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Research Article

Symbolic Meanings and Style of Traditional Praise Poetry in Sepedi Language with Reference to Ramohlale's Tottem

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Abstract

Traditional praise poetry in this context refers to poetry that was narrated by African people which is regarded as the pioneer of all kinds of poetry. It first began with oral poetry, evolved with time until it finally arrived at the written, well-structured and differentiated kind of contemporary poetry. But it should be clear that oral literature has somewhat different potentialities from written literature, and additional resources which the oral artist can develop for his own purposes; and that this aspect is of primary significance for its appreciation as a mode of aesthetic expression (Finnegan, 2012:7). The most interesting part is how this poetry was able to survive through generations to be able to be transmitted to next generations.

Though praise poetry did not enjoy the written status; through rote learning and memorization, poems were able to be transmitted to next generations with minor alterations. Finnegan (1978:1) says that "the context that often springs to mind when 'oral poetry' is mentioned is of some remote village far off the beaten track with the indigenous people non-literate and unindustrialized - engaged in performing some local song or piece of traditional verse. Thus, oral poetry is not only a poem that tells a story, it is also a poem that, regardless of its manner of composition, has been changed in the process.

Traditional praise poetry was prominently recited in royal functions, to usher praises to the king before he addresses his sub-ordinates and after the address. This poetry was prominently recited by initiates during the initiation ceremonies; each initiate will praise himself with the motive of challenging the audience to give him gifts. Hidden within praise poetry is cultural beliefs, cultural traits and reputations as well as the origin of the particular tribe. Careful analysis of the following poem will reveal the origin of the poet:

> Ke nna tlou ya Bolepṡe,
> Ke tṡwa Kgwara ke kgwahlile,
> Botse ke tṡwa Bokgalaka.
> Ke nna kaparaphiri baloi ba go tṡhabe,
> Botse o tṡhabjwe ke Mankuke, moloi wo mogolo.

> I am the elephant from 'Bolepṡe'
> I come from 'Kgwara' being strong,
> Originally I come from 'Bokgalaka'.
> I wear Hyna skin to scare witches,
> Rightfully to scare 'Mankuke' the big witch.

From the poem above, one could draw up a conclusion that the poet is originally from 'Bokgalaka'. 'Bokgalaka' is named after 'Bakalanka', which is one tribe in Zimbabwe. The poetic line implies that the poet's origin is Zimbabwe. The poetic line, 'ke nna Kaparaphiri baloi ba go tšhabe' reveals his character; something that is mostly related to cultural traits, something that tells us that if you want to know the origin of an individual, you get it from his praise poems. Sepedi language praise poetry has its own unique way to convey messages and preserve cultural heritages which will be transmitted from one generation to another. Sepedi language praise poetry displays yet another interesting characteristics that makes them different from western poetry. Its unstructured content, form and unplanned technique of traditional poetry is what prompted us to pursue this study.

Keywords: Cultural beliefs, Sepedi language praise poetry, traditional praise poetry and oral poetry

Introduction

Poetry had always been the important assert of literature; it is aesthetic form of literature, without it literature is dull and unattractive. Stedman (1970: 44) offers the following condensed definition: Poetry is rhythmical, imaginative language, expressing the invention, taste, thought, passion, and insight, of the human soul. Tizhoosh, Sahba and Dara (2008: 8) argue that poetry is a form of art used to express emotions and feelings.

We finally concluded that poetry is the art of language presentation; two persons can see and event, but how each can present the event to another person will never be the same. Each person is capable to narrate an event using tones, rhythm, interesting word order, figurative language and imagery. People may find one person's narrative not interesting or interesting depending on the form or structure and content of the narration. All works of art have form, a particular organization of parts that makes a whole. In poetry, form is referred to as poetic structure: the way words are arranged in lines, lines are arranged in stanzas, and units of sound are organized to achieve rhythm and rhyme. Furthermore, in poetry, content and form combine to create meaning. Poetic content refers to a poem's language. It makes use of numerous elements, including the poem's topic, subject matter, theme, tone, word choices, word order, figurative language, and imagery. Traditional poetry, through its oral nature, do not satisfy all the criteria of techniques or in poetry are tools that the poet use to convey a particular tone and message in their literary works. At its most basic, a poetic device is a deliberate use of words, phrases, sounds, and even shapes to convey meaning. That sounds so broad that it could basically encompass any form of written expression, but poetic devices are generally used to heighten the literal meaning of words by considering sound, form, and function (Brinks, 2019: 1).

