



**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SESOTHO  
LINGUISTICS WITH REFERENCE TO SYNTACTIC CATEGORIES**

**BY**

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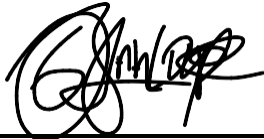
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**DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that the Doctoral Degree research dissertation that I herewith submit for the Doctoral Degree qualification **Doctor of Philosophy** at the University of the Free State is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education. I am aware that the copyright is vested in the University of the Free State.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. M. ...', written over a horizontal line.

Date: November 2021

(ii)

**DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to all young men and women in Mashaeng. You can still do it. Never give up. Take it from me, it could have been worse!

(III)

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

What a ride! I would like to thank myself for pulling through. To my supervisor, Dr Malete: Thank you for your patience, kindness and understanding, and I would like to thank you for everything; I truly appreciate it! To my fans and supporters: I know you have been waiting for this one! And special thanks to everyone who helped me, I appreciate you!

**ABSTRACT**

Numerous scholars, including missionaries of various denominations of the past as well as other contemporary Sesotho linguists, have written on various aspects of the Sesotho language, especially in unpublished research theses and dissertations. However, there is no publication, which formerly traces the diachronic development of Sesotho linguistics, and in particular, the identification and classification of Sesotho syntactic categories within a particular linguistic developmental period. This research study traces the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories. It also traces over time how various linguists have identified, described, and analyzed Sesotho syntactic categories, looking at the prominent characteristics of various linguistic periods, namely the pre-literacy period (1659-1800), historical-comparative period (1800-1826), missionary period (1826-1927), structural/functional period (1927-1975) and modern/Chomskyan period (1975 to date). It has been observed that during the pre-literary period, Sesotho was a spoken language and the transmission of information, history, and involvement within the Basotho was predominantly through the oral practice and performance rather than on written texts. The Basotho people used oral traditions such as folklore, proverbs, riddles, songs, and stories to pass information from one generation to another. The missionaries introduced Sesotho orthography and Sesotho grammar where syntactic categories such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections were identified; where grammatical concepts such as case in Sesotho and its various types were also identified, the concept that was later disputed by Doke and Mofokeng. In the structural period, Doke, van Wyk, and Ziervogel identified more syntactic categories besides nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and conjunctions. They added copulatives, interjections, and relatives. The Chomskyan period broadly classified Sesotho syntactic categories; it provides a full description and analysis of sentences, phrases, and words. It identified five broad syntactic categories, namely i) sentences as parts of speech, ii) Phrases as grammatical categories, iii) Lexical categories as syntactic categories (this category consists of nouns, verbs, copulatives, deficient verbs, adverbs, adjectives, relatives, conjunctions, prepositions, quantifiers, and enumerative), iv) Inflectional categories

(agreement of inflection, tense, mood, aspects, and negatives) and v) Empty categories such as pronouns, null subject, and the infinitive. Finally, this study presents an observation that the analysis of grammatical phenomena at different times in the history of African Languages, were patterned and classified according to European classical languages and prominent characteristics of a particular linguistic period, despite their unique grammatical structures, and that with the arrival of the modern linguistic approaches (Generative Transformational Grammar), which filtered through at a later stage in the historical development of African languages, recognized the uniqueness of syntactic categories of African Languages, bringing them back into their spaces of history and securing their lost identity.

**KGUTSUFATSO**

Barutehi ba bangata, ho kenyeletswa baruti ba dikereke tse fapaneng tsa nako e fetileng mmoho le ditsebi tse ding tsa mehleng ena tsa puo ya Sesotho, ba ngotse ka dintlha tse fapaneng tsa puo ya Sesotho, haholo-holo dingolweng tsa thuto tsa dipatlisiso tse sa phatlalatswang. Le ha ho le jwalo, ha ho na phatlalatso, eo nakong ya pele e latedisang ntshetsopele ya thutapuo ya Sesotho, haholo-holo, ho hlwahwa le ho arolwa ha ditho tsa puo tsa Sesotho nakong e itseng ya ntshetsopele ya thutapuo. Boithuto bona ba patlisiso bo latedisa ntshetsopele ya nalane ya ditho tsa puo tsa Sesotho. Hape bo latela nako e telele kamoo borapuo ba fapafapaneng ba hlwaileng, ba hlalosa le ho sekaseka ditho tsa puo ya Sesotho, ho sheba makgetha a hlahelletseng a dinako tse fapaneng tsa dipuo, e leng nako ya pele ho mongolo (1659-1800), nako ya nalane ya papiso (1800- 1826), nako ya baruti (1826-1927), nako ya sebopehopuo (1927-1975) le nako ya thutapolelo (1975 ho fihlela jwale). Ho hlokometswe hore nakong ya pele ho mongolo, Sesotho e ne e le puo e buuwang mme phetiso ya lesedi, nalane le ho kenya letsoho ka hare ho Basotho e ne e le haholo ka mokgwa wa molomo le tshebetso ho feta ditemaneng tse ngotsweng. Basotho ba ne ba sebedisa disangolwang tse kang ditshomo, maele, dilotho, dipina le dipale ho fetisa ditaba ho tloha molokong o mong ho ya ho o mong. Baruti ba ile ba hlahisa mongolo wa Sesotho, le thutapuo ya Sesotho moo ho ileng ha hlwahiswa ditho tsa puo tse kang, maemedi, maetsi, mahlalosi, makopanyi, maetelli le makgotsi; moo dikgopolo tsa puo tse kang kheisi ya Sesotho le mefuta ya teng e fapaneng e ile ya sibollwa, kgopolo eo hamorao e ileng ya hanyetswa ke Doke le Mofokeng. Nakong ya sebopehopuo, Doke, van Wyk le Ziervogel ba hlwaile ditho tsa puo tse ngata ho tshwana le mabitso, maemedi, maetsi, mahlalosi, makgethi, le mahokedi. Ba ile ba eketsa ka leba, makgotsi le marui. Nako ya thutapolelo e arotse ditho tsa puo tsa Sesotho ka ho pharalletseng; e fana ka tlhaloso e feletseng le tlhahlobo ya dipolelo, dipolelwana le mantswe. E kgethile ditho tsa puo tse hlano tse pharaletseng, e leng i) Dipolelo e le ditho tsa puo, ii) Dipolelwana e le ditho tsa puo, iii) Sehlopha sa mantswe e le ditho tsa puo (sehlopha sena se na le mabitso, maetsi, leba, mahaelli, mahlalosi, makgethi, maamanyi; mahokedi, maetelli, le mabadi), iv) Dikgomathiso (lehokedi la kgomathiso, lekgaathe, sekao, le kganyetso) le v) Dihlokakemedi tse kang maemedi, moetsi wa lefeela. Qetellong, boithuto bona bo

fana ka tlhokomelo ya hore tlhahlobo ya diketsahalo tsa sebopeho-puo ka dinako tse fapaneng nalaneng ya dipuo tsa Afrika, di ne di kenngwa pateroneng le ho hlophiswa ho ya ka dipuo tsa kgale tsa Yuropa le makgetha a hlahelletseng a nako e itseng ya puo, ho sa tsotellehe dibopeho tsa tsona tse ikgethang tsa sebopeho-puo, hape le ka ho fihla ha mekgwa ya thutapuo ya sekwale-jwale (*Generative Transformational Grammar*), e ileng ya phunyeletsa hamorao tswelopeleng ya nalane ya dipuo tsa Afrika, e ile ya hlokomela ho ikgetha ha ditho tsa puo tsa dipuo tsa Afrika, ho di kgutlisetsa dibakeng tsa tsona tsa nalane le ho boloka boitsebiso bo lahlehileng ba tsona.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce research study of the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories. This chapter will look into the background information on the research question, definitions of historical linguistics and thematic periods. The chapter will also state the problem statement, research design, value of research and show how the study will be structured and organized.

### 1.2 Background information

Languages develop and change from time to time based on various linguistic and social dynamics of the world. The language people use today cannot be the same in the next fifty years. Sesotho is one of the eleven indigenous languages in South Africa, which was given the official status after 1994, and has undergone a natural and deliberate development throughout the years to date.

According to Chomsky (1957:284), language is a set of sentences all constructed from a finite alphabet of phonemes which may not be meaningful in any independent sense of the word or ever have been used by speakers of the languages. In addition, Harris (1983:13 -14) defines language as a grammatical system existing in the brains of a group of individuals, it exists perfectly only in the collectivity external to the individual.

Mutaka et al (2000) state that there was no scholarly work, which existed on African languages except that of Arabic, until the seventeenth century. During the seventeenth century, the work on African languages came up and the missionaries who had a goal of disseminating the gospel brought it. Mutaka et al (2000), furthermore postulate that W.H.I Bleek (1827-1875) in his classification of the South African languages founded Sesotho among other Bantu languages. Bleek is known to be the first to use the term "Bantu" and he further organized the nouns into 18 classes, singular and plural and the description of agreement systems in relation to their belonging to specific classes. Doke and Cole (1984:02), claim that Brusiotto de

Vetralla was the first to produce a Bantu manuscript on the grammar of Bantu languages in 1642, and was the first to record the Bantu noun - class system.

Campbell (2002) claims that it is not possible to understand developments in linguistics without considering their historical and cultural contexts. Historical linguistics is the study conducted by historical linguists on how a particular language has developed in a certain period. De Kuthy (2001) defines historical linguistics as the study of how languages change over time and of their relationships with other languages. Labov (1994) asserts that historical linguistics can be thought of as the art of making the best use of bad data, though we would prefer to characterize the data in question as “imperfect.”

In addition, Kikusawa and Reid (2011) say historical linguistics is the study of the ways in which language changes through time. According to Trask (1996), historical linguistics is the study of language change over time. Crowley (1997) states that historical linguistics can allow us to go back quite a few thousand years in time, it can provide us with a number of different kinds of information about history of a society.

Bynon (1977) furthermore posits that historical linguistics is concerned with the process of language change through time, it investigates how and why the language of individuals, a social group or a whole ‘speech community’ develops in respect of its pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

Lass (1969) says historical linguistics is the craft linguists exercise upon the results of change, in order to tell coherent stories about it. The study of historical linguistics is based on the diachronic analysis and De Kuthy (2001) defines it as the domain of historical linguistics because the devices for recording sounds have only been around for about a century, therefore the vast majority of data used for historical linguistics is textual.

Kosch (1993) used the following periods as an approach to study of the development of Northern Sotho linguistics:

- a) Traditional period
- b) Functional period (Dokeyan era)
- c) Structural period (Van Wyk era);
- d) Modern period.

According to Kosch (1993:13), the *traditional period* is the period around the 1800, and it is the classical or early European oriented period because the classical European languages were used as basis of description during that time while Latin was no longer used as the frame of reference. The *functional period* as indicated by Kosch (1993:28), refers to the period in 1927, and in that year C.M Doke revolutionised Bantu linguistics description with the presentation of a new model in his textbook of Zulu grammar published by the University of the Witwatersrand Press. Kosch (1993:53) further gives a third period which she refers to as the *structural period*, a period around 1958, characterised by the appearance of a doctoral thesis by E.B Van Wyk entitled *Woordverdeling in Noord-Sotho en Zoloe: 'n Bydraetot die vraagstuk van woord-identifikasie in die Bantoetale* (Word division in Northern Sotho and Zulu: A contribution regarding the problem of word identification in the Bantu languages) which was to steer the grammatical approach towards the Bantu languages in a new direction. The final period is referred to by Kosch (1993:74) as the *modern period*, the period around 1975 when the Bantu grammatical analysis had an experience of no change, but rather a gradual transition over a number of years.

Campbell (2002) based his study of historical linguistics on the approach of grammatical traditions, the rise of universal grammar, the rise of comparative method, philosophical-psychological (-Typological Evolutionary) approaches, the rise of structuralism, Noam Chomsky & linguistic theory since 1957 and typology. On grammatical traditions, Campbell (2002) looked into the Old-Babylon tradition, Hindu tradition, the Greek grammarian tradition, Roman linguistics, the Arabic grammatical tradition, the Hebrew linguistic tradition and the early Christian writers. With regard to comparative method, he looked into the Scythian hypothesis and the notion of Indo-European, the work of Sir William Jones and the Neogrammarians. With regard to

structuralism, he looked into the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), the Prague School and its antecedents, Franz Boaz (1858-1942), Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and Leonard Bloomfield (1887-1949).

Byon (1977) studied the historical linguistics in terms of linguistic reconstruction and prehistory; she dealt with the history of languages in terms of their own internal structure. Byon (1977) states that it must also be evident that all periods throughout its history a language has speakers and that these too have a history in political, social and cultural terms.

In addition, Trask (1996) used the comparative method to study the history of an individual language, which includes systematic correspondences and comparative reconstruction. On that note, Crowley (1997) goes further to study historical linguistics using comparative method looking at the sound correspondence and reconstruction, reconstruction of conditioned sound changes and the reality of protolanguages.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the study of historical linguistics puts more emphasis on the nature and character of grammatical traditions or themes based on various periods. This research study will also attempt to trace the development of Sesotho linguistics on the same notion of grammatical traditions based on specific periods.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Sesotho as one of the indigenous African languages was put to a writing system after the arrival of the French missionaries in Lesotho in 1833 and has developed steadily throughout the years. Numerous scholars, including missionaries of various denominations of the past as well as other contemporary Sesotho linguists, have written on various aspect of the Sesotho language, especially in unpublished research theses and dissertations. However, there is no publication, which formerly traces the diachronic development of Sesotho linguistics, and in particular, the morphological and syntactic linguistic developments. The central aim of this study is to trace the development of Sesotho from a historical point of view. It will trace over

time, how various linguists have identified, described and analysed Sesotho's parts of speech.

#### **1.4 Research Design**

This study is a qualitative research and it will assume a descriptive research design, where empirical general characteristics of a particular period will be identified and described. Such characteristics will then be employed to slot the linguistic status of Sesotho as a language into an appropriate linguistic period. Qualitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data such as language; qualitative research helps to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research.

This research study will use the secondary research methodology where journals, books, articles and unpublished sources such as dissertations and theses will be consulted. Based on, Bynon (1977), Trask (1996), Crowley (1997), De Kuthy (2001), Campbell (2002) and Kikusawa (2011), this study will then adopt the following linguistic developmental periods to describe the development of Sesotho linguistics:

- (a) Pre-Literary period (1659 - 1800)
- (b) Historical comparative period (1800-1826)
- (c) Missionary period (1826-1927)
- (d) Structural/Functional period (1927-1975) and
- e) Modern/Chomskyan period (1975 to date).

#### **1.5 Value of Research**

This research study is significant to the African languages more especially Sesotho, the reason being that there are no studies done on the development of Sesotho linguistics with regard to the historical perspectives. The findings will bring to light general Sesotho linguistics developments, and provide an analysis of various grammatical traditions that has dominated linguistics periods. The study will also help to create tools, which will determine the growth and status of the language itself.

## **1.6 Organisation of Study**

This research study will be divided into five chapters, chapter 1 will serve as an introduction to the whole study, chapter 2 will be literature review, chapter 3 will strictly deal with the theoretical framework, chapter 4 will be on the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories, and chapter 5 will be the concluding chapter where findings are summarised.

The thesis structure will look as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework - Historical linguistics

Chapter 4: The historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories

Chapter 5: Summary and conclusion

## **1.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research study will attempt to trace the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories on the notion of grammatical theme based on five linguistic developmental periods namely: pre-literary, missionary, historical comparative, structural/functional and Chomskyan period. The next chapter will focus on literature review of the study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The focal point of this chapter is embedded on research conducted on African languages history. This part of study provides a brief definition of language, history and extend to historical linguistics, which was introduced in the previous chapter. The background of historical linguistics will show what it entails because the central aim of this research is to trace over a period of time, how various linguists have identified, described and analyzed parts of speech in Sesotho language.

This chapter therefore holds a section on empirical historical linguistics and African historical linguistics. It also looks at the classification of African languages. Again, it looks at Bantu family, provides a brief history of the Bantu family with reference to Sotho group and the characteristics of the Southern Bantu languages. In addition, this chapter will also have a section on the contributions made by missionaries and the conclusion.

#### **2.2. Empirical Historical linguistics**

Chomsky (1957) defines language as a set of sentences all constructed from a finite alphabet of phonemes which may not be meaningful in any independent sense of the word or ever have been used by speakers of the languages. According to Fromkin (2001:3), linguistics is the scientific study of human language. This study is concerned with the nature of language and communication and it also delves into how language changes over time. There is a link between history and language seen by the Bantu, Yoruba and Mande. The speciality of the link between history and language in African tradition lies in the view of history and language to which that tradition, on the whole, has held. History is seen as wisdom and an art of living which aims at knowledge of the past. Linguistics is seen as a science of language and speech. Ki-Zerbo (1981) claims that historical narratives and historical works are contents and forms of thought whereby language is the medium and prop of such thought. Language is a historical phenomenon used as a system and a tool of communication and it has its own history. Ki-Zerbo (1981) asserts that it is usual to

say the study of relationships between languages is the cross-roads between linguistics and history.

Heine & Nurse (2000) consider language evidence as a democratic historical resource and they say it does not normally allow one to identify individual characters in history, but it provides a powerful set of tools for probing the widest range of past developments within communities and societies as a whole, and it lends itself well to studies of history over the long term. According to Nurse & Philippson (2003), any language has three components: what it inherited from its ancestors, what it innovated during its evolution, and what it absorbed from other languages along the way. Heine & Nurse (2000) elucidate on the fact that two or more languages are related because they descend from a common mother language called a 'proto-language'. This proto-language evolved at an earlier time in history into two or more daughter languages, it diverged into its daughters, much as the mother cell divides into daughter cells. The daughter languages each can subsequently become proto-languages themselves, diverging at later periods into daughter languages of their own; and this process can of course repeat again and again over the long-run of language history.

Historical linguistics is defined by De Kuthy (2001) as the study of how languages change overtime and of their relationships with other languages. Bynon (1977) says historical linguistics is concerned with the process of language change through time, it investigates how and why the language of individuals, a social group or a whole 'speech community' develops in respect of its pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Historical linguistics also goes by the name of diachronic linguistics, which is the scientific study of language change over time. According to Britannica.com (2019), historical linguistics, also called diachronic linguistics, is the branch of linguistics concerned with the study of phonological, grammatical, and semantic changes, the reconstruction of earlier stages of languages, and the discovery and application of the methods by which genetic relationships among languages can be demonstrated. Historical linguistics, traditionally known as philology, is the branch of linguistics concerned with the development of a language or of languages over time (Campbell, 2002). Historical linguistics is a subfield of linguistics in which an investigation of the history of languages is used to learn about how languages are

related, how languages change, and what languages were like hundreds and even thousands of years ago, even before written records of a language.

Moreover, this study focuses on variation over time in a language's semantic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and other features. Individuals who study historical linguistics are basically interested in the following: describing and also to account for observed changes in particular languages, reconstructing the pre-history of languages and to determine their relatedness by grouping them into language families, developing general theories about how and why language changes, again describing the history of speech communities and studying the history of words. Historical Linguistics explores different aspects of language change. The most commonly studied areas in historical linguistics are:

1. Etymology: Studying the reconstruction and origin of words.
2. Analysis and description of multiple speech communities.
3. Tracing (as far as possible) the history of language. This includes Sanskrit, Latin, Old English, and also modern languages, such as German, Italian and Japanese. This process also involves grouping languages into categories, or "families", according to the extent to which those languages are similar to each other.
4. Describing and analysing changes of any type which have occurred cross-linguistically and within a language itself. Languages can change in any area of language; phonology, syntax, morphology and orthography are only a few of the areas which could be considered.
5. The construction of a framework of theories which can account for how and why languages change.

According to historical linguistics, language evolves and diversifies over time, and the history of their evolution can be reconstructed by comparing modern languages to determine which traits their ancestral languages must have had for the later developmental stages to occur. Morphology is the study of formation of words. This study analyses the structure of words and parts of words and it also looks at parts of speech. A part of speech in traditional grammar is a category of words which have

similar grammatical properties. Words that are assigned to the same part of speech generally display similar behaviour in terms of syntax; they play similar roles within the grammatical structure of sentences and sometimes in terms of morphology, in that they undergo inflection for similar properties. Commonly listed English parts of speech are noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction, interjection and sometimes numeral, article or determiner.

### **2.3. African Historical linguistics**

According to Alexandre (1972), African linguistics was born in the nineteenth century, shortly after the birth of general linguistics. It is not accidental that the first pioneers in the field, or the greatest among them, were primarily Germans. The first important works dealing with the study of African languages by non-Africans were published in the seventeenth century by Catholic missionaries. The oldest works have not been preserved, but it is known that certain of them date from before the fifteenth century.

Similarly, Gregersen (1977:93) claims that, the significant work on African languages was at the beginning of the seventeenth century, not eclipsed until modern times. The major impetus for the work seems in most instances to have been the desire of missionaries to spread the gospel. But other reasons existed of course, including a humanistic curiosity kindled in the Renaissance. By the end of the century, significant work had been done on members from all the major linguistic phyla. The earliest extant texts of the period in languages without a native tradition of writing were catechism: in Kongo (1624), Ndongo (1643) and Ge (1658).

Alexandre (1972) gives an overview on how to study African languages. He says the study of African languages takes place at two different levels. On the first level, a language with a view to determining its structure and providing precise, rigorous, and systematic description of it is chosen. Such description, nevertheless, does not amount to grammar which would permit foreigners to learn the language described. More importantly, this description forms the scientific basis from which grammars of this type can be written (which can serve speakers of the language itself as well as foreigners wishing to learn it) from which vocabularies or dictionaries can be compiled. On the second level, the descriptions obtained by different linguists will be compared, first in order to find typological groupings (which can have an immediate

practical interest for the establishment of grammars, dictionaries etc.), then to formulate hypotheses about relationships between these languages which lead to their classification and eventually permit a recreation of their region (p. 22). African languages like any other languages have three components: what they inherited from their ancestors, what they innovated during their evolution, and what they absorbed from other languages along the way.

Prah (2009) claims that Africans have been using their languages for as long as they existed and it can be lucid that they have always had a perfect implicit knowledge of sound system and grammatical structure of their mother tongues. However, for many years, African languages had not been reduced to writing and in the same way; neither grammatical descriptions nor dictionaries of these languages had been produced. The formal study of African languages was pioneered by the European Christian missionaries from the early sixteenth century onwards.

