpheme and the bound morpheme indicated below

- a. *dance* (*e*) + *ing* = *dancing*
- b. *Dance* (*e*) + *er* + *s* = *dancers*

The above example illustrates both the free and the bound morpheme. In this case *dance* (*e*) in both (a) and (b) carries meaning and is therefore capable of occurring in isolation, it is therefore categorized as a free morpheme. Whereas morphemes such as *-ing* and *er* do not carry any semantic content and are incapable of occurring in isolation therefore because of their nature which requires that they are attached to other morphemes to create meaning, they are called bound morphemes.

Northern Sotho for instance rarely has or only has bound morphemes. For example;

- a. Seeta (se+ eta) *shoe*

The above example indicates [se-] as the prefix of the word and [-eta] as the stem of the word. The prefix [se-] is a bound morpheme as it carries no meaning, however the [-eta] on the other hand is a free morpheme as it carries meaning, **eta** in Northern Sotho means to **lead**. There are other types of morphemes which are affixes, a category divided into prefixes and suffixes and roots which will be demonstrated in this section. An affix is a morpheme which attaches to roots, changing their meaning in regular ways. Affixes are generally either prefixes

or suffixes. Thus in order for a dialect to be considered as belonging to the same language with the other, this means both will have the same system of creating words.

In most cases, bound morphemes are the only type of morpheme that are frequently found in Northern Sotho and a majority of other Bantu languages. To analysis this language using this category a distinction between two types of bound morphemes is therefore made namely bound roots and affixes. Bound roots are those morphemes that have lexical importance when they are appended to other bound morphemes to frame words or sentences in Bantu dialects. They can't remain individually as independent words (e.g. – *tho* headed root for *motho* 'individual') Skhosana (2010: 141) states that bound morphemes, on the other hand, can never function on their own as they always form part of a larger entity, that is, a word. They can, in fact, be regarded as the building blocks of words as they are the units by means of which complex or polymorphemic words are constructed. Most words in the African languages are polymorphemic, that is, they are constructed by means of two or more bound morphemes.

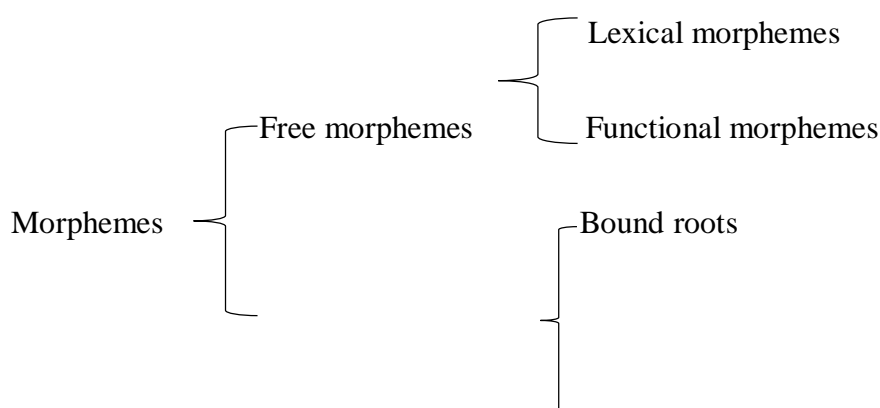
Such an example in Northern Sotho can be seen in the verb *batshegile* which consists of a subject concord *ba-*, a verbal root *-tsheg-* and a perfect ending *-ile*. However, the term affixes refer to bound morphemes that are attached to roots or words and change the meaning or grammatical function of those words or roots. These affixes can be distinguished between three kinds (prefix, suffix and infix) which is based on where they can be attached to either a stem, root or a base. A prefix is an example of an affix that is only attached before, root, base or stem. Like most Bantu Languages, Northern and all its varieties would have their prefixes as the noun classes, this can be indicative of a plural or singular noun.

According to Taljard and Bosch (2006: 429) these thing prefixes have, for simplicity of examination, been organized into classes with numbers by historical Bantu language specialists and speak to a globally acknowledged numbering framework. Similarly, Mphasha (2006:93)

and Taljard and Bosch (2006: 429) and asserts that the noun prefixes contribute to the morphological structure of Northern Sotho, they play a role in grammatical category which for example include the system of concordial agreement, which governs grammatical agreement in verbs, adjectives, possessives, pronouns and so forth. Unlike the prefix which role is to change the grammatical form of a morpheme, that suffix can bring more change to a morpheme.

Suffix is another type of affix that is attached at the end of a root, stem or base morpheme. In changing the grammatical form, verb is changed to a noun sometimes even changing the meaning of the morpheme. According to Mphasha (2006: 116) there are four nominal suffixes in Northern Sotho that may show up with things, i.e., the feminine suffix – *gadi*, the diminutive suffixes – *ana* and – *nyana* the locative suffix – *eng* and the augmentative suffix – *gadi*. However, the nominal locative is not only accessible but is also fully functional. The locative with the suffix – *eng* can be added to any noun except for 1a and 2a which falls under the human category.

Suffixing in Northern Sotho has proven to generally change the meaning of the root or word they are attached and it is this category that then enables the formation of new words with different meaning which is indicated in the suffixation of the feminine morpheme. In locatives for instance a word is capable of being changed from a grammatical category of noun to that of an adverb of place. The diminutive example has illustrated the possibility of the base shifting to a different sub-class within the same broader word class.



Bound morphemes

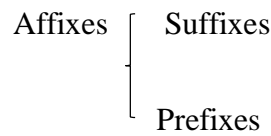


Figure 3. classification of morphemes

The structure clearly summarizes the definition and categories of each word morpheme. Note that in the structure everything was included except for the infixes, where do not exist in Northern Sotho or any Bantu language.

On the basis of this morpheme difference we therefore categorize affixes into two types namely the inflectional and the derivational affixes. According to Faab et al (2015) the derivation and inflection are part of word formation where there is a glue of prefixes and suffixes. Both the inflectional and derivational morphemes are glues to word-forms that are not yet finished, meaning that they do not have a final morpheme. Derivation is considered to be essential to language development especially if there is a need for vocabulary increment. According to Faab et al (2015) the derivational morphemes do not only form new words, they also cause a major grammatical change which involves changing the word-class that a base belongs to. Generally, this morpheme is capable of changing the meanings of the roots or words to which they are attached as notes earlier this process therefore enables the formation of new words with different meanings. The scholar further asserts that Bantu languages are rich in inflectional and derivational morphemes which affixed to bound root as both prefixes and suffixes. For example, Northern Sotho uses different noun classes to form both singular and plural nouns using verb like in /se-/ the derivational morpheme /-opel-/ the verb which resulted in the derived on *seopedi*.

Unlike the derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes do not change referential or cognitive meaning. The inflected morpheme is also incapable of shifting the grammatical

class however they can shift the grammatical of a morpheme (bound morpheme). The inflectional morpheme can signify grammatical changes. For example, in monna (*man*) –*nna*- is the word root, ba- is an inflectional affix thus taking the new form *banna*, the grammatical function of the word changes from singular to plural.

2.2.2. Morphological processes

All dialects are systematic language varieties that follow regular patterns of vocabulary choice, grammar and pronunciation thus since dialects are often considered the as different forms of one language, all these forms will therefore follow the same regular pattern of vocabulary, choice, grammar and pronunciation.

We use derivation to derive new words from primitive words through affixation and inflection. For the scope of this study, the sequence of inflectional and derivational morphemes will be tested on verbs and de-verbatives (nouns formed from verbs) which is hypothetical for all the three dialects. They are derived from prefixing or suffixing the required class prefix and suffixing the required verb root. This process takes place in accordance with the rules of lexical derivation. Thus the relatedness of the dialects under study can be determined through how all three follow the same rule of lexical derivation of Northern Sotho in particular.

a) De-verbalization

De-verbalization is one of the sub-classes of derivation in which the verbal characteristic is removed either one of the sub-classes of derivation in which the verbal characteristic is removed either by a nominal suffix or any other major category. We de-verbalize from primitive words in order to increase the vocabulary of our language. e.g. *apara v* ‘wear’ > *seaparo n* ‘clothing’

b) Reflexivization

In standard Northern Sotho the reflexive is formed by prefixing [i] to the verb stem as in bona> ipona. In instances where the initial sound is a bilabial the prefixing of [i] in the verb stem results in the plosivation of the initial sound [b] > [p].

c) *Dimunitization*

The diminutive in Northern Sotho can be expressed by suffixing /-ana/or /-nyana/, the suffixation depends on the phone at the end of the word to which the suffix is attached. for example, *katse dimunitized* to *katsana* and *mošemane* to *mošemanyana*.

d) *Locative*

Three locative class prefixes used to function in various African languages. Northern Sotho in particular has locative of both suffix and prefix, [-ng] is a suffix locative existing in Northern Sotho whilst [ga-] [ho-] and other are prefix locatives. Unlike the standard Northern Sotho, the use of the suffix locative in both Khelobedu and Setlokwa is [ni] instead of [ng] such as *nokeng* in Sepedi, *nokeni* in Setlokwa and *nogheni* in Khelobedu.

According to Sekere (2004:78) Spoken language is considered primary since it existed before written language and everyone learns to speak the language before learning how to write them. However, we should not view linguistic difference as historical priority but rather a complementary feature.

2.3. Sound changes amongst Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu

Phonology is a linguistic term that deals with the formation of sounds. It further involves the way language sounds and the way words are pronounced in a particular language. Where there are variations in vocabulary and grammar, these are normally accompanied by phonological variations. Phonological processes are those changes which segments undergo. When morphemes are combined to form words, the segments of neighboring morphemes become

juxtaposed and sometimes undergo change. When this happens, some of the juxtaposed segments under various conditions may undergo changes.

Note that there is difference in the initial sound in the two dialects with [ts] and [dz] which are introduced as new pronunciation. Since Sepedi and Khelobedu are dialects spoken in different areas, the different changes in pronunciation can be as a result of geographical locations or influences of other languages. Thus pronunciation which means articulating sounds in a correct manner is also vital when defining the term phonology (Sekere, 2004:81). Thus, a spoken sentence can be meaningful only when the speaker combines correct pronunciation, stress, intonation and sound. Thus, Spuy (1990: 10) indicates that phonological rules describe the system of sounds of one specific language. Northern Sotho as a Bantu language is regarded as a tonal language. This is proven *inter alia* by the minimal pair /**bona**/ and /**ḃona**/ (the accent marking a high tone, the orthographic word form for both is bona). The first /**bona**/ represents pronoun they ‘they’ while /**ḃona**/ is a verb meaning ‘to see’.

a) Elision

In phonology the term elision refers to the omission of a sound/ phoneme in speech. This can refer to the omission of an unstressed vowel, consonant or a syllable. Elision is common in Northern Sotho. It takes place between vowels or between consonants. An example of this is evident in some of the phonemic differences between the standard Northern Sotho in comparison to Setlokwa and Khelobedu for example the use of glottal [h] instead of standard velar [g] as in **nagana** *think* in Sepedi and **nahana** *think* in Khelobedu. Speakers of either Setlokwa or Khelobedu are mostly likely to remove the glottal sound [h] both in articulation and in orthography.

b) Pronunciation

Another variation between the standard Northern Sotho and its dialects includes that of words word pronunciation and orthographic spellings. Pronunciation or sound differences stressed in this study will be based on the usage of a high or low vowel. For example, letsogo hand in Sepedi and Lidzoho hand in Khelobedu differ in orthography but have the same manner of articulation.

Note that the prefix [le] (belonging to noun class 5) appearing in both Sepedi and Setlokwa, however we have [li] appearing in Khelobedu. Notice that both sounds are having the same manner of articulation, meaning that they are allophones. With the other being high and others being low. In order to distinguish the similar sound which, differ in orthography the best way to do it, is to use the phonemic representation indicating pronunciation of each vowel due to the fact Northern Sotho has primary and secondary vowels, which can be very confusing. For instance, we have [a], [i] and [u] as our primary vowels and [e] and [o] as are secondary vowels. However, these secondary vowels consist of two more vowels which are written the same way but pronounced differently, thus they are represented as [ɛ] and [e], and [o] and [ɔ] the un marked vowel [o] and [e] represents a low vowel and [ɛ] and [ɔ] represent a high vowel.

2.4. Language Classification

As indicated earlier Northern Sotho belongs to the Bantu language family, more specifically the South- Eastern zone of Bantu languages. This language is also part of a larger grouping of language, namely Sotho. Northern Sotho is also one of the official languages of South Africa. Northern Sotho different scholars classified Northern Sotho and its dialects in different ways. This classification has played an important role in dividing and categorizing this into its group or language family and further sub-languages. Harris (1984:25) states that it is therefore crucial to classify languages in order to establish relationship between languages and also to provide models of their historical development that may point researchers to historical events. Thus

through the different approaches of classifying Northern Sotho by scholars, it can be highlighted that some scholars have indicated Northern Sotho as a language and Sepedi, Khelobedu and Setlokwa as dialects. The study is further able to establish through early writer's dialects that have existed from some time ago.

There are different types of language classifications, each of which individually identifies a state in which these languages came to be considered as connected or related to each other. Languages are considered to be a part of the same group because of the number of people speaking that particular language. This study will consider classifying Northern Sotho first geographically followed by a typological classification. The geographical classifications are based on works of Van Warmelo (1935), Mokgokong (1966) and Ziervogel (1969).

2.4.1. Van Warmelo (1935)

Van Warmelo (1935) as cited by Rakgogo (2016: 32) gives a geographical classification of the Sotho dialects (which later came to be known as the dialects of Northern Sotho) as follows:

- Central Sotho, which includes Pedi, Tau, Kone, Roka, and Kopa;
- Eastern Sotho, which includes Kutswe, Pai, and Pulana;
- North-Eastern Sotho, which includes Phalaborwa, Lobedu, Mamabolo, Letswalo, Mametša, Mahlo, and Kgaga; and
- Northern Sotho, which includes Mphahlele, Tšhwene, Mathabatha, Maja, Mothapo, Matlala, Molepo, Tlokwa, Dikgale, Moletši, and Hananwa.

The above indicates that Van Warmelo (1935) classifies Northern Sotho as a language through which Sepedi exists as a dialect. This is also an indication that dialects such as Lobedu and Tlokwa existed from some time back.

2.4.2. Mokgokong (1966)

Mokgokong (1966: 3-4) mentions the provisional classification of the Northern Sotho subgroup into dialect clusters by then Department of Bantu Languages, University of South Africa (UNISA), is as follows:

- The Central Sotho Dialect Cluster: from whose dialects the written Northern Sotho language has developed, e.g. Pedi, Tau, (Masemola), Kone, Mphahlele, are the most important dialects of Sekhukhuneland and adjacent parts;
- The Eastern Sotho Dialect Cluster: Here the dialects are (1) Pulana and Kutswe, and (2) Pai. These dialects bear a strong impression of Tsonga Swazi, especially Pai.
- The North-Eastern Sotho Dialect Cluster: Here the most important dialects are Lobedu and Phalaborwa, and related languages such as Kgaga. They show a strong influence of Venda; and
- The North-Western Sotho Dialect Cluster: Here we have the dialects common to the Polokwane and Mokopane districts, i.e. Hananwa, Matlala, Tlokwa and Mamabolo. Birwa, a nearly extinct language, may also be included.

On this view it can, it is clear the provisional classification of the Northern Sotho subgroup into dialect clusters by then Department of Bantu Languages consider Sepedi as a dialect and not as a language on its own. Both scholars Van Warmelo (1935) and Mokgokong (1966) share the same ideas when it comes to the classification of Sepedi, which is classified as a Central Sotho dialect. Thus the term Northern Sotho is considered a language or an umbrella term for all the dialects.

