

## The Interpretation of “*Tlhahisoleseding*” v/s “*Tlhahisolesedi*”

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**ABSTRACT** This study seeks to question the continuous usage of the compound locative noun ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ (information) as the basic noun. The paper argues that ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ (information) is a locative noun (an adverb of place) derived from the noun ‘*tlhahisolesedi*’ (information) and should not be used as an equivalent term for information but ‘*tlhahisolesedi*’ instead. The basic principles of compound or complex nouns formation were scrutinised; and the implications of suffixal morpheme *-eng/-ng* in changing basic nouns into locative nouns. The suffixal uses of *-eng/-ng* in other *Sesotho* word categories is presented. The Theory of Government and Binding (GB) and its sub theories were applied. The outcomes of the study show that ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ is a locative noun whereas ‘*tlhahisolesedi*’ is a basic compound noun which has a reading of information. The morphological analysis of these ‘alternating’ nouns shows that they produce different meaning in *Sesotho* sentences.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Most of the newly acquired compound nouns in *Sesotho* followed the principles and rules of grammar in as far as the formation of compound nouns is concerned. It is not yet established whether it is by choices of individual language users or by any other grammatical implications studied somewhere that language practitioners use the concept ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ (information) at liberty.

In the past, *Sesotho* speakers used to refer to ‘*lesedi*’ (information/light) as the correct equivalent for information. Even right now, some old written *Sesotho* texts (the old version of *Sesotho* Bible) still refer to information as ‘*lesedi*’. The template that is currently used by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) when broadcasting weather forecast in *Sesotho* reads “*Lesedi le tlisitswe ke...*” meaning that the information has been supplied by... This showed that ‘*lesedi*’ was a much appropriated equivalent term for information. ‘*Lesedi*’ was often confusing for young developing translators as ‘*lesedi*’ is also an equivalent term for ‘light’. There was a concern, that whenever a young language practitioner comes across the words ‘light’ and ‘information’ in the same sentence, confusion will be apparent when they are to be translated. Another equivalent term for information that was often suggested is ‘*tsebo*’ which in real sense means ‘knowledge’.

The alternative use of ‘*tsebo*’ and ‘*lesedi*’ in referring to information, led to the establishment

of the concept ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ which is used as the equivalent term for ‘information’ in *Sesotho*. Some of the Old *Sesotho* language users avoided the concept in favour of the old used of the term ‘*lesedi*’. Most of *Sesotho* translators are in favour of the concept ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ because it has a convincing meaning of the comprehensible and accurate; but syntactically the term does not qualify as the equivalent term for information because ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ is a locative noun, whilst the term ‘information’ is not a locative noun.

Even though there is no written evidence as to where the term has been harvested from (that is, where it is originated); there are so many written texts (both official and unofficial) and visual recorded materials that can bear as evidence that the term ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ is frequently used by the *Sesotho* speakers and in some cases it has been officially documented as such. The following documents serve as reliable sources in terms of frequent use of the term ‘*tlhahisoleseding*’ as illustrated by the Free State Provincial Gazette (2005), People First Document (2009), *Dumela* Free State University Newsletter (2006), *Setatementsa sa Naha sa Leano la Kharikhulamo* (2005), *Setatementsa sa Kharikhulamo ya naha Dikereiting tsa R - 12* (2011), Debates of the Legislature of the Free State Province (Hansard) (1997), *Sesotho Online*(2011), Free State Provincial Government internet(2010), SABC: *Lesedi* FM (Current affairs programmes and other daily programmes), etc. These are some of the sources where you would

find frequent use of the term '*tlhahisoleseding*' as an equivalent to English term 'information'.

The question that needs to be asked is whether the sources mentioned in the previous paragraph and those that were never identified did conduct a research as to whether this term '*tlhahisoleseding*' met the standards of the previously developed terms. Was there any formal sitting to discuss the adoption of this term '*tlhahisolesedi*'? Was there any raised concern regarding the frequent use of the term '*tlhahisoleseding*'? This study would not be able to answer some of these questions; but it intends to prove that '*tlhahisoleseding*' is a locative noun referring to place where the information is located or that '*tlhahisolesedi*' will be an appropriate equivalent term for 'information'. The discussion that follows will show how the study is divided.

This paper is structured as follows: Section two is the discussion on the theoretical aspects that are relevant to this study and the implication thereof. In section three the researcher provides details on the different uses of the suffixal *-eng/-ng* in *Sesotho* word formation. The issue of formation of compound nouns in *Sesotho* are discussed in section four. The compound nouns and suffixal *-eng/-ng* in Noun Classes are addressed in section five. Section six consists of the findings and the recommendations of the study, concerning '*tlhahisoleseding* vs. '*tlhahisolesedi*'. Section seven concludes the study.

## 2. ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT AND BINDING (GB) THEORY

This study has been conducted under the theory of Government and Binding (GB) to provide support in highlighting the difference between locative noun and basic noun. In particular the researcher refers to some of its sub-theories, that is, Case theory and Theta theory.

