

**The Formalist approach to selected Sesotho novels: *Mosikong wa lerato, Mosali a nkholo* and *Lehlaba la lephako***

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## DECLARATION

I, Galaletsang A. Mokhuwa, Identity number: \_\_\_\_\_ and student number: \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Central University of Technology, Free State for the Degree: **Master of Communication in Language Practice**, is my own independent work, and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Central University of Technology, Free State. It has not been submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment (or partial fulfilment) of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.



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## ABSTRACT

This research examines the applicability of Russian formalism in selected Sesotho novels. The selected text that are subject of analysis are *Mosikong wa lerato* – T. Mafata; *Mosali a nkhole* – M. Khaketla; and *Lehlaba la lephako* – TWD Mohapi.

Chapter one introduces the aims of research questions and objectives, as well as the theoretical framework, which forms the basis on which the study is analysed. The notions of literariness, defamiliarisation, fabula and sjuzet are discussed within the theoretical framework of Russian Formalism, and the focus is placed on narratology.

Chapter two looks into the literature review of scholarly articles of the past and present researchers who have contributed to African literature, elements of a novel are discussed, as they will underpin the novels that will be analysed and interpreted. The concepts of setting, character and characterisation are also placed under spotlight the aim being to determine whether they are congruent with the novels that are subjects of the study.

Chapter three discusses the theoretical framework that underpins the research work. The advocates of Russian Formalism are discussed at length and the four aspects that are the crux on which the research is based are described and interpreted. It is found that the author is dead in Russian Formalism as his/her contribution in the text may influence the interpretation of the text in the negative or positive way. Therefore the contribution of the author is left out and of importance is the content of the text.

Chapter four deals with the actual interpretation of the texts, namely, *Mosikong wa lerato* by T Mafata, *Mosali a nkhole* by M Khaketla as well as *Lehlaba le Lephako* by TWD Mohapi. The concepts of literariness, defamiliarisation, fabula and sjuzet are used to determine as to whether they are congruent with the three texts or not. The discussion reveals that characters are affected by the political, psychological and socio-economic factors in their endeavour to survive in their environment

Chapter five concludes the research work and findings reveal that though Russian Formalism is a theory that emerged from Europe, it has the capacity to analyse and interpret literary texts that originates from the African soil.



# DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving grandmother, Mosela Lydia Mokhuwa.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Presently, there are only a few research studies that have been conducted on the use of Russian Formalism as a mode of criticism in African literature. The narratives, that are the subject of this analysis were written in an African country and are about Africa. This proposed study attempts to demonstrate that although Russian Formalism is a Western literary theory, it can still be used to analyse African Literature, which in this case, are the selected Sesotho novels: *Mosikong wa lerato* (T Mafata:1988), *Mosali a nkhole* (B.M. Khaketla:1960) and *Lehlaba la Lephako* (T.W.D Mohapi:1999).

### 1.2 BACKGROUND

The narrative is firstly an extraordinary range of genres, which is spread amongst different matters as though any material were fit to receive a man's stories. Hazel (2007) explains that a narrative is our fundamental means of comprehension and expression of life experiences, and again most authors create narratives as an attempt to unfold complex human experience (Moloi, 1973: 11).

In the past, Africans used to reflect their cultural experiences through oral literature. This was done by word of mouth because the communities never had any form of writing. Oral literature was intended to teach and instil discipline in the children and to the adult members of society, and to encourage a communalistic way of life as well as instilling bravery in the minds and hearts of regiments. The principles and standards by which literature is measured are in themselves conditions in the classification of the values of a given society. Literature itself ought to be seen as a facet where societies express themselves culturally (Amuta: 1989).

In order to treat African indigenous literature in its own right, our main focus of attention should be on the established cultural traditions and historical experiences, together with those aspects of the social and political life of the Africans which are the most helpful sources of our inspiration and techniques (Gemedu: 2012).

The transformation of African literature from a traditional form to a high standard has its own well-founded historical reasons (Palmer 1979:2). There are several critical approaches that have been used to analyse literary works and a few are listed: Formalist, biographical, historical, gender, and psychological modes of criticism (Daiches: 1984). The Formalist Approach is the central focus of this research as it focuses on the literary work and elements of structure within the text and very few scholars have used this literary tool to analyse the selected Sesotho novels.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This section entails the stating of the problem(s) that are to be solved or investigated. Readers, critics and literary scholars are always confronted with problems arising from literary texts and these problems are sorted out by means of appropriate investigation.

Writers and literary critics are mirrors of our societies, representatives of our aspirations. They observe how good and evil prevail in our society, and use characters to portray human experiences. It is for this reason that literature is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty; it is the written record of man's spirit, of his thoughts, and the only history of the human soul. It is characterised by its artistic, its suggestive, and its permanent abilities. Its object, aside from the delight it gives, is to know man, that is, the soul of man rather than his actions; and since it preserves the race the ideals upon which all our civilization is founded, it is one of the most important and delightful subjects that can occupy the human mind (Long, 2005).

The world influences literature because when it changes, so does literature. Rivkin and Ryan (2004) state that literature only gives form to ideas and realities that lie outside the literary dimension and constitute its motivation.

Great African novelists such as Chiuna Achebe (1958) and Nguqi wa Thiongo (1986) have under the influence of European and African literary traditions produced a complex form of story-telling in the form of what we now call African novels. These writers are literary products of Europe and Africa. They contend that it would be a literary crime to apply raw Western critical norms to African novels as though it were a replica of European literature. Equally wrong would be the use of purely African literary standards as if the oral forms of literature have solely influenced the written African novels (Finnegan: 2012).

In his work, Amuta (1989: 77) echoed works of various scholars and derived at a dialectal theory for African literature, which he has categorised into history, a meditating subject and literary event. This cannot be ruled out as an African literary theory because it mostly deals with language and history, rather than content, form and style.

Art in Africa is for the sake of the people. It is not the kind of art, which is about itself and for itself. A granny would employ special skills in her story-telling, where a fact follows a fact with an accumulative effect on the listeners (Miller: 2008). She employs short sentences, which are clear in meaning and logical in arrangement and the effect of this is to give the story the appearance of an actual occurrence rather than a true story. This is why Erlich (1955: 151) is of the opinion that art itself approximates life because like life, it exists and it cannot help existing.

The problem to be solved in this regard entails the fact that the object of science is not literature, but literariness. There is little research on the Formalist approach to the study of indigenous African literature. In light of the preceding assertion, the aim is to analyse selected Sesotho novels, namely, *Mosikong wa lerato* (1988) by T Mafata, *Mosali a nkhole* (1960) by B.M Khaketla and *Lehlaba la Lephako* (1999) by T.W.D Mohapi using Russian Formalism as a mode of criticism. The Sesotho novels that have been selected depict current problems, which affect people in their social settings, their struggles and aspirations in their endeavour to survive.

## **1.4 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE**

This study will aid other literature students and critics to develop critical thinking skills. Criticisms are vital as they take the reader to a higher level of cognitive thought by evaluating what the analyst says.

The work will also provide wisdom to the modern society about life. It will allow us to interpret our own life and emotions and find ways to relate to the story so we in turn can reflect. It will serve as a form of entertainment and allow people to use their imagination to visualise the story within their own mind. It should be noted that Formalism is not an African literary theory, therefore when used to analyse African material, literary students can thus explore meaningful contexts that are full of descriptive language and interesting characters. For academics, it is more important in that it structures lessons around the reading of literature and introduces a profound range of vocabulary, dialogues, and prose. In addition to developing students' language skills, the Formalist analyses of this research will also appeal to their imagination, develop cultural awareness, and encourage critical thinking on the elements of literature such as the plot, setting, characters and so forth.

## **1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this research is to analyse selected African novels using Russian formalism, which was developed in Europe (Trotsky: 1957). The motivation for selecting formalism over other literary theories is that Formalism is, as the name implies, an interpretive approach that places an emphasis on literary form and literary devices within the text. A Formalist approach sought to place the study of literature on a scientific basis (Wellek and Warren: 1977). This is done through an objective analysis of the ideas, devices, techniques, and other functions that comprehend the literary work. The Formalists placed great importance on the literariness of texts (Erlich: 1955), those qualities that distinguished the literary from other kinds of writing. Research questions and objectives of this research are discussed as follows:

### 1.5.1 Research questions

A research question is a responsible analysis into a specific concern or issue. It is the initial step in a research project. The 'initial step' means after you have an idea of what you want to study, the research question is the first active step in the research project (Hammond and Wellington, 2013:127). The following questions are the foundation on which the study is based:

- How do characters conform to the Formalist approach?
- How are the narratives *Mosikong wa Lerato*, *Mosali a nkhole* and *Lehlaba la Lephako* compatible with the notions of defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula and sjuzet?
- Which characters do the narratives revolve around?
- Do the elements of selected narratives conform to the prescripts of Russian Formalism?
- Do the themes of selected Sesotho novels relate to the narrative?

### 1.5.2 Research objectives

Research objectives are found by deciding what type of research needs to be conducted and what type of evidence a certain entity is hoping to obtain from the research (Murray, 2003: 41). The following research objectives are the crux on which the study has been based:

- To exploit the way characters conform to the Formalist approach.
- To determine the compatibility of the narratives *Mosikong wa Lerato*, *Mosali a nkhole* and *Lehlaba la Lephako* with the notions of defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula and sjuzet.
- To examine which characters the narratives revolve around
- To investigate how the elements of selected narratives conform to the prescripts of Russian Formalism
- To analyse the theme in order to determine how it is related to the narrative.



## 1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Russian Formalism is the theory on which this study has been based. Formalism was an influential school of literary criticism in Russia from the 1910s to the 1930s (Trotsky: 1957). The proponents of this literary theory are Viktor Shklovsky, Vladimir Propp, Boris Eikenbaum, Roman Jakobson, Boris Tomashevsky, and Grigory Gukovsky (Lavery: 2005). Russian Formalism has the following concepts, defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula and sjuzet, which will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

The analysis of the texts are based on the Formalist exploration of the structure of the narrative text. Of cardinal importance in the interpretation of the text will be the three dimensions, which run together in the discussion of African literature, - its definition, and the constitution of African culture as well as the validity of a specifically African literary criticism. Russian Formalism is presented as being more compatible with African literature in the sense that it will reveal the African culture as embedded in the selected texts.

Art as a technique will be a focal point in our interpretation of the selected text. Rice and Waugh (1998:1) describe the notion “art” as involving the concept of defamiliarisation, i.e making strange. Art refreshes our sense of life and experience, and it makes one feel inclined to make stone, stoney. In this regard, the researcher will work under the assumption that art imparts the sensation of things as they are perceived, and not as they are known.

It is out of art that the researcher will use special language, which will differentiate between the selected texts and other forms of writing such as newspapers, magazines and so on. In the discussion, it will be proved beyond doubt that defamiliarization, as a concept is closely related to Russian Formalism, which distinguishes between practical and poetic language. It is this poetic language that gives the selected Sesotho novels scientific status. This, in turn, gives rise to literariness. Literariness has been used to organise language through special linguistic and formal properties in order to distinguish literary texts from non-literary texts.

The researcher will therefore select texts from the selected novel to which she will apply the concept of literariness. Literariness will give rise to special characteristics that distinguish literature from other texts. It will therefore be shown how the text creates only fragments of its message, in other words, the researcher's construction of knowledge about the text will be reflected.

In the discussion, the distinction has also been made between fabula or story, and sjuzet and plot. Put simply, fabula or story is the set of presented events in their casual – sequential order, sjuzet or plot, is the artistic arrangement of the events (Ryan and van Zyl (1982:20). Further, in the analysis and interpretation of the selected text, focus will be placed on how the material is artistically presented as opposed to what is presented.

Again, Emphasis will be placed on the view referred to, that the Formalist rejects the notions of form and content and replaces them by the distinguishing between the material and device, as Jefferson and Robey (1991:36) contend. Characterization is based on direct and indirect characterization. This forms part of the discussion, and another important aspect will be based on characters in respect of round and flat characters; the round characters will also be referred to as dynamic, and flat characters are referred to as static characters. Both types of characters will be a centre of attraction concerning what they say, what they do, and how they think. Their behaviour will support the view that in art, one may recover the sensations of life, as art exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stoney (Ryan and Van Zyl 1982:21).

Textual analysis of the books will reveal the stylistic and artistic features of the works of the concerned authors. We can also deduce what is considered a literary genre on the basis of which distinctive features, change over time. It will be revealed how narrative distinguishes itself from the practical uses of language with the use of 'special, artistic techniques'.

The important principle to observe is whether there have been some developments or some setbacks in the literary value of indigenous African literature.

## 1.7 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

This research entails quite a number of definitions and explanations of functioning notions such as art, literature, African literature, literary criticism, love, poverty, religion, tradition and witchcraft as applied in their context in this research.

- 1.7.1 Art- cognisant use of skill and inventive imagination. (Collingwood: 1925)
- 1.7.2 Literature- is a term used to define written and sometimes oral material. (Meyer: 1997)
- 1.7.3 African literature- is written and occasionally oral material from Africa. (Achebe: 1958)
- 1.7.4 Literary criticism- the art or practice of judging and commenting on the quality and character of literary works. (Murray: 2009)
- 1.7.5 Love - A strong feeling of affection and sexual attraction for someone. (Rubin: 1973)
- 1.7.6 Poverty – The state of being tremendously poor. (Harper: 2010)
- 1.7.7 Religion – The belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. (Nongbri: 2013)
- 1.7.8 Tradition- The transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way. (Green: 1997)
- 1.7.9 Witchcraft - The practice of magic, especially dark magic; the use of spells. (Goss:2008)

## **1.8. CONCLUSION**

This chapter served as an introductory phase to the study. A statement of the problem, background, aim and objectives, research method and scope of this study, theoretical framework, definitions and explanations of concepts such as narrative, literature, oral African literature, literary criticism. It concisely discussed the theoretical framework Russian Formalism, which the study is based on and concepts such as defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula, and sjuzet were also placed under spotlight. The following chapter deals with the review of literature that supports the aim for this study, shows and discusses other concepts within literature.

## **1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

The study is divided into five chapters that forms a sequential whole, and this division is presented as follows:

### **Chapter One**

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the study. A statement of the problem, background to the study, aim and objectives, theoretical framework, definitions and explanations of concepts that were discussed.

### **Chapter Two**

This chapter examines the scholarly works of previous and present writers who explored the literary works using literary theories. This is done through a review of literature.

### **Chapter Three**

The theory on which this study is based, is discussed in detail. A brief detail about the development and origin of Russian Formalism has been given.

## **Chapter Four**

This chapter deals with the actual analysis of the literary texts, namely, *Mosikong wa lerato* (1988), *Mosali a nkholo* (1960) and *Lehlaba la Lephako* (1999). For our purpose, the researcher shall examine the authors' techniques and artistic skills of their work. A detailed scrutiny on textual analysis will be attempted.

## **Chapter Five**

In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations settle this work.

The next chapter deals with a literature review.

# CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one discussed the introduction and background of this research and this chapter will look into the literature review of scholarly articles of the past and present researchers who have contributed to African literature, specifically using literary theories as the tools of interpretation and more significantly, have embedded the literary elements into their work.

Although many African scholars have analysed African literature, a few to date, have used literary theories to evaluate the works of literature. While some Sesotho narratives consist of loosely bound series of separate events, Moloi (1973) comments that the story grows and develops in a coherent and ordered whole throughout. Young (2007) articulates that a narrative consists of a complete conceptualization of the world in which the story is set. This includes all the characters, locations, conditions and actions or events that take place during the story's sequential level.

The above renditions about a narrative show that narrative is indeed the creativity of an author and he or she can write about anything, as long as it is not vague and unentertaining. He or she should be able to compose what is known into a creative, yet pleasurable work, and fuse what is unknown with the realities.

A definite principle knits the constituent elements of a novel in order to provide the total effect of the message delivered (Moloi, 1973: 2). From the foregoing statements, this means that the message the narrative is trying to communicate is vital, for both the author and the reader.

Communication and message are concomitant; in fact, a message is what is being communicated, whereas communication is the 'act' of communicating anything. In his work, Zulu (2016:44) clearly exposes his understanding on communication by stating that communication itself depends on the milieu in which the message is recipient, only if literature is seen as some form of communication conveying a message between the author and the reader.

This shows that the message from narratives depend on the setting in which it proceeds. He again asserts that literature often arises either as a reaction or a validation from its times and this work looks at the relationship between the literary work and its past time.

## **2.2 ANALYSIS OF A NOVEL**

The appraisal of a narrative requires an altered approach than reading a magazine or newspaper. The meaning is implied and not stated directly as in typical reads. One therefore builds a logic corollary around what he or she thinks the novel is about. Below are the basic elements to be considered when analyzing a novel. The basic elements include the setting, plot, character, and point of view, which will be orderly conferred to as stated, in the details below. The first element to be discussed is setting.

### **2.2.1 Setting**

Russell (2009) asserts that setting refers to time, geographical locations, and general environment and circumstances that prevail in a narrative. Luke (2010) then extricates setting into the integral and the backdrop setting, where integral setting is defined as a setting that is essential to the plot of the story and the backdrop setting as the setting that is indefinite and helps to convey a universal, timeless story.

With the above definition on integral setting, this means the integral setting is described in both time and place and that the story could not take place in a different setting whereas backdrop setting is non-specific and the plot of the story could happen anywhere.

Again, the integral setting, as Luke (2010) declares, is typically described in great detail, and is used to move the story along, set the mood or tone the scenes, or used to reveal a theme. Backdrop setting can thus be seen as that which is visually creative and interesting to the audience but is not significant to the plot of the story.

Setting can be used to evoke a mood or atmosphere that will prepare the reader for what is to follow. McCully (2009), on the other hand, supports the preceding statement when conveying that setting is not just a scenery.

Boshego (1995: 89) states that the setting of a narrative is seen as 'the sum total of references which constitute the social environment and circumstances, the physical and temporal objects, the artefacts as well as the feelings of characters.' Kenny (1966: 38) as quoted by Boshego (1995:89), views setting as a component of narrative which discloses the time, place and space at which events of the plot occur to the reader. It is divided into social and physical environments. The social environment, as argued by Long (2015) is the location of characters and events in a particular society or social class, whereas the physical environment are the details of the location in which the story abodes. The physical specifics often indicate the emotional state of the characters or the link between characters (Kenny: 1966).

Subsequently, Boshego (1995: 89) then deduced that the creation of setting in literature comes from the two features, namely, place and time. From the above extracts, one can deduce that there is no setting without place, space and time, thus setting plays a crucial and a much-needed role in the compilation of literature.