2.4.3. Ziervogel (1969)

Mojalefa (2007:4) cites Ziervogel (1969) who classifies the dialects of Sepedi into 22 dialects. Ziervogel (1969) approach differs from that of Van Warmelo (1935) and Mokgokong (1966)

- Southern dialects such as Kopa, Setebele-Sotho, Molepo, Mothiba, Mothapo and Makgoba;
- Central dialects such as Pedi, Kone, Tau, Roka, Moletlane;
- North-Western dialects such as Hananwa, Tlokwa, Matlala, Moletši and Mamabolo;
- North eastern dialects such as Lobedu, Phalaborwa, Kgaga, Tswapo; and
- Eastern dialects such as Pulana and Kutswe.

In his approach Ziervogel (1969) classifies Sepedi as a language and not as a dialect. This scholar appears to be the only one that is in favour of Sepedi as language and not a dialect. It can therefore be noted that all three scholars indicate the existence of Sepedi and other dialects such as Lobedu and Tlokwa as dating from a long time ago.

2.4.4. Typological Classification

Typological classification is based on the notion that language could be reduced to a small morphology based. Thus, genetically related languages tend to share structural features. The agglutinative structure like that of Northern Sotho have lengthy word formation involving prefixing and suffixing which is a common practice throughout all Bantu languages (Bailey,1995). Northern Sotho shows a linguistic typology that is common to Bantu languages. As a tone and an agglutinative language, it has a basic SVO (Subject, Verb and Object) word order and has a rich noun class system as well as rich verb morphology. The syllabic structure of Northern Sotho is in this manner (C represents any consonantal phoneme and V represents any vowel phoneme)

- (a) CVCV, e.g. *reka*
- (b) VCV e.g. *ema wait*
- (c) CCV e.g. *nko nose*
- (d) CVCVC e.g. *thabeng*

This study will only classify the Northern Sotho which is the holding category of other dialects under study. Northern Sotho is classified over the others as there is very little published information available on these other dialects of Northern Sotho. The morphological and possible lexical variation among these dialects will be indicated in the subsequent data analysis section of the final dissertation.

There have been numerous attempts to classify languages by their types rather than by their relationships by different scholars from the beginning of historical linguistics, either based on all Bantu languages or one particular language from the language family. One of these includes works by Doke as cited by (Zerbian, 2006:41) *Textbook of Zulu Grammar in 1927* (reprinted in 1992) which was considered to have a great impact on South African Bantu linguistics. His main contribution was an approach to word division based on stress, and the classification of word categories. The Bantu word was identified based on phonetic/ prosodic principles, i.e. by 'one main stress'. In this grammar book rather Northern Sotho seems to have been influenced the least by the Dokeian approach, although some grammars of the neighbouring languages these included Southern Sotho (Doke & Mofokeng 1957) and Tswana (Cole 1959) which were based on Doke's framework (Kosch 1993: 29). However, scholars such as Ziervogel seem to difference of Doke's approach he deviated from Doke's prosodic approach to the word in Bantu. His morphological approach to word division in Bantu is reflected in his grammar on Northern Sotho (Ziervogel et al. 1969 in English). Van Wyk (1969) investigated all existing approaches to the problem of word division and proposed an own model. For the purpose of this study classification will be based solely on the agglutinative nature looking only on its

morphological and phonological aspect of the language diffusing systems which is based on the following

i. Tone

Tone, in linguistics, a variation in the pitch of the voice while speaking, it is equivalent to intonation in phonetics/phonology. In accordance with other studies on Bantu languages, Northern Sotho is assumed to have a two tone system whereby only high tones are specified underlying and low tones are inserted by default.

The examples below indicate lexical and grammatical use of tones in Northern Sotho.

a) lexical minimal pairs (Ziervogel & Mokgokgong 1961)

bona *to see*

bona *they*

Ke **bona** monna *I see a man*

Ke **bona** ba *They are the ones*

Tone is very important in Northern Sotho as it controls the way meaning is conveyed. Its realization is influenced both by syntactic structure and information structure. In the case of this study it is thus most likely that since these dialects share a genetic relation they will follow the same tonal pattern as Northern Sotho indicated above.

ii. Noun class system

Northern Sotho morphology and most Bantu languages in particular the noun class system classifies nouns into a number of noun classes, as signaled by prefix morphemes also known as noun prefix. These noun prefixes have, for ease of analysis been divided into classes with numbers by historical Bantu linguists. The role of this noun class is to simply indicate the classes to which the different nouns belong to and further play a significant role in morphological structure of all Bantu languages as they link noun to other words in sentences.

Noun class	prefix	Example	Ziervogel and Mokgokong (1975)	Poulos and Louwrens (1994)	Mphasha (2006)
1	mo-	Mosadi 'woman'	✓	✓	✓
1a	∅-	Malome 'uncle'	✓	✓	✓
2	ba-	Basadi 'women'	✓	✓	✓
2b	bo-	Bomalome 'uncles'	✓	✓	✓
3	mo-	monwana 'finger'	✓	✓	✓
4	me-	Menwana 'fingers'	✓	✓	✓
5	le-	Lebone 'light' Lebaka 'reason'	✓	✓	✓
	∅	Baka 'reason; time'	x		x
6	ma-	Mabone 'lights' Mabaka 'reasons; times' Madi 'blood' Madulo 'kinds of residences'	✓	✓	✓
7	se-	Selepe 'axe' Sehlare	✓	✓	✓
	∅	'medicine' hlare 'medicine'	✓	x	
8	di-	Dilepe 'axes' Dihlare 'medicines'	✓	✓	✓
9	n-	Mpša 'dog'	✓	✓	✓
	∅	Hlogo 'head'	✓	✓	✓
10	diN-	Dimpša 'dogs'			
	di-	Dihlogo 'heads'			
14	bo-	Bohlokwa 'importance' Bodulo 'residence'	✓	✓	✓
15	g0-	Go ruta 'to learn'	x	✓	x
16	fa-	Fase 'below'	✓	✓	x
17	go-	Godimo 'above'	✓	✓	x
18	mo-	Morago 'behind'	✓		x
N-	N-	Ntle 'outside' Pele 'in front'	x x	✓ ✓	x x

24	∅ ga-	Gare 'middle'	x	✓	x
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Table 1: Noun classes in traditional grammars of Northern Sotho

According to Taljard and Schryver (2016:170) who summaries the noun class system presented in *figure 2.2.3* above when the discussion of the noun class system of Northern Sotho in the various standard grammars is perused, it quickly becomes apparent that it is presented as a straightforward, static and somewhat one-dimensional state of affair. The above table indicates at least three standard grammars from different one. Scholars such as Ziervogel and Mokgokong (1975), and Poulos and Louwrens (1994) all cited from Taljard and Schryver (2016:170). To compare these grammatical standards, the researcher referred to Mphasha's (2006) work. All three scholars' noun class system feature a lot of irregularities and uncommon systems of noun classes. For instance, Mphasha (2006:95) observes that the noun class prefixes of some locatives nouns no longer function as prefixes in Northern Sotho. These includes noun class systems in class 16, 17 and 18 that are recognized through the presence of fossilized prefixes:

1. Class 16 fa-se
- Class 17 go-dimo
- Class 18 morago.

Ziervogel and Mokgokong (1975) Poulos and Louwrens (1994) have however indicates the above noun class systems as still existing and functioning. However, scholars also feature a common ground in the traditional noun class system of Northern Sotho. As indicated in the table all scholars seem to agree that, it may happen that a certain noun class in Northern Sotho, such as class 1a above, may not be expressed by any prefix. In such cases, it is evident that the grammatical feature (class 1a) will be preferred in place of the form of the prefix that in this case has no form.

The above table does however exclude because. In most cases the writers tend to be exposed to the orthography and terminology of the standard form or considered them corrupted, they have constantly avoided or manipulated the noun class system. The following is a diagram that presents the noun class system of Khelobedu replaced or manipulated by scholars

Noun Class	Noun Class Prefix	Example
1.	mu-	Mutho
2.	ba-	Batho
3.	mu-	Muriri
4.	mi-	Miriri
5.	li-	Lirama
6.	ma-	Marama
7.	khe-	Khetulo
8.	dzi-	Dzitulo

Table 2: Noun class system of Khelobedu

There seems to be many irregularities in the noun class system that the three scholars present. Maphasha (2006: 95) argues that there is also a number of locative noun classes for instance the class 7 prefix is [se-] while the class prefix for Khelobedu is [Khe-] as exemplified in the following:

seeta for kheeta *shoe* sello for khello *a cry*

Although these dialects have difference in class prefixes for the singular form, the prefix for the plural form remain the same and the meanings in both singular and plural is not affected. Thus class 8 plural [di] accommodates only Sepedi and plural form is [dzi] in Khelobedu. Thus, the following exemplifies the plural form

Seeta to dzieta Setena to dzitena

e) Tense morpheme

Northern Sotho verbs appear in a variety of moods. These moods all appear in the three tenses future, present and past and all may be negated. To mark tense or polarity, each of the moods makes use of specific morphemes to appear in front of the verb stem. The verb stem itself may show specific affixes fused to it, e.g. indicating some of the past constellations (allomorphs of the past tense morpheme -il-), and it appears with certain endings, inter alia [-a] or [-e] that each are predefined by the constellation they must occur in (Faas, 37:2010). The following are examples of verb tenses of Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu;

Example 1

Sepedi

Present tense: Ke **ja** bogobe

porridge

Past tense: Ke jile bogobe

Setlokwa

Ke **la** buswa

Ke lle buswa

Khelobedu

Ghe **la** Booswa *I eat*

Ghe lle booswa *I ate porridge*

Example 2

Standard Northern Sotho

Ke **diša** dikgomo

Setlokwa

Ke **disa** dikgomo

Khelobedu

Ghe **lesa** dikhomu *I look after cattle*

Although there is a phonological difference in verbs of the three dialects, you may take note that all three dialects have the same default suffix as [-a] which is an indication that the verb is in the present tense. This is also an indication that in the past tense the verbs' allomorph of changes from [-a] to [-il-] or [-e] which are added respectively depending on the structure of the word. Both Setlowa and Khelobedu have the same word structure and thus maintain the same allomorph in the past tense

2.5. Conclusion

The neglecting of other dialects has thus put those who speak them at a serious disadvantage when it comes to participating in official and public affairs, especially those that will contribute to the development of these dialects. While these issues have been perceived for a considerable length of time and are still waiting to be addressed by the policy makers, it must be noted that language specialists have been led research to build up a superior comprehension of dialect patterns and attitudes towards dialects. It is clear that there is still much work remaining that needs to be done to develop dialect awareness and acceptance. Linguist however have argued that in order for languages to maintain this equality harmonization is another option.

3. Research Design and Methodology

The fundamental focus of this chapter is to outline the research design, method, approaches and techniques applied in this study. The sample population and sampling technique are

thoroughly explained. All methods and approaches of collecting data, analysing and interpreting the data collected from participants are discussed and exemplified under the subthemes below.

3.1. Research Design

The comparative research method together with the quantitative research approach are used in this study to analyse the data. The quantitative method presented the different sound correspondences collect from the three speech varieties. The comparative method analyses sound correspondences between Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu. Thus, address issues of morphological and phonological variations which are thoroughly exemplified in the section below, following the steps of the comparative method.

3.2 Significance of the study

A comparative study of all three varieties is therefore crucial in Northern Sotho to clarify some morphological and phonological issues that result to the exclusion and attitudes amongst the language users. The standardisation of one particular language variety has resulted in many speech communities of the excluded variety to develop their varieties as separate entities from the Northern Sotho. The side-lining of these dialects from the standard form can lead to bad consequences of the improvement and development of the Northern Sotho vocabulary being either insufficient or resulting to a lot of borrowing from other languages. Instead of contributing to the development of the standard form these speakers are reducing their varieties into writing and starting their own language committees because of their exclusion from the standard form. These varieties can be incorporated together into the standard form instead of having too many closely related languages as single entities.

3.3. Quantitative Research Approach

The researcher conducted quantitative survey to identify and explore dialectical vocabulary of Khelobedu, Setlokwa and Sepedi in which randomly identified participants were handed questionnaires to fill out.

Quantitative research method refers to the collection and analysis of data in order to gain insight into the situation of interest. Creswell (1994:2) regards qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding a social human problem, based on building complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting. Kumar (2014:14) further substantiate that size the quantitative research approach also gives importance to the validity and reliability of findings and communicates findings in an analytical and aggregate manner, drawing conclusions and inferences that can be generalised. This study has thus harvested lexicons of the Khelobedu, Setlokwa and Sepedi dialect directly from the speech community using the quantitative research method. An attached addendum indicated the biographical data which participants used fill in lexicons that exist in their dialects using the equivalence in English provided to them by the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher was able to determine that relationship that existed between the three dialects, through analysis of the collected lexicons presented in the preceding chapter 4 which also enabled the researcher to provide full statistical analysis of common words existing morphologically and phonologically.

3.3.1 Primary Source

Ravitch and Carl (2019: 172) state that a questionnaire has the advantages of affording the researcher the opportunity to collect data from different people in different places, in a short space of time, from a large group of people and the data is easy to gather and decode. These questionnaires contain questions and other types of items designed to elicit information appropriate for analysis (Babbie, 2014: 262). Information can be elicited through an open-

ended or close ended questionnaire. This study makes use of close-end questionnaire that consists of 120 simple words arranged in different POS. A closed-ended question offers, as its name suggests, a limited number of answers. According to (Popping 2015:2) the term closed-ended questionnaire is characterized by assisted response, constructed in an a priori way possibly will fail to provide an appropriate set of alternatives meaningful in substance or wording to respondents. These questionnaires are intended to provide a precise or clearly identifiable response or answer. In most cases closed-ended questionnaire required that the participants answer with a simple yes or no answer. Popping (2015:2) further states that, in a pilot study the investigator has the opportunity to fine-tune the question wording and also there will be clarity regarding the answering possibilities. The investigator has the possibility to overcome the argument that it is impossible to construct codes in advance for a question. Unlike the open-ended questionnaire, the close ended questionnaire does not leave room for free expression. Its main purpose is to be encoded according to pre-established criteria.

3.4 Sampling

a. Population

The research has explored the effects of Sepedi as a standard language to other excluded dialects and its speakers. Thus the Batlokwa and Balobedu as the excluded varieties speakers are the target population of this study, including the speakers of the standard form Sepedi as all three are compared for relatedness.

Since the data consists of three sets of participants, the Khelebody, Setlokwa and Sepedi speakers with each of the dialect consisting of at least 20 participants. All three set of participants completed the questionnaires in different time frames. The following table illustrates a breakdown of the distribution and collection of data collected from participants for analysis.

Dialects	Number of Questionnaires Distributed	Number of Questionnaires Collected	Total used for analysis
Sepedi	30	27	20
Setlokwa	30	23	20
Khelobedu	30	25	20

Table 3: Number of questionnaires distributed and collected

The biographical information of participants also included that they indicate their gender (whether a participant is male or female). Thus a statistical analysis that calculates the number of Male and females that have participated in this study is provided collectively and not per dialect, using the total number of questionnaires that are randomly selected for analysing. Figure 1 below is demonstration of the distribution of gender of participants.