### 2.1 Theta Theory

According to Ramone, 'the component of grammar that regulates the assignment of thematic roles is called theta theory' (1997:60). In other words, the theta role specifies the thematic roles of the arguments in sentences. It is a requirement that each argument of a predicate should be assigned a theta role. Theta theory, as defined by Haegeman (1991), is concerned

with assignment of thematic roles to sentential constituents. According to Du Plessis and Visser (1995: 5) 'theta theory is concerned with a relation between a verb and a noun phrase: an NP in a sentence must be an argument of a verb. This relation between a verb and a noun has three features'. In the first place, this relation is obligatory, that is, a NP in a sentence must be an argument of some verb as indicated in (1).

- (1) [*Pule*] o raha [*bolo*]  
'Pule kicks the ball'

In (1) above, the NPs *Pule* and *bolo* are arguments of the verb *raha*. *Pule* is the subject argument while *bolo* is the object argument or no subject argument. The subject arguments are always obligatorily filled while non- subject arguments are optional as sentence (2) below illustrate.

- (2) [*Pitsa*] e a bela  
'The pot is boiling'

In (2) above *Pitsa* (pot) is the subject argument of the verb *bela* (boil) and it must be obligatorily filled. There is, however, in (2) no object or non- subject argument. The subject argument may be missing. In such case it is represented by an empty *pro* with a subjectival agreement as in (3) below:

- (3) [*pro* i] ba a bapala  
'They are playing'

In (3) above, the subject argument which is obligatorily filled is missing but is represented by an empty *pro* which is coindexed with the subject agreement *ba* by index [i]. Such missing subjects are interpreted as definite, that is, they refer to some definite NP.

Levin and Hovav (2005:10) observed that 'each predicate possesses at least one 'thematic' or 'theta' role, which the predicate assigns to an argument (The class of arguments includes, among other categories' referential NPs [for example, 'John', 'the problem', et cetera.] and the sentential components).'

According to Rappaport and Levin (1988:14), there are three modes of theta- role assignment: by a verb, a preposition and a VP via predication. Du Plessis and Visser (1995: 2) explain these modes of  $\theta$  role assignment as follows: 'the NP argument which is assigned a theta role by the VP via predication must be outside the maximal projection theory. The verb may thus assign a theta role to the NP argument in the subject position and this argument is an external argument.'

Concerning the theta roles Haegeman (1991:41), remarked that there is no agreement about how many specific roles there are and what their labels are. The following theta roles may be distinguished:

- a. AGENT/ACTOR: The one who intentionally initiates the action expressed in the predicate.
- b. PATIENT: The person or thing undergoing the action expressed by the predicate.
- c. THEME: The person or theme moved by the action expressed by the predicate.
- d. EXPERIENCER: The entity that experiences some (psychological) state expressed by the predicate.
- e. BENEFACTIVE/BENEFICIARY: The entity that benefits from the action expressed by the predicate.
- f. SOURCE: The entity from which something is moved as a result of the activity expressed by the predicate.
- g. GOAL: The entity towards which the activity expressed by the predicate is directed.
- h. LOCATION: The place in which the action or state expressed by the predicate is situated.

**2.2 Case Theory**

This is another sub theory of GB Theory. According to Ramone the problem of Case has been studied since Classical times, in Latin and Greek. Traditional grammars, in 'many natural languages continued the study of Case' (1997:74).

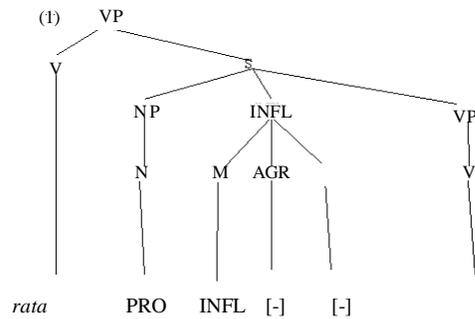
Ramone (1997:75) observed that when an abstract Case is assigned its 'assignment need not be accompanied by any morphological realization nor any phonetically overt realization' This observation led to the conclusion that not all languages have morphologically realized Case marking. As observed by Haegeman (1991:104), English has no morphologically realized Case marking. This observation is also shared by Du Plessis (1997:21), when he says that Case is not 'formally marked in the African languages, that is, there is no overt form or morpheme which indicate a specific Cases'

As to which Case to assign, Chomsky has outlined the following principles:

- i. NP is nominative if governed by AGR (eement) of INFL;

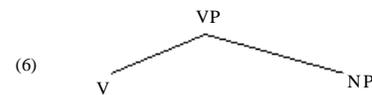
- ii. NP is objective if governed by V with the subcategorization feature [-NP];
- iii. NP is oblique if governed by P;
- iv. NP is genitive in [NP – X];
- v. NP is inherently Case – marked as determined by the properties of its [-N] governor (Chomsky 1981:70).

According to Chomsky's principle (i), NP is normative if governed by AGR (eement) of INFL; agreement of inflection is a Case assigner like V and a P. Malete (1996) shares this view: 'Nominative Case is assigned to the NP subject of the finite clauses. The subject of the infinitive clauses will not be assigned nominative Case since they lack the element of inflection and their subject position is not phonologically realized as shown in (4)'(1996:17).



According to Chomsky's principle (ii) above, a V with the subcategorization feature [-NP] assigns an Accusative or Objective Case under government. Sentence (5), as analysed in (6) illustrate.