This study was determined to analyse the content, form and techniques of traditional praise poetry in Sepedi language. It should be noted that this poetry was not written because of its incompatibility to modern structural requirements. Many authors tried to transform their structures in order to satisfy the poetic literary devices, nevertheless; the slight change of structure leads to the production of an absolutely new poem. Most original traditional praise poetry is not represented in modern books in the library shelves; it is still rich and retained in the minds and hearts of most elders.

Formalism Literary Theorybottom of Form

The study was mentored by formalism literary theory as adopted and embraced by Dobie (2002). Formalists are mostly interested in the form or structure of any literary text; the theory analyses the form of both oral and written literature. Dobie (2002:33) asserted that formalism, also known as "new

criticism" is a critical approach that examines a literary text or art work through its aesthetic composition such as form, language, techniques and style.

Formalism' sustained popularity among readers comes primarily from the fact that it provides them with a way to understand and enjoy a work for its own inherent value as a piece of literary art, emphasizing close reading of the work itself, formalism puts the focus on the text as literature. Literature, then, might be that form of writing that engages with the life in the most exciting, innovative, creative, and mind-altering ways. It is a way of seeing and being in the world that we find so attractive because it allows us to see the world in a new way (Blackwell, 2013: 7). Collaboration between Dobie's definition of formalism (form, language, techniques and style) and our study topic; is exactly what completely convinced us that formalism literary theory is most appropriate; and will lead us to reliable and precise research methodology and design.

Research Methodology and Research Design

The study was meant to identify the content, form and techniques of traditional praise poetry of warriors in Sepedi language. To best identify the above criteria, we found a qualitative research approach appropriate because it allowed us to interact with the participants and thereby explored all angles of the problem under study. Mishra and Alok (2017:3) say that qualitative research, is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., relating to quality or variety.

Within this approach we employed a retrospective theory testing case study design, which assisted us to gain in-depth cognition of the problem at hand. The retrospective theory testing case study is the simplest type of study; it involves the collection of data relating to a past phenomenon of any kind. The researcher is looking back on a phenomenon, situation, person, or event and studying it in its historical integrity (Starman, 2013:34). The employment of qualitative approach in conjunction with retrospective theory testing case study design and elements of formalism literary theory (form, language, techniques, and style) were envisaged useful concoction and indicator to safe and relevant data collection.

The Study Site and Sample

The study took place at "Segopje" village. "Segopje" is a semi-urban village, 15 kilometers next to Mankweng location. Mankweng location (Turfloop) is where the University of Limpopo is located. Out of many villages around Turfloop we selected "Segopje" village due to the following two key reasons: villages still accommodates grannies who know their respective clan traditional praise poetry; and most important, it is where we could easily collect three "Ramohlale" traditional clan praise poems from three participants (Grannies). The main reason to collect same clan poem from three participants was to compare and check the authenticity and originality of the "Ramohlale" poem. We were only restricted by COVID 19 to collect as many praise poems as we could, therefore praise poems of only one clans was used to represent Sepedi traditional praise poems.

"Segopje" is a beautiful village named after previous prominent king "Segopi", arriving in Segopje, you come across the big clinic, and next to the clinic is the king's Krall with a Pig as their totemic animal (Dikolobe). The village proudly accommodates four primaries and two secondary schools. Important for our study, the village has homesteads around the king's Krall which extend further to the south, north, east and west. These homesteads accommodate elderlies with extensive knowledge of their culture and traditional poems important for our study.

We arrived at the king's Krall, before we were directed to the three elderly grannies of the three clans, the "Ramohlale"; all in all three participants (Grannies) were selected to be interviewed. We explained to them that their participation in the study is absolutely voluntary, and they can decide to withdraw their participation anytime. Ciesielska and Jemielniak (2017: 4) confirmed that participants

may choose to withdraw temporarily from the research project but simultaneously reserve the right to re-join at a later stage. After winning the hearts and minds of participants and have pledged our commitment to confidentiality and most importantly that all ethical issues were considered and satisfied, we then asked participants to sign consent forms upon agreement.