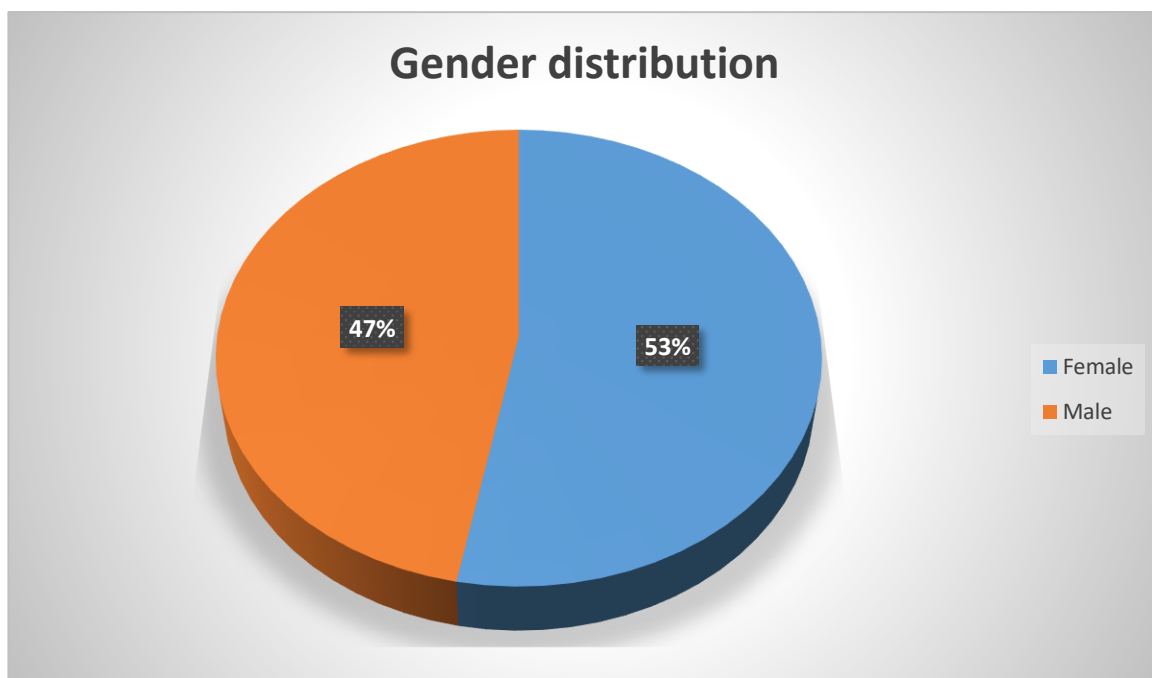


Figure 4: Participants' Gender distribution

The biographical data of participants also required them to indicate their age prior to filling in the closed-ended questionnaire. Figure 2 below illustrates the age distribution of participants collected in all three dialects. The participants between the ages of 18- 24 were 10 (17%), 25-35 were 26 (43%),36-48 were 16(27%) and participants who were above the age 48 were 09 (15%).

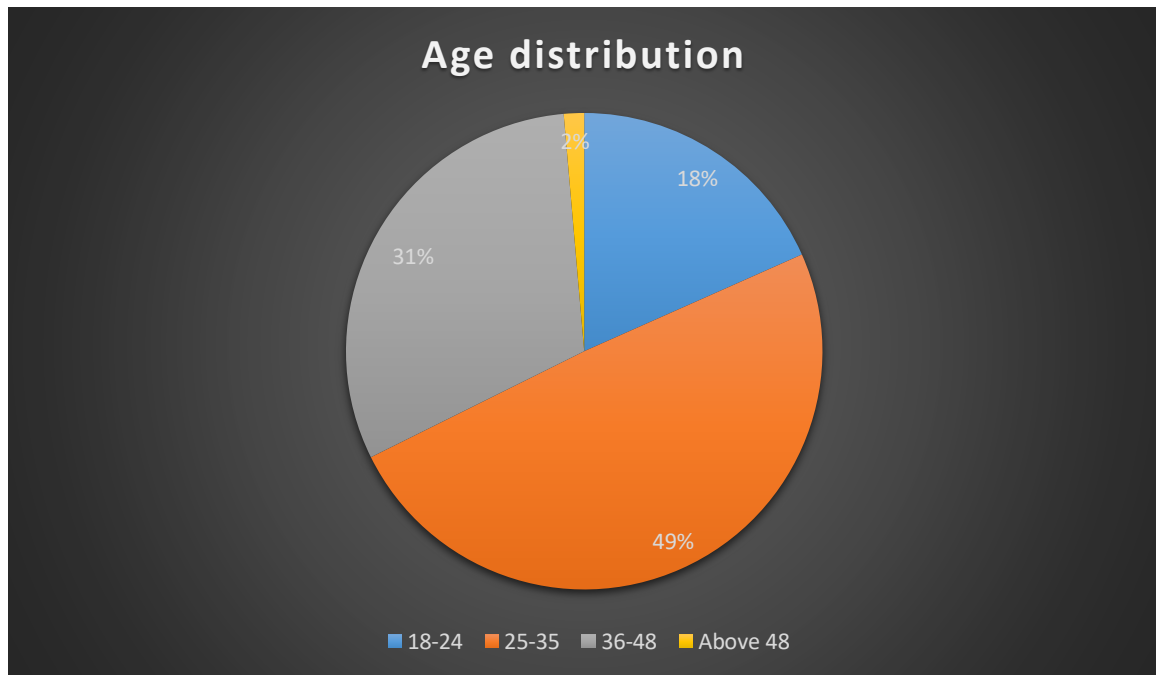


Figure 5. Participants Age distribution

Amongst the participants who were from the ages of 18 to above 48. There researcher did not have any criteria of choosing participants who were from a particular profession, any participant was allowed to participate and provide information about the dialect they speak.

b. Area of study

The quantitative phase of study was conducted in three areas located in the Limpopo Province by the researcher. The place includes, Louis Trichardt, Tzaneen and Polokwane. These are the remote areas in which the Sepedi, Setlokwa and Khelobedu are spoken.

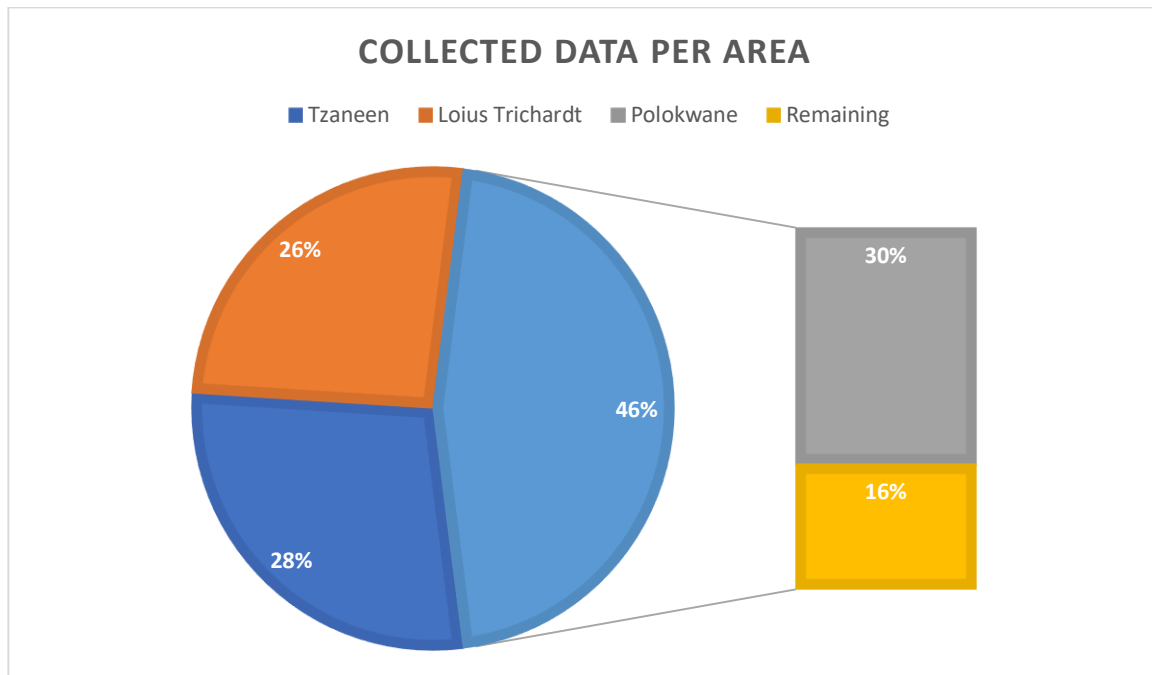


Figure 6: Collected Data Per Area

c. *Data Collection*

The researcher used one tool to collect data from the participants, data was collected in a form of questionnaires. The following comprises of all the steps taken used during the collection of data.

- i. Data collected from participants were in a form of questionnaires, in which 90 questionnaires were distributed consisted of 120 word. The domains of the data included basic vocabulary such as body parts, kinship and etc, and further primary verbs, nouns adjectives and locatives.
- ii. Distributed questionnaires required that the participants fill in the questionnaire by themselves or nominate either the researcher or another person to complete the questionnaire for them.
- iii. As a result of multilingualism participant were asked to complete as many dialect columns as possible, which included the mother tongue dialect and dialects which they had the knowledge of. An extra column was added for sentences; this was to avoid

ambiguous words. In a sentence the researcher is able to see in which context is the word most likely to appear in.

- iv. The questionnaires which were structured in columns, consisted for words in English where the participant is required to fill an equivalent in their mother tongue dialect. The columns were labelled, Sepedi, Khelobedu and Setlokwa this indicated that participants are required to fill information under the dialect column they speak or have knowledge of.
- v. Questionnaires were distributed door to door, with some sent via email. Door to door visits took place in Tzaneen, Louis Trichardt and Polokwane, with the Khelobedu speakers in Tzaneen, the Batlokwa in Louis Trichardt and the Bapedi in Polokwane. Data was thus collected over a period of 2 weeks.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

An ethical clearance certificate has been applied for at the University of the Witwatersrand. The ethical clearance certificate is attached in Appendix below, from which clearance approval has been granted. Permission letters for recruiting participants within community are attached in Appendix which indicates that the researcher was given permission by respective community leaders in the three areas. In addition, the participants have the right to know what the research is about, how it will affect them and what the benefits of their participation to the study are. The participant is made aware the risks and benefits of participation, and the fact that they have the right to decline to participate or discontinue their participation at any time during the process if they choose to do so.

The ethics ensures that research involves gathering data from people (human participants) treats these participants fairly and meets ethical standards. The ethical clearance certificate obtained by the researcher will therefore assist in protecting of the participants within all possible limits from any of the physical or emotional discomfort that may emerge

from the research project. Broadly speaking this involves full disclosure (telling them about the research), non-coercion, and consideration of privacy issues. It further takes into consideration the ethical conduct of collecting and analysing data from human participants which is necessary in research training.

The researcher has thus considered the confidentiality of participants is ensured by both the researcher and the supervisor for which a consent form was provided to the participants upon participation. The consent form and PIS (*attached Appendix*) also reminds participants that their participation is completely voluntary and that no payments will be made for participation. The consent form together with the PIS is in English and Northern Sotho a language that is understandable to the participants.

3.6. The Comparative Method

While the comparative method is universally accepted and applied by most linguists for both classification and reconstruction it has not been comprehensively and consistently applied to African Languages, mostly because of the sheer amount of data and work involved as compared to the small number of linguists working in the field. Similarly, it is also the fact that African languages have a large family covering an extensive land area, with a large number of discriminable languages and dialects (Nurse 1997:362).

In order to make the comparative method a less complex one, this study makes use of a diffusional approach of the Comparative methods highlighted by both Fox (1995) and Campbell (2013) which are further revised to suit the data in question. In most studied the Comparative Method has been applied across one particular sphere of linguistics particular in phonology and it is in this sphere that the method has been most extensively employed and where its usefulness has been most clearly demonstrated with the others neglected. However, this method should in principle be more widely applicable hence this study considers applying

this Method to other areas of linguistics which is morphology. Since the nature of morphemes is such that they are expected to be phonologically distinct. The main technique of this comparative method is to compare for phonological and morphological differences which is typically carried out to the dialects presumed or demonstrated as related. The central focus is to identify recurrent sounds correspondences between the dialects under study. Thus, data is very important in this regard, all data used in this section will consist of written sources. It allows for an easy postulation of common morphemes and phonemes that exists among the dialects, without any information being skewed. Furthermore, Postulation of this relatedness allows us to compare these dialects without any bias. The steps of this method are followed respectively using the data at hand.

Comparative Method was used as the linguistic reconstruction to compare two or more languages to establish the relatedness of the dialects. This method developed during the course of the nineteenth century. Until the end of the century it was capable of being held up as a model of a scientific method which could be applied more generally (Fox, 1995:19). It was first applied in Germany to the Indo-European groups of languages, but it has subsequently applied to more and more families. In this study dialects are assumed to have some genetic relationship they are compared using the linguistic reconstruction approach for the purpose of establishing a relatedness amongst dialects.

These dialects are therefore assumed to have some genetic relationship they are compared using the linguistic reconstruction approach for the purpose of establishing a commonality amongst dialects. These languages are considered to be genetically related thus they are classified using kinship terms such as sister, daughter, parent and language families. Therefore, the comparison of Northern- Sotho dialects, shows that these dialects belong to one language Northern Sotho. Through change these dialects developed as independent dialects.

Therefore, by comparing what these sister languages inherited from their ancestor, as an attempt to reconstruct the linguistic traits which Proto-Northern Sotho possessed.

Although application of the Comparative Method is mostly involves discovering the sound correspondences between presumed cognate words and trying to assign a unique proto-form such that the individual daughter languages (the related dialects) can be derived by plausible sound changes. This study revises the Comparative Method presented by Fox (1996) and Campbell (2011). The discovered sound correspondences between presumed cognates words will not be compared for the purpose of assigning a unique proto-form for the dialects but rather will be comparing for relatedness and a common system of phonological and morphological rules to the grammar of Northern Sotho which is the given language. Thus in this study the comparative method assumes that the sister languages have undergone various changes in order for them to develop into independent languages from the proto-languages.

This method consists of examining words with similar meanings in the dialects in Northern Sotho. These three dialects are compared solely on the fact their regular sound correspondences and a reconstructed proto-language sound system have not yet been established. Thus, the steps and procedures of this method will follow order that will be suitable for the data in question. Steps are thus broken down into a more manageable manner. Thus, similarities and difference of both linguists will be made with some steps of from Fox (1995) and other from Campbell (2013), this is done through a comparison of both steps in which others are eliminated.

Step 1: Assemble cognates

In this study a cognate is considered a phone or a morpheme which is related to another, sound or morpheme in sister languages/ dialects as a result of inheritance from a common ancestor. Although the method requires that data consists of basic vocabulary such as parts of

speech, close kinship terms; body parts or even common geographical terms and etc which are mostly nouns only (Campbell, 2011:108). This study will further make use of primary verbs, adjective and locatives. These cognates resist borrowing more than other sort of vocabulary and these are considered to be true cognates of the comparative method. Cognates that will be avoided at all time, should be words that appear as non-cognates, such as onomatopic words and borrowed words within the dialects in question.

a) Alignment of the cognates in a particular order, either in rows or columns.

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	English
1. Leotwana /lɛ-/ /-otw-/ /-ana/ leot ^w ana	Lekotwana /lɛ-/ /-kotw-/ /-ana/ lekot ^w ana	Kheodwana /khe-/ /-ad-/ /-ana/ k ^h eoɔ ^d wana	'small leg'

Table 4: Some Dialects cognate sets

According to Campbell (2011: 112) in the application of the comparative method, it is not always necessary to follow all these steps in precisely the sequence described. In most cases a linguist o researcher is likely to jump back and forth among these steps. This procedure therefore applies to the revised methods of Fox (1995) and Campbell (2011) applied in this study.