- (5) *Monna o ja [nama]*  
'A man eats meat'

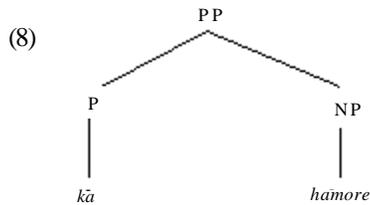


In (5) above, the NP *nama* (meat) is assigned the accusative or objective Case by the verb [j-] because the verb is a head of the phrase (VP) while the NP *nama* (meat) is a complement of the V. Thus, a V is a governor and *nama* (meat) is a governee and a complement of V. These two, V and NP, are sisters.

Chomsky's principle (iii) above shows that prepositions assigns the Oblique Case to their

NP complements. Sentence (7), as analysed in (8) shows:

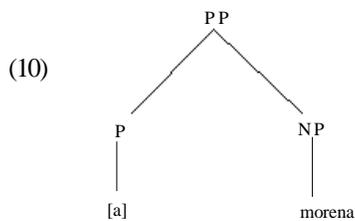
- (7) *Monna o lwana [ka [hamore]].*  
‘A man fights with a hammer’



The preposition *ka* is the head of the prepositional phrase (PP) and as such it C-commands the NP ‘*hamore*’ (hammer) that it governs.

The possessive [a] subcategorizes for an NP that is assigned Genitive Case by the possessive [a] which syntactically functions like a preposition as sentence (9), analysed in (10) illustrates.

- (9) *Kobo [ya morena] e tabohile ka le hare*  
‘The chief’s blanket is torn apart’



According to Chomsky’s principle (iv), an NP is assigned Genitive Case in [NP – X]. Thus, in (9) above, the Possessive [a] governs an NP *morena* (chief) which it also assigns the Genitive Case.

The locative morpheme [-eng] in *Sesotho*, is a suffix that is attached to noun stems to give them locative meaning. According to Ramone, this morpheme is a ‘Case assigner in the sense that it assigns a locative Case’ (1997: 81). Malete (DATE?) shares this view when he says ‘they can be Case assigners in the sense that they can assign Case locative to NP’s as illustrated in (11)’ (1996:17).

- (11) a. *Thaba +eng > Thabeng*  
‘On a mountain’  
b. *Motse +eng > Motseng*  
‘At the village’

- c. *Morena +eng > Moreneng*  
‘At the chief’s place’

Malete goes on to say that ‘there are also locative prepositions (that is, *ha* and *ho*) that assign locative Case to NP’s as illustrated in (12).

- (12) a. *Ke tswa [ha] malome.*  
‘I ‘m from my uncle’s place’  
b. *Ke ya [ho] ntate*  
‘I am going to my father’

### 3. THE USES OF SUFFIXAL –ENG/-NG IN *SESO*THO WORD FORMATION

The suffix morpheme –eng/-ng in *Sesotho* can be used in formation of relative from verbal stems; as an interrogative suffix –eng (what) or *mang* (who); as suffix that denote an emphaziser; as an imperative morpheme for pluralization and also as the locative morpheme.

#### 3.1 The Suffix –eng/-ng as Relativizer

The suffix –eng/-ng can be used in the formation of relative from verbal stems. This is from the fact that membership of the paradigm of relative lexical parts is open (that is, it allows other word categories to act as its lexical parts). In this case, we are going to scrutinize verbal lexical morphemes or verbal roots as relative lexical or relative stems. Here are some of the examples in formation of relative as in (13) below:

- (13) *Bona + -ng > bonang* ( to see)  
*Bua + -ng > buang* (to speak)  
*Sebetsa + -ng > sebetsang* (to work)  
*Tsamaya + -ng > tsamayang* (to walk)

These verbal lexical morphemes or verbal roots may take relativizer morpheme –ng to express relative lexical morphemes as sentences (14) show.

- (14) a. *Bana [ba bonang] bosenyi e le kot si bat la pholoha.*  
‘Children who see crime as dangerous will survive’  
b. *Batho [ba buang] haholo ba robet se*  
‘People who talk too much are asleep’

- c. *Banna [ba sebetsang] ba hlokome-la malapa a bona*  
‘Men who are working take care of their families’
- d. *Motho [ya tsamayang] a bua ka ba bang hampe o tla fetella*  
‘The person who walks around bad mouthing others will get used to that and be worse’  
The bracketed words are relative clauses qualifying the subject, ‘bana’, ‘batho’, ‘banna’ and ‘motho’. They are sometimes referred to as sentences embedded within a noun phrase or subordinated sentences qualifying the subject.

### 3.2 An Interrogative Suffix –eng (what) or mang (who)

The suffix –eng can be used as an interrogative formation of *eng* (what) or *mang* (who). The following examples in (15) below illustrate that.

- (15) a. *Masilo o bua [ka [eng]]?*  
‘Masilo is talking about what?’  
‘What is Masilo talking about?’  
or
- b. *Masilo o buang?*  
‘Masilo is talking what?’  
‘What is Masilo talking?’  
or
- c. *Masilo o bua eng?*  
‘Masilo is talking what?’  
‘What is Masilo talking?’
- d. *Letsie o laola mabotho [ka [mang]]?*  
‘Letsie commands the armies by whom?’  
‘By whom does Letsie command the armies?’
- e. *Ya laolang mabotho [ke mang]?*  
‘The armies are controlled by whom?’  
‘Who controls the armies?’