The above renditions explain that the word 'setting' is used to identify and establish the time, place and mood of the events of the narrative. It essentially helps in establishing where and when and under what conditions the story is taking place. However, with that said, Maxwell-Mahon (1984: 6) warns that it is judicious to select a setting that you are accustomed to, based on personal experience and Hawthorn (1985: 60) embraces this by stating that the choice of a suitable setting sometimes helps an author to avoid the need to write about things that he or she is not good at. Iranmanesh (2012:128) contends that heroes and characters are changing less and will mostly expose dissimilar events and incidents.



The following questions that can be asked when dealing with setting include asking for the location or area where the story commences, checking whether the setting provides background and is important to the story, and provides other information that is fundamental to the story.

From the above discussion, one can conclude that setting includes place, time, conditions whether climatically or social and space as a mood describing its features. Aspects that make up the setting are very crucial and include, social conditions, the period affects the language, atmosphere or social circumstances of the novel. These features are discussed in detail below.

### *2.2.1.1 Space*

Space serves as a base for action (Boshego: 1995, 90). Bal (1985) as quoted by Boshego (1995) argues that it functions merely as the place of action, the acting place, often referred to as 'thematized space', influences characters to act and to behave in a particular manner.

In other words, the spatial setting is no longer seen as only a place where action occurs but as the main influence or the controller of events in the narrative. Characters' actions are influenced by the circumstances relevant to the particular space. From the humanistic viewpoints, Tuan (1979: 388) elaborates that the study of space is that of persons' spatial and notions in the stream of experience and further states that 'experience is the totality of means by which we come to know the world.'

Space is one of the main facets in literature. In his work, Moeketsi (2014: 27) observed that space had an impact on the story. It functioned as an acting place where it communicated something about the situations of characters and somehow is connected to the characters. The space, constructs indicators for our behaviour, and varies with an individual and cultural group and that perceptual map differs from person to person and culture to culture (Tuan, 1979: 389).

### 2.2.1.2 Place

The term place, as Boshego (1995: 89) refers to it, is the topological position in which the actors or characters in the story are located and where events take place. Milford (2000:23) consecutively defines the term place in a literary sense as the physical aspect of the environment at hand and also as the environment removed from the speaker or writer.

According to Tuan (1979: 387), a place incarnates the experiences and desires of characters and he asserts that place is a space, as it has been appropriated for human purposes. It is shaped by all the particular values, ideals, and technologies, which characterises those purposes in different socio-cultural circumstances.

That which precedes events in the story being told, past events or background, add meaning to the current circumstances. There is no room in any literary text for decorations or for anything that draws the attention to itself. The way we are taught at school to write an essay, does not apply to literature: the use of 'good', exquisite language, proverbs, idioms and adjectives, and not too long sentences, a pretty and gripping introduction, the whole essay should sparkle and so on (Toolan, 1988:104).

From these viewpoints, one realises that place and space in literature go hand-in-hand and are intertwined. Both play a vital part and neither one can be excluded. Although space may be ante-cultural, place always comprises some human speculation and involvement. Boshego (1995: 89) noted that a location where the events take place in a narrative may either be stated overtly or covertly. With the above renditions in place, it can be stated that it is a region or area, location, setting, or site considered with reference to the events that occur there, prevalent conditions, affinities, ideas, and other influential factors. Tuan (1979: 387) believes that place is not only a reality that can be explained in the broader frame of space but can be elucidated and understood from a viewpoint of people who gave meaning to it.

In all these cases, the rendering of place is seen as something extra, as a decorative presentation or genuine filling which interrupts the narration and which draws the attention away from that which happens.

Agnew and Livingstone (2011) contends that the term 'place' has a second meaning other than that of location or area. They describe it as a meta-concept that allows for particular stories to be linked with precise places. With that said, the comprehension in the meanings endorsed to space and place are various itineraries to thinking how geography matters to a wide range of both natural and human phenomena (Stake: 1995).

In view of the above, a place can be defined as a series of locales where everyday-life activities take place where a location is not just the mere address but where the social life and environment transform.

### 2.2.1.3 Time

As defined by Groenewald (2012: 53) following the works of Rimmon-Kenan (1991:43), time is the 'textual organisation of the event component of the story' with certain features that can only be reached by equating the events of the story. Time is therefore an indefinite and continued evolution of existence and events in the past, present, and future viewed as a whole.

Alvele (2017) on one hand, elaborates that narrative can be thought to have four different and separate times, and they are: the author's time, the narrator's time, the plot-time and the audience time. Whereas Chatman (1978:62) goes on to say that it is the discourse-time, which is the time it takes to scrutinise the discourse and the story-time. This is the duration of the purported events of the narrative. The preceding statements presume that Chatman (1978) only took two times into consideration.

Alvele's views (2017) on time are broad. The author, narrator and reader times, are consecutively defined by the author as the time when the work was originally written or published, as the time when the narrator in a work of fiction supposedly narrates the story, when a reader reads the work or sees it performed are not to be considered when talking about time in this study. The plot time, is when the action depicted actually takes place, which is the time that is referred to in this study (Alvele: 2017).

Time in a narrative has multiple purposes and effects. It can set the parameters: The time setting of a narrative has an impact on what types of lives your characters can lead and what choices they make. Time in the novel's setting determines what kind of technology is available and what type of eloquent detail will feature, example, historical literature often describes antiquated items that readers would otherwise not be familiar with (Johnston: 2000).

A narrative can therefore be set in multiple time periods, to show the revolution of characters and their society and again, time and place can give literature a frame of reference that will add to a narrative's sense of legitimacy and credibility (Gemedda:2012).

Time is subjective, according to the importance we characterise to the events that happen at a point in it. The narrative chooses to put a varying amount of emphasis on different points in time and this time is thus not a neutral series of abstract instances. The measuring of time is not something inherent in time but is something humans impose upon time as a need to analyse it and to place events in the context of it (Ricoeur, 1983: 62). When analysing narrative time, you can include the place of the narrative, checking whether it is timeless or grounded in a precise place and time.

Below follows another element of a novel, which is plot:

### **2.2.2 Plot**

A plot is defined by Riedl and Young (2003:48) as an 'action sequence'. The events of a story are regularly alleged to as that which creates an array called the 'plot' (Chatman, 1978:43) which is defined by Boulton (1975:45) as a story or a selection of events set in time, and one reason why we go on reading a novel is to see what happens next. It has a beginning, which leads through middle to end. It makes some kind of an arrangement, the probability must appear not only in events, but in their sequence, and a plot contains intentions, consequences and relationships.

As Gameda (2015: 64) has put it, 'the plot in a narrative work of art is composed of its events and actions that are arranged and rendered to achieve emotional and artistic effects' and that the actions that are executed are the means by which the characters display their ethical and moral abilities. The plot of a particular literary work and the characters are hence interdependent critical notions.

Moloi (1973: 10) noticed that the plot of a good novel will be dramatic if the author's image of life is deep and he is able to strengthen the conflict in or among his characters. Whereas Riedl and Young (2003: 48) transcribed a plot as coherent when a user can understand the manner in which the events of a narrative have significance and relevance to the outcome of the story. Events make a story and in fact, they form the key and crucial pillar of it, without playing a role in the development of its characters regeneration.

Another purpose of a plot is simply to provide pegs or shelving where the author can put things that he wishes to show. A good plot suits the characters, tone and background of a novel (Boulton 1975:48-64). The plot is most significant to a novel as Boulton (1975:45) thought of it as the skeleton of the human body; which is simple compared with some other systems, but gives the organism its structure and clenches it together.

Bocker (1963:91) states that a plot is an imperative component of literary work, because it informs us about the important events that occur in a narrative. Plot or the structure of action is used to designate almost any kind of action that is found in a narrative, including the closed plot, the open plot, and the conventional narrative with little or no serious impediment.

A novel's plot usually reveals what the story is about, and the main events and their relation are also revealed. The main events can also be arranged chronologically and in a specific manner. The way in which the narrative is narrated can also surface. With that said, the plot can be fast-paced or slow-paced. The thoughts, behaviours, and actions of characters move the plot forward.

The plot should have unity, and all the episodes should be relevant to the total meaning or effect of the story. The story's incidences can grow logically out of the preceding incident and lead naturally to the next or be mixed up and confusing. The improbability of the coincidences should also be identified.

Plot usually contains the five stages namely, the exposition, rising action, climax, turning point and resolution. The exposition is the beginning revelation of the story; characters, background, and setting. Whereas the rising action is when the events in the story become complicated and the conflict is revealed (Stephen: 2000).

The rising action is essential to plot, because it ties incidents together and moves the plot. Climax is the turning point of the story where readers wonder what will happen next; whether the conflict will be resolved or not. The falling action is where resolution begins; events and complications start to fall into place and lastly resolution is the outcome of events in the story (Stone: 1991).

### **2.2.3 Conflict**

As mentioned above, conflict is revealed in a plot and usually plays an important role in narrative. In literature, a conflict is a literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces usually a protagonist and an antagonist (Boulton, 1975:34). In literature, a conflict is defined as any struggle between opposing forces. Usually, the main character struggles against some other force. This type of conflict is what drives each and every story. Without it, the story would have no point or purpose. There are two types of conflict that can drive a story, the internal and external conflict (Welty: 2009). The internal conflict is the struggle that actually occurs inside a character, usually the protagonist or main character (Janovsky: 2015).

Moloi (1973: 10) remarks that whether the conflict is internal or external, will be the satisfactory motivation or even clarify the actions of the characters. Conflict or tension is usually the heart of the novel and is related to the main character.

### 2.2.3.1 *Internal conflict*

Sometimes people are their own worst enemy. An internal conflict is a good test of a character's values. The internal conflicts of a character and how they are resolved are good clues to the character's inner strength. With internal conflicts, the character could be struggling with a decision he must make or with his own weaknesses in his personality (Frey: 1987).

This form of conflict is central to the character or characters and must be resolved by the character alone, it lends them an air of complex believability. Internal conflict is also known as man versus self. Internal conflict is necessary for good characters, but it is the least complicated form of conflict (King: 2000).

### 2.2.3.2 *External conflict*

The second type of conflict is an external conflict. This conflict takes place outside of the protagonist. External conflicts are struggles between the protagonist and some other force outside his body (Leder: 2002).

The main type of external conflict occurs when the protagonist struggles against the antagonist, which is a character who mainly opposes the protagonist. However, other types of external conflicts can also arise due to other characters, acts of nature, or the society itself in which the character lives (Boulton, 1975:34).

Conflict is therefore the essence of fiction. It creates plot and the conflicts we encounter can usually be identified as one of four kinds namely, man versus man, man versus nature, man versus society, and man versus self also known as Internal conflict (Frey: 1987).

The conflict where man versus man, simply is the conflict that pits one person against another. These struggles may be born from moral, religious or social differences and may be emotional, verbal or physical conflicts. Man versus man is almost always, the conflict present when a hero fights a villain. This form of conflict may be presented alone, or in conjunction with other external conflicts (Welty: 2009).

The man versus nature is a quarrel with the forces of nature (Leder: 2002). On the one hand, it expresses the triviality of a single human's existence in the intergalactic scheme of things. Additionally, it tests the restrictions of a person's strength and will to live. Examples are when a character is struck by thunder, or characters whose house sinks due to *Dineo* (a cyclone) or maybe a character who struggles against hypothermia in a snow storm.

Man versus Society is a conflict when the values and customs by which everyone else lives are being tested. The character may come to an unfortunate end as the consequence of his or her own convictions. The character may, on the other hand, bring others around to a sympathetic point of view, or it may be decided that society was right after all (King: 2000).

Frey (1987) contends that man versus fate occurs when a character is compelled to follow an unknown destiny. Man versus fate conflict breeds internal conflict, while forcing a character to consciously or subconsciously, act on his or her fate.

Often, more than one kind of conflict takes place at the same time. In every case, however, the existence of conflict enhances the reader's understanding of a character and creates the suspense and interest that make you want to continue reading (Stake: 1995).

Whether the conflict is internal or external, it will be an adequate motivation or even enlightenment for the actions of the characters (Moloi: 1973). To analyse conflict in a novel, it is important to identify it first, and to distinguish its nature, whether it is physical or psychological. It is vital to also see how it is resolved or the manner in which it develops, either from good to bad or vice versa.

The conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist can be sharply segregated or be more subtle and complex (King: 2000). The climax of the story and the point in the story where the climax occurs is to be considered, and the ending should be labelled as fair or unfair. The next section discusses another important element of literature, which is character.



## 2.2.4 Character

A story without a character(s) is not a story at all but a body without a soul (Boshego, 1998: 35). In his work, Boshego (1998) mentions that characters are very crucial in literature as they join all the literary preoccupations. A Character is an extremely powerful symbol as it makes the narrative more convincing and at the same time is readable and embroils the reader (Paizis, 1998:74). Bal (1985: 80) believes that the character is not a human being, but is similar to one and that no one has yet succeeded in constructing a complete and coherent theory of character probably because of this human aspect.

Boshego (2007: 43) refers to characters as the created agents of the authpr. He states that the agents are the writer's means of effective communication of his or her textualizations, whereas Moeketsi (2014: 21) remarks that characters come alive to readers when they read, and therefore live on the page and in their hearts and minds.

For the above renditions, it is noted that characters are a creation of the author although this creation might be based on real persons, the author knows in reality that they are not humans and only exist on paper, and must therefore be viewed as ordinary textual people as a human divert and not as humans (Boulton: 1975).

Characters are a central point in the narrative, a device for setting it into motion and one of the signs contributing to the construction of meaning (Chatman, 1978:16). This insinuates that characters are extremely important because they are the medium through which the reader interacts with a piece of writing. Every character has his or her own personality. Their traits are developed by showing characters acting in similar ways during different periods of their lives (Chatman, 1978:16).

Bal (1985: 79) proclaims that the word 'character' is ambiguous to the extent that even animals or machinery could also act as characters when, to support his statement, Gelley (1987) outlines character not as a being but as a contributor.

With their declarations, a character can be a person, an animal, machinery or an imaginary creature that takes part in the action of a literary work. Boshego (1995:35) adds to this by stating that the term character ranges widely.

A vague definition or meaning of character can either be, a person in a fictional story; or qualities of a person. Character in this study is referred to as a person or a thing in literature. Characteristics of a character can be revealed through his or her physical appearance, what he or she says, thinks, feels, dreams and what he or she does or does not do. What others say about him or her and how they react to him or her can also reveal the character's characteristics. It is again wise to note that in contemporary recent times, with the evolvement of literature, characters are also often referred to as *actors*, even in prose, or personages (Chatman: 1978).

Characters may be important to us at different levels, just as people are important to us at different levels in real life (Boulton, 1975). A character may represent something symbolic. We may relate to a character or compare people in real life to fictional characters. Like real people, a noble character is more credible if he has some natural weaknesses (Boulton, 1975:74-76), as is a depraved character, if he has some reflection of goodness, or wins some slight sympathy by a clue as to why he is bad

Moeketsi (2014: 28) recommends that characters should not only be defined by means of actions, what they say or their names but prominence must be based on how their psychosomatic make-up influences their actions. He believes that it is more important to know what the character is thinking and how their mind works, unlike passing on judgment based on the uttered words.

#### *2.2.4.1 Characters as protagonists and antagonists*

Characters can either be protagonists or antagonists. Below Burman (2012: 19) makes a distinction between protagonist and antagonist by saying that in all stories the protagonist is a Palestinian child, always a victim, victim of injury, victim of losing a house and father, victim of fear, victim of sadness, a victim position that the occupation and the Israeli occupation soldiers are held responsible for.

At the same time as they are portrayed as victims they are also refusing the victimization through studying harder, participating in the way they can despite injuries, refusing to obey and to overcome the fear for the soldiers. Noteworthy is also that they are depicted with the physical presence of a sole female guardian, in three cases the mother and in one the grandmother (Burman: 2012).

The antagonists are always presented in the shape of warriors never posing as civilians or presented by proper names. They do not and will not, nor do they have to, stop, because of the power of conditions, until they get their way. They are addressed as soldiers, military, enemies and bats of darkness (Martin: 2004). Burman (2012) further denotes that the protagonists in the narrative are responders to actions directed towards them and the people around them, and not only actors, consequently their intentions are rather to work contrary to the antagonist's intents.

From the top extracts, it can be realised that Protagonists are the clear centre of a narrative hence all major events are important to this character. Whereas the antagonists are the opposition or "nemesis" of the main character.

Riedl and Young state that (2003: 48) a character is believable when the actions taken by the character can be seen to come from the character's internal traits. While narrative coherence is essential for an audience to make sense of what they are seeing, character believability is important in a virtual reality medium where characters are expected to be expressive and entertaining.

The research presented also considers the importance of characterisation. Martin (2004: 10) asserts characterisation as the stylistic and narrative techniques for the representation of human features, actions, intentions, desires and traits in the novel. How they interact with reader's perceptive are strategies for recognising and developing knowledge about other people.

#### 2.2.4.2 Characterisation

Moeketsi (2002: 143) wrote about space and characterisation in Sesotho novels; and asserts that all characters give significance to life, in their own mode. As defined by Ntombela (1995: 131), characterisation is a narrative device used by the author to give a human identity to the otherwise non-human figures in the story. With that said, it is not to be forgotten that the author must be extremely careful in the selection and shaping of characters to dramatise human relationships and life (Moloi: 1973). He states that character demarcation is important.

The author does this with a view that particular figures, as Ntombela (1995) explains, are used in the text, assumptions of some form of human status for the reader are made, because they (the characters) are considered as the representations of persons. From the above viewpoints, characterization obviously is all the techniques an author uses to create and develop characters using carefully selected details.

The above viewpoints reveal that characterization corresponds with how the characters are described. When analysing a novel, an author can show characterization through dialogue, by the way the characters speak, their physical appearance, thoughts and feelings, the way they act towards other characters, or the qualities that make them stand out (Reams, 2015: 4).

This could be the reason Dube (1996) believes that through fiction, we meet people we have never met before, and yet we find them very familiar. It is again revealed, that through the created characters, we may be able to reflect and see ourselves in life's mirror. Dube (1996: 79) points out that one other important element that comes out of the study of characters is that the authors use certain means that assist us to recognise and understand the characters. That most characters are termed using a special naming technique that associates with their personalities.

Hochman (1985:65) states that characterisation is important to both author and reader since when the reader starts to read the text, he knows nothing about the characters; they are new and odd to him. The reader thus has to be introduced to the characters, and get to know them, even more significant, to understand them.