## **2.4 Classification of African Languages**

Like any other set of entities, languages can be classified in an indefinitely large number of ways. For languages to have an immediate common ancestor in genealogical tree means that they are all the later differentiated continuation of what were once dialects of the same language. Before nineteenth century, certain observations relevant to classification had been made, based on an accumulation of data that begin essentially in the seventeenth century when the first grammars and dictionaries of African languages began to appear. The eighteenth century saw only very modest additions to our knowledge of African languages but towards the end of that period we find that the basic concept of genetic classification begins to come into clear focus in the form of specific hypotheses regarding the existence of certain language families. It was such hypotheses that formed the basis in the nineteenth century of the development of linguistics as a comparative-historical science. The early nineteenth century was marked by a great acceleration in the production of grammars and dictionaries of African languages as well as the publication of comparative word lists of considerable numbers of African languages (Ki-zerbo, 1981:292).

Language classification requires one to bring to light the relationships between the people who speak the language and the history of those people. Languages are

therefore classified through people and their history. The basis of classification is an analysis into linguistic types in which each linguistic family is distinguished by a set of structural characteristics. Ki-Zerbo (1981) present three ways of classifying a language, which are genetic, typological and geographical classifications. Ki-Zerbo (1981) states that genetic classification establishes relationships and affiliations within a linguistic family and thus helps least to some extent to re-establish the historical unity of people and culture using languages derived from a common stock. Typological classification groups together languages having obvious structural or systematic similarities and affinities. And geographical classification is mainly the result of an instinctive tendency to compare and group together languages which at the present time exist in any one setting.

Gregersen (1977), Ki-Zerbo (1981), Childs (2003), Heine and Nurse (2000), are all in agreement that African languages are divided into four families, namely: Niger-Congo, Afroasiatic, Nilo-Saharan and Khoisan. Childs (2003) stress this when he says the languages of Africa are generally divided into four major phyla: Niger-Congo, Nilo-Saharan, Afroasiatic and Khoisan, especially coupled with a good knowledge of socio-historical facts. Meinhof's recent attempt at the classification of African languages followed the pioneer period of Lepsius, Muller and Cust. In accordance with this classification the languages of the continent are exhaustively assigned to five families: Semitic, Hamitic, Bantu, Sudanese, and Bushman (Greenberg: 1963).

Also, in Southern Africa, Lichtenstein is credited with making the first clear distinction between the Khoi-Khoi and San languages on the one hand and the Bantu on the other. The identity of this latter group of closely related languages was recognized. It was variously called the Kaffrarian or South African family of languages. The Bantu, from the word for 'people' in many of these languages, was first proposed by W.H.I Bleek in 1851. He classified the languages into four groups: 1. Bantu; 2. Mixed Negro; 3. Hamitic; 4. Semitic. Fundamentally there were, however, two sets of languages: (a) Bantu and Mixed Negro (class languages) and (b) Semitic and Hamitic (gender languages).

## **2.5 The Bantu Family**

According to Nurse & Philippson (2003), Bantu-speaking communities are found in Africa, south of a line from Nigeria across the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Kenya, to southern Somalia and other languages between that line and the Cape. Twenty-seven African countries have communities that speak indigenous Bantu languages and they are: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, CAR, Comoros, Cameroon, Congo, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Kenya, Gabon, Mayotte, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Nigeria, Namibia, Somalia, Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The Bantu family form part of the Niger-Congo phylum.

Also, Prah (2009) states that 'Bantu' is the name for the family of languages currently spoken in much of sub-Saharan Africa. The term was coined in 1862 by Wilhem Bleek. Bleek was a German philologist and theologian who came to South Africa as a missionary during the early 1850s. For this and his other contributions he became known as the 'father of Bantu philology'. Before Bleek coined this term, however, there had been other attempts to find a name for this language family. Some of the attempts made in this vain included the ones listed below:

- a) The South African languages (Balbi, 1826)
- b) The Kaffarian Family (Pritchard, 1826)
- c) The Alliteral Class (Appleyard, 1847)
- d) The Kaffir Class (Clarke, 1848)
- e) The Nilotic languages (Krapf, 1850)
- f) Ba-languages (Barth, 1852)

## **2.6 Brief History of the Bantu Family with reference to Sotho Group**

Gailey (1970) provides an overview of the southern Bantu, he says in the early nineteenth century a series of revolutionary innovations by some of the Bantu led to the Mfecane or a decade of movement, warfare, and killing aptly defined as the time of crushing. Very few of southern Africa were unaffected by the Mfecane; untold thousands of Bantu were killed, some clans disappeared, and many moved hundreds of miles from their original locations. From the carnage and chaos there emerged a number of strong nations such as the Zulu, Swazi, and Basotho. These

were collections of many clans, a number of which had previously been hostile to one another. He goes further to say the Bantu of southern Africa can today be divided linguistically into three separate groups. The western Bantu, who live north and south of the Okavango River, presumably arrived at their present locations by a different, shorter, more western route than the other southern Bantu. The south-central Bantu are the various Shona groups of southern Rhodesia. The south-eastern group, which includes the majority of the people of South Africa, has four linguistics subdivisions – the Nguni, Shangaan-Tsonga, Sotho, and Venda. The major Nguni people are the Xosa, Zulu and Swazi.

Furthermore, Gailey (1970) asserts that, the Sotho are represented by the southern and northern Basotho and the Tswana. The ancestors of the Sotho were probably those pre-Shona Bantu who were skilled in mining and ironworking in Rhodesia. Some had probably moved south of the Limpopo River before the arrival of the Shona. One large group of the Sotho, today called the western Sotho, moved south-westward, skirting the eastern fringes of the Kalahari Desert. These western Sotho comprise all of the Tswana people together with small groups still residing in the Western Transvaal. The Tswana are today divided into a number of different segments. The most important of these are the Barolong, Bahurutshe, Bamangwato and Bakwena. Eastward in the Transvaal one encounters the eastern Sotho. The most important of this Sotho group are the Bapedi and those people such as the Kwena and Koni who have long been under Pedi influence. The areas of Lesotho live the southern Sotho. Before 1822 two separate kinds of southern Sotho could be identified on the basis of their migration patterns. There were those groups that had migrated there from the west, such as the Sia, Tlokwa, and Phuting, who were related to the Tswana, and those from the east such as Phuthi, who perhaps had been a part of the old Sotho population of the Swaziland area (1970:185).

Similarly, Wilson & Thompson (1982) say that the Sotho people are demarcated by language. It includes those who speak southern Sotho, northern Sotho or Pedi and Tswana. Chief Moshweshwe who formed Lesotho a century ago, was of the same stock and spoke the same language as the Tswana and Pedi, differing only in dialect. In 1965 there was five million of Sotho speakers scattered throughout southern Africa. A hundred and fifty years ago, they were concentrated between the Limpopo and the Orange Rivers, north and west of the Drakensberg, with some

across the upper reaches of the Limpopo. Sesotho is classified as one of the Bantu language family and it falls under a group named South Eastern Bantu. Nhlapo (2015:9) states that Sesotho, like Setswana is a Bantu language which can be found in the South-Eastern zone of Guthrie's (1971) zonal topogram. Sesotho, or Southern Sotho, is spoken in Lesotho, the Free State and southern Gauteng also spoken in the vicinity of Pretoria and Brits. Sesotho was one of the first African languages to be reduced to writing, and it has an extensive literature. The classification of Sesotho is shown in the table below:

<b>African Language Family</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Language Group</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Dialects</b>
Bantu family	South-eastern region. Zone S (S.30)	Sotho group	Sesotho	Setaung Sekwena Sekgolokwe Setlokwa

This table shows that Sesotho falls under the Bantu family, it is found in the South-eastern region and it is in the branch of Zone S (S.30). Sesotho is found in the Sotho group amongst Sepedi and Setswana. The dialects of Sesotho are Setaung, Sekwena, Sekgolokwe and Setlokwa.

## **2.7 Characteristics of the Southern Bantu Languages**

The written form of Sesotho was originally based on the Tlokwa dialect, today the written language is mostly based on the Kwena and Fokeng dialects although there are variations. It's a tonal language and very different to Western languages. This language is governed by the noun, which is split into various classes and it is known as an agglutinating language (a combination of simple word elements to express a specific meaning). With many suffixes and prefixes used in sentence construction causing sound changes, agglutination uses numerous affixes and derivational and inflexional rules to build complete words. Sesotho was transmuted into writing by the French missionaries, Eugene Casalis, Thomas Arbousset and Constant Gosselin of the Paris Evangelical Mission who arrived in Lesotho (Thaba-Bosiu) in 1833. Casalis published the first grammar book,

*Etudes sur la Langue Sechuanain* 1841. Sesotho is a tribal suffix, i.e. the name of the Sotho people or Basotho, while Sesotho is the term for the "language of the Basotho". Use of Sesotho rather than "Sotho language" in English has seen increasing use since the 1980s, especially in South African English and in Lesotho. Sesotho utilizes click consonants in some words, while Sepedi and Setswana do not have clicks.

## **2.8 Contributions made by missionaries**

The period of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century in the study of Bantu languages is known as the 'age of Brusciotto' paying tribute to the most important Bantuist of the time. According to Prah (2009), the entire era lasted from about 1642 to 1805. The bulk of the contributions during this period were by Roman Catholic priests who were referred to as the "Angola Fathers". These were missionaries based in Angola, Congo and East Africa. Most of their works were religious materials such as catechisms or other books of Christian doctrine.

Moreover, Eugene Casalis' major contribution was *Etudes Sur La Langue Sechuana*. The book was really a description of aspects of Southern Sotho; the study consisted of three parts, namely: a sixty page introduction dealing with the progress of the mission, fifty-one pages of grammar, and a fifty-page appreciation of *Poesies des Bassoutos*, comprising praises, proverbs and folktales. Of these, four were prose poems and eight animal praises in French translation. Father J. Torrend S.J.'s major contributions to Bantu linguistic studies are contained in *Comparative Grammar of South African Languages*, published in 1891. He also produced *English-Vernacular Dictionary of the Bantu-Botatwe Dialects of Northern Rhodesia*. He based his *Comparative Grammar of South African Bantu Languages* on thirty language clusters. Starting with a phonetic study, he proceeded to the grammar of these language varieties. On the other hand, Johann Ludwig Krapf's first linguistic contribution in Africa was not in Bantu languages but in Semitic and Cushitic languages of North-East Africa (2009:51).

Furthermore, Chaphole (1988) traced the development of Sesotho auxiliaries in the missionary period. He states that it is certainly not an overstatement to say that it is solely through the efforts of the missionaries that Southern African languages of the Bantu family were subjected to writing. He mentioned the work of Eugene Casalis,

Etudes sur la Langue Sechuana that was published in 1842; He claims that this little treatise contains a grammar of Sesotho and not of Setswana as the title suggests. In 1862, Schrumpf published a Long Grammatical Note on Sesotho. Mabile published a little Sesotho grammar called Helps to Learn Sesotho in 1876; in 1879 Kruger published Steps to Learn the Sesotho Language. Jacottet then followed to publish Elementary Sketch of Sesotho Grammar in 1893. These French Missionaries made a huge contribution to the grammar of Sesotho at different times. While Chaphole investigated the grammar of auxiliaries in Sesotho, he concerned himself with Jacottet's scientific work A Grammar of the Sesotho Language.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

Linguistics is seen as a science of language and speech. Language is a historical phenomenon used as a system and a tool of communication and it has its own history. Historical linguistics is a subfield of linguistics in which an investigation of the history of languages is used to learn about how languages are related, how languages change, and what languages were like hundreds and even thousands of years ago, even before written records of a language. From the findings of this chapter, Sesotho is classified as a language found under the Bantu family, situated in the South-eastern region and it falls under the Sotho group amongst Sepedi and Setswana. The missionaries published a vast major of books in Sesotho grammars and other Bantu languages; there is no one who traced the historical development of Sesotho parts of speech into thematic periods. This study will adopt thematic periods to trace the historical development of Sesotho parts of speech. The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework of historical linguistics.

## Chapter 3

### Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework is a component in research that introduces and describes the theory behind the research problem. This chapter will define historical linguistics; compare and discuss relevant theories and themes of historical linguistics and show how this research study fits in.

#### 3.2 Definition of historical linguistics

According to Campbell (2002), it is not possible to understand developments in linguistics without considering their historical and cultural contexts. Historical linguistics is the study conducted by historical linguists on how a particular language has developed in a certain period. De Kuthy (2001) defines historical linguistics as the study of how languages change over time and of their relationships with other languages. Labov (1994) asserts that historical linguistics can be thought of as the art of making the best use of bad data, though one would prefer to characterize the data in question as “imperfect.”

In addition, Kikusawa and Reid (2011) say historical linguistics is the study of the ways in which language changes through time. According to Trask (1996), historical linguistics is the study of language change over time. Crowley (1997) states that historical linguistics can allow us to go back quite a few thousand years in time, it can provide us with a number of different kinds of information about history of a society.

Furthermore, Bynon (1977) posits that historical linguistics is concerned with the process of language change through time, it investigates how and why the language of individuals, a social group or a whole ‘speech community’ develops in respect of its pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Lass (1969) says historical linguistics is the craft linguists exercise upon the results of change, in order to tell coherent stories about it.

### 3.3 Approaches to historical linguistics

The study of historical linguistics is based on the diachronic analysis and De Kuthy (2001) defines it as the domain of historical linguistics because the devices for recording sounds have only been around for about a century, therefore the vast majority of data used for historical linguistics is textual.

Kosch (1993) used the following periods as an approach to study the development of Northern Sotho linguistics: a) Traditional period

b) Functional period (Dokeian era)

c) Structural period (Van Wyk era);

d) Modern period.

According to Kosch (1993:13), the traditional period is the period around the 1800, and it is the classical or early European oriented period because the classical European languages were used as basis of description during that time while Latin was no longer used as the frame of reference. The functional period as indicated by Kosch (1993:28), refers to the period in 1927, and in that year C.M Doke revolutionised Bantu linguistics description with the presentation of a new model in his textbook of Zulu grammar published by the University of the Witwatersrand Press. Kosch (1993:53) further gives a third period which she refers to as the structural period, a period around 1958, characterised by the appearance of a doctoral thesis by E.B Van Wyk entitled *Woordverdeling in Noord-Sotho en Zoloe: 'n Bydraetot die vraagstuk van woord-identifikasie in die Bantoetale* (Word division in Northern Sotho and Zulu: A contribution regarding the problem of word identification in the Bantu languages) which was to steer the grammatical approach towards the Bantu languages in a new direction. The final period is referred to by Kosch (1993:74) as the modern period, the period around 1975 when the Bantu grammatical analysis had an experience of no change, but rather a gradual transition over a number of years.

Campbell (2002) based his study of historical linguistics on the approach of grammatical traditions, the rise of universal grammar, the rise of comparative method, philosophical-psychological (-Typological Evolutionary) approaches, the rise

of structuralism, Noam Chomsky & linguistic theory since 1957 and typology. On grammatical traditions, Campbell (2002) looked into the Old-Babylon tradition, Hindu tradition, the Greek grammarian tradition, Roman linguistics, the Arabic grammatical tradition, the Hebrew linguistic tradition and the early Christian writers. With regard to comparative method, he looked into the Scythian hypothesis and the notion of Indo-European, the work of Sir William Jones and the Neogrammarians. With regard to structuralism, he looked into the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), the Prague School and its antecedents, Franz Boaz (1858-1942), Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and Leonard Bloomfield (1887-1949).

Byon (1977) studied the historical linguistics in terms of linguistic reconstruction and prehistory; she dealt with the history of languages in terms of their own internal structure. Byon (1977) states that it must also be evident that all periods throughout its history a language has speakers and that these too have a history in political, social and cultural terms.

In addition, Trask (1996) used the comparative method to study the history of an individual language, which includes systematic correspondences and comparative reconstruction. On that note, Crowley (1997) goes further to study historical linguistics using comparative method looking at the sound correspondence and reconstruction, reconstruction of conditioned sound changes and the reality of protolanguages.

The study of linguistic change is called historical and comparative linguistics. Linguists identify regular sound correspondences using the comparative method among the cognates (words that developed from the same ancestral language) of related languages. They can restructure an earlier protolanguage and this allows linguists to determine the history of a language family.

Languages that evolve from a common source are genetically related. These languages were once dialects of the same language. Earlier forms of Germanic languages, such as German, English, and Swedish were dialects of Proto-Germanic, while earlier forms of Romance languages, such as Spanish, French, and Italian were dialects of Latin. Furthermore, earlier forms of Proto-Germanic and Latin were once dialects of Indo-European.

A linguistic change like sound shift is found in the history of all languages, as evidenced by the regular sound correspondences that exist between different stages of the same language, different dialects, and different languages. Words, morphemes, and phonemes may be altered, added or lost. The meaning of words may broaden, narrow or shift. New words may be introduced into a language by borrowing, or by coinage, blends and acronyms. The lexicon may also shrink as older words become obsolete.

Change comes about as a result of the restructuring of grammar by children learning the language. Grammars seem to become simple and regular, but these simplifications may be compensated for by more complexities. Sound changes can occur because of assimilation, a process of ease of articulation. Some grammatical changes are analogic changes, generalizations that lead to more regularity.

These are the examples of language change in English:

Old English	499-1066 CE	Beowulf
Middle English	1066-1500 CE	Canterbury Tales
Modern English	1500-present	Shakespeare

Phonological change: Between 1400 and 1600 CE, the Great Vowel Shift took place. The seven long vowels of Middle English underwent changes. The high vowels [i] and [u] became the diphthongs [aj] and [aw]. The long vowels increased tongue height and shifted upward, and [a] was fronted. Many of the spelling inconsistencies of English are because of the Great Vowel Shift. Our spelling system still reflects the way words were pronounced before the shift took place.

Morphological change: Many Indo-European languages had extensive case endings that governed word order, but these are no longer found in Romance languages or English. Although pronouns still show a trace of the case system (he vs. him),

English uses prepositions to show the case. Instead of the dative case (indirect objects), English usually uses the words *to* or *for*. Instead of the genitive case, English uses the marker ('s) after a noun to show possession. Other cases include the nominative (subject pronouns), accusative (direct objects), and vocative.

Syntactic change: Because of the lack of the case system, word order has become more rigid and strict in Modern English. Now it is strictly Subject - Verb - Object order.

Orthographic change: Consonant clusters have become simplified, such as *hlaf* becoming *loaf* and *hnecca* becoming *neck*. However, some of these clusters are still written, but are no longer pronounced, such as *gnaw*, *write*, and *dumb*.

Lexical change: Old English borrowed place names from Celtic, army, religious and educational words from Latin, and everyday words from Scandinavian. Anglo-Saxon (German dialects) form the basis of Old English phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. Middle English borrowed many words from French in the areas of government, law, religion, literature and education because of the Norman Conquest in 1066 CE. Modern English borrowed words from Latin and Greek because of the influence of the classics, with much scientific terminology.

Language change has an influence on the structure of a particular language; it may be from phonology, morphology, semantic and syntax. The study will use De Kuthy's (2001) English illustration scope of language change. As may be obvious, English has changed especially over the most recent 1100 years such a lot of that Old English is totally unimaginable to modern speakers, requiring language training practically identical to learning, say, German; but then it is as yet unchanged language as it were it has been spoken during that time by the English, and there has never been a reasonable break between Old English and Modern English. You cannot remove Old English and say that the English communicated in one language for a few hundred years, and afterward on such and such a date changed to another language. The change, similar to all normal language change, was continuous. It is historical linguistics that concentrates on the idea of this kind of language change.

De Kuthy (2001) provides the kinds of language change using English as a point of reference. Languages go through change at every single linguistic level and each part of language (phonetic, phonemic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic) is

affected by the progression of time. Phonetic: Old English had the sound u-umlaut, while that sound is at this point not present in Modern English. Phonemic: Old English viewed [v] as an allophone of /f/, while in Modern English /v/ is a phoneme itself. Morphological: Old English had case endings on ordinary nouns to distinguish indirect and direct objects. Modern English has no such marking, depending rather on prepositions and word order. Syntactic: Old English permitted questions to be formed by inverting the subject and the action word, whether or not it was an auxiliary. Modern English just permits this with auxiliaries, and employs "do" in any case. Semantic: In Old English, "girl" alluded to both young men and young women. In Modern English it just alludes to young women.

Languages change for vast reasons. A language may split into two or more languages if the speakers become separated into two or more groups with little or no contact. Such is what happened with Latin during and after the heyday of the Roman Empire. Latin-speaking peoples were scattered far and wide around Europe and eventually lost contact with people in other regions. Thus the Latin of people living in Iberia eventually became Spanish, Portuguese or Catalan, people in Gaul spoke French and Provençal, and so on for all the Romance languages. Along with the fact that languages tend to change naturally through internal factors, language contact also plays a major role in language change. If two groups of people speaking two different languages come in close contact with each other (for trade, etc.), then each group's language may begin to adopt features of the other's. Vocabulary is frequently added to a language through language contact. Less frequently phonetic, phonemic, and even syntactic, morphological and semantic borrowing can occur. Borrowings frequently obscure the relationship of languages by "covering the tracks" of historical development. For example, the Latin word for beer was "cerevisia". Spanish preserved this word in the form "cerveza". French, however, while it is a direct descendant of Latin, chose to borrow a word from the German tribes its speakers were in contact with - "bier".

Since resistance to change is by all accounts a characteristic human quality, it is not surprising as usual that language change has habitually been opposed all through the ages. One of the most conspicuous instances of such obstruction has been the development in different nations of language foundations - establishments coordinated to endeavour to manage, stop, or even converse language change. Habitually such associations see themselves as shielding their language from the

attack of barbaric terms from different languages, or probably forestalling vulgar speech (generally alluding to linguistic advancements presented by the lower classes) from defiling the language as a whole.

According to De Kuthy (2001) there are two models of language change, the family tree model and the wave model. The family tree model was the first (nevertheless the most recognizable) attempt at portraying the connections between languages. It lays on two presumptions: the regularity hypothesis, this is the possibility that languages change in normal ways they don't display wild, irregular changes which appear to follow no patterns. This is essential in light of the fact that without it, noticed similarities between languages would not lead us to presume that they came from a typical source which has wandered in ordinary ways - they could simply have come from totally different sources, yet have changed so on a very basic level and sporadically that they wind up having numerous likenesses. The relatedness hypothesis, this is the speculation which says that on the off chance that two languages show a significant measure of similarity, one can infer that they are connected. This cooperates with the routineness theory in the accompanying manner: assuming that there are two languages, A and B, which show a decent arrangement of comparability. We close by the regularity hypothesis that the source of the likeness isn't superficial, however has emerged through customary, normal change. Then, at that point, on the grounds that the two languages are similar, there will be a conclusion by the relatedness hypothesis that they are hereditarily related in some way.