The study adopted the homogeneous purposive sampling, which Palinkas et al. (2016: 2) acknowledge that it involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. Indeed, our study targeted only grannies (elderlies) who, in their hearts and minds preserved the indigenous Sepedi praise poems.

Data Collection

Following their agreement to take part in the study, we then commenced to create a cordial relationships under a spontaneous healthy atmosphere. Because they are elderlies, we began straight away to relate to them who we are and connect our possible relationships with them. Data was established through structured interviews, cultural beliefs practices and COVID 19 protocols.

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Our study used the structured interview schedule to allow the elders to recite their original clan's traditional praise poems without alterations and deviations.

In structured interviews, the questions are fixed and they are asked in a specific order. Multiple respondents will be asked identical questions, in the same order. Structured interviews most closely approximate a survey being read aloud, without deviation from the script (Harrell & Bradley, 2009: 28).

Our study was only up to one and most important objective: the recitation of original traditional clan poem. Structured interview schedule assisted our study to obtain relevant and precise data without much effort; this kind of interview schedule is time saving and cost effective.

According to our schedule, we had planned to visit participants three times. Indeed participants were visited according to plan. The first visit was for arrangements and introduction of the study. The second visit was scheduled for the initial interviews. The third visit was used for feedback and debriefing. Data collection of our study did not require any further visit for extended conversations. More ethical issues which assisted this study are cultural beliefs, practices and COVID-19 protocols.

CULTURAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Amidst our modern way of collecting data, our study as well recognised the cultural protocols which were obliged to be performed before any member of a clan could recite the clan's poem. The whole activity compelled the clan members to sit around the totemic plant and inform the ancestors to welcome visitors; this is a procedure to avoid conflict with ancestors. It is believed that unless appropriate rituals are performed and ancestors taken, this brooding can lead to misfortune, illness, madness and vulnerability to various ecological hazards such as lightning as well as sorcery and witchcraft (Edwards et al., 2009: 3). Our study was obliged to respect and succumb to cultural beliefs and practices of participants.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Our interviews was conducted at the time when COVID-19 third wave was looming. COVID-19 regulations declared all elderlies as co-morbidities due to their vulnerability to the viral infections. Subedi (2020: 33) propounded that presence of co-morbidities like hypertension, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases are associated with older people seems to increase the risk for severity of COVID-19 disease. In conducting interviews, we made sure that all COVID-19 protocols were adhered to. This included keeping safe distance, regular sanitising, always wearing masks, and

preferably surgical masks. When all COVID-19 protocols were satisfied, it was then safe to proceed with interviews.

Analysıs and Dıscussıon

This section outlined the two traditional praise poems, analyzed and provided a brief discussion where necessary. Data analysis is in short a method of putting facts and figures to solve the research problem (Ashirwadam, 2010:1). The two poems were extracted from the recorded participants in their original form for analysis; without structure and form being altered in order to conform to the modern stylistic writing. One poem was analyzed (Ramohlale praise poem) considering its merits and demerits according to the five elements of formalism literary theory: form, language, techniques, and style.

The second poem was only written but not analyzed, analysis was envisaged to be done if there were new poetic features that emerged from the second poem. Our analysis followed the principle of first poetic feature analysis, which implied that the same poetic feature was not repeated if observed in the next stanza or poetic line; only identified poetic features were picked and analyzed. Two traditional poems were recorded, one from Ramohlale clan and the other from Mamabolo clan. Only the Ramohlale traditional poem was selected for analysis, while the Mamabolo poem was only outlined as evidence for the unique traditional poetry form.

Poem 1 (Ramohlale praise poem)
Liiiiiiiiiuuu….iu...iu...iiiiiiiu Ditlouweee!
Ke ba ga Ramohlale wa lekgwahla, wa sekhulwana
Ke ditlou tše dikgolo, Ditlou tša go tšwa bolepye.
Bolepye wee…ke bolepye ga-hlaudialewaa, maoka a
Jelwa eitšwe ga bosekgatša sa Maratha.

They belong to Ramohlale, the kind bachelor
They are big elephants from 'Bolepye',
You, 'Bolepye' it's 'Bolepye' with the big cave,
Where wild fruits are being eaten.