### 3.3 The Suffix –ng Denoting Emphasizer or Enumerative

In his study about the preposition in *Sesotho*, Ramone shows how the suffix –ng as being used as numeral together with the preposition ‘ka’. He observed that this ‘numeral –ng (one) is used with the preposition ‘ka’ to effect the meaning of ‘emphasizer’ (1997: 110). This numeral should have the agreement of the head, that is, like adjectives it takes the prefix of the head noun. Sen-

tence (16) indicate how agreement of –ng functions.

- (16) a. *Monna [ka [mong]] o rata ho ithorisa*  
‘Each man likes to praise himself’
- b. *O hlatswe sekotlolo [ka [seng]]*  
‘You wash each dish’
- c. *Lesaka [ka [leng]] le hlwekiswe*  
‘Each kraal should be cleaned’

In sentences (16) a – c, it is clear that the suffix –ng function as a quantifier and is a complement of the preposition ‘ka’ and that it takes the prefix of the head noun, *monna [ka [mong]]*, *sekotlolo [ka [seng]]*, *lesaka [ka [leng]]* as in (16) a – c.

In classes 8 and 10, the plural classes, *di-* and *din-* respectively, the plural noun with –ng gets a reference to type or groups or kind and not to the plural of the noun. Sentences (17), below demonstrate this.

- (17) a. *Difate [ka [ding] di kutwe*  
‘Each type of tree be pruned’
- b. *Dinku [ka [ding] di kutelwe nqa e le nngwe*  
‘Each kind of sheep be sheared at one place’

Thus, the meaning, in (17) a. and b. differs in that a reference is not made to plural of the nouns but reference is made to the types of *difate* (trees) and *dinku* (sheep).

### 3.4 The Suffix –eng/-ng as an Imperative Morpheme

According to Palmer, imperative mood is mood ‘that signals directive modality, especially in command. Its use may be extended to signal permission’ (1985:17). Khoali et al.(1993). provide the following examples in (18) to show the instructions of the speaker.

- (18) a. *Nka, moshemane!*  
‘Take this boy!’
- b. *Tholang, bashemane ting!*  
‘Be silent boys!’
- c. *Mpheng dijo tsa ka!*  
‘Give me my food!’

All the above sentences in (18) are full of instruction. The speaker is instructing a person or people. When the instruction is passed to more people the suffix –ng is attached after the verbal suffix as in (19).

- (19) a. *Dumela wena!*  
*Dumelang, lona!*  
 'Hello you!' (Singular)  
 'Hello you!' (Plural)
- b. *Tsamaya, wena!*  
*Tsamayang, lona!*  
 'You, go! (Singular)  
 'You, go!' (Plural)
- c. *Thola, morena!*  
*Tholang, marena!*  
 'Be silent, chief!  
 'Be silent, chiefs!'

In this case, the presence of the suffix *-ng* attached at the verbal stem is used to intensify the instruction to more than one people. Guma (1991: 184) refers to this suffix *-ng* as a 'pluralization suffix (imperative plural suffix).'

### 3.5 The Suffix *-eng/-ng* as a Locative Morpheme

The Locative NPs, in *Sesotho*, may appear with the affix *-eng*. In connection with this morpheme, *-eng*, Doke and Mofokeng (1991: 318) remarked that 'the suffix *-ng* or *-eng* is attached to nouns of all classes except class 1(a)'. Du Plessis and Visser (1995:66) share the same view when they say that 'locative NPs in *Sesotho* may appear in various forms, for example, with an affix *-eng*.'

According to Ramone (1997: 516), there is yet another assertion that is made by Doke and Mofokeng (1991) about the nouns from class 1(a). He says that all nouns from class 1(a) assume 'the prefix *ho-* and *ha-* to form the locative' as in (20) below.

- |      |    |             |   |              |
|------|----|-------------|---|--------------|
| (20) | a. | <i>ho</i>   | + | NP           |
|      |    | <i>ho</i>   | + | <i>Ntate</i> |
|      |    | 'To father' |   |              |
|      | b. | <i>ha</i>   | + | NP           |
|      |    | <i>ha</i>   | + | <i>Ntate</i> |
|      |    | 'At father' |   |              |

Ramone (1997:516) further observes that 'personal nouns of all classes (except class 1 (a)) may form their locatives either by suffix or by prefix'. Putting the above assertions together, it may be concluded that locative morpheme *-eng/-ng* is used to form locative from nouns with one exception, viz nouns of class 1(a).

Bresnan and Kanerva observed that 'locative formation is an active derivational process, forming a locative noun out of an already in-

flected noun' (1989: 23). This view is shared by Demuth when she says that 'in some languages the locative noun class prefixes are used in conjunction with an invariant locative suffix - (e) ng in *Setswana*, -ni in *Zulu* and *Kiswahili*); but in languages like *Sesotho* -(e) ng has taken over as the locative marker, and the locative prefixes have been lost as productive noun classes' (2000:274).

Guma refers to this locative suffix *-eng/-ng* as 'the adverbial suffixal morpheme' (1991:225). This in principle implies that whenever a noun is attached to this suffix *-eng/-ng*; it changes to a locative noun which semantically and syntactically functions as an adverb. The nouns in (21) illustrate this.