Table 4. above has indicated an arrangement of cognates listed orderly into a column. These cognates are selected from the data collected by the researcher. They are cognates consisting of dimunitized words in all the three dialects. Here, the alignment of cognates has been identified morphologically and phonologically a well to ensure their genetic equivalence. These cognates (listed in the column) are selected from basic vocabulary of body parts and are words that resist borrowing more than other sorts of vocabulary existing in Northern Sotho.

The numbering of each column represents cognate sets. For example, the word *leotwana* for ‘small leg’ is in cognate set 1. Each cognate set therefore is listed using their conventional spelling, morphological representation (showing prefix and stem) by using the // to show the morphemes available in each word. The IPA representation accounts for the pronunciation of different sounds in a cognate.

b) Writing cognates in the conventional spelling, morphemic and phonemic representation. This is already achieved in the previous column where the cognates were arranged into an orderly manner.

Step 2: Establish morphological and phonological correspondences sets

Although this step requires the establishment of morphological and phonological correspondence sets it cannot be done purely on both spheres. The phonological sphere is more applicable than the morphological sphere. This however does not limit the equivalent morphological function.

- a) The previously aligned cognates, are labelled according to the different dialects with each cognate indicating its phonological and morphological make up.
- b) These sound and morpheme correspondences will be numbered accordingly indicated below. Since the method will be analysing phonologically and morphologically the correspondence set (MCS and SCS) are numbered individually to show the number of morphemes and sounds in a cognate set. The following exemplify the numbering of correspondence sets.

Morphological correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep	/le-/	/-otw-/	/-ana/

Setl. /le-/ /-kotw-/ /-ana/

Khe. /khe-/ /-odw-/ /-ana/

Sound correspondence set

Unmatched sounds

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Sep.	[l]	[ε]	[o]	[t]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]	
Setl.	[l]	[ε]	[k]	[o]	[t]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[o]	[d]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]	

Matched sounds

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sep.	[l]	[ε]	-	[o]	[t]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[l]	[ε]	[k]	[o]	[t]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	-	[o]	[d]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Step 3: Establish the regular phonological and morphological correspondences existing between the dialects of Northern Sotho.

- a) Determine sound frequency in a table in each of the sound and morpheme correspondence. The following are principles that should be considered one establishing frequency of sounds in a sound correspondence set.
 - Directionality, which considers that some sound changes which recur in independent languages typically go in one direction (A>B) which happens in most cases and (B>A) which is either never found or rarely happens. For instance, in Northern Sotho we have

sound changes where [b] > [p] but the change in the other direction [p] > [b] is almost unlikely (Campbell, 2011: 116).

- Majority is another guiding principle where we let majority of sounds correspondence set win. A sound in the correspondence set which shows up in the greatest number of dialects is picked, in most cases to reconstruct the proto-sound (Campbell, 2011: 117). In this study however, the frequency appearing sound will be used to observe the relatedness of these dialects. For example, the cognate set for 'leg' indicates that the sound [l] is frequent in all the three dialects as an initial sound [l].

The above cognates indicated the following as frequent sounds of the word 'leg'

Frequency

As indicated in the chapter 2, in Northern Sotho, the morphemes are affixes that are either prefixes or suffixes. These affixes are bound morphemes, i.e., they always appear with a root or stem and never on their own. Such affixes may be either inflectional or derivational. For instance, in the MCS has illustrates the noun class prefix 5 /le-/ appears a dimunitized prefix (inflectional affix) in both Sepedi and Setlokwa, however Khelobedu has noun class prefix 7 /khe-/ appears a diminutive prefix (inflectional affix). The dimunitized prefixes appears before different stems /-otw-/, /-kotw-/ and /-odw-/. However, all three dialects use a default diminutive suffix (derivational affix) in Northern Sotho which is expressed by *-ana*. The SCS in the data do correspond regularly and this is evident in the above sets of cognates. The consonant sounds, [w] and [n], and vowel [ε], [ɔ] and [a] are universal across these dialects, however, the differences likes in the vowel [ɔ] and [u] in which Sepedi and Setlokwa use high vowel [ɔ] whereas Khelobedu employs [u], these sounds however have the same manner of articulation. Some sounds overlap with one another in various places, e.g. In Sepedi and Setlokwa they use the sound [t] and Khelobedu the sound [d̪] which are the minimal pairs, their

place of articulation is the same. There is not much variance amongst the three dialects which indicates their relatedness.

Step 4: Establish the morphological process and phonological rules of each cognate.

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** leoto +ana [dimunitize /leoto/]
- Setl.** lekoto +ana [dimunitize /lekoto/]
- Khe.** leodu+ana [dimunitize /leodu/]
- ii. **Sep.** leotoana [glide formation]
- Setl.** leokotoana [glide formation]
- Khe.** leoduana [glide formation]
- iii. **Sep.** leotwana
- Setl.** lekotwana
- Khe.** leodwana
- iv. **Khe** kheodwana [substitute class 5 prefix /le-/ with class 7 /khe-/]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /∅-/ → /-ana/ / leoto__
- Setl.** /∅-/ → /-ana/ / lekoto__
- Khe.** /∅-/ → /-ana/ / leodu__
- ii. **Sep.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ / leot_ana
- Setl.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ / lekot_ana
- Khe.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ / leod_ana
- iii. **Khe.** /le-/ → /khe-/ / __odwana

Since both the phonological and morphological rules and processes of the excluded data has little or no records the researcher relied solely on the spoken and written form of the data provided by speakers.

Step 5: Identify genetically equivalent morphemes

The morphological process above clearly indicates the words, *leoto*, *lekoto* and *leodu* before they undergo a dimunitization process. All three dialects have the existence of three morphemes which is also indicated clearly in the MCS. All three dialects initially have an existence of an equivalence in the initial morpheme, which is /le-/ a noun class prefix 5. However, after undergoing dimunitization the initial morpheme in Khelobedu only, is substituted with the noun class prefix 7 and like all three dialects the dimunitive suffix /-ana/ is added, which is normally the default suffix of Northern Sotho during dimunitization.

Step 4: Attempt to identify their functions

- a) Consider the sequence of the morpheme in the cognate set

The MCS as clearly indicated the morphemes of all three dialects, as consisting of a prefix, stem and a dimunitization suffix, these are all bound morphemes as they need to be attached to each other in order for them to create meaning. The prefix /le-/ is CL5. sing with is pl. as /ma-/ a CL6 prefix. These are inflected affixes as they do not change the stem of the word, however the derivational affix /-ana/ changes the stem of the word in all three dialects, as there is a formation of a glide due to the juxtaposition of the vowels. On the other hand, this results to the substitution of the inflected affix from Cl 5 prefix to Cl.7. The morphological variations of these cognates has proven to have a regular structure and sequence formation in the formation of dimunitized words.

3.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined the research design and methodology used in this study. The description of the Methodology above clearly indicates the significance of the Comparative Method to this study as it is assisted the researcher in observing of certain relations that appear in the data collected from the three different Northern Sotho dialects. Furthermore, the method does not only show the relationships and analogies existing between a set of cognates but it also identifies the challenges affecting spelling rules or orthography especially in dialect with no existing records/ the dialects excluded from the standard form. Since the comparative method presented the emergence of different themes in the POS and word formation processes included their phonological rules, the preceding Chapter 4 will elaborate more of the findings and further discuss what the researcher revealed.

Chapter 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The fundamental focus of this chapter is to discuss and present the findings of this study. An application of the comparative method was employed to analyse the collected data. Furthermore, an interpretation and discussion of the statistical data is also presented, attaching meaning and drawing answers for the research objectives. The interpretation and analysis is fully dependent on the results of the data collected from the participants being the speakers of the three dialects in question. Analysis will include comparing the three Northern Sotho dialects for relatedness in order to determine the aim and objectives highlighted in this study.

4.2 Data Analysis

The researcher has employed both the Quantitative and the Comparative Method for this study. The Quantitative Method provided the researcher with the statistics involving calculation of the frequency of cognates provided by the participants which served as analyzable data arranged into different categories by the use of the Comparative method. The Northern Sotho dialect cognates has proven the relatedness of cognates morphologically and phonologically. This allowed the researcher to determine appropriate forms to include in the correspondence forms, during application of the method. The major assumption of the comparative method is that while the phonemes of Northern Sotho develop differently in the three dialects, the development is consistent in each kind of linguistic environment within each dialect (Gudschinsky, 1956: 615). By applying the comparative method to these related dialects, we are able to determine the impact the standard Sepedi has had on these included dialects morphologically and phonologically. The central focus is to identify recurrent sounds correspondences between the dialects under study. Thus, data is very important in this regard,

all data used in this section will consist of written sources (from participants). It allows for an easy postulation of common morphemes and phonemes that exists among the dialects, without any information being skewed. All these is evidence of the importance of the comparative method as having the ability to show the relatedness of dialects which are considered to be distinct as they are excluded from the standard form, thus the analysis of these cognates are further indicated this chapter's subthemes.

4.3. Quantitative Data Analysis

The researcher analysed the collected data by doing the following.

- i. The researcher familiarised herself with the data collected from Northern Sotho dialect speakers. The distribution of Gender and Age of participants per dialect were also taken into consideration (a statistical analysis of these is indicated in the subtheme above)
- ii. The collected data was further checked for any ambiguity in lexicons and further excluded all borrowed lexicons which were mostly in Afrikaans or English.
- iii. The researcher analysed the data for lexicon frequency. For instance, for every dialect, each English word required that the participant's list one equivalent in their mother tongue dialect. However, in most cases different participants have different equivalence. This resulted in the researcher selecting one word and calculation how many participants listed that word as an equivalent in their dialect.
- iv. Data is sorted into cognate forms in which all three sets of questionnaires were checked for regular sounds correspondences (determining the frequency of occurrences of related words). This is relevant as it provided the researcher with more useful information to assist in fulfilling the aim and objectives of this study.
- v. A tally table was made to record all the words frequencies in each dialect. A typical example of the tally table is attached in the Appendix below.

- vi. Another table was created in which all the existing cognates were written in their IPA form to account for the different pronunciation of the different dialects. The IPA table is attached in the Appendix below.

4.4. Comparative Data Analysis

The previously randomly selected data for analysis, is divided into different morphological categories which will later be analysed for morphological and phonological similarities and differences. Data that has more similar qualities will indicate that dialects are more related and should therefore be included into the standard variety.

4.4.1 Analysis of the sequence of dimunitization

The following is a list of cognates in the **basic vocabulary** domain selected from the data. The cognates have evidences that they underwent **dimunitization**. All dimunitized words are lexical items that express the smallness of a things. As an inflected morpheme it has evidently indicated that it creates new lexemes and modify significantly the meaning of the stem to which they are attached.

All the analysed cognates have indicated an equal number of morphemes. In most cognate sets, all three dialects have three morphemes, consisting of a prefix, stem and a suffix. Whist in some sets only two dialects presents the existence of only two morphemes and the other will all three morphemes. Results of the compared cognates morphologically and phonologically are thus presented according to the category of the vocabulary through which they were collected. The lexical entry in the categories below were collected as nominal nouns and dimunitized, in order to observe each morphological and phonological structure in each dialect accordingly

a) Close Kinship terms

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Glossary
1. Mosatšana /m--satš--ana/ [mɔsɒtʃana]	Sesatjana /se--satj--ana/ [sesatʃana]	khesadjana /khe--sadj--ana/ [k ^h esadʒana]	small woman
2. Mošemanyana /mo--šema--nyana/ [mɔʃɛmaɲana]	Sesemana /se--sem--ana/ [sɛsɛmaana]	khesemana /khe--sem--ana/ [k ^h ɛsɛmaana]	small boy
3. Motlogolwana /mo--tlogolw--ana/ [mɔtloɔɔlwana]	Setloholwana /se--thlohol--ana/ [setlo ^h ɔlwana]	Khedulwana /khe--dulw--ana/ k ^h ɛdʊlwana	small grandchild

Table 5: Close kinship terms cognates

1. *mosatšana, sesatjana and khesadjana* 'small woman'

MCS	1	2	3
Sep	/mo-/	/-satš-/	/-ana/
Setl	/se-/	/-satj-/	/-aana/
Khe	/khe-/	/-sadj-/	/-aana/

Morphological processes

mosadi+ana → *mosatšana* ; *mosadi* → *sesatjana* and *musadi* → *khesadjana*

- i. **Sep & Setl:** mosadi+ana [dimunitizing /mosadi/]
Khe: musadi+ana [dimunitizing/musadi/]
- ii. **Sep & Setl:** mosadiana [juxtaposed /-i-/ and /-a-/]
Khe: musadiana [juxtaposed /-i-/ and /-a-/]

- iii. **Sep & Setl:** mosadyana [glide formation /i/ > /y/]
Khe: mosadjana [palatal formation /i/ > /j/]
- iv. **Sep:** mosatšyana [assimilating /-d-/ to /-tš-/]
Setl: mosatjyana [assimilating /-d-/ to /-tj-/]
- v. **Sep:** *mosatšana* [/-y-/ is deleted]
Setl: mosatjana [/-y-/ is deleted]
- vi. **Khe:** **khesadjana** [substitute CL1 prefix with CL7]
Setl: **sesatjana** [substitute CL1 prefix with prefix CL7]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep	[m]	[ɔ]	[s]	[a]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl	[s]	[e]	[s]	[a]	[tʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe	[kh]	[e]	[s]	[a]	[dʒ]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø/ → /-ana/ / mosadi___
- ii. **Sep.** /-i-/ + /-a-/ → /-y-/ / mosad_ana
- iii. **Sep.** /-d-/ → /-tš-/ / mosa_ana
- iv. **Sep.** /-y-/ → /-ø-/ / mosatš_ana

This cognate set has indicated balance in morpheme correspondence sets as the word is made up of three morphemes, the prefix, the stem and the dimunitization suffix. However, all three cognates do not belong to the same class. Before dimunitization we have all three dialects belonging to class 1 prefix /mo-/ for instance Sepedi, **mošemane** and **mosemane** for Khelobedu and Setlokwa. However, due to the fact that all three dialects dimunitized differently this has resulted cognates of both Khelobedu and Setlokwa belonging the class 7

prefix /se-/ and /khe-/. Both dialects also add a diminutizing suffix together with a prefix as seen in ‘small woman’, *sesatjana* and *khesadjana*. The nominal noun of *sesatjana* is *mosadi* and *mosadi* is *khesadjana*, notice that the CL 1 [mo-] and [mu-] were substituted by CL7 [se-] and [khe-] with /-ana/ as a suffix for all.

When these cognates underwent the morphological process of being diminutized, there are three phonological processes that show the sound changes. Juxtaposition is the initial process which is as a result of the two vowels in a juxtaposed position, in most cases the juxtaposition of the primary vowels results in a glide formation which is the second process, while the other one forms a palatal sound. Assimilation is the preceding process where a dental sound [d] is assimilated to the palatal sounds [tj] and [tš]. Deletion and Substitution are seen as the last processes, in deletion the semi vowel [y] which was formed by a juxtaposition of vowels is deleted in all three dialects as a result of a sequence of three consonants following each other which is an irregular syllable structure in Northern Sotho and is avoided at all times. In the final stage the class 1 prefix /mo-/ is substituted with the class 7 prefix in *Khelobedu* and *Setlokwa* to form a diminutized cognate. Substitution of the noun classes therefore impacts on the sound correspondence sets where we have all the 8 sounds as equivalent to each other except for 1 and 2, and 5 which has sounds like [tš], [tj] and [dj] as allophones of the same sounds since they occur in the same environment and have the same manner of articulation.