Mpedi wee… re bapedi ba lesenkeni la matabole,
Re bapedi batswala ba mmaposa thabantsho,
Wa namela yona, o bona Bokgaga.
Ramohlale, o se fete Letsoalo tseleng,
Kgomo ga e fete namane e etswetše.

You, Pedi… We are Pedis from Matabole's place,
We are the Pedis cousins to Mmaposa the black mountain,
You climb it, you will see Bokgaga village.
Ramohlale, never pass Letsoalo on the way,
A cow does not pass its own calf.

Ke batho ba bo Sekwaila kobo ya tšhwene marekwa e phutilwe.
Ke batho ba bo Ramollo mollo setuka phagong ya bo Matome.
Matome thate ya seepe ka rema ga tee ka letšhetša, ka tšhabiša more go oma.
Ke batho ba bo Maledu sekgiritla maboya morwa Ramohlale.

They are Sekwaila people, with Baboon's blanket,

They are Ramollo's people with the fire that burn in Matome's cave,
Matome the big branch, who chop once and retreat, scared to kill the whole tree.
They are people of Maledu, rich with hairs, son of Ramohlale.

Ke batho ba bo Mmamphiri a koto le Matswiri, tswiri nonyana.
Ke batho ba bo Moalusi kwapa le leso la ga Ramohlale mmanaka ditshetshane
Ke batho ba bo Mmantieng madimetša Magana bošweu madumela bošwana,
Le bo mmalegodi a fofa semela mathekga, sepalakantša maeba.

They are people of Mamphiri, siblings to Koto and Matswiri the bird,
They are people of Moalusi, the black Tsonga and Ramohlale, with lean horns,
They are people of Mantieng, who denied light complexion for dark one.
With Mmalegodi who fly with the speed to frighten the pigeons.

Batho ba ke ditlogolwana tša mmankutu nkutu le leaka barwa ba Lebese.
Ke mmankutu wa ga ramahlalerwa kobo ke tšo e tšea kae, ke ikaparela lešoba?
Leaka fofela godimo, ke leaka la go kobola hlogo mola dingwe ke kobola molala.
Ke lebese mma mojelele, lebese maswi a kgomo ke kgahlile seelela le kgamelo.
Ke gamilwe ke le botse, ke dio tšhelwa ke bagami le baokodi ditšhila.
Re ba ga dinkgogadiome, wa hwetša di omile o tsebe gore bjala bo fedile.
Ke tšhaba mediti…!

These people are the nephews to Mmalekutu nkutu and Leaka, sons of Lebese
He is Mmalekutu of Ramahlalerwa, where do I get the blanket, wearing old clothes?
Leaka fly high, it's Leaka who pecks the head while others pecks the neck.
He is the milk, the milk from the cow, I'm half liquid milk gently flowing with the container.
I was milked pure and clean, to be contaminated by milkers and cheese makers.
We are people with eternal filled liquor containers, if you find containers empty, know that liquor is finished.
I'm scared of the elders…!

FORM AND STRUCTURE OF TRADITIONAL PRAISE POEM

The structure of the traditional praise poem differ completely from the contemporary modern poem due to the fact that traditional poems in essence do not have a fixed structure, while the modern poetry projects fixed structure in the form of stanzas and well rhymed poetic lines. About the structure of a poem, Malntyre, Olivier and Varga (2019:12) propounded that it may be rigid and prescribed or loose and undefined." Traditional praise poetry adopted the following format:

o   *Unique introduction*

The traditional praise poetry is well-known for its unique introduction; traditional introductions such as "Kgomo e a tshwa!"(The cow spits) or an interjection, such as "Ekwaa!, or agee!, Or luuuu…!, or the greeting phrase, "re a lotšha", "Ke a rema nna!, are all characteristics of traditional praise poetry; these elements are lacking in written praise poetry. This first introduction is provided by the artist/poet while the second part is provided by the audience; this way an immediate contact is established by declaring to the audience in the following way:

Kgomo e a tshwa! (The cow is spitting)   (Artist)
E gangwa ke mang? (Who milks it?)   (Audience)

The presence and participation of the audience motivates the artist to recite the poem with enthusiasm and envy to receive prices at the end of recital. The audience's verbal participation may be highly structured, as amongst the "Bapedi," where the verbal repartee between the artist and audience is established from the outset with two part formula.