In one hand with the family tree model, languages are dealt with similarly as people are in a family tree: they have mothers, sisters, and daughters. The model is addressed by a (typically descending developing) tree, with more established ages at the top and descendants at the base. Assuming a language is associated with a language straight above it by a "branch", then; at that point, the lower language is a daughter of the higher language. Sisters are languages that have a same mother.

On the other hand, the wave model is meant to correct some of the problems with the family tree model, and as such is more satisfying theoretically, but it is not as easily conceptualized as the family tree model. The idea is that instead of having definite delineations between languages, there are waves of linguistic change which affect some languages but not others, and tend to spread out to other languages nearby.

Different waves represent different linguistic features, and so for any given language it will share some features with its neighbours but not others.

Another theory that is part of historical linguistics is sound change. Sound change is the most normally concentrated on type of language change in diachronic linguistics. There are a few explanations behind this. Sound change was the practically select focal point of past historical linguists. For that reason the greatest amount of existing historical work is on sound change. Sound change has an impact in pretty much every part of language change. For instance, the morphological and syntactic changes that came from the deficiency of case endings in Old English were in huge part because of the trademark Germanic first-syllable stress which would in general put forth the case endings distorted and thusly vague, driving speakers to find different method for communicating linguistic relations. It is by contrasting sound changes and similarities that one would figure out which dialects are hereditarily connected with which. Sounds are definitely steadier after some time than is syntax, semantics, morphology, or other aspects of language. Sound change is more straightforward to manage at a starting level, and the techniques utilized transfer to the study of different kinds of language change.

A Sound change is a phonological process which has been acknowledged by all speakers of a language. Sound changes will generally spread from one speaker to another step by step in a wave-like example until they are consistently involved by all speakers in a linguistic community. They don't unexpectedly happen anywhere in a language. There are several dimensions along which sound changes can be categorized. Conditioned versus unconditioned sound changes, this alludes to whether or not the phonological cycle making the sound change is reliant upon the phonetic environment or not. Those which are reliant are conditioned; those which are not are unconditioned. Both of these classifications can be additionally partitioned. Conditioned sound changes consist of assimilation, dissimilation, deletion and insertion. Unconditioned sound changes on the other hand consist of monophthongization: Diphthongs become monophthongs. Diphthongization, here monophthongs become diphthongs. Metathesis: The order of sounds change. Raising/Lowering: The position of the tongue becomes either higher or lower when producing certain sounds. Backing/Fronting: The position of the tongue becomes either more forward or more back.

Campbell (1998) states that the historical linguist may also study changes revealed in the comparison of related languages, often called comparative linguistics. One would say that languages are related to one another when they descend from a single original language, a common ancestor. A Comparative method may be used a theory of historical linguistics, this is a method (or set of procedures) which compares forms from related languages, cognates, which have descended from a common ancestral language (the proto-language), in order to postulate, that is to reconstruct, the form in the ancestral language. The comparative method is also important in language classification, in linguistic prehistory, in research on distant genetic relationships. The comparative method is central to historical linguistics, the most important of the various methods and techniques one use to recover linguistic history.

Another theory is linguistic classification. A question one may ask is how are languages classified and how are family trees established? Subgrouping, as the classification of related languages is called, is an important part of historical linguistics. Linguistic classification is about the relationships among languages (and language varieties); to see how it work. Subgrouping is about the internal classification of the languages within language families; it is about the branches of a family tree and about which sister languages are most closely related to one another. Dialect means only a variety (regional or social) of a language, which is mutually intelligible with other dialects of the same language. 'Dialect' is not used in historical linguistics to mean a little-known or minority language, and it is no longer used to refer to a daughter language of a language family, though the word has sometimes been used in these senses. The term subgroup (also called subfamily, branch) is relatively straightforward; it is used to refer to a group of languages within a language family which are more closely related to each other than to other languages of that family that is, a subgroup is a branch of a family. Subgrouping is the internal classification of language families to determine which sister languages are most closely related to one another.

As discussed earlier, the family tree is the traditional model of language diversification. The family-tree model attempts to show how languages diversify and how language families are classified. A family-tree diagram's purpose is to show how languages which belong to the same language family are related to one another. Linguistic diversification refers to how a single ancestor language (a proto-language)

develops dialects which in time through the accumulation of changes become distinct languages (sister languages to one another, daughter languages of the proto-language), and how through continued linguistic change these daughter languages can diversify and split up into daughters of their own (members of a subgroup of the family). The family-tree diagram represents this diversification, being a classification of the languages of a family and the degree of relatedness among the various languages.

Syntactic change as one of the themes of historical linguistics has three mechanisms: reanalysis, extension and borrowing. Reanalysis changes the underlying structure of a syntactic construction, but does not modify surface manifestation. The underlying structure includes constituency, hierarchical structure, grammatical categories, grammatical relations and cohesion. Surface manifestation includes morphological marking (for example, morphological case, agreement, gender) and word order. Extension results in changes in surface manifestation, but does not involve immediate modification of underlying structure. Syntactic borrowing is much more frequent and important than some scholars have thought in the past, though others have gone to the other extreme of assuming that everything not otherwise readily explained in a language's grammar is due to borrowing. It is important to avoid such excesses but also to recognise the proper role of syntactic borrowing in syntactic change.

As this study will focus more on syntactic categories it is important to mention generative approaches and explain linguistic change in historical linguistics. Most work on historical syntax since 1960 has taken the perspective of Generative Grammar (or its descendants). Generative linguists generally associate syntactic change with child language acquisition. Seeing syntactic change as part of what happens in the transition of grammars from one generation to the next. In this view, child language learners hear the output of adults around them and on the basis of these data they must construct their own grammar. The grammar which the children acquire reproduces the output which they hear from the adults' grammar more or less accurately, but it does not necessarily coincide with the internal structure of adults' grammar. After learning an optimal grammar as children, adults may later add rules to their grammars which make them no longer optimal. Children of the next generation, hearing the out- put of this non-optimal adult grammar, restructure it as they construct their own internal grammars, making it more optimal. Central to the

generative view of language change is the notion that linguistic change in general, and therefore also syntactic change, takes place in the language acquisition process and in the transition of grammars from one generation to the next. Many cases of syntactic changes would seem to conform to this view, though others seem at odds with it. This approach assumes that many of the kinds of changes are the results of the child language learners just getting it wrong, making mistakes.

Campbell (1998) explains linguistic change stating different reasons. Climatic or geographical determinism was thought by some to lie behind some linguistic changes. Some spoke of racial and anatomical determination: one example of this is the notion that Germanic tribes had a greater build-up of earwax (for reasons left unaddressed) which somehow impeded their hearing, resulting in the series of consonantal changes in Grimm's Law. More insidious are claims of language change due to physical attributes assumed to be associated with different races. A most obvious example attributes phonetic traits encountered in some African languages such as implosives, clicks or labiovelar sounds to changes that must have taken place to produce such sounds in the first place, according to those making these claims, due to the anatomical structure of the lips of black Africans. Etiquette, social conventions and cultural traits: many have speculated concerning cultural motivations for certain linguistic changes. Indolence: a particularly common assumption, especially among lay people, is that language change is the result of laziness - young people or particular social groups who are seen to be changing their speech in ways disapproved of are assumed to be just too slovenly to pronounce correctly, or to produce the full or distinct grammatical forms, and so on. Ease and simplification: a common assumption has been that language speakers tend towards 'ease of articulation', which leads to language change. 'Simplification' became an important part of the generative linguists' approach to linguistic theory and consequently also to their views of linguistic change. We will need to look at this in more detail as we explore plausible explanations for why languages change.

Foreign influence (substratum) - borrowing: Languages do change through borrowing, indisputably, though often language contact has been exaggerated and abused in attempts to explain particular changes. Any change whose cause is otherwise not understood, or any exception to otherwise general accounts, was often attributed to influence from other languages, often in spite of no evidence in the neighbouring languages that might support such a view. Desire to be distinct and

social climbing: it was sometimes proposed that groups of people changed their language on purpose to distinguish themselves from other groups. Sociolinguistic study shows that group identity is a very important factor in many changes, but it is not achieved in quite such a simple-minded way as formerly conceived of. External historical events: it is sometimes asserted that particular historical events are the cause of certain linguistic changes. A typical example is the proposed correlation between certain linguistic changes and the expansion of the Roman Empire. Jespersen correlates the Black Death and the wars and social disruption of the later Middle Ages (which coincided in England and France) with the most rapid linguistic change. (1998:283-285)

### **3.4 Conclusion**

From the above discussion, it is clear that the study of historical linguistics put more emphasis on the nature and character of grammatical traditions or themes based on various periods. This research study will also attempt to trace the development of Sesotho linguistics syntactic categories on the same notion of grammatical themes based on various linguistic periods. Furthermore, the study will adopt the comparative method, tracing similarities amongst the parts of speech and comparing various parts of speech found in every period. It is assumed that linguistic characteristics of each period have influence on the naming and identification of the parts of speech in African languages, and in particular Sesotho linguistics. This study will also categorise five linguistic periods in an attempt to trace identification and development of Sesotho syntactic categories, or parts of speech. They are the pre-literary period, historical comparative period, missionary period, structural/functional period, and Chomskyan period.

The next chapter will trace the development of Sesotho syntactic categories based on five thematic approaches, namely: pre-literary, comparative, missionary, structural/functional, and Chomskyan period.

## CHAPTER 4

### Historical Development of Sesotho Linguistics

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter traces the history of the development of Sesotho as a spoken language during the pre-literary period and as the written language from the missionary period until the Chomskyan period. The main focus is to identify the main characteristics of each period, traces the classification and description of Sesotho syntactic categories for each period, identifies the challenges various linguistic periods brought to the grammatical development of Sesotho and lastly determines contributions each period made to the development of Sesotho. All these major aspects involving development of Sesotho linguistics, will be dealt with in four linguistic periods of study, namely (a) Pre-Literary period (1659-1800); (b) Historical comparative period (1800-1826); (c) Missionary period (1826-1927); (d) Structural/Functional period (1927-1975) and (e) Modern/Chomskyan period (1975 to date). The Comparative-Historical period will not be discussed in detail in this chapter as it does not specifically speak about Sesotho syntactic categories or parts of speech.

#### 4.2. Pre-history and pre-literary period: 1659 – 1800 AD

This period will trace pre-history of South Africa from earlier Stone Age to Iron Age. It will also trace the Basotho nation building, the Mapungubwe trades, and the concept of Ubuntu, oral literature and its significance as well.

It is imperative to trace the South African pre-history from earlier Stone Age until the Iron Age to see the development of life and the way of living. That will in turn taper down to how the nation of Basotho came about, how they lived and which language they used and how it was developed.

Huffman (2010) provides an overview of South African pre-history, divided into the following stone ages: Firstly, some hominids began to manufacture stone tools about 2.6 million years ago, thus beginning the Earlier Stone Age known as the Oldowan industry, most of the earliest tools were rough cobble cores and simple flakes. The flakes were used for such activities as cutting meat and skinning animals. At present, it is unclear which hominids made Oldowan tools. Many scientists believe *Homo habilis* produced them. Sterkfontein is one of the few sites anywhere to yield an *in situ* assemblage of Oldowan tools. By about 1.4 million years ago, hominids started

producing more recognizable stone artefacts such as hand axes, cleavers and core tools. Although serving many purposes, these Acheulean tools were probably designed to butcher large animals, such as elephants, rhino and hippo, which had

died of natural causes. Because these animals were particularly dangerous, hominids were probably not yet able to hunt them. At this time, then, the ancestors were most likely specialized scavengers. Such scavenging yielded enormous amounts of protein, which was critical in the evolution of the human brain. The hominids that made Acheulean tools can confidently be identified as *Homo ergaster* (formerly called *Homo erectus*). Acheulean artefacts seldom occurred in cave sites until the end of the Earlier Stone Age (from about 400,000 to 250,000 years ago), but some have been found at Sterkfontein and Swartkrans. Most Acheulean material is found outside caves because ancestors had not yet mastered fire.

Secondly, the repeated use of caves by 250,000 years ago, the beginning of the Middle Stone Age, indicates that ancestors had developed the concept of a home base and hearths showing that they could make fire. The tool kits included prepared cores, parallel-sided blades and triangular points. The same points were hafted to make spears used to hunt large grazers such as wildebeest, hartebeest and eland. By this time, then, the ancestors had become accomplished hunters. These early hunters are classified as archaic humans. By 100,000 years ago, they were anatomically fully modern. Fully modern human behaviour, such as abstract thought, complex politics and kinship systems, requires the use of true language. Other animals communicate, but only humans have the ability to string together sounds in unlimited combinations. Unfortunately, archaeologists cannot study directly abstract thought, kinship systems or language. This is why small artefacts are so important. Among other artefacts, compound tools, such as hafted harpoons and compound glues for hafting spear points, indicate complex thought. Evidence for these cognitive advancements comes from Sibudu Cave near Durban and Blombos Cave in the Cape both dating to about 70 000 years ago. These were important steps in the cultural evolution of humanity. In addition, the widespread use of red ochre, presumably as body paint, also shows that Middle Stone Age behaviour had become more human. The recent finds of decorated ochre at Blombos and decorated ostrich eggshells at Diepkloof in the Cape, further demonstrates this point.

Thirdly, by 25,000 years ago at the beginning of the Later Stone Age, archaeological deposits contain a diagnostic tool kit that includes small scrapers and segments manufactured from fine-grained materials. By this time, Later Stone Age people were hunting small game with bows and poisoned arrows. In addition to bow hunting and

shellfish collection, human behaviour was recognisably modern in other ways. Uniquely human traits such as rock art and purposeful burials with ornaments were a regular practice. In southern Africa, these people were the ancestors of the San (or Bushmen). San rock art has a well-earned reputation for aesthetic appeal and symbolic complexity. David Lewis-Williams and his team have been able to unravel this complexity, at least in outline, through the careful use of some 13 000 pages of text recorded in the late 19th century in English and the San language. Rather than a record of daily life, the art is essentially religious. Among other aspects, it expresses beliefs about the role of shamans (medicine people) in controlling rain and game, and in healing through the famous 'trance dance'. Trance images figure prominently, along with animals of power, such as eland, elephant and rhino. Southern Africa has the largest corpus of rock art anywhere in the world, and the Drakensberg contains some of the finest. Because of its richness, it is part of the UKhahlamba-Drakensberg World Heritage Site.

#### **4.2.1. The transition from the Later Stone Age to Iron Age**

Kessy (2013) states that Iron Age agropastoralists, suggested to have been Bantu speakers, left West Africa and spread to Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa. In their migrations, the Iron Age people came into contact with autochthonous Late Stone Age populations. The question of the nature of the contacts between Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers and advancing Iron Age agro pastoralists has led archaeologists to propose at least three interaction models namely: displacement, assimilation, and acculturation to describe the fate of Late Stone Age hunting-gathering communities at the onset of Iron Age agro pastoralist dispersal to sub-Saharan Africa.

He goes further to explain the three models in this manner: The displacement model assumes that the spread of Bantu-speaking people south of the Equator resulted in the dislocation of Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers, this model accounts for why autochthonous Late Stone Age people today are represented by scattered groups of minority populations. The assimilation model suggests that by the early first millennium AD, most Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers were absorbed by more technologically sophisticated Iron Age agropastoralists, whose presence is identified in the region by pottery and evidence of iron working. The acculturation model suggests that the Iron Age people involved in the formative period in most areas of

Eastern and Southern Africa were descendants of Late Stone Age hunter-gatherers. This model does not involve assimilation or displacement, but rather diffusion of cultural elements from neighbouring agriculturalists or pastoralists to hunter-gatherers.

According to Phillipson (2005), the African Iron Age is traditionally considered that period in Africa between the second century AD up to about 1000 AD when iron smelting was practiced. In Africa, unlike the Europe and Asia, the Iron Age is not prefaced by a Bronze or Copper Age, but rather all the metals were brought together. From the 2nd century AD to about 1000 AD, the Chifumbaze spread iron throughout the largest portion of Africa, eastern and southern Africa. The Chifumbaze were farmers of squash, beans, sorghum and millet, and kept cattle, sheep, goats and chickens. They built hilltop settlements, at Bosutswe, large villages like Schroda and large monumental sites like Great Zimbabwe. Gold, ivory, and glass bead working and trade was part of many of the societies. Many spoke a form of Bantu; many forms of geometric and schematic rock art are found throughout South and Eastern Africa.

Phillipson (2005) gives an outline for African Iron Age timeline as follows:

- 2nd millennium BC: West Asians invent iron smelting
- 8th century BC: Phoenicians bring iron to North Africa (Leptis Magna, Carthage)
- 8th-7th century BC: First iron smelting in Ethiopia
- 671 BC: Hyksos invasion of Egypt
- 7th-6th century BC: First iron smelting in the Sudan (Meroe, Jebel Moya)
- 5th century BC: First iron smelting in West Africa (Jenne-Jeno, Taruka)
- 5th century BC: Iron using in eastern and southern Africa (Chifumbaze)
- 4th century BC: Iron smelting in central Africa (Obobogo, Oveng, Tchissanga)
- 3rd century BC: First iron smelting in Punic North Africa
- 30 BC: Roman conquest of Egypt 1st century AD: Jewish revolt against Rome

- 1st century AD: Establishment of Aksum
- 1st century AD: Iron smelting in southern and eastern Africa (Buhaya, Urewe)
- 2nd century AD: Heyday of Roman control of North Africa
- 2nd century AD: Widespread iron smelting in southern and eastern Africa (Bosutswe, Toutswe, Lydenberg)
- AD 639: Arab invasion of Egypt
- 9th century AD: Lost wax method bronze casting (Igbo Ukwu)
- 8th century AD; Kingdom of Ghana, Kumbi Selah, Tegdaoust, Jenne-Jeno.

The Iron Age is so named after the materials used at the time to make tools and weapons. It followed the Stone and Bronze Ages but developed at different times in different parts of the world. In East Africa people produced steel as early as 500 BC. In Europe, this development happened only in the 1700s AD. Technology in Africa was therefore long advanced before the arrival of European colonisers. Bantu-speaking people who migrated to the south from North and Central Africa transmitted Iron Age technology across Africa. Their language and culture mixed with those of the groups they met, which is why many African people are Bantu-speaking. They also brought iron smelting technology and agriculture to these groups and founded great kingdoms like Great Zimbabwe, Mapungubwe and Thulamela. Before the Iron Age in Southern Africa, most people were nomadic and survived by hunting wild animals and gathering wild plants. Most chiefdoms were small and people did not regard land as property. This resulted in harmonious co-existence as no tribe needed to be or was sufficiently more powerful to conquer another. Some scientists say this was helped by the abundance of resources. Food and water were readily available and people simply followed the animals they hunted as the seasons changed. This made the nomadic life more practical than settling in one place. (Huffman, 2010).

According to Huffman (2010), the Bantu language family originated in West Africa, along the border of present day Nigeria and Cameroon. Generally, the evidence

suggests that between 200 BC and AD 200 the ancestors of Eastern Bantu-speaking people moved out of this homeland into East and Southern Africa. These people cultivated sorghum and millets, herded cattle, sheep and goats and manufactured iron tools and copper ornaments. As a rule, these homesteads were sited near water and good soils that could be cultivated with iron hoes. Because metalworking represents a totally new technology, some archaeologists call this period the Iron Age. The first 900 years are known as the Early Iron Age (EIA), while the people themselves are sometimes referred to as Early Farming Communities (EFC). As agriculturalists, these farming people lived in semi-permanent homesteads comprising pole-and-dagga (wattle and daub) houses and grain bins arranged around animal byres. This arrangement, known as the Central Cattle Pattern, was characteristic of Eastern Bantu speakers who preferred cattle for bride wealth, traced their blood from their father, practised male hereditary leadership and had a positive attitude about the role of ancestors in daily life. Throughout the Iron Age, climatic fluctuations played a significant role in structuring human geography. When EIA people first entered southern Africa, the climate was warmer and wetter than today. Between about AD 700 to 900 the climate was colder and drier than at present, and EIA farmers would have retreated to more optimal areas. The climate became better again sometime during the Middle Iron Age, between AD 900 to 1300. At about AD 1700, however, the 'Little Ice Age' reached its nadir, and its impact upon human population was particularly severe. Besides these changes, Iron Age farmers had to contend with unpredictable droughts. When the droughts were particularly severe, from 3 to 5 years in a row, rainmakers would perform special rituals on special hills, and the common people would follow with various cleansing rituals. Evidently, some people had to burn their grain bins down and build new ones on top. These burnt structures are not as common as archaeologists once thought, and they can now be used as a cultural proxy for severe drought.

#### **4.2.2. Southern Africa's Iron Age**

The roots of southern Africa's Iron Age are in something called the Bantu expansion. Around 200 CE, Bantu-speaking peoples of west/central Africa expanded to the east and south, spreading not only their technologies, but also the technologies of people who they encountered. This included metallurgy, or metalworking. As these Bantu-speaking people entered into southern Africa, they started competing with the

nomadic cultures that lived there, and often either assimilated or replaced them. By 400 CE, Bantu-speaking people and their technologies had made it to the southern tip of the continent. These are the ancestors of all Bantu-based languages in southern Africa today as well as the majority of southern Africa's modern population. Throughout this time of expansion, a lot changed, very quickly. The nomadic and semi-nomadic people suddenly had access to iron-smelting technologies and tools, which let them clear out swaths of forest and start farming. They grew sorghum, millet, melons, gourds, and other products. Without needing to roam for food, permanent villages and societies appeared, as did advanced ceramics and pottery. This is one of the few places in the world where widespread agriculture, pottery, and iron all appeared at the same time.