2. *mošemyana*, *sesemaana* and *khesemaana* ‘small boy’

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	/mo-/	/-šema-/	/-nyana/
Setl.	/se-/	/-sem-/	/-aana/
Khe.	/khe-/	/-sem-/	/-aana/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** mošemane+nyana [dimunitize /mošemane/]
Setl. mosemana+ana[dimunitize/mosemana/]
khe. musemana+ana [dimunitize/mosemana/]
- ii. **Sep.** mošemanyana [substitute /-e-/ for /-a-/]
- iii. **Setl&Khe.** mosemaana [vowel lengthening /-a-/ and /-aa-/]
Setl. Sesemaana [substitute CL1 prefix /mo-/ with CL7 prefix /se-/]
Khe. Khesemaana [substitute CL1 prefix /mu-/ with CL7 prefix /khe-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Sep.	[m]	[ɔ]	[š]	[ε]	[m]	[ɲ]	-	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[s]	[ε]	[s]	[ε]	[m]	-	[a]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[s]	[ε]	[m]	-	[a]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mošemane__
Setl. /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mosemana__
Khe. /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mosemana__
- ii. **Sep.** /-e-/ → /-a-/ / mošeman_ ny ana
Setl. /-a-/ + /-a/ → /-a-/ / mosem__na
Khe. /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-/ / musem__na
- iii. **Setl.** /mo-/ → /se-/ / __semaana

Khe. /mu-/ → /khe-/ /__semaana

Like the previous cognate this cognate has almost the same properties as the previous cognate because they belong to the same class 1 prefix /mo-/ which is before dimunitization. The cognate has shown an equal number of morpheme correspondence set with a prefix, stem and a dimunitized suffix. The morphological process has however, indicated only two processes. Lengthening and substitution, the vowel strengthening has resulted from the fact that the vowel is lengthened, this is evident in Khelobedu and Setlokwa when the dimunitized suffix /-ana/ is added to the noun, thus the vowel from the noun and dimunitive stand in juxtaposition with each other instead of undergoing assimilation where only one vowel is kept, these dialect's phonological processes becomes incomplete resulting in the lengthening. Substitution is seen when the class 1 prefix /mo-/ substituted with class 7 /khe-/ and /se-/ a process of dimunitization seen in Khelobedu and Setlokwa.

The resulting SCS which are as a result of the processes that the nouns underwent are seen as regularly corresponding except in SCS 1&2 where a dimunitized prefix is added in Setlokwa and Khelobedu. SCS 3 indicated a voiceless palata sound [š] and voiceless alveolar [s] and allophones. In SCS 7 the sound [a] is not represented in the SR because the three dialects did not have the same dimunitization suffix added to them thus did not undergo the same phonological processes.

3. *setlogolwana, sethloholwana and khedulwana*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	/se-/	/-tlogolw-/	/-ana/
Setl.	/se-/	/-thloholw-/	/-ana/
Khe.	/khe-/	/-dulw-/	/-ana/

Morphological process

- i. Sep. setlogolo +ana [dimunitize /-ana/]
 Setl. sethloholo+ ana [dimunitize /-ana/]
 Khe. khedulo+ana [dimunitize /-ana/]
- ii. Sep. setlogo ana [glide formation /-w-/]
 Setl. sethloholoana [glide formation /-w-/]
 Khe. kheduloana [glide formation /-w-/]
- iii. Sep. setlogolwana
 Setl. sethloholwana
 Khe. khedulwana

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sep.	[s]	[ε]	[tl]	[o]	[g]	[o]	[lʷ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[s]	[ε]	[tʰl]	[o]	[h]	[o]	[lʷ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[kʰ]	[ε]	[d]	[u]	-	-	[lʷ]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø/ → /-ana/ /setlogolo__
Setl. /-ø/ → /-ana/ /sethloholo__
Khe. /-ø/ → /-ana/ /mudulo__
- ii. **Sep.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ /setlogol_ana
Setl. /-o-/ → /-w-/ /sethlohol_ana
Khe. /-o-/ → /-w-/ /mudul_ana
- iii. **Khe.** /mu-/ → /khe-/ /_dulwana

Although having the same morphological structure as the two other cognate sets, this cognate set introduces a new approach that is different from the two other cognate sets, as it belongs to the class 7 prefix. This cognate has presented only one phonological process which glide formation, this is a result of the two adjacent segments when the diminutized suffix is added resulting in two primary vowels being in juxtaposition with each other forming a semi vowel /-w-/. The glide formation occurs in all three dialects, there is only one phonological process in this cognate mostly because the diminutization of this particular cognate includes suffixation rather than both suffixation and prefixation.

In SCS the data presented the two sets of allophones in SCS 1 & 3, the sounds in 3 for Sepedi and Setlokwa [t] and [tlh] are minimal pairs whilst Khelobedu presents a front dental [d] which is not an equivalent with the other dialects. SCS 5 presents two sounds glottal [g] and aspirated [h] which do not have the same manner of articulation but occur in the same environment. SCS 4 presents two vowels with the same manner of articulation [o] and [u] are allophones of the same sound as the utterance of [o] in the Sotho language cluster is the same as that of [u] in Khelobedu.

The structural morphemes for diminutizing does not follow the regular rule of Northern Sotho of suffixing the either /-ana/ or /-nyana/ to emphasize on the size of particular object. For instance, Khelobedu and Setlokwa substitutes the nominal prefix of each noun with the noun CL 7. This mostly in instance where the word being diminutized has a prefix, if their prefix is absent then CL7 prefix is added instead of being substituted.

All three analyzed cognate sets using the Comparative Method has shown evidence of regularity in sound with most of them presenting allophones in most cases such as in, *sesatjana*, *mosatšana* and *khesatjana* the sounds [tj], [tš] and [dj] are allophones of the same sound. These allophones therefore represent a phonological conditioning which indicates that these sounds

have the same phonological properties. The sound change in these dialects often happens in the same environment. Lexical variation in this category exists both in dialect and the standard form of language nevertheless, there appears to be genetically and structural relation between the three varieties.

b) Animals

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Gloss
1. Mpyanyana /mpya-//-nyana/ [mpyaɲana]	Sempanyanyana /se-//-mpya-//-nyana/ [sembyaɲana]	Khembyanyana /khe-//-mbya-//-nyana/ [khembyaɲana]	‘small bird’
2. Pešana /peš-//-ana/ [peʃana]	Pešana /se-//-peš-//-ana/ [sepeʃana]	Khepešana /khe-//-peš-//-ana/ [khepeʃana]	‘small horse’
3. Lepogwana /le-// -pogw-// -ana/ [lepogwana]	Lebowana /le-// -bow-// -ana/ [lebowana]	Khebowana /khe-// -bow-// -ana/ [khebowana]	‘small tiger’

Table 6: Dimunitized animal's cognate sets

1. *mpyanyana, sempanyanyana, khembyanyana*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	-	/mpya-/ [mpyaɲana]	/-nyana/ [mpyaɲana]
Setl.	/se-/ [sepeʃana]	/-mbya-/ [sembyaɲana]	/-nyana/ [sembyaɲana]
Khe.	/khe-/ [khembyaɲana]	/-mbya-/ [khembyaɲana]	/-nyana/ [khembyaɲana]

Morphological processes

- i. Sep.** mpya+nyana [dimunitize /mpya]
Setl. mpya+nyana [dimunitize/mpya/]
Khe. mbya+nyana [dimunitize /mbya/]
- ii. Sep.** mpyanyana
Setl. sempyanyana [assign class noun prefix CL7 /se-/]
Khe. khembyanyana [assign class noun prefix CL7 /khe-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sep.	-	-	[m]	[p]	[y]	[a]	[ɲ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[s]	[ɛ]	[m]	[b]	[y]	[a]	[ɲ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ɛ]	[m]	[b]	[y]	[a]	[ɲ]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological process

- i. Sep.** /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mpya_
Setl. /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mbya_
Khe. /-ø/ → /-nyana/ / mbya_
- ii. Setl.** /ø-/ → /se-/ / _mbyanyana
Khe. /ø-/ → /khe-/ / _mbyanyana

This cognate set has presented an unequal number of morphemes, as morphemes in Setlokwa and Khelobedu consist of three morphemes whilst the morphemes of Sepedi are only two. Khelobedu and Setlokwa have a prefix, stem and a dimunitized suffix, whereas Sepedi only has a stem and a suffix. Before the noun underwent dimunitization all three dialect had three morphemes, mainly because the noun *dog* in Northern Sotho belongs to the noun class

10, where their prefix is /N-/ and is mostly underspecified in all the nouns that fall under the noun class. Thus the noun class 7 prefix in Khelobedu and Setlokwa resulted from the dimunitization processes since both the dialects dimunitize by adding a prefix and a suffix. The stem in Sepedi is different from that of Khelobedu and Setlokwa which have the same word when referring to a *dog*.

As a result of the affixation that occurred in the dimunitization of the word *dog*, the three dialects thus have variation of the initial and preceding SCS which represents the prefix of the word. Sepedi has no SCS in 1&2 and Khelobedu and Setlokwa has SCS are minimal pairs they occur in the same environment. In SCS 4 we have [p] and [b] as allophones of the same sounds, they have the same manner of articulation.

2.pešana, pešana and khebešana

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS **1** **2** **3** **4**

Sep. - /peš-/ /-ana/

Setl. - /beš-/ /-ana/

Khe. /khe-/ /-beš-/ /-ana/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** pere+ana [dimunitize /pere/]
- Setl.** bere+ana [dimunitize /bere/]
- Khe.** bere+ana [dimunitize /bere/]
- ii. **Sep.** pereana [vowel juxtaposition /-e-/ and /-a-/]
- Setl.** bereana [vowel juxtaposition /-e-/ and /-a-/]
- Khe.** bereana [vowel juxtaposition /-e/ and /-a-/]

- iii. **Sep.** pešana [assimilation of sounds /-r-/ to /-š-/]
Setl. bešana [assimilation of sounds /-r-/ to /-š-/]
Khe. bešana [assimilation of sounds /-r-/ to /-š-/]
- iv. **Khe.** khebešana [assign class 7 prefix /khe-/]

Sound Correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	-	-	[p]	[e]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	-	-	[b]	[e]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[b]	[e]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø/ → /-ana/ / pere__
Setl. /-ø/ → /-ana/ / bere__
Khe. /-ø/ → /-ana/ / bere__
- ii. **Sep.** /-e-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-/ / per__na
Setl. /-e-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-/ / ber__na
Khe. /-e-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-/ / ber__na
- iii. **5Sep.** /-r-/ → /-š-/ / pe__ana
Setl. /-r-/ → /-š-/ / pe__ana
Khe. /-r-/ → /-š-/ / be__ana
- iv. **Khe.** /ø-/ → /-khe-/ / __bešana

This cognate introduces a very interesting approach of the formation of a dimunitized noun, which is evident from the MCS where we see that, in this cognate Setlokwa there is no prefix present. Thus there is an unequal number of morphemes presented by this cognate with Sepedi

and Setlokwa presenting only two morphemes a stem and the diminitized suffix whilst Khelobedu has all three a prefix, stem and a suffix. Sepedi and Setlokwa do not have sound equivalence to align with Setlokwa and Khelobedu. In the instace of words belonging to the noun class 9 with a zero prefix, the researcher has excluded the prefix /N-/ and has not represented in the surface representation (SR) and the underlying representation (UR) of the class prefix of cognates /pešana/ in the Sepedi dialect but rather considered as a silent sound. There are two phonological processes that are indicated the morphologi cal process of the dimunitive noun horse is that of vowelhel juxtaposition and assimilation. Like all the other dimunitized nouns, juxtapositioning of vowels is common when a dimunitized suffix is added to the stem. The assimilation of sounds however is a result of one sound [r] being modified into the other [š] so that it more sound the environment.

The SCS has presented an equivalence in sounds, except for the two intial sounds that represents the prefix, which is absent in both Setlokwa and Khelobedu with allophones [p] and [b] at SCS 3.

3.lepogwana, lebowana and khepowana

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	/le-/	/-pogw-/	/-ana/
Setl.	/le-/	/-bow-/	/-ana/
Khe.	/khe-/	/-bow-/	/-ana/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** lepogo+ana [dimunitize /lepogo/]
- Setl.** leboho+ana [dimunitize /leboho/]
- Khe.** leboho+ana [diminitize /leboho/]

- ii. **Sep.** lepogoana [glide formation /-o-/ +/a-/]
Setl. lebohoana [glide formation /-o-/ +/a-/]
Khe. lebohoana [glide formation /-o-/ +/a-/]
- iii. **Sep.** lepogwana
Setl. lebowana [deletion of /-h-/]
Khe. lebowana [deletion of /-h-/]
- iv. **Khe.** khebowana [substitute class 5 prefix /le-/ with class 7 prefix /khe-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sep.	[l]	[ε]	[b]	[o]	[g]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[l]	[ε]	[b]	[o]	-	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[b]	[o]	-	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-∅/ → /-ana/ /lepogo_
Setl. /-∅/ → /-ana/ /leboho_
Khe. /-∅/ → /-ana/ /leboho_
- ii. **Sep.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ /lepog__na
Setl. /-o-/ → /-w-/ /leboh__na
Khe. /-o-/ → /-w-/ /leboh__na
- iii. **Setl.** /-h-/ → /-∅-/ /lebo_wana
Khe. /-h-/ → /-∅-/ /lebo_wana
- iv. **Khe.** /le-/ → /khe-/ /__bowana

In this cognate the MCS are universal throughout the three dialects, with a prefix, stem and diminutization suffix. The stem however is orthographically different in all three dialects due to some differences in sounds. Before diminutization all three dialects had two morphemes which changes after the noun undergoes diminutization the cognate maintains three morphemes, with a substitution of the prefix from Khelobedu. Thus this cognate has three phonological processes, glide formation, deletion and substitution. Glide formation resulted for the addition of the diminutive suffix to the stem, deletion the sound [h] is eliminated due to an imposed condition, whereas substitution results from the processes of diminutization which includes adding both a prefix and a suffix in Khelobedu thus changing the noun from noun class prefix [le] 5 to noun class prefix [se] 7.

The SCS presents equivalence in sounds except for the initial sound where Khelobedu has [kh] instead of [l] mainly because the phoneme in Khelobedu belongs to a different noun class. SCS 5 two of the dialects has no sound [h] is deleted as it is considering as a sound that is heard in the deliberate speech in isolation and got lost in rapid speech, this mostly occur with the palatal [g] of Sepedi.