Reams (2015: 4) has further divided characterisation into direct characterisation, which is anything that the author tells directly to the reader and indirect characterisation is anything that is shown to the reader by another source. Taking it onestep further, Reams explains that characterisation can be conveniently separated into five primary categories namely the physical description, actions, reactions, thoughts, and speech.

Welty (2009) states that direct characterisation is defined as any deed performed by the author/narrator that cultivates the reader's comprehension of the character. It has the primary advantage of being, well and direct. There is no indirect twisting or sewing necessary to tie in the component an author wants to express about a character when using direct characterisation; the author simply puts it in detail (Boshego: 1998).

Because of this, direct characterisation is best used in detecting the main characteristics of an individual (Reams, 2015: 4), the most important features of who they are. Whereas indirect characterisation is really a comprehensive term for the many different means in which a feature of a character can be conveyed or confirmed in the mind of the reader without asserting it directly (Dube : 1996).

Reams (2015:15) also believes that actions, reactions, thoughts, speech, and to a degree even the situation of the character can all be used to shape the image constructed in the reader's mind. An author should use all of these to build their character in small ways; imperceptibly binding the qualities together and binding them to the base set down with the first interaction with the character. To achieve this goal, it is clear that the author uses most techniques, including the repetition and alternation of techniques. The following methods are used to reveal a character (Hochman, 1985:65):

Firstly, that which the character says gives us an indication of who that character is. The words that are spoken by the character indicate to us, the readers what kind of a person the character is (Ntombela: 1995). If for instance, the character always shouts or speaks rudely to other characters, we can therefore conclude that the character at hand is rude and always annoyed.

Again, that goes for a character that speaks softly and calmly, which we mostly conclude that the character is sweet, wise or kind-hearted.

Secondly characters are often described in such a way that their physical appearance is communicating something to us about who they are. The physical description of a character should never be without a purpose, a function- thus just there for decorative purposes. If the narrator describes a character as a cripple, he must portray or refer to this handicap on more than one occasion. The character must walk with difficulty or be confronted with obstacles; or there was no reason for him to be cripple at all (Moeketsi: 2012).

If the author decides to focus on the character's place and deem the character as poor, then the character's place should match up to him or her. It is unusual to have a rich character living in a dilapidated home. Most authors are aware of this and put the physical descriptions into consideration so as not to confuse the readers (Riedl and Young, 2003: 48). Again, Reams (2015:4) denotes that physical description is an essential part of creating any character and has mentioned that physical descriptions should include the attire, gender, and what an author chooses to divulge about a character can be extremely momentous, as it is the first impression the reader gets of who the character is.

Thirdly, from reality we all know a chief, a policeman, a man, woman, daughter-in-law and so on. As such, that which a character is, is his nature, which already reveals something about him, which we know from the extra-textual facts and as such the actors need not portray what they are to us in so much detail. Comparing fiction to reality, we know that the community respects a chief (Moeketsi: 2012). We again know that when we talk of an elderly woman we already know that the woman should have wrinkles and grey hair.

In studying characters in literature, Reams (2015) says that in the real world, our actions reveal who we are. In the same way, a character's actions inside a story reveal who they are. Actions should be defined as anything a character does as a primary act. In other words, a character's actions are the cause, not the effect.

An individual may utter or consider something but it lacks the concrete worth of an executed action. Therefore, actions cannot be undone, and are often a concrete proof and consistent of what kind of person a character truly is (Paizis: 1998).

Fourthly, types of characters which are the protagonist and antagonist. The protagonist is usually the main character of a narrative; it is a central character who engages the reader's interest and empathy while the antagonist is the character, force, or collection of forces in fiction or drama that opposes the protagonist and gives rise to the conflict of the story, an opponent of the protagonist (Hochman, 1985:65).

Burman (2012: 19-20) distinguishes between the two by saying that 'the protagonists are in the stories primarily not depicted as actors but rather responders to actions directed towards them and the people around them. Therefore their objectives are rather to work against the antagonist's objectives whereas the antagonists are depicted as the aggressors.' In a specific narrative, the two types of characters can be distinguished or analysed according to the consequences of their actions, the age, genders, nationality and skills, as Burman (2012) aptly states.

Characters in fiction can be conveniently classified as major and minor, static and dynamic (Bal: 1985). A major character is an important figure at the centre of the story's action or theme. The major character is sometimes called a protagonist whose conflict with an antagonist may spark the story's conflict. Supporting the major character is one or more secondary or minor character whose function is partly to illuminate the major characters.

Minor characters are often static or unchanging: they remain the same from the beginning of a work to the end (Moeketsi: 2012). Dynamic characters, on the other hand, exhibit some kind of change of attitude, purpose, behaviour, as the story progresses. There may be major and minor characters in a work. Characters that change little, if at all, are called static characters. Characters that change significantly are called dynamic characters (Welty: 2009).

Fifthly, a round character is one who is without doubt true to life. It is a character that has many different and sometimes even contradictory personality traits. A character that undergoes some type of change or development in the story, which is often because of something that happens to him/her (Boshego: 1998).

Forster (1927) articulates that the real test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way. If it never surprises, then it is considered to be a flat character but if it does not convince, it is a flat character pretending to be round, it has the incalculability of life about it, life within the pages of a book. And by using it sometimes alone, more often in combination with the other kind, the novelist achieves his task of adjustment and complements the human race with the other aspects of his work.

Round characters are usually fully developed personalities that are affected by the story's proceedings; they can learn, grow, or deteriorate by the end of the story. Characters are most convincing when they look like real people by being consistent, motivated, and life-like (Burman :2012).

A round character is opposed to a flat character (Moloi: 1973). This is a character that does not change in the course of the story. It is a character that is stereotyped, shallow, and often symbolic, that has only one or two personality traits. A flat character is a one-dimensional character According to Forster (1927) flat characters were called “humorous” in the seventeenth century, and are occasionally called types or caricatures. In their purest form, they are built round a single idea or quality and when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards the round.

Moloi (1973: 12) believes that flat characters are a necessary vehicle for conveying one kind of vision of life and Forster (1927) claims that the flat characters are the most advantageous. An advantage of a flat character is that it is easily recognised by the reader's emotional eye whenever he/she comes in, not by the visual eye, which merely notes the relapse of a proper name.



A second advantage is that he/she is easily remembered by the reader afterwards. They remain in his mind permanently for the reason that they were not changed by circumstances; they moved through circumstances, which in review gives them a comforting quality, and preserves them when the book that produced them may decay (Paizis: 1998).

## **2.3 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this review was to view the inclinations in elements of narrative studies within the past and present periods and see how commentary on the analysis of novels has changed and is still changing. Appropriate and credible academic literature was identified and used. It is clear from the research revised that evaluative clarification is very captivated and widely practiced throughout the world. Along with this, it is also clear that elements of analysing novels and short stories are used to achieve clear comprehension amongst societies and benefits the communities at large. The mentioned elements of analysing a novel, are very crucial as their center are a concern with helping scholars, writers and students become better analysts.

The next section deals with the theoretical framework in which this study is embedded.

# CHAPTER THREE

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two dealt with literature review in which elements that constitute a novel were discussed. This chapter discusses the theory that underpins this research. As stated in chapter one under the heading “theoretical framework”, Formalism was an influential school of literary criticism in Russia from the 1910s to the 1930s (Erlich: 1955). It was the first theory to emerge as a reaction against Romanticism, which advocated the author’s milieu, the period in which he lived as well as his race, important factors in the analysis of texts. Russian Formalism is the base upon which all other criticism theories were founded (Eikenbaum: 1924).

Formalism emerged from two groups namely the Opoyaz movement and the Moscow linguistic circle in the year 1917 (Eagleton: 1996). Distinguished figures in the formulation of this theory were Roman Jakobson, Victor Shlovisky, Boris Eikenbaum, Osip Brik and Jurie Tyngarov. Formalism was somewhat an assembly of closely interacting people who shared basic assumptions, objectives, and areas of interest but who otherwise did their distinct work and often engaged in a debate with one another (Erlich: 1973).

Opoyaz’s primary concern was that the study of literature should be constituted as a genuinely autonomous science, employing distinctive methods and procedures of its own, and not as a part of some other science, even that of linguistics (Even-Zohar:1990).

The evolution of the Formalist school was guaranteed to attract notice and provoke opposition on the part of rival critical groupings; consequently, its methodology was challenged by a school known as Marxism.

They too have felt the effect of the extensive wince from positivism (Bann and Bowlit: 1973). The theory of Marxism, will however, not be discussed in this study.

Formalism is a descriptive theory. It is therefore correct to say that this theory is not extrinsic. Formalism was less concerned with the concept of literature itself but paid more attention to what makes a text literary. Saussure's central methodological perception was that the value and function of a given unit of language, is its accepted meaning, depends on its relationship to other such units within the system of language ( Eagleton : 1996).

Russian Formalism thought of literature on a scientific basis, it is completely straightforward and amply analysed by focusing on language and the employment of literary devices. This theory does not look at the author but focuses more on the analysis of the novel itself; therefore, it is an intrinsic theory (Jakobson:1987). It is an independent theory that teaches narrative Formalism.

To the extent that the Formalist did argue that the value and function of a literary device depends on its relationship to other devices within the system of the relationship established by the literary text as a whole, it is quite correct to point to their influence on the formation of structuralism (O'Toole and Shukman:1978).

The strongest influence on formal theorising was the desire to stop the methodological mix up, which at that particular time, was very common and existed in traditional literary studies, and created literary scholarship as a unique and integrated field of intellectual strive(Erich: 1955).The following section discusses the concepts of Formalism namely, Fabula and sjuzet, defamiliarisation and literariness.

### **3.2 FABULA AND SJUZET**

In the discussion, the distinction will be made between fabula or story, and sjuzet or plot. Fabula is related to the practical use of language and Sjuzet as the poetic use of language. Selden (1989: 12-13) defines the two concepts as follows:

A plot is the artful disposition of the ingredients which make up a story... 'plot' (sjuzet) is strictly literary, while 'story' (fabula) is a mere raw material awaiting the organising hand of the writer (Hasan: 1985).

According to the above excerpt, the Formalists disregard the authors' ideas, reality, and theme, describing them only as external factors that the authors employ and are of no use in literature. The Formalists further rejected the notions of form and content and replaced them with the distinction between material and device. Plot is the disruption of the formal arrangements of ingredients in the text. (Hull and Lawrence: 1969). Plot is closely related to the notion of defamiliarisation because incidents now appear as if we see them for the first time (Lemon and Reis: 1965). Fabula is the story. Sjuzet combines the events of the fabula together into a coherent plot while fabula is composed of all casual events in the literary work. The reader of the work, creates it through his/her interpretation (Miall and Kuiken: 1994).

Two functions can be ascribed to the literary text: that of entertaining or giving pleasure to a reader because of the 'artistry' or 'literariness' of the texts and that of communicating something to the reader about the 'lives' of certain characters. Regarding these two aspects of *reading pleasure* and the *communication of something* we find the distinctions of literature X 'light/kiosk/popular literature'/reading matter (Mukarovsky: 1964).

The Formalists wanted to free poetic words from the bondage of philosophical and religious practices. The Formalists judged the constituent elements of the poem by their internal factors and explored the structural principles that made it verse literariness, which is explained as a word that forms the basis of a Formalist as that which makes a given work a literary work (Eikenbaum: 1924).

The novelist seems to be aware that a plot is vital when creating a narrative and cannot be taken for granted. With their description of plot, one can conclude that a plot is the rudimentary plan of a story and that it is the succession of events that noble or good characters go through or take upon themselves to try get into an exultant ending.

Brik (1972: 90) as quoted by Jefferson and Robey (1988: 31) comments that there are no poets or literary figures, and there is poetry and literature.

In studying the events of a prose-text, one has to make a distinction between the events as they appear in the text, and a rearrangement of the events by the reader. Take into account all the sequential, logical and casual relations between those events, which will (in most instances) bring out a different chronology, this deduction of events is often called the plot or fabula (Bann and Bowlt: 1973). The plot is most significant to a novel much as the skeleton of the human body; it is simple compared to some other systems, but it gives the organism its structure and clenches it together. The events of a story are usually said to create an array called 'plot'. A plot is a story, a selection of events arranged in time, and one reason why we go on reading a novel is to see what happens next (Eagleton: 1996).

A plot has a beginning, which leads through the middle to an end. It makes some kind of an arrangement, the probability must appear not only in events, but in their sequence, and a plot contains intentions, consequences, and relationships. The following section discusses the notion of defamiliarisation.

### **3.3 DEFAMILIARISATION**

The Formalists believed that a true literary study ponders on the proper devices used to produce the paraphernalia of defamiliarization. Shklovsky (1917) coined the term defamiliarisation, which is also known as *ostranenie*. He introduced the concept of defamiliarisation in his work by means of "Art as a Device" which is frequently translated as 'Art as Technique'.

Therefore, defamiliarisation is the artistic technique of presenting to audiences common things in an unfamiliar or strange way in order to enrich the perception of what is known. To the Formalists, the central concept 'obstranenie' or defamiliarisation is understood as the dominant, which specifies the function of the device within the uniquely literary work. In contradiction to the futurists, the defamiliarisation effected by literary text does not, according to the Formalists, reveal

the world as it really is but merely constitutes one distinctive form of cognition amongst others.( Cook:1994).

The notion 'art' in the formalism theory, involves the concept of defamiliarisation, i.e. making strange. Art refreshes our sense of life and experience, and it makes one-feel things - to make stone, stoney. In this manner, Russian formalism regards literature as a special use of language, which is able to express experience in a unique approach. The Formalists' practical criticism upheld the inseparability of art and spirituality, and searched for the connections between the two in individual work (Mukarovský: 1964).

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. Objects appear unfamiliar as if we are seeing them for the first time. Art is realised by the use of the special language, which will distinguish literature from other forms of writing. Defamiliarising differentiates between practical and poetic language. It is this poetic language that gives literature scientific status and which in turn gives rise to literacies (Cook: 1994:40).

Art is 'a way of life' and literature itself is a work of art, which has its own merits and demerits. Art does not get better and better its appearance just changes and somehow their value for their own times and their value for us now must be held in the mind concurrently. Narrative deviates analytically from everyday speech as it alters and strengthens ordinary language. Farr (2004) believes that Dickinson recognized that an artist must be gratified with the artifact; otherwise, its appreciation by others is resonated as trivial.

Eikenbaum (1924) accentuates that Formalism is dependent on logical aesthetics and philosophical theories of art. An artful, yet specific literary arrangement of meaningful, active structures that arranges the raw material into art, also transforming it from random and mundane to ordered, patterned, and evocative is known as device. Although it might sound like the contrast between form and content, it is applied to a different aspect of literary construction. It is equivalent to the different techniques the artist uses to transform that material into a different medium, and to an interested viewer.

The purpose of art is to divulge the sensation of things as they are observed and not as they are known (Miall and Kuiken: 1994). It will be shown that the artistic techniques that are used by the authors make the comprehension of texts difficult as it increases the level of perception in readers. Art is characteristically trans-emotional and consequently has no mainstay.

Defamiliarisation serves as a means to strengthen individuals' experiences of everyday ordinary life in new ways, through the use of artistic language. The artistic language will create a shift in the normal, foreseen form of perception and by so doing reveals the world anew. As Aristotle (n.d) said, 'poetic language must appear strange and wonderful', therefore consequently, the reader is required to see from a different perspective and appreciate the form of the text and not just its content or meaning (Verlich: 1976).

Gabriel's practice localises defamiliarization in the creative process itself and characterises it as a stratagem to invite the artist to explore more profoundly and extensively in creating the piece. The effect of defamiliarisation depends not on the device itself, but on the use to which it is put. Beyond doubt, defamiliarisation, as the concept closely related to Russian Formalism, distinguishes between practical and poetic language (Shklovsky: 1940). The following section discusses literariness.

### **3.4 LITERARINESS**

This word 'literariness' reveals that narrative writing is based on the poetic language used in narrative (Lemon and Reis: 1965). Narrative language therefore differs from everyday language that is found in the media such as the newspapers and magazines.

Literariness makes a given work a literary effort. It is a feature that differentiates literature from other human creations and is made of certain artistic devices, which are employed in literary works. In Russian Formalism theory, attention is focused on the literary process itself, and not only on the insight of defamiliarization and procures that literary texts are treated as autonomous objects (Eikenbaum: 1924).

The Formalists wanted to free poetic words from the bondage of philosophical and religious practices. The Formalists judged the constituent elements of the poem by their internal factors and explored the structural principles, which made it a verse literariness, a word that forms the basis of a Formalist as that which makes a given work a literary work (Erlich: 1955).

To study the phenomenon of literariness is to study the relationship between the series of the text designated as literary and those as non-literary cultural forms, which literary texts alter by making strange the terms of seeing proposed in them. Whether or not a given text can be said to represent the attribute of defamiliarisation thus depends not on its intrinsic, isolated properties but on the relationship, which those properties establish with other cultural and ideological forms (Scott: 1973).

Literariness is the result of working etymologically so that it “makes strange” or interrupts our familiarised perception of the word (Erlich: 1955). A Formalist approach to a particular literary text does not end in itself, or to be understood on its own terms and for its own sake, but as vehicles for the exemplification and development of this concept (Verlich: 1976).

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed the theory of Russian Formalism and its concepts. There has been much research and discussions conducted on Formalism. The purpose is therefore to give the reader more clearer insight on Russian Formalism and its concepts such as fabula and syhuzet, defamiliarisation and literariness. the researcher has introduced and explored the concepts of Formalism and meaning, because these concepts add value to both Russian Formalism theory and analysis of novels. It is seen that Fabula and Syhuzet go hand in hand, literariness and defamiliarisation are also intertwined. With Formalism explained, the analysis of selected Sesotho novels that are to be examined using this literary theory should therefore be lucid.

The next chapter deals with the analysis of *Mosikong wa lerato*, *Mosali a nkhola* and *Lehlaba la lephako*.



# CHAPTER FOUR

## ANALYSIS OF THE LITERARY TEXTS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical framework of Russian Formalism. The concepts such as defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula and sjuzet were discussed at length. These concepts form the crux on which this research is based. In this chapter, these concepts will be used to support the interpretation and analysis of three literary texts that are subjects of this research. The following Sesotho selected novels will be analysed in this chapter: *Mosikong wa lerato* (1988) *Mosali a nkholo* (1960) and *Lehlaba la lephako* (1999).

The next section discusses the concepts, fabula, sjuzet, literariness and defamiliarisation, which will support all novels that are subjects of evaluation and analysis as discussed in chapter three. The four concepts originate in Russian Formalism and are employed in narratology, which describes narrative construction. Firstly, each concept will be explained and thereafter, the three novels will be analysed using the concept in question as an analytical tool. Beside the analysis of three selected Sesotho novels, which use Russian Formalism concepts, additional concepts such as character and characterisation will also be part of the discussion as they support the four concepts mentioned. The section that follows, discusses fabula in the three novels.