The Southern African Iron Age began around 1 800 years ago, when the Ntu speaking (formerly known as Bantu) peoples moved into the area. The newcomers slowly replaced the San, as they had a different lifestyle, which included pastoralism, made possible by domesticated plants and animals, whereas the San still maintained a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. In the Kruger Park area, the Ntu tribes settled along the Limpopo, Luvuvhu, Shingwedzi and Letaba Rivers, moving to the Sabie and Crocodile rivers later. The life of Iron Age farmers differed from that of Khoisan hunters and gatherers in the following ways:

- They cultivated crops and kept domestic livestock
- They lived in semi-permanent villages
- They smelted and forged iron
- They produced pottery of characteristic types

Khoikhoi herders also had domestic animals and pottery but they did not cultivate crops. Although it is impossible to know for certain what language was spoken by the inhabitants of early farming settlements, it is generally accepted that they were Ntu-speakers on the basis of continuity in the archaeological record from the earliest sites to the more recent, historically documented past. By some 1 800 years ago, farming communities, which are known to have used iron tools, had moved south of the Limpopo River into areas previously inhabited only by hunter-gatherers and herders. The sites reveal increased numbers of cattle, a growth of wealth and

political stratification. Between 800 and 1 050 years ago at Mapungubwe on the Limpopo River, there is evidence of extensive trade in ivory and tortoise-shell for glass beads, cloth and Chinese porcelain. Trade networks extended to the Indian Ocean coast and indirectly to Arabia and the Orient. The site of Mapungubwe is divided into an elite hilltop area and a surrounding village settlement believed to have been occupied by commoners. The rich burials on the hilltop containing precious gold objects affirm the status of the rulers. As a centralized state, controlling a far-reaching trade network, Mapungubwe reached its height before Great Zimbabwe to the north. As the name implies, Ntu-speaking people have been classified into groups based on language. They form part of the large Ntu-speaking family, comprising over 70 million people, living in the area stretching southwards from the Great Lakes in equatorial Africa. It was also during this period that the area known as South Africa began to receive international attention for its trade goods. The three main attractions were ivory, slaves and gold. The interest from Arab traders led to the rise of trading posts such as Mapungubwe (a site located within the Vhembe Dongola National Park), on the current Zimbabwe/Botswana border.

The phrase 'Iron Age' in the South African context refers to a technology that led to the earliest major transformation of human society in South Africa. Iron Age technology was based on farming and metal production, which led to fundamental changes in the South African economy, South African politics, and South African social relationships. Before the Iron Age, everything was on a small scale in South Africa so far as human beings were concerned. After the Iron Age, the way was open for the emergence of our present large-scale South African society. (Mason, 1974)

Mason (1974) asserts that the Iron Age was significant because in the South African context, it prepared South African society for rapid adjustment and interlocking with complex Western technology, leading to the present explosively productive South African economy. South Africa today could not have been built without the foundation of human aptitudes for complex industrial labour created by the Iron Age.

#### **4.2.2.1 The Mapungubwe trades**

The people of Mapungubwe were wealthy and farmed with cattle, sheep and goats, and also kept dogs. They produced large harvests that allowed them to trade and store extra food. Archaeologists found traces of millet, sorghum and cotton in the remains of storage huts. Riches also came from ivory, gold and the rich farmland caused by the flooding of the area. From about 1220 to 1300 Mapungubwe was an advanced trading centre and its inhabitants traded with Arabia, China and India through the East African harbours. Farm animals supplied meat and hides, but they also hunted, snared and gathered other food. The city could trade because it was so close to the Limpopo River, which connected it with the coast. They exchanged salt, cattle, fish, gold and iron, ivory, wood, freshwater snail and mussel shells, chert and ostrich eggshell beads were used for glass beads and cloth. The first settlers of Mapungubwe were early Iron Age settlers. They lived there from about 1000 AD to 1300 AD and around 1500 Iron Age subsistence farming settled there. Their existence is confirmed by the discovery by archaeologist of a few potsherd identified as early Iron Age pottery. This means that they manufactured their own pottery and metal tools. Mapungubwe was structured along social classes. This may be seen from the location of people's houses separating leaders and commoners. The elite lived at the top of Mapungubwe and their followers stayed at the bottom of the hill and in the surrounding area. Mapungubwe was the first state in Southern Africa 1220-1300, and Great Zimbabwe was the predecessor. After Mapungubwe demised, Great Zimbabwe rose into prominence and became the new leading trade centre in Southern Africa. Archaeological evidence suggests that Great Zimbabwe became a centre for trading; with artefacts suggesting that, the city formed part of a trade network linked to Kilwa and extending as far as China. Copper coins found at KilwaKisiwani appear to be of the same pure ore found on the Swahili coast. This international trade was mainly in gold and ivory; some estimates indicate that more than 20 million ounces of gold were extracted from the ground.

Shortly after the abandonment of Mapungubwe (about AD 1300), the ancestors of the present day Sotho-Tswana moved south from East Africa. Archaeologists have recorded the earliest Sotho-Tswana sites, characterized by a ceramic style called Moloko, in the Limpopo Province. Somewhat later, Sotho-Tswana people moved south into a large part of Gauteng and the Northwest Province. About 100 years

earlier, the ancestors of Nguni-speaking people had moved from East Africa into the KwaZulu-Natal region. These Late Iron Age farmers left huge numbers of stonewalled settlements throughout South Africa. Southern Nguni built the first stonewalling in about AD 1300 in the Midlands of KwaZulu-Natal known as Moor Park, this first walling stands in defensive positions on hilltops and spurs. The front-back orientation of these settlements conforms to the shape of the terrain. Somewhat later (about AD 1450), a few Northern Nguni moved up onto the Free State highveld and built circular settlements. The best-known are near the hill Ntswanatsatsi (the legendary place of origin of the Bafokeng), which has given its name to the walling type. Somewhat later still, these Nguni people moved across the Vaal River into the hilly areas of Gauteng and the North West Provinces, introducing the practise to Sotho-Tswana people. By the late 18th century, Western Sotho-Tswana had created the Molokwane type, best known from the site with the same name west of Rustenburg. Some Molokwane settlements were huge aggregations, housing up to 20 000 people. From this time on, urban settlements became characteristic of Sotho-Tswana life.

#### **4.2.2.2 Late Iron Age and the Basotho nation building**

Basotho of modern-day Lesotho are descents of Iron Age Bantu-speaking and Nguni communities that settled in southern Africa in about the sixteenth century. Economically, they depended on crop production, pastoralism, gathering of edible wild plants and hunting, and engaged in reciprocal economic exchanges within their groups. They also participated in trade with more distant communities in the region such as the Nguni communities in the modern-day Natal and Eastern Cape areas of South Africa. There was trade in household utensils made from iron and copper, iron hoes, animal skins, cattle, tobacco and commodities. Beads were used as currency in long-distance trade.

#### **4.2.3 Pre-literary period and the concept of Ubuntu**

Broodryk (2002) conceives Ubuntu as a comprehensive ancient African worldview based on the values of humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion and associated values. The questions, what does it mean to be African? How does one speak of an African, and for what purpose, are critical to understandings of the notion of Ubuntu and its perceived importance to African communities. Mudimbe

(1985) raises similar and very critical questions when he asks, in which areas and against which background is the knowledge of the African's being to be deposited? How does one define this very being, and from which authority could one provide a foundation for possible answers. For Mudimbe (1985), the ways in which the African worldview and African traditional systems have been thought of and the means used to explain them relate to theories and methods whose constraints, rules, and systems of operation suppose a non-African epistemological locus. For instance, when Mbeki described himself as 'an African', as the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom, he was not simply appealing to nationalistic populism. On the contrary, he was articulating his perception of his African identity. It is a norm among the Basotho to dare one to praise one's totem group. Such praises take the form of oral historical recitations of one's family which are passed from generation to generation and whose knowledge is highly valued and treated as a signifier of one's identity. (Letseka, 2012)

A common thread running through the work of Liebenberg (2000), Sindane (1994), Tutu (1999), to mention a few, is the conviction that Ubuntu is a moral theory. That is, it serves as a cohesive moral value in the face of adversity. Bessler (2008) argues that in South Africa the culture of Ubuntu is the capacity to express compassion, justice, reciprocity, dignity, harmony and humanity in the interests of building, maintaining and strengthening the community. Ubuntu articulates our interconnectedness, our common humanity and the responsibility to each that flows from our connection. It is a worldview that emphasises the commonality and interdependence of the members of the community. Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu or "a human being is a human being because of other human beings" resonates with Mbiti's (1990) maxim I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am, which articulates social interdependence or a deep rootedness in community. For Sindane (1994), "Ubuntu inspires us to expose ourselves to others, to encounter the difference of their humanness so as to enrich our own". (Letseka, 2012)

The values which Ubuntu seeks to promote can also be traced in various Eurasian philosophies. German scholar and intellectual Wilhelm von Humboldt expounded on the notion of bildung in his theory of Bildung. He argued that bildung is about linking

the self to the world in the most general, most animated and most unrestrained interplay. Humboldt understood *bildung* as mimetic, that is, as non-teleological, undetermined and uncertain, and aimed at the reconciliation between outer historico-social and inner individual conditions. For Humboldt, *bildung* requires interchange between individuals. It is a political and social harmony that must be achieved in the modern state. Sorkin notes that for Humboldt, there is an internal moral imperative which makes *bildung* become the basis of politics. Standish (2002) contends that in the world of *bildung* the self is never a lonely wanderer, but always already involved, such that the opposition between the self and the world is not a contingent one but expresses a necessary relation. (Letseka, 2012)

Given some of the values that are implicit in Ubuntu, such as altruism, kindness, generosity, benevolence, courtesy, and respect for others, Nkondo (2007) contends that Ubuntu has the potential to deepen our disposition for compassion and caring. He opines that the political ideal of Ubuntu associated with communalism seeks to reconcile two ideals: first, the idea that society possesses a morally privileged status that should be enshrined and protected by certain inviolable rights and freedom against exploitation and domination. The Ubuntu-based political ideal is founded on the idea that we live in a moral space mapped by strong values, that one's social world provides a framework which defines the shape of a life worth living. Thus under Ubuntu conditions political thinking would involve interpretation of shared understandings and meanings bearing on the political life of one's community.

The word Ubuntu is derived from a Nguni (isiZulu) aphorism: *Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu*, which can be translated as "a person is a person because of or through others" (Moloketi, 2009). Ubuntu can be described as the capacity in an African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality in the interests of building and maintaining communities with justice and mutual caring (Khoza, 2006). The Ubuntu application is pervasive in almost all parts of the African continent. Hence, the Ubuntu philosophy is integrated into all aspects of day-to-day life throughout Africa and is a concept shared by all tribes in Southern, Central, West and East Africa amongst people of Bantu origin (Rwelamila et al, 1999). Although the Bantu languages have evolved since the concept was first formulated, the meanings and principles of Ubuntu are the same in all these languages.

An African is not a rugged individual, but a person living within a community. In a hostile environment, it is only through such community solidarity that hunger, isolation, deprivation, poverty and any emerging challenges can be survived, because of the community's brotherly and sisterly concern, cooperation, care, and sharing. The Ubuntu philosophy does not mean that people should not address themselves to a problem, but it does imply that they should look at whether what they are doing will enable or empower the community around them and help it improve. The Ubuntu philosophy also implies that if people are treated well, they are likely to perform better.

Practising the Ubuntu philosophy unlocks the capacity of an African culture in which individuals express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality in the interests of building and maintaining communities with justice and communalities. Africans are social beings that are in constant communion with one another in an environment where a human being is regarded as a human being only through his or her relationships to other human beings. There are several basic management principles derived from African tribal communities that embody this philosophy, including trust, interdependence and spiritualism. This Ubuntu approach plays a pivotal role in determining the success of any African organisation. Ubuntu transcends the narrow confines of the nuclear family to include the extended kinship network that is omnipresent in many African communities. As a philosophy, Ubuntu is an orientation to life that stands in contrast to rampant individualism, insensitive competitiveness, and unilateral decision-making. The Ubuntu teachings are pervasive at all ages, in families, organisations and communities living in Africa. People who truly practise Ubuntu are always open and make themselves available to others, they are affirming of others and do not feel threatened that others are able and good. (Nzimakwe, 2014)

#### **4.2.4. Oral literature and its significance during Pre-literary Period**

Oral traditions are messages that are communicated orally starting with one age then onto the next. The messages might be gone down through discourse or song and may appear as folktales and fables, epic narratives and portrayals, proverbs or sayings, and melodies. Oral Traditions make it workable for a general public to pass information across ages without writing. They assist individuals with figuring out the

world and are utilized to show children and grown-ups significant parts of their way of life.

There is a rich practice all through Africa of oral storytelling. Basotho could not read or write, so the transmission of information, history and involvement within the Basotho was predominantly through the oral practice and performance rather than on written texts; in that sense, Sesotho was a spoken language up until the arrival of the French Missionaries. Oral traditions guide social and human ethics, providing individuals with a sense of place and purpose. There is frequently an example or a worth to ingrain, and the transmission of wisdom to children is a community obligation. Parents, grandparents, and family members participate during the time spent elapsing down the information on culture and history. Storytelling gives entertainment, fosters the creative mind, and teaches significant lessons about life.

Oral history is a form of Basotho oral tradition. It is the recording, conservation and interpretation of historical information, in view of the narrator's individual encounters and opinions. It frequently appears as onlooker account about previous occasions, however can incorporate legends (*ditshomo tsa diemahale*), folklore (*ditshomotshomo*), myths (*ditshomo tsa bosatsejweng*), praise poems (*dithoko*), riddles (*dilotho*), proverbs (*maele*), songs (*dipina*) and stories (*dipale*) passed down over the years by word of mouth.

During pre-literary period, Sesotho was a spoken language used for everyday communication. The development of Sesotho in this period can be seen where Sesotho was used as a tool for oral traditions. The Basotho had to record historical information as a means of conservation, teach significant lessons about life, preserve their culture and tradition through folktales, proverbs, riddles, songs and stories; the Basotho used their language to do so.

This period provided an overview of the South African pre-history classified into stone ages. The earlier Stone Age is known to be the Oldowan industry, the beginning of middle Stone Age indicates that ancestors had developed the concept of a home base and hearths showing that they could make fire and in the later Stone Age they were hunting small wild animals with bows and arrows. The transition from later Stone Age to Iron Age traced the origins of Bantu, language and culture tapering to the nation building of Basotho. Oral traditions are messages that are

communicated orally from young to old people. Sesotho was used as a means of communication. In this case, the spoken language was the main objective and here there was no purposeful study of grammatical features of Sesotho. This period was important because it brought the oral tradition that Basotho used to record and preserve their historical information. For their information to be memorable, they used folklore, proverbs, riddles etc. The next section will focus on the historical comparative period.

### **4.3 Historical Comparative Period: 1800 – 1826 AD**

The previous period looked at the pre-history of South Africa and the development of Sesotho as a spoken language during the pre-literary period.

#### **4.3.1 Characteristics of historical comparative linguistics**

The main focus was to explore the culture of European languages and to classify them according to their similarities and differences. The linguists of this period, believed that the languages of Europe were the same and this similarity was due to the fact that these languages descended from the same proto-language, known as the Indo-Germanic language. As for the differences, it is due to the change in the meaning of the words as these European nations migrate. Linguists followed the history of language to discover its culture by comparing it to other languages. This was very easy because the European languages were already developed into the written form. This linguistic comparison was based on vocabulary, phonology, morphology and syntax. These European languages were sorted according to their similarities: Hellenic -> Greek, Indi-Iranian -> Persian, Italic-> Sicilian; French; Spanish; Portuguese, Celtic-> Welsh; Irish; Scotch, Germanic-> German; Dutch; English; Scandinavian, Baltic -> Lithuanian and Slavic -> Russian.

The linguists who came to prominence in the study of historical comparative linguistics in European languages were people like F. Bopp; A.W. von Schlegel; F. von Schlegel; Dane R. Rask; J.L.K Grimm and A. Schleicher. This study of historical comparative linguistics was passed on to African languages by people like John Philip; James Cowles Prichard; William Boyce; John W. Appleyard; W.H.I. Bleek; J. Torrend and Carl Meinhof. Among them the study highlights Wilhelm Bleek and Carl Meinhof, the linguists who stood out in African languages comparative and classification.

#### **4.3.2 Language classification**

Language classification is the grouping of related languages into the same category. Language classification simply means to divide languages into categories that are governed by certain similarities; languages that are very similar will be classified separately. In this classification, the similarity of languages is based on vocabulary, phonology, phonology and syntax. All of these must go hand in hand and be constructed to avoid gaps and shortcomings in language classification. However, language classification is multidisciplinary, and there have been many linguists who

have been involved in the classification of African languages. The study can point out Karl Lepsius, Meinhof and Westerman to name just a few.

#### **4.3.3 Methods of language classification**

African languages can be classified using three methods namely: areal classification, typological classification and genealogical classification. Areal classification involves geographic criteria, and covers those languages that are close by and have developed similar characteristics in terms of structure. Under the influence of intensive mutual influences, these kinds of languages are creating language unions. In typological classification, languages are grouped into language types on the basis of formal criteria, according to their similarities in grammatical structure. There are several types: flexile (morphological resources), agglutinative (affixes), and rooted (the root of the word as a morphological resource). The genealogical classification indicates the historical connection between the languages, and it uses the historical and linguistic criteria as a basis. Genealogical classification is based on the premise that languages can be divided into one common language (proto-language). The conclusion that languages descended from the same culture was achieved by examining the linguistic similarities in terms of phonology, morphology and syntax.

In African languages, areal classification was introduced by Doke, van Warmelo and Malcolm Guthrie. Through this classification we are told that languages that are almost identical are often found in the same place. However, this issue of regions is problematic because sometimes the language may be the same as another but not found in the same place. Doke lists seven regions in his language classification: North-western region, North region, Congo region, the Middle/Centre region, East region, South-eastern region and South-western region. The typological classification will group languages into agglutinating languages (*dipuo tsa dikgomathiso*), isolating languages (*dipuo tsa maikemedi*), fusional/inflectional languages (*dipuo tsa makopanyo*) and polysynthetic languages (*dipuo tsa dingatana*). Agglutinating language is a language which has a morphological system in which words as a rule are polymorphemic and where each morpheme corresponds to a single lexical meaning. Characteristics of agglutinating languages using Sesotho examples are: there is multiplicity of morphemes per word. For an example: Moahisane (*Neighbour*) will have these morphemes: mo-ah-is-an-e. In agglutinating languages there is an invariance of morphemes - morphemes appear in exactly the same form as morphs.

For an example:

Morphemes - [batho] [ba] [a] [thus]-[an]-[a]

Morphs - /ba/ /tho/ /ba/ /a/ /thus/ /an/ /a/

Every morpheme has its own meaning - one form one meaning. For an example: **rahelwa**, rah- motso (*root*), -el- leetsetsi (*applicative suffix*), -w- boetsuwa (*passive suffix*), -a sehlongwanthao/mokwallo (*verbal suffix*). Morphemes have grammatical functions - one morpheme one function. For an example: rek-el-a (-el- puts the verb in a transitive form).

Basically, it is clear that there could never be only one method of classifying languages; so, the study will classify languages in terms of areal classification, genealogical classification and typological classification.

In the method of typological classification is where certain terms are used to show the interrelationships between languages. This method, however, includes or incorporates genealogical and areal classification and here again the interrelationships between languages are explored in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. The terms used in the classification are: family, region, group, language and dialect.

#### **4.3.4 A brief history of the description and classification of the Bantu languages**

Bantu languages started to kindle the scholarly curiosity of Europeans as early as the late 15th century, when Portuguese sailors began their voyages along the coasts of Central, Southern and Eastern Africa. Bantu words and phrases slipped into the writings of European seafarers, merchants, soldiers and missionaries. In their endeavours to spread the holy word among the peoples of Africa, missionaries had the most direct utilitarian interest in acquiring knowledge of Bantu and other African languages. It is therefore not surprising that the oldest extant Bantu language text is a Kongo translation of the catechism by the Portuguese Jesuit Mattheus Cardoso (1584-1625) from 1624. The oldest Bantu (Latin-Spanish-Kongo) dictionary was compiled through close collaboration between the Kongo priest Manuel Roboredo and several Spanish Capuchins. It was subsequently hand copied by the Flemish Capuchin Joris Van Gheel in 1617-1652, and his copy from 1652 is the only one available. The oldest Bantu grammar, on Kongo too, is also a product of clerical

scholarship. It was written by the Italian Capuchin priest Giacinto Brusciotto (1601-1659). This grammar was translated into English and made available to a wider public by Guinness (1882). All three documents pertain to one and the same variety of South Kongo, i.e., the court language spoken at Mbanza Kongo, the capital of the Kongo kingdom, the direct ancestor of present-day Sikongo H16a (Bostoen & de Schryver 2018). Detailed historical accounts of early missionary and other research into the Bantu languages are to be found in Johnston (1919: 1-14) and Doke (1935, 1959).

The birth of Bantu linguistics as a scientific discipline is commonly attributed to the Rhenan (German) philologist Wilhelm Heinrich Bleek, who established Bantu as a family and gave it the name it still has today. As pointed out by Fodor (1980: 127-128), the unity of the Bantu languages was actually recognised more than a decade earlier by the American scholar H. E. Hale, who collected African vocabularies during his voyage around the globe as part of the United States Exploring Expedition commanded by Charles Wilkes. Hale divided what would become known as the Bantu languages into two distinct branches, i.e., the Congo-Makua and the Caffrarian languages, but did not propose a common label for the group.

It was Bleek himself who introduced the label Bantu in a book volume published in 1958. Further elaborating on ideas that he had started to develop in his doctoral thesis (Bleek 1851), he proposed to use that name for designating those African languages which are “prefix-pronominal” (cf. Chrétien 1985: 46), in contrast to the “suffix-pronominal” or “sex-denoting” languages, including what he called the “Hottentot” and “Bushman” languages according to the parlance of that time, i.e., those known as “KhoiSan” today. Koelle (1854) had also noticed that concord prefixes equally occurred in many languages of West Africa. Bleek defined “prefix-pronominal” languages as those “in which the pronouns were originally identical with the derivative prefixes of the nouns” and situated them in the “Tropical Regions of Africa, and probably also of the Islands in the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific” along with two families in “the African or Continental Section of this Class,” i.e., “the Bántu and the Gor Family” (Bleek 1858), already previsioning there what would later become Niger-Congo. Bleek situated his “Gor” family in sub-Saharan Western Africa. Bantu, on the other hand, had both a South-African and West-African division. The South-African division comprised languages still considered to be Bantu today, subdivided in three distinct branches: South-Eastern, including all known languages

of Southern Africa (except KhoiSan), North-Eastern, including languages spoken along the Eastern Coast of Africa and South-Western, including those spoken along the Western Coast of Central and Southern Africa, such as Herero R31.

The West-African division, however, occupied parts of the territory of the “Gor” family and included languages such as “the Otshi dialect of Ashanti-land, and the Bullom and Timneh of Sierra Leone” (Bleek, 1858), which are classified today in other branches of the Niger-Congo phylum. Hence, Bleek’s original definition of Bantu was territorially much wider than ours today. Moreover, it was not really genealogically founded. Bleek’s answer to the question heading this section was rather typologically oriented and took the feature of pronominal agreement through prefixes as its point of departure. In his *Comparative Grammar of South African Languages*, Bleek (1862, 1869) was also the first to come up with a noun class prefix system, whose structure and numbering system are still used by current-day Bantuists - and scholars of Niger-Congo more generally - some changes notwithstanding (Katamba, 2003).