The morphological structure for diminutive nouns in animals is rather different from that of close cognates. Setlokwa has presented an inconsistency of the use of a prefix to indicate diminutization in Setlokwa, this may be due to a motive seemed to have influenced the low-class dialects of Northern Sotho. Similarly, because the noun class prefix 7 [se-] is used for non-living things and diminutization means belittle of things thus a human is de-humanized by an addition of the noun class prefix [se-] which is for non-living things or less humanly. This inconsistency is seen in the cognate set **pešana** *small horse* and **lebowana** *small tiger* where both sets do not have the diminutizing prefix /se-/ but rather uses the suffix /-ana/ like the standard form, this is mainly because these are animals and not humans.

d) Body parts

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Glossary
1. letsogwana	letsowana	khedzowana	'small arm'
2. mpana	mbaana	khembaana	'small tummy'
3. leotwana	lekotwana	kheodwana	'small leg'

Table 7: Dimunitized body parts cognate set

1. *letsogwana, letsowana, khedzowana*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	/le-/	/-tsogw-/	/-ana/
Setl.	/le-/	/-tsow-/	/-ana/
Khe.	/khe-/	/-dzow-/	/-ana/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** letsogo+ ana [Dimunitize /letsogo/]
- Setl.** letsoho+ana [dimunitize /letsoho/]
- Khe.** lidzoho+ana [dimunitize /lidzoho/]
- ii. **Sep.** letsogoana [juxtaposition or glide formation /-o-/ +/-a-/ =/-w-/]
- Setl.** letsohoana [juxtaposition or glide formation /-o-/+/-a-/ =/-w-/]
- Khe.** lidzohoana [juxtaposition or glide formation /-o-/+/-a-/ =/-w-/]
- iii. **Sep.** letsogwana
- Setl.** letsowana [deletion of /-h-/]
- Khe.** lidzowana [deletion of /-h-/]
- iv. **Khe.** khedzowana [substitute noun class prefix 5 with CL 7 prefix]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sep.	[l]	[ε]	[ts]	[o]	[g]	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[l]	[ε]	[ts]	[o]	-	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[dz]	[o]	-	[w]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. Sep. $/-\emptyset/ \rightarrow /-ana/$ /letsogo_
 Setl. $/-\emptyset/ \rightarrow /-ana/$ /letsoho_
 Khe. $/-\emptyset/ \rightarrow /-ana/$ /Lidzoho_
- ii. Sep. $/-o-/ \rightarrow /-w-/$ /letsog_ana
 Setl. $/-o-/ \rightarrow /-w-/$ /letsoh_ana
 Khe. $/-o-/ \rightarrow /-w-/$ /lidzoh_ana
- iii. Setl. $/-h-/ \rightarrow /-\emptyset-/$ /letso_wana
 Khe. $/-h-/ \rightarrow /-\emptyset-/$ /lidzo_wana
- iv. Khe. $/\emptyset-/ \rightarrow /khe-/$ _dzowana

This cognate presents equal number of MCS with a prefix, a stem and a diminutive suffix. Before diminutization all three dialects belong to the same noun class with the prefix /le-/ and Khelobedu due to the process of diminutization where a prefix and suffix is added results in the noun class of the initial noun changing into class 7 /se-/. The stems of all three dialects are different as some have undergone phonological processes.

One of the most common phonological process in this theme includes the formation of a glide which is due to the juxtaposition of vowels. The SCS are universal throughout the, with difference in SCS 1& 2 where we have a difference initial sound [kh] of Khelobedu as the noun belongs to a class that is different from Setlokwa and Sepedi. In SCS 3 voiced dental [dz] and

voiceless alveolar [ts] are allophones of the same sound, whereas the SCS 5 [g] is the only sound with [h] being underspecified or deleted.

2. *mpana, mpaana and khempana*

Morpheme correspondences set

MCS	1	2	3
Sep.	-	/mp-/	/-ana/
Setl.	-	/mb-/	/-aana/
Khe.	/khe-/	/mb-/	/-aana/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** mpa+ana [dimunitize /mpa/]
Setl. mpa+ana [dimunitize /mba/]
Khe mba+ana [dimunitize /mba/]
- ii. **Sep.** mpaana [vowel coalescence /a/ +/a/]
Setl. mbaana [vowel lengthening /a/ +/a/]
Khe. mbaana [vowel lengthening /a/+/a/]
- iii. **Sep.** mpana
Khe. khembaana [assign noun class prefix 7]

Sound correspondences

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	-	-	[m]	[p]	[a]	-	[n]	[a]
Setl.	-	-	[m]	[b]	[a]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Khe. [kh] [ε] [m] [p] [a] [a] [n] [a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-∅/ → /-ana/ mpa__
Setl. /-∅/ → /-ana/ / mpa__
Khe. /-∅/ → /-ana/ / mba__
- ii. **Sep.** /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-/ mp__na
Setl. /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-aa-/ mb__na
Khe. /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-aa-/ mb__na
- iii. **Khe.** /∅-/ → /khe-/ / __mbaana

All three dialects have presented an equal number of morphemes with only one prefix morpheme overlapping in khembaana. This is due to the fact that the other two dialects have zero prefix and their cognates are mpana and mbaana small tummy/stomach. The data presented in this category has evidently indicated that all three dialects use the same rule of dimunitizing lexical items.

In this cognate set the most common morphological process is the coalescence or the juxtapositioning of the same vowels, when this happens a language/dialect can either assimilate it into one vowel with other keeping the vowel as juxtaposed, this is known as vowel lengthening. The lengthening of vowels is seen in this cognate when the diminutive suffix is added to the stem, occurring in both Khelobedu and Setlokwa, where we have mbaana and khembaana. In the data collected some participants wrote the orthography of the word as mbana for instance with most of them using mbaana. The participants with mbana might have had influence from the standard form which they mostly taught at schools and used as a formal language. The sounds in the SCS are universal throughout the dialects, except for the initial sounds in SCS 1&2 of Khelobedu which is due to its dimunitization which adds both a prefix and a suffix. The SCS 6 is absent in Sepedi since it assimilates its vowel to only one.

3. *leotwana, lekotwana, kheodwana*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS **1** **2** **3** **4**

Sep. /le-/ /-otw-/ /-ana/

Setl. /le-/ /-kotw-/ /-ana/

Khe. /khe-/ /-odw-/ /-ana/

Morphological process

i. Sep. leoto +ana [dimunitize /leoto/]

Setl. lekoto +ana [dimunitize /lekoto/]

Khe. leodu+ana [dimunitize /leodu/]

ii. Sep. leotoana [glide formation]

Setl. leokotoana [glide formation]

Khe. leoduana [glide formation]

iii. Sep. leotwana

Setl. lekotwana

iv. Khe. leodwana

v. Khe kheodwana [substitute class 5 prefix /le-/ with class 7 /khe-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9**

Sep. [l] [ε] - [o] [tʷ] [a] [n] [a]

Setl. [l] [ε] [k] [o] [tʷ] [a] [n] [a]

Khe. [k^h] [ε] - [o] [d^w] [a] [n] [a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /ø-/ → /-ana/ /leoto__
- Setl.** /ø-/ → /-ana/ /lekoto__
- Khe.** /ø-/ → /-ana/ /leodu__
- ii. **Sep.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ /leot_ana
- Setl.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ /lekot_ana
- Khe.** /-o-/ → /-w-/ /leod_ana
- iii. **Khe.** /le-/ → /khe-/ /__odwana

MCS of this cognate presents three morphemes, prefix, stem and a diminutive suffix. The stem of all three dialects are different as they are all spoken in three different environments but have sounds linguistically occurring in the same environments such as [d^w] and [t^w]. There is only one morphological process that results in sound change which is the glide formation as a result of two juxtaposed vowels forming a glide [-w-].

The SCS satisfy the genetic equivalence criteria with only one sound [k] that does not occur universal in all the three dialects, whereas sound [d^w] and [t^w] in SCS 5 are allophones of the same sounds.

The structure of a diminutive noun under the body parts has presented a more similar structure with the previous diminutive noun. Moreover, it is only in this category where Setlokwa does not use a prefix to diminutize or emphasize on the size of the body part. Some of these changes are affected by the adjacent segments, while others may be affected by the environments in which the segments occur. As a result of the diminutization suffix attached to the stem of the word, this results in the sound change of the sound to which the suffix is attached to.

Suffixation of */-ana/* has thus resulted in the change of most of the stems in these cognate set.

This leads to the phonological makeup of each cognate. The phonological structure of the dimunitized words appear to be regular throughout all the cognates under the body parts theme.

e) Geographical terms

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Glossary
1. sehlašana <i>/se-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/</i> [sɛɫɔʃana]	sehlašana <i>/se-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/</i> [sɛɫɔʃana]	Khehlašana <i>/khe-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/</i> [kʰɛɫɔʃana]	‘small tree’
2. tselana <i>/tsel-/ /-ana/</i> [tselana]	Tselana <i>/tse-/ /-aana/</i> [tselana]	khedzelana <i>/khe-/ /-dzel-/ /-ana/</i> [kʰɛdʒelana]	‘small road’
3. nokana <i>/nok-/ /-ana/</i> [nɔkana]	Nokana <i>/nok-/ /-ana/</i> [nɔkana]	khenughana <i>/khe-/ /-nugh-/ /-ana/</i> [kʰɛnugʰana]	‘small river’

Table 8: Dimunitized geographical terms cognate set

1. sehlašana, sehlašana and khehlašana

Morpheme correspondence

MCS **1** **2** **3**

Sep. */se-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/*

Setl. */se-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/*

Khe. */khe-/ /hlaš-/ /-ana/*

Morphological process

i. **Sep. & Setl.** sehlašana [dimunitize /sehlašana/]

Khe. khehlašana [dimunitize /khehlašana/]

- ii. **Sep. & Setl.** sehlareana [vowel juxtaposition/deletion of /-e-/]
Khe. khereana [vowel juxtaposition/ deletion of /-e-/]
- iii. **Sep. & Setl.** sehlašana [assimilation of /-r-/ to /-š-/]
Khe. khehlašana [assimilation of /r/ to /š/]

Sound Correspondence Set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	[s]	[ε]	[ɦ]	[a]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[s]	[ε]	[ɦ]	[a]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[ɦ]	[a]	[ʃ]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep. & Setl.** /ø-/ → /-ana/ / sehlare__
Khe. /ø-/ → /-ana/ sehlare__
- ii. **Sep. & Setl.** /-e-/ → /-ø-/ / sehlar__na
Khe. /-e-/ → /-ø-/ / sehlar__na
- iii. **Sep. & Setl.** /-r-/ → /-š-/ / sehla__ana
Khe. /-r-/ → /-š-/ / sehla__ana

The MCS in this cognate satisfies the genetic equivalence criteria as the relatedness of morphemes are show more equivalence in any other category. This cognate in particular did not undergo any substitution of prefix from the dialects, Setlokwa and Khelobedu which dimunitize by both prefix and suffix because it belongs to the same noun class. The cognate has three morphemes, prefix, stem and a dimunitive suffix. All three dialects belong to the same noun class before and after dimunitization with the class 7 prefix /se-/ and/ /khe-/.

The cognate undergoes only two morphological processes which is evident in all three dialects, vowel juxtaposition and assimilation. Unlike the previous juxtapostioning this one does not

result in a formation of a new sound but rather the deletion of a vowel and assimilation is a result of the voiced alveolar [r] being modified into a voiceless palatal [š].

2. *tselana, tselana and khedzelana*

Morpheme correspondence

MCS **1** **2** **3**

Sep. - /tsel-/ /-ana/

Setl. - /tsel-/ /-aana/

Khe. /khe-/ /-dzel-// -ana/

Morphological process

i. **Sep.** tselana [dimunitize /tselana/]

Setl. tselana [dimunitize /tselana/]

Khe. dzela +ana [dimunitize /dzela/]

ii. **Sep.** tselana [vowel coalescence /-a-/ +/-a-/]

Setl. tselana [vowel coalescence/ -a-/ + /-a-/]

Khe. dzelana [vowel coalescence /-a-/ +/-a-/]

iii. **Sep.** tselana

Khe. Khedzelana [assign class prefix 7 /khe-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9**

Sep. - - [ts] [e] [l] - [a] [n] [a]

Setl. - - [ts] [e] [l] [a] [a] [n] [a]

Khe. [k^h] [ɛ] [dʒ] [e] [l] [a] [a] [n] [a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep. & Setl.** /-ø/ → /-ana/ /tsela__
Khe. /-ø/ → /-ana/ /dzela__
- ii. **Sep. & Setl.** /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-//tsel__na
- iii. **Khe.** /-a-/ + /-a-/ → /-a-//dzel__na
- iv. **Khe.** /ø-/ → /khe-//__dzelana

MCS in this cognate have are a genetic an irregularity with two of the dialects representing only two morphemes the stem and the dimunitive suffix, whereas Khelobedu has all three morphemes, prefix, stem and a dimunitive suffix. Before dimunitization all the dialect belonged to the noun class 9. Dimunitization process has an effect the prefix of Khelobedu changing from class 9 to class 7.

SCS also presents an irregularity of frequency in sounds with a majority of the sounds which are universal throughout all the other dialects. SCS 1 & 2 has only two sound correspondences of Khelobedu and SCS 3 is allophones [ts] and [dz]. Sepedi also assimilates lengthened vowels hence only Khelobedu and Setlokwa have a present SCS in 6.

3. *nokana, nokana, khenoghana.*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3	4	5
Sep.	-	/nok-/	/-ana/		
Setl.	-	/nok-/	/-ana/		
Khe.	/khe-/	/nugh-//	/-ana/		

Morphological process

nokana, nokana and khenughana

- | | | |
|------|-------------------------|--|
| i. | Sep. & Setl. | noka +ana [dimunitize /noka/] |
| | Khe. | nugha+ana [dimunitize /noga] |
| ii. | Sep. & Setl. | nokaana [vowel juxtaposition] |
| | Khe. | nughaana [vowel juxtaposition] |
| iii. | Sep. & Setl. | nokana |
| | Khe. | khenugaana [assign class 7 prefix /khe-/] |

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	-	-	[n]	[ɔ]	[k]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	-	-	[n]	[ɔ]	[k]	[a]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ɛ]	[n]	[u]	[k]	[a]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- | | | |
|------|-------------------------|---|
| i. | Sep. & Setl. | $/-\emptyset/ \longrightarrow /-ana/ \text{ / } \text{ /noka_}$ |
| | Khe. | $/-\emptyset/ \longrightarrow /-ana/ \text{ / } \text{ /nugha_}$ |
| ii. | Sep. & Setl. | $/-a-/ + /-a-/ \longrightarrow /-a-/ \text{ / } \text{ /nok_na}$ |
| | Khe. | $/-a-/ + /-a-/ \longrightarrow /-a-/ \text{ / } \text{ /nugh_na}$ |
| iii. | Khe. | $/\emptyset-/ \longrightarrow /khe-/ \text{ / } \text{ /_nughana}$ |

Dialectal exclusions of Northern Sotho resulted has only resulted in a one-sided Standard Language but further resulted in speakers of the excluded dialects further disowning their own dialect and thus shifting into the orthography of the standard form.

In structured morphemes, when a morpheme combines with other morpheme especially for derivational purposes one or more of the combining morphemes will undergo phonological changes, hence we have the assimilation of the voiced alveolar /-r-/ to the voiceless palatal /-š-/ evident in cognate 1 in sehlašana (Sepedi and Setlokwa) and khehlašana has been as a result of an addition of the diminutive suffix /-ana/ which then led to the juxtaposition of vowel sounds between the last vowel of the stem and the diminutive suffix. In some instances, the vowel juxtaposition of coalescence has resulted in the deletion of a particular sound. In cognate set 2 *tsela* of Sepedi when /-ana/ is added two sound [a] and [a] are in juxtaposition resulting in the deletion of one [a] sound. However, this is different in other dialects like Khelobedu and Setlokwa, do not delete a sound when they encounter a juxtaposition of vowel sounds, especially with the sound [a], these dialects prefer a lengthening of vowels as a phonological rule to their structure of words. The lengthening of sounds does not however affect the genetic equivalence of the cognate sets.