o   *Unavailability of stanzas*

Naturally traditional praise poetry is not having stanzas; the whole poem is just one big undivided stanza. Different ideas can be found within the only one big stanza. Where it was supposed to be the beginning of the new stanza, could be identified by the word, 'ke'. An effort was made to divide the 'Ramohlale' poem into stanzas only for analysis's sake and 'ke' was used as a determinant factor. Stanza 1, first poetic line says: "**Ke** ba ga Ramohlale wa lekgwahla…" (They are a lineage of Ramohlale) Stanza 3, poetic line 1, says: "**Ke** batho ba bo Sekwaila…" (They are people of Sekwaila) and poetic line 4 says: "**Ke** batho ba Mmamphiri a koto le tswiri…" (They belong to Mamphiri, Koto and Tswiri).

o   *Non-logical main idea and sequence of events*

To traditional praise poetry, logical sequence of events and connective flow of main idea is immaterial. This is prompted by creativity of poets to connect four to five poems and make one long poem to impress the audience. Stanza 1 and 2 seems to be one complete poem, but stanza 3, 4 and 5 were joined to the main poem to further inform the audience about other clan relatives. This skill is key in African traditional poetry, but on the other hand the main idea is compromised.

LANGUAGE

Language of the poem analyzed is rich with vocabulary and in some cases depict the original language, places the Ramohlale's once lived and the route travelled before they settled where they are today. The language used in the poem is rich and difficult to interpret to a non-native speaker. Efforts to try and interpret poetic line 1, in stanza 1, "Ke ba ga Ramohlale wa lekgwahla, wa sekhulwana." 'Lekgwahla" refers to a man without a wife, and 'Sekhulwana' refers to a kind-hearted person. Poems are rich in vocabulary (lexicology); most importantly in traditional poetry is stored cultural traits, beliefs and values.

Technıques and Style

Every work of art is armed with techniques capable to attract readers, listeners and audiences. Traditional praise poetry is not exceptional, although not granted written status; if carefully analyzed is capable to display interesting techniques. The importance of poetic technique is often underrated, particularly by critics who are not poets. Yet it is not possible for a critic to make an informed judgement on a poet's work without understanding what it is the poet is trying to achieve and what technical means she/he is using to achieve it (Meyer, 1995: 4). The following are techniques which were identified in the "Ramohlale" poem:

SUMMARY TABLE:

STANZA	POETIC LINE	TECHNIQUE
Stanza 1		No technique
Stanza 2	Poetic lines 4 & 5	Poeletśogare (Parallelism)
Stanza 3	Poetic lines 1, 2 & 3	1-Poeletśothomi (Anaphora)
		2-Tlemanyithalo (Anadoplosis)
Stanza 4	Poetic lines 1 & 2	1 & 2 Poeletśogare (Mesodioplosis)
	Poetic line 1	1-Poeletśo ya senoko (Polyptoton)
	Poetic line 3	3-Kelelathalo (Enjambement)
Stanza 5	Poetic lines 3 & 4	Repetition of techniques

PARALLELISM (Poeletšogare)

Stanza 2, poetic line 4 and 5, we identified Parallelism (Poeletšogare). Poetic line 4 says: "Ramohlale, o se **fete** Letsoalo tseleng." Poetic line 5 says: "Kgomo ga e **fete** namane e e tswetše." The word "fete" is repeated in adjacent poetic lines; this is parallelism. Parallelism is the repetition of structure in adjacent lines or phrases within a poem. It is used to emphasize the meaning of the poem or a specific parallel words (Centfie, 2020:6).

ANAPHORA (Poeletšothomi/Sekafoko)

Stanza 3, poetic line 1 and 2, we identified the technique, Anaphora (Poeletšothomi/Sekafoko). Poetic line 1, says: **"ke batho ba bo**…" Poetic line 2 as well began with same anaphoric words, **ke batho ba bo**…The two phrases are repeated at the beginning of consecutive lines. Anaphora is the literary device in which a phrase or word is repeated at the beginning of consecutive lines or clauses. Apart of adding emphasis to the selected words, it contributes to the rhythm of a poem (Centfie, 2020:7).