The scholar who truly defined Bantu as a genealogical unity, i.e., a family of languages descending from a common ancestor that can be reconstructed through the establishment of regular sound correspondences among modern-day languages, was the Prussian (German) philologist Carl Meinhof. Meinhof postulated the existence of Ur-Bantu or Proto-Bantu and stated that “Die Gesetze des Ur-Bantu sind nur aus den heute gesprochenen Bantusprachen zu erschliessen. Da sie aber in allen Bantusprachen ihre Spuren hinterlassen haben, ist ihre Kenntnis unerlässlich für die Erforschung der einzelnen Sprachen” (Meinhof 1899: 7) [“The laws of Proto-Bantu can only be deduced from Bantu languages spoken today. However, as they have left their traces in all Bantu languages, their understanding is imperative for the study of the individual languages,”].

Meinhof is not really explicit on the territorial spread of the Bantu languages, but from the map at the end of his 1899 treatise, it is obvious that his idea of the family’s distribution was much narrower than Bleek’s. Excluding Western Africa, Meinhof’s conception comes close to our own current conception of the Bantu area, except for his northern extensions into the Darfur and Kordofan regions. In his comparative work aiming at the reconstruction of Proto-Bantu, Meinhof also incorporated North-Western Bantu languages, such as Duala A24 from Cameroon.

Johnston (1919) conceived the geographical delimitation of the Bantu languages along the same lines as Meinhof, i.e., “the whole of the southern third of Africa, with the exception of very small areas in the south-west (still inhabited sparsely by Hottentot and Bushman tribes) and a few patches of the inner Congo basin.” He was only hesitant about “the northern boundary of the Bantu field,” which he considered to be “still a little uncertain and not easy to delineate geographically. It may be said to start on the west coast of Africa in the Bight of Biafra (due north of the island of Fernando Po), at the mouth of the Rio del Rey in the southern portion of the Bakasi peninsula, which flanks the estuary of the Old Calabar river.” He situated the north-western extremity of the Bantu area in the borderland between present-day Nigeria and Cameroon, but recognised that the languages spoken there miss some of the distinctive characteristics of a typical Bantu language.

For a language to be qualified as Bantu according to Johnston, it thus had to fulfil at least two conditions: (1) possess a sufficient number of distinctive word-roots cognate with word-roots found elsewhere in the family, and (2) manifest certain characteristic phonological, morphological and syntactic features, such as simple vowel systems and open syllables, agglutination, invariable word-roots, noun class system, the absence of sex-based gender distinctions, pronominal agreement, verb extensions, decimal numeration and the use of prepositions rather than postpositions (Johnston 1919: 18-20). The 12 so-called “propositions” laid down by Johnston to “define the special or peculiar features of the Bantu languages” were actually a critical reassessment of the 12 structural parameters originally proposed by Lepsius (1880). These were long considered “an authoritative outline of Bantu criteria” and also quoted and used by Cust (1880) and Werner (1919) in their reference sketches of African and Bantu languages, respectively (Guthrie 1948: 9).

Johnston (1919) qualified a language only fulfilling one of the two conditions mentioned above as “semi-Bantu.” Although some of these “semi-Bantu” are what we consider today as “Bantoid” or “Wide Bantu” languages (cf. *infra*), Johnston (1919) also identified “semi-Bantu” languages elsewhere in the current-day Niger-Congo area, very much in line with Bleek’s West-African division of Bantu.

Johnston’s distinction between Bantu and semi-Bantu languages persisted in the comparative work of Malcolm Guthrie (1948, 1971). Building on the Bantu scholarship discussed above, Guthrie adhered for his referential classification to two principal (1-2) and two subsidiary (3- 4) criteria to define what a proper Bantu

language is: (1) A system of grammatical genders (or noun classes), usually at least five, corresponding to four more features which we cannot recall here for reasons of space; (2) a vocabulary, part of which can be related by fixed rules to a set of hypothetical common roots; (3) a set of invariable cores, or radicals, from which almost all words are formed by an agglutinative process, these radicals having five more features which we also cannot recall here for reasons of space; (4) a balanced vowel system in the radicals, consisting of one open vowel 'a' with an equal number of back and front vowels (Guthrie 1948: 11-12). Guthrie distinguished between two categories of "languages which are incompletely Bantu," viz. "Bantoid" and "Sub-Bantu" languages. In Guthrie's view, Bantoid languages are those spoken in Cameroon and south-eastern Nigeria, which "have a system of grammatical genders and agreements operated by means of prefixes," but "show little or no relationship of vocabulary with full Bantu languages" and also "do not display even the rudiments of the structural features laid down in the third criterion; moreover their vowel system is frequently complicated" (Guthrie 1948: 19)

Sub-Bantu languages, on the other hand, are those responding to all criteria set out by Guthrie except the first, i.e., a system of grammatical genders. They still manifest traces of the noun classes and grammatical agreement, but these systems have become very fragmentary, if not completely defunct. Most of Guthrie's Sub-Bantu languages, such as the Congolese language Bira D32, occur in the northern Bantu borderland. Others are vehicular languages spoken further south, such as Lingala C36d. While Guthrie excluded Bantoid languages from his referential classification, he did include Sub-Bantu languages.

#### **4.3.5 Language family**

Languages found in the family reflect similarity in phonology, vocabulary, and syntax. These languages are grouped together and referred to as belonging to the same family. The family languages, however, must indicate that they come from the same lineage, and the Bantu languages, by genetics, are from Ur-Bantu. These African languages can be divided into five categories, which can be called language families: Semitic, Hamitic, Bantu, Sudanese and Bushman.

The map in figure 1 below shows Niger-Congo languages where Bantu family is covers the large part in the Congo region, Central region and towards the Southern region. The map in figure 2 below presents the approximate locations of the sixteen

Guthrie Bantu zones, including the addition of a zone J. The study locates the Bantu groups found in the South-eastern region covered by the S. zone: Sotho - S30, Nguni - S40, Venda - S20, Tsonga - S50, and Tonga (Inhambane) - S60. The map in figure 3 below shows all African language families where Niger-Congo languages are classified and grouped in A and B - Bantu families are found in Niger-Congo B coloured in Orange.

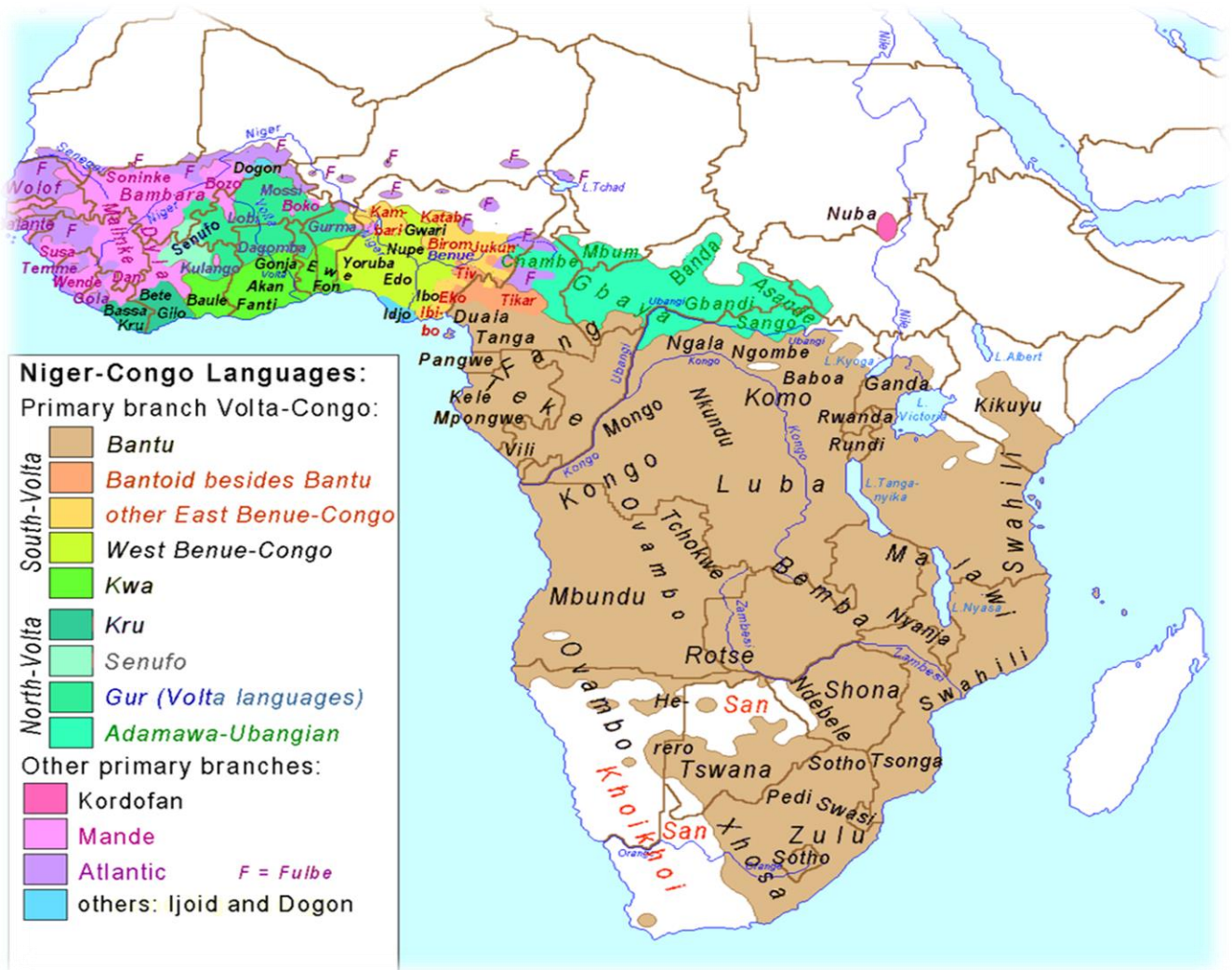


Figure 1: Niger-Congo languages

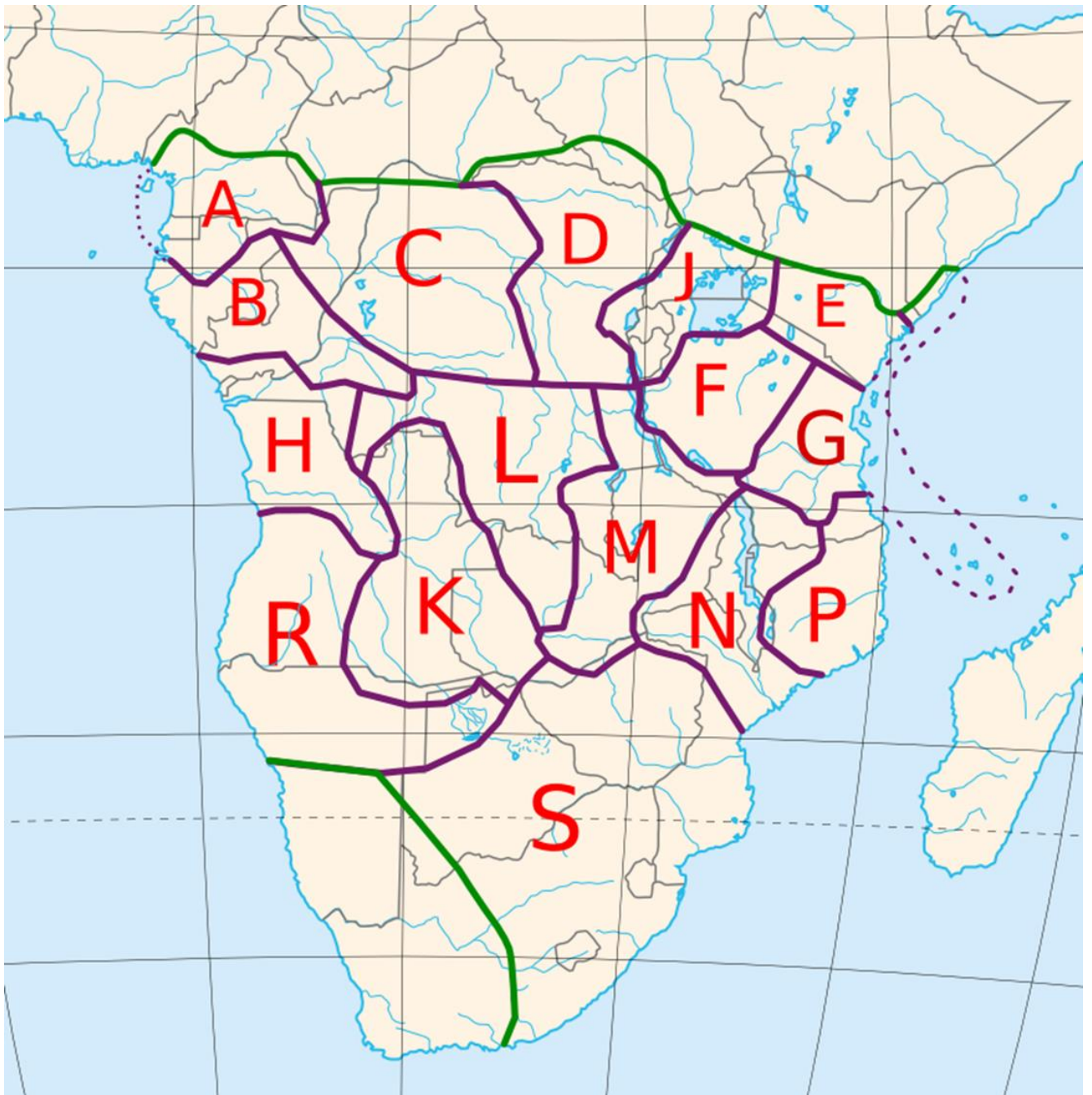


Figure 2: Guthrie's geographic zones of Bantu languages

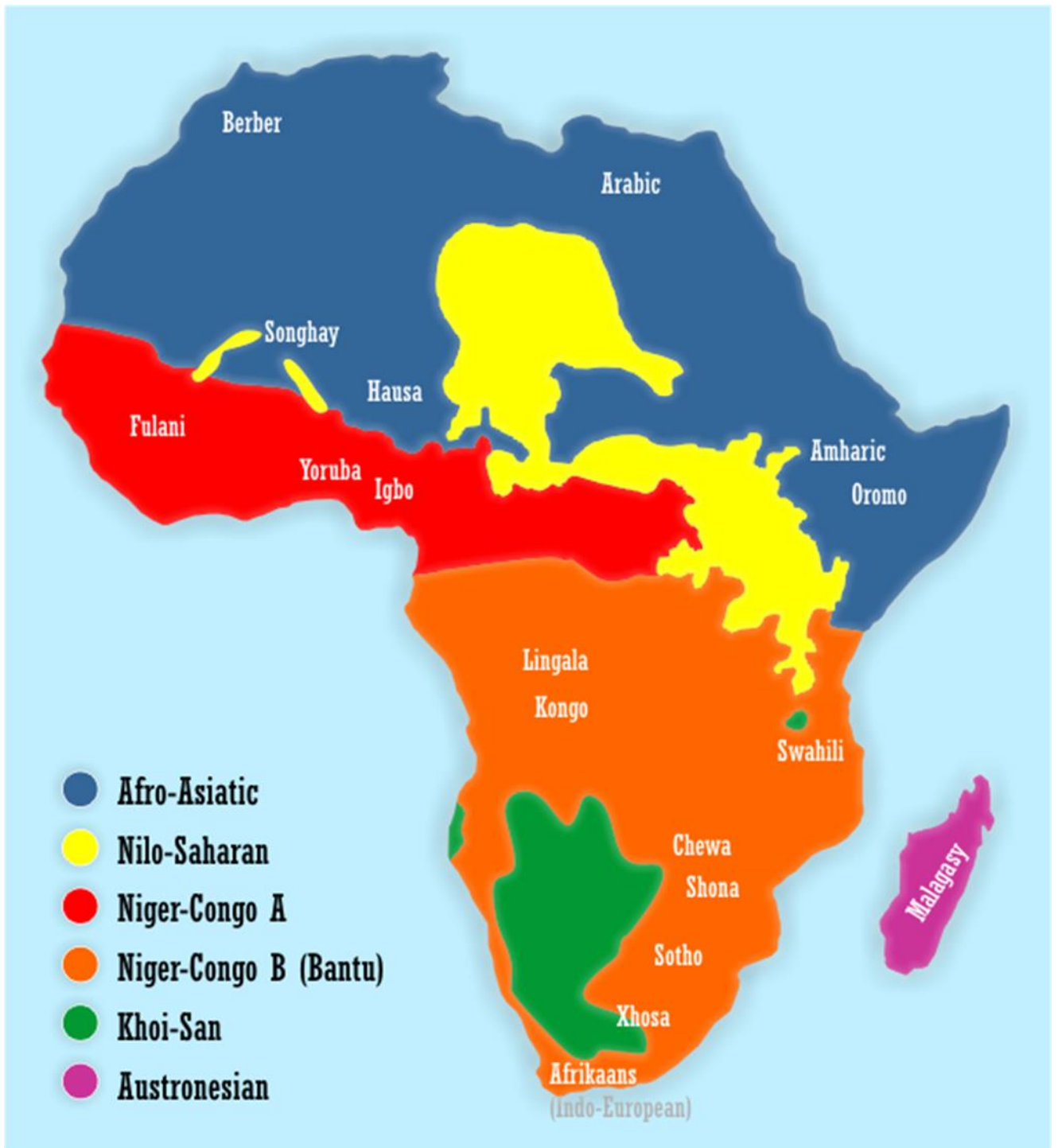


Figure 3: African language families

Sesotho and other Southern African languages are classified into region, group, language, and dialect. The linguistic region is one in which there are certain languages that prove to be from the same family, but, they produce more similarities among them than other languages of that family. Regional languages are the closest among members of a language family. Regions are accepted because the languages of that region are genetic, and the family may have more than one region. A good example is the regions that Doke provided: North-western region, North region, Congo region, the Middle/Centre region, East region, South-eastern region and South-western region. A linguistic group is a group of languages within a region that reflects the greater similarity than that of the region. The members of the group descend from the region, and such a group will be unique in certain behavioral patterns of its members, which are quite different from those of the other groups. The South-eastern region has the following groups: Sotho, Nguni, Venda, Tsonga, and Tonga (Inhambane).

Language is a tool, a basic means by which information can be stored and passed on to future generations, and only its value can be enhanced. Language can be both written and spoken. Languages that are spoken differently but written the same are one and employ the same written form based on one of the languages. Languages are subdivided into the following groups: Sotho - Sesotho, Setswana and Sepedi; Nguni - isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, and Siswati; Venda - Tshivenda; Tsonga - Xitsonga; and Tonga - ChiTonga.

Some languages have a particular form spoken only in certain areas. These particular forms are called dialects. Although dialects are languages, they are often regarded as not pure languages. Dialects can often be promoted and adopted in schools and be used in churches. Here are the ones: Sesotho - Setaung, Sekwena, Sekgolokwe, and Setlokwa; isiZulu - KwaZulu Natal Zulu, Transvaal Zulu, Qwabe and Cele; Setswana - Serolong, Sengwaketse, Sehurutse, Setlhaping, Sekgatla and Sengwato; Sepedi - Seroka, Sephalaborwa, Sehananwa, Sepulana, Sekone, Setlokwa, Sekopa and Khelobedu; isiXhosa - Mpondo, Xesibe, Bomvana, Ngcika, Gcaleka, Thembu, Mpondomise, Ndlambe and Hlubi. Siswati - Hhoho, Nandzini and Shiselweni.

### **4.3.6 Challenges and conclusion**

This period does not classify parts of speech but strictly deals with classification of languages. Several methods of classifying languages are areal, genealogical, and typological classification. Sesotho was classified in terms of family, region, group, language and dialect. It was classified as one of the highly agglutinative languages that fall within the Bantu family. Sesotho is found in the South-eastern region and forms a Sotho group with Setswana and Sepedi. The dialects of Sesotho are Setaung, Sekwena, Sekgolokwe and Setlokwa. This period was important because it highlighted the distinguishing characteristics of Bantu languages and in particular Sotho group (Sesotho, Setswana and Sepedi). However, this period does not mention anything about Sesotho syntactic categories.

The next period will look into the contributions made by missionaries towards the development of Sesotho syntactic categories.

## **4.4 Missionary Period: 1826 – 1927 AD**

The previous period looked at the pre-history of South Africa and the development of Sesotho as a spoken language during the pre-literary period.

### **4.4.1 Characteristics of the Missionary period**

According to Kosch (1993:13), the missionary period is actually the *traditional period* around the 1800, and what Jacobson (1986) referred to as the classical or early European period because classical European languages were used as basis of describing other languages, during that time while Latin was no longer used as the frame of reference.

The main focus of this period was the study of school grammars and identification of parts of speech of any language. This was based on Aristotle philosophy that the world consists of substances, which are given names and do certain actions as subjects. Their actions are explained by predicates. The structure of a sentence is therefore based on this logic and philosophy. When the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) began thinking about language more than two thousand years ago, he talked about four parts of speech: nouns, verbs, articles, and conjunctions. Dionysus Thrax, the Greek grammarian (170-90 BC), expanded Aristotle's idea. Dionysus named eight parts of speech: nouns, verbs, pronouns, articles, conjunctions, participles, prepositions, and adverbs. Dionysus did not have a category for

adjectives; he included them with nouns. Much later, Latin grammarians dropped articles from the list and added interjections. Still, the parts of speech have hardly changed over the two thousand years since Dionysus. The eight parts of speech along with their dictionary abbreviations are noun (n), pronoun (pron), verb (v), adjective (adj), adverb (adv), preposition (prep), conjunction (conj), and interjection (interj).

During this traditional period, linguists were prescriptive, determining the rules of the languages, only written languages were regarded as the source for language studies. The Christian missionaries pioneered the transition of indigenous African languages from oral into written form in the early 1800s. They codified the language, wrote descriptive grammars and dictionaries and initiated translation of texts, especially biblical texts and primers for purposes of evangelism and education for those whose hearts were 'pierced' by the Word. These characteristics were carried over to South African languages with the arrival of the missionaries and Sesotho was no exception.