### 4.2 FABULA

Chatman (1978: 20) refers to fabula as the entire whole of events to be correlated in the narrative. It is composed of all casual events in the literary work. Through the works of Sklovsky, Merrill (2012: 11) was able to conclude that fabula which are the devices of plot construction complicate, delay and bring inclination to, is equated with

the human drive to procreate. We can thus deduce that it is created by the reader of the work, through interpretation.

#### **4.2.1 Mosikong wa lerato, 1988 (T. Mafata)**

The story is about a marriage between a man and his wife. Lesedi is a teacher at Patsuwe and also a community leader. His wife is an introvert and an uneducated young woman. Lesedi as a leader befriends everybody in the community and this gesture creates jealousy amongst members of his community.

Jealousy intensifies to the extent where some members of the community accuse him of having a love affair with Lesiba's wife, Mmamotjodi. This state of affairs causes conflict between Lesedi and his wife, Mmalekupa. Whilst facing this crisis at home, his wife goes to town to get household goods. In the bus, men are discussing issues that affect men and women in marriage, and because she is an introvert, she feels that the men in the bus are discussing her home circumstances, thereby ridiculing her. She insults one of these men, and all hell breaks loose. She is brutally attacked and one of her eyes was battered.

In town, Mmalekupa could not get her clothes from the dry cleaner as she forgot the dry clean slip at home. She passes the time carelessly in town until she discovered that there was no longer transport back home. A man unknown to her makes some love advances towards her and she rejected the advances. This man ends up saying that she can reject him, but does she know what her husband is doing at home with other women. Immediately after this man had stated this, Mmalekupa's mind started to construct a vivid mental picture of the relationship between Lesedi and Lesiba's wife. She is angry and wants to avenge this.

Fortunately, for her, she got a lift back home and at that time her husband, Lesedi is raging with anger because it was already late in the afternoon and his wife was still not at home. His mind forced him to believe that the manner in which she was dressed is an indication that she is a prostitute. This makes matters worse when a car stopped in front of his house. His madness caused him to break the flower and there was commotion in the house.

There was mud and water all over and when his wife entered the house, finding the house in such a disarray, she ended up swearing at Lesedi, stating he (Lesedi and Mmamotjodi had been playing with her flower and had eventually broken it. Lesedi on the other hand is attracted by the battered and swollen eye, and out of rage, unleashed a powerful fist that closed the healthy eye. Mmalekupa ran to her parents for protection and when they saw their daughter in that condition, they decided that Lesedi no longer loves their daughter, and has no right to assault her. Therefore, they will teach him a lesson that he will never forget. Lesiba at this stage was also preparing to teach Lesedi a lesson that he will never forget in his life as he thought that Lesedi undermined him by engaging in a love affair with his wife. He was brutally assaulted by Lesedi. The involvement of the inspectors of education and police officers led to a peaceful resolution of conflict between Lesedi and all those who were against him.

#### **4.2.2 Mosali a nkholo, 1960 ( B, Khaketla)**

In the beginning, Khaketla's *Mosali a nkholo* highlights the protagonist named Mosito who has recently graduated from a modern school together with his two best friends Pokane and Khosi. Mosito is described as a very handsome young man. He is the only son of chief Lekaota who is to take over his father's throne after he passes. People from his village were very excited to have him home after being gone for such a long time. The chief, his father even had a cordial ceremony to welcome his son who has done him proud. Chief Lekaota was proud of his son as he now saw him as a 'real man'.

A minister by the name of Motete was invited to advise Mosito and his friends. The ceremony was lovely and people had lots of eats and drinks. After two years since he had come back from school, Mosito's father realised that it was now time for his son to marry. He had this discussion with his son and suggested that he marries into chief Khare's family, as he knew the good upbringing of Khare's daughters. Lekaota believed that Khare's family are good people but emphasised that his son may marry into whichever family his heart desires, in other words, he was not forcing his son to choose one of Khare's daughters to be his wife.

The day came that Mosito had to choose a wife. He went with his two friends to chief Khare's place. His friends warned him not to take an uneducated woman, as she would be troublesome and make imprudent decisions. He chose Sebolelo to be his wife. Sebolelo is described as a very beautiful woman but not as educated as he was. After their marriage, the couple had a son whom they named Thabo and according to Sesotho tradition, Sebolelo's son was to be called Mmathabo.

Chief Lekaota passed on just a few years later and Mosito was given the chieftaincy, as it was his birthright. Before he died, Lekaota advised Mosito to be guided by his consciousness at all times. Pokane and Khosi became chief Mosito's advisors. His late father's advisors, Khati and Sebotsa visited the young chief and advised him to strengthen his throne with a human liver.

Mosito was fuming with anger by what the old men had said and dismissed them. He was instantaneously disgusted and surprised by what the old men had come to say. Mosito then received a booklet written by the superior Chief, which states that all small-run villages must be reduced and be controlled by fewer leaders. Mosito was one of the chiefs who was to lose his chieftaincy. His advisors told him to wait for other changes that the council might make regarding the chiefs whose chieftaincies were to be taken away from them and believed that Mosito should do good deeds that will earn him the position he deserves as an educated man. He agreed with what his friends had said. The two men engaged a man named Maime in their plans to convince the chief to fight for his birthright. They also went with a strange man by the name of Selone who is a travelling traditional doctor. The man mentioned to Mosito that his chief was also disputing the matter and fighting for his throne but Mosito dismissed and belittled him in front of other men, and that left Selone very angry and vengeful towards Mosito.

The men were unsuccessful to change his mind and approached Mmathabo to revolutionise her husband's decision regarding the above matter, which she successfully managed to do. Mosito then went to dispute the case with no success. Hearing that their chief had lost the case, the men and Mmathabo blamed him for not agreeing to use voodoo before his trial in order to get the council to agree to whatever he had to say.

Selone advised the young chief to get hold of his late father's chieftaincy horn, which will aid his throne. He discussed the matter with his wife who agreed with Selone. He chose to listen to his wife although his instinct told him otherwise. As he was about to go to bed, he saw a large snake on the window bank and quickly hit it slightly on the head. The snake immediately died and right after this incident, the couple struggled to sleep.

As Mmathabo had told him, Mosito was now convinced that someone was bewitching him and wanted him dead. She had told Mosito that Khosi and Pokane were behind his misfortunes and wanted the throne for themselves, which he believed. One morning he called the old men including Selone and Maime to inform them that he will consult Selone and during his consultation, Selone told him to get a freshly acquired human liver from a strong fearless man to complete the medication that will give him power and make people fear him. The old men suggested that their prey should be a man called Tlelima, as he suited the description of a man whose liver was to complete the medication. Mosito disagreed with them but as usual was convinced by his wife to do so, which he did. Tlelima was captured and slaughtered. Tlelima's friends and two other two men were involved in his murder and all the men individually took a part of Tlelima's body to fulfil their necromantic activities. They then disposed of his decrepit corpse by using a rope, which they tied around the leg of a man named Papiso and also dragged him into the river, and drowned them.

The two corpses were discovered and retrieved by the villagers who had spotted them. The police then arrested Mosito as well as his accomplices and they were sent to prison. Maime convinced a man named, Letebele to betray the men and to confess to the crime by shifting all the blame from them, which they did. The two men became state witnesses and Mosito and the other men were granted death penalties. Before their strangulation, Tlelima's ghost tormented the men. Mosito told pastor Motete, Khosi and Pokane how his wife had betrayed him. The men were hung and after Mosito's painful fate, Khosi and Pokane gathered with the men to strategise how to educate the community and chiefs on witchcraft, tradition and Christianity.

### 4.2.3 Lehlaba la lephako, 1999 (T. Mohapi)

In his novel, *Lehlaba la lephako*, Mohapi informs us about life on the farms. This is an area where people live in poverty. They try by various means to better their lives and they worked for a white man named Swanepoel. We are introduced to Seabata, who is the novel's protagonist. He also works for Swanepoel and is then given the position of being a foreman because Swanepoel trusts him. Seabata lives with his wife, Mmabatho and the two were employed by Swanepoel. Mmabatho was a maid.

Since he became the foreman, Seabata started to mistreat the workers and life became very difficult for them on the farm. He was undermining the workers and abusing them. He did not teach them how to operate machinery but then blamed them when they could not use the machines properly. He also became a cheat and had an affair with Mmakeneuwe.

Things remained as such until Swanepoel heard rumours that a group of workers' rights activists had visited his farm and that infuriated him. He even decided to demolish the school on his farm. The school was destroyed and many villagers were very upset by that, as their children had to attend school at pastor Nkgelwane's place. Seabata continued to ill-treat the workers until they hated him. He then took his employer's van to transport the sheep to the vet. He also took his wife to the doctor. On his way back to the farm, his wife, Mmabatho then went outside to feed their chickens only to find that all the chickens were slaughtered. That same night, the angry people smashed the couple's windows. They had to move to a backroom behind Swanepoel's house. Seabata tried to change his ways and behaved slightly better towards the workers. Seabata had a plan to make money, it was to take one sheep each and every time he transported them and to trade with a butcher for money.

Swanepoel noticed the change in Seabata and became cautious of him. He then hired a private investigator by the name of Tshediso to follow Seabata wherever he went. Tshediso caught Seabata red-handed and immediately called both the police and Swanepoel who came within the blink of an eye. Seabata and the butcher were arrested. On the day of his trial, Seabata spoke dishearteningly, he uttered words

that showed regret and was very apologetic that he did not work well with his community. He explained that he had gratified Swanepoel who used him knowing that he was poor, and that people tried to inform him but he was too blinded by poverty, and then said that employees try by all means to satisfy their employers because of poverty.

He was sentenced to three years imprisonment, which is the number of sheep he had sold and the butcher was sentenced to two and a half years. Seabata remained in custody and was delighted when his wife visited him. Mmabatho came to tell her husband about the passing of their son and he was heart-broken.

### **4.3 SJUZHET**

Sjuzet is the plot. For Boulton (1975:45) the probability of a plot are that must not appear in events only, but in their arrangement and contain cause, consequences and relationships which Zainul (2009) suggests that in order to understand a literary work as a work of art, emphasis must be placed on its form. It should therefore be accurate and relevant within the total meaning of the story (fabula).

The five stages of the plot (Ellis: 2010) are discussed in chapter two, and to follow is only a brief discussion of what these stages entail:

#### **4.3.1 The Exposition stage**

In the exposition, characters are presented to the reader, their relationship with one another, the place and time of events (Boulton: 1975). This phase is characterised by peace, law and order.

#### **4.3.2 Motorial moment**

This is the second stage where conflict in the story starts. The behaviour of one of the characters affects the equilibrium that prevails and other characters are affected (Chatman: 1978).

### **4.3.3 Complication or climax**

This stage is where the lives of the main character and those around him become complicated. Climax according to Cohen (1973: 177), is the most important point towards which the chain of events move. It is the turning point of the story.

### **4.3.4 Falling action**

This is the stage where resolution begins; events and complications start to fall into place (Chatman: 1978).

### **4.3.5 Denouement**

This is the part of the story where all that happened in the climax is unravelled (Ellis: 2010). It is the end of conflict.

The sjuzet of the three novels will be categorised in exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution.

## **4.4 SJUZET IN MOSIKONG WA LERATO**

### **4.4.1. Exposition**

Characters such as Lesedi, Mmalekupa, Moretlo, Lesiba, Mmamolepe, Mmamotjodi and others are introduced. Lesedi is married to Mmalekupa, and the story revolves around them. The place of events is Patsuwe in Lesotho and the time of events is both modern and traditional.

### **4.4.2 Motorial moment**

It is expected of both the husband and wife to work together in order to realise their marriage goals. But this is not the case with Lesedi and his wife. When the wife is not at home, Lesedi sells his wife's fowl, and also when the husband is away from home, Mmalekupa gives away her husband's blanket.



The behaviour of both partners causes more rift between them when rumour goes around in the village about the misdemeanour between Lesedi and Lesiba's wife.

#### **4.4.3 Complication or climax**

Peace no longer prevails at home as the situation becomes tense. On one hand Mmalekupa gives away Lesedi's favourite blanket as a gift without his consent and on the other hand Lesedi sells their chicken without telling his wife. What triggers more action is that Mmamolepe reveals to Mmalekupa that her husband, Lesedi fraternises with other women in the village and this encourages Mmalekupa to have more detail with regards to the matter.

Lesiba at this time is planning to teach Lesedi a lesson because he perceives Lesedi's action as undermining his manhood. In the bus, Montoe and his friends are discussing the relationship between a husband and wife at home, and without using her judgement carefully, Mmalekupa feels that these men are talking about her family, and she ended up being brutally attacked by one of the men. Lesedi is angry at home and as it is becoming darker, he thinks that his wife is with another man, and jealousy drives him to complete madness. The arrival of his wife by car driven by another man, unknown to him, resulted in Lesedi assaulting his wife further, eventually closing another eye. Lesedi's problems force him to look for spiritual intervention, hence he seeks the services of the diviner.

#### **4.4.4 Falling action or crisis**

The two warring partners want a solution for the problem. The principal of the school, Mr Moretlo, inspector of schools, police officers and Lesedi and Mmalekupa try to find a way to reach the solution. This happens at court.

#### **4.4.5 Denouement**

Lesedi was told to appear at court with his witnesses and so did principal Moretlo. The court found Lesedi not guilty at all and Moretlo was dismissed as principal whereas Mmalekarapa was dismissed as a teacher.

Chief Mokotla was given a second chance to lead with honesty and was told he was to be dismissed if he misled the community.

There is now harmony between the characters that have been at war. Lesedi was given Moretlo's position, which is to be the school's principal and his friend Tello, was now his deputy principal. Through what was said during the court proceedings, Mmalekupa realised how wrong she was and later went to apologise to Lesedi, who forgave her.

The next section discusses the sjuzet in *Mosali a nkhole*:

## **4.5 SJUZET IN MOSALI A NKHOLA**

### **4.5.1 Exposition**

The place of events is Qacha in Lesotho and the time of events is semi-modern as well as rural. In the beginning of the novel, we see Mosito and his friends who have just come back from a modern school. We are informed that the young men were taught modern ways and that they, unlike other villagers, were educated. Mosito is described as a light-toned handsome man who is the only son of Chief Lekaota. His father and the entire community were happy to have the young men back from school. Their presence was celebrated and they were even advised.

### **4.5.2 Rising action**

Chief Lekaota advises his son that it was now time for him to get a wife. After Mosito had married and had a son by the name of Thabo, Chief Lekaota passed on. Mosito was thereafter crowned to be the chief of his village and honoured his birthright. After he was crowned chief, his late father's advisors, Khati and Sebotsa came to him and advised him to get a human liver, which will strengthen his chieftaincy, but he refused and dismissed the men. He then received a booklet from the Superior council stating that the number of chiefs were to be reduced. His wife managed to influence him to dispute the council's decision, which he lost.

### 4.5.3 Climax

After losing the case, Mmathabo blamed him for not listening to her for she said he must start at the traditional herbalists to make the council agree with whatever he had to say. Khati and Sebotsa now involved a man by the name of Maime in their plans to amend their chief's mind about traditionalists. Mmathabo also poisoned her husband's mind by making him believe that Pokane and Khosi were the ones who are bewitching him. Mosito then became rude and distanced himself from them. A travelling herbalist named Selone told Mosito that he must get his father's royal horn, which apparently was recovered inside the tummy of the snake that Mosito had 'killed'. He then told him that he only needed a human liver to complete the medicine. Mosito and several men went ahead and murdered Tlelima. Each of the men then took Tlelima's body parts to complete their evil rituals.

Lipuo, who is Tlelima's wife began to worry about her husband's unusual disappearance and went to Mosito to report him missing and to ask him to send a search party to locate her husband, which Mosito unwillingly did.

Papiso drowned while disposing of Tlelima's corpse in the river. The villagers recovered the corpse. Papiso's wife also went to Mosito about her husband's disappearance. An undercover cop by the name of Seleso pretended to be destitute and asked Mosito for a job. He later disappeared from Mosito's place after his fight with Molafu. Mosito was arrested together with his accomplices.

Maime and a man called Letebele betrayed chief Mosito and the other men by confessing to the crime yet not implicating themselves but shifting all the blame to chief Mosito. Maime and Letebele therefore became state witnesses. Mosito and his men were asked to confess to the murder, but they claimed that they were innocent. His late father's apparent herbalist came and asked Mosito for late Tlelima's liver, which Mosito instructed Mmathabo to do by writing a letter, to give it to him.

The ghost of Tlelima haunted all the men. The men pleaded for a second chance at life and they had to write to the magistrate to show remorse for what they had done, but failed to do so as they continued to claim that they were innocent.

#### **4.5.4 Falling action**

The men were given death penalties. A day before Mosito was to be executed; he admitted the felony to Reverend Motete. What he and his two best friends had done and why he had done such an awful thing.

#### **4.5.5 Denouement**

The men were later dispatched. Khosi and Pokane together with several men manoeuvred ways to educate the community on witchcraft, tradition and Christianity.

### **4.6 SJUZET IN LEHLABA LA LEPHAKO**

#### **4.6.1 Exposition**

The reader is informed about the difficult life of living on a farm, how people struggle to make ends meet but try to cope under their circumstances even with an abusive employer, Swanepoel. Seabata is given the position of a foreman and his house is built using bricks unlike other people. It seems like he is the only one with such living conditions. He thinks that people are jealous of him. He is also very loyal to Swanepoel

#### **4.6.2 Rising action**

Seabata is used by Swanepoel to treat workers inhumanely even when he does not agree with doing so, but does so knowing that he depends on Swanepoel for survival. Seabata is also power-hungry and ends up being a slave to Swanepoel.

A man by the name of Nketsi came to the farm and asked Seabata for a job. As rude as he had now become, Seabata asked him about his education and found out that Nketsi was more educated than he was. He then told Swanepoel not to give Nketsi a job. Nketsi then suspected that Seabata might have been the one to tell Swanepoel about past rumours, that he had stolen a sheep before, which of course were fallacy. Seabata ill-treated the workers, then they hated him for that and because he was so

close to Swanepoel. A group of workers' rights activists visited the farm and informed workers of their rights. After he had heard the news, Swanepoel decided to demolish the school on his farm.

#### **4.6.3. Climax**

The school was demolished and Seabata was one of the men to demolish the school after being instructed to do so by Swanepoel. This infuriated the people as that building was very important to them. It was used as a church, community hall and to hold various communal activities such as concerts.