ANADIPLOSIS (Tlemanyithalo/Kgokanyi)

Stanza 3, poetic line 2 and 3, the word/name "Matome" is repeated. In poetic line 2, "Matome" is placed at the end of the sentence, and in poetic line 3, the name, "Matome" is placed at the beginning of the sentence. This poetic technique is called Anadiplosis/Gradation (Tlemanyithalo/kgokanyi). Anadiplosis is a common literary technique whereby poets repeat the last word or phrase in the line and at the beginning of the next line. It is used for emphasis, rhythm enhancement, and to produce an aesthetic effect (Centfie, 2020:8).

MESODIPLOSIS (Poeletšogare)

In stanza 4, poetic line 1 and 2, a poetic device, Mesodiplosis (Poeletšogare) was identified. In poetic line 1, there is "Koto **le** Matswiri" and in poetic line 2 "kwapa **le** leso"; the word 'le', is repeated in the middle of the two poetic lines. Mesodiplosis is a technique where the same word or phrase occurs in the middle of successive lines. Mesodiplosis enhances sound effect, rhythm and emphasis. It also creates parallelism (Centfie, 2020:8).

POLYPTOTON (Poeletšo ya senoko)

The poetic technique Polyptoton (Poeletšo ya senoko) was identified in stanza 4 poetic line 1. Combined consonant and vowel were repeated three times in different words to bring about emphasis. "Ke batho ba bo Mamphi**ri** a Koto le Matswi**ri**, tswi**ri** nonyana. In the three words, 'ri', is repeated three times to bring about polyptoton. Polyptoton occurs when a poem has repetitive words with the same root although the endings of the word are different (CENTFIE, 2020:10).

ENJAMBMENT (Kelelathalo)

The last poetic technique was identified in stanza 4, at the end of poetic line 3. The poet used words, "madumelabošweu''. This poetic device is called enjambment. In simple terms eenjambment, is a poetic term for the continuation of a sentence or phrase from one line of poetry to the next. Olivier (1994:75) argues that enjambment gives the writer an ability to restrain or to spur on the pace of poem. An enjambed line typically lacks punctuation at its line break, so the reader is carried smoothly and swiftly without interruption to the next line of the poem.

Fındıngs

INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION OF TRADITIONAL PRAISE POEMS

Traditional praise poetry is known to possess a unique introduction. In the case of the "Ramohlale" poem the introduction is: "Iiiiiiuuuuu…iu...which implies that the poet is appealing to the audience to listen to him/her and give him the platform to recite. Other poems allow the audience to respond, as in "Kgomo e a tsha", the audience will respond by saying "e gangwa ke mang" this way the audience is enticing the poet/orator to go ahead and recite, thus the poet will have courage and recite with enthusiasm.

Most traditional poetry display some interesting conclusion, one such conclusion says: "Ke tšhaba baditi" (I'm scared of the elders). The literal significance of this conclusion is that the poet does not wish to go further and outclass his/her seniors, but in essence he/she signifies that he/she has come to the end of the poem.

UNIQUE POETIC NAMES AND COMPOUND NOUNS (Mainagokwa)

Traditional praise poetry possesses unique poetic names that cannot found in any type of poetry form. In the "Ramohlale" poem, stanza 4 and poetic line 1, the poet says: "Ke batho ba bo Mmamphiri'a Koto le Matswiri." All the names used in this poetic line are strange and unique for traditional praise poetry.

Traditional praise poetry as well, is known to make use the compound nouns for emphasis, for cultural beliefs, traits and Behaviour. Sometimes these compound nouns are used aesthetically to beautify and attract audience. In the last stanza and poetic line of "Ramohlale" poem, the poet says: "Re ba ga dinkgogadiome." "Dinkgogadiome" is a compound noun composed of a combination of morphemes to bring forth emphasis.

PRAISE AND RESONANCE (BOIKGANTŠHO LE KGOELETŠO)

Traditional praise poetry make use of a lot of praise and resonance. When reciting, the poet grossly praises himself or his/her own clan. In the first stanza poetic line 2, the poet says: "Ke ditlou tše dikgolo" (They are big/great elephants). The poet associates the "Ramohlales" with big elephants, which is a sign of praise.