#### **4.4.2 Missionary Contributions**

In the case of Sesotho language, this period deals with the contributions made by the missionaries with regard to the development of Sesotho language in terms of the writing system, grammars, translations and most importantly, Sesotho parts of speech from the year 1826 to 1870. Parts of speech are defined as a traditional class of words (such as adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and verbs) distinguished according to the kind of idea denoted and the function performed in a sentence. Chaphole (1988) traced the development of Sesotho during the missionary period. He states that it is certainly not an overstatement to say that it is solely through the efforts of the missionaries that Southern African languages of the Bantu family were subjected to writing. He mentioned the work of Eugene Casalis, *Etudes sur la Langue Sechuana* that was published in 1842; He claims that this little treatise contains a grammar of Sesotho and not of Setswana as the title suggests. In 1862, Schrupf published a *Long Grammatical Note on Sesotho*. Mabile published a little Sesotho grammar called *Helps to Learn Sesotho* in 1876; in 1879 Kruger published *Steps to Learn the Sesotho Language*. Jacottet then followed to publish *Elementary Sketch of Sesotho Grammar* in 1893. These French Missionaries made a huge contribution to the grammar of Sesotho at different times. While Chaphole investigated the grammar of auxiliaries in Sesotho, he concerned himself with

Jacottet's scientific work *A Grammar of the Sesotho Language*. The missionary period has brought parts of speech into Sesotho language. The French Missionaries Eugene Casalis and Edouard Jacottet identified these parts of speech in Sesotho: noun (*lebitso*), pronoun (*leemedi*), verb (*leetsi*), adverb (*lehlalosi*), adjective (*lekgethi*), conjunction (*lekopanyi*), preposition (*leetelli*), and interjection (*lekgotsi*).

Casalis researched about a noun in Sesotho grammar and he compared it with Hebrew where he identified five cases in Sesotho nouns namely: nominative case (*kheisi ya moetsi*), accusative case (*kheisi ya moetsuwa*), oblique case (*kheisi e tshekalletseng*), locative case (*kheisi ya tao*), and genitive case (*kheisi ya thuo*). The nominative case is a grammatical case for nouns and pronouns. The case is used when a noun or a pronoun is used as the subject of a verb. The accusative case is a grammatical case that is used to show the direct object of a verb. The genitive case is a grammatical case that is used for a noun, pronoun, or adjective that modifies another noun. The genitive case is most commonly used to show possession, but it can also show a thing's source or a characteristic/trait of something. The locative case is a case used to indicate a place or location. In grammar, an oblique case is a noun case that is used when the noun or pronoun is the object of either a verb or a preposition.

The technical definition of a preposition is "a word or group of words that is used with a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase to show direction, location, or time, or to introduce an object." Simply put, prepositions are connector words. These connectors customarily tie a noun to an idea. Jacottet and Casalis identified eight syntactic categories and introduced them into Sesotho grammar. Nouns (*mabitso*), pronouns (*maemedi*), verbs (*maetsi*), adverbs (*mahlalosi*), adjectives (*makgethi*), conjunctions (*makopanyi*), prepositions (*maetelli*) and interjections (*makgotsi*) were identified as Sesotho parts of speech.

To sum up the work of Jacottet we can quote the words of Doke whom was quoted by Ramone saying "Jacottet, who did more than anyone else to encourage and foster the growth of a Native Sotho literature, became also its foremost grammarian" (Ramone, 1997:53).

#### **4.4.3 Some challenges or shortfalls**

There is no doubt that the Christian Missionaries contributed quite substantively towards the development of African languages, and Sesotho in particular. However, there were also negative influences and challenges on the African languages and other language related matters. Makalima (1981) and Miti (2009) state that their contributions were of instrumental and functional value to the missionaries themselves, and except for the language itself, very little reflected the culture or the world view of the Africans (Makalima 1981:39-43, Miti 2009:53-9). Therefore, their development was for a narrow rather than expansive purpose, deliberately disregarding the richness of the culture and the world view of the speakers (Prah 2009).

Kosch (1993), pointed out that the missionaries, as the pioneers of the development of African languages, they were not necessarily linguists. They reverted to their classical languages as their frame of reference. Kosch (1993) goes further to indicate that some grammatical classification and concepts were forced upon the Bantu languages without considering the uniqueness of their grammatical structure and their intrinsic value. They superimposed the grammar of their mother tongue upon the particular Bantu language they were dealing with.

The next section will deal with the development of Sesotho syntactic categories during the structural period.

#### **4.5 Structural Period: 1927 - 1975**

This period traces the development of Sesotho syntactic categories between the years 1927 to 1975. The functional/structural period is also known as the Dokean/van Wyk period.

After the historical comparative period, there were many ways of studying linguistics. All of them were different but they fell under the structuralism approach. The word 'structure' has various meanings; the first meaning is the structure of alphabetical letters which differ in structure according to meaning and pronunciation given to a specific letter. The second meaning is language structure in general which consists

of phonology, morphology and syntax. The third meaning is the structure that is divided into two categories: deep structure and surface structure of the sentence. This period will focus mostly on the second meaning where linguists were studying the structure of language in general.

#### 4.5.1. Characteristics of Structural / Functional Period

Linguists of this period believed that each and every language was unique and we have to study and examine it according to its structure. We have to leave out the history part of a particular language and only look at the contents; study it in a position that we find it in. This structuralism approach was started by a Swiss man Ferdinand de Saussure in the year 1915. This linguist believed that there should be a way of examining a language which is the relationship between words and things of the world. His discovery was to bring the difference between what he called *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* refers to the rules behind the way the language is arranged and used, while *parole* refers to the actual utterances of language, both written and spoken. These rules of language are few but they help an individual to form words and lots of sentences without being taught.

According to de Saussure (1915), linguistic units are composed of two parts, a concept or meaning and a sound-image which are 'the signified' and 'signifier', for an example: signifier – red, signified – stop (on a traffic light). Studying language in this manner is called semiology and this study relates to structuralism because both of them are based on linguistics. The study of structuralism was further developed by Levi Strauss where he looked at the study of grammar, which includes syntax and meaning of phonemes. Structuralism approach was also used for analysing literature which is called structuralist narratology where syntax was used as a basic of novel analysis. This theory of structuralism says a sentence is divided into subject and predicate, for instance: **Thabo** (subject) o hlabile motho ka **thipa** (predicate) (*Thabo stabbed someone with a knife*). And this sentence can be a foundation of a novel book. Folklorist Vladimir Propp also used this approach (relationship between sentence structure and predicate) to analyse folklore. In this approach, the main character is the subject and the predicate is the scenes in a folk tale which are 31 functions he called Narratemes. Sesotho folk tales have some of the 31 functions that Vladimir

Propp used in his approach. The main purpose of structuralism was only to analyse the meaning and structure of sentences but structuralism was also used in literature.

This study will use structuralism on words and rules of sentence construction based on syntactic categories such as nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions etc.

#### **4.5.2 Linguists In Functional/Structural period**

Structuralism was introduced in South African indigenous languages by linguists such as Clement Doke, Dirk Ziervogel, Malcolm Guthrie, and E.B Van Wyk. The focus of this period will be on structuralism, the characteristics of structural period and the works and contributions of linguists in structural period. The period of structuralism can be divided in accordance with the prominent linguists, Dokean (functional); Ziervogel and Van Wyk.

##### **4.5.2.1 Doke's approach**

This period of Doke is the period called the Functional Period by Kosch (1993) because Doke (1957) divided parts of speech according to the functions of words. This period started right after the publication of his book of IsiZulu named *Textbook of Zulu Grammar in 1927*. Doke's work received recognition in African languages as a new way of study and it went further to other South African languages like Sesotho and Sepedi.

Doke (1957) classified Sesotho parts of speech into six main categories:

1. Substantives
2. Qualificatives
3. Predicate
4. Adverbs
5. Conjunctives and
6. Interjectives

He classified nouns (*mabitso*) and pronouns (*maemedi*) under substantives; adjectives (*makgethi*), relatives (*maamanyi*), quantifiers (*mabadi*) and possession (*lerui*) under qualificatives. He also classified verb (*leetsi*) and copulative verb (*leetsileba*) under predicatives; adverbs (*mahlalosi*) under descriptives; conjunctions (*makopanyi*) and interjections (*makgotsi*). What Doke has done in this period is to

eliminate prepositions that were introduced by Jacottet in the missionary period. Again, the case that was introduced by Casalis has been done away with: in his own words Doke (1957:55) said:

“It will be seen that there are no prepositions in Sotho – they are foreign to Bantu as a whole. Case also does not exist in the BANTU languages: the form of the noun or pronoun does not alter whether it is used as subject or object of the sentence.”

What has been modified here is an addition of parts of speech from the work of Jacottet. Doke added copulative verb, quantifiers, possessions and relatives.

Chaphole (1998) traced the work of Doke on classification of Sesotho deficient verbs and he found out that these deficient verbs have groups I, II, III, and IV and they use tense and mood as their classificatory criteria. Chaphole (1998) however found that their method of classification was bound to run into difficulties because it failed to distinguish basic auxiliaries from the various morphological forms of the same auxiliaries. Even so, their paradigm of deficient verb forms was a neat piece of work they presented; they listed the morphological forms of each of the three basic conjunctive auxiliaries **-re**, **-ba** and **-ka** and that is where they took Jacottet’s work further.

#### **4.5.2.2 Ziervogel’s approach**

In the year 1952, in his book called *A Grammar of Swazi* Ziervogel introduced a new way of describing a word. According to Ziervogel, the structure of a word was divided into prefixes, roots and suffixes. On the description of a word, Ziervogel describes a word using its function, structure, meaning and sound.

Ziervogel (1952) classified syntactic categories into two segments and they are called basic parts of speech and additional parts of speech. Basic parts of speech comprise noun (*lebitso*), pronoun (*leemedi*) and verb (*leetsi*). Additional parts of speech on the other hand consist of adjectives (*makgethi*), relatives (*maamanyi*), possessions (*marui*), adverbs (*mahlalosi*), interjections (*makgotsi*), and conjunctions (*makopanyi*). These syntactic categories are more or less the same as Doke’s, they differ on copulative verb. The modification here is assigning them into two segments. Another thing is that prepositions and case are also not identified.

### 4.5.2.3 Van Wyk's approach

In the year 1958, van Wyk influenced the introduction of a new structuralist approach until the 70's. van Wyk became the first South African linguist to research the study of language based on Science. He explains that words should be well arranged based on the cornerstones of grammar and orthography and he went further to discover a new approach of writing which is called semi-conjunctive; and this new approach brought new parts of speech. van Wyk arranged parts of speech by using sound, structure, function of a word and meaning.

This section will look into different syntactic categories that were introduced by different linguists discussed earlier. It will also highlight the modification of syntactic categories from previous periods.

Van Wyk (1958) identified nouns (*mabitso*) and pronouns (*maemedi*), verbs (*maetsi*), adverbs (*mahlalosi*), copulative (*leba*), and interjections (*makgotsi*). He did not identify possessions (*marui*), adjectives (*mahlalosi*), conjunctions (*makopanyi*), and relatives (*maamanyi*) compared to the work of Doke and Ziervogel. However, van Wyk introduced particles (*dipatekele*) into Sesotho.

In his book *An outline structure of Southern Sotho*, Guma (1982) wrote about these parts of speech: noun (*lebitso*), pronoun (*leemedi*), adjective (*lekgethi*), relative (*leamanyi*), possessive (*lerui*), copulative (*leba*), adverb (*lehlalosi*), conjunctive (*lekopanyi*), and interjective (*lekgotsi*). These categories have similarities to the works of other linguists. The most common categories in almost all the linguists are nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, relatives, conjunctives, adverbs and interjectives

### 4.5.3 Challenges

This period traced the development of Sesotho syntactic categories and compared them under the work of Doke, Ziervogel, van Wyk and Guma. In this period, the study has observed that there are differences in terms of identification and classification of Sesotho syntactic categories between the missionary period and the structural period, there are omissions and modifications. Doke (1957) classified syntactic categories into substantives, qualificatives, predicative, descriptive, conjunctives and interjectives. Ziervogel classified them into basic parts of speech and additional parts of speech. There is a difference between Doke and Ziervogel's works where

Ziervogel did not identify quantifiers and copulative verb. Van Wyk introduced particles but his work did not identify quantifiers, possession, relative, adjective and conjunctives as compared to Doke and Ziervogel. These results of the comparison show that the particular linguists were not using the same method of identifying syntactic categories. Doke and Guma were using the functional method while Ziervogel and van Wyk were using the structural method. All these linguists eliminated prepositions and case that were introduced by the missionaries; this could have been caused by language change and how different linguists perceived parts of speech. The next section will focus on Sesotho syntactic categories in the Chomskyan period.

#### **4.6 Modern - Chomskyan Period: 1975 – to date**

This period traces the development of Sesotho syntactic categories through the work of Chomsky, who introduced Generative grammar. It focuses on the characteristics of Chomskyan period, contributions brought by the application of generative grammar and shortfalls of this approach.

##### **4.6.1 Characteristics of Chomskyan period**

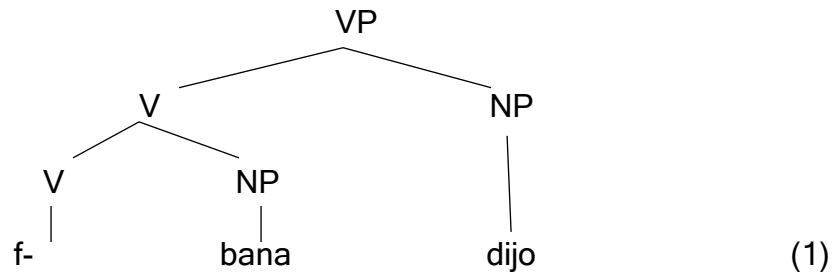
This period of syntax started around the year 1950 under the leadership of a linguist known as Avram Noam Chomsky. This period's ideas appeared in his book *Syntactic Structures* published in 1957. With regard to Sesotho, the Chomskyan ideas were applied later during the 1990 by various Sesotho scholars. The following are main characteristics or theoretical principles that govern the Chomskyan period. Sesotho examples will be applied to demonstrate how Sesotho has developed in this regard.

Human beings can generate sentences that they have never heard before and have eloquence of changing word order (transform) and create their own sentences (generative transformational grammar). According to Generative syntax, all human beings have an innate capacity for language and that includes the phrase structure rules (PS rules) which help to generate a lot of sentences. There are verb phrase and noun phrase rules that govern Sesotho verbs and nouns and they are highlighted below where VP represents verb phrase while NP represents noun phrase:

*Verb phrase rules:*

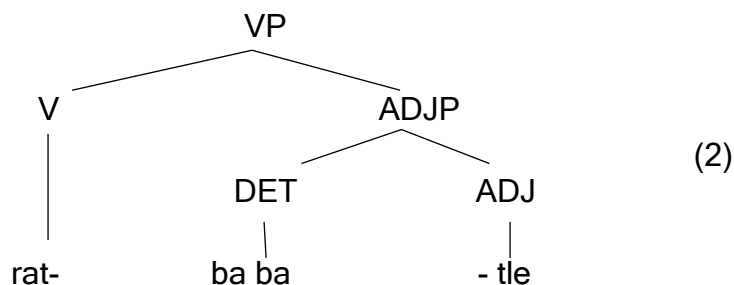
The sentence (*Mme o fa bana dijo*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, V represents verb and NP represents noun phrase and they are highlighted in diagram (1) below:

(i) VP → V NP NP (*Mme o fa bana dijo*)



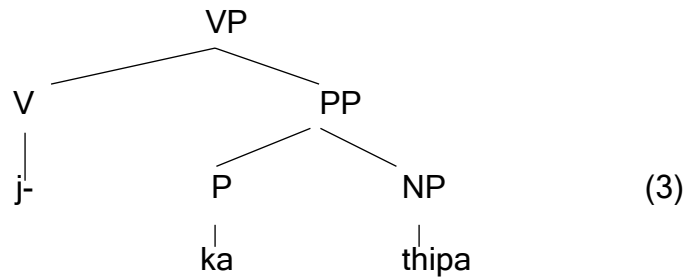
The sentence (*Morena o rata ba batle*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, V represents verb, ADJP represents adjective phrase, DET represents determiner and ADJ represents adjective and they are highlighted in diagram (2) below:

(ii) VP → V ADJP (*Morena o rata ba batle*)



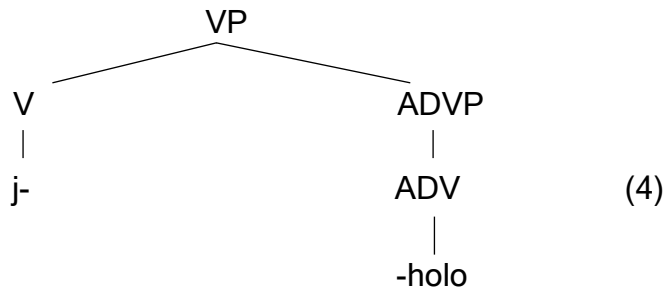
The sentence (*Thabo o ja ka thipa*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, PP represents preposition phrase, V represents verb, P represents preposition and NP represents noun phrase and they are highlighted in diagram (3) below:

(iii) VP → V PP (*Thabo o ja ka thipa*)



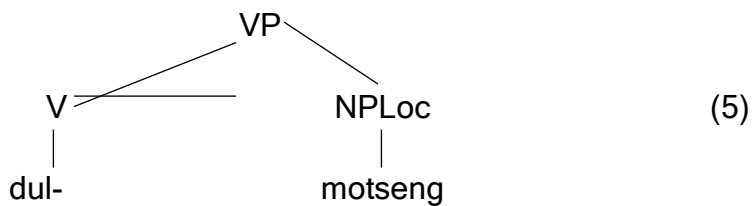
The sentence (*Thabo o ja haholo*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, ADVP represents adverb phrase, V represents verb, ADV represents adverb and they are highlighted in diagram (4) below:

(iv) VP -> V ADVP (*Thabo o ja haholo*)



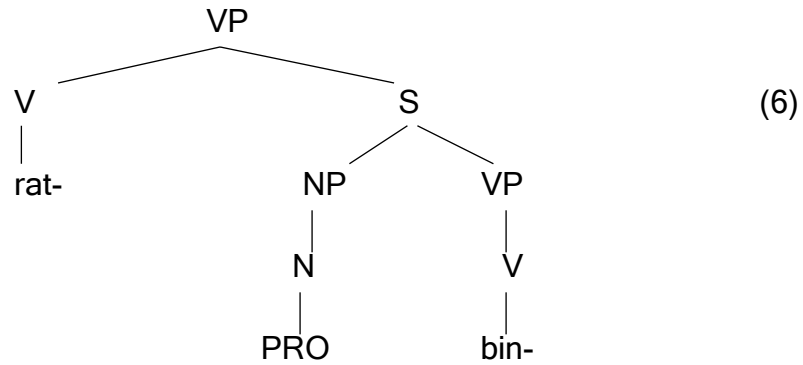
The sentence (*Mme o dula motseng*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, NP<sub>Loc</sub> represents noun phrase locative, and V represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (5) below:

(v) VP -> V NP<sub>Loc</sub> (*Mme o dula motseng*)



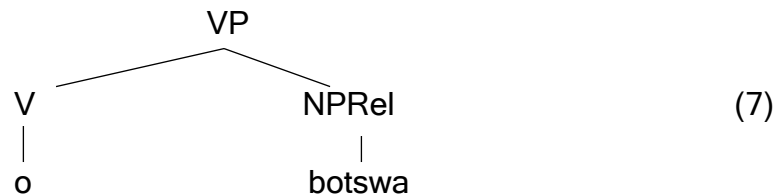
The sentence (*Thabo o rata ho bina*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, VP represents verb phrase, V represents verb, PRO represents pronominal and NP represents noun phrase and they are highlighted in diagram (6) below:

(vi) VP -> V S (*Thabo o rata ho bina*)



The sentence (*Thabo o botswa*) is governed by verb phrase whereby VP represents verb phrase, NPRel represents noun phrase relative, V represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (7) below:

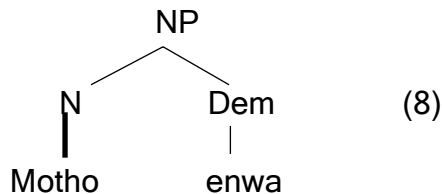
(vii) VP → V NPRel (*Thabo o botswa*)



*Noun phrase rules:*

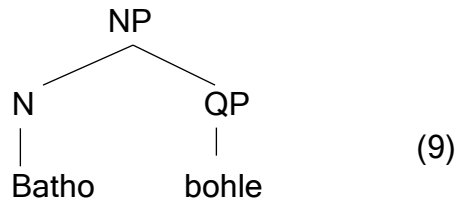
The sentence (*Motho enwa*) is governed by noun phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, Dem represents demonstrative, N represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (8) below:

(viii) NP → N Dem (*Motho enwa*)



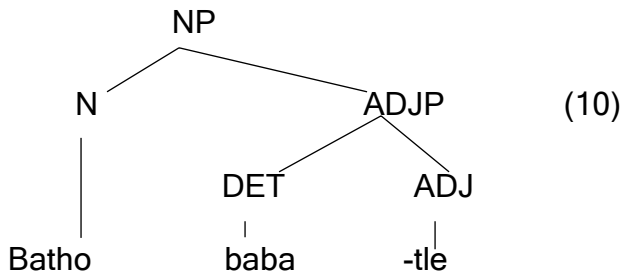
The sentence (*Batho bohle*) is governed by noun phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, QP represents quantifier phrase, N represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (9) below:

(ix) NP → N Q (*Batho bohle*)



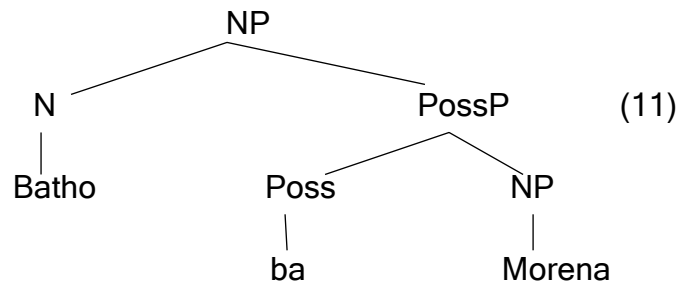
The sentence (*Batho ba batle*) is governed by verb phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, ADJP represents adjective phrase, N represents noun, DET represents deteminer and ADJ represents adjective and they are highlighted in diagram (10) below:

(x) NP -> N AdjP (*Batho ba batle*)