After his wife informed him about being pregnant and not feeling well, Seabata took her to the doctor and typically took a sheep to the vet to be treated, as instructed by his employer, Swanepoel. Upon their return, Mmabatho went to feed their chickens only to find that all the chickens had been killed. She then went inside the house and that particular night, their house's windows were smashed. The couple's lives were now in danger. Swanepoel decided to give them a backroom at his house.

The people now hated Seabata and he decided to remain at home and no longer went to work. Swanepoel then became suspicious of him after they had a disagreement in front of the labourers in which Seabata stood up for the labourers. He then became friends with a man named Tawana who was a butcher and they met through Seabata's girlfriend, Mmakeneuwe. The two men ended up strategizing a fraudulent plan of how they can help each other. The plan was that Seabata was to sell Swanepoel's sheep to Tawana in exchange for money.

#### **4.6.4 Falling action**

As suspicious as Swanepoel was now of Seabata, he decided to hire a man by the name of Tshidiso, who was a private investigator to follow Seabata wherever he went and the man did so. Tshidiso caught Seabata selling sheep to Tawana and immediately Swanepoel and the police were notified. The two men were arrested and Seabata was sentenced to three years while Tawana was given two and a half years of imprisonment.

#### 4.6.5 Denouement

The ending of the novel *Lehlaba la lephako* is infrequent. Seabata was to choose between living in harmony with his fellow people or remain faithful to Swanepoel but this does not happen. What happens is that he ends up in prison and has lost his freedom, job, wife and son.

#### 4.7 SETTING

Boshego (1995: 89) observes that setting is where the features of time and place ascend. It is therefore used to move the story along, set the mood or tone of the events. The physical specifics often indicate the emotional state of the characters or the link between characters (Kenny: 1966). The following section below discusses the setting of the three novels that are selected for this study:

##### 4.7.1 Mosikong wa lerato

This is the time and place of the story. The place of events is Patsuwe in Lesotho and the time of the events is both modern and traditional because the reader is told about schools, police officers and busses as a means of transport on the one hand and the authority of chiefs on the other hand. Mafata shows the physical setting through the use of mountains, rivers and animal houses.

Social setting is the way and culture of the people of that community. This setting is modern in both its ways and tradition. We note that it is modern because of the mode of transport the characters use. Lesedi was working as a teacher at Patsuwe School while Mmalekupa gets punched in the eye inside a bus. This setting also appears to be culturally moved because of the mention of traditional medicine and herbalists.

Lesedi who is nauseous, weak and heartbroken seeks help; he wants a person who can solve his problems. During the old time, when one strived for help one went to consult traditional doctors like Rasefabatho. We are not surprised since the novel starts we are told about *pulo ya mokotla* (the opening of a bag). Basotho people have a belief that the bag is opened only when there are difficulties in life.

#### **4.7.2 Mosali a nkholo**

The events take place at a village called Qacha, in Lesotho. The time of the events is both traditional and modern. A modern state of time is seen when Mosito gets out of the bus of an urban school. We take note that only Mosito and his two best friends, Khosi and Pokane are from the urban school like him. He is the only one in the village of Qacha who knows how to read and write.

In the process of writing, Khaketla shows that all communities were in the governance of chiefs. We also note how Mosito and his apprentices use horses as a mode of transport. This without a doubt proves un-refinement among the people of Qacha which also signifies traditional and cultural times.

#### **4.7.3 Lehlaba la lephako**

The events take place on a farm near Theron station, which is near a mining shaft called Star Diamonds at Theunissen, Masilo. The time of the events was in the olden days. People have to work and depend on farm work. We notice this as Nketsi goes and asks to be employed on the farm. The key detail of the events that took place on the farm reveals how people lived. The way Mohapi wrote shows illustrates how people lived on the farm since it was only the foreman, Seabata who had a 'better' house made of brick. Having a house made of brick showed how lavish and privileged Seabata and his wife Mmabatho were than other people. We infer that other village homes could have been made of mud and grass.

There was no electricity and people therefore used paraffin lamps. We also notice how Seabata thought people were jealous of him just because he had the privilege to drive Swanepoel's van. We therefore conclude from Seabata's perception of the villagers that civilisation was not something they were used to. Back in the past, white people oppressed black people as they thought that they were superior to them. It is revealed how villagers lived in fear and were beleaguered by Swanepoel. We realise that the people are doing farm work despite their genders and again had to solicit with Swanepoel to take them to Theunissen.

We detect that the building on Swanepoel's farm is not only used as a school but also to host various communal occasions. Not only were the villagers working for him, they were also scared and dependent on Swanepoel for survival.

## 4.8 CHARACTER AND CHARACTERISATION

A character is a created person in a text. Mousavi and Mousavi (2014) observe that characters are fictional representations of people who are endowed with definite ethical, rational and sentimental personas and are vital in the story's plot.

Dube (1996: 63) states that the events mostly revolve around one major character. It is to be noted that not all characters are listed, only those that had a huge impact on the novel's conflict. However, the appreciation of character traits is for their own sake, including some that have little or nothing to do with what happens as Chatman (1978: 112) maintains. The following statements unveil the authors, Mafata, Khaketla and Mohapi's choice of character and characterisation. Below, the characters are sifted to show why the author might have designated their names.

### 4.8.1 Mosikong wa lerato

It is our view that Lesedi is the protagonist around whom the events revolve. Mafata named the character 'Lesedi' meaning 'light'. It can be seen throughout the novel that Lesedi shed light upon many peoples' lives, especially the learners. Mafata shows this in the following paragraph:

***Ka nako ya ho ruta, a ruta bana hore ba  
tsebe; a sa etsise ba mona ba jwetsang bana  
hore ba tsebe di be di ebe, ho ntse ho thwe  
ho a rutwa ke benghadi...***(Mafata, 1988:5)

(When it was a time to teach, he taught until learners were erudite; unlike the educators here who taught children to cram and forget)



Not only is Lesedi wise but he is also truthful and understands how life works. This is seen when he converses with his friend, Serwala. He says:

***‘...Re santse re le mosikong wa lona, ha re  
eso ka ba re hlwella ka hodimo, monyakeng o  
kang wa lehodimo, moo ho senang dintwa le  
matshwenyeho, moo ho renang kgotso  
feela...’***(Mafata, 1988:37)

(We are still at the bottom of it, we are not yet at the peak of it, just like the content of heaven, where there is no war or worries but where peace prevails)

We also consider one mechanical aspect that arose from his passion and dedication for children. Because of his adoration and compulsion to educate children, Lesedi was adored by his learners:

***‘Ka hoo ha ho makatse hore ebe ba ile ba bonahala  
ba se ba etswa ka diphaphosing tsa bona ba  
phasaphasa ho leba koloing ya mapolesa  
ba hlabile mokgosi wa phohomela, ba etsisa  
dikgomo ha di mathela ho ya la  
moswang’...’***(Mafata, 1988:76)

(It is therefore not surprising as they were seen exiting their classrooms and running towards the police vehicle)

He made learning fun and interesting for children. He believed that fun activities and sport should be incorporated. His amazing work to educate children was known. This is seen when Moretlo complements him and says:

***‘Ntate Lesedi, ka nnete ho ipaka hore o a  
tshabeha ka ntho tsa hao!’***(Mafata, 1988:7)

(Mr Lesedi, this indeed shows how amazingly good you are with your work!)

He puts his profession aside, mingles with other men from his community, and eats from the same pot as they do. He even wore a blanket as all the other men did, but people expected him to dress smart and to associate with people of his social standing:

***‘O ne a nyalana le bona ha bonolo, le meketjaneng ya bona ya badimo le e meng e mengata ba mo mema mme a fele a yo ba teng’***(Mafata, 1988: 6)

(He blended with them so well, even at their ancestral ceremonies and a whole lot of other gatherings they invited him to, which he attended)

Mmalekupa is the next character to be discussed. The name Mmalekupa, arises from a saying ‘*Ntwa ya kupa*’ which means that there is always war where Mamalekupa is concerned. Society expects women to be diplomatic and nonaggressive. In this case, Mmalekupa was the opposite. She pushes her husband instead of asking him nicely to move out of the way:

***Mmalekupa a kgaruma jwalo ebile a mo thesela, Lesedi a be a thekesela kwana’***(Mafata, 1988: 13)

(Mmalekupa then pushes him severely that he almost fell)

She then physically fights with a man in the bus and gets a blue eye from the brawl. She not only disrespects her husband, but men in general. She verbally fights her husband by saying:

***‘Kere o tlohele jana tseo tsa ka o tsamaye, o ye metswalleng yane ya hao eo o mathang le yona! Ke di utlwile tsa hao hona kajeno lena!’***

(Mafata, 1988:13)

(I said leave my plates alone and go roam with those friends of yours! Today I have heard all your scandals!)

Besides her extreme lack of engaging in a harmonious conversation, she is ill-mannered. She referred to one of the men (Montwe) as *'monna towe'* ('towe' can be seen as a words said in scornful or contemptuous manner). There is no doubt that Mmalekupa is unable to communicate her feelings. She is incapable of asking her husband about the canard she heard from Mmamolepe, otherwise chooses to be discourteous and to talk harshly. When asked which friends she is referring to, she simply responds:

***'Yona yane eo o e tsebang. Sutha ke fete!'***(Mafata, 1988:13)  
(Those same friends whom you know. Get out of my way!)

Lesedi notices how rude his wife is and begs:

***'Hao butle hle, Mmalekupa, motho towe  
ka ho ntsunyatsunya ka mantswe', a buwa  
moya wa hae o le tlase, ho utlwahala  
hore o betile pelo.***(Mafata, 1988: 18)  
(‘Mmalekupa can you just please stop hurting me with words’, he said with a broken spirit and heartache)

Mafata then introduces the character Lesiba as Mmamotjodi’s husband. Lesiba, meaning feather, is what this character is associated with. He believes in whatever is said. We get to see how he thinks. He remembers the conversation of his ex-colleagues from the mines who once said women have affairs with other men while their husbands are away at work and decides to quit his job in order to guard and trace his wife’s movements:

***Lebaka la ho ja matsatsi ao e ne e le  
ho alosa metsamao ya mosadi wa hae, ka  
ha a ne a ithutile melomong ya metswalle,***

***ha ba ntse ba qoqa morafong kwana, hore basadi ba  
sala ba matha le bomahlalela hae ha***

***banna ba ile mosebetsing*** (Mafata, 1988:29)

(The reason he took days off from work was so that he could spy on his wife, just like he had learnt from his friends' words who were talking back at the mines, that women run around with unemployed men while their husbands are at work )

He took action before analysing or talking about things. His ego is bruised and he is quick to act. He also believed the rumours about his wife and Lesedi. That is seen when he goes to Chief Mokotla to ask for his permission to attack Lesedi. He did not attempt to interact firstly with Lesedi face to face to find out if he, Lesedi was really having an affair with his wife. It can be said that because the character was allied with a feather, he, like a feather, was blown whichever direction the wind drove him:

***Ka mora ho kgobaka Mmamotjodi ka molamu,  
Lesiba o ne a ila qala mosebetsi wa ho hlophela  
letsatsi la ho ya suha Lesedi a mo etsa thupula,  
le ho mo timellelsa botitjerenyana boo bo neng bo  
mo tsosa jwala ka pokola ya poho selemo.***(Mafata, 1988: 31)

(After beating Mmamotjodi with a stick, he then chose a day to go to Lesedi and teach him a lesson, which will show that his teaching profession is nothing)

It was the first time that he saw Lesedi conversing with his wife but it was not the first time he beat his wife for communicating with another man. He, like a feather, is weak and feels that his manhood is threatened. He takes this out on his wife when he beats her. One can conclude that his weakness and ego push him to punish Mmamotjodi. Mmamolepe says about him:

***'...Hape bare Lesiba o kgagathile mosadi ka  
molamu e le ha a mmone a buisane le Lesedi.'***

(Mafata, 1988:12)

(They also say Lesiba beat up his wife just because he saw her conversing with Lesedi)

His cowardice surfaces, when instead of approaching Lesedi alone, he gangs up on him. He lets other men fight his own personal battles. His weakness is also shown when he beats up his wife. His insecurities decide for him. He secures his superiority by beating up his wife. He believes that Mmamotjodi would therefore be atrocious towards him.

There is a saying in Sotho that states '*kgetsi ya moqoqo ha e tlale*', meaning the bag of conversation is never full. The author has named the village chief Mokotla because he was the one resolving all cases and disputes in his village. Mokotla, means a baggage, listens whatever the villagers come to say. He in turn believes that his word is final, like a chief, he must be obeyed and listened to:

***Morena Mokotla le banna ba Lekgotla ha ba kopana mme ba utlwa tsena, ba fela ba bona ho hlokahala hore Lesedi a ke a etelwe ka diphafa.***(Mafata, 1988: 32)

(After hearing about this, Chief Mokotla and his council decided that Lesedi must be beaten up)

Rulers are expected to bring peace and harmony within the community and not take sides but make a decision that is fair for both conflicting parties. He burdens himself with other people's issues. This is seen when he tries to beat Lesedi without hearing what he came to say. He says:

***'Kere nang moikakasi towe, se ntseng se o potisa mo ke eng?'***(Mafata, 1988:42)

('You pompous fool, I asked what on earth brings you here?')

The fight was never between him and Lesedi. The walls came tumbling down towards him as he sees that his plan to have Lesedi beaten had failed and Lesedi is

well. He could not stand and watch his kind go through misery as Lesedi had hospitalised the men of the Council of Dinare who were sent to beat him:

***Ha a qeta a mo setotsa ka leihlo le tletseng  
bokgopo, a ntano itswella pele ho itjella  
mafi jwalo ka ha eka ho ne ho sa  
etsahale letho.***(Mafata, 1988: 42)

(He then looked at him with eyes filled with anger,  
and continued eating as if nothing had happened)

He also appears to be governing unfairly. He applies nepotism by giving his nephew a lead position in the council of Dinare. He then does not reprimand Lesiba for beating up his wife. Instead he supports his family, even when they are at fault. This is seen when Lesedi says:

***'Athe o morena wa ngwana ngwaneno?  
Ebile ha ore nna ke a ikakasa,  
wena o a ikakasolla!'***(Mafata, 1988: 43)

(Are you only the chief when it comes to your nephew?  
Moreover, when you say I am pompous, you on the other hand  
are self-deprecating!)

It can be believed that Mokotla was burdened, he unconsciously made wrong choices to please those who were close to him. His decisions seemed to have been based on what he was told by others. As a chief, it is his responsibility to listen to both sides of the story, and this was the quality that he lacked. He also thought highly of himself and feared embarrassment:

***'Ekaba morena o ne a le jwang ho hlajwa ke  
ditlhong ha a ikokobetswa ha kaalo, ha a tseba  
a tshajwa ke batho ha kale, a ikentse poho  
hara motse moo?'***(Mafata, 1988: 47)

(How was the Chief like when he had to beg,  
knowing that people fear him as he is a bully in this village?)

What other characters say about him reveals that not only does he apply nepotism, but he is also a tyrant.

Moretlo is another character of Mafata's *Mosikong wa lerato*. He is a derogatory person. He pretends in order to get the information that he wants about people. This is seen when he tries to get Lesedi to talk about his confrontations with Chief Mokotla:

***Moretlo ha a se a leka ho mo phenyekolla mahafi,  
a batla a mo qoqele ntho e ngwe le engwe  
malebana le moferefere oo o mahlakore a mabedi,  
a bile a batle le ho phomosetswa le tse amang  
morena Mokotla, a etsa hoja eka e  
ne e le motswalle...***(Mafata, 1988: 67)

When Moretlo attempts to get him to talk, he wanted him to mention everything that had happened concerning the conflict on both inconsistent revelries, as well as mention how chief Mokotla was encountered; whilst pretending to be a friend ...)

He is seen visiting Serwala's house, who is Lesedi's best friend, with the intention of discovering any information about him and what surprises Serwala is that he actually pretends to care about Lesedi in order to be told everything about him:

***'Banna, ekaba Lesedi ha e le motho ya  
tlhokang dikgatatso ha kaale o tenne  
a futuhelwa ka mabaka afe?'***(Mafata, 1988: 61)

(Lesedi is not troublesome, what reasons could have pushed him to do what he did?)

Even though the events never took place in the schoolyard, Moretlo decided to dismiss him because of the fallacies he had heard about Lesedi's marital affairs and him attacking Mokotla.

***Sefahleho sa Moretlo se ne se se se le hole  
haholo le mane moo se neng se le hona teng  
hoseng, eka sa motho ya neng a setse a hlabehiswa  
hoba a arohane le yena!***(Mafata, 1988: 69)  
(Moretlo's facial expressions had changed  
from that of mourning, like that of a person who was  
angered by separating from him)

Moretlo is seen as a person who tries by all means to destroy peace that triumphs within his surroundings. The fact that Lesedi was not into politics also annoyed him. He says to him:

***'Monna tloleha ditaba tsa dipolotiki o tla  
re bolaisa ka batho'***(Mafata, 1988: 8)  
(‘Man just leave politics alone before you get us  
into trouble’)

He says this and yet he is the one who uses what people tell him against them. This is bizarre as he was the one who asked Lesedi about his political preferences.

***'Moretlo!' Ho kgotsa Serwala, 'Moretlo ke tamolane  
e kgolo ya Mokotla! O teng mererong ena e mebe,  
ha e sa le a ntse a sebetsa le Morena ho tloha  
kgale.'***(Mafata, 1988:47)  
(‘Moretlo!’ says the shaken Serwala, ‘Moretlo is  
Mokotla’s biggest spy! He is involved in all these  
evil plans; He has been working with the Chief forever.’)

The next character to be discussed is that of Mmalekarapa. She is one of the female teachers in Patsuwe. She displays her hatred:

***Ke motsotsong wona ona oo bana ba neng ba  
ntse ba mo tsholohela tjena mosuetsana  
e motenya, Mmalekarapa, a ileng a kgobola***



***ngwana e mong ha bohloko, ka moya o  
tletseng lefufa...*** (Mafata, 1988:67)

(It is at this minute when learners were happy to see him, a chubby female teacher, Mmalekarapa, then painfully shoved off a learner and with a voice filled with hatred...)