Resonance is observed in stanza 2, poetic line 1. The poet says: "Mpedi wee…"resonance is an important weapon in literature and traditional poetry in particular. Resonance is the reinforcement or prolongation of sound by reflection or synchronous vibration (Burgess, Sammy, and Steenkamp). Resonance is actually used by poets to draw attention to the audience to say, hey! Listen to me! Let me tell you more about my clan.

TRADITIONAL PRAISE POETRY DOES NOT HAVE STANZAS BY NATURE

Traditional praise poem naturally does not have stanzas. When a poet recites his clan poem, the only pause is observed is when the poet has to take a breath. Thwala and Twala (2018:110) say that a stanza is a group of arranged and assembled lines in a poem that considered to be a unit. Stanzas aren't always separated by line breaks. Especially in older or longer poems, stanzas are distinguished from one another according to where the meter or rhyme scheme change. The "Ramohlale" poem is no exception, it does not have stanzas. The stanzas were only created for the sake of analysis compatibility.

TRADITIONAL PRAISE POETRY IS DOMINATED BY REPETITION OF SOUNDS

Traditional praise poetry is dominated by repetition of sounds as indicated in the analysis of Ramohlale poem. This poetry has more of alliteration, anaphora, consonance, parallelism and other different types of literary repetition. This poetry possesses little of simile, metaphor, imagery, and symbolism and more other literary techniques that have to do with figures of speech.

Conclusıon

Cultural beliefs and traits are hidden in the language people use as a means of communication, while on the other hand poetry traces the geographic and linguistic origin of a particular community, clan and ethnic group. Larsen-Freeman (2012: 23) remark that when we focus on language in use rather than language as an abstract formal system, we see it rooted in the context and culture of the local speech community to which the participants belong. Conclusion is therefore drawn that to sustain its existence of language, it must be spoken, written and conform to aesthetic literary forms.

South Africa has many ethnic group speaking different languages. When we say a person is a Pedi, it means he/she belongs to a Pedi ethnic group and he/she speaks Sepedi as his/her home language. The same thing applies to the Zulu; we will expect him/her to speak Isizulu. If the Pedi language is extinct, the implication is that we don't have "Pedis" anymore; which implies that language is people and people is language. It is therefore imperative for every ethnic group to preserve their language by encouraging the youth to speak it and make efforts to groom future authors among the members of that particular speech community.

Language is a means of communication between members of the community in the form of symbols of sound produced by the speech organs. Language is also a tool of self-expression and served as a tool to show their identity as well (Rabiah, 2012: 5). Culture is another important vehicle to shape-up and give direction to the language we speak, is brought to the picture. Language and culture are interlinked and you cannot learn one, without having a clear knowledge of the other. Poetry is built from culture and language which is spoken by people of the same speech community. Therefore, traditional poetry is regarded as the storage-room for preservation of original culture and language. Traditional poetry must be preserved, respected and protected.

Recommendatıons

TRADITIONAL POETRY SHOULD BE DECLARED NATIONAL HERRITAGE

The ideal act must be to preserve traditional poetry by declaring it the traditional national heritage because they are at the brink of extinction. Parangu and Salim (2018: 1223) ascertain that preservation is the art of preserving or protecting something to prevent it from being damaged. Preservation specialists in libraries, archives, and museum share a commitment to protect the "stuff" of culture in all forms of formats.

TRADITIONAL PRAISE POETRY MUST BE WRITTEN

In our study, we recommended that traditional praise poetry be given the rights to be written. Therefore educationists and scholars must go all out in communities and collect as much traditional poetry as possible. The collection must be written in their original form and stored in a museum. If there is no museum available, the collection of poems could be stored in a digital database nicely protected from all forms of viruses. The lack of cultural exposure makes young people less familiar with the variety of cultures…unfortunately it makes the existence of culture to be forgotten and even become extinct (Parangu & Salim, 2018: 1223).

TRADITIONAL PRAISE POETRY IS AT THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION, THE NEED TO PRESERVE IT IS INEVITABLE

Traditional praise poetry will be extinct because it is known and mastered only by elderly members of the society, with a very short/limited life-span. Youth of today are less interested this poetry as it cannot be written and it is difficult for them to rote learn this kind of poetry. Parangu and Salim (2018:1) propounded that to preserve oral literature, people usually inherit from generation to generation. Oral literature contains cultural values and local wisdom that is considered original and unique worth every reason to be preserved.

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