4.4.2 Deverbalization

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Glossary
1. molemi	molemi	mulemi	<i>Farmer</i>
2. motsamaiši	motsamaisi	mudzamaisi	<i>traveller</i>
3. seopedi	seobedi	kheobedi	<i>Singer</i>
4. morekiši	morekisi	mureghisi	<i>Seller</i>
5. moagi	moahi	moayi	<i>Builder</i>

Table 9: Dervebalized morpheme cognate sets

1. *molemi, molemi and mulemi*

Morpheme correspondence

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /mo-/ /-lem-/ /-i/

Setl. /mo-/ /-lem-/ /-i/

Khe. /mu-/ /-lem-/ /-i/

Morphological process

lema [verb] > *molemi/mulemi* [noun]

- i. **Sep. & Setl.** lemi [normalization verb stem /*lema*/]
Khe. lemi [normalization verb stem /*lema*/]
- ii. **Sep. & Setl.** molemi [assign class 1 prefix /mo-/]
Khe. mulemi [assign class 1 prefix /mu-/]

Sound correspondence

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sep.	[m]	[ɔ]	[l]	[e]	[m]	[i]
Setl.	[m]	[ɔ]	[l]	[e]	[m]	[i]
Khe.	[m]	[u]	[l]	[e]	[m]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep. & Setl.** /-a/ → /-i/ | lem_
Khe. /-a/ → /-i/ | lem_
- ii. **Sep. & Setl.** /∅-/ → /mo-/ | _lemi
Khe. /∅-/ → /mu-/ | _lemi

2. motsamaiši, motsamaisi, mudzamaisi

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /mo-/ /-tsamaiš-/ /-i/

Setl. /mo-/ /-tsamais-/ /-i/

Khe. /mu-/ /-dzamais-/ /-i/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** tsamaya [given verb]
- Setl.** tsamaya [given verb]
- Khe.** dzamaya [given verb]
- ii. **Sep.** tsamayi [nominalize verb stem]
- Setl.** tsamayi [nominalize verb stem]
- Khe.** dzamayi [nominalize verb stem]
- iii. **Sep.** motsamayi [assign CL1 prefix /mo-/]
- Setl.** motsamayi [assign CL1 prefix /mo-/]
- Khe.** mudzamayi [assign CL1 prefix /mu-/]
- iv. **Sep.** motsamayiši [add applicative /-iš/]
- Setl.** motsamayisi [add applicative /-is/]
- Khe.** mudzamayisi [add applicative /-is/]

Sound Correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sep.	[m]	[ɔ]	[ts]	[a]	[m]	[a]	[y]	[i]	[ʃ]	[i]
SetL.	[m]	[ɔ]	[ts]	[a]	[m]	[a]	[y]	[i]	[s]	[i]
Khe.	[m]	[u]	[dz]	[a]	[m]	[a]	[y]	[i]	[s]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i.** **Sep.** /-a/ → /-i/ / tsamay_
 Setl. /-a/ → /-i/ / tsamay_
 Khe. /-a/ → /-i/ / tsamay_
ii. **Sep.** /∅-/ → /mo-/ / _tsamayi
 Setl. /∅-/ → /mo-/ / _tsamayi
 Khe. /∅-/ → / mu-/ / _dzamayi
iii. **Sep.** /-∅/ → /-iš/ / motsamayi_
 Setl. /-∅/ → /-iš/ / motsamayi_
 Khe. /-∅/ → /-is/ / mudzamayi_

3. *seopedi, seobedi and kheobedi*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /se-/ /-oped-/ /-i/

Setl. /se-/ /-obed-/ /-i/

Khe. /khe-/ /-obed-/ /-i/

Morphological process

opela/obela [verb] > *seopedi/seobedi* [noun]

- i.** **Sep.** opeli [norminalize verb stem]
 Setl. obeli [norminalize verb stem]
 Khe. obeli [nominalize verb stem]
ii. **Sep.** opedi [assimilation of /-l-/ to /-d-/
 Setl. & Khe. obeli [assimilation of /-l-/ to /-d-/]

- iii. **Sep.** seopedi [assign class 7 /se-/]
Setl. seobedi [assign class 7 prefix /se-/]
Khe. kheobedi [assign class 7 prefix /khe/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sep.	[s]	[ε]	[o]	[p]	[e]	[d]	[i]
Setl.	[s]	[ε]	[o]	[b]	[e]	[d]	[i]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[ε]	[o]	[b]	[e]	[d]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-a/ → /-i/ / opel_
Setl. /-a/ → /-i/ / obel_
Khe. /-a/ → /-i/ / obel_
ii. **Sep.** /-l-/ → /-d-/ / ope_i
Setl. &Khe. /-l-/ → /-d-/ / obe_i
iii. **Sep.** /ø-/ → /se-/ / _opedi
Setl. /ø-/ → /se-/ / _obedi
Khe. /ø-/ → /khe-/ / _obedi

4. *morekiši, morekisi, mureghis*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2	3	4
Sep.	/mo-/	/-rekiš-/	/-i/	
Setl.	/mo-/	/-rekis-/	/-i/	

Khe. /mu-/ /-reghis-/ /-i/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** reka [given verb]
Setl. reka [given verb]
Khe. regha [given verb]
- ii. **Sep.** rekiša [add causative morpheme /-iš-/]
Setl. rekisa [add causative morpheme /-is-/]
Khe. reghisi [add causative morpheme /-is-/]
- iii. **Sep.** rekiši [nominalize verb stem]
Setl. rekisi [nominalize verb stem]
Khe. reghisi [nominalize verb stem]
- iv. **Sep.** morekiši [assign class 1 prefix /mo-/]
Setl. morekisi [assign class 1 prefix /mo-/]
Khe. mureghisi [assign class 1 prefix /mu-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	[m]	[ɔ]	[r]	[e]	[k]	[i]	[ʃ]	[i]
Setl.	[m]	[ɔ]	[r]	[e]	[k]	[i]	[s]	[i]
Khe.	[m]	[u]	[r]	[e]	[g ^h]	[i]	[s]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø-/ → /-iš-/ / rek__a
Setl. /-ø-/ → /-is-/ / rek_a
Khe. /-ø-/ → /-is-/ / regh_a

- ii. **Sep.** /-a-/ → /-i-/ rekiš_
- Setl.** /-a-/ → /-i-/ rekis_
- Khe.** /-a-/ → /-i-/ reghi_
- iii. **Sep.** /ø-/ → /mo-/_rekiši
- Setl.** /ø-/ → /mo-/_rekisi
- Khe.** /ø-/ → /mu-/_reghisi

5. *moagi, moahi* and *muayi*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /mo-/ /-ag-/ /-i/

Setl. /mo-/ /-ah-/ /-i/

Khe. /mu-/ /-ay-/ /-i/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** aga [given verb]
- Setl.** aha [given verb]
- Khe.** aya [given verb]
- ii. **Sep.** agi [nominalize the verb stem]
- Setl.** ahi [nominalize the verb stem]
- Khe.** ayi [nominalize the verb stem]
- iii. **Sep.** moagi [assign class 1 prefix /mo-/]
- Setl.** moahi [add class 1 prefix /mo-/]
- Khe.** muayi [add class 1 prefix /mu-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5
Sep.	[m]	[o]	[a]	[ɾ]	[i]
Setl.	[m]	[o]	[a]	[h]	[i]
Khe.	[m]	[u]	[a]	[y]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-a/ → /-i/ / ag_
- Setl.** /-a/ → /-i/ / ah_
- Khe.** /-a/ → /-i/ / ay_
- ii. **Sep.** /ø-/ → /mo-/ / _agi
- Setl.** /ø-/ → /mo-/ / _ahi
- Khe.** /ø-/ → /mu-/ / _ayi

4.4.3 Analysis of the sequence of Deverbalization

Like the diminutive nouns the same Sesotho verbs that were used previously will head the process of derivation in this section. The researcher did not deverbalize the verbs but rather collects them as nominal verbs and deverbalized nouns from the participants. Most of these the deverbalized cognates are invented from the ordinary nouns and other terms which were also collected as data.

In the all deverbalized nouns from all the three dialects consisted of; a derivational prefix which comes before a noun root to form the noun and the noun ends with a nominal suffix /-i/. For instance, in cognate set 1: *molemi*, *molemi* and *mulemi* in this case the prefix /mo-/ and /mo-/ are nominal derivational morphemes and it comes before the root /-lem-/, followed by the closing vowel /-i/. In the data collected all cognates have followed the same morphological structure. The most common morphological process is assimilation, unlike the

dimunitization the assimilation in deverbalization is rarely as a result of the juxtapositioning of vowels but rather changes are affected by the adjacent segments, while others are as a result affected by the environments in which the segments occur. This is mostly known as the ‘sound change assimilation’. Consider cognate set 3: *seopedi*, *seobedi* and *kheobedi* the initial verb is *opela*, after the nominalization of the verb, the sound [l] assimilates to [d]. Before the verb underwent a phonological change the cognates were *seopeli*, *seobeli* and *kheobeli*. In other Sotho languages like Sotho of Lesotho the word is orthographically correct and sounds [l] and [d] are allophones of the same sounds hence the voiceless alveolar [l] is pronounced as the voiced dental [d]. However, the South African Sesotho dialects like the Northern Sotho dialects the word has undergone the full phonological change where [l] assimilates [d] mainly because the sounds have the same manner of articulation and are used differently in different environments. Sound changes occurring in the same environments are also seen in [b] and [p] of cognate set 2 and [k] and [g^h] of cognate set 3 as allophones of the same sounds.

4.4.3 Analysing sequence of a reflexivized verb

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Gloss
1. Ipona /i-/ /-pon-/ /-a/ [ipona]	Kebona /ke-/ /-bon-/ /-a/ [kebona]	ibhona /i-/ /-bhon-/ /-a/ [ib ^h ona]	To see oneself
2. ikwešiša /i-/ /-kwešiš-/ /-a/ [ik ^{wɛ} ʃiʃa]	Ithwesa /i-/ /-thwesi-/ /-a/ [it ^h wesisa]	idwesa /i-/ /-dwesi-/ /-a/ [id ^w esisa]	Understand one-self
3. ihlokomela /i-/ /-hlokomel-/ /-a/ [iɬokomela]	Ithlokomela /i-/ /-thlokomel-/ /-a/ [it ^h lokomela]	ihlokomela /i-/ /-hlokomel-/ /-a/ [iɬokomela]	Take care of one-self

Table 10: Reflexivized verb morpheme cognates

1. *ipona, kebona and ibhona*

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /i-/ /-pon-/ /-a/

Setl. /ke-/ /-bon-/ /-a/

Khe. /i-/ /-bhon-/ /-a/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** bona [given verb]
- Setl.** bona [given verb]
- Khe.** bona [given verb]
- ii. **Sep.** ibona [add reflexive vowel /i-/]
- Setl.** kebona [add subj-1st person-sing]
- Khe.** ibona [add reflexive vowel /i-/]
- iii. **Sep.** ipona [devoicing of /-b-/ to /-p-/]

Sound Correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5
Sep.	[i]	[p]	[o]	[n]	[a]
Setl.	[kɛ]	[b]	[o]	[n]	[a]
Khe.	[i]	[b]	[o]	[n]	[a]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** / \emptyset -/ \longrightarrow /i-/ /_bona
- Setl.** / \emptyset -/ \longrightarrow /ke-/ /_bona
- Khe.** / \emptyset -/ \longrightarrow /i-/ /_bona
- ii. **Sep.** /b-/ \longrightarrow /p-/ /_ona

2. *ihlokomela, kethlokomela and ihlokomela*

Morpheme correspondence

MSC	1	2	3
Sep.	/i-/	/-hlokomel-/	/-a/
Setl.	/ke-/	/-thlokomel-/	/-a/
Khe.	/i-/	/-hlokomel-/	/-a/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep & Khe.** hlokomela [given verb]
Setl. thlokomela [given verb]
- ii. **Sep & Khe.** ihlokomela [aad reflexive prefix /-i/ to verb]
Setl. **kethlokomela** [add subj-1stperson-singular]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Sep.	[i]	[ɪ]	[o]	[k]	[o]	[m]	[e]	[l]	[a]
Setl.	[kɛ]	[tʰ]	[o]	[k]	[o]	[m]	[e]	[l]	[a]
Khe.	[i]	[ɪ]	[o]	[k]	[o]	[m]	[e]	[l]	[a]

Phonological rules

3. *ikwešiša, ithwesisa, idwesisa*

Morpheme correspondence

MCS	1	2	3
-----	---	---	---

Sep. /i-/ /-kwešiša-/ /-a/

Setl. /i-/ /-thwesis-/ /-a/

Khe. /i-/ /-dwesis-/ /-a/

Morphological process

i. **Sep.** kwešiša [basic verb]

Setl. thwesisa [basic verb]

Khe. dwesisa [basic verb]

ii. **Sep.** ikwešiša [add reflexivized prefix /i-/]

Setl. ithwesisa [add reflexivzed prefix /i-/]

Khe. idwesisa [add reflexivized prefix /i-/]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sep.	[i]	[k]	[w]	[e]	[ʃ]	[i]	[ʃ]	[a]
Setl.	[i]	[tʰ]	[w]	[e]	[s]	[i]	[s]	[a]
Khe.	[i]	[d̥]	[w]	[e]	[s]	[i]	[s]	[a]

Phonological rules

i. **Sep.** /∅-/ → /i-/ /_kwešiša

Setl. /∅-/ → /i-/ /_thwesisa

Khe. /∅-/ → /i-/ /_dwesisa

4.4.4. Analyzing of the sequence of Reflexivization

Unlike the previous word formation process which derives new words, reflexivization only inflects a sound to the existing word. In this case standard Northern Sotho inflects the prefix

/i-/ when forming a reflexive verb. However, in the two excluded dialects have presented an inconsistency in the morphological structure of a reflexive verb.

Unlike N.S which adds the prefix /-i/ to form a reflexive verb which in most cases results in the sound change of the initial sound. In some cases, the addition of the reflexive verb does not result in the change of the initial sound like in cognate set 2 of Sepedi, *kwešiša* changes to *ikwešiša*, notice that the initial sound [k] is still retained from the verb root. Khelobedu and Setlokwa however, use a different approach in forming a reflexive verb. For instance, cognate set 1; *ipona, kebona and ibhona*, for Khelobedu a reflexive suffix is added but does not result in the change in the initial sound [b] but the sound is strengthened by adding an aspirated sound [h]. Setlokwa on the other hand simplifies the system of forming a reflexive verb, this is exemplified in *kebona* of cognate set 1. A copulative /ke-/ was introduced as an identifying copulative for a reflexive verb, it contains a subject of the first person singular (translated as *I am*). This copulative is (high tone) phonologically presented as [kε] indicated in the SCS.

Both Setlokwa and Khelobedu have simplified the system so that all their reflexive verbs do not undergo strengthening like in Sepedi where *bona* becomes *ipona* [b] > [p]. three dialects have satisfied the genetic equivalence criteria in cognate 1: SCS 2 [b] > [p] are allophones of the same sound, same applies for cognate 2 SCS 2 [hl] and [tlh] also appear as allophones. However cognate 3, SCS 2 has sounds as [th] and [dh] allophones and the remaining one [k] which does not satisfy the genetic equivalence criteria in these three languages.