She cannot contain her hate like many people could, and does not care about the truth. She also despises Lesedi's guts and publicly shames him. We see this when she volunteers to pray during the school's assembly:

***'Satane eo le qetang ho utlwa mona Bebeleng  
ho thwe o ne a se ke ke a tswafa ho leka esitana  
le Morena Jeso, mora wa Morena Modimo, felleng,  
ha a eso kgaotse ho lwana. O teng mona hara rona,  
mme ha re sa mo hlokomele o tla re ntsha kotsi.  
Ha a tsotelle na motho o mokae  
dilemong...*** (Mafata, 1988:68)

(The devil is that you have just heard about from the Bible who even tests Jesus, the only Son of God; is not done fighting. He is here amongst us, and if we are not aware of him, he will destroy us. He cares not about the age of a person)

The above extract shows how much she hates and belittles Lesedi. She manages to call him a Satan in front of everyone, including learners. She, unlike other educators, could not pretend and showed Lesedi that she is revolted by him.

***'Wena mosadi towe, o ke o kwale molomo  
oo wa hao, ha ke buwe le wena, ke buwa  
le Moretlo!*** (Mafata, 1988:71)

('Woman, just close your damn mouth, I am not talking to you, I am talking to Moretlo!')

She can be seen as Moretlo's sidekick. She gets involved where she is not concerned. The following section discusses character and characterisation in Khaketla's *Mosali a nkholo*.

#### 4.8.2 Mosali a nkholo

Mosito is the tragic hero of Khaketla's *Mosali a nkholo*. Mosito, like his name says, he is a person who has a lot of anger. He is not able to hide how he feels; his umbrage is that which people can see:

***'Khosi a talima Pokane, a qekotsa, eaba o boetse  
o talima Mosito, empa a fumana sefahleho sa  
hae se hloka khotso ho hang, hoo e bileng  
o se a sitoa le hore na a ka boela a re'ng  
ho Morena eo oa hae.'***(Khaketla, 1960: 94)

(Khosi looked at Pokane, thereafter he looked at Mosito, only to find his face not peaceful at all, that he was even speechless to say anything to his Chief).

Mosito had a modern upbringing and despite that, his actions show that he is religiously confused. We can deduce that because of the religious confusion, he is both burdened and livid. He had a modern upbringing but believed that he somehow lost his way. He later practices witchcraft and angrily rips out Tlelima's liver:

***Ka mora metsotso e se mekae, Mosito a tsoa  
le sebetse, sa akgeloa bolekaneng.*** (Khaketla, 1960: 124)

(Just within a short period of time, Mosito had taken out his liver, and put it inside a bucket)

He also cannot control the way he speaks. His anger gets the better of him. This is seen when he yells at Sebotsa and Khati:

***'U se k'a bua ka ntate! Ntate ha a e-so'o ka a  
etsa ntho e kang eno le khale!'***(Khaketla, 1960: 27)

(Don't you dare talk about my father ! He has never done such a thing!)

Although what they came to say was indeed revolting, he could not contain his anger towards them. He disrespects them. He is also unable to make decisions without consulting someone. As a chief, people advise him but he has the final say, he however cannot stick to his initial decision and this contradicts what he says:

***'Maikutlo a ka ha a fehohe joaloka lempetje.'***(Khaketla, 1960: 56)

(Once I make up my mind, it stays that way)

Though he says this, he continually changes his mind. The people also belittle him and are aware that he has no idea how to govern a village. This is seen when Selone says:

***'Ka moo ke bonang ka teng, ho rialo Selone, ntho e ileng ya mo halefisa ke puo yaka; empa 'na ke re le se ke la mo tlohela; ha a tsebe seo a se etsang, o etsoa ke bongoana feela.'***(Khaketla, 1960: 78)

('The way I see it, says Selone, 'he was angered by what I said; however I say continue pursuing him, for he does not know what he is doing, he is still a minor.')

The following section discusses the character of Mmathabo (Sebolelo). Mmathabo's advice to her husband arose from the instructions of Khati and his men to influence her husband. The words of the men triggered Mmathabo's biggest fear, which was to see his son leave in poverty for his father did not fight for his crown.

***Hang a rera hore o lokela hore ntoa ena, e seng a hlotse banna, a e loane ka bohlale bo boholo, le ka matla ohle a sesali ao a nang le ona, hore a tle a fenye.*** (Khaketla, 1960: 79)

(She immediately noted that this war, had failed the men, she needs to fight it very ingeniously, even use all her feministic power to win it)

She listens not to her husband and sees no reason. She is shown to be manipulative and pitiful. She uses the fact that her husband loves her against him:

***Ha a rialo, a reteletsa sethunya, a shebisa molomo oa sona pelong ea hae, a lebella seo monna a se etsang.***(Khaketla, 1960: 107)

(When saying that, she then took a gun and pointed it towards her heart, and waited to see her husband's move)

She thinks not of the consequences of the advice she gives her husband and this shows that she is uneducated. She is also a traditionalist, hence the advice she gives her husband is:

***'...eo le oena u e hanneng, ke ea hore ha selemo se thoasa bana kaofela ba phatsetsoe letolo; empa le teng u lomahantse meno. Hona joale tjena Thabo e se bile e le monna oa motonahali, empa lehare ha a le tsebe'.***(Khaketla, 1960: 81)

('...that which you also disagreed to, is that of having the children circumcised at the beginning of the year, still you remain stubborn. Thabo has even grown up but remains uncircumcised.')

What other characters say about her is of importance. Mosito says:

***'Ntate Motete, mosali oa ka a tla a nkhola!'*** (Khaketla, 1960: 182)  
(‘My wife really deceived me’)

This shows that Mmathabo was a selfish and deceitful person who not only is a traditionalist but also cunning. The next character to be discussed is that of Maime.

Maime is always scheming. He stays behind as all the men in Qacha village go to complete manly tasks as ordered by his Chief. He does disrespect him and enters his home without his presence in order to influence Mmathabo into convincing her husband to do as they say:

***...Maime a nyoloha butle ka matlapeng, a ba  
a fihla a kena motseng. Hoba a qamake,  
mme a ikholise hore ha ho ea mmonang, a ea  
a kokola, a ba a fihla a kena***

***lapeng ha Mofumahali...***(Khaketla, 1960: 73)

(...Maime sneaked from the toilets until he reached the village. After carefully observing and seeing that no one saw him, he then sneaked about until he entered the Queen's home)

His uses a Bible verse to convince the men to carry out his evil plan to manipulate Mosito through Mmathabo:

***'Le ne le utloe Mangolong a Halalelang hore  
e ne ere ha Satane a bona hoba a ke ke a  
phelekanyetsa Atama eaba o mo raha  
maling-a-mpa. Kamehla ha u rata ho tsoara phoofolo,  
u n'o tsoara lelinyane la eona, ebe ua itsamaela,  
'me u tla bona e se e u sala morao...'***(Khaketla, 1960: 40)

(You have heard in the Holy Bible that when Satan could not get to Adam, he then kicked him where it hurts, [he used Eva to get to him]. Most of the times when you want to successfully capture an animal, you first get its young and walk away, and you will see that animal follow you)

He claims that he knows very well how the human mind works and uses this to manipulate and convince other characters. His calculating ways are also seen when they were arrested. He only cares about himself and convinces a man by the name of Letebele to confess to him.

He thus lies to the police and in the court of law to grant himself immunity and thus not to be executed. He convinces Letebele and says to him:

***‘Maikutlo a hao ke ho fumana mokhoa wa ho phonyoha lerabeng lena le u tsoasitseng; feela u tshaba ho rialo ho bao u tsoeroeng le bona, hobane ha u tsebe hore na ba tla reng.’*** (Khaketla, 1960: 150)  
(Your plan is to find a way to get out of this mess, but then you are afraid to tell those that you were arrested with since you do not know what they will say.)

Maime is always planning and can find solutions to any struggle, but that is as long as he gets to benefit. Sebotsa praises how he thinks:

***‘Ke hlile ka tseba hore ha u ntse u ipatile ka matsatsinyana ana a fetileng u ntse u losa taba ena hore u fumane mokhoa oo e ka nolofatsang ka oona.’***(Khaketla, 1960: 40)  
(I already knew that you were planning, the moment I noticed you went missing for the past few days that you were strategizing how to tackle this matter)

The following character to be conferred upon is that of Selone. Khaketla initially introduces Selone as a visiting witchdoctor. Strange events start to take place when he resides in Qacha:

***Letsoalo leo ho neng ho bonahala hore Khati o na le lona la mo thiba moea, a sitoa ho bua, a nna lekanya matsoho feela***

***joaloka semumu*** (Khaketla, 1960: 67)

(The shock that Khati has showed to suffocate him, he did not even talk, but used hand movements just like a deaf person would)

The above extract shows that he is indeed a witchdoctor. Following his instructions, Khati sees a large snake just like Selone told him he would. From the commencement of the novel, he then orders Mosito to get a human liver to complete his medicine. He claims that he is there to heal and not to harm people. His actions contradict what he says:

***'Ke moeti, ke a iphilela mme ha ke rate ho***

***jala moferefere metseng ea batho...***' (Khaketla, 1960: 66)

('I am just a visitor and do not like causing havoc in other people's villages')

After Mosito had embarrassed him, he is bitterly angry and swears to avenge himself:

***'Ke re ha ke Maselone nna, ke Selone! Ke tla mo***

***ruta batho, a tle a tshabele ruri!***' (Khaketla, 1960: 78)

(I say I am not Maselone, I am Selone! I shall teach him a lesson that he will never forget!)

Not long after what he promised, a bizarre event took place at Mosito's home, which led Mosito to believe that he was being bewitched by the people close to him. He does not tell Mosito that he was angry at him but vows to help him. He is heartless and evil. He tells Mosito that he must provide a freshly acquired human liver. While the human sacrifice (Tlelima) pleads with them. Selone is shown to be brave and evil. He says:

***'Morena qala ka ho ntsha leleme lena, a tle a***

***sitoe ho bua ha ho sebetsoa, hobane hoo***

***ho tla senya lithare tsaka!***' (Khaketla, 1960: 124)

(‘Chief, start by cutting his tongue off so that he is unable to speak because that will ruin my medicine!’)

Mosito, Khati and the other men who committed the ritual murder praise Selone’s work:

***‘Ho tloha ha hao mona’, ho rialo Khati, ‘ho tshwana le ho liha lephephe leo e leng khale le sirelelitse motho letsatsi ‘me motho eo a sale a bataolaka ke la sengalingali.’***(Khaketla, 1960: 145)

(‘You leaving here, says Khati’, ‘is like uncovering a sheet that has blocked the sun from a person who had been lost in the darkness.’)

From his actions, what he brought to Qacha was evil and pain. He destroyed the loves of many including his own.

Khati is said to be an old man who was once Chief Lekaota’s advisor. He belittles Pokane and Khosi’s positions as the Chief’s advisors and disregards Mosito’s advice:

***Mokhoa oa hae oa supa ka mokhoa o totobetseng hore tsena tse buuoang ke Morena Mosito hase tseo a eang le tsona le hanyenyane feela...***(Khaketla, 1960: 33)

(His behaviour clearly indicated that he completely disagreed with what was said by Chief Mosito...)

He and Sebotsa are the first people to go to Mosito and to tell him to strengthen his village with a human liver. The two traditionalistic old men might have planted that idea upon Selone. The old man displays courage unlike Sebotsa. As he continues with Sebotsa’s statement, he mentions:

***‘Metsoako eno e batloang ke sebetse sa motho,***



***me ke ka hona a itseng e fumanoa hathata kajeno,  
hobane ha ho sa le ntoa.*** (Khaketla, 1960: 26)  
(‘This mixture that is needed is a human liver, and  
that is why he said it is nowadays difficult to get  
hold of it because there is no war.’)

He volunteers to organise men that will capture Tlelima for a ritual killing. Each and every solution he provides is muti or witchcraft related. This is seen when Sebotsa agrees with him and says:

***‘U nepile haholo, khati. Haesale linyeoe li hloloa  
ka litlakala*** (Khaketla, 1960: 55)  
(‘You are very correct Khati. From the beginning  
of time, cases were won using muti’)

Another character is that of Sebotsa. He is uneducated and a traditionalist just like Khati, and supports his friend dearly:

***...etsoe joale Khati a bua ka taba e botebong  
ba maikutlo a hae, eo a e lumelang ka moea  
oa hae kaofela.*** (Khaketla, 1960: 55)  
(...as soon as Khati talks about the issue that  
he had thought of, he agreed with him completely.)

This proves that his mind also functions like that of Khati. He also asks many questions. This is shown when he says:

***‘Lona ba balang likoranta, ho thoe ntoa e tla  
neng?’*** (Khaketla, 1960: 27)  
(‘You who read newspapers, what is being said  
about the war ending?’)

Signs of disrespect for his Chief are shown through what he articulates. He still treats the Chief like a minor:

***‘Che, bo, Morena; re mamele me u re etsetse  
ka moo re kopang kateng hle! Re baholo  
ha re le bakana, me re tseba seo re se  
buang.’***(Khaketla, 1960: 24)

(‘No Chief, just listen to us and do as we say please! We are as old as we are and we know what we are talking about.’)

He delays before speaking. It somehow seems as if he is too shy to just blurt out words.

***‘Morena ke a bona Sebotsa o a  
tsilatsila...’***(Khaketla, 1960: 26)  
(Chief, I can see that Sebotsa is afraid...’)

The following section discusses the character and characterisation of *Lehlaba la lephako*.

#### **4.8.3 Lehlaba la lephako**

The character of Seabata, meaning ‘it is cold’ in Sesotho can refer to his cold oddity. He has a cold character (semelo sa hae se a bata) which can explain why he spoke and treated people like that. He has immunity and does not work hard like other people:

***...moo Seabata a neng a eme teng a itshwere  
letheka teng, a shebile lemulwana la banna le basadi  
ba ntseng ba hlaola.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 8)  
(...where Seabata was just standing and watching a group of men and women harvest.)

Not only does he not care about the workers, but also about his wife:

***Ha re se le teke ho yena Seabata ha a  
bona mosadi a tsamaya a korobane le ho feta  
matsatsing a fetileng. Pelo ya hae e ne e le  
monateng wa leeto la hae le  
Mmakeneuwe.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 49)

(Seabata was not even bothered when he saw that his wife was getting worse. He was still reminiscing about the fun he had with Mmakeneuwe)

As superior as he thought he was, he cheats on his ill wife and does not even notice the pain she is going through. He represents a human being who would do anything to live lavishly. Even when he appears to have a better job than other people, he remains discontent and steals from Swanepoel:

***A qaboha a le mong ha a nahana ka pholo  
e ka morao veneng eo a ilo e rekisa...***(Mohapi, 1990: 97)

(He became happy when he thought about a sheep that was at the back of the van which he was going to sell...)

He is despised by the workers and his boss. His actions lead to his imprisonment. And just after he is arrested he shows sincere regret:

***'Moputso wa ka ke ona. Ke bile tjena ka lebaka  
la ho hana ho sebetsa le baheso. Ke ne ke  
kgotsofatsa monnga polasi...'***(Mohapi, 1990: 102)

('This is my fate. I became this way because I refused to work together with my people. I was just impressing my boss...')

How he betrayed his own people and treated them badly shows what a cold heart he has. People complain about him and Nketsi remembers how badly he treated him just by asking for a job:

***A ya a hopola ha a ne a fihla polasing***

***ena a hlongwa dipotso ke Seabata wa moikakasi.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 6)

(He then remembered when he first came to the farm how he was interrogated by Seabata, who thinks highly of himself.)

The next character to be analysed is that of Swanepoel (Sepanapodi). He was heartless. He treated his workers like filth; he assaulted and embarrassed them in front of each other:

***Sepanapodi a mo kgotla sefubeng mona ka monwana o motenya o supang oo ekang o kgotse, a ba a qetella ka ho mo kgotlakgotla phatleng ka makgetlo a tsamaelanang le mantswe a ho qetela ao a a buang,...***(Mohapi, 1990: 7)

(Sepanapodi poked him in the chest with his plump finger, and ended up by shoving him on the forehead while consecutively uttering words)

He is callous and malicious. He is upset when he sees that the workers have taken a lunch break but wants them to continue working without having a break:

***'Ke fumana basebetsi ba ja ba sa sebetse, ha ke re ba sebetse Seabata a nkena hanong a re ba je!'*** (Mohapi, 1990: 95)

('I found the workers having a lunch break when I entrusted them to get back to work, Seabata then interrupted me and told them to continue eating!')

He is also feared by his workers and orders them to carry out his evil deeds, even when it is hurtful to them:

***'Rapolasi ore selemong se tlang o tlo fedisa sekolo polasing ya hae.'*** (Mohapi, 1990: 39)

(‘The farm owner says that next year he will close down the school on his farm’)

He does not care about the workers and their children’s’ future. He knows well that their children will then have to work for him or his children. He knows that he provides food to many people but thinks that the workers are against him. Thinking that, he disrespects them:

**‘Rapolasi enwa ehlile o a re tella ka nnete.’**(Mohapi, 1990: 53)

(‘This farm owner really disrespects us.’)

Mohapi then exposes Nketsi as the antagonist in the novel. He locks horns with Seabata on many several occasions. He is quickly irritated and holds grudges:

***Eitse feela ha a bona Seabata hona moo, kelelo ya hae ya bapala setshwantsho se hlakileng sa hoseng masimong.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 5)

(Once his eyes were placed on Seabata, his mind immediately pondered on the events that took place in the morning on the land :)

Nketsi also has a lot of anger, which clouds his judgement. He somehow believes that people do not change:

**‘Ntate Thabiso mohlomong o tla re re bua ka Seabata hobane re mo hloile , motho eno ke noha re o jwetse.’** (Mohapi, 1990: 40)

(‘Mr Thabiso you might think that we talk of Seabata because we hate him, but you must know that man is a snake.’)

Forgiveness is said to be the attribute of the strong, and from that saying, one can conclude that Nketsi is weak, thus he cannot forgive. His words prove that he believes in the use of muthi:

***‘O ne a re ekabaneng ditlhare tsa hae di tla loka, o laehile ha a ye!’*** (Mohapi, 1990: 5)  
(‘He thought his muthi would work, to hell with him!)

His anger is rebellious and other people can see this. He is constantly reminded to calm down:

***‘Butle ntate Nketsi, se ise pelo mafisa’.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 10)  
(‘Please calm down Mr Nketsi, do not get this upset.’)

Although his intentions are good, Nketsi hated delays and wanted to take action as soon as possible. His anger towards Swanepoel and Seabata are triumphant, he sees no need for community meetings.

The last character to be discussed is that of Mmabatho. Mmabatho is kind unlike her husband. She is caught in the middle between her husband and the community:

***A ipotsa hore ebe o tla phela jwang plasing ena ha eka yena le monna wa hae ba hlouwe tjena ebile batho ha bas a ipata.*** (Mohapi, 1990: 16)  
(She then imagined how she was going to live on that farm since her husband and her were resented by the people, who no longer hid their hatred towards them)

Although her husband Seabata is unkind, she does not treat people ruthlessly: She wanted to live in a harmonious environment and wisely advised her husband:

***‘..Keo jwetsitse kgale hore o se ke wa nyatsa batho, yaba o a hana...’***(Mohapi, 1990: 2)  
(I have told you before not to undermine but you refused ...’)