- (21) a. *Motse* + *-eng* > *Motseng*  
 b. *Lefu* + *-eng* > *Lefung*

The locative adverbs express a general and non-specific idea of the place or locality in connection with which some action is carried out. Thus the locative adverb '*motseng*' from '*motse*' (a village) may 'convey the idea of to, from, into, by, at, on, out of which the action takes place' (1991: 215). It is the specific significance of the locative adverb is determined by the predicate with which it is used. The following sentences in (22) illustrate the locative noun '*motseng*' when is used with different predicate.

- (22) a. *Batho ba kene [motseng]*  
 'People have gone INTO the village'
- b. *Batho ba dula [motseng]*  
 'People live IN the village'
- c. *Batho ba ya [motseng]*  
 'People are going TO the village'
- d. *Batho ba tswa [motseng]*  
 'People come FROM the village'

Lombard et al. (1988:73) make a distinction between a 'basic nouns' (which do not indicate locality) and localized nouns with the assistance of the locative morpheme *-ng* but reconstructed as *-eng*. The vowel *e* in this suffix *-ng* coalesces with the last vowel (final vowel) of the noun to which it is joined and exerts its influence. This can be represented as follows in (23), below.

- |      |                    |                        |  |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| (23) | <b>Final vowel</b> | <b>Locative suffix</b> | <b>Final vowel changes to</b>                    |
|      | e                  | + <i>-eng</i>          | [ <sup>1</sup> ] <i>motseng</i> 'in the village' |
|      | ê                  | + <i>-eng</i>          | [e] <i>kerekeng</i> 'in church'                  |
|      | o                  | + <i>-eng</i>          | [o] <i>ntleng</i> 'in the hut'                   |

- o + -eng [Í] *tshimong* 'in the field'  
 a + -eng [e] *tseleeng* 'in the road'

When the final vowel of the noun is [i] or [u], no changes takes place, as in (23), below.

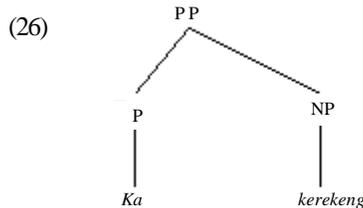
(24) a. *lemati* + -eng > *lemating* 'on the door'

b. *seledu* + -eng > *seledung* 'on the chin'

A locative noun with a locative morpheme –eng, may be a complement of a preposition 'ka' as in sentence (25) as analysed in (26) illustrates.

(25) *Ba balehetse [ka [kerekeng]] ha ntwa e kupa*

'They rushed into the church when fight broke out'



(27) a. *Badisana ba nyameletse [ka [morung]]*

'The shepherds disappeared into the forest'

b. *Ba ile [ka [nokeng]] ho ya sesa.*

'They have gone to the river to swim'

c. *Ba ahile [ka [toropong]]*

'They live in town'

According to Mokoena, 'the suffix or formative –ng is also used to indicate time' (2008:176). This view can be illustrated as follows in (28), below.

(28) *ho sa* > *hoseng*

'to dawn' > 'at sunrise, in the morning'

This is shown as follows in these sentences in (29), below.

(29) a. *Moeti o tsamaile [ha ho sa]*

'A visitor left (departed) when the sun rose'

b. *Moeti o tsamaile [hoseng]*

'A visitor departed in the morning'

#### 4. COMPOUND NOUNS IN SESOTHO

When coming to compound nouns in *Sesotho* Guma remarked that 'nouns with complex or compound stems are those that are made up of nominal prefix plus various morphemes that constitute the noun stem' (1991: 83). This view

is shared by Ramone who observed that 'such a noun stem is complex in that it is made up of number of morphemes, all of which are clearly identifiable' (1997: 535).

Despite the complexity, nouns with compound stem have all the relation that other nouns have. They do occupy the subject and object slots as do nouns with simple stem. Guma state that complex noun 'also control prefixal concords of various kinds' (1991:83). In them there may be more than one recognisable prefixal morpheme. In all such cases, however, it is the first prefix that is dominant and therefore controls the concord. Every other morpheme thereafter, even if it was a 'dominant prefix elsewhere, now forms part of the complex stem' (1991: 83).

Guma (1991: 84 – 89) mention ten conditions in which complex noun stems may arise to form a compound noun. These conditions are briefly discussed as follows.

- i. Complex noun stem may arise from the use of extra prefixes. To a given noun an extra prefix may be affixed, for example:

(30) *Ralebitso* = *Ra* + *lebitso*

'*Ra* + noun' (proper name of a person)

*Mmabatho* = *Mme* + *batho*

'*Mme* + noun' (proper name of a person)

*Sekamotho* = *Seka* + *motho*

'*Seka* + noun' (proper name of a person)

- ii. Complexity may come from reduplication, that is by reduplicating the same noun stem, for example:

(31) *boswahlawahla* 'noise of a person going through reeds'

*madimadi* 'much blood'

Guma (1991: 85) attributed this to the fact that when the noun stem is monosyllabic the prefix and the stem are reduplicated as in (31) above.

- iii. Complexity may come from combining two nouns, for example:

(32) *lehlaku* + *lebele*

noun + noun

*Tlhakubele* 'March'

*kgoho* + *dira*

noun + noun

*Kgohoyadira* 'the bird *Burhinops capensis*, Cape dikkop'

- iv. Complexity may be achieved by combining a noun plus a qualificative prefix plus a qualificative stem. In some cases, the

first noun bears the diminutive suffix /-ana/, for example:

(33)

- **Possessive**

*neano + taba*

noun + noun

*Neanotaba* 'history'

*kodi + ya + malla*

noun + possessive prefix + noun

*Kodiyamalla* 'mourning song'

- **Adjective:** Here the initial element of the adjectival concord is elided, for example:

*lekgowa + tshwana*

noun + adjective stem

*Kgowanatswana* 'Black European'

*thaba + ntsho*

noun + adjectival stem

*Thaba ntsho* 'place name'

- **Relative:** The relative concord is elided. The relative stem may be contracted.

*bo + hlooho + thata*

prefix + noun + relative stem

*Bohloohothata* 'obstinate'

*bo + pelo + nolo*

prefix + noun + relative stem

*Bopelonolo* 'kind heartedness'

- **Enumerative:**

*mohla + ope*

noun + enumerative

*Mohlaope* 'perhaps'

According to Guma, this form functions 'mainly as an adverb or conjunctive' (1991: 86).

- v. Complexity of the noun stem may be achieved by combining a noun prefix plus a radical and its extension plus a noun, for example:

(34) *bo + ya + batho*

prefix + verbal stem + noun

*Boyabatho* 'death'

*bo + tjhaba + letsatsi*

prefix + verbal stem + noun

*Botjhabatsatsi* 'east'

- vi. Complexity may come from affixing the prefix of class 2(a) /bo-/ to a verbal stem. (35)

*bo + ke + a + tseba*

prefix SC+ SC+ verbal stem

*Bokeatseba* 'doctors'

*bo + ba + re*

prefix + SC + verbal stem

*Bobare* 'rumours'

- vii. Complexity may be effected by affixing a noun prefix to a verbal stem plus a participial predicate, for example:

(36)

*ma + loma + afodisa*

prefix + verbal stem + participial predicate

*Malomaafodisa* 'unreliable person'

*se + ja + se lla*

prefix + verbal stem + participial predicate

*Sejasella* 'dissatisfied person'

- viii. Instead of a noun being the logical object of the verbal idea, a pronoun may be found in its stead, for example:

(37)

*ma + kgona + tsohle*

prefix + verbal stem + qualificative

*Makgonatsohle* 'good in all emergencies'

*se + ema + nosi*

prefix + verbal stem + qualificative

*Seemanosi* 'stand alone'

- ix. Complexity may be achieved by affixing a noun prefix to a root and its extension(s) plus an adverb, for example:

(38)

*mo + ja + morao*

prefix + verbal stem + adverb

*Mojamorao* 'one who eats last'

*se + lahlwa + le boya*

prefix + verbal stem + adverb

*Selahlwaleboya* 'one completely cast away'

- x. According to Guma, 'there are few miscellaneous nouns' with complex stems that do not fall into any of the categories above (1991: 89), for example:

(39)

*tsebe + tutu*

noun + ideophone

*Tsebetutu* 'deaf and dumb person'

*hlana + phetho*

ideophone + ideophone

*Hlanaphetho* 'somersault'

## 5. COMPOUND NOUNS AND THE SUFFIX MORPHEME -ENG/-NG IN NOUN CLASSES

According to Ramone (1997: 536), like all other nouns, 'compound nouns, in all classes, form locatives by adding the locative morpheme -eng'.

In class 1, the following example may be found, for example:

- (40)
- |                               |   |                  |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------|
| <i>Monna + moholo + -eng</i>  | = |                  |
| <i>Monnamoholong</i>          |   | ‘at the old man’ |
| <i>Mosadi + moholo + -eng</i> | = |                  |
| <i>Mosadimoholong</i>         |   | ‘at old woman’   |

They are represented as follows in (41) sentences, below.

- (41) a. *Ha o batla ho fela ke thupa bapalla [monnamoholong]*  
‘If you want to get enough spunky play near an old man’
- b. *Dipale tsa nnete ka bophelo di [mosadimoholong]*  
‘Real stories about life are found in old woman’

Class 2 would be the plural form of the nouns that are found in class 1. Then the compound nouns in class 3 would be the following as shown in (42), below.

- (42) *mmusa-pelo-wa-noka* ‘cancer bush’  
*mokopuntja* ‘warthog’  
*modiboya* ‘the plant Hypoxis acenata’

These nouns take the locative morpheme –eng to form locatives as sentences (43) indicate.

- (43) a. *Ha o jewa ke mofetshe, phallela [mmusa-pelong-wa noka]*  
‘If you suffer from cancer resort to cancer bush’
- b. *Ha o tshwenngwa ke mala, ikele [modi –boyeng]*  
(Ramone, 1997: 536)

In class 4, we have the following compound nouns that can be affixed with the suffix –eng to form locative noun, as in (44) show.

- (44)
- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>melala –qhuu</i>         | ‘type of beer’      |
| <i>mehlhlwa –e – rapame</i> | ‘very lazy persons’ |

These nouns take the locative morpheme –eng to form locatives as sentence (45) indicate.

- (45) a. *Matahwa a fella [melala –qhuung ya mefuta]*  
‘Drunkards end in different types of beers’
- b. *Se yeng [mehlhlwa –e – rapameng eo]*  
‘Do not go to those very lazy persons’

Class 5, will provide the following compound nouns shown in (46), below.

- (46)
- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| <i>lekgarakgara</i>  | ‘violence’    |
| <i>lehlabaphiyo</i>  | ‘traitor’     |
| <i>leebakgorwana</i> | ‘turtle dove’ |

Compound nouns in (46) above also accommodate the suffix morpheme –eng for locative formation, as in (47) below.

- (47) a. *Di sa tloha feela a phallela [lekgarakgareng]*  
‘From the start he resorted to violence’
- b. *Ngwana o tswa [leebanakgorwaneng la hae]*  
‘The child comes from his turtle dove’
- c. *Bulane o kgutlela [lehlabaphiyong le Pulane]*  
‘Bulane returns to the traitor Pulane’

Compound nouns in class 6 are shown in (48) below.

- (48) *mamenemene* ‘tricks’  
*maaparakobo* ‘those who wore blankets/ Sothos’  
*mahatammoho* ‘those who tread together’

The compound nouns in (48), above can be presented in sentences (49) with the suffix morpheme –eng, below.

- (49) a. *Ba kene [mamenemeneng a mona a bona]*  
‘They have started with their usual tricks’
- b. *Karohano e teng [mahatammohong a Lekota]*  
‘There is a split among Lekota’s members’
- c. *Kutlwelo bohloko e teng [maaparakobong a matle]*  
‘There is mercy in beautiful Sothos’

In class 7, compound nouns are shown in (50) below.

- (50)
- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>sesitahloohwana</i> | ‘nightmare/ one with a big head’ |
| <i>seemahale</i>       | ‘monument, statute’              |
| <i>sethibamathe</i>    | ‘last wife’                      |

These nouns may take the locative morpheme –eng to form locatives as sentences (51) indicates.

- (51) a. *Mosadi a phaphama [sesitahloohwaneng se boima]*  
‘The woman woke up from a heavy nightmare’  
b. *Bana ba sekolo ba ya [seemahaleng sa Mandela]*  
‘School children are going to the monument of *Mandela*’  
c. *Monna o tsoha [sethibamatheng sa hae]*  
‘The husband wakes up from his last wife’

When coming to class 8, it also appears that it does follow other previous classes when concerning the treatment of compound nouns. This is shown in (52), below.

- (52) *diaduma* ‘noise of thunder’  
*diabulwadiakwalwa* ‘quotation marks’

These nouns may take the locative morpheme *-eng* to form locatives as sentences (53) show.

- (53) a. *Le ya kae [diadumeng tse tshabehang jwalo]?*  
‘Where are you going in that noisy thunder like that?’  
b. *Tsepamisa maikutlo a hao mantsweng a [diabulwa dia kwalweng]*  
‘Concentrate on words with quotation marks’

In class 9, Ramone provide the following examples of the compound nouns, for example:

- (54) *kolobemoru* ‘wild pig’  
*tswelopele* ‘progress’  
*tladimothwana* ‘lightning out of cloudless sky’  
*koloiyamollo* ‘train’ (1997: 539)

These nouns assume the locative morpheme *-eng* to express locatives as sentences (55) below.

- (55) a. *Bana ba kgutletse [kolobemorung ela]*  
‘Children have returned to that wild pig’  
b. *O phetse [tladimothwaneng ya Kgotso]*  
‘He survived from *Kgotso*’s lightning out of cloudless sky’  
c. *Ba theohile [koloing ya mollo ya mantsiboya]*  
‘They allied from the evening train’

The class 10 is the plural form of class 9, discussed above in (55). In this case, class 10 will not be discussed. The last class to be fol-

lowed will be 14, which is a class of abstract nouns. The compound nouns in this are shown as follows in (56), below.

- (56) *bohloothata* ‘stubbornness’  
*bomadimabe* ‘bad luck’  
*bopelonolo* ‘kind heartedness.’

These nouns take the locative morpheme *-eng* to form locatives as sentences (57) demonstrate.

- (57) a. *O tswa [bomadimabeng bo bohologo]*  
‘She comes from a bad luck’  
b. *Kgutla [bohloothateng bona ba hao]*  
‘Retreat from this stubbornness of yours’

From the above discussion (that is, section 5), it is possible to form locative nouns from compound nouns coming from any noun classes by affixing the locative morpheme *-eng*.

## 6. TLHAHISOLESERING VS. TLHAHISOLESEDI

From the previous discussion it is important to notice the difference between the nouns ‘*tlhahisolesering*’ and ‘*tlhahisolesedi*’. The first test is to establish whether these nouns can be classified in a Noun classes, and if they do fit in a given noun class in singular form, they should also take the plural form of the corresponding class (that is, singular/ class correspondence). The second test will be theta role assignment by these nouns. Do they assign the same theta role and if different what is the implication? Lastly, I look at the issue of the Case assignment of these nouns. Why ‘*tlhahisolesedi*’ and ‘*tlhahisolesering*’ is assigns different Case in a given Sesotho sentence whereas it is claimed they are both equivalent term to ‘information’?

In this study, it is taken for granted that all Sesotho nouns are classifiable in noun classes (that is, every noun should be place in its noun class). ‘*Tlhahisolesedi*’ (information) is a compound noun that can be classified in class 9 as shown in (58), below.

- (58) a. *Monna o sheba [tlhahisolesedi] ka tsa temo*  
‘A man is looking for information on agriculture matters’  
b. *[Tlhahisolesedi ena] o e tliseditswe ke SABC.*

'This information was brought to you by SABC'

From the sentences in (58), above, '*tlhahisolesedi*' appears in the S and O slots (that is, Subject and Object position). In (58a), '*tlhahisolesedi*' occupy the object position in which the question of 'what' is answered. The 'information' is what the man has been searching for. In sentence (58b) '*Tlhahisolesedi*' is the subject of the sentence in which the question of 'what' has been answered. What has been brought to the people? The answer is simple the information. From both (a) and (b) in (58), above, '*tlhahisolesedi*' is from class 9. This is true if one consider that most nouns from class 9 takes their plural forms from class 10. The sentences (59) show the plural form of '*tlhahisolesedi*', below.

- (59) a. *Monna o sheba [ditlhahisolesedi] tse fapaneng ka tsa temo*  
'A man is looking for different information on agriculture matters'  
b. *[Ditlhahisolesedi tsena] o diliseditswe ke SABC*  
'This information was brought to you by SABC'

When coming to '*tlhahisoleseding*' it becomes easy to notice that it has been derived from the compound noun '*tlhahisolesedi*'. By affixing the suffix morpheme *-eng/-ng*, it becomes a locative noun with a semantic meaning of location. When we take the sentences (58), above and replace '*tlahisolesedi*' by '*tlhahisoleseding*', the meaning will be obscure as sentences (60b) indicate.

- (60) a. *Monna o sheba [tlhahisoleseding] ka tsa temo*  
'A man is looking from/at the information on agriculture matters'  
b. *\*[Tlhahisoleseding ena] o diliseditswe ke SABC*  
'From/at this information was brought to you by SABC'

From the above sentences in (60), the question to be answered is 'where?' The answer would be 'at/from the information'. Sentence (60) (a) is correct in the sense that adverbs modifies the verb in terms of the place or location; but sentence (b) is syntactically correct, but semantically ungrammatical because of the attached suffix *-eng* to the noun '*tlhahisolesedi*'. '*Tlhahisoleseding*' is a locative noun which cannot be classified in basic nouns.

The theta role assignment can also be used to account for the ungrammaticality of the sentence (b) in (60). In (a) above, the role on '*monna*' (man) is ACTOR/AGENT whereas '*tlhahisoleseding*' (from/at information) is LOCATION where the action or state is expressed. The verb '*sheba*' (look) would have subcategorizes for THEME; but here the LOCATION is. In (b), the SABC is the AGENT in a passive sentence, while the LOCATION is found in the position of the THEME. The sentence becomes ungrammatical because the verb '*tlisa*' (bring) subcategorizes the THEME next to it, not a LOCATION.

The last observation is that Case theory can also be utilised to account for the ungrammaticality of sentence (60) (b). '*Tlhahisoleseding*' as an object in the active voice, is supposed to get its Case from the ACCUSATIVE as a THEME; but it is a locative noun which supposed to get its Case from the locative morpheme *-eng/-ng* as its LOCATIVE CASE. So, in essence there is no way a noun can be assigned two cases in a sentence. The only Case applicable for '*tlhahisoleseding*' is LOCATIVE CASE because it is assigned by the locative suffix *-eng/-ng*. Once the sentence loses its THEME and that THEME is replaced by a LOCATION, then the sentence becomes ungrammatical. The SABC will get its Case from NOMINATIVE to indicate its syntactic role as a subject.

As discussed from the previous sections, '*tlhahisolesedi*' should be used whenever one is referring to 'information'; but '*tlhahisoleseding*' should be used for location purposes. From the above discussion, it was observed that an ordinary or basic noun changes to locative noun wherever the suffix morpheme *-eng/-ng* is attached to it. That the suffix *-eng/-ng* cannot be affixed to the proper noun, but the prefix *ho-* and *ha-* can be affixed to them to form locative nouns. It was also observed that the Theory of Case and Theta Theory succeeded in illustrating the difference between '*tlhahisolesedi*' and '*tlhahisoleseding*'. All the nouns that have been attached with the suffix *-eng/-ng* denotes location apart from proper names from class 1 (a).

From the above observations, it thus, appear that '*tlhahisolesedi*' as a compound noun should be used as an equivalent term for 'information' and '*tlhahisoleseding*' for location where information is obtainable or can be accessed from.

## 7. CONCLUSION

To conclude this discussion, it was observed that the suffix morpheme *-eng/-ng* in *Sesotho* produces different functions in formation of *Sesotho* words. '*Tlhahisolesedi*' (information) as a compound noun was found to be following some of the ten conditions, in formation of compound nouns. The issue of compound nouns in formation of locative nouns using the suffixal morpheme *-eng/-ng* in noun classes was also discussed and it was found that '*tlhahisoleseding*' (from/at the information) is a good example of a locative compound noun formed from '*tlhahisolesedi*' (information) affixed to the suffixal morpheme *-eng/-ng*.

The sub-theories of Government and Binding (GB), that is, Case and Theta Theories) were prominent in highlighting the distinction between '*tlhahisolesedi*' (information) and '*tlhahisoleseding*' (from/at the information). The results both showed that they are indeed different apart from the fact that '*tlhahisoleseding*' (from/at information) is derived from '*tlhahisolesedi*' (information) as a basic noun.

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