4.4.5. Analysing sequence of a Locative

Sepedi	Setlokwa	Khelobedu	Glossary
1. sekolong	sekoloni	khegholoni	<i>At school</i>

2. thabeng	thabeni	thabeni	<i>At the mountain</i>
3. kgorong	kgoroni	khoroni	<i>At the gate</i>

Table 11: Locative morpheme correspondence sets

1. *sekolong, Sekoloni and khegholoni*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS 1 2 3

Sep. /se-/ /-kolo-/ /-ng/

Setl. /se-/ /-kolo-/ /-ni/

Khe. /khe-/ /-gholo-/ /-ni/

Morphological process

i. Sep. sekolo [given noun]

Setl. sekolo [given noun]

Khe. khegholo [given noun]

ii. Sep. sekolong [add locative suffix]

Setl. sekoloni [add locative suffix]

Khe. khegholoni [add locative suffix]

Sound correspondence set

SCS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Sep. [s] [ɛ] [k] [o] [l] [o] [ŋ] -

Setl. [s] [ɛ] [k] [o] [l] [o] [n] [i]

Khe. [k^h] [ɛ] [g^h] [o] [l] [o] [n] [i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** / -∅/ → / -ng/ sekolo_
 Setl. / -∅/ → / -ni/ sekolo_
 Khe. / -∅/ → / -ni/ khegholo_

1. *thabeng, thabeni and thabeni*

Morpheme correspondence set

MCS	1	2
Sep.	/thabe-/	/-ng/
Setl.	/thabe-/	/-ni/
Khe.	/thabe-/	/-ni/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** thaba [given noun]
 Setl. thaba [given noun]
 Khe. thaba [given noun]
- ii. **Sep.** thabe [nominalize stem]
 Setl. thabe [nominalize stem]
 Khe. thabe [nominalize stem]
- iii. **Sep.** thabeng [add locative suffix]
 Setl. thabeni [add locative suffix]
 Khe. thabeni [add locative suffix]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6
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Sep. [t^h] [a] [b] [e] [ŋ] -

Setl. [t^h] [a] [b] [e] [n] [i]

Khe. [t^h] [a] [b] [e] [n] [i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-a-/ → /-e-/ / thab_
- Setl.** /-a-/ → /-e-/ / thab_
- Khe.** /-a-/ → /-e-/ / thab_
- ii. **Sep.** /-∅/ → /-ng/ / thabe_
- Setl.** /-∅/ → /-ni/ / thabe_
- Khe.** /-∅/ → /-ni/ / thabe_

2. *kgorong, kgoroni, khoroni*

Morphological sound correspondence

MCS 1 2

Sep. /kgoro-/ /-ng/

Setl. /kgoro-/ /-ni/

Khe. /khor-/ /-ni/

Morphological process

- i. **Sep.** kgoro [given noun]
- Setl.** kgoro [given noun]
- Khe.** khor [given noun]
- ii. **Sep.** kgorong [add locative suffix]
- Setl.** kgoroni [add locative suffix]

Khe. khoroni [add locative suffix]

Sound correspondence set

SCS	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sep.	[x]	[o]	[r]	[o]	[ŋ]	-
Setl.	[x]	[o]	[r]	[o]	[n]	[i]
Khe.	[k ^h]	[o]	[r]	[o]	[n]	[i]

Phonological rules

- i. **Sep.** /-ø/ → /-ng/ / kgoro_
Setl. /-ø/ → /-ni/ / kgoro_
Khe. /-ø/ → /-ni/ / khoro_

In most instances the locatives in NS are presented by several locative particles which inform the reader or speaker about directions of actions/states of something such as those existing in noun class 16 [fa] for fase, 17 [go] for godimo and 18 [mo] for morago. However, the research focus on the suffix locative /-ng/ rather than the prefixes mentioned above. Sepedi has indicated the use of the suffix /-ng/ for the formation of a locative with both Khelobedu and Setlokwa adding the suffix /-ni/. When forming a locative some nouns like /thaba/ requires nominalization before a locative suffix can be attached to the stem. Thus the final sound of the stem [a] becomes [e].

In the data analysed the number of morphemes presented by the data of all three dialects have indicated an equal amount of morphemes, indication prefix, stem and the locative suffix. Difference in morphemes is indicated in the stem where they data presents difference in orthography but same manner of articulation with regards to sound. For instance, in cognate set 3 we have the cognate *khoroni* and *kgorong*, these cognates have the same sets of

morphemes presenting a difference in orthography and initial speech sound [kh] and [kg] these two sounds which are allophones of the same sounds, these sounds are seen as occurring in the same environment throughout the data presented and analysed. The consistency of the use of the use of a suffix to form a locative rather than having a prefix in one dialect and a suffix in the other proves the relation that these dialects have with each other. All the analysed locative presented genetically equivalent data from the sound and the morpheme correspondence sets which prove to have a balanced frequency in the manner in which they occur.

4.3. Analysis of findings

The overall analysed data using the comparative method was successful in revealing the similarities and differences existing between the three dialects. These similarities and differences were presented both morphologically and phonologically. The following figure is a summarizes all the percentage of POS cognate set, none cognate and none equivalent morphemes, found in each dialect as evidence of the existing genetic equivalence among the three dialects.

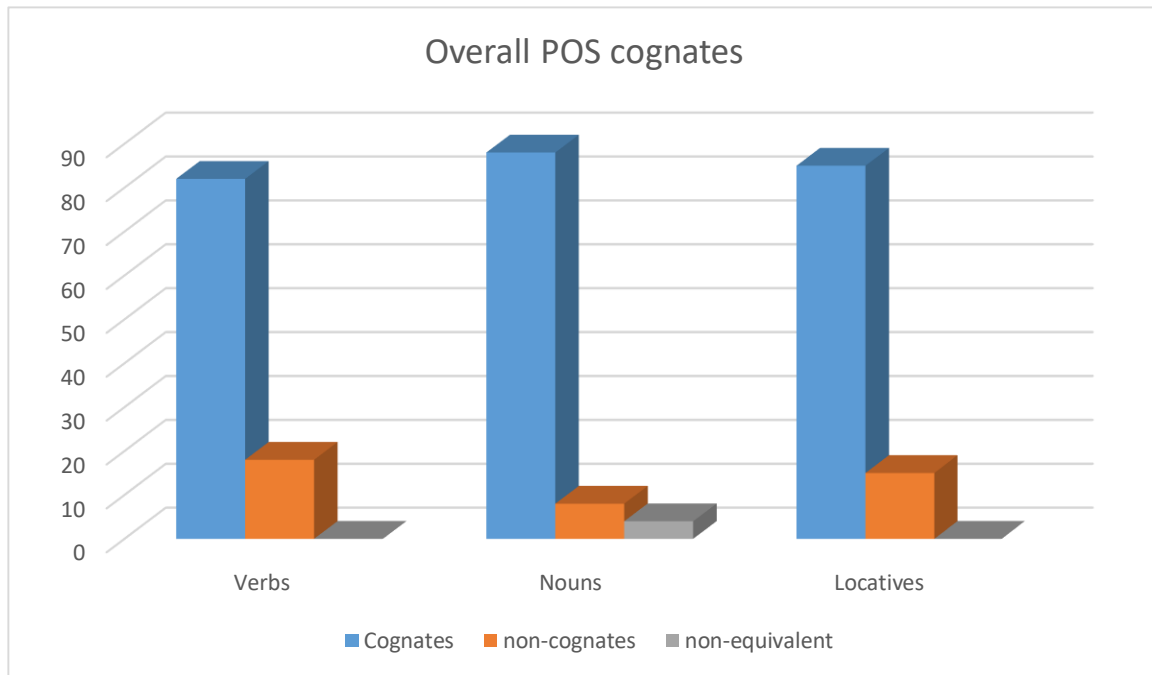


Figure 7: Overall POS cognates

As indicated earlier in chapter 3, the cognates are the words or morphemes which are related to each other. Thus the none cognate include words that do not have the qualities of genetic similarity and in most cases these words are borrowed word or influenced by other languages within the same area of the spoken dialect. Therefore, the non-equivalent morphemes are those words that exist in other dialects but are not known or exist in other. The Table below exemplifies such cognates

Sepedi	Khelobedu	Setlokwa	Gloss
1.	Khekome	-	Peanut butter
2.	Khebhebhe	-	Van

Table 12: None equivalent morphemes

These none cognates are presented by the noun section meaning the language development is mostly possible in the nouns as there is constantly a new object derived

From the Table above and the overall comparison of the three dialects the researcher was able to note a few things. Thus Appendix below illustrates the frequency of the word

equivalence provided by all the participants during the data collection (presented by a tally), thus the researcher calculated the frequency per dialect in accordance to the responses from the participants. Although these three dialect show components of genetic relatedness there is one dialect that has proven to be more related to the both of them. The data in Setlokwa has shown to be related to the both Sepedi and Khelobedu.

The morphological structure of words in inflected and derived words presented by the data had little difference and more similarity in them. Most of the cognates presented difference in orthography mainly due to sound changes however the semantics of all the cognates were universal throughout. Phonological similarities can be noted in sounds such as the Khelobedu uses the sound [dz] and both Setlokwa and Sepedi uses the sound [ts]. There are allophones, both these sounds are voiced palatalized sounds which combine two sets of sounds to create one single sound. The same sounds the orthography of these sounds may be influenced by the geographical distribution of these dialects.

There has been evidence of the creation of sounds through the morphological structure of Northern Sotho. However, because Sepedi is a recorded dialect with grammar books and many more is thus having rules of grammar which determine how morphemes and words can combine to express a specific meaning. The rules presented by this dialect are thus consistent all the time, whilst the rules presented by Khelobedu which has little to no records, and Setlokwa which has no records, appear to be inconsistent in their morphological and phonological structures. Similarly, the data has presented a lack of obedience in the perspective rules of grammar. The inconsistency can be seen in the diminutization of word where one dialect, Setlokwa in particular would add a prefix and a suffix and in some words stick to the standard form of adding a suffix /-ana/. Another example is seen in the formation of a reflexive verb where the reflexive prefix /i-/ is added and in other instance the copulative /ke-/ is added.

4.3. Common problems encountered in dialect comparison

A majority of the 120 cognates collected in each dialect have presented a regularity in inflectional and derivational morphemes. A few of the words presented in the questionnaire attached in Appendix below did not have equivalence in other dialects.

However, there has been a number of challenges that presented themselves during the selection of the data to be analysed. There were issues of orthography that was presented in the data in that the participants provided the researcher with a variety of orthographic representation of words for instance in Khelobedu, sounds like [khe] with which some of the participants as [khi], [b] as [v] etc. The researcher has realised because most participants have adapted to the standard form which is used for educational purposes and formal settings thus failed to express themselves using the dialect they speak as the easiest vocabulary that is accessible to them is that of the standard form, as a result some word equivalence were duplicate of mostly the standard form. However, this did not have a major impact on the genetic equivalence of the cognates as most of the participants were able to provide the researcher with true cognate data that was not influenced by any other language. formally in the correct manner.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter presented the presentation of the data analysed and the discussion was based on the comparative method used to compare the three Northern Sotho dialects for similarities and differences. The use of the comparative method was successful in generating the relatedness that exist between the dialects in the derived and inflected morphemes. The morphological process was able to reveal the distinction that exist within the morphemes which led to the phonological differences presented by the sound changes. The preceding Chapter will therefore 5 presents the summary, concluding remarks and recommendations of the research.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The fundamental focus of this chapter is to summarize the overall findings of the study and thereafter provide the recommendations will be supplied on how excluded dialects can be documented or standardized into the standard form to contribute to the existing vocabulary of the language. The study was conducted in order to determine the genetic relation that exist between the three dialects with the data collected by speaker of these dialect. The literature indicated that the speakers of the excluded dialects do not have much confidence in their dialectical variety.

The standardization of Sepedi, excluded many of its dialects from the process, thus, left Khelobedu and Setlokwa speakers outside of this medium and later subjected them to learn it in schools, putting them at a point of disadvantage academically.

5.2 Achieving the aims and objectives of the study

The aim and objective of this study were to prove the relatedness of three Northern Sotho dialects for the possible inclusion into the standard form. The literature of this study presented issues of standardization of one dialects to the exclusion of others and how this has implication on the development of the excluded dialects. This use gap that exist between the standard form and the dialects does not only impact on the development of the overall language but excludes speakers in many plat form of their lives that allow them to participate in issues and decisions that affect their lives directly. Thus the researcher was able to identify and shape their research problem be as:

The standardization of Sepedi has deliberately created a sense of discrimination between competing dialects, and thus created a sense of social instability within the speech community with the speakers developing a superiority and inferiority attitude. In this way, speakers of the

excluded language variety chose to accept the written form of standard Northern Sotho without even questioning the validity of the orthography as a result of an inferiority complex. This led to the development of the following aim and objectives. The aim being:

- a) To identify the relatedness of three dialects of Northern Sotho through their morphologically and phonologically difference and similarities.

Whilst these are the objectives:

- b) To explore the effect Sepedi as a standard language, has had on other language varieties and its speakers
- c) To investigate how these dialects could contribute to the enhancement of the standard variety, Northern Sotho

To answer the research question and the objective employed the comparative method to compare and check for the relatedness of dialect's inflected and derived morphemes, both morphologically and phonologically.

In the study the researcher sought cognates or word equivalence in all three dialects. The research areas included, Tzaneen, Polokwane and Louis Trichardt which all located in the Limpopo Province. In each of these areas at least 20 questionnaires were handed, collected and used for data analysis. Random and purposive sampling techniques were used by the researcher to derive the sample units from the total population as guided by the objectives of the study.

5.3. Summary and interpretation of research results.

Quantitative research method used in this study for collection and analysis of data enabled the researcher to gain insight into the comparison of the three Northern Sotho dialects. This was evidently possible through the careful consideration of the Comparative Method which was used to compare for phonological and morphological differences by carefully following the steps revised from both Fox (1995) and Campbell (2011) carried out to the dialects presumed

or demonstrated as related. The central focus was to identify recurrent sounds correspondences between the dialects under study. Thus, data proved to be very important in this regard, all data used in this section will consist of written sources provided to the researcher by participants. It allows for an easy postulation of common morphemes and phonemes that exist among the dialects, without any information being skewed.

The findings of the study have thus revealed that not only do the three dialects show relatedness but there are still possibilities of eventually including these dialects into the standardized form. It is just a matter of commitment from language practitioners who should not overlook the development of these dialects but come up with ways of engaging the community to document and develop the Northern Sotho vocabulary into a richer one. Lexicons can be harvested from the immediate family of a given language variety to bridge the gap of zero equivalence and other linguistic challenges. The data analysed prove that speakers have within them the ability to create terms because it is their form of communication daily. This implementation will further address the biggest challenge of the standard form of terminology development thus the need for these dialects to be added in the standard form. As it is observed that, there are some words in Khelobedu that do not exist in the standard form.

5.4 Recommendations:

Some of the advantages of including the excluded dialects into the standard form include the following:

- Reduction in the costs of translation into three varieties.
- Development of a wider readership in Northern Sotho literature and the media.
- Documentation (dictionaries, grammar book and etc) of excluded dialect to allow for the participation of their speakers in different platforms.

- Use of teaching materials across a wider community of learners.

Furthermore. Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) and other language boards should adopt the rules recommended in this study for the other three excluded dialect's orthography. These rules amongst others must include rules about parts of speech which is inline of the morphological processes presented by the inflected and the derived morphemes. These rules all accommodate different Northern Sotho variety speakers and will limit the inferiority complex existing among these dialects.

In conducting this research, the researcher was well aware of language as an instrument that can bring speakers together to form new speech communities or enhance the existing ones, or diverge speaking which may also result in language death. Thus the researchers believed a nation bulding catalyst language which will serve as a contribution to the vocabulary of Northen Sotho where the dialects speaker are given a voice to express concerns they have with the current language systems and how they would like the future of their dialects to be. Thus the researcher chose to undertake this research as there is still a lot of needs to be done on the development and the preservation of these dialects. Allowing speakers to participate in different platform and being able to express themselves in their different dialects, like the filling of form in banks, at school and etc. A classroom environment can be in a manner that allows for the multi-dialectal students of Northern Sotho speakers the for the possibility of codeswitching and mixing within a range of proximal syntactic structures and morpho-lexical properties across the varieties. Where they are also free in expressing theirselves through writing, reciting of poems and etc, without any feeling of inferiority.

5.5 Conclusion

The researcher stands firm and unshaken with believe that the exclusion of other Northern Sotho dialects into the standard form has violated the rights of the speech communities who are unable to become fully functional citizen in the new democracy as a result of language barriers. There is however still sufficient time to protection and promote these dialects which will further allow Northern Sotho to be instrumental in its growth and development.

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