She loves her husband dearly. She continues loving him even after she found out that he was having an affair:

***'Le mputse mahlo. Ke ne ke sa tsebe hore  
Seabata o ntse a mpota ka morao'***. (Mohapi, 1990: 47)  
(‘You have opened my eyes. I did not know that  
Seabata was having an affair.’)

Although people were angry with her husband, many people still cared for Mmabatho and wanted to help:

***'...Na le kile la mo hlwela kapa basadi ba  
lona ba mo tjhakela ho thusa ka hona  
le hwane?’***(Mohapi, 1990: 42)  
(...‘Have you checked on her or have your wives visited  
her to assist with this and that?’)

Many people note that she was a loving person. She forgave easily. The following section to follow attempts to defamiliarize *Mosikong wa lerato*, *Mosali a nkholo* and *Lehlaba la lephako*:

#### **4.9 AN ATTEMPT TO DEFAMILIARIZE *MOSIKONG WA LERATO*, *MOSALI A NKHOLA* AND *LEHLABA LA LEPHAKO***

The concept of defamiliarization, is the idea that the aesthetic features of a literary text deautomatize observation, has left a certain trace throughout the history of literary criticism (van de Ven: 2010). Raselekoane (2010) remarks Visser (1982:17) by saying defamiliarisation occurs when familiar acts and objects are taken out of their ordinary context or by describing them as if they were seen for the first time.

Shklovsky (n.d) then finalises that defamiliarisation is one of the crucial ways in which literary language distinguishes itself from ordinary, communicative language, and is a feature of how art in general functions, namely, by presenting things in

strange and new ways that allow the reader to see the world in a different light. Below follows the defamiliarisation of Mafata's novel, *Mosikong wa lerato*.

#### 4.9.1 Mosikong wa lerato

Mosikong wa lerato, can be translated as 'at the bottom of love', which is futile and somewhat nonsensical. The term *mosikong*, is associated with mountains. In the Sesotho language, when confabulating about 'mosikong' we imply 'bottom of the mountain', where it is known to be dark and cold. Mafata associated love with the bottom of a mountain. It is therefore right to deduce that the hidden meaning of *mosikong wa lerato* can be explained as love that is cold and there are no unforeseen events, where both partners are still getting to know one another. Mafata took a term that is familiar and linked it to the notion of love. As stated in the previous pages, the novel is about marriage. Mmalekupa was unable to stand by her husband Lesedi, and let alone trust what he said or did.

When analysing the title mosikong wa lerato, it can be seen that *thaba ena ya lerato e ne e imela Mamalekupa ho e ehlwa le monna wa hae*, means that this mountain of love (burden of a marriage) was too much for Mmalekupa to climb along with her husband.

The author again managed to relate marriage to a real mountain. In reality, we know that it is difficult to climb a mountain. Mafata shows that marriage is not easy especially when only one partner is willing to make it work. This is illustrated when Lesedi took his uncles to Mmalekupa's parents to try to resolve their marital issues. Although he knew he was not at fault, he chose to be the bigger person and fix his marriage. However, Mmalekupa had let her parents believe that Lesedi was not the Lesedi they knew and loved. When he came with his uncles to Mmalekupa's parents' home, they were attacked and Mmalekupa did not defend her husband but sided with her family.



It is noted that Mafata's veiled dispatch was also to somehow notify readers that when married, your partner is now your family and whatever disputes you may have, you should at least resolve them together before the intervention of families. Despite his attempt to fix things, Lesedi was unsuccessful in fixing his relationship.

When both partners face difficulties together in a marriage they are able to overcome anything and finally reach the peak of the mountain where they now experience love without anyone or anything planting seeds of doubt in their minds or pulling them back. We again see why Mafata associated love with a mountain. It is known that there is warmth and sunshine at the peak of every mountain as well as true love. When both partners overcome the obstacles in their marriage and trust one another, they are completely happy and it is rare for them to quarrel. Lesedi had not climbed this mountain before in his life, in other words, he has never faced relationship difficulties before.

***'A bona motse wa habo o alehile maotong  
a thaba ya Qoqolosing, mme yena bophelo ba hae  
bo jakile moo, a eso ka be a leka ho hlwella  
tlhorong ya thaba eo ho tseba bokahodimo  
ba yona.'*** ( Mafata, 1988:4 )

(He then realised that his village was just beneath the mountain of Qoqolosing, and his whole life was based there, but he never even attempted to climb that mountain to reach the peak of it).

A lake separates places, here and there. Everyone's desires are not usually within their reach. Lesedi struggled to jump to the other side of the lake, to reach his desire, which was a peaceful marriage. This is a revelation that he was yet to face marriage difficulties.

An ant hill is a sign of a sophisticated work, just like a bird that takes a feather to build its home. With his wife absent, Lesedi sells her chickens. The two do not know how to communicate matters. The wife also gave away Lesedi's blanket without telling him first.

How a human mind functions is also revealed during Lesedi and Moretlo's conversation. Moretlo believes so much in politics and supports those who are following his chosen political party. He dismisses those who follow different political parties. On the other hand, Mmamolepe creates a juicy story in her own mind and tells Mmalekupa about Lesedi and Mmamotjodi. Lesedi was so friendly that he greets and mixes with anyone in the community. People therefore interpreted his behaviour. Just because Lesedi was conversing with Lesiba's wife, he then concluded that Lesedi was dating his wife. Lesiba's insecurities force him to believe what it wants him to believe about Lesedi's character.

When Mmamolepe told Mmalekupa about her husband's affair, Mmanko then steps in and stops their conversation. By doing so, this signifies how a human mind functions. Mmalekupa had already heard what Mmamolepe told her, and her insecurities drove her to the decisions that she took. Her mind convinced her that her husband was indeed having an affair, even though that was not true.

Mmalekupa was now behaving in manners that wounded Lesedi, and his heart was hurt because his mind has already shown him the path his wife was about to take. This was further accentuated by previous arguments they had and Mmalekupa's sudden decision to kill. Lesedi's heart was further broken when her wife came home late with a car that dropped her straight at the gate. He was blinded by extreme jealousy. To him, this is no longer a car but a ride from Mmalekupa's lover. A person's mind connects what is not connected. Mmalekupa then briefly converses with the car owner and Lesedi's mind tells him that Mmalekupa is trying to make him jealous. His hurt is broken and he breaks a pot plant, steps on the mud and covers the bed with the mud. His mind makes him ill.

Men in the bus are having a conversation related to marriage and Mmalekupa is made angry by this as her mind tells her that they are talking about her marital problems. Because of her mind, she ended up with a closed eye.

Montwe on the other hand is infuriated by the fact that Mmalekupa interfered in their conversation and was more factual than they were. He thought that Mmalekupa called him an idiot.

Montwe's anger shows him exactly what he wants to see. This fight is influenced by how the human mind thinks, it thinks what it wants. Mmalekupa has forgotten the dry clean slip and money. She forgot about them because of Lesedi; her forgetfulness and idiocy should therefore belong to her wearisome husband.

She misses the bus because her mind was restless, thinking tirelessly, until a man approached her. This man's mind shows him exactly what he wanted to see. The man believes that Mmalekupa's blue-eye was the result of her husband beating her. This man further goes to say that Mmalekupa knew exactly what her husband was up to back home, and this undermines what Mmamolepe had told her. She arrives home and finds her home in an uninviting and unpleasant condition. She sees what she wants to see. She sees precisely what the strange man and Mmamolepe had told her.

As a result of the chaotic state of the house, Mmalekupa concludes that Lesedi was fighting for a pot plant with another woman, hence it broke. Lesedi also sees her blue-eye, and thinks that his wife got beaten up by the man who dropped her at home in a car. Mmalekupa ends up swearing at Lesedi and Lesedi hits her other eye. Lesedi's deed is a sign to Mmalekupa that he no longer loves her and wants to be with Lesiba's wife. Lesiba has been preparing to teach Lesedi the lesson of his life. Lesedi took his wife just because he is a teacher. He knows that Lesedi is more educated than he is. He sees that Lesedi undermines his position as being a part of the community council. He needs to protect his dignity, act as a man and end this friction he has with Lesedi. He ends up hospitalised because of how his mind displayed events.

***'Ha lebidi la bophelo le boela le kgwasolla  
diqidikwe tse ding tseo motho a ntseng a sa di tsebe,  
ho Lesedi ho ne ho bile jwalo.'*** (Mafata, 1988: 2)  
(As life is unpredictable to every person, it was like  
that with Lesedi)

Mafata compares life with a wheel to show that what comes around goes around. This in real life is referred to as karma. He shows that Lesedi, although as wise as he was, was stranded and did not know how to go about solving the challenges he was faced with.

***‘Hang hoba a qalelle ho hlwa hape, lelakabe la hlala la rarolohela hodimo ka mora hae. Yare ha monna eo a re o a kgutla o ilo e tima, ha be ho se ho se moo a ka hlahang ka teng. le ha ho le jwalo, monna eo a leka ho e tima.’*** (Mafata, 1988:5 )

(Once he started climbing again, a flame of fire appeared right behind him. The man then went back to stop the fire but was now surrounded by fire and there was no way to escape but he persisted in stopping the flames.)

The above quotes from the novel show Mafata’s warning about the difficulties that accompany the climb of a mountain. In this sense, he shows that it is never easy to climb a mountain and that one may face obstacles while climbing a mountain. From the previous paragraphs, this mountain is that of marriage, where a couple has to climb together. He uses a man in Lesedi’s day dream to illustrate that marriage does come with difficulties and one has to overcome them despite the difficulty. This is shown when the man tries to stop the horrible flames of fire even when trapped.

***‘Serobele se ne se bile se dutse lekaleng le haufi le ntlwana eo, se nkile lesiba le lesweu la kgoho. Hang ha fihla setsokotsane, sa tsukutla sefate seo yaba serobele se lahla lesiba se a baleha. A mang a masiba a dikgoho le mahlokwa a neng a sa ntsa ruletse ntlwana le ona a ya le moya. Yaba hore moya o kgutse, a bona serobele sane se se se le teng hape mane pela ntlwana ya sona ka lesiba le leng. Sa le rokella ntlwaneng ka pele, sa ntano ikela.’***(Mafata, 1988: 5)

(A butterfly sat on a leaf near its nest and had a white

chicken feather in its possession. Once the wind came, it shook that tree and the butterfly then threw that feather down and flew away. The rest of the feathers and sticks that the butterfly used to build its nest were also blown away by the wind. After the wind had passed, he then noticed that the butterfly had returned to its nest with a new feather. It then interweaved the feather into the nest and then flew away.)

It can be said that Mafata associates some matrimonies with the above scenario. Like a butterfly, some couples divorce when they face difficulties and are not able to withstand the wind (are not able to overcome challenges). The ordeals destroy their households and families and they are not able to bounce back from that. To them separation or divorce then becomes solution.

However, some couples, like the butterfly, try to pick up the pieces and rebuild their marriages after difficult ordeals. They know that in marriage, there are difficult times but they must be willing to get through them together. In comparison to the butterfly, some partners are able to fix their broken marriages despite the past trials. They know that their marriage will be tested and do not allow anything to separate them. They are prepared for challenges and willing to work through them.

Mafata talks about a bird that accidentally enters a house through a window; is knocked down by the walls and gets confused. Eventually stands on the table in front of people who can do whatever it wants. He compares this with the events of life, life's events that can exploit a person until the person ultimately gives up; the same dreadful events that leaves one powerless and weak. The following discusses defamiliarisation in *Mosali a nkholo*.

#### **4.9.2 Mosali a nkholo**

Khaketla talks about *mophato o chang*, translated into 'initiation'. Initiation in the Sesotho tradition is when young males are taken to the mountain and are taught about the Sesotho ways of doing things, basically how to be a good man.

This is what we know. Nevertheless, the author talks about the return of Mosito and his friends from a modern school. The three men were taught the modern ways of doing things and how to conduct themselves. Khaketla relates the two. From the traditional and modern initiations, the young men are regarded as freshmen to manhood.

Another character, minister Motete talks about *ho cheswa ha nkgo* (the burning of a pot). He says:

***‘Eaba o ntshupisa linkho tse peli, a ntoo nka molangoana, a li o tla-otla ka oona. Ka utloa e ngoe e lla ha monate tsepe e molumo o monate, empa e ngoe molumo oa eona oa se ke oa e-ba monate joalo ka oa nkho ea pele.’*** (Khaketla, 1960: 4-5)

(‘She then showed me the two pots, and and took a stick and beat them. I heard a pleasant sound that one of the pots made, but the other pot did not sound as lovely as the first one.’)

What the Minister concluded was that a person is built through difficult times. Although he was educated, Mosito has never gone through difficult times first before he was fully developed. He points out that like a clay pot, he needs to go through flames of fire to get rid of the tiny unwanted clay particles.

*Tholoana ya morusu* (Khaketla, 1960:34), meaning the seed of chaos, are the words that Khaketla uses to show the beginning of conflict. We know in real life that there is no seed of chaos. The author shows how this seed was planted, it was planted through betrayal. Like wisdom, a seed grows and produces some kind of plantation thus the conflict got worse during the commencement of the novel, which resulted in Mosito’s tragic fate. Mmathabo ends up losing her husband because of the advice and manipulations she applied to Mosito. In this case, Mosito harvests what his wife Mmathabo has planted.

Khaketla( 1960: 110) says that Mosito o cheka motsoako (Mosito digs for the mixture) which is when the ritual murder took place in a chapter. In the Sesotho tradition, most traditional mixtures are herbal and thus are dug. In *Mosali a nkholo*, Mosito kills Tlelima and takes out his liver, which is the *main* ingredient for the 'mixture'. This action is what Khaketla relates to what most Sesotho herbalists do, they dig out their herbals to complete their medicines and in this case, Mosito 'dug out' Tlelima's liver.

The writer (Khaketla, 1960:176) declares that *lebone le a tima* (the light switches off) to show the events that took place before and during Mosito's execution. We see how the men pray for the last time and ask for the souls to be saved. We believe that Khaketla was trying to show that a human life is like a burning light, when there is life, the light remains shining but when death takes over, or when the person passes, their life then comes to an end, just like switching off the light.

The following section discusses the defamiliarisation in *Lehlaba la lephako*.

#### 4.9.3 Lehlaba la lephako

The title of the book is *Lehlaba la lephako*, which is translated as 'pain of hunger'. The author associates the pain that Swanepoel's employees felt while working for him because they were poor and had to work to fulfil their needs. He did this by appointing Seabata as foreman and used him to ill-treat workers and this created antagonism between Seabata, the workers and the entire community.

Mohapi hopes to deliver an African man from being consumed by greed, and if we look at Swanepoel, we see that he has it all, but still wants more. This can be seen when he orders the men to stop eating and to continue working as wealth was more important to him than humanity.

***'Seabata a se ke a kgaleha, o ne a rwalla mona le mane ho se tharollo menahanong e farasang le dithota le maralla, diphula le melapo.'*** (Mohapi, 1999: 4)

(Seabata then did not sleep; he was going here and there with no solution in his mind, which is running like baggage and hills, rainfall and rivers.

Mohapi uses extreme weather conditions to explain Seabata's confused emotions. We know that extreme weather conditions, as explained by the author, causes chaos in people's homes. By that, we note that he did not know how to think clearly and was super stressed. His mind was overthinking, he thought about all that had bothered him that day.

***'Ra hola ra holela mathata,  
lephako ke sera.'*** (Mohapi, 1999: 7-8)  
(*'We grew, we grow up for troubles;  
hunger is an enemy'*)

It is in our nature to grow; we are to grow and age. The word 'trouble' is used like a person; we are expected to grow for 'trouble' and the word hunger is the enemy. We know that no one can grow up for troubles but rather the more you grow up, the more often you meet challenges.

***'Ena polasi ntate o e fumane ka madi a  
ntatemoholo.'***(Mohapi, 1999: 51)  
(*It is this land, which my father received  
from my grandpa's blood*)

The word blood as used in this sentence means to work hard. Swanepoel's grandfather had to work hard and invested all his strength to get that land. We know that to believe physical pain, blood must be seen, hence it can be said again that Mohapi not only uses blood to show hard work, but the pain that Swanepoel's grandpa had to go through before acquiring the land.

***'A mo tsholela a kgenne seo a tswang ho  
se ngwathela Nketsi'*** (Mohapi, 1999: 9)  
(*He angrily dished him what he just dished Nketsi*)



Here the writer explains that the news he angrily just gave to Nketsi, he passed to Seabata with the same anger. In real life news cannot be dished out. We know that food is dished out; therefore we can conclude that the news that Swanepoel told was a mouthful, just like food. An analogy is seen in the concept of defamiliarisation. There is a comparison in which the relationship between things is established by comparing them to a similar relationship between other things. The following section discusses the notion literariness.

## **4.10 LITERARINESS**

According to Jakobson (1921) the word 'literariness' makes a literary text different to other genres. Literariness is what extricates every day language usage that we find in the newspaper in contrast to narrative or artistic language found in works of literature. Based on Miall and Kuiken's observations, literary texts contain features that stand out from ordinary language use. In the process of writing, Mafata, Khaketla and Mohapi integrate literary texts in their novels. Here, literariness contains various artistic styles that a writer applies. A few of those are discussed below.

### **4.10.1 Mood**

Mood can be seen as the environment of sensation in a literary work. The choice of setting, objects, images, and words all contribute towards generating a precise mood (Welty: 2009). An author may create a mood of mystery around a character or setting.

In *Mosikong wa lerato*, Mafata sets the mood by using the social setting which is Lesedi's thoughts. We wonder why he would need help. We see his thoughts but wonder what could have been the cause of his dilemma. There is a mystery; we wonder whether Lesedi had actually gone to a traditional doctor before.

Khaketla, in *Mosali a nkhole* also sets the mood by describing Mosito's handsomeness. He attracts the viewers into finding out more about fetching the young character. We wonder why people surround him and ask ourselves many questions. We are anxious to find out more about the young man.

In *Lehlaba la lephako*, Mohapi describes the conduct of the character, Seabata. We initially wonder and assume why he is like that. We get to see his behaviour even before the commencement of the novel. Below we see how the authors applied imagery to distinguish the novels from everyday common texts. Imagery is described:

#### **4.10.2 Imagery**

Dube (1996:95) refers to imagery as a lived familiarity transformed into an artistic piece, which can also be viewed as the collection of images in a work of fiction. The mental pictures are fashioned by the author's words. An author uses figurative language or sensory description to help the readers visualise what the author is writing about. Imagery is discussed as both the experience of the author and the physical description of things.