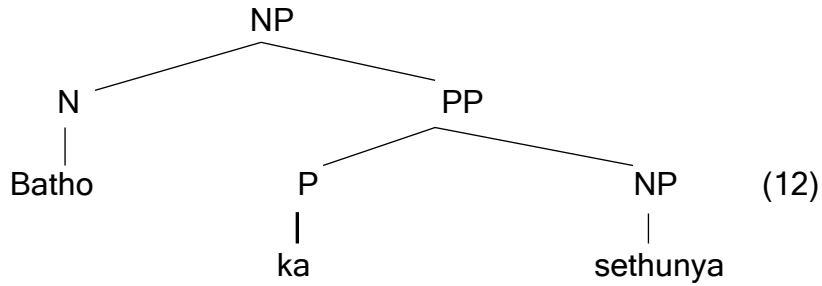
The sentence (*Batho ba morena*) is governed by verb phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, PossP represents possession phrase, N represents noun, Poss represents Possession and NP represents noun phrase and they are highlighted in diagram (11) below:

(xi) NP -> N PossP (*Batho ba morena*)



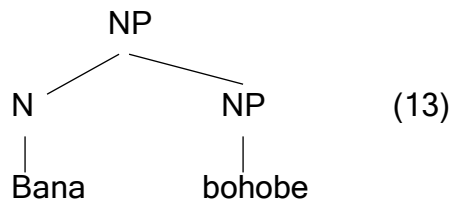
The sentence (*Batho ka sethunya*) is governed by verb phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, PP represents preposition phrase, N represents noun, P represents preposition and NP represents noun phrase and they are highlighted in diagram (12) below:

(xii) NP -> N PP (*Batho ka sethunya*)



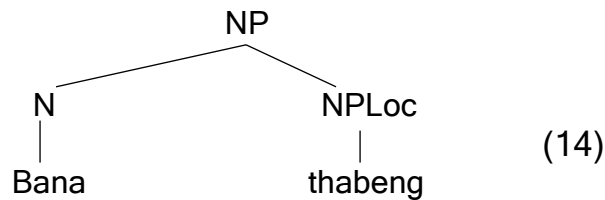
The sentence (*Fa bana bohobe*) is governed by noun phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, NP represents noun phrase, N represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (13) below:

(xiii) NP -> N NP (*Fa bana bohobe*)



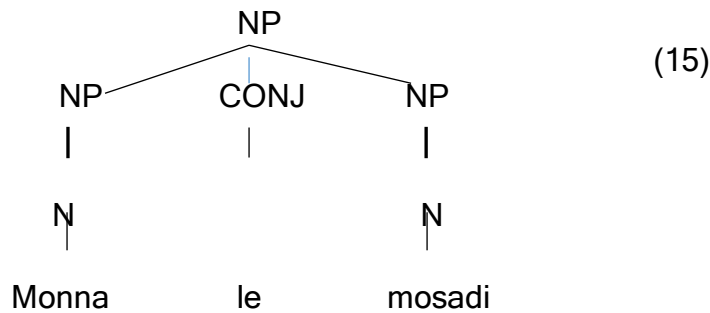
The sentence (*Bana thabeng*) is governed by noun phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, NPLoc represents noun phrase locative, N represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (14) below:

(xiv) NP -> N NPLoc (*Bana thabeng*)



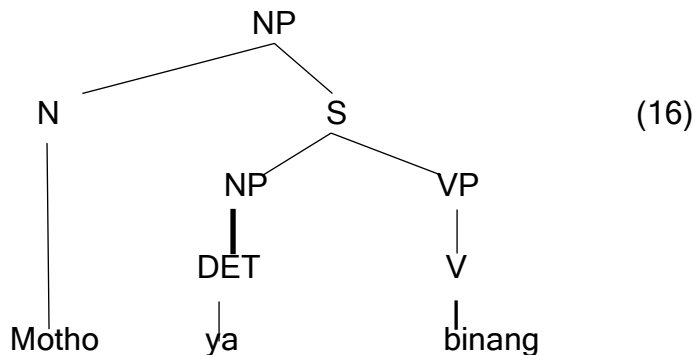
The sentence (*Monna le mosadi*) is governed by verb phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, CONJ represents conjunction, N represents noun and they are highlighted in diagram (15) below:

(xv) NP -> NP Conj NP (*Monna le mosadi*)



The sentence (*Motho ya binang*) is governed by verb phrase whereby NP represents noun phrase, DET represents determiner, N represents noun, VP represents verb phrase, V represents verb and they are highlighted in diagram (16) below:

(xvi) NP -> N S (*Motho ya binang*)



Grammar is a language skill in which a speaker has, is where we learn rules that govern arrangement and meaning of words, arrangement of phrases, clauses and sentences. Radford (1997) states that grammar is the study of grammatical competence: the native speaker's tacit knowledge of grammar; a cognitive System internalized within the brain or mind, the internalised principles possessed by the fluent speaker.

The speaker of a language is the only one who knows the rules of language; they know the wrong sentence and inappropriate expression. Thus, a linguist is taking matters from the speaker, not that the linguist is the one that sets the rules for what language

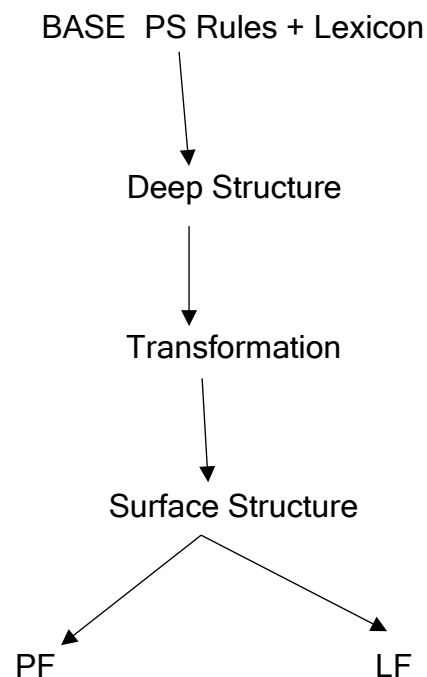
should be. All the languages of the world are the same; they are the same because they all have the same characteristics: They have the rules of sentence construction, they are used by people, and they have parts of speech and so on. In this way, we must have a universal grammar. Haegeman (1997) emphasizes this with these words: Universal grammar is a system of all principles that are common to all human languages. However, each language has its own distinctive feature (language parameters).

While languages of the world are the same, they have distinguishing and unique features that separate them from other languages. In African languages such as Sesotho we have special features which are:

- a. Noun classes (*dihlopha tsa mabitso*),
- b. Empty categories (*dihlokakemedi*),
- c. Inflectional categories (*dikgomathiso*),
- d. Sentence structure (*sebopeho sa polelo*),
- e. Tone (*sehalo*), and
- f. The relative (*leamanyii*).

According to Generative Transformational Grammar, language is based on sentence. This aspect makes the study of grammar to be based on the sentence, hence the study of syntax. The study of syntax consists of four steps, viz. the first step is the Base - this basic section covers all the Phrase Structure rules that make up sentences and the lexicon that has all the words that are found in the language. The second step is Deep structure - the rules and words found in the first stage give rise to unfamiliar sentences. The third step is Transformation - in this phase the unfamiliar sentence must change its form. All languages have these changes in sentence structure, where words reside in different places within a sentence. The fourth step is Surface structure - the result of changes of words in the sentence gives a common sentence.

In that sense, a common sentence is a logical statement divided into two parts: The first part is where we look at whether a sentence is made up of syntactic categories that can be pronounced or not (Phonetic form of the sentence). The second part is where we study the meaning of words.



The four steps above form the base from which we study syntax. The relationships that exist between the words in sentences are explained and enhanced by the use of the sub-theories: government theory, binding theory, X-bar theory, theta theory, case theory and the control theory.

Universal grammar must have one strong theory; the theory that will be able to give a clear and complete explanation. This grammatical theory must contain the following points:

- The theory must cover all languages (universal).
- It must give a complete explanation of why languages are unique.
- The theory must not allow external factors that will weaken in the definition of universal grammar.
- The theory must use minimal theoretical apparatus.

It must provide a simple but complete way in which a child can learn a language.

In view of the above characteristics of Generative Syntax, it is important to define what syntax is all about. According to Finegan (1989), syntax focuses on the

sequence of morphemes and words in a sentence, syntax examines the parts that make up a sentence, examines the relationships of words as well as the relationships of sentences themselves. Mutaka (2000:192) defines syntax as a study of the rules governing sentence formation, while Watters (2000:194) goes further to explain that syntax is a sequence of words and phrases in a linear order, sequence that creates phrases, clauses and sentences, and emphasizes that syntax helps us to learn about the relationships of the units just mentioned according to their positions in the sentence (hierarchical relation). The function of syntax is to check word order in a sentence; provide terminology of parts of speech in a language; explain linear & hierarchical relations; explain the functions of words in a sentence and to analyse a variety of sentences.

Henry (1984) says a sentence is not just a string of words; it is a string of words in a certain order, a string that has structure. According to him, a sentence is a list of words arranged in a way that conveys a complete meaning, steps that elevate the sentence to show the relationships of the parts of the sentence. The structure Henry (1984) refers to is, where the sentence is analysed according to the steps of the sentence and the X-Bar expands the sentence into: sentence (*polelo*), clause (*polelwana*), phrase (*sekapolelwana*), word (*lentswe*), and morpheme (*lebopi*).

If the sentence is analysed by these steps, and is highlighted directly by the X-Bar, it is clear that the sentence can no longer be just in a linear form. Burton (1985) explains X-Bar as a notational device which provides information about syntactic structures of the sentence. It provides analysis of the sentence down to word level or at phrase level or goes beyond word level and indicates the morphological structure of each word.

#### **4.6.2 Contributions of Chomskyan period to Sesotho language**

Generative syntax classifies syntactic categories into five main categories. These categories have been used to classify Sesotho parts of speech and this is regarded as the main contribution to the development of Sesotho grammar, to address the challenges that were observed in the other two periods, namely Missionary period and Structural period. They are the following:

- a. Sentences - Dipolelo

- b. Phrases - Dikapolelwana
- c. Lexical Categories - Mantswe
- d. Inflectional Categories - Dikgomathiso
- e. Empty Categories - Dihlokakemedi

Sentences can be divided into basic sentences (*dipolelo tsa motheo*) and transformational sentences (*dipolelo tsa bonono*). Basic sentences consist of simple sentence (*polelonolo*), declarative sentence (*polelopeho*), an active sentence (*poleloleetsa*) and an affirmative sentence (*polelotumelo*). Transformational sentences on the other hand consist of coordinated sentence (*polelokopano*), subordinated sentence (*polelomararane*), passive sentence (*poleloleetswa*), negative sentence (*polelokganyetso*), question sentence (*potsopolelo*), imperative sentence (*polelotayo*), relative sentence (*polelokgethi*), and copulative sentence (*poleloleba*).

Sesotho phrases have five different types which are: noun phrase (*sekapolelwanabitso*), adjective phrase (*sekapolelwanahlalosi*), possessive phrase (*sekapolelwanathuo*), preposition phrase (*sekapolelwanaketi*), and the verb phrase (*sekapolelwanaketso*).

Sesotho lexical categories (words) have nouns (*mabitso*), relatives (*maamanyi*), adjectives (*makgethi*), interrogatives (*mabotsi*), quantifiers (*maakaretsi*), determiners (*mabadi*), possessions (*marui*), ideophones (*maetsisi*), interjections (*malahlelwa*), conjunctions (*makopanyi*), verbs (*maetsi*), deficient verbs (*mahaelli*), copulative (*leba*), prepositions (*maetelli*), and adverbs (*mahlalosi*). Sesotho agglutinations consist of moods (*dikao*), tense (*lekgathe*), auxiliaries (*mathusi*), negation (*kganyetso*), and concord/agreement (*lehokedi*). When we look at substitutions (*dihlokakemedi*), we find four types which are: pronouns (*maemediqho*), the subject with no substitute, reflexive morpheme (*lebopi la boiketsi*) – the object with no substitute and sentences of **/ho/** which are PRO.

#### 4.6.3 Sentences

There are many ways to organize sentences. They can sometimes be categorized according to their use in language, depending on the types of verbs or whether the sentence has an action or not. In this case, as this section follows Chomsky,

therefore the section will use his method of sentence structure, in which he divides sentences into two main categories according to his belief that sentences are made up of phase structure rules and the transformational rules.

There are basic sentences (*dipolelo tsa motheo*) as stated previously; these are the kind of sentences that Chomsky (1957) says are the sentences which a person is born with a set of rules to create them and these are the straightforward sentences: simple sentence (*polelonolo*), declarative sentence (*polelopeho*), active sentence (*poleloleetsa*), and an affirmative sentence (*polelotumela*). The last three sentences, which are all simple sentences, describe different levels of simple sentence, e.g. a simple sentence that declares a point and a verb of the sentence is in affirmative, it does not negate; also the verb is in active form.

Transformational sentences (*dipolelo tsa bonono*) on the hand are those that Chomsky (1957) says are sentences in which a person shows a broad knowledge of his or her own language, in which he or she expresses the art of his or her own language. The meaning of these sentences is still carried by basic sentences. These sentences are: coordinated sentence (*polelokopane*), subordinated Sentence (*polelomararane*), passive sentence (*poleloleetswa*), negative Sentence (*polelokanyetso*), question sentence (*potsopolelo*), imperative Sentence (*polelotaelo*), relative sentence (*Polelokgethi*), and copulative sentence (*poleloleba*).

All of these sentences are formed from simple sentence. Among them the study will focus on two types, coordinated sentence and subordinated sentence:

A coordinated sentence is two phrases that are connected together by these conjunctions (*empa* or *mme*). Coordinated sentences are sentences that can stand on their own and are joined by conjunctions (*mme*, *empa*, *kapa*). Sometimes a coordinated sentence can be a coordinated sentence without conjunctions. A subordinated sentence is two or more sentences, a sentence stem that is defined and chosen by an additional phrase and sometimes sentence stem and additional phrase are connected by complementizer (*lerarahanyi*) [hore].

#### 4.6.4 Phrases

A sentence has two main parts, namely: the noun and the verb. Some parts of speech define and select a noun or describe an action. Thus, a sentence has two key phrases, namely a noun phrase and a verbal phrase. A noun phrase will be defined and chosen by other phrases and the same will apply for verbal phrase. We have these types of phrases: noun phrase, noun phrase time, noun phrase locative, noun phrase relative, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, possessive phrase, preposition phrase, and verb phrase.

#### 4.6.5 Words

A word must have three steps and these steps are exactly the same as the three steps of X-Bar:

- Phrasal category (X<sup>''</sup>) e.g NP
- Lexical category (X') e.g N
- Lexical item (X) e.g Car

Words are divided according to their unique structure and function and those parts are called syntactic categories. These syntactic categories interact in a special way according to the rules of grammar, and when the rules are well organized they form phrases, clauses and sentences correctly. When the sentences are well organized, they are expected to give meaning and communication that can be easily understood. Syntactic categories can usually be divided into two:

Open class: parts of this class are behaving in a way that is based on the morphology or syntax characteristics. In this class new parts are easily accepted and these include nouns and verbs. A closed class comprises a few parts in number and it is not easy to accept new parts in this class. In Sesotho we can talk about pronouns (*maemedi*), conjunctions (*makopanyi*), interjections (*makgotsi*), determiners (*maakaretsi*), quantifiers (*mabadi*) and prepositions (*maetelli*).

Closed class syntactic categories are described further in this way, pronouns (*maemedi*) are words that represent nouns in a sentence, and can serve as a subject of a verb and they can also apply in the same way as the object. Pronouns are created with the suffix /-na / and a class prefix. Conjunctions (*makopanyi*) are words that are used to combine phrases and sentences and are divided into two

categories, namely basic conjunctions and conjunctions formed from other parts of speech. The basic conjunctions are: *empa, le, mme, hape, kapa*. The conjunctions that are formed from other parts of speech may be: *kanthe, hoba, hobane, ka hoo, jwale, hore*, to name a few. Determiners (*maakaretsi*) are words made up of several stems *feng, sele* in Sesotho, and usually the prefix takes the concord. For an example: *O bua ka motho ofe? O bua ka batho basele*. Prepositions (*maetelli*) are the parts of speech that precede nouns and pronouns in a sentence, and their function is to combine the noun with other parts of speech as well as to bring about the relationship between the verb and the noun. According to Jacottet (1908), Nikelo (1990), Du Plessis & Visser (1992), Louwrens (1994), and Ramone (1997), prepositions are available in Bantu languages. In Sesotho according to Ramone (1997), the prepositions are: *ka, ke, le, ho, ha* and *sa* and their function in a sentence is shown below:

- *Ka* - Ba utlwane **ka** puo (*They agreed on something*)
- *Ke* - Nama e jewa **ke** ntate (*The meat is eaten by the father*)
- *Le* - Thabo o tsamaya **le** mosadi (*Thabo is travelling with the wife*)
- *Ho* - Bana ba dula **ho** ntata bona (*The children live with their father*)
- *Ha* - Motswala o tswa **ha** malome (*The cousin is from my uncle*)
- *Sa* - Thabo o matha **sa** mmutla (*Thabo runs like a rabbit*)

As closed class categories have been explained, open class syntactic categories can also be explained as nouns (*mabitso*) that are divided into certain categories such as proper nouns, common nouns, collective nouns, abstract nouns, concrete nouns, and compound nouns which are formed when nouns are put together with another parts of speech. For an example:

- Lebitso + Lebitso - (leeba + kgorwana = leebakgorwana)
- Lebitso + Lekgethi - (mosadi + holo = mosadimoholo)
- Lebitso + Leemedi - (ngwaha + ola = ngwahola)
- Lebitso + Leamanyi - (hlooho + nolo = Lehlohonolo)
- Lebitso + Lerui - (ngwana + eso = ngwaneso)
- Leetsi + Lebitso - (ja + lefa = mojalefa)
- Leetsi + Leetsi - (thetsa + disa = Sethetsabadisana)

Also, adjectives and adverbs form part of open class syntactic categories. Adjectives are syntactic categories that are used to select or explain more about noun features, features such as (quantity, colour or number). In the creation, an adjective has an adjective stem, adjective prefix and adjective concord. Example: Sefate **se se holo** (*The big tree*). According to Guma (1982), adjectives have these types: adjective of shape (*lekgethi la sebele*) - (-be; -tle; -holo; -nyane; -lelele; -tenya; -ngata; -sesane) example: Sefate se se**holo** (*The big tree*). An adjective of colour (*lekgethi la mmala*) - (-tsho; -tala; -fubedu; -hlaba; -nala; -putswa; -phatswa) example: Lesela le le**sehla** (*The yellow cloth*); and an adjective of number (*lekgethi la palo*) - (-ngwe; -bedi; -raro; -ne; -hlano) example: Dikgomo tse **hlano** (*The five cows*).

According to Guma (1982) adverbs are parts of speech that tell us more about when an action takes place, or how the action is taking place and where the action is taking place. He provides three types of adverbs: adverbs of time (*mahlalosi a nako*), adverbs of manner (*mahlalosi a mokgwa*) and adverbs of place (*mahlalosi a sebaka*). According to Du Plessis & Visser (1991) an adverb of time is a part of speech that tells us when action takes place. In Sesotho, nouns are used as adverbs to tell us more about time. In some nouns the meaning of time is attached together with a noun, these are nouns that indicate the time of day: morning (*hoseng*), afternoon (*motsheare*), evening (*mantsiboya*), night (*bosiu*); nouns that indicate time of year: this year (*monongwaha*), last year (*ngwahola*), year before last (*ngwaholakola*). In Sesotho, prepositions can also be used to create an adverb of time: ka meso (*at dawn*), ka shwalane (*at dusk*), ka phirimana (*in the evening*).

Du Plessis & Visser (1991) state that an adverb of manner is a part of speech intended to tell us how the action takes place. Adverb of manner is made up of original adverbs, which are few in Sesotho (*feela, ruri, butle, tjena*). In addition, other parts of speech are used to serve as adverbs: where the morpheme **ha-** and other parts of speech are used such as adjective stem and the relative stem, for an example: adjective (*lekgethi*) - (*haholo, hampe, hantle*), relative (*leamanyi*) - (*ha bonolo, ha bohloko*); where preposition **/ka/** conveys the meaning of manner (*ka sebele, ka boomo, ka moo, ka nnete, ka thabo, ka kgotso, ka maswabi, ka potlako, ka matla, ka bohale*).

According to Du Plessis & Visser (1991) an adverb of place is a part of speech meant to tell us about the place where the action takes place. They say that the adjective of place is very common in languages that use agglutination, and is made up of nouns that have the suffix (-ng) and prepositions such as /ka/, /ho/ and /ha/ in Sesotho. In nouns we have examples such as (*thaba - thab-eng; noka - nok-eng*). In the prepositions we have these examples (*ho mme; ha malome*).

It should be noted that there is still an issue for Sesotho grammar scholars as to how an adverb is understood and interpreted. There are a few Sesotho adverbs (*feela, ruri, butle, tjena, jwalo*), which are the adverbs that Guma (1982) call original adverbs. Apart from these, other parts of speech are used to form other adverbs of manner, place and time. In Sesotho, nouns are used to form adverbs of time and place, and they are called adverbs because of the work they do, which is not the original, except for the nouns that indicate time in which the meaning of time is embedded.

#### **4.6.6 Inflectional Categories**

Agglutinations are parts or morphemes attached to verbs and these morphemes help verbs to add to and perform an action. These helping morphemes go along with the verbs. These morphemes can be prefixes or verbal suffixes. In summary, these morphemes that form the verb phrase include concords (subject concord and object concord); apart from these concords, we have other morphemes that go with the verb. Commenting on the work of these morphemes, Guma says:

*“They indicate mood, tense as well as additional semantic concepts such as ‘still’, ‘already’, ‘no longer’.”*

*Guma (1991:165)*

This section of the agglutination, as per the definition and Guma's comment, includes moods (*dikao*), tense (*lekgathe*), aspect morphemes (*mabopi a leetsi*), negation (*kganyetso*), and an agreement (*lehokedi la sehlopha*).

Firstly, the moods tell us how the action is performed. The form of the mood and the type of the mood are determined by the verb morpheme, either verbal prefixes or verbal suffixes. In Sesotho we can identify *sekaopeho* (*indicative mood*), *sekaoho* (*infinitive mood*), *sekaokgoneho* (*potential mood*), *sekaokgethi* (*adjective mood*),

sekaotlwaelo (*habitual mood*), sekaotaelo (*imperative mood*), sekaokamanyi (*relative mood*), sekaoboemo (*conditional mood*), and sekaohore (*subjunctive mood*).

Secondly, the tense tells us the time when the action is performed. The structure and types of tenses are determined by verbal morphemes, either verbal prefixes or verbal suffixes. In Sesotho we have lekgathe lekwale (*present tense*), lekgathe letlang (*future tense*) and lekgathe lefetile/lephethi (*past/participle tense*).

Sesotho aspect morphemes are dihlongwapele tsa leetsi (*verbal prefixes*) and dihlongwanthao tsa leetsi (*verbal suffixes*). Verbal prefixes comprise limits morpheme (*lebopi la meedi*): [-a] - Ke a bua (*I am speaking*); emphasis morpheme (*lebopi la kगतello*): [e] - Ke fihlile ba eja (*I arrived while they were eating*); future morpheme (*lebopi la letlang*): [tla]/[tlo] - Thabo o tla tsamaya (*Thabo will leave*)/Re tlo tsamaya neng? (*When are we going to leave*); continuous morpheme (*lebopi la letswelli*): [sa]/[ntse] - Re sa ja (*we are eating*) / Re ntse re ja (*we are still eating*); perfect morpheme (*lebopi la lephethi*): [se] -Re se re bona (*we can see*); possibility morpheme (*lebopi la kgoneho*): [ka] - Ba ka bina (*they can sing*)/Ba rata ho ka bina (*they like to sing*); command morpheme (*lebopi la kgotlaets /taelo*): [ho]/[a] - Ha re bueng (*let's talk*)/A re bueng (*let's talk*); additional morphemes (*mapobi a tlatsetso*): [eso]/[no]/[nto]: ha ba eso tsamaye (*they have not left*)/Le se no tsamaya le masiu (*do not go out at night*)/Buang le nto tsamaya (*talk then leave*).

Verbal prefixes (dihlongwanthao tsa leetsi) consist of ending vowel (*tumannotshi ya mokwallo*): [-a] - Ke a bon-a (*I see*); ending vowel (*tumannotshi ya mokwallo*): [-e] - Ha ke batl-e (*I do not want*); ending vowel (*tumannotshi ya mokwallo*): [-e] - Ke jel-e (*I have eaten*); perfect suffix (*sehlongwanthao sa lephethi*): [-ile] - Ba tsama-ile (*they left*); relative suffix (*sehlongwanthao sa leamanyi*): [-ng] - Motho ya bua-ng (*a person who speaks*) and plural suffix (*sehlongwanthao bongateng*): [-ng] - Bua-ng.

Negation in Sesotho has a negation morpheme (*lebopi la kganyetso*): [ha] - Ha re robale (*let's sleep*); negation morpheme (*lebopi la kganyetso*): [se] - Ke ne ke se morui (*I was not rich*) and negation morpheme (*lebopi la kganyetso*): [sa] - O tsamaile a sa lle (*he/she walked away crying*).

The study took the first five noun classes to demonstrate Sesotho agreement. Class 1 prefix Mo will take the agreement O, class 2 prefix Ba will take the agreement Ba,

class 3 prefix Mo will take O, class 4 prefix Me will take E as an agreement to the noun and class 5 prefix Le will take the agreement Le.

All of these agglutinations parts are classified in the table below:

**DIKGOMATHISO (AGGLUTINATIONS)**

<b>A. DIKAO (MOOD)</b>	<b>B. LEHOKEDI (AGREEMENT)</b>	<b>C. LEKGATHE (TENSE)</b>	<b>D. KGANYETSO (NEGATION)</b>	<b>E. MABOPI (ASPECT MORPHEMES)</b>
Hore	O	Lejwale	[ha]	[ha]
Ho	Ba	Letlang	[se]	[a]
Tlwaelo	O	Lephethi	[sa]	[a]
Kgoneho	E	Lefetile	---	[tla]
Taelo	Le			[tlo]
Peho	A			[sa]
Kamanyi	Se			[se]
Kgethi	Di			[ka]
Boemo	E			[no]
	Bo			[eso]
	Ho			[nto]
				[-a]
				[-e]
				[-e]
				[ile]
				[ya]
				[-ng]

#### 4.6.7 Deficient verbs

Guma (1971) defines deficient verb as a verb stem that cannot stand on its own in a sentence, and needs to be supplemented by another clause to give full meaning. Deficient or auxiliary verbs are verbs that require a subordinate or complementary verb to complete their action. Deficient verbs are always followed by verbs in which the meaning of the action is expressed. Here is an example in Sesotho: ke ne ke sebetsa (*I was working*). In this sentence, [ne] is a deficient verb and cannot stand alone in the sentence, but needs to be supplemented by another clause [ke sebetsa].

In Sesotho, deficient verbs must always be followed by an additional phrase, for instance, Ke ne [ke sebetsa] (*I was working*)/Ke rata [ho tsamaya] (*I like to travel*). Deficient verbs always choose the type of additional phrase and provide the mood of the additional phrase, for instance, supplementary phrases that are in subjunctive mood (*sekaohore*): O ye [a tsamaye] (*he/she travels*)/O hle [a tsamaye] (*he/she travels*)/O nne [a tsamaye] (*he/she travels*)/O ke [a tshehe] (*he/she laughs*). Supplementary phrases that are in adjective mood, O batla [a kgothala] (*he/she is almost encouraged*)/O hlola [a eja] (*he/she always eats*)/O sala [a lla] (*he/she is left crying*)/O letse [a sa robala] (*he/she could not sleep*). Supplementary phrases that are in infinitive mood, O tla anela [ho dula] (*he/she will merely stay*)/O atisa [ho tsamaya] (*he/she usually travels*)/O rata [ho bina] (*he/she likes to sing*)/O tshwanela [ho tsamaya] (*he/she has to leave*). There are deficient verbs that do not choose supplementary phrases and take different moods, subjunctive mood (*sekaohore*) or adjective mood (*sekaokgethi*): A hla [a tsamaya] (*he/she actually walked away*) or O tla boela [a bua] (*he/she will speak again*). Agreements of deficient verbs and agreements of supplementary phrase should always be present, for instance, Ke ne [ke sebetsa] (*I was working*) and O fihlile [ba etswa] (*he/she arrived just as they were leaving*). Deficient verbs can also be supplements to other auxiliary verbs, for instance, Ba dula [ba dutse] (*they are always sitting*) and Ba fihlile [ho fihla] (*they arrived*). Deficient verbs may appear in a passive form, for instance, Ho dulwa [ho bapalwa] and Hwa fihlwa [hwa binwa]. Deficient verbs take other types of copulative as supplements, for instance, Ke rata [ho ba morena] (*I like to be a chief*)/Ke ne [ke le titjhere] (*I was a teacher*)/Ke ne [ke se titjhere] (*I was not a teacher*)/Ba ne [ba na

le titjhere] (They had a teacher). Deficient verbs like any other verbs have lexical entries:

**sebopeho [ - ne]**

**setho [+v – n]**

**kgetho [ ---- S]**

#### **4.6.8 Copulative verb**

Mpeko (1992) defines copulative as a verb that joins or connects a noun to the verb. There have been many linguists such as Doke (1985), Guma (1971) and Ziervogel (1988), who have argued that copulative is not a verb but only functions as a verb. Mpeko (1992) opposes this idea and emphasizes that a copulative is a verb because it has all the characteristics that verbs have. He supports his point by giving the characteristics of copulative verb and therefore he states that copulative gives mood like other verbs: indicative mood (*sekaopeho*) - Thabo ke morena (*Thabo is a chief*) and conditional mood (*sekaoboemo*) - Ke fumane Thabo e le morena (*I found Thabo as chief*). Copulative gives tense like other verbs: present tense (*lekgathe lejwale*) mosadi o motle (*the woman is beautiful*); future tense (*lekgathe letlang*) mosadi o tla ba motle (*the woman will be beautiful*) and perfect tense (*lekgathe lephethi*) Mosadi o bile motle (*the woman has been beautiful*).

Copulative has agreement that gives either assonance or alliteration like other verbs: **Bana ba be batenya** and **Masea a be matenya**. Like other verbs, copulative has verbal aspects: phutheho e sa le nyenyane (*the congregation is still small*) and mosadi o tla ba motle (*the woman will be beautiful*). Like other verbs, copulative has negation: Ke lakatsa hore ho se be monate (*I wish it could not be fun*).

#### **4.6.9 Types of copulative verb**

Du Plessis & Visser (1995) say that in Sesotho we have six types of copulative verb and they are le, ke, na, se, ba and cop. These types will be explained briefly and their examples will be provided.

##### **4.6.9.1 Copulative verb [le]**

This verb is often found in the subordinate sentence. The verb [le], has an agreement in its creation and works in two types of moods: conditional mood and relative mood. Example: Matlo ana a bonahala a **le** matle (*these houses look beautiful*) and Matlo ao a **leng** matle (*those houses that are beautiful*).

#### 4.6.9.2 Copulative verb [ke]

The second type of copulative is [ke], in its creation it does not appear with agreement to bring the sound of language. This verb is always replaced by a verb [le] in sentences that have conditional mood (*sekaoboemo*) or relative mood (*sekaokamanyi*). Mpeko (1992) says that the function of the copulative [ke] is to set us an immutable state of affairs and it appears with nouns in independent sentences. Example: Tshepe ke serafshwa (*steel is a mineral*) and Letsie ke morena (*Letsie is the king*).

#### 4.6.9.3 Copulative verb [na]

The third type of verb is [na]. Mpeko (1992) explains that this verb is used to denote possession, a particular relationship with the subject or even to describe the weather conditions. It usually appears in independent sentences and phrases, where it always takes prepositional phrase as a supplement. In its creation it has agreement to bring the sound of language. Example: Sephooko se na le mahlo a maholo (*an owl has big eyes*); Ho na le moya o mongata (*there is a lot of wind*) and Nkgono o na le mahlaba (*Grandmother has pains*).

#### 4.6.9.4 Copulative verb [ba]

Mpeko (1992) says that this verb is used to describe changing circumstances, conditions that have not yet been fully fulfilled. It is a verb that occurs in many types of sentences as well as moods because it replaces many verbs in a sentence. Where it replaces a verb, it takes the characteristics of that verb. In its creation it has agreement except where it represents the copulative verb [ke]. The contents of this copulative verb are:

<b>Form</b>	<b>[ ba ]</b>
<b>Category</b>	<b>[+ v – n]</b>
<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>[-- xp]</b>
<b>Meaning</b>	<b>[inchoative]</b>

#### 4.6.9.5 Copulative verb [se]

The copulative verb [se] is a negative verb and always works in place of these verbs: [le] or [ke]. This verb where it works in place of verb [le], it takes all the [le] characteristics. Example: Ha mahlaku a le masehla (*when the leaves are yellow*), it will be Ha mahlaku a se masehla (*when the leaves are not yellow*).

#### 4.6.9.6 Copulative verb [cop]

Mpeko (1992) says that this type of verb has no form and adopts the indicative form in the sentence. In sentence analysis this verb is represented by the word [cop] which is an abbreviation of the word copula. This verb, like the verb [le], has agreement that gives the sound of language and often appears in the main sentence in the indicative mood. This verb appears in the sentence with the following parts of speech: adjectives; relatives; locative nouns as well as preposition phrase. Example: Bana ba hae ba baholo (*his/her children are old*), Nama ena e bonolo (*this meat is soft*), Katleho o sekolong (*Thato is at school*) and Thabiso o ka tlung (*Thabiso is in the house*).

In this period, Chomsky reintroduced prepositions and case that were firstly identified in the Missionary period. He identified complementizer and empty copula. This period classified syntactic categories into open class and closed class. Open class syntactic categories are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs while closed class syntactic categories are pronouns, conjunctions, interjections, determiners, quantifiers and prepositions. This period identified and described the syntactic categories with relevant Sesotho examples, which include the deficient verbs and copulative verbs.

According to case theory, Chomsky brought back the prepositions that were introduced by Jacottet in the missionary period, the prepositions are highlighted in bold and their function in a sentence follow: **Ka** (*Ntate o lema tshimo **ka** mohoma*), **Le** (*Ntate o tsamaya **le** mme*), **Ke** (*Ntate o jewa **ke** mala*), **Ha** (*Ntate o dula **ha** hae*), and **Ho** (*Ntate o tswa **ho** malome*).

Chomsky has also reintroduced case in Sesotho and it has five types which are nominative case (*kheisi ya moetsi*), accusative case (*kheisi ya moetsuwa*), oblique case (*kheisi ya tshekalletseng*), locative case (*kheisi ya tao*), and lenetive case (*kheisi ya thuo*).

Again, he introduced the new part of speech, complementizer (*lekopanyi*) /**hore**/: This category can be used to link two sentences, for instance: Ke rata bana and Bana ba ja nama and the full sentence will be Ke rata **hore** bana ba je nama. He also introduced the empty copula found in Sesotho adjective and copulative and these are the examples: adjective (*lekgethi*): *Bana ba batle* and copulative (*leba*): *Bana ba batle*.

What is more interesting in this section is that Chomsky provided the new arrangement of syntactic rules and he said they can be arranged in this order: dipolelo (*sentences*), dipolelwana (*phrases*), mantswe (*words*), dikgomathiso (*inflectional categories*), and dihlokakemedi (*substitutions*).

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter was to trace and compare the development of Sesotho syntactic categories from Sesotho as a spoken language up until the modern period. During the first period, the pre-literary period, Sesotho was not a written language and the Basotho used oral literature to transfer information, history and to teach children. They used storytelling, folklore, riddles, songs etc. The significance of oral literature is to guide social and human ethics, to transfer wisdom and to preserve history and traditions. The spoken language was the main objective and here there was no purposeful study of grammatical features of African languages, Sesotho in particular.

The second period, historical comparative period, classified Sesotho in terms of family, region, group, language and dialect. Sesotho was classified as one of the highly agglutinative languages that fall within the Bantu family. Sesotho is found in the South-eastern region and forms a Sotho group with Setswana and Sepedi. The dialects of Sesotho are Setaung, Sekwena, Sekgolokwe and Setlokwa. This period did not classify Sesotho syntactic categories.

During the third period, the missionary period, Jacottet introduced noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction, interjection and preposition. Casalis introduced

these types of case in Sesotho: nominative case, accusative case, oblique case, locative case and genitive case. The prepositions identified in this period are: ka, ke, le, ho, ha, and sa. This period was important because Sesotho was developed from being a spoken language to a written language. However, there were also negative influences and challenges on the African languages and other language related matters. The missionaries' contributions were of instrumental and functional value to the missionaries themselves, and except for the language itself, very little reflected the culture or the world view of the Africans. Their development was for a narrow rather than expansive purpose, deliberately disregarding the richness of the culture and the world view of the speakers.

The syntactic categories were modified in the fourth period. The linguists in this period based their identification of syntactic categories method on functionalism while others were on structuralism. During the structural/functional period, Doke eliminated prepositions and case; he identified relative, quantifier, possession and copulative verb which were not introduced in the missionary period. Ziervogel identified almost the same syntactic categories as Doke, the only difference was quantifier and copulative verb. Van Wyk introduced particles into Sesotho.

In the fifth period, the Chomskyan period, prepositions and case were reintroduced through Generative syntax as opposed to Doke's view that there are no prepositions in Bantu languages. Furthermore, case was reintroduced using Generative syntax conceptualization of case where abstract case as opposed to morphological case was introduced by Ramone (1997). The Chomskyan period provided a broader description of all syntactic categories and many contributions were brought by this period. The development of Sesotho syntactic categories has changes and modifications throughout the periods because linguists in different periods used different methods of identification such as functionalism, structuralism and Generative syntax. The next chapter will focus on the summary and conclusion of the whole study.

## Chapter 5

### Summary and Conclusion

The central aim of this research study was to trace the development of Sesotho from a historical point of view, and the study employed the comparative approach to trace and compare over time how various linguists have identified, described and analysed Sesotho syntactic categories. This study traced the history of the development of Sesotho as a spoken language and as a written language looking at the syntactic categories. The following linguistic developmental periods were used to trace and compare the history of the development of Sesotho syntactic categories:

- (a) Pre-literary period (1659 - 1800)
- (b) Historical comparative period (1800-1826)
- (c) Missionary period (1826-1927)
- (d) Structural/Functional period (1927-1975)
- (e) Modern/Chomskyan period (1975 to date).

The first chapter served as an introduction where the problem statement was stated, the design and methodology and how the study was going to be organised. Chapter two reviewed previous topics and studies on African historical linguistics in general and Sesotho historical linguistics, African languages were classified and the missionaries' contributions were mentioned. Chapter three dealt with the theoretical framework of the study and Chapter four focused on the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories.

#### **5.1 Findings of the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories**

This section will focus on the summary and findings of the historical development of Sesotho syntactic categories from five linguistic periods traced in chapter four. The first period, pre-literary period traced the pre-history and history of the development of Sesotho as a spoken language. One of the major characteristics of pre-literary period is Sesotho oral literature. As Sesotho was not a written language, the Basotho could not read or write therefore they used oral traditions to pass information across ages. The transmission of information, history and involvement within the Basotho

was predominantly through the oral practice and performance rather than on written texts. Sesotho oral literature includes legends (*ditshomo tsa diemahale*), folklore (*ditshomotshomo*), myths (*ditshomo tsa bosatsejweng*), praise poems (*dithoko*), riddles (*dilotho*), proverbs (*maele*), songs (*dipina*) and stories (*dipale*). The significance of Sesotho oral literature is to record, preserve and interpret important teachings, historical information and stories on the origin and genesis of the Basotho.

The second period, historical comparative period was classifying languages and not syntactic categories. Sesotho was classified as one of the highly agglutinative languages that fall within the Bantu family. Sesotho is found in the South-eastern region and forms a Sotho group with Setswana and Sepedi.

The third period focused on the contributions that missionaries brought to Sesotho grammar and in this case, syntactic categories. The missionaries introduced orthography and Sesotho became a written language. Jacottet introduced noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, adjective, conjunction, prepositions, and interjection as Sesotho parts of speech. Eugene Casalis introduced five types of case in Sesotho nouns: nominative case, accusative case, oblique case, locative case, and genitive case. According to Ramone (1997) Sesotho prepositions are **ka, ke, le, ho, ha** and **sa**.

In the fourth period, there were different suggestions of syntactic categories among linguists. The reason is that some linguists were so much based on functionalism while others were based more on structuralism that is why their syntactic categories differ. Doke classified Sesotho syntactic categories into substantive (noun and pronoun), qualificative (adjective, relative, quantifier and possession), predicative (verb and copulative verb), descriptive (adverb), conjunctive and interjective. Doke disputes that there are prepositions and case in Sesotho. Ziervogel categorised Sesotho syntactic categories into basic parts of speech and additional parts of speech. The basic parts of speech comprise noun, pronoun, and verb while additional parts of speech incorporate adjectives, relatives, possessives, copulative, adverbs, interjections and conjunctions. Van Wyk identified nouns and pronouns, verbs, adverbs, particles, copulative and interjections.

In his book *An outline structure of Southern Sotho*, Guma wrote about noun, pronoun, adjective, relative, possessive, copulative, adverb, conjunctive, and interjective. All these linguists got rid of prepositions and case that were introduced in the missionary period. However, there are modifications to Jacottet's syntactic categories. Doke identified relative, possession and quantifiers that were not introduced by Jacottet. What they have in common are noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, conjunction and interjection. The common syntactic categories among Doke and van Wyk are noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, copulative and interjection; among Doke and Ziervogel are noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, relative, possession, adverb, interjection and conjunction. Van Wyk introduced particles into Sesotho which both Doke and Ziervogel did not identify and they were not introduced in the missionary period.

Moving on to the fifth period, the Chomskyan period has a broader classification of Sesotho syntactic categories. Generative syntax through African scholars such as Nikelo (1990), Du Plessis & Visser (1992), Lourens (1994), and Ramone (1997) re-introduced prepositions in African languages as opposed to Doke's view that there are no prepositions in Bantu languages. In the case of Sesotho, that has been proven otherwise because Ramone (1997) was using Generative syntax and he identified **ka**, **ke**, **le**, **ho**, **ha**, and **sa** as Sesotho prepositions.

In addition, Ramone (1997) re-introduced case in Sesotho using Generative syntax conceptualisation of case, where abstract case as opposed to morphological case was introduced, supporting the views of Jacottet in 1908. He identified nominative case, accusative case, oblique case, locative case, and genitive case as types of Sesotho case.

Malete (2016), in his book "Metheo ya Ditokiso tsa Sengolwa" classified syntactic categories into open class (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and closed class (pronouns, conjunctions, interjections, determiners, quantifiers and prepositions); he identified and described Sesotho deficient and copulative verbs.

Generative Syntax also introduced complementizer which also occurred in Sesotho as the complimentizer [hore]; it characterizes Sesotho complex sentences. The Chomskyan period provides a full description and analysis of sentences, phrases, words and the classification of inflectional categories.

The common syntactic categories that Generative syntax has with the previous period are noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, quantifier, verb, copulative, conjunction, and interjection. One of the modifications here is a full description and analysis of deficient and copulative verbs. Whereas Doke (1987) referred to nouns with locative meaning as adverbs, Generative syntax introduced Noun Phrase locatives with adjunctive function. The emphasis being that a noun will remain a noun even if it performs a secondary function.

The challenge of using historical periods to trace Sesotho syntactic categories is that most linguists do not agree on the same method of classification of syntactic categories. Some were using the functional method while others were using the formation method to classify syntactic categories.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Sesotho syntactic categories were traced to study how they were developed over different linguistic periods. The study traced how various linguists have identified, described and analysed them from the pre-literary period, historical comparative period, missionary period, structural period and Chomskyan period. The findings show Sesotho from being a spoken language in the pre-literary period to being introduced to a writing system by the arrival of the missionaries.

Certain Sesotho syntactic categories such as prepositions and case were introduced in the missionary period, however some were eliminated and there were modifications in the structural period. The good example is the elimination of the Sesotho prepositions and Case. The Chomskyan period had a broad classification and had brought back the syntactic categories that were previously stamped out. During this period, prepositions were brought back through scholars like Ramone (1997) in Sesotho, and Nikelo (1990) in IsiXhosa.

The inclusion of inflectional categories as parts of speech and the empty categories was an improvement in the description of languages, Sesotho benefiting in transformation as well. The introduction of sub-theories such as government binding theory also improved the description of lexical relations in syntax, bearing in mind that the Minimalist approach has done away with these sub-theories.

The major challenge in the study of Sesotho historical language development as it is

the case with other African languages is that the Sesotho thematic periods do not correlate with global developmental periods. This statement is supported by Kosch when she says:

"Grammatical description in the Bantu languages has also gone through a number of periods. It is interesting to note that the analysis of grammatical phenomena at different times in the history of Bantu linguistics does not necessarily correspond with the current developments on the wider linguistic front: Some theories applied on the international level only filtered through to Bantu linguistics when their novelty had already started wearing off elsewhere."

[Kosch, 1993:8]

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