In *Mosikong wa lerato*, Mafata uses both the experience and physical descriptions. We notice that he sympathises with Lesedi through his thoughts and gets to see what he is going through. We also see women gossip and note that the people are still having ancestral ceremonies and from that, we relate to the picture that the author is trying to bring to life.

***'Phalafala le Kgolo, Tshwene le Namahadi,  
Nku, mpheng lesedi, badimo ba utlwe thapelo yaka-  
Phelo bo matsutla thokolosi e kene le kae?  
Thato ke dife, re etsetse ba thesele lediba?  
Tlhaka ke dife, re sesetse ba Letlama dinoko?'***

(Mafata, 1988: 1)

The above words are uttered by a traditional herbalist on Lesedi's dreams. The traditionalist asks for guidance from the ancestors. The language that Mafata has used here is not one that is spoken or rather written on a daily basis and the connotation of the words is somehow hidden.

Khaketla, on *Mosali a nkholo* talks of chieftaincy. We get to see how people respect those who are royalty. The people will do anything to see those of royal blood satisfied. They respect the authority of their rulers.

***Kapele-pele hoba mohlankana enoa a theohe loring,  
batho ba phakisa ba bokellana, ba etsa seqhoqhoana,  
ba mo kenya hare, ba mo lumelisa. Har'a ba neng ba  
le teng re ka bolela Sajene ea Mapolesa le Toloko ea  
Mmuso e kholo, ha mmoho le mafumahali  
a bona.***(Khaketla, 1960: 1 )

Immediately just after this young man got off the truck, people hurried and formed a huge crowd to greet him. Those who were present in the crowd include the police sergeant and the principal government interpreter as well as their wives.

Without being present, we are involved in the narrative. We see how the people treat those of royalty like gods, we believe, through the image created by the author that the sovereigns are superior and that it matters more than common people, as in real life.

In *Lehlaba la lephako*, Mohapi creates an image for the readers. We see the dilapidated bedding of a person who was given a better job position. We conclude that he is not paid well.

***Ka mora nako, Mmabatho a fetoha ka potlako a ba a  
batla a diha Seabata ka sanketse ha a bothetsa  
bethe ka letsoho le itshwarelletseng  
mealong.*** (Mohapi, 1999: 1)

(After that time, Mmabatho turned so fast that she almost made Seabata fall off the dilapidated bed as she put her hand on top of it)

We also consider the men who spend most of their time at taverns, and deduce that alcoholism is used as a temporary escape from their 'real life'. We note that women, except Mmabatho are given hard labour like men.

The above statements on the three novels show how the writers use concrete images to go beyond physical description in order to express feelings and states of mind. Most images are created through words that appeal to the readers. To be discussed is the concept of symbolism:

#### 4.10.3 Symbolism

A symbol is something that indicates something else. It is an image of an event or a physical object that is used to represent something non-physical such as an idea, a value, or a sensation (Welty: 2009). Authors use symbols to suggest meaning. The statements below show how Mafata, Khaketla and Mohapi have used symbols in their work.

We see how Mafata uses objects to suggest meaning in *Mosikong wa lerato*. He has used mountains, rivers, bird nests and anthills; and each symbol is a representation of something. For example, the climbing of a mountain represents the relationship or marriage troubles. The river signifies what difficulties you have to go through before getting what you want and so on and so forth.

Culture in *Mosali a nkholo* is the most significant symbolism. We see how Mosito is caught between the two cultures, that of Sesotho and the modern culture. This confusion sets. He goes out of his way and murders a man to complete his mixture as instructed by a witchdoctor.

We also see how the arrival of a witchdoctor enlivens the villagers of Qacha. After the disappearances of the husbands, the women firstly go through their Chief and ask him, rather than the police for help.

Mohapi uses the events in *Lehlaba la lephako* to symbolise the notion of Ubuntu. We see Seabata and Swanepoel abuse people. We later notice the people's anger towards Seabata because he was one of their own but was inhumane. They in turn, also became inhumane and destroy his property. This notion of Ubuntu is further shown when Seabata was arrested. Only a few people came since Swanepoel was to provide them with transportation. He makes the workers work in extreme cold conditions. To follow is how the authors have applied tone in their work:

#### 4.10.4 Tone

Tone refers to the author's attitude or position towards the action, characters, narrator, subject, and even readers of the story (Welty: 2009). To determine the tone of a story, the reader must inspect the language the author uses and decide what effect the author's choice of words have. Below is the application of tone in the three novels:

In *Mosikong wa lerato*, Mafata reveals tone through his use of language when Lesedi beats up Lesiba and his men:

***A be a se a le hara bona ka selepe:  
phohlo, putla, phohlo, putla, phohlo, putla,  
ka dijase; therethere; putla!***(Mafata, 1988: 33)

We assume that the men were tragically beaten up.

Khaketla in *Mosali a nkholo*, displays tone towards the narration, when he says:

***... 'me ba khabise melala ea bona ka sekhamo sa  
ropo, seo basa se ntshetseng leha e le peni e  
ntsho ena, seo ba se fumanang  
mopasa.*** (Khaketla, 1960: 177)

This tone reveals what was about to happen to the guilty characters, Mosito and his men, who had committed a ritual murder.

In *Lehlaba la lephako*, Mohapi uses tone to reveal Nketsi's anger towards Seabata:

***'Moleko oo, ehlike wa tsekela hee, o mekgwa e mengata hee, o batla ho mpolaya. Kgidi banna! Hoja ka se ke ka thiba ka pele nka be ke hohlola madi hona jwale. Feela a ka di loma, a di tshwela, ho nna a ke ke a ba a o besa wa tuka.*** (Mohapi, 1999: 5)

(This devil is really testing me, he has many tricks, and he wants to kill me! Imagine! had I not immediately defended myself, I would be bleeding by now. He can bite, and spit on his muthi, but to me, he will not succeed)

The paragraph below shows Nketsi's expressions and anger which we, the readers are not able to see, but can only imagine his fury. This is seen when Mohapi uses 'kgidi' which is a sound of anger. The following section discusses the irony present in the texts:

#### **4.10.5 Irony**

Irony refers to the unexpected difference or lack of agreement between appearance and truth or between expectation and reality. Irony is apparent when an author uses contrast between what is expected or what appears to be and what actually is. Often readers understand something that a character in a story does not (Miller: 2008). This concept of irony is divided into dramatic and verbal irony:

##### **4.10.5.1 Verbal Irony**

Verbal irony, also known as sarcasm is the distinction between what is said and what is actually meant. It is saying the opposite of what is meant or saying it sarcastically (Davidson: n.d). It is evident in the following texts of the three novels:

Mafata in *Mosikong wa lerato* shows verbal irony through Moretlo's words. He says:

**‘...banna ba Lekgotla ba ne ba patetse  
motswalle wa rona mona!’**(Mafata, 1988: 61)  
(‘...men in the Council had visited our friend here!’)

He claims to be Lesedi’s friend but does not treat him as such, in fact he treats him oppositely and this is evident in the novel.

In *Mosali a nkholo*, verbal irony is seen when Chief mosito says:

**‘Maikutlo a ka ha a fetohle joaloka  
lempetje’**(Khaketla, 1960: 56)  
(‘My mind does not change like that of a chameleon’)

Yet he later changes his mind after talking to his wife.

In *Lehlaba la lephako*, Seabata claims:

**‘Nna ke tlile ho sebetsa mona, mme monnga ka  
o mpeile hore ke be leihlo le tsebe ya hae mona.  
Ke tla etsa jwalo, ho seng jwalo re tla ja mabodi  
re sa hetla ka morao.’**(Mohapi, 1988: 2)  
(‘I came here to work, and my boss has made me  
his eyes and ears. I will do so; otherwise we will have  
nothing to eat’)

This statement shows that Seabata values and appreciates what Swanepoel does for him, but what happens after a while is that he manages to betray and steal from his boss. The following discusses dramatic irony:

#### 4.10.5.2 *Dramatic Irony*

This occurs when the audience or reader discerns more than the characters know (Russel: 2009). In *Mosikong wa lerato*, we learn that Mmalekupa is upset about her husband’s alleged affair with Mmamotjodi.

She comes home, talks to her husband very harshly and disrespectfully. Lesedi on the other hand, has no idea what is going on with his wife. We wish we could tell Lesedi what we know, that is, why his wife is behaving in such a way.

In *Mosali a nkholo*, there is a lot of dramatic irony but not all will be discussed. We pick up on the conversation between Maime, Khati and Ssebotsa about appealing to Mmathabo's emotions in order to convince her husband to change his mind. She does not know about the men's plans. Maime goes to her and successfully appeals to her mind. She on the other hand, manipulates Mosito to change his mind. Mosito also does not know about the conversation between his wife and Maime. That which was revealed to us, the characters do not know.

Mohapi in *Lehlaba la lephako* shows dramatic irony when Mmabatho is not aware of her husband's infidelities. Then the women come to her house and tell her about the affair. She keeps that to herself and does not burst out as most women would. Seabata is caught up in his love affair; he is not aware that his wife knows about his relations with Mmakeneuwe. We wonder why his wife does not have weird outbursts towards her husband. We admire her strength.

#### **4.10.6 Foreshadowing**

Foreshadowing is when hints are used to alert the reader about events that will occur later. It is used to build suspense (Welty: 2009), where the author intentionally intensifies the reader's anxiety over what will happen next.

In *Mosikong wa lerato*, we see Lesedi going through a lot of problems and is later on arrested. We see that he is given a chance to gather witnesses on his behalf but we do not know how the events will turn around. We wonder what the final verdict will be.

In *Mosali a nkholo*, foreshadowing is used just before the capture of the victim of a ritual murder, Tlelima. We wonder if Mosito will indeed go ahead with the plan. We know that he constantly changes his mind and doubtfully believes that he will change his mind again about killing Tlelima.



In *Lehlaba la lephako*, we see Seabata agreeing to steal from Swanepoel but we wonder if he will actually do it. We know that he is afraid of Swanepoel and he depends on him. The following segment seeks to unravel some idioms and phrases found in the three novels.

#### 4.10.7 Idioms, proverbs and phrases

A variety of phrases, proverbs and idioms are found in the three novels but a few are noted. The three play a major role in conforming literary texts into artistic work. The following idioms, proverbs and phrases are some that are found in the novels.

##### 4.10.7.1 *Mosikong wa lerato*

**'Hei, ha ho mosi o ka kubellang feela tjena ka ntle ho mollo!'** (Matafa, 1988: 12)

*Ha ho mosi o kubellang feela ntle le mollo* translates, there is no smoke without a fire. This means, with reference to the novel that rumours cannot just start unless something was seen or noted.

**...ba tswafa ho ithonkga dipelo le ho senya kgotso ka ho tsetolla mofu** (Matafa, 1988: 13)

*ho tsetolla mofu* means to wake up the dead, which in the text, means to bring up what has passed.

We now look at few texts within *Mosali a nkhole*.

##### 4.10.7.2 *Mosali a nkhole*

**'..Ha Morena a theha motse lokela hore a o tiise ka lenaka le matla'** (Khaketla, 1960: 26)

*Ho tiisa motse* means to doctor a homestead.

**...a fumana tsa ho thetsa moholu** (Khaketla, 1960:63)

*ho thetsa moholu* means to eat

**Ha o mo sheba o ke ke oa pheha khobe  
le eena.** (Khaketla, 1960: 23)

*Ho pheha khobe* in this case means to never disagree or argue but it is also defined as try very hard without success.

**Meno a masoeu aa phoma** (Khaketla, 1960: 54) means white teeth eventually darken.

#### 4.10.7.3 *Lehlaba la lephako*

**'re batla ho o tswela kgomo monna.'** (Mohapi, 1999: 26)

The above statement, '*ho tswela kgomo*' means to make someone aware of something.

**'Ka ho panya ha leihlo....'** (Mohapi, 1999: 64)

*Ho panya ha leihlo*, means within the blink of an eye.

**Hang feela ha a hata kosene** (Mohapi, 1999: 13)

means to leave.

**'Butle ntate Nketsi, se ise pelo mafisa'** (Mohapi, 1999: 10)

*Ho isa pelo mafisa* means to give away to sorrow.

**A ja masapo a hlooho** (Mohapi, 1999: 42)

means to think.

**'Ke seloma, sejadirethe'** (Mohapi, 1999: 42)

*Sejadirethe* is to be betrayal.

***Ho se nko e tswang lemina*** (Mohapi, 1999: 50)

is translated as no mucous escaped the nose, meaning that there were no results.

#### **4.11 CONCLUSION**

The events of the novels were revealed by applying *sjuzet* and *fabula*. This chapter has outlined the analysis of the selected Sesotho novels using Russian Formalism. It is therefore seen that a Western literary theory, Russian Formalism, has the potential to analyse African-written novels, despite the fact that the novels emerged from the rich African soils and are rich in African tradition and culture. The next chapter provides the summary, recommendations and conclusion to this study.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overriding purpose of this study was to analyse the selected Sesotho novels namely, *Mosikong wa lerato* (1988), *Mosali a nkholo* (1960) and *Lehlaba la lephako* (1999) using a Western literary theory which is Russian Formalism. Determining the concepts that entail Formalism has allowed the simple analysis of the novels. Related to that effort, it became necessary to reach an understanding about the nature of Formalism. To provide for the possibility that Formalism can be perceived and measured as a feasible constituent to analyse African novels, it was imperative to first consider the elements used when analysing a novel with the potential to encompass the use of Formalistic concepts. Once these ultimate steps were attained, this study was able to advance.

The succeeding chapters examined, in dissimilar ways, the factors to be considered when analysing an African novel:

CHAPTER ONE served as an introductory phase to the study. A statement of the problem, background, aim and objectives and scope of this study, theoretical framework, definitions and explanations of concepts such as narrative, literature, oral African literature, literary criticism. It succinctly discussed the theoretical framework Russian Formalism, which the study is based on and consists of the concepts: defamiliarisation, literariness, fabula, and sjuzet.

CHAPTER TWO is the literature study on narrative elements. This literature study concentrates on the various viewpoints of different scholars and has outlined the purpose and elements of literature in detail. Appropriate and credible academic literature was identified and used.

CHAPTER THREE deliberated on the theory of Russian Formalism and its concepts, namely fabula, sjuzet, defamiliarization and literariness.

CHAPTER FOUR is where the theory of Russian Formalism was put into practice. The events of the novels were revealed through the application of sjuzet and fabula, literariness and defamiliarization.

CHAPTER FIVE is the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations of all the previous chapters as well as an evaluation of the research goal, objectives and hypothesis.

## **5.2 IMPLICATIONS OF MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

### **5.2.1 Findings on the application of formalism concepts in Sesotho texts**

#### *5.2.2.1 Fabula and sjuzet*

In the analysed texts of *Mosikong wa lerato* (1988), *Mosali a nkholo* (1960) and *Lehlaba la lephako* (1999) it is seen that the plot or sjuzet has bearing on the literary text. Both the Fabula and sjuzet pertain to the difference between the raw material and its arrangement in a literary text. The probability of events appeared not only in events but also in their sequences. It is also noted that the event casualties resulted in suspense.

#### *5.2.2.2 Defamiliarization and literariness*

Since defamiarization and literariness are almost similar in the Sesotho etymology, it was therefore difficult to distinguish them apart. The events of the narratives were inclusive of a variety of literary texts that, other than being defamiliarized, were also literariness.

Literary union of the texts built up a whole and the formal textual properties became the prime concern. The text tensions are created through irony, enigma and obscurity.

### **5.2.2 Findings on the actual analysed texts**

Literature is an independent work of art and, by means of an objective analysis of formal devices, one eventually gets a grip on a literary text. The inspiration of the author and the subjective emotions of the reader were irrelevant in this study. An analysis of the specific stylistica reveals that ordinary language was rehabilitated to activate the mood of the readers.

### **5.2.3 Conclusions**

Russian Formalism has scrutinised, construed and assessed the internal features of the texts inclusive of grammar, syntax and literary devices. The most significant literary elements such as the setting, plot, theme, and character emerged during the analyses and were connected with the formalism theory. The form and content cannot be alienated because form also has meaning, which results in successful texts. The texts were analysed based on the relationship between the form and the content of the texts. Formalism was therefore mostly applied consciously or subconsciously by the authors.

## **5.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

I should stress that this study has been primarily concerned with the Sesotho language and does not imply, without an attempt, that all languages can be analysed using the Russian Formalism theory. With that said, it can only be assumed that the analysis of various texts is possible with the Formalism theory.

This study looks not at the author but at the text itself. It should therefore also be borne in mind that this study was based on descriptive and interpretative paradigms. The results are therefore the researcher's views and should be taken as such.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

When analysing texts using Formalism, it is recommended to first emphasize and establish the difference between poetic language and practical language hence literary language is said to be devoid of the practical function which everyday language executes. It is again important to identify the literary techniques applied by the author.

## **5.5 POSSIBLE FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study influences the valid construction of a specific African literary theory. Since it is possible that a Western literary theory can analyse Sesotho texts, which are African works, it is therefore a possibility that an African literary theory can emerge. Africans have more knowledge and understanding about the African culture and traditions, which influences most literary works.

There are other works of art in the indigenous languages that may seem too complex to be analysed using Russian Formalism. As mentioned earlier, since this study has analysed texts in the Sesotho etymology, it would be a step to analyse other African languages using Formalism. It is therefore important that more research be undertaken to investigate works in other ethnic languages and establish if there is indeed a possibility that Formalism can be applied in these languages.

## **5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The Russian Formalism theory is one of the oldest Western literary theories. It has successfully been expounded in the analysis of the designated Sesotho narratives. It can be applied to any kind of literature, since a literary theory is predominantly about literature. Formalism leads to a well-comprehended text, which has the capacity to unravel the hidden message produced by the texts. This theory considers the entire process of literary work from its very conception in the cognizance of an author and yet disregards the authors' feelings and outlooks.

The study delved into the analysis of the Sesotho texts using Russian Formalism, which is a Western theory, by its concepts and literary elements. It is noted that the three authors, Mafata, Khaketla and Mohapi carefully shaped the raw material of the Sesotho oral traditions into some form of creative art. The authors have consciously or subconsciously applied the Formalism notion in their work and have created more secular and less didactic narratives. The ordinary language that we use for everyday communication was made strange or defamiliarised and the formal devices created literary effects that were analysed by studying the texts